

**AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS DIFFICULTIES IN WRITING
INFORMATIVE ABSTRACTS IN JURNAL ONLINE
MAHASISWA UNIVERSITAS RIAU**

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Abstract: *Writing an abstract is one of the important components that must be included in a thesis or research article, but in fact, it is difficult to do. The purpose of this research was to identify difficulties in writing informative abstracts in Jurnal Online Mahasiswa Universitas Riau. This research used a qualitative approach, and the research design is content or document analysis. The data was taken from 40 Jurnal Online Mahasiswa Universitas Riau in the last 4 years (2019–2022). The results showed that the percentage of rhetorical moves in Move 1 (Introduction) was 20%, Move 2 (Purpose), Move 3 (Method), and Move 5 (Conclusion) was 97.5%, while Move 4 (Product) was 95%. Furthermore, in the writing aspects, there are 80% of documents that use formal vocabulary, formal verbs, and full verbs. Then, only 47.5% of the documents use formal grammar structures; 77.5% of the abstracts used statements; 52.5% use impersonal language; 62.5% of the abstracts analyzed were precise; 75% use hedging statements; and 70% of the abstracts used transition words. The conclusion is that there are difficulties in writing an abstract framework in move 1 (introduction), and formal grammar structure is the most difficult writing aspect that students experienced.*

Key Words: *Difficulty, Informative Abstract, Writing*

SEBUAH ANALISIS KESULITAN PENULISAN ABSTRAK INFORMATIF MAHASISWA DALAM JURNAL ONLINE MAHASISWA UNIVERSITAS RIAU

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Abstrak: Menulis abstrak merupakan salah satu komponen penting yang harus ada dalam thesis maupun artikel penelitian, namun faktanya sulit untuk dilakukan. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menemukan kesulitan–kesulitan dalam menulis abstrak informatif di Jurnal Online Mahasiswa Universitas Riau. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode pendekatan kualitatif dan desain penelitiannya adalah analisis isi atau dokumen. Data diambil dari 40 Jurnal Online Mahasiswa Universitas Riau edisi 4 tahun terakhir (2019–2022). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa jumlah persentase dari Move 1 (Introduction) 20%, Move 2 (Purpose), Move 3 (Method), dan Move 5 (Conclusion) 97,5%, sedangkan Move 4 (Product) berjumlah 95%. Sedangkan pada aspek-aspek penulisan terdapat 80% dokumen yang menggunakan kosakata dan kata kerja formal, serta kata kerja penuh. Sedangkan hanya 47.5% dokumen menggunakan struktur tata bahasa formal; 77.5% menggunakan pernyataan; 52.5% menggunakan bahasa impersonal; 62.5% abstrak yang dianalisis sudah tepat; 75% menggunakan pernyataan *‘hedging’*; dan 70% abstrak menggunakan kata–kata transisi. Kesimpulannya adalah terdapat kesulitan dalam menulis kerangka abstrak pada move 1 (Introduction) dan struktur tata bahasa formal merupakan aspek penulisan paling sulit yang dialami oleh siswa.

Kata Kunci: Kesulitan, Abstrak Informatif, Menulis

INTRODUCTION

Writing is a symbol that is associated with words or sentences that are written with capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and words based on the function (Satya et al., 2018). In competency learning or writing aspects whose ultimate goal is to produce or produce writings or texts, both functional and monologues based on genres or types of texts, students are expected to be able to understand the characteristics of a text and be able to express them with correct vocabulary and grammar (Djafar, 2018). In academic fields, students are required to write research journal articles or commonly referred to as a graduate thesis. In general, a graduate thesis is composed of several parts, such as introduction, literature review, methodology, results, discussion, and conclusion. When students have started writing research journal articles, students have to follow the writing procedures correctly (Amnuai, 2019). In addition, an informative abstract is one type of abstract that is commonly used in the academic world. It is because the informative abstract is a brief summary of all the information in a scientific paper (Arkansas, 2022). As far as the writer knows, the research related to the analysis of student difficulties in writing informative abstracts is still not much research in Indonesia. It makes the writer decide to conduct research that focuses on an abstract framework that is commonly known as rhetorical structure or moves.

In fact, many students still find it difficult and challenging to write informative abstracts for research journal articles or theses. This is due to lack of awareness in compiling the steps of scientific writing. Based on the experiences of some alumni students of the English Department Study Program at Universitas Riau who had written an abstract thesis, they stated that when writing an abstract, they had difficulties, like the components of abstract, the structures of an abstract, and many other difficulties. Besides, students' difficulties in writing abstracts are also influenced by aspects in academic writing. The aspects are grammar, vocabulary, statements, and so on. According to (Male, 2018), this is understandable, because the knowledge of systematic writing of abstract scientifically is still not fully mastered by students, even though some of them already have the ability to use language to write a text. So, based on the problems above, the purpose of the research was to analyze students' understanding of the informative abstract framework and their difficulties in writing it on Jurnal Online Mahasiswa.

There are some abstract models of Saboori (2013). The first is the CARS or the Swales' model. According to Swales (1990), there are four framework models used for abstract analysis. The framework is known as the CARS model. Moreover, the framework has 4 moves (Introduction Purpose, Method, Results, and Conclusion). The next abstract framework is the Bhatia Model (1993). Bhatia model has been widely used by well-known researchers. In abstract research, Bhatia's model has 4 frameworks, namely Introduction of the Purpose, Description of the Methodology, Summarizes a Result, and Conclusion. Along with the times, one of the leading writers, namely Hyland (2000) also argue that there are 5 moves used in analyzing abstracts. The five moves are Introduction, Purpose, Method, Product, and Conclusion.

According to (Hyland, 2008), there are some aspects of writing ability, namely, process, systems (such as grammar, vocabulary, statements, punctuation), and content. Hyland's theory (2008) also mentioned the aspects of writing. There are 9 aspects of writing, such as use formal vocabulary, use formal verbs, use full verbs, use formal grammar structures, use statements, use impersonal language, be precise, use hedging statements, and use transition words (Kirub, 2014).

Based on the discussion above, the writer decided to use Hyland's model in this research. The reason is because Hyland's model is more detailed and complete. Hyland's model is also more updated than the previous two models. Besides, the Hyland model is the development of Swales and Bhatia. The Hyland model has 5 moves, which means each move has a step. On the other hand, based on writing aspects, the theory of Hyland is also appropriate for this research. It is because the writer also did research about the informative abstract writing difficulties of the students on Jurnal Online Mahasiswa. The writer saw aspects of writing that they used, such as grammar, vocabulary, statements, punctuation, and so on.

The research on the difficulties of writing informative abstracts has attracted the attention of several researchers. They are (Hashemi & Saboori, 2013; Fajriyah, 2015; Andika, Safnil, 2018; Male, 2018; Wulandari, 2018; and Anakib, 2020). Most of them have done research on rhetorical moves in the abstract. However, in this research, the writer combines them by analyzing the difficulties in writing the abstract framework (rhetorical moves) and the aspects of writing it. So this is what has made this research different from previous research.

METHODOLOGY

This research approach was qualitative, because it focuses on the abstract framework of students and their difficulties in writing. In addition, this research was explained as holistic and requires a deeper understanding than just enough to analyze numerical data (Ary, 2010). The research design of this research was content or document analysis because the purpose of this research was to identify certain characteristics of a material.

The main data on this research was taken from a students' abstract framework on research journal articles in English. While the source of data were obtained from Jurnal Online Mahasiswa undergraduate. This research identified 40 research journal articles, and the focus of the analysis was only on writing abstracts. In this research, the writer made an instrument according to Hyland's theory, which was adapted by (Hashemi & Saboori, 2013).

Table 1. The Research Instrument by Hyland's Model

Rhetorical Structures (Moves) in Students Writing Abstract on Jurnal Online Mahasiswa		
MOVES	STEPS	✓/X
Move 1 (<i>Introduction</i>)	Step 1: Discussing the dominant research topic.	

	Step 2: Making the topic generalization.	
	Step 3: Defining terms, objects, or processes of the research.	
	Step 4: Identifying a gap in current knowledge.	
Move 2 (<i>Purpose</i>)	Step 1: Discussing the purpose directly.	
Move 3 (<i>Method</i>)	Step 1: Describing the participants.	
	Step 2: Describing the instruments.	
	Step 3: Describing the procedure or conditions.	
Move 4 (<i>Product</i>)	Step 1: Describing the product or main features.	
Move 5 (<i>Conclusion</i>)	Step 1: Stating the conclusion of the research.	
	Step 2: Evaluating value of the research.	
	Step 3: Giving a recommendation.	

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

RESULTS

The results of the findings are classified based on the formulation of the problems.

1. Students' Informative Abstract Framework Writing on Jurnal Online Mahasiswa Universitas Riau

Move 1: Introduction

According to the rubric of framework abstract by Hyland's theory, the first move in abstract is "Introduction". On this move, the total number of students that used it were 7 students out of 40. In the part of the introduction, there are four steps, which are: discussing the dominant research topic, making the topic generalization, defining terms, objects, or processes of the research, and identifying a gap in current knowledge. For a better view of the results, the data and explanations were presented in the following chart.



Chart 1. The Number of Move 1 (Introduction) in Informative Abstracts of Jurnal Online Mahasiswa

1) Step 1

Based on chart 1, it can be seen that a few students followed step 1 (discussing the dominant research topic) in their abstracts as an introduction. Data shows that there are 6 students who wrote the Move 1 introduction, especially Step 1 in their informative abstract.

2) Step 2

According to chart 1, it can be determined that there are 5 students who followed step 2 (making the topic generalization) in their abstracts as an introduction.

3) Step 3

Based on chart 1, there are 4 students who followed step 3 in the introduction. Step 3 is where students write down the meaning of the object of research or the research process. Step 3 is called defining terms, objects, or processes of the research. According to data of the research, it shows that there are 4 students that have completed step 3 on "the introduction".

4) Step 4

In chart 1, it can be seen that none of the students wrote this in the introduction section of their informative abstracts. Step 4 is concerned with identifying gaps in current knowledge.

Move 2: Purpose

According to the rubric of the abstract framework by Hyland's theory, the second move in the abstract is "Purpose". Based on the 40 abstract documents that were sampled for this research, the writer found that 39 students wrote the purpose of their abstracts. In contrast to Move 1 (Introduction), Move 2 doesn't have many steps. This is because move 2 only focuses on one explanation, namely the purpose of the study.

Move 3: Method

This move generally describes or explains how the research process is carried out, such as participants, instruments, and implementation procedures. In this study, there are 39 out of 40 abstracts that followed Move 3 "Method". Although in its use, students followed one or more of the steps. Hyland's theory states that there are three steps in the "Method" as shown in the following chart.

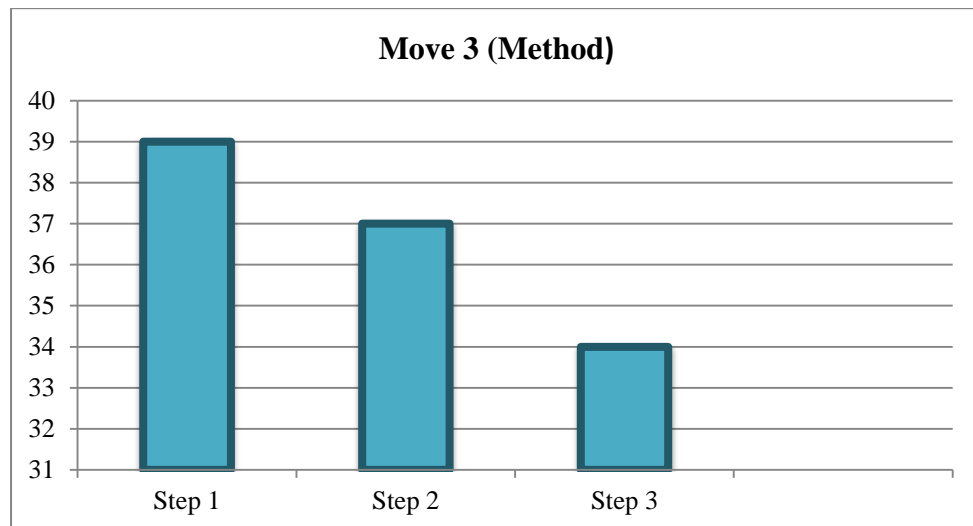


Chart 2. The Number of Move 3 (Method) in Informative Abstracts of Jurnal Online Mahasiswa

1) Step 1

Based on chart 2, it can be seen that there are 39 students who followed step 1 (describing the participants).

2) Step 2

This step commonly explains the research instrument. From the findings, there are 37 students who followed step 2. Step 2 is called "describing the instruments".

3) Step 3

From chart 2, there are 34 students who followed step 3 in the method. Step 3 is the step where the procedures and conditions of the research object are carried out, or the research process. Step 3 is called "describing the procedure or conditions."

Move 4: Product

Using the rubric of the abstract framework by Hyland's theory, the fourth move in writing abstract is "product". Based on the 40 abstract documents that were sampled for this research, the writer found 38 documents included the product in the abstract. Similar to move 2 (purpose), move 4 (product) also doesn't have many steps. The reason is because move 4 only focuses on one step, namely describing the product or main features.

Move 5: Conclusion

In this move, it is generally about completing the research being carried out. In this research, 39 out of 40 abstract documents have Move 5 "Conclusion", although in its use, the students use one or more of the steps. Nevertheless, in this case, all of the students wrote a conclusion on their informative abstract in the Jurnal Online Mahasiswa Universitas Riau. Hyland's theory states that there are three steps in Move 5 "Conclusion," in which these variations of three steps were exhibited in the following chart.

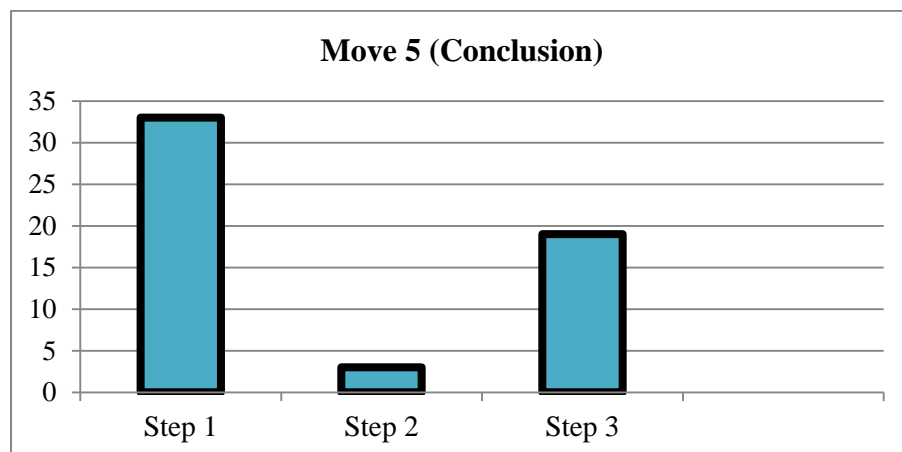


Chart 3. The Number of Move 5 (Conclusion) in Informative Abstracts of Jurnal Online Mahasiswa

1) Step 1

Based on chart 3, it can be seen that there are 33 students who followed step 1 (stating the conclusion of the research) in their abstracts.

2) Step 2

In Step 2 of the Move 5, "Conclusion" generally conveys an evaluation of the value of a study. Only 3 abstract documents followed step 2 in writing the conclusion of their abstracts.

3) Step 3

Based on chart 3, it can be seen that there are 19 students who followed step 3 (giving a recommendation) in their abstracts. . This can be seen from the use of recommendation phrases in the document, such as *"it is suggested..."*, *"several recommendations were given..."*, *"it is recommended..."*, and so on.

After knowing the variations of the rhetorical moves (abstract framework) above, to help the reader understand them more easily, the writer added a number of abstract informative documents that use variations of the abstract framework in the form of percentages which can be seen in Chart 4 below.

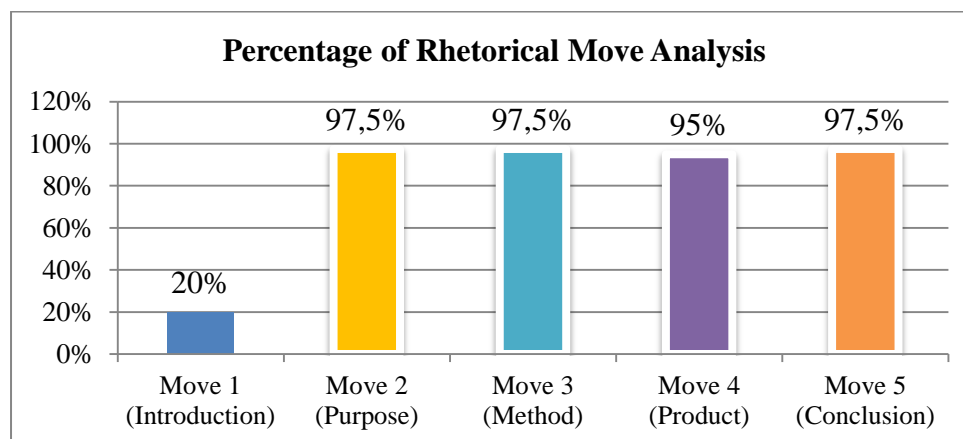


Chart 4. Percentage of Rhetorical Move Analysis

2. The Difficulties of Students Writing Informative Abstracts on Jurnal Online Mahasiswa Universitas Riau

After doing the research, based on data obtained from 40 abstracts written by students of the English Department Study Program accessed in Jurnal Online Mahasiswa Universitas Riau for the last 4 years (2019–2022), the writer found that the aspects of writing used by students are quite varied. For a better view, the writer has calculated the percentage of the number of document abstracts that used the writing aspects of Hyland's theory as follows:

Table 2. The Percentage of Aspects of Writing

No	Aspects of Writing	Total Abstract Documents	Percentage (%)
1	Use formal vocabulary	32	80%
2	Use formal verbs	32	80%
3	Use full verbs	32	80%
4	Use formal grammar structures	19	47.5%
5	Use statements	31	77.5%
6	Use impersonal language	21	52.5%
7	Be precise	25	62.5%
8	Use hedging statements	30	75%
9	Use transition words	28	70%

DISCUSSIONS

1. Students' Informative Abstract Framework Writing on Jurnal Online Mahasiswa Universitas Riau

According to findings above, most of the 40 abstract documents of English Department students who have written informative abstracts in Jurnal Online Mahasiswa Universitas Riau of the last 4 years (2019 – 2022) have difficulty in certain sections such as move 1 (introduction). This is evident from the percentage

of data that is only 20% of 100%. Different from move 1 (introduction), move 2 (purpose), move 3 (method), and move 5 (conclusion) have the same percentage, which is 97.5% of 100%. It means that only 1 Abstract document does not use this move. As for move 4 (product) has a percentage that is not much different from the previous three moves, which is 95% of 100%. It can be seen that only 2 documents do not use move 4 (product) in these informative abstracts. Moreover, it also backs up with findings of research by Hashemi & Saboori (2013). They found out that move 1 (introduction) has smallest of total document (the data was taken from 63 abstracts. So, the research showed that 10 abstracts for AE, 8 abstracts for ME, and only 6 abstracts for AL). It means that not all writers understand all the steps in abstract framework, especially on this move.

2. The Difficulties of Students Writing Informative Abstracts on Jurnal Online Mahasiswa Universitas Riau

As has been known, writing is one of the most important components and keys in an academic field (Nurfiryalianti et al., 2014). To be a good writer, it is better to know the aspects of writing that are in accordance with academic guidelines. This research also used Hyland's theory in analyzing the difficulties students of the English Department Study Program at Universitas Riau faced in writing informative abstracts. This was because Hyland's theory was more widely used in related and more complete research (Maharani, 2019).

After the writer conducted research assisted by experts, the writer found that most of the 40 abstract documents of the English Department who had written informative abstracts in the last 4 editions of the Jurnal Online Mahasiswa Universitas Riau (2019–2022) had difficulties in several aspects, such as formal grammar structure (47.5%), using impersonal language (52.5%), and being precise (62.5%). However, it is clear that the formal grammar structure is the most difficult aspect experienced by English Study Program students at the Universitas Riau in writing informative abstracts. This is also in line with previous research, which explains that grammar structure is one of the most difficult things faced in academic writing (Andika, Safnil, 2018).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of this research, it can be seen clearly that the difficulties experienced by students of the English Department Study Program at Universitas Riau in writing informative abstracts are in Move 1 (introduction). The writer found that only 20% of abstracts used this move. Then, for the second of formulation of the problem, formal grammar structure is the most difficult aspect experienced by students of the English Study Program at the University of Riau in writing informative abstracts. It can be seen from the percentage of findings that the formal grammar structure only reached 47.5%.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In this research, the writer would like to provide some recommendations for the future so that it could be even better. These recommendations include:

1. For the next writers, they are expected to use this research as a reference so that they can develop research related to this topic.
2. For students, it is recommended to pay more attention to and study the preparation of informative abstract frameworks and to be more motivated in studying aspects of academic writing, especially for the preparation of thesis and research journal articles.
3. For universities, it is expected to provide support in the form of information and guidance in writing abstracts to students, so that students do not have trouble finding references, so that many of them follow an incomplete abstract format.
4. For the management of Jurnal Online Mahasiswa Universitas Riau, it would be even better if the journal manager could improve the quality and pay attention to the shortcomings that exist in an article that will be published in Jurnal Online Mahasiswa Universitas Riau. It is intended that the interest of readers is also increasing, and more writers would like to contribute their articles to Jurnal Online Mahasiswa Universitas Riau

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