Rhetorical Variation across Research Article Abstracts in Linguistics

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Song, Jina. 2015. Rhetorical Variation across Research Article Abstracts in Linguistics. *SNU Working Papers in English Linguistics and Language 13, 143-164.* This study examines the communicative characteristics of the quantity-focused and the quality-focused abstracts in the fields of Linguistics. With respect to the pattern of the rhetorical structures, in the quantity-focused abstracts, the conventional moves were Purpose, Method, Product and Conclusion; and the optional moves were Introduction. On the other hand, in the quality-focused abstracts, the conventional moves consisted of Introduction and Product; and the optional moves consisted of Purpose, Method, and Conclusion. As for the verb tense usage, in the Method move, the high frequency of the past tense was identified only in the quantity-focused abstracts. In the quality-focused abstracts, there was no incidence of the Method. Moreover, in the Purpose, the higher use of the present was only identified in the quality-focused abstracts. In the quantity-focused abstracts, however, the past was more frequently used than the present. Finally, this study investigated the first-person pronoun usage in each rhetorical move. In the quantity-focused abstracts, the first-person pronouns were used the most frequently in the Method; but in the quality-focused abstracts, the first-person pronouns were used the most frequently in the Product. Overall, this study confirmed the necessity of investigating both quantity-focused and the quality-focused abstracts, and by doing so more accurate pictures of research article abstracts in the field of linguistics were suggested. **(Seoul National University)**

Keywords: rhetorical variation, research article abstracts, quality-focused, quantity-focused

1. Introduction

Research abstracts play a particularly important role in research writings because it is the point where readers judge whether the article is worth reading or not (Hyland 2003). To catch prospective readers' attention, writers tend to highlight their main claims and originality of their research with controlled vocabulary and syntax (Hartley, 1987). Since the research abstracts are important promotional genre and have

their own communicative characteristics, there have been a number of studies on the abstracts of different genres – Medical abstracts (Salager-Meyer, 1992), applied linguistics abstracts (Santos, 1996), wildlife behavior and conservation biology abstracts (Samraj, 2002), applied linguistics and educational technology abstracts (Pho, 2008), and linguistics and applied linguistics abstracts (Suntara and Usaha, 2013).

However, the study on the linguistics abstracts (Suntara and Usaha, 2013) have had its limitations in that it only focused on quantity-focused articles[1] but excluded conceptual/theoretical articles. While linguistics is generally considered as a soft-knowledge discipline[2], in the field of linguistics both quantity-focused articles, which have the properties of hard-knowledge such as experimental or corpus-based articles, and quality-focused articles, which have the properties of soft-knowledge such as conceptual or theoretical articles, exist. Thus, in order to fully investigate the communicative characteristics of the linguistics abstract, it will be necessary to study both knowledge types of abstracts.

In the study of Suntara and Usaha (2013), rhetorical moves, verb tenses and the first-person pronoun usage of the linguistics abstracts were investigated and argued that Purpose, Method, and Product move were the conventional moves but Introduction and Conclusion were optional moves. In addition, in the Method move the past tense was the most frequent but in the Purpose the present was more frequently used than the past. And the first-person pronouns were used in all five moves.

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[1] Suntara and Usaha, (2013) used the sample articles from the following linguistics journals: *Journal of Phonetics, Journal of Pragmatics,* and *Language Sciences.*

[2] The hard knowledge disciplines concern building quantitative models and analyze observable experience to establish empirical uniformities. Also explanations are derived from precise measurement between a limited numbers of controlled variables (Hyland 1998, 1999; Becher 1989). For example, Physics, Engineering, and Medicine are belonged to the hard knowledge disciplines. Whereas, the soft knowledge disciplines concern the influence of human actions on events and employ synthetic inquiry strategies with more varied variables (Becher, 1989: 12-17; Kolb, 1981; Hyland 1999). For example, history, business and linguistics are belonged to the soft knowledge disciplines.

However, the results can be different if both the quantity-focused and the quality-focused abstracts are considered.

In this study, I will study the quantity-focused and the quality-focused abstracts in the fields of Linguistics. The pattern and the characteristics of the rhetorical moves of both types of abstracts will be investigated; and distribution and usage of verb tenses and the first-person pronouns across the rhetorical moves will be explored.

2. Method
2.1 The corpora

The data for this study have been collected from 30 research article abstracts (15 quantity-focused abstracts; 15 quality-focused abstracts) representing the subgenres of linguistics scholarly papers – Syntax, Semantics, Phonology and Phonetics – and both quantity and quality focused articles involve all three subgenres. The article abstracts were selected from major journals in the field of linguistics – *Language, Lingua, Natural Language & Linguistic Theory, Journal of memory and language, Journal of linguistics, and Journal of phonetics.* These selected abstracts were published during the years of 2001-2015.

2.2 Analysis of rhetorical structure: Hyland (2000, 2004)

All the abstracts were divided into 5 rhetorical moves, based on Hyland's (2000, 2004) model, which was obtained from the analysis of 8 disciplines – philosophy, sociology, applied linguistics, marketing, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, physics, and biology. Since the field of linguistics consists of both quantity and quality focused articles, it would be suitable to analyze the linguistics abstracts with the model which encompasses various

knowledge domains.

Move	Function
Introduction	Establishes context of the paper and motives the research or discussion
Purpose	Indicate purpose, thesis or hypothesis, outlines the intention behind the paper
Method	Provides information on design, procedures, assumption, approach, data, etc.
Product	States main findings or results, the argument, or what was accomplished
Conclusion	Interprets or extends results beyond scope of paper, draws inferences, points to applications or wider implications

Table 1. A classification of rhetorical moves in RA abstracts (Hyland, 2000, 2004)

The frequency of occurrence of the finite verb tenses and modals as well as first person pronouns in each move was recorded.

3. Findings and Discussion
3.1 Move Identification

According to Hyland's (2000, 2004) model, the rhetorical structure of both quality-focused and quantity-focused research article abstracts in linguistics was analyzed. The results of the occurrences of moves are illustrated in Table 2 (I for Introduction, P for Purpose, M for Method, PR for Production and C for Conclusion).

	I	P	M	PR	C
Quality	13	8	0	15	7
	87%	53%	0%	100%	47%
Quantity	9	12	13	15	12
	67%	80%	87%	100%	80%

Table 2. The occurrences of rhetorical moves in the quality and quantity focused abstracts

First, the occurrence frequency of the Product move was 100% both in quality and quantity focused abstracts. This result was matched with Hyland's (2004) findings that 94% of the abstracts from 8 disciplines included the Product move. The Product is therefore considered to be a conventional move in all disciplines, both hard and soft knowledge, from the results above. The reason why the Product is conventional can be explained from Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995), where they argued that the abstract is essentially promotional genre. In order to gain readers' interest, authors should highlight their most central claims, which are stated in the Product move.

Second, in the Introduction move, the quality-focused abstracts showed more preference for the Introduction than the quantity-focused abstracts, as with 87% and 67% respectively. This difference is very similar to that found between hard disciplines and soft disciplines. That is, the quality-focused abstracts, which have the soft disciplinary properties, showed a greater tendency to contain the Introduction than the quantity-focused abstracts, which have the hard disciplinary properties.

This tendency is clearly related to the disciplinary variations. According to Hyland (2004), the hard disciplines are characterized by the fairly well-defined research topics; whereas the soft disciplines are relatively absent of well-defined issues and a definite direction. For this reason, the writers of the hard disciplines tend to skip the Introduction move because they generally expect that readers will be familiar with the

topics. On the other hand, the writers of the soft disciplines have a strong need for the Introduction move because they have to acquaint readers with the background.

In the Introduction of the theoretical abstracts in linguistics, the cases that the writers try to acquaint readers with the background can be found as in (1).

(1) *The Ezafe, a feature of certain Western Iranian languages, is realized as an enclitic and links the head noun to its modifiers and to the possessor NP. The latter follow the head and are linked to one another by the Ezafe*.

Third, Purpose move of the quality-focused abstracts accounted for 53%; whereas that of the quantity-focused abstracts accounted for 80%. Similarly, the greater preference for the Purpose was found in the hard disciplines. This result can be related to topic centrality in the Introduction of the soft disciplines. Swales (1990) argued that the Introduction move in humanities/ social science claims topic centrality by identifying a problem to encourage further reading, which is a part of the function of the Purpose move. In the Introduction of the theoretical abstracts in linguistics, the same topic centrality function appears.

(2) *Persian complex predicates pose an interesting challenge for theoretical linguistics since they have both word-like and phrase-like properties.*

However, the hard disciplines just address real world issues in the Introduction move (Hyland 2004) and less generally involve the topic centrality function of the Purpose move in the Introduction. Thus, the quality-focused abstracts, which have the soft disciplinary properties, less frequently have the Purpose move because the Introduction move

generally includes a part of the function of the Purpose move, outlining intention behind the articles.

Fourth, in the Conclusion move, the quantity-focused abstracts showed more preference for the Conclusion than the quality-focused abstracts, as with 80% and 47% respectively. The reason why the Conclusion move is conventional in the quantity-focused abstracts, but not in the quality-focused abstracts, can be attributed to the different functions of the Conclusion applied to the each knowledge-based abstract genre. Li (2011) has classified the functions of Conclusion move into 3 types – the first was deducing conclusions from results, the second was evaluating value of the research and the third was presenting recommendations – and I categorized the Conclusion moves of the quantity-focused abstracts of linguistics according to 3 functions.

	Functions of Conclusion	**#**
Step 1.	Deducing conclusions from results	12 cases
Step 2.	Evaluating value of the research	1 case
Step 3.	Presenting recommendations	1 case

Table 3. Functions of Conclusion move in the quantity-focused abstracts

As in table 3, the most frequent function of the Conclusion of the quantity-focused abstracts was deducing conclusions from results. While in the quality-focused abstracts the central argument generally appears in the Product move, in the quantity-focused abstracts results or findings are just stated in the Product move and main arguments or conclusions are usually made in the Conclusion move from the main findings in the Product move. Therefore, it seems to be not enough to end the abstract with the Product move in the quantity-focused abstracts.

In addition, the Conclusion move was fairly conventional in both quality and quantity focused abstracts. This result was not matched with Hyland (2004)'s findings that conclusion move is optional in all disciplines but he mentioned that there was a considerable expansion in the use of the Conclusion. The increasing trend of the Conclusion could be explained with the severe competition in publishing; so, more and more scholars are making greater effort to promote their papers (Ren 2011).

Finally, the Method move was obviously conventional in the quantity-focused abstracts (100%), but not used in the quality-focused abstracts at all. Since the purpose of the hard and soft-quantity-oriented articles is to report the fact of acts of research and their outcomes, how the study was conducted is important (Hyland 2004) and therefore the Method move, where the procedures or information on the research are written, has a strong tendency to be included in the quantity-focused abstracts. On the contrary, in the quality-focused abstracts, usually arguments are made through analogy, argumentations or exemplifications, the need for the Method tend to be very low.

3.2 Tense

In order to account for the usage of finite verb tense and modality in both knowledge types of linguistics abstracts, and to examine how the usage differences between two types of the linguistics abstracts are related to the communicative function of the rhetorical moves, the frequency of occurrence of the finite verb tenses and modals were recorded.

Quality focused

	#	%
Total	197	100.0%
Tense	178	90.4%
Modal	19	9.6%

	#	%
Tense	178	100.0%
Present	166	93.3%
Past	1	0.6%
Pres.Perf	11	6.2%
Past.Perf	0	0.0%

	#	%
Modal	19	100.0%
will	3	15.8%
can	12	63.2%
may	3	15.8%
must	1	5.3%
could	0	0.0%

Quantity focused

	#	%
Total	210	100.0%
Tense	192	91.4%
Modal	18	8.6%

	#	%
Tense	192	100.0%
Present	93	48.4%
Past	92	47.9%
Pres.Perf	7	3.6%
Past.Perf	0	0.0%

	#	%
Modal	18	100.0%
will	1	5.6%
can	8	44.4%
may	2	11.1%
must	1	5.6%
could	1	5.6%
might	5	27.8%

Table 4. Distribution of Verb Tenses and Modals in quality / quantity focused abstracts

My data yielded a total of 197 verb forms in the quality-focused abstracts and 210 verb forms in the quantity-focused abstracts. In both types of linguistics abstracts, the modal verbs were used less than 10%, instead, the finite verbs were used more than 90%. That is, non-modal verbs were overwhelmingly frequently used in both types.

However, there was a difference in the specific tense usage between the quality and the quantity-focused abstracts. In the quality-focused abstracts, the present was by far the predominant tense as compared

with other tenses: 93.3% for the present. But in the quantity-focused abstracts, both the present and the past were almost evenly distributed as with 48.4% and 47.9%, respectively.

With regard to this different tense usage between two types, the inclusion / exclusion of the Method move in each type can be the one reason for it.

Tense						
#	Introduction	Purpose	Method	Product	Conclusion	Total
Present	47	12	0	90	17	166
Past	0	0	0	0	1	1
Pres.Perf.	10	0	0	0	1	11
%	Introduction	Purpose	Method	Product	Conclusion	Total
Present	28.3%	7.2%	0.0%	54.2%	10.2%	100%
Past	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100%
Pres.Perf.	90.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	100%

Table 5. Distribution of Verb Tenses in each move in the quality-focused abstracts

Tense						
#	Introduction	Purpose	Method	Product	Conclusion	Total
Present	20	15	14	16	28	93
Past	1	8	28	50	5	92
Pres.Perf.	5	1	1	0	0	7
%	Introduction	Purpose	Method	Product	Conclusion	Total
Present	21.5%	16.1%	15.1%	17.2%	30.1%	100%
Past	1.1%	8.7%	30.4%	54.3%	5.4%	100%
Pres.Perf.	71.4%	14.3%	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	100%

Table 6. Distribution of Verb Tenses in each move in the quantity-focused abstracts

As mentioned in the previous section (in Table 2), in the sample data

there was no single case that the quality-focused abstracts had the Method move; but 87% of the quantity-focused abstracts contained the Method. According to Salager-Meyer (1992) and Pho (2008), the past tense usage was frequent in the method move because the past is usually used to refer to a specific event, action, process that occurred during an experiment (Malcolm, 1986; Wiigard, 1981). Similarly in table 6, the past tense was the second mostly used in the Method (30.4%) of all moves in the quantity-focused abstracts. Thus, lack of the Method move in the quality-focused abstracts can be attributed to the very few uses of the past tense; and the conventional use of the Method in the quantity-focused abstracts can be the reason for the fairly frequent use of the past.

Moreover, the different tense usage in the Product move between two types can be another reason for the overall tense difference. As in table 5, the present tense was the most frequently used in the Product move (54.2%) of all the moves in the quality-focused abstracts; whereas in the quality-focused abstracts, the past had the highest frequency in the Product (54.3%). In the Product of the quality-focused abstracts, the present tense tends to be widely used because writers generally state the main arguments in the Product move and the present tense enhances the generalizability (Heslot, 1985; LackStrom, 1978; Vasquez, 1987), expressing deductions and implications of the research by means of the present tense (Salager-Meyer 1992). As in the example (3), the generalizability was enhanced with the present tense in the Product of the theoretical abstract.

(3) *We **argue** that the facts of Oneida, and Iroquoian in general...*

However, in the product of the quantity-focused abstracts, writers usually describe the results or findings of their research. According to (Pho 2008), when reporting the results or findings, the use of the past leaves the reader with the impression that the writer is being objective

and plainly reporting the results of the study. So, there was preference for the past tense over present tense in the Product move of applied linguistics and educational technology (Pho 2008), which are quantity-focused soft disciplines, just the same as the quantity-focused abstracts in linguistics. As in the example (4), the past tense usage can be found in the Product of the quantity-focused abstracts to express the objectivity reporting the results of the study.

(4) *Again, control information **did not** influence initial disambiguation…*

Therefore, the prevalent usage of the present in the quality-focused abstracts and the frequent use of the past in the quantity-focused abstracts can be attributed to the different functions of the Product move in each type.

As for the present perfect tense, the present perfect was the most frequently occurred in the Introduction move both in the quantity-focused abstracts (71.4%) and the quality-focused abstracts (90.9%). This trend is matched with Salager-Meyer's (1992) study on the Medical English abstracts, where the present perfect was most frequently used in the rhetorical function of Statement of the problem (Introduction move). The reason why the frequency of the present perfect was the highest in the Introduction move can be attributed to the function of the present perfect that emphasizes a certain degree of disagreement with previous research findings (Salager-Meyer 1992). Since the previous study is usually mentioned in the Introduction, where context of the paper is established, the present perfect is generally used in the introduction to challenge the validity of the previous study, as in (5a) a theoretical abstract and (5b) an experimental abstract.

(5) *a. how arguments are syntactically realized **has been***

virtually unchallenged…
*b. Recent research **has shown** much evidence that sentence comprehension can be extremely predictive*

As for the present tense, it was the most preferred tense in the Conclusion move both in the quality (17 cases) and the quantity-focused abstracts (28 cases) as in table 5 and table 6, because the present has the function of emphasizing the relevance of the study and enhancing its generalizability. However, the present had the third highest frequency in the Conclusion move of the quality-focused abstracts (10.2%); on the other hand, the present was the most frequently used in the Conclusion move of the quantity-focused abstracts (30.1%). The reason for the more present tense usage in the Conclusion of the quantity-focused abstracts is that the conclusion move is conventional (80%) in the quantity-focused abstracts but less conventional (47%) in the quality-focused abstracts as discussed in the previous section, table 2.

With regard to the distribution of modals in each rhetorical move between the quality and the quantity-focused abstracts, *can* was the most frequent of the modals in both types (12 cases, 8 cases).

Quality focused						
#	Introduction	Purpose	Method	Product	Conclusion	Total
will	0	1	0	2	0	3
can	3	0	0	8	1	12
may	1	0	0	1	1	3
must	0	0	0	1	0	1
could	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	Introduction	Purpose	Method	Product	Conclusion	Total
will	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%	66.7%	0.0%	100%
can	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	66.7%	8.3%	100%
may	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%	100%
must	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100%
could	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 7. Distribution of Modals in each move in the quality-focused abstracts

Quantity focused						
#	Introduction	Purpose	Method	Product	Conclusion	Total
will	0	0	0	0	1	1
can	1	0	2	1	4	8
may	0	0	1	1	0	2
must	1	0	0	0	0	1
could	0	0	1	0	0	1
might	0	1	2	1	1	5
%	Introduction	Purpose	Method	Product	Conclusion	Total
will	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100%
can	12.5%	0.0%	25.0%	12.5%	50.0%	100%
may	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	100%
must	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
could	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%
might	0%	20%	40%	20%	20%	100%

Table 8. Distribution of Modals in each move in the quantity-focused abstracts

This result is matched with Biber et al. (1999) that *can* is the most commonly used modal in academic prose. It can be attributed to a wide range of meanings that *can* conveys – permission, possibility, and ability – but the other modals represents more restricted meanings.

Comparing the usage of *can* in each move between the quality and the quantity-focused abstracts, *can* was the most frequent in the Product move of the quality-focused abstracts (66.7%) but most frequent in the Conclusion move of the quantity-focused abstracts (50%). This difference is partly related to the lack of assertiveness that modals express. As discussed in the previous section, in the Product of the quality-focused abstracts, main arguments are stated; but in the Conclusion of the quantity-focused abstracts, conclusions are usually deduced from results of the study. Since both moves are indicative not definitive, these two moves should present high incidences of hedged expressions to show the lack of assertiveness.

Moreover, *may* (*might*) had a very high frequency in the quantity-focused abstracts (7cases). Many previous studies have reported that *may* was the modal of highest frequency in scientific writings because of its greater hedging possibilities (Vasquez, 1987; Salager-Meyer 1992). The high frequency of *may* in the quantity-focused abstracts, which have the hard-knowledge properties, further corroborates the high frequency of *may* in the scientific writings.

3.3 The first-person pronouns

In general, abstracts are considered to be objective and impersonal construction. However, authorial stance can be expressed in the abstracts and the author's involvement is different across rhetorical moves (Pho 2008). In this section, the authorial stance through the first person pronouns (*I*, *we*, and *our*) will be examined in the quality and

the quantity-focused abstracts of linguistics[3], because the first person pronouns can be used as an effective strategy for establishing the authoritative self (Ivanič and Camps, 2001; Tang and John, 1999). Moreover, by using the first person pronouns in the abstracts, the author's persona can be constructed by emphasizing the author's contribution and conveying connotations of authority. (Hyland 2001, 2002; Ivanič and Camps 2001; Tang and John 1999).

Overall, the frequency of occurrence of the first-person pronouns was higher in the quality- focused abstracts than in the quantity-focused abstracts, 21 cases and 8 cases respectively.

	Quality	Quantity
WE	10	7
OUR	1	1
I	10	0
TOTAL	21	8

Table 9. First-person pronouns in the quality and the quantity-focused abstracts (raw numbers)

This trend is very similar to the Hyland's (2003) findings, where soft disciplines – more theory-focused – had more frequent first-person pronoun uses (51.6%) than hard disciplines – more quantity-focused – did (19.1%).

This usage difference can be accounted for by a disciplinary rhetorical stance. According to Hyland (2003), hard disciplines tend to downplay the personal role to emphasize the phenomena itself and the generality of the findings, by strengthening the objectivity of their interpretations. On the other hand, soft disciplines generally have more interpretive

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[3] While the quality-focused abstracts had both the single and multiple authors, the quantity-focused abstracts had only multiple authors. For this reason, the first-person pronoun *I* does not included in the quantity-focused abstracts.

arguments; so invoking intelligent, credible and engaging persona tend to be the key to their argument acceptance. Thus, the quality-focused abstracts, which have the soft disciplinary properties, generally use more first person pronouns to make a personal standing in their writings. As for the uses of the first person pronouns in each rhetorical move in the quality-focused abstracts, the first person pronouns were the most frequent in the Product move, as in table 10.

	I	P	M	PR	C
WE	0	2	0	7	1
OUR	0	0	0	1	0
I	1	1	0	8	0
TOTAL	1	3	0	16	1

Table 10. Distribution of First-person pronouns in each move in the quality-focused abstracts

This result is matched with Hyland's (2003) findings, where the first person pronouns were most prevalently used for stating results or claim function (Product) in the theoretically-oriented disciplines such as philosophy or sociology. By using the first person pronouns in the Product move, the author's unique role in establishing a plausible interpretation can be highlighted and an authority based on confidence and an argument command can be constructed (Hyland 2003). That is, since the Product move has the function of stating main argument, it is highly likely that there are more chances of underlining the author's contribution using the first person pronouns. In the Product of the quality-focused abstracts in linguistics, the cases that the author's contribution in establishing an argument is emphasized by the first person pronouns can be found, as in (6).

(6) *I propose a syntax and semantics for these deverbal*

nominalizations that account for their interpretive variability.

On the other hand, in the quantity-focused abstracts the first person pronouns were most frequently used in the Method move, as shown in table 11.

	I	P	M	PR	C
WE	0	2	5	0	0
OUR	0	0	0	1	0
TOTAL	0	2	5	1	0

Table 11. Distribution of First-person pronouns in each move in the quantity-focused abstracts

This result is quite surprising considering the function of the Method move – providing information on design or procedures – which is commonly regarded as being objective. However, according to Hyland (2003), in the research articles of the hard knowledge and quantitatively focused papers in the soft fields, the first person pronouns were overwhelmingly used in the Method move; and also in the abstracts of hard knowledge disciplines, the first person pronouns were used the most in the Method of electronic engineering, the second most in the Method of biology.

By using the first person pronouns in the Method, readers can be reassured from the author's familiarity in research practices and the author's role in a process can be highlighted by including an element of qualitative judgement that the author has made some personal choices (Hyland 2003). As in the example (7), the author's role and the qualitative judgement are expressed by the first person pronoun, in the Method move of the quantity-focused abstracts in linguistics.

(7) *In the ERP task **we** probed <u>expectations</u> for Source and Goal referents by employing pronouns that matched one of the referents*

in gender.

In the Purpose move of both the quality and the quantity-focused abstracts, the first person pronouns were the second most frequently used, as in the table 10 and the table 11. This result is matched with Hyland's (2003) findings, where both hard and soft disciplines showed the second most frequent usage of the first pronouns in stating a goal or structure function (Purpose move). Using the first person pronouns in the Purpose helps clarify the direction of the study and what the author's main position is in relation to the issue under discussion (Hyland 2003). That is, the author's position and direction in the research can be explicitly indicated by the first person pronouns, as in (8), the example from the quantity-focused abstract and (9), the example from the quality-focused abstract.

(8) *In the two eye-tracking experiments,* **we** *examined* <u>*whether*</u> *predictive information in dependency formation is inevitably given priority over a well-known structural preference in syntactic ambiguity resolution.*

(9) *To account for the linear freedom of either in disjunction constructions,* ***I expand*** *upon the focus-based account of den Dikken (2006).*

4. Conclusion

The communicative characteristics of the quantity-focused and the quality-focused abstracts in the fields of Linguistics have been studied. With respect to the pattern of the rhetorical structures, two types of abstracts had different conventional and optional moves. In the quantity-focused abstracts, the conventional moves were Purpose,

Method, Product and Conclusion; and the optional moves were Introduction. On the other hand, in the quality-focused abstracts, the conventional moves consisted of Introduction and Product; and the optional moves consisted of Purpose, Method, and Conclusion. This result was different from Suntara and Usaha's (2013) findings, where they argued that in linguistics abstracts, the conventional moves were Purpose, Method, and Product move but the optional moves were Introduction and Conclusion. However, Suntara and Usaha's (2013) findings are very similar to those of the quantity-focused abstracts of this present study. Considering Suntara and Usaha (2013) investigated only quantity-focused abstracts, this matched result more supports the conventional and the optional move patterns in the quantity-focused abstracts of linguistics.

As for the verb tense usage, Suntara and Usaha (2013) argued that in the Method move the past tense was the most frequent but in the Purpose the present was more frequently used than the past. However, this study found that the verb tense usage was different depending on the knowledge type of the abstracts. In the Method move, the high frequency of the past tense was identified only in the quantity-focused abstracts. In the quality-focused abstracts, there was no incidence of the Method move. Moreover, in the Purpose, the higher use of the present was only identified in the quality-focused abstracts. In the quantity-focused abstracts, however, the past was more frequently used than the present. These contradicting results between two types of abstracts further support the need to study both knowledge types of abstracts in the field of linguistics.

Finally, this study investigated the first-person pronoun usage in each rhetorical move. While Suntara and Usaha (2013) argued that the first-person pronouns were found in all five moves, the frequency of the occurrence was different depending on the knowledge types of abstracts. In the quantity-focused abstracts, the first-person pronouns were used the most frequently in the Method; but in the quality-focused abstracts,

the first-person pronouns were used the most frequently in the Product. Overall, this study confirmed the necessity of investigating both quantity-focused and the quality-focused abstracts, and by doing so more accurate pictures of research article abstracts in the field of linguistics were suggested.

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