Rhetorical Moves in Problem Statement Sections of Postgraduate Theses of English Education Study Program

Rizki Denarti
Universitas Bengkulu
rizkidenarti97@gmail.com
Hilda Puspita
Universitas Bengkulu
puspita.hilda@gmail.com
Mukhrizal
Universitas Bengkulu
rikamarlenibkl@gmail.com
Corresponding email: rizkidenarti97@gmail.com

Abstract

This research is aimed to find out kind of moves, the dominant moves and steps and the most common pattern of rhetorical moves in Postgraduate Theses of English Education Study Program Students at the University of Bengkulu in the academic year 2018 and 2019. The documentation technique and checklist were used in this research. Twenty six theses were analyzed by using checklist analysis from Swales' CARS Model (1990). The results showed that Move 1 (Establishing a Territory), Move 2 (Establishing a Niche) and Move 3 (Occupying the Niche) were found in each thesis. The writers dominantly use Move 2 and Step 1B (Indicating a Gap) and the other step is Step 1A (Outlining Purposes) of Move 3. That is to say, the writers understood that Move 2 was the key component of Problem Statement (PS), and that makes Move 2 as the obligatory move. Further, the most common pattern is Incomplete Pattern. The PS which has this pattern only involved one move in it. Meanwhile, the other PS which has two moves which belong to Semi-Complete and another one has three moves, and it belongs to Complete Pattern. In conclusion, the Problem Statement by Postgraduate Students of English Education Study Program did not follow the required structure of CARS Model by Swales (1990).

Keywords : problem statement; rhetorical moves; a move; a step; CARS Model

Introduction

Rhetorical Moves analysis has become the focus interest of scientific discourse studies recently. This analysis is intended as an attempt to determine or find the type of genre of a group in the texts that have equations or similarities in various things such as communicative purposes, communicative events, place, time and participant, etc. Based on the linguistic characteristics and discourse contained in the sample text that is analyzed.

In 1990 Swales created an establish model to analyze rhetorical moves in text entitled Create Research Space (CARS). CARS Model was formed upon his analysis on introduction in articles. He tried to explain and describe the organizational pattern part writing of introduction to scholarly research studies. Based on his finding, Swales (1990) addressed three function of CARS Model for writer, such as: (1) to be able to begin the writing process, (2) to understand the way in which an introduction sets the stage for the rest of the research paper, and (3) to assess how the introduction fits within the larger scope in the study.

The model assumes that writers follow a general organizational pattern in response to two types of challenges relating to establishing a presence within a particular domain of research: 1) the challenge is to create a rhetorical space and, 2) the competition is to attract readers into that space. The model consists of three actions or so called steps. Accompanied by specific steps, it is reflect the development of an effective introduction for a research paper. These "moves" and "steps" can be used as a template for writing the introduction or other section in thesis.

The CARS Model made by Swales (1990) consists of three moves. First is move 1 (establishing a territory) which has three steps: claiming centrality, making topic generalization, and reviewing items from previous studies. Second is move 2 (establishing a niche) which has four steps: counter claiming, indicating a gap, question raising, and continuing a tradition. The writer may
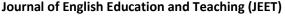
use only one step from this move. The last is move 3 (occupying a niche) which has three steps: outlining purposes or announcing present research, announcing principal findings, and indicating research article structure.

Moreover, CARS model has been applied in several studies on parts of journal or academic writing, to offer an example, in abstract (Kenneth & Maclean, 1997; Tseng, 2011), introduction (Gordon, 2014; Samraj, 2008; Pujiyanti, 2018; Swales 1981), results and discussion (Diah, 2013), problem statement (Vahid, 2016, Parsa&Tahirian, 2017), and full scientific journal reports (Kanoksilapatham, 2005). These studies have provided guidelines for those to their new target community and its common practices as seen in Swales (1990) CARS Model, which introduces the students from different disciplines to the characteristic academic writing. The credibility of Swales' model is the main reason why this study was conducted with this framework.

It was observed that there were a few researchers focused on rhetorical moves in the problem statement, particularly in English Education Postgraduate students in University of Bengkulu. In fact, PS section is one of the small parts in introduction, it places after background. PS is a place which illustrates the merits of a thesis, and its main purpose is to recapitulate the whole research process (Jalilifar, 2012). In other words, a research problem connects the distinct elements in a research (Ellis & Levy, 2008) and embodies the purpose of the study. In addition, there is a need to conduct a research in this section. It will help the students have a clear perspective of organizing the problem statement structure in thesis. Eventually, this will be a great help prior to research paper presentation and publication.

In particular, this research is aimed at investigating kind of moves and steps in PS, the most dominant moves that are found in the PS and the pattern the researchers commonly used in their PS.

Research Method

Descriptive quantitative with purposive sampling which means the researcher only used the theses during the year 2018 and 2019 and the researcher chose the theses which included problem statement section only. According to Ary (2006) quantitative research deals with questions of relationship, cause and effect, or current status that researchers can answer by gathering and statistically analyzing numeric data. Moreover, descriptive research according to Sevilla *et al.*, (2002) is designed to gather information about present existing conditions. It defined to collect the data in order to answer the questions concerning the current status of the subject of the research. The descriptive quantitative design that used aimed to show and described the frequency and the percentage occurrences of moves and steps in problem statement of theses written by English Education Postgraduate students from University of Bengkulu which generated in year 2018 and 2019.

The data consisted of 26 of PS written by Postgraduate Students of English Education Study Program. The samples were purposively gained with the permission from English language department of university. The structure of PS was analyzed based on Swales (1990) data analysis checklist. The analysis was done manually by the researcher and independent co-rater. The moves, step and the pattern were defined, coded and tabulated. The results from the co-rater then discussed to ensure reliability. Descriptive statistical analysis including frequency and percentage were used to report the results. Below is the table checklist by Swales (1990).

Table 1. Frequency and percentage occurrence of moves and steps in samples (N = 26)

Move	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Move 1, Step 1: Claiming a centrality		
Move 1, Step 2: Making topic generalization		
Move 1, Step 3: Reviewing item from previous research		
Move 2, Step 1A: Counter claiming		
Move 2, Step 1B: Indicating a gap		
Move 2, Step 1C: Question-raising		
Move 2, Step 1D: Continuing a tradition		
Move 3, Step 1A: Outlining purposes		
Move 3, Step 1B: Announcing present research		
Move 3, Step 2: Announcing a principal findings		
Move 3, Step 3: Indicating thesis structure		

Findings and Discussion

Findings

The data were analyzed by using Swales' CARS Model. In this section, the results of the analysis presented in frequencies and percentages.

Table 2. Frequency and percentage of moves in the samples (N = 26)

Moves	Frequency	Percentage
Move 1	11	42%
Move 2	18	69%
Move 3	14	54%

As shown in the table 1, M2 with 69% had the highest percentage rather than M1 (42%) and M3 (54%) in the samples. This finding shows that the most dominant move is M2, and most of the researchers were more concerned in establishing a niche (M2) rather than establishing a territory (M1) or occupying a niche (M3).

Table 3. Frequency and percentage of Steps in the samples (N = 26)

Step	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Move 1, Step 1: Claiming centrality	6	23%
Move 1, Step 2: Making topic generalization	10	38%
Move 1, Step 3: Reviewing items of previous research	1	4%
Move 2, Step 1A: Counter-claiming	9	34%
Move 2, Step 1B: Indicating a gap	14	54%
Move 2, Step 1C: Question-raising	-	-
Move 2, Step 1D: Continuing a tradition	1	4%
Move 3, Step 1A: Outlining purposes	14	54%
Move 3, Step 1B: Announcing present research	-	-
Move 3, Step 2: Announcing principal findings	-	-
Move 3, Step 3: Indicating RA structure	-	-

Based on the table above, step 1B indicating a gap of Move 2 and Step 1A outlining purposes of Move 3 have the highest percentage with 54% among all the steps, which indicate M2S1B and M3S1A as the dominant steps. Those steps certainly give opportunities for the writer to get the reader's attention to their research paper.

The three steps in M1 were found, meanwhile in M2 only Step 1C question-raising was missing. However, unlike M1 and M2 which almost have all the steps, in M3 only found one step, Step 1A Outlining Purposes. Below are the examples of steps in Move 1.

Table 4. Examples of linguistic features signaling Move 1 Steps

Step	Sample
S1 : Claiming Centrality	- "Research article introduction is **one of the most important sections** that must be written by Indonesian post-graduates students and scholar well…." - "The IBL strategy is **effective** for teaching of English which is supported in the literature…"
S2 : Making topic generalization	- "…the good effect of **FIACS technique** for the teacher, …" - "The content of the course book is all about **grammar exercises**. **The pattern** of the tasks in grammar explanation then followed by the tasks."
Step 3 :: Reviewing items of previous reserach	**"A study conducted by Ena and Lathif** (2015) showed that…"

Based on table 3, it can be seen that the linguistic features employed in the samples to signal M1S1 (Claiming centrality) are words like "the most important section" and "effective" which emphasize the need of starting something. M1S2 (Making topic generalization) signaled by words "FIACS technique", "grammar exercise," and "pattern" indicate the topic which would be discussed in the PS. For M1S3 (Reviewing items of previous research) indicate, the writer usually referred to previous works to support

the problem or claim. The examples of linguistic features of Move 2 are presented in table 5.

Table 5. Example of linguistic features signaling Move 2 steps :

Step	Sample
S1A : Counter claiming	- "**The Low contribution** in publication, especially in the reputable Journal ..." - "Students have **difficulties to understanding** the context and get the information of the text."
S1B : Indicating a gap	- "**However**, there is **a lack** of information ..." - "...the researcher **found that** mostly students at grade X of SMAN 9 Kota Bengkulu."
S1C : Question raising	-
S1D : Continuing a tradition	"Moreover IBL strategy **has a chance to be experimented** on developing students speaking ability."

Based on the table 4, M2S1A (Counter claiming) is signaled by words "low contribution" and "difficulties" this step is required to create an argumentative tone. After that, in M2S1B (Indicating a gap) indicates by "however", "lack", and "found". The expressions used are for indicating the writer is well aware of the gap in the PS. For the next step the researcher couldn't find it in the sample, the factor probably the writer thought it's already represent in research question. As for M2S1D (continuing tradition) was signaled by words "has a chance", where the research can be continue or reproduction. The examples of linguistic features of Move 2 are presented in table 6.

Table 6. Example of linguistic features signaling Move 3 steps :

Step	Sample
S1A : Outlining purposes	- "… Therefore, the researcher **tries to find out** the English learning strategies..." - "…the researcher **wants to investigate** "Thematic Progression in Jakarta Post."
S1B : Announcing present research	-
S2 : Announcing principal findings	-
S3 : Indicating PS Structure	-

However, in Move 3 the researcher only found one step from the samples, that is M3S1A (Outlining purposes) was signaled by expression such "tries to find out" and "wants to investigate" which indicate the aim or purpose the writer wanted to achieve. As for the missing steps in Move 3, it showed that the writers are lack of knowledge of CARS Model suggested by Swales (1990). As for the common pattern can be seen in the table 7 below :

Table 7. Frequency of Pattern in PS

Pattern	Frequency	Percentage
Complete	6	23%
Semi Complete	5	19%
Incomplete	15	58%
Total	26	100%

Table 3 shows the frequency and percentage of common pattern the researcher used in PS. From the results, Complete pattern was found in 6 theses, Semi-Complete pattern was found in 5 PS, and Incomplete pattern was found

in 15 PS. This proved clearly the most common pattern the researcher frequently used was incomplete pattern.

Discussion

The first finding revealed, almost all the moves from CARS Model suggested by Swales (1990) were presented in the 26 theses. However, it does not mean that the samples included all the moves and steps.

The second finding was about the most dominant moves and steps found in the theses and the result presented the most frequent move in PS section is Move 2 (*establishing a niche*). As Jalilifar, et.al. (2011) stated the writers tend to put more emphasis on Move 2, which is used repetitively to explain the reason for conducting research on the problem under investigation. it means, the writers are well aware that Move 2 plays a vital role on creating PS section in thesis. Moreover, for the dominant steps found in the theses is S1B indicating a gap from M2 and S1A outlining purposes from M3.

The finding of this analysis is compatible by the previous finding reported by Parsa and Tahirian (2017) who done a comparative research of Problem Statement section in theses between native and nonnative English speakers. They stated that it is the nature of Problem Statement (PS) sections that needs more competition to establish a niche to convince their research, and to show its validity. They also stated Move 2 as the key Move in PS sections bridges the divide between Move 1 (what has been done) and Move 3 (what the present research is about) (Swales & Feak, 1994).

However, this finding is contradictory with Vahid, et al (2016). Based on his finding on Iranian students, he found out the most dominant move was Move 1. It was observed that the Iranian theses were relies heavily on 'presenting the academic issue as the problem or claim' rather than indicating the gap. The difference observed may lie on preferences of individual universities or the theses supervisors. As Vahid (2016) reported the students

required some sort of training on rhetorical structure of the PS section. The fact that they are all lecturers at the moment further underscores the necessity of training.

The last finding was about the common pattern in the theses. Because there is only a few theses which has complete pattern (M1-M2-M3), it clearly illustrated the postgraduate students still did not follow the structure in CARS Model suggested by Swales (1990). It was found only 6 theses from 26 theses which has complete pattern, where the majorities of theses have incomplete pattern. This negatively affects the rhetorical structure of the PS which can be attributed to the writer's lack of knowledge about the adequate structure of the PS (Vahid, 2006).

If one of the moves does not insert in the PS, it will cause considerable impact. Since, each moves hold a different role in PS. For example, if the PS did not contain Move 1, then the reader would not find the reason why the topic is important to analyzed, and the evidence which support the topic, or the area where the problem is belongs to. As Swales (2004) states, move 1 is narrowed down to reach partial goals through "Topic generalization of increasing specificity." In case, Move 1 is missing in PS, then the reader would not found the reason why the researcher took the topic.

From the results, the researcher can draw a conclusion that many majorities have not followed the required moves and steps of writing PS section proposed by Swales (1990). Therefore, it is recommended that the students in postgraduate should be well aware of PS, especially CARS Model by Swales (1990).

Conclusion

From the results and discussion, several conclusions can be drawn from this research. it is found that the most dominant move in Problem Statement (PS) section of postgraduate thesis of English Education Study Program is Move

2 (*establishing a niche*), with the highest percentage 69% among the three moves. As for the dominant steps, the researcher found Step 1B of Move 2 and Step 1A of Move 3 as the dominant steps in PS section and have a same percentage 54%.

It is found the most dominant common pattern in PS section of postgraduate theses is incomplete pattern. It is dominantly found with the biggest percentage. Incomplete pattern itself is a pattern where the writer only put one move in the PS. The missing moves and steps can give negative affect the rhetorical structure of PS which can show the writer's lack of knowledge and adequate structure of PS. From this finding we can conclude that the majorities of postgraduate students did not follow the required moves and steps based on CARS Model suggested by Swales (1990).

The last but not least, it showed that CARS Model is suitable in writing PS and can be used to analyze any sections in theses. The students can use this model to analyze their own writing to see whether they followed the structure or not.

The findings of this study could be helpful for the lecturers and supervisors. They could help postgraduate students become aware about this subject particularly in rhetorical moves. For the future researcher, it would be interesting to compare PS section between EFL and ESL students to see whether there is a difference in the structure of PS.

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