



**LEXICAL BUNDLES IN RHETORICAL MOVES IN THE INTRODUCTION
SECTION OF ENGLISH LINGUISTICS RESEARCH ARTICLES FROM
NON-SCOPUS AND SCOPUS JOURNALS**

By

GENG HUI

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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The introduction section takes a pivotal role in the construction of a research article (RA). To achieve proficiency in research writing, the building blocks of discourse – lexical bundles and rhetorical moves are indispensable. Lexical bundles are the most frequently occurring sequences of words in a language or register while rhetorical moves are the schematic units that mark textual regularities of research article introductions (RAIs). However, there is limited research on how lexical bundles are used to initiate certain moves to fulfill the discourse-related functions in English RAIs in applied linguistics. Thus, this study aims to fill the gap by identifying the lexical bundles found in rhetorical moves in linguistics RAIs from non-Scopus-indexed and Scopus-indexed journals.

For lexical bundle analysis, the quantitative approach was utilized to extract bundles with 3 to 5 words by AntConc 4.2.0 while the qualitative approach was utilized to manually do data refinement and analyze the structural types. For move analysis, the

qualitative approach was used for identification of moves and exploration of their sequence and combination while the quantitative approach was used for examining essentiality rates, occurrence frequency, and the relationship between the indexing of journals and the distribution of moves. The corpora comprise 100 English linguistics RAIs, with 50 sourced from two non-Scopus-indexed journals and another 50 from two Scopus-indexed journals. This research adapted two analytical frameworks: Biber et al.'s (1999) structural classification of lexical bundles and Swales' (1990) Create-A-Research-Space (CARS) model. The results for lexical bundles presented a total of 206 and 253 bundles in moves and steps of RAIs from the non-Scopus and Scopus corpus respectively. As for the structural categories, a total of 13 grammatical structures were detected and the most dominant two types in both corpora were *Noun phrase with of-phrase fragment* (i.e., the importance of) and *(Verb/adjective +) to-clause fragment* (i.e., are more likely to). The findings for move analysis revealed a new step Move 3 Step 5 (expectation from findings). Meanwhile, the occurrence frequency of Move 3 Step 1B was found to be statistically significantly dependent on the indexing types of journals. Moreover, the most dominant linear type was M1-M2-M3 in both corpora, but there was a difference in the use of the cyclical structure types of moves between the non-Scopus and Scopus corpus. The findings of the combination of moves demonstrated that the percentage of M1+M2+M3 in the Scopus journals is 12% higher than in the non-Scopus dataset.

To conclude, this study sheds light on the construction of English linguistics RAIs by connecting lexical bundles with rhetorical moves and investigating the relationship of the indexing of journals with the use of bundles and moves. The outcomes of this study mainly include the generation of a practical list of 3- to 5-word lexical bundles for

realizing each move and step and the detection of a new step for the theoretical Swales' (1990) CARS framework. It would be meaningful for writers to follow the conventions of employing lexical bundles and rhetorical moves in RAIs from Scopus-indexed journals with high reputations.

Keywords: lexical bundles, rhetorical moves, introduction section, research articles, non-Scopus and Scopus journals

SDG: GOAL 4: Quality Education



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**IKATAN LEKSIKAL DALAM GERAK RETORIK DI BAHAGIAN
PENGENALAN ARTIKEL PENYELIDIKAN DALAM JURNAL BUKAN-
SCOPUS DAN SCOPUS LINGUISTIK BAHASA INGGERIS**

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Bahagian pengenalan memainkan peranan yang penting dalam pembinaan artikel penyelidikan. Penggunaan ikatan leksikal dan gerak retorik adalah perlu untuk pencapaian kemahiran dalam penulisan sesebuah artikel penyelidikan. Ikatan leksikal ialah urutan perkataan yang paling kerap berlaku dalam sesebuah bahasa atau daftar bahasa manakala gerak retorik merupakan unit skematik yang menandakan keteraturan tekstual dalam bahagian pengenalan artikel-artikel penyelidikan (RAI). Walau bagaimanapun, telah diperhatikan bahawa terdapat kekurangan kajian yang menumpu kepada cara pengrealisasian gerak retorik oleh ikatan leksikal. Dengan ini, matlamat kajian adalah untuk mengisi jurang pengetahuan dalam pencirian kehadiran ikatan leksikal dalam gerak retorik RAI.

Pendekatan kuantitatif telah digunapakai dalam analisa ikatan leksikal untuk mengekstrak ikatan leksikal yang terdiri daripada gerombolan 3 hingga 5 perkataan melalui perisian AntConc 4.2.0 manakala penghalusan data dan analisis struktur telah

dilakukan dengan penggunaan pendekatan kualitatif. Pendekatan kuantitatif juga digunakan dalam analisa gerak retorik berserta dengan penerokaan perjujukan dan kombinasi gerak retorik manakala analisa kadar keterharusan, kekerapan kejadian, dan hubungan antara jenis-jenis perindeksan jurnal dan taburan gerak retorik telah dijalani dengan pendekatan kualitatif. Korpus-korpus dalam kajian ini terdiri daripada 100 ekstrak bahagian pengenalan artikel penyelidikan dari dua jurnal dengan 50 ekstrak dari setiap jurnal. Kajian ini telah mengadaptasi dua kerangka analitik: klasifikasi himpunan leksikal Biber at al. (1994) dan model CARS Swales (1990). Hasil penemuan dari kajian ini telah membentangkan sebanyak 206 dan 253 ikatan leksikal yang terjadi dengan gerak retorik dan pola gerak terperinci dalam korpus Scopus and korpus bukan-Scopus masing-masing. Sebanyak 13 struktur tatabahasa turut ditemui dan didapati bahawa dua struktur tatabahasa “*Noun phrase with of-phrase fragment (i.e., the importance of)*” dan “*(Verb/adjective +) to-clause fragment (i.e., are more likely to)*” merupakan yang paling dominan. Dapatan dari analisa gerak retorik juga turut mendedahkan keterjadian gerak retorik yang baru iaitu Gerak 3 Pola Gerak 5 (*Move 3 Step 5*) (perjangkaan daripada dapatan). Sementara itu, didapati bahawa Gerak 3 Pola Gerak 1B adalah tergantung secara signifikan dengan jenis pengindeksan jurnal. Hasil kajian juga mendapati bahawa terdapat perbezaan diantara jenis struktur gerak retorik siklikal korpus SCOPUS and bukan SCOPUS walaupun struktur linear pengrealisasian G1-G2-G3 merupakan struktur dominan dalam kedua dua korpus; korpus SCOPUS didapati mengandungi 12% lebih banyak kombinasi struktur G1-G2-G3 dari korpus bukan-SCOPUS.

Secara kesimpulannya, kajian ini telah sedikit sebanyak memberi pencerahan terhadap pembentukan RAIs linguistik Bahasa Inggeris melalui pengaitan ikatan leksikal

dengan gerak retorik serta menyiasat perhubungan diantara pengindeksan jurnal dengan penggunaan ikatan leksikal and gerak retorik. Hasil kajian daripada kajian termasuk penjana senarai ikatan leksikal yang praktikal untuk pengrealisasian setiap gerak retorik dan pola gerak beserta dengan pengesanan gerak retorik baru untuk model kerangka CARS empunya Swales (1990); para penyelidik diharap dapat menggunakan hasil kaji dalam penukilan RAI SCOPUS yang berimpak tinggi.

Kata kunci: ikatan leksikal, gerak retorik, bahagian pengenalan, artikel penyelidikan, jurnal bukan Scopus dan Scopus

SDG: MATLAMAT 4: Pendidikan Berkualiti

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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of the Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

RA	Research Article
RAI	Research Article Introduction
IF	Impact Factor
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
LBs	Lexical Bundles
M	Move
S	Step
NSJ	Non-Scopus Journal
SJ	Scopus Journal

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter begins by providing information on the background of the study, including academic genre and research article (RA), rhetorical moves and lexical bundles in the introduction section as well as the non-Scopus and Scopus-indexed journals in linguistics and language. It is then followed by the statement of the problem, the objectives, the research questions, the theoretical underpinning, and the conceptual framework. Next, the significance of the study, the scope, and the limitations are presented respectively. Finally, the definition of key terms and concepts are highlighted.

1.2 Background of the Study

The steady growth of research on academic writing has been witnessed in the last two decades. As one of the pivotal elements in the academic context, academic writing is a mental and cognitive activity that supports scholars, experts, lecturers, and students to manifest their ideas and opinions through making logical organization and arrangement of sentences and paragraphs within the units of discourse (Abu-Ghararah, 1998). However, the process of academic writing is complex because it involves a variety of aspects and the comprehension of writers should be approached from a societal standpoint rather than that of a single individual (Burke, 2010).

To access the gate of successful writing, a significant amount of research has been focused on academic genres. Academic genres encompass a range of documents that

are tailored to meet specific requirements and purposes. The structural features of these genres are regarded as a manifestation of their particular form, content, technique, and other relevant aspects (Hanganu, 2014). Among many academic genres, RA remains the most essential one formulated by their generic structure and features, and this becomes the focus of this study.

1.2.1 Academic Genre and Research Article

Over the years, there has been a growing emphasis on the notion of genre and its utilization in the realm of academic writing. Genre refers to “a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes” (Swales, 1990, p. 58). It pertains to the manner in which writers commonly make use of language to address recurring situations and employ conventions to convince other members within the discourse community (Hyland, 2008).

Functioned as a firmly established social genre of communication, the RAs have evolved into the ultimate outcome of a complex process involving critical thinking, synthesis, analysis, evaluation and composition, and have been substantially produced in academic and research-driven communities. Swales (1990, p. 110) stated that they historically developed from “the informative letters” written by scientists as an attempt to disseminate their value in the exploration of academic findings. Hyland (2009a, p. 67) mentioned that the RA is extensively studied and it remains the “pre-eminent genre of the academy” and is the “principal site of knowledge-making”.

Genre develops over time in response to recurring rhetorical needs, and the genre analysis of texts can be carried out at multiple levels. Comparative genre analysis has

been performed on the overall structure of RAs (Swales & Feak, 1994; Weissberg & Buker, 1990). According to the early studies, the three broad organizational divisions of RAs are the introduction, procedure, and discussion, which represent the beginning, middle, and end (Hill et al., 1982). Considering particular disciplines, studies have been done by Nwogu (1997) and Posteguillo (1999). For instance, Nwogu (1997) offered an in-depth exploration of the organizational structure of medical research articles. This particular study delved beyond the broad divisions of introduction, procedure, and discussion to analyze the nuanced structural components or “Moves” within each section. Nwogu’s findings revealed that a typical medical research paper was composed of eleven distinct schematic units or “Moves”. Specifically, the Introduction and Methods sections each comprised three of these “Moves” the Results section had two, and the Discussion section contained four. This breakdown illustrated that while the overarching structure of introduction, procedure, and discussion—as highlighted by Hill et al. (1982)—remains foundational, there existed a more intricate substructure that varied across disciplines. In the context of medical research, these schematic units or “Moves” contribute to a more granular understanding of how information is presented, ensuring clarity, coherence, and optimal communication of findings to readers. As time goes by, grammatical elements such as verb tense and voice have been indicated in distinct genres of writing as well as various locations within the same genre (Bunton, 2014). Take the use of verb tense as an example, in academic writing, the verb tense corresponds to the time of research findings, with the present tense expressing proven truths and the past tense outlining procedures and outcomes (Salager-Meyer, 1992). Fiction employs past tense for immersive narratives and present tense for immediate engagement (Fludernik, 2003). These choices shape the tone, credibility, and reader’s engagement, emphasizing the significance of context

and genre conventions in crafting effective written communication.

1.2.2 Rhetorical Moves and Lexical Bundles in the Introduction Section

The RA usually involves different sections. Following the hourglass diagram proposed by Hill et al. (1982) to show the RA's macro structure, the IMRD model (Introduction, Method, Results, and Discussion) has been illustrated by Swales (1990). From the IMRD model, it can be seen that a key section of academic texts, especially of RAs, is the introduction section. Jalilifar (2009) described the introduction as a piece of writing on a particular subject that is published in a journal or book for the intended audience. The introduction represents the accumulated knowledge of a field and reports on the investigation of a particular research study. As stated by Bhatia (1993, p. 82), the communicative purpose of an introduction in a RA marks "a link between what has gone before in the relevant field of research and the present work that is being reported", and Gea-Valor et al. (2014) reported that the introduction section is one of the most difficult sections to write, and it has become a heavily researched area in its own right.

Since Swales' (1981, 1990) seminal work on the move structure and the 'Create A Research Space' (CARS) model, the introduction section has started to draw particular attention. Crookes (1986) found the cyclical nature of introductions. Jacoby (1987) looked into the usage of references in introductions in more detail. Pickard (1995) gave an analysis of how expert writers engage in citation practices in English introductions. Thompson and Tribble (2001) made the investigation of citation practices in academic texts, extending Swales' division of citation forms. Samraj (2002, 2005) analyzed the introductions of RAs from two disciplines, and some

scholars have employed Swales' model for examining texts written in various languages, including Malay and Swedish. Through their investigations, they have reached the conclusion that the introductions of RAs are affected by linguistic and cultural differences.

With much potential for delving into the introduction sections, move analysis has become one of the influential genre-based approaches to identifying the structure of RAs. In move analysis, texts are commonly characterized by their general organizational patterns, which are understood as comprising a sequence of moves. These moves are functional units within a text that collectively serve the overarching communicative purposes associated with the genre (Connor et al., 1995). As defined by Nwogu (1997, p. 22), a move is “a text segment made up of a bundle of linguistics features (lexical meaning, propositional meanings, illocutionary forces, etc.) which give the segment a uniform orientation and signal the content of discourse in it”. Swales (2004, p. 228-229) termed move as “a rhetorical unit that performs a coherent communicative function”, and made headway for a vibrant study with multi-level analysis. According to Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993), moves may contain multiple elements or some combinations. These elements are commonly denoted as “steps” or “strategies”. The primary function of the steps within a move is to accomplish the intended objective of the stated move (Crookes, 1986; Swales, 1990).

In a nutshell, moves are identifiable semantic and functional units within texts that serve specific purposes of communication and typically possess clear linguistic boundaries that can be objectively investigated.

In addition, it is widely acknowledged that there is a connection between the move and the sort of expressions that are embedded in the move, which can provide valuable insights into a more accurate interpretation of the communicative intention conveyed by the move (Kashiha, 2015).

Hence, possessing knowledge of the commonly encountered word combinations employed in the rhetorical organization of introductions of RAs is a great way to assist writers to enhance their proficiency in academic writing. Meanwhile, the proper use of formulaic expressions is indispensable in drafting a successful text.

Since the pioneering works by Jespersen (1917) and Firth (1951), the formulaic languages have been studied extensively. It has been posited that individuals who are native speakers possess a vast repertoire of memorized formulaic sequences within their cognitive lexicon, which serve to structure and organize their discourse, assist and enhance the efficiency of language processing, effectively communicate highly specific meanings and demonstrate their inclination to align themselves with a specific discourse community (Nattinger & DeCarrico, 1992; Siyanova Chanturia & Martinez, 2015; Schmitt, 2010). As formulaic language is ubiquitous, how it works in the context of English academic writing, especially in the writing of RAs should not be overlooked. Erman and Warren (2000) found a very large proportion of formulaic language in written texts. Wei and Li (2013) extracted collocations and longer n-grams from academic English corpus and claimed that 2- to 6-word sequences covered 58.75% of their corpus.

Lexical bundles serve as a prominent category in formulaic language, and understanding these bundles indicates a higher level of expertise than understanding individual words. According to Vilkaitė (2016), formulaic language encompasses various categories, such as collocations, lexical bundles, phrasal verbs, idioms, clichés, proverbs, each exhibiting distinct characteristics and patterns of usage. While among these categories, collocations and lexical bundles occupy a big part of academic discourse. The term “collocation” was captured by Firth (1951) through the dictum of “you shall judge a word by the company it keeps”, referring to the associations between lexical words (Biber, 1999). Lexical bundles are extended collocations, and they can be regarded as bundles of words that display statistical co-occurrence propensity (Biber, 1999). Based on previous studies, it was found that lexical bundles account for approximately 30% of conversation and 21% of academic discourse (Biber et al. 1999). Another research also discovered that as language proficiency increased, the prevalence of lexical bundles increased (Chen & Baker, 2010). Due to the high frequency of these sequences, the adoption of corpus-driven criteria is necessary for the extraction of them (Biber et al., 2004).

To look into the relationship between lexical bundles and rhetorical moves, Cortes (2013) extracted the four-word and longer lexical bundles that could realize moves or steps from RAIs of various disciplines and discovered that a group of lexical bundles was exclusively associated with an individual move or step in a move, whereas a second group was distributed across multiple moves and steps. Furthermore, certain expressions were employed to signify the requisite steps, while others served as supplementary elements and functioned as commentary.

Given that the introduction section is an essential component of a RA, and a professional and well-organized introduction cannot be constructed without the building blocks – lexical bundles and rhetorical moves, the current study aims to investigate the rhetorical moves through the extractions of lexical bundles in terms of their structural characteristics, to help academic writers use proper lexical bundles to realize certain moves.

1.2.3 Non-Scopus and Scopus-Indexed Journals in Linguistics and Language

There are many citation databases for linguistics and language researchers to access published and peer-reviewed materials. As one of the high-quality and reliable databases, Scopus, the name of which was inspired by a bird Hammerkop (Scopus umbretta) that has exceptional navigation ability, is now the largest abstract and indexing database for multidisciplinary peer-reviewed literature. Launched in November 2004, it features smart tools for tracking, analyzing, and visualizing research. It also offers a comprehensive representation of global research output across various disciplines, including science, social science, medicine, technology, arts and humanities. According to Elsevier, Scopus covers an extensive collection of 22,800 titles sourced from over 5,000 international publishers (Sedghi & Heshajin, 2018). It is larger than the Web of Science and more accurate than Google Scholar (Falagas et al., 2008). According to the Scopus Content Coverage Guide updated in 2020, different source types are covered by Scopus where active journals account for 60.5%, inactive journals, book series, and trade journals account for 36.6%, active book series account for 2.1% and active trade journals account for 0.7%. It can be seen that journals make up the bulk of the content in Scopus.

Thomson Reuters' Journal Citation Reports provide annual rankings of science and social science journals based on Impact Factor (IF) data. These rankings are specific to the subject categories that are relevant to each journal. Consequently, quartile rankings are determined for every journal within each of its subject categories based on the quartile of the impact factor distribution that the journal falls into for that specific subject category. Q1 represents the upper 25% quartile of the Impact Factor (IF) distribution, and Q2 corresponds to the middle-high position, falling between the top 50% and top 25% of the distribution. Q3 indicates the middle-low position, ranging from the top 75% to the top 50% of the distribution. Lastly, Q4 signifies the lowest position, encompassing the bottom 25% of the IF distribution.

The list of 2022 encompassed a total of 1114 journals within the domain of linguistics and language. Among them, 255 journals were made available with open access. The list of journals comprised a total of 249 publications, categorized into Q1, Q2, Q3, and Q4. Together with journals that can be searched on the Web of Science, Scopus-indexed journals have gained much recognition on various occasions. For example, many universities in Malaysia as well as in the world hope their academicians publish in Scopus-indexed, ISI (now Web of Science), and other high-impact factor journals. This aspiration becomes evident as certain universities provide incentives to writers in the form of "seed money or research grants" (UniMAP 2010, UniMAP 2011). In contrast, the term "non-Scopus" pertains to publications that are not encompassed inside the Scopus index and are often overlooked in the assessment of scholars' achievements on a national scale. Therefore, in the current study, the corpus was built based on selecting introductions of English linguistics RAs from Scopus-indexed journals. Meanwhile, the non-Scopus journals with a comparatively lower reputation

were also taken into consideration. This is because after analyzing their differences in the use of lexical bundles and rhetorical moves, the writers will have a better comprehension of the language features in both types of journals and obtain what can be called a well-structured introduction.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

In the academic community, writing and publishing RAs to gain wide acceptance from experts and scholars has always been essential, and such mental engagements always lead to contributions to various fields. Concerning the citation databases with a good reputation, ISI (now Web of Science) and Scopus are both at the top list. However, the disparity in citation data between Web of Science and Scopus varies greatly by discipline. With the exception of computer science, Scopus finds fewer citations for academics working in the sciences than Web of Science. With the exception of Cinema Studies academics, Scopus finds more citations than Web of Science for academics working in the Social Sciences and Humanities. In this vein, concerning the area of linguistics and language that belongs to social science, the Scopus citation database is more representative than Web of Science. Journals indexed by Scopus are distinguished by their adherence to higher standards of quality, impact, and rigor in the editorial and peer review processes. These journals, such as “Applied Linguistics” and “Language Learning”, engage in a more rigorous and structured review process, emphasizing originality, methodological rigor, relevance, and contribution to existing research, often involving multiple rounds of detailed feedback. This contrasts with many non-Scopus journals, where the review process may not be as stringent, potentially leading to quicker review times but less comprehensive feedback, affecting the depth of revisions and the quality of the final article. Scopus-indexed journals also

enjoy greater visibility and impact within the academic community, with journals like “TESOL Quarterly” and “Journal of Second Language Writing” being widely recognized and contributing significantly to the field’s development. These journals have a clear and specific scope, ensuring articles are evaluated by experts familiar with the sub-discipline’s nuances, leading to more informed assessments. Moreover, Scopus-indexed journals are required to adhere to stringent ethical guidelines, monitored to ensure high standards of academic integrity, a rigor that may vary among non-Scopus journals. This adherence to quality, combined with a thorough review process, high impact and visibility, specific scope, and strict ethical standards, underscores the distinction between Scopus-indexed journals and their non-Scopus counterparts, impacting the dissemination and recognition of research in fields like applied linguistics. The critical focus on English linguistics research articles is underscored by English’s status as the global lingua franca and its predominance as the primary language of academic publication. This prominence renders research in English linguistics indispensable for scholars who seek to engage with the international community and make substantial contributions to the global knowledge economy. Given that such articles are penned by language experts, they exemplify professionalism, particularly in the strategic use of rhetorical moves—a contrast to practices in other fields of study. A deep understanding of the conventions prevalent in linguistics research is crucial for crafting coherent, persuasive arguments and engaging effectively in scholarly discourse. This knowledge not only enhances the quality of academic writing but also ensures meaningful participation in the broader academic community, positioning English linguistics research as a pivotal area of study for advancing global communication and scholarship. Therefore, the importance of investigating articles with what kinds of linguistic features can be published in

Scopus-indexed journals becomes evident.

However, the findings from the study comparing non-Scopus-indexed and Scopus-indexed RAs are still insufficient. In previous research, selections of journals for analysis, especially those with high impact factors in applied linguistics such as *ESP (English for Specific Purposes)*, *TESOL Quarterly (TQ)*, *Applied Linguistics (AL)*, and *English Language Teaching Journal (ELT)*, were often made without specifying their Scopus indexing status. For instance, Rahman et al. (2017) analyzed 20 research articles from these top-tier journals but did not differentiate between Scopus-indexed and non-Scopus-indexed categories. This oversight highlights a clear gap in the literature, as the categorization of journals by their indexing status could provide more nuanced insights into the use of lexical bundles and rhetorical moves in the introductions of linguistic research articles. Furthermore, even though there has been research on the Scopus database, it has focused on how it fares in terms of indexing speed, title range, and repeated citations when compared to databases like PubMed, Google Scholar, and Web of Science (Barnett & Lascar, 2012; Falagas et al., 2008; Moed et al., 2016). While there has been a study that delved into the structure and linguistic characteristics of applied linguistics RAs in Scopus-indexed journals, it primarily focused on abstracts as a sub-genre (Kurniawan et al., 2019). This study explored the rhetorical variations through a quartile analysis and determined that the ranking of Scopus-indexed journals does not significantly influence the structure of abstracts. Research comparing non-Scopus and Scopus-indexed views on RAIs remains sparse.

Moreover, previous studies have revealed that there were several obstacles for academic writers to construct RAs from home and abroad. The challenge of publishing in English-language journals has been extensively documented as an obstacle for individuals who are non-native speakers of English, particularly those with limited proficiency in English language skills (Ammon, 2001). Ren and Li (2011) claimed that academic writers find it hard to write the various sections of RAs if they are not aware of the rhetorical moves of each section. Meanwhile, past studies have shown that the writing does not reflect the rhetorical structure in introductions (Samraj, 2008), literature review (Kwan, 2006), and conclusions (Bunton, 2005). Hence, it is a need for writers to acknowledge the nature of academic written texts, the textual and interpersonal functions of the English language, and the way to use grammar and lexis as well as the rhetorical conventions when constructing texts.

Nunan (1999) mentioned that for academic researchers from different countries, the most challenging task is to produce a coherent, fluent, extended piece of paper. In this context, scientists and academic researchers experience strong pressure to publish articles in English (Cargill et al., 2012). Therefore, to help academic writers reach an acceptable level of publishing their articles in well-regarded and high-impact Scopus journals, more guidance and support need to be provided for them (Paltridge, 1993). Meanwhile, in social sciences, researchers are commonly equipped with comprehensive training in methods, statistical analysis, and research design. However, it is often observed that many scholars possess limited training in effectively situating, motivating, and organizing manuscripts, particularly concerning the crucial introduction section of an RA. Moreover, the part in question exhibits challenges in readability and is more susceptible to rejection by the editing team due to framing and

organizational concerns (Ahlstrom, 2017). The problems encompass the writers' limited comprehension of establishing a theoretical framework or setting the context for their research at the outset, as well as their failure to express topic-related concepts in a coherent and logical manner. For example, considerations arise regarding the appropriate timing for introducing key terminology, background knowledge, and the level of interest demonstrated by previous researchers. Additionally, determining the most suitable phrases and sentences to address research gaps poses a challenge. Furthermore, achieving a balanced length for the literature review, given the existing body of knowledge on the subject, is a crucial aspect to be addressed in the initial section.

For academic writers, constructing the introduction section of RAs that can be published in Scopus-indexed journals is a tough and burdensome task. For emerging writers, especially those who are still finding their feet in the world of research, there is an escalating pressure to present their findings in English and publish their articles in journals indexed by Scopus. For expert writers who have published some articles in Scopus-indexed journals, during the writing process, they might confront various choices and determinations, such as the extent of background information, balancing an authoritative tone with a genuine one, engaging the readers, and deciding on the directness of their method (Swales & Feak, 1994). Meanwhile, not only the composing skills required but also the familiarity with the specific academic genre is worth to be emphasized. This is because the introduction section can be involved in many academic genres, such as RAs, dissertations, textbooks, book reviews, grant proposals, and lab reports. Writers need to have a clear mind of the features of a specific genre and keep some relevant techniques. Flowerdew (2001) conducted an interview with

editors from eleven international journals on English language teaching and observed that the primary challenges for non-native speakers were not superficial English language mistakes like article usage or subject-verb agreement, but rather the incorrect structuring of various sections in a Research Article (RA).

Navigating these intricacies requires a comprehensive understanding of the expectations set by the academic community. The introduction section of research articles serves as a compass, guiding readers through the research. Therefore, the organizational structure and the lexical associated patterns of the introduction section are especially important in the constructing process. However, how the rhetorical moves of introductions of RAs varied and how the lexical bundles were used in these moves in Scopus journals and non-Scopus journals have rarely been studied to date. As the introductions of RAs come from different indexing sources, whether they adhere to the same move-structure standard and employ the same lexical bundles to realize each move to meet the requirement of high-impact international journals is worth investigating.

As for the organizational structures, while several studies utilized Swales' move analysis framework to determine the rhetorical structure of scholarly texts and professional discussions, they predominantly centered on different academic domains, genres, and sections. For instance, the CARS model has been employed in areas like medicine (Muangsamai, 2018), computer science (Posteguillo, 1999), biology (Samraj, 2002), biochemistry (Kanoksilapatham, 2005), and engineering (Maswana et al., 2015). It has been applied to academic texts including master of science dissertations (Hopkins & Dudley-Evans, 1988), textbooks (Nwogu, 1991), university lectures (S.

Thompson, 1994), and professional discourse involving legal discourse, philanthropic discourse - focusing on direct mail letters, grant proposals and movies reviews. It has been applied to other sections, especially in abstracts (Tanko, 2017) and literature reviews (Kwan, 2006). Consequently, there is a need to look into the move structures of introductions of English RAs in the field of linguistics and language.

Meanwhile, in the process of move analysis, the sequential patterns of moves should not be ignored. A rhetorical move sequence can be organized in a linear or cyclical pattern, serving distinct communicative purposes within academic texts. Linear sequences, exemplified by Swales' CARS model (M1-M2-M3), progress through a series of moves—establishing a territory, identifying a niche, and occupying the niche—in a straightforward, step-by-step manner. Cyclical sequences, on the other hand, may revisit certain moves or themes throughout the text, enhancing depth, reinforcing arguments, or addressing complex issues from multiple angles. Both linear and cyclical patterns are essential for structuring arguments effectively, ensuring coherence, and engaging the reader in academic discourse. For instance, Alsharif (2022) highlighted that in the context of business management research article introductions, the adherence to Swales' CARS model is predominant, with deviations being notably rare. This underscores the model's efficacy in structuring introductions that effectively communicate the research's significance. Conversely, recent studies in applied linguistics have expanded the scope of move sequence analysis to other academic genres, such as book reviews (Khosrojerdi, 2023) and master's theses (Khamaiseh, 2023), indicating a burgeoning interest in exploring how different genres employ rhetorical moves. This diversification points to a significant gap in the literature, particularly the need for a focused analysis of move sequences in research

article introductions within applied linguistics.

With regard to lexical bundles, it is noteworthy that these fixed collocations play a crucial role in the production and comprehension of fluent discourse in academic settings (Wiprayanti, 2023). Because many of them are fairly widespread and tend to mark stages in a text, they demand special consideration in move analysis and academic writing pedagogy (Li et al., 2020). However, there is a dearth of research that has looked at the utilization of bundles among writers who have published non-Scopus articles in comparison to those who have published Scopus articles. Staples et al. (2013) contended that a significant portion of the extant literature has concentrated on contrasting the utilization of lexical bundles between (English) L1 and L2 writers, with only a limited number of investigations delving into lexical bundles across the writers' levels of proficiency (e.g., Vo, 2019).

Moreover, the majority of previous studies concentrated on lexical bundles and rhetorical moves separately (Kurniawan & Haerunisa, 2023; Djuwari et al., 2022; Nasrabady et al., 2020). Few studies have investigated associating lexical bundles with rhetorical moves. The significance of studying lexical bundles and rhetorical moves in conjunction is grounded in the enriched understanding it offers on the construction and achievement of specific communicative purposes within texts, particularly those within academic and professional contexts. This approach not only unveils how standardized expressions are strategically used by writers to structure their arguments and convey nuanced meanings, thereby offering deeper insights into text construction and interpretation, but it also has practical implications for academic writing pedagogy. By discerning the typical patterns of language usage across various genres, educators

can better guide students, especially non-native English speakers, in adhering to the conventions of academic discourse. Furthermore, this line of research holds promise for advancing automated text analysis by informing the development of sophisticated natural language processing tools capable of discerning text structure and function, which can be applied in plagiarism detection, text summarization, and content analysis. Additionally, examining the interplay between lexical bundles and rhetorical moves contributes to genre analysis, enhancing our understanding of the linguistic hallmarks that distinguish different genres or disciplines and thus facilitating interdisciplinary collaboration. Lastly, such studies shed light on language variation and change, revealing the dynamic nature of standardized expressions across different contexts and over time, which enriches the field of corpus linguistics. This integrated analysis, therefore, not only deepens our understanding of linguistic practice but also broadens the scope of its application in both educational and technological domains.

In conclusion, limited studies have been conducted on the comparison between the application of lexical bundles and rhetorical moves in a specific genre published in non-Scopus and Scopus journals. Only when writers understand the distinctions between articles of varying levels can they recognize well-structured articles that meet the criteria for publication in Scopus journals, thereby advancing further. In this sense, the present study aims to fill the gap by connecting lexical bundles with rhetorical moves and analyzing and comparing their use in introductions of linguistics RAs from both non-Scopus and Scopus journals.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

This study has four objectives: First, this study aimed to identify the lexical bundles found in rhetorical moves in the introductions of English linguistics research articles from non-Scopus-indexed journals and Scopus-indexed journals. The second objective was to determine the structural features of lexical bundles that indicate the rhetorical moves in the introductions of English linguistics research articles from both types of journals. Third, it aimed to explore the patterns of rhetorical moves in the introductions of English linguistics research articles from both types of journals. Fourth, it also aimed to investigate the relationship between the use of moves in introductions of English linguistics research articles and the indexing of non-Scopus and Scopus journals.

1.5 Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the lexical bundles found in rhetorical moves in the introductions of English linguistics research articles from non-Scopus-indexed journals and Scopus-indexed journals?
2. What are the structural features of lexical bundles that indicate the rhetorical moves in the introductions of English linguistics research articles from both types of journals?
3. What are the patterns, essentiality, frequency, and combination of rhetorical moves in the introductions of English linguistics research articles from both types of journals?
4. How does the different indexing of non-Scopus and Scopus journals correlate with the use of rhetorical moves in the introductions of English linguistics research articles?

1.6 Theoretical Underpinning

As far as the genre theory is related to this study, the notion of the term genre must be clear. The concept of genre finds its roots in the French language (and originally in Latin) and is widely employed in the fields of rhetoric, literary and media theory, and more recently, linguistics. Genre theory delves into how texts are categorized based on shared conventions, structures, and purposes within various contexts, including literature, film, music, and other art and communication forms, serving as a framework for distinguishing different forms of textual expression as noted by Chandler (1997). Reflecting on the evolution of genre's conceptualization, Cuddon (2012) highlights the transition from understanding genre as a strictly literary term to its broader application across various domains. The debate on genre's definition, whether as a literary, linguistic, or socially defined concept, has been explored by scholars like Todorov (1991) and Ventola (1997). Further, Cope and Kalantzis (1993) argue that genre reflects how social expectations interact with language structures, presenting a lens through which the relationship between text and societal norms can be examined. This broader understanding underscores genre's role in shaping and being shaped by the linguistic and social practices within different communicative contexts.

In applied linguistics, genre theory examines the use of language within specific genres, scrutinizing the alignment of linguistic features and structures with genre conventions, including those of research articles, business reports, and academic lectures. This analysis aids in comprehending how effectively knowledge and intentions are conveyed across various contexts. It is crucial, within this field, to recognize three distinct conventions that underpin genre studies, each contributing to our understanding of how genres shape and are shaped by language use. From the

convention of new rhetoric genre studies, Miller (1994) claimed that based on recurrent situations and rhetorical practices, the genre is a rhetorical action and the principle of the genre is open rather than closed solely based on structure, substance, or aim. In modern research within the field of rhetoric, there has been a shift in genre studies towards a greater emphasis on the interplay between text and context, with a reduced focus on textual features. This shift is often facilitated through the utilization of ethnographic analysis or case study methodologies. From the perspective of systemic functional linguistics, Martin (2001) introduced genre as a staged, goal-orientated, and purposeful social activity that people engage in as members of their culture. Swales (1990) defined 'genre' from the perspective of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) as a class of communicative events with a shared set of communicative purposes.

Grounded in Swales' (1990) genre theory, this study adopted one of the most influential genre-based approaches - move analysis, to help both novice and experienced English language writers develop academic communicative competence. Move analysis is viewed as a pedagogical approach, emerging in the 1970s and 1980s and building upon the concept of rhetorical action. The primary emphasis lies on the organization of discourse with regards to its communicative objectives, necessitating cognitive evaluation for the interpretation of the author's rhetorical intentions and the division of a text into distinct discourse units (Elena, 2018). Traditionally, move analysis was conducted on a limited corpus of texts that exemplify a specific genre of writing, but now the application of it has also been extended to large corpora. The progression of evolving frameworks for move analysis was outlined in Chapter 2.

1.7 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1.1 shows the conceptual framework of this study, which discusses the structure of the study and integrates the relevant theories used in the study. The key components of the research process are also aligned in the following figure.

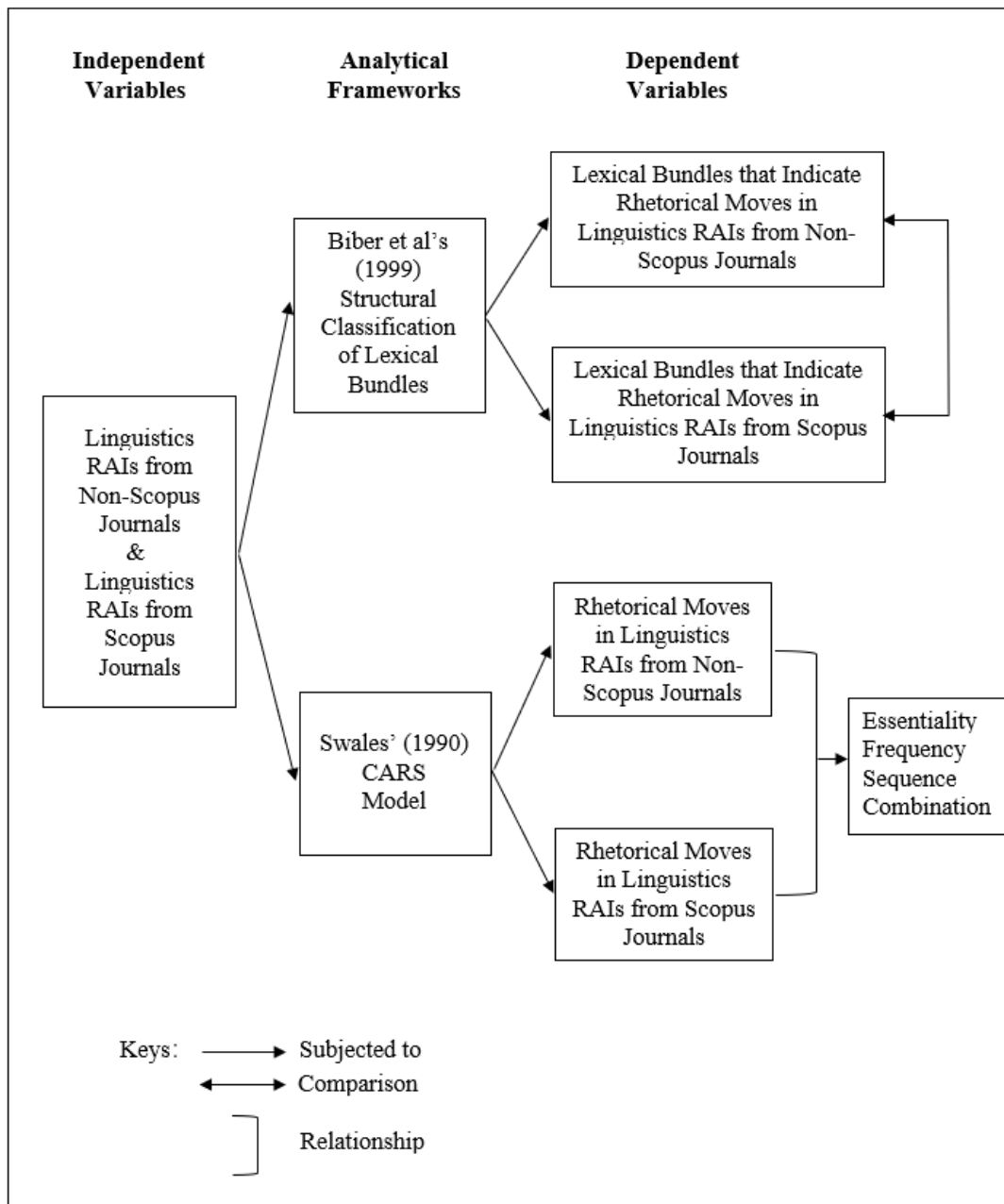


Figure 1.1 : Conceptual Framework of the Study

Based on the conceptual framework, the introductions of linguistics RAs from non-Scopus-indexed journals and Scopus-indexed journals were subjected to the adapted Swales' (1990) CARS (Creating A Research Space) model and the adapted Biber et al's (1999) structural classification of lexical bundles in academic prose.

The present study first identified the lexical bundles found in rhetorical moves in the introductions of linguistics RAs in English from both types of journals. Then, to see how these moves were realized by using certain formulaic languages, the lexical bundles were also investigated based on the adapted Biber et al's (1999) structural classification of lexical bundles. Next, the patterns of rhetorical moves such as the essentiality (optional, conventional, or compulsory), the frequency (the number of occurrences), the sequences (cyclical features), and the possible combination of moves and steps were explored in terms of the adapted Swales' (1990) CARS model. Besides, the comparison of the use of lexical bundles found in rhetorical moves from the non-Scopus corpus and Scopus corpus was made, and the relationship between the use of moves and the indexing of journals was also examined.

In this manner, by employing a set of lexical bundles, the rhetorical moves could be realized, and by employing certain rhetorical moves, the introductions of RAs could be more structured and organized, leaving an appropriate impression to editors from high-impact Scopus-indexed journals.

1.8 Significance of the Study

Firstly, by identifying the lexical bundles found in rhetorical moves in the introductions of linguistics RAs in English from non-Scopus-indexed journals and

Scopus-indexed journals, a practical list that fits for choosing lexical bundles to indicate each move can be made. Coxhead and Byrd (2007) posited three advantages of using lexical bundles and suggested that it is better to construct sentences in larger ready-made chunks instead of constructing sentences word-by-word because lexical bundles not only widely occur in academic writing but also play an important role in developing written texts that fit the expectations of readers in academia, and allow writers to see the interactions between syntax and lexis.

Secondly, by exploring the structural features of lexical bundles that indicate the rhetorical moves in introductions of linguistics RAs in English from both types of journals, the contrastive results can be found to fill the previous research gap. Cortes (2013) was the first person to connect lexical-grammatical patterns and rhetorical moves in introductions. She first extracted lexical bundles from the one-million-word corpus, then compiled, and matched them to specific moves and steps in terms of Swales' framework. However, her seminal research just identified a variety of expressions that frequently and intuitively initiated a move or step and did not involve any contrastive research on introductions written by novice writers in low-impact non-Scopus-indexed journals and by experienced writers in high-impact journals such as Scopus-indexed ones (Qian, 2005). This study aims to fill this gap, revealing the similarities and differences in the structure of lexical bundles found in the rhetorical moves of introduction sections of linguistics RAs of both corpora. The results added important pedagogical implications in analyzing bundle-driven moves by classifying structural features of lexical bundles, which would deepen writers' understanding of formulaic languages that were used to realize rhetorical moves in certain academic genres (Basim, 2020).

Thirdly, by identifying the rhetorical moves in introductions of linguistics RAs in English from non-Scopus-indexed journals and Scopus-indexed journals, the conventional structure and the organizational frame of the introductions in RAs can be presented, providing empirical evidence on the essentiality, frequency, sequence, and combination of moves. Since Scopus-indexed journals set strict criteria to accept RAs, writers should follow the procedures and use proper moves to draft a readable text. Dudley-Evans (1994) stated that the moves are essential units playing a role as building blocks in text construction, so the proper application of moves can improve the quality of writing.

Last but not least, based on investigating the differences in the use of rhetorical moves in introductions of linguistics RAs in English between non-Scopus-indexed journals and Scopus-indexed journals, new insights can be provided in terms of the theoretical framework targeted to both novice and expert academic settings. Analyzing the frequency, combination, and cyclical patterns of rhetorical moves in the introductions of linguistics research articles reveals potential for new moves or features to enhance the CARS model. This research not only suggests updates to existing frameworks but also offers evidence that employing rhetorical moves can significantly improve the writing quality of especially novice writers. By integrating these moves, authors can craft more coherent, structured, and effective introductions, advancing their ability to communicate research findings clearly.

In a nutshell, the findings of this study can assist writers in writing introductions of RAs in English, especially in the field of linguistics and language, guiding them to get their RAs published in high-impact Scopus-indexed journals.

1.9 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is defined by its primary aim to explore the utilization of lexical bundles and rhetorical moves by writers in the introductions of linguistics research articles (RAs), specifically those written in English and published in both non-Scopus-indexed and Scopus-indexed journals. By delving into the ways lexical bundles serve to initiate each rhetorical move and examining the deployment of these moves within the texts, the research seeks to shed light on the intricate dynamics of academic writing in the field of linguistics. This inquiry is grounded in the theoretical frameworks provided by the adapted structural classification of lexical bundles by Biber et al. (1999) and the adapted Create-A-Research-Space (CARS) model by Swales (1990), which serve as the analytical lenses through which the data is interpreted.

To achieve its objectives, the study meticulously analyzed a total of 100 introduction sections from a balanced selection of journals, with 50 introductions sourced from non-Scopus-indexed journals and an equivalent number from Scopus-indexed counterparts. This comparative approach not only enhances the understanding of academic writing practices across different publishing platforms but also contributes to the broader discourse on the impact of journal indexing on rhetorical strategies employed by academic writers in linguistics. Through this comprehensive examination, the study aims to contribute valuable insights into the strategic use of language in scholarly communication, with a particular focus on the roles of lexical bundles and rhetorical moves in shaping the introductions of linguistics RAs.

1.10 Definition of Key Terms and Concepts

Before reviewing the related literature in the next chapter, the key terms and concepts frequently used in the present study are listed as follows:

Genre is defined as a conventional category of discourse that has its foundation in the large-scale typification of rhetorical action (Miller, 1984). In the current study, genre refers to a class of staged and structured communicative events that possess a string of recognizable communicative purposes in the discourse community.

Research article refers to a written document consisting of a few thousand words that presents findings from an investigation conducted by the author or authors. This type of text incorporates non-verbal elements (Swales, 1990). In the current study, research article is an academic genre that comes from a research journal or an edited book-length collection of papers and details the results of original research by the author(s).

Introduction is the section that explains the rationale for undertaking the study and clearly describes the main purpose of conducting it (Bavdekar, 2015). In this study, the term “Introduction” is defined as the initial opening section of a research article, clearly marked with the heading “Introduction”. This section is characterized by its standalone nature, devoid of any subheadings like “Background” or “Problem Statement”, yet it may encompass the content typically associated with background information and problem statements.

Scopus delivers the most comprehensive view of the world’s research output in the fields of science, technology, medicine, social science and arts and humanities (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016). This study applies the definition of Scopus as the

largest peer-reviewed literature database containing abstracts and citations by the above-mentioned fields of study.

Rhetorical Move is a unit that relates both to the writer's purpose and to the extent that she or he wishes to communicate (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). In the current study, rhetorical moves are schematic units serving as the organizational blocks to mark textual regularities in introductions of RAs.

Step is a lower-level text unit than the move that provides a detailed perspective on the options open to the writer in setting out the moves in the introduction (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). In this study, steps are the smaller rhetorical segments composing a move.

Lexical Bundles, termed the most frequently occurring sequences of words in a language or register (Biber, 2007). They are building blocks that characterize fluent spoken and written discourse. In this study, they are used to initiate certain rhetorical moves, and can technically fulfill the rhetorical and discourse-related functions.

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