

**EMBEDDED MOVES IN ABSTRACTS OF RESEARCH ARTICLES
IN THE FIELD OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
AND THEIR LINGUISTIC REALISATIONS**

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ABSTRACT

Writing an abstract requires artful composition and skillful selection of salient information. This is because reducing an extensive volume of research into a precise abstract of limited number of words can pose a challenge to researchers-cum-authors. To provide a guideline for writing abstracts, a genre-based study was conducted on 48 abstracts of research articles from six journals in the field of International Studies. The findings reveal a total of six Moves with frequent occurrences of embedding in complex sentences. The common linguistic features employed to encapsulate two to four Moves in a single sentence are also highlighted. They include a variety of grammatical forms such as infinitives, adjective clauses or phrases, adverb clauses, adverbial phrases, and connectors. It is hoped that the findings can enlighten novices on how to compose a concise abstract with succinct information that is presented within an economical word count.

Keywords: Phrases, genre analysis, abstract, moves, steps, research articles, linguistic features, embedding of moves, and International Studies

1.0 INTRODUCTION

An abstract is a highly essential piece of writing which is mandatory for academic genres such as dissertations, theses, paper presentations, and journal articles. It constitutes “the gateway that leads readers to take up an article, journals to select contributions, or organisers of conferences to accept or reject papers” (Lorès, 2004: 280). Despite its limited length of about 100 to 250 words, it encapsulates vital information on the justification and aim of the study conducted, the methodology or research design, the data, and the results or findings. The content of the abstract is dictated primarily by the intention of the author, and in the case of journal articles, by the publisher. In addition to its fundamental role of providing readers with a succinct summary of the study, there are authors who may utilise the abstract as ‘the hook’ to attract readership. Consequently, they would not reveal their findings in their abstracts. Thus, it is not surprising that the abstract has become a subject for research in linguistics due to the necessity to comprehend the mechanisms that operate in this multifunctional text (Lorès, 2004: 280).

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In order to examine the current trend of how abstracts are written for research articles published in journals in the field of International Studies, a genre analysis is conducted in the present study. Genre-based studies have been conducted on different sections (abstract, introduction, method, and discussion) of research articles and in limited fields such as social sciences, life and health sciences (Swales, 1981 in Swales, 1990 and Crookes, 1986), biology (Hopkins and Dudley-Evans, 1988), sociology (Brett, 1994), medical (Williams, 1999), conservation biology and wildlife behaviour (Samraj, 2005), and management (Lim, 2006). On the other hand, the absence of publications of genre analysis on International Studies is a clear indication that there is a need to conduct a genre-based study in this field. Due to this chasm in textual knowledge, the current study focuses on the identification of moves, the embedding of moves at sentential level, and their linguistic features realisations.

In addition, a genre-based approach is adopted in the present study because it provides the “most developed and comprehensive rhetorical theory to address writing in recent times” (Dias, *et al.*, 1999: 18). It holds the key that unlocks the treasury of knowledge pertaining to acceptable norms in communication among members of a speech community. Furthermore, Lemke (1994: 4) advocates genre analysis as a “strategic resource” since it enables teachers “to teach students about the expectations of readers, and the strategies of writers.” Therefore, the findings via the current research would be able to meet the linguistic needs of novice researchers in writing abstracts for their research article publication targeted at international journals as well as the pedagogical needs for guidelines and materials in teaching novice researchers.

1.2 Problem Statement

An abstract serves as the first interface where an author communicates with a reader. Since the first impression is always important, novice writers may be faced with a daunting task of having to decide which contents are appropriate and how to present them within a coherent paragraph. As pointed out by Lorès (2004: 280), writing an abstract is not necessarily “a relatively easy task for the non-native English speaker as compared with the arduous task of completing the research article (RA) itself.” Lorès justifies this statement by emphasising that the genre of the abstract is unique since it has its own distinctive “function, rhetorical structure, and linguistic realisations” (2004: 281).

1.3 Aim and Objectives

The present study analyses the communicative intents in 48 abstracts of research articles in six selected journal articles in the field of International Studies and identifies the embedded moves and their linguistic realisations.

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- i. to identify the rhetorical moves and their frequencies in 48 abstracts of research articles in six selected journal articles in International Studies;
- ii. to identify the embedded moves at sentential level;
- iii. to determine the frequency of the embedded moves identified;
- iv. to identify the linguistic realisations of embedded moves; and
- v. to determine the frequency of the linguistic features of embedded moves identified.

1.4 Research Questions

In line with the objectives stated in 1.3, this study seeks to answer the following questions.

RQ 1a: What are the rhetorical moves in 48 abstracts of research articles in six selected journal articles in International Studies?

RQ 1b: What is the frequency of the moves identified?

RQ 2a: What are the embedded moves at sentential level?

RQ 2b: What is the frequency of the embedded moves identified?

RQ 3a: What are the linguistic realisations of embedded moves identified?

RQ 3b: What is the frequency of the linguistic features of embedded moves identified?

1.5 Definitions of Terms

The definitions of four key terms are explained within the context of the study. They comprise ‘genre’, ‘move’, ‘embedded moves’, and ‘linguistic realisations’. Firstly, a ‘genre’ can be reckoned as an institutionalised text-type that assumes purposeful communicative intentions which are realised through the use of written or spoken language. It takes on a conventionalised form and style with characteristic linguistic features which are recognised by members of a particular discourse community (Dudley-Evans, 1987). The genre examined in the present study comprises of journal articles published in the field of International Studies.

Secondly, a ‘move’ in genre analysis is defined as “a discursal or rhetorical unit that performs a coherent communicative function in a written or spoken discourse” (Swales, 2004:228). In other words, a rhetorical move reflects one main communicative purpose or function. Collectively, they provide the cognitive structure of the overall message in a particular genre, that is, how the message is organised (Bhatia, 1993). In the current study, a move is perceived as a segment of text that is distinguishable by a specific communicative purpose (that is of the authors’) which shapes its schematic structure and constraints its choice of content and style (Holmes, 1997; Swales, 1990). The uniformity in orientation of this text segment and its contents are signaled by diverse linguistic features, such as lexical meaning, propositional meanings, illocutionary forces, and others (Nwogu, 1997). A move may comprise one to several constituent elements or steps that collectively embody the information that the author intends to present in the text (Nwogu, 1997). A ‘move’ basically provides the answer to the question, “What is the author trying to communicate?” In other words, a ‘move’ explains why the author is doing what he / she is doing.

Thirdly, ‘embedded moves’ are moves that occur in the same sentence. This phenomenon can be observed due to constraint in the number of words allowed for an abstract. Fourthly, ‘linguistic realisations’ are the linguistic features that authors use to perform the embedded moves. Given the brevity of this paper, these features are limited to coordinators, subordinators, prepositions, and phrases. The features such as tense and aspect are not included in this study.

The parameter of the present genre analysis is set within the above definitions of the four key terms. Therefore, the analysis attempts to identify the moves in abstracts, the embedded moves, and the linguistic realisations for the embedded moves.

1.6 Significance of Study

The prevalent use of the English language is evident in the academic world because of its lingua franca status as a global language. To a great extent, current information and knowledge are presented or shared in English. Although advanced technology has made it possible to access this immense fountain of information, knowledge contributors need to be proficient in communicating their research work in English and knowledge seekers need to be competent in decoding the message. If learners or novices are well informed and trained through comprehensive instruction and practice, they would be able to enhance the effectiveness of their abstracts. For instance, they would be able to gain a wider readership and acceptance in presenting their research papers in conferences.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The concepts of genre as well as genre analysis and approaches are reviewed to provide insightful information related to the study. This is followed by a review of analytic schemes employed by past researchers who conducted genre-based studies on abstracts of research articles in different fields. Lastly, linguistic features used in this study are highlighted.

2.1 Concept of Genre

According to Bawarshi & Reiff (2010), ‘genre’ is a French word which is related to two Latin words, namely *gender* and its cognate, *gener*. The former refers to “kind” or “a class of things”, whereas the latter means “to generate” (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010: 4). These two meanings are applicable in genre-based research as genre can be a classificatory tool to categorise texts as

well as “generating kinds of texts and social actions” (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010: 4). This etymology of genre is clearly reflected in the contending views among linguists throughout the development of genre-based research (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010).

The term ‘genre’ was first introduced in the field of applied linguistics, particularly English for Specific Purposes by Swales (1981) as well as Tarone, Dwyer, Gillete, and Icke (1981 in Swales, 2004). As defined by Swales (1990), genre is a class of recognisable communicative events whereby language is used to convey a set of identified communicative purposes. This collection of events is mutually understood by the members of the professional, academic or discourse community in which it regularly occurs. Genres can be viewed as purposeful expressions of articulation within acceptable norms established for the realisation of communicative goals. Whether they are spoken or written texts, they are most often highly structured with decipherable linguistic patterns of structure, style, content and intended audience (Swales, 1990). In other words, genres can be defined as oral and written text types delineated by their inherent characteristics and their communicative intents established by the social contexts (Hyon, 1996).

2.2 Concepts of Genre Analysis and Approaches

The concept of genre analysis has evolved from a linguistic analytical approach developed in the early 1970’s. It was then commonly termed as rhetorical / grammatical analysis of oral or written texts related to the subject matter or content of core studies. The rhetorical part of the analysis focuses on the organisation of information found in such texts, whereas the grammatical part examines the linguistic mechanisms utilised to realise the rhetorical structures (Selinker, 1988). Studies on genre analysis had examined various text types, namely textbooks, technical manuals, research reports, and journal articles (Selinker, 1988).

The term ‘genre analysis’ was formally introduced by Swales (1981) in ESP when he conducted a study on article introductions. With reference to that study, Swales (1981) defines genre analysis as an approach to examine the regularities in the organisational structure of a text and the language used to realise these conventionalised patterns. Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988: 116) redefine genre analysis as an analysis system that considers “the communicative purpose of a text within a communicative setting, where the text is one element of ongoing interaction within a sociocultural environment” with its established norms, values, and conventions. In other words, the analysis examines the content of the message conveyed by the author (transactional function), the internal textual organisation including its implicit and explicit patterning (textual function) as well as the manner the readership is taken into account (interpersonal / interactional function) (Hopkins and Dudley-Evans, 1988). The identification of communicative goals within a particular genre is encapsulated in rhetorical structures known as ‘moves’ and ‘constituent steps’. They describe the discourse structure of the genre and are labeled in accordance to the author’s purposes and the conventions of the speech community concerned (Paltridge, 2001).

From another ESP perspective, genre analysis is the study of how language is used to achieve a specific communicative goal within an institutionalised discourse community (Bhatia, 1993). The concept of genre analysis can be a very functional analysis system as it allows spoken and written language to be described profoundly and constructively. It expends linguistic analysis from mere linguistic description to explanation. Hence, genre analysis requires input from multi-disciplines to assist in the interpretation, description and explanation of the rationale underlying various professional and academic genres (ibid.). It focuses on such issues as rhetorical styles and discourse types and relates research in sociolinguistics, text linguistics and discourse analysis to the study of specialist areas of language. In other words, genre analysis is language description which provides explanation of sufficient depth from the socio-cultural, institutional and organisational perspectives. This analysis is also astute enough to highlight differences rather than similarities in transactional language use. It is a system of analysis that examines and reveals the essential, specific and distinctive differences which distinguish one genre from another and between sub-genres (Dudley-Evans 1987). The findings of genre analysis should be germane and pragmatic to language teachers and applied linguists (Bhatia, 1993).

The present study adopts the approach established by Swales (1987). The researcher shares the view of the strong hypothesis that overt teaching of the journal article framework established through genre analysis of the moves and constituent steps in journal articles is effective for non-native speakers of English. In addition, it is cost-effective in terms of time since novice writers can produce journal articles that meet the required specifications of the speech community concerned.

2.3 Past Studies on Abstracts

The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) defines an abstract as “an abbreviated, accurate representation of the contents of a document, preferably prepared by its author(s) for publication with it” (ANSI, 1979 in Bhatia, 1993: 78). Based on the definition, an abstract of a research article contains factual information on what was done, how it was done, what was found, and what was concluded by the author(s) (Bhatia, 1993). It has a distinguishable rhetorical structure with the communicative intent of providing the reader an accurate and succinct knowledge of the entire article (Bhatia, 1993). It may or may not be a summary depending on the disciplinary field. As an illustration, the methods employed are not mentioned in the abstracts of research articles in both Conservation Biology and Wildlife Behaviour (Samraj, 2005). On the other hand, it may be more than a synopsis. For instance, the abstracts of research articles on Conservation Biology include rhetorical moves that are similar to those found in introductions (Samraj, 2005).

Earlier studies has established the organisational structure of research article abstracts based on the macro-structure of the entire research article, namely, introduction, methods, results, and discussion (Samraj, 2005). Consequently, four moves comprising purpose, methods, results, and conclusion have been identified (Samraj, 2005). These four moves have been employed in a number of studies on abstracts, for example, those by Salager-Meyer (1990, 1992) and Bhatia (1993). An additional move ‘situating the research’ has been postulated to account for the structure of abstracts in applied linguistics (Santos, 1996). This move usually appears at the beginning of abstracts and consists of two submoves, namely, statement of current knowledge and statement of problem (Samraj, 2005). In Hyland’s (2000) study of abstracts from several disciplines, a five-move model has also been employed. Similar to Santos’ ‘situating the research’ move, Hyland has proposed an introduction move that provides the context of the paper and research motivation (Hyland 2000 in Samraj, 2005). These two additional moves can be considered as serving a similar rhetorical function (Samraj, 2005). Table 2.1 summarises the rhetorical structures and linguistic features in studies conducted by Santos (1996), Hyland (2000), and Bhatia (1993).

Table 2.1 Rhetorical structures and linguistic features of abstracts

Move	Submove / Descriptor	Example of Linguistic Features
1 : Situating the research (Santos, 1996) OR	1 : Stating current knowledge 2 : Stating problem OR	Not available in article referred to.
1 : Introduction (Hyland, 2000)	1 : Context of the paper 2 : Research motivation	
2 : Purpose (Bhatia, 1993, pp. 78-79)	Indicating author’s intention/ thesis/ hypothesis or stating goals/ objectives/ problem	sets out to examine
3 : Methods (Bhatia, 1993, pp. 79)	Describing experimental design: information on data, procedures or method(s) used, scope of research	were collected and analysed both cross- sectionally (month by month) and longitudinally (looking for changes over time)
4 : Results (Bhatia, 1993, pp. 79)	Summarizing observations/ results, and suggesting solutions	was found that the data showed
5 : Conclusion (Bhatia, 1993, pp. 79)	Interpreting results, drawing inferences and may indicate implications and applications of findings	is suggested that

A more recent genre analysis on abstracts of research articles on Conservation Biology and Wildlife Behaviour conducted by Samraj (2005) has shown that there are certain moves or rhetorical structures specific to the communicative goals adherent to a disciplinary field. Examples of these moves include ‘centrality claims to promote the worthwhileness of the research topic’ in Conservation Biology abstracts and ‘background description on the species studied’ in Wildlife Behaviour (Samraj, 2005). In addition, Samraj (2005) pointed out that whether hard or soft disciplines, applied areas of inquiry have the inclination to be more persuasive than theoretical inquiries. Since international relations shares similar characteristics to Conservation Biology as an

emerging field that possesses an applied nature of a soft discipline, drawing from a number of fields, these particular moves and functions may also exist in the abstracts of research articles on international studies.

2.4 Linguistic Features

Since the analysis of linguistic features in embedded moves is only at the sentential level, this review is limited to specific grammatical categories, namely conjunctions (coordinators and subordinators), relative pronouns, prepositions, and phrases (prepositional and nonfinite or particle). Firstly, according to Eppler and Ozón (2013), conjunctions comprise of two closed classes: coordinators and subordinators. Eppler and Ozón define coordination as “the joining of two elements, which have equal syntactic status and are usually also of the same kind, to make a larger constituent of the same kind and level” (2013: 37). In other words, the function of coordinators is to join two nouns, two verbs, two adjectives, two independent clauses, and so forth. Greenbaum and Nelson (2002) list ‘and’, ‘or’, and ‘but’ as the central coordinators which may be reinforced by ‘correlative expressions: ‘both ... and’; ‘either ... or’/ ‘neither ... nor’; and not only ... but also’. On the other hand, “subordinators introduce subordinate clauses” (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002: 111). Some common subordinators listed by Greenbaum and Nelson (2002: 112) include “after, although, as, because, before, if, since, that, till, unless, until, when, where, while, except that, as long as”, and so on. They also point out that some of these words function as subordinators and prepositions. The rule of the thumb is “If the word introduces a finite clause, it is a subordinator; if it introduces a phrase, it is a preposition.” (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002: 112).

Secondly, Greenbaum and Quirk (1990: 118) categorise relative pronouns into two series, firstly, “wh- items (who, whom, whose, which)” and secondly, “that and zero”. They also distinguish the usage of the first series pronouns: the antecedent for ‘who’ (subjective) and ‘whom’ (objective) must be personal gender; for ‘which’, nonpersonal gender; and for ‘whose’, both personal and nonpersonal gender. In the second series, ‘that’ can be used “without reference to the gender of the antecedent or the function within the relative clause, except that it cannot be preceded by a preposition.” (Greenbaum & Quirk, 1990: 118). This is also applicable for ‘zero’ which is used when there is no subject function. They highlight that the second series pronouns can only be used in restrictive clauses.

Thirdly, some common prepositions are “about, above, across, after, against, among(st), around, as, at, before, behind, below, beside, between, but, by, despite, down, during, for, from. In, inside, into, off, on, out, over, past, since, than, through, till, to, toward(s), under, until, up, with, without, and phrases such as because of, in spite of, in addition to” (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002: 112-113). Greenbaum and Nelson (2002) point out that many of these words may also function as adverbs or conjunctions.

Fourthly, a phrase is “a group of semantically and grammatically related words which have an internal structure.” (Eppler and Ozón, 2013: 8). There are five types of phrases, namely noun phrase, verb phrase, adjective phrase, adverb phrase, and prepositional phrase (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002: 112). For the purpose of this paper, only the noun phrase and prepositional phrase will be discussed. The noun phrase may have the following structure: “(determiners) (pre-modifiers) noun (post-modifiers), where the parentheses indicate optional elements” (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002: 47-48). According to Greenbaum & Nelson (2002), common post-modifiers imbedded in the noun phrase are relative clauses, appositive clauses, and appositions. Noun phrases can function as subjects, direct objects, indirect objects, subject complements, object complements, complements of prepositions, pre-modifiers of nouns or noun phrases, and adverbials (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002). Next, the prepositional phrase comprises of two parts: “preposition and complement” (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002: 70). As stated by Greenbaum and Nelson (2002: 70-71), “the prepositional complement is typically a noun phrase, but it may also be a nominal relative clause or an –ing clause.” They list the functions of prepositional phrases as the post-modifier of a noun, the post-modifier of an adjective, and an adverbial.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

To begin with, the rationale for conducting the present research via the genre-based approach is considered. Before any form of framework can be provided for novices to write research articles in the field of International Studies, an approach that examines the rhetorical features, the embedding of moves, and linguistic resources used by established and experienced researchers to accomplish the rhetorical functions in writing the abstracts has to be selected. The most suitable approach that is devised to fulfill these requirements is probably the genre-based approach.

The present study is exploratory as its primary aim is to provide a significant insight into the generic structure of abstracts of journal articles in the field of International Studies. It is basically descriptive in nature as the researcher attempts to identify and describe these structures. The only descriptive statistics employed are the frequency of occurrence of moves identified in the 48 abstracts of selected journal articles.

3.2 Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample consists of 48 abstracts taken from 48 journal articles in the field of International Studies. There are two types of sampling techniques involved, namely purposive sampling in selecting six journals and systematic random sampling in selecting eight articles from each journal.

Firstly, the journals are reputable refereed international journals of American publications. They are regarded by specialists to be central in the field of international studies and are held in high esteem by them. Their contents include at least one of the four sub-fields of International Studies, namely international relations, international political economy, strategic and security studies or foreign policy analysis. Based on these criteria, the selected journals are Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), International Organization (IO), International Studies Quarterly (ISQ), International Studies Perspectives (ISP), International Studies Review (ISR), and Millennium Journal of International Studies (MJIS). Secondly, only two articles were selected from each issue commencing from the middle of 2012 until the middle of 2013. They are the two longest articles written by different authors.

3.3 Analytic Scheme

The researcher takes an eclectic approach of utilising existing models in analysing the genre of journal articles in the field of International Studies. Since models on abstracts of research articles in other fields have been established in previous research, the present analysis utilises these models (in Table 2.1) as a source of reference. Nevertheless, the qualitative nature of this study allows for an emergent analytic scheme, that is adaptable and evolving, to be constructed by the researcher when necessary (Baumgartner *et al.*, 2002).

3.4 Data Analysis

Analysis of data was interpretative and descriptive as the study aimed to establish moves, embedded moves, and their respective frequencies as well as the linguistic realisations of embedded moves of 48 abstracts. These objectives were achieved by categorising the data into moves with reference to existing nomenclature of moves and totaling their occurrences. Moves that occur within a sentence were marked as embedded moves. The linguistic means to perform the embedded moves were analysed using the grammatical categories advocated by Greenbaum & Quirk (1990), Greenbaum & Nelson (2002), Kaplan (1995), and Eppler & Ozón (2013).

In the event of a move or step that does not match any of the existing nomenclature, a new term would be introduced to describe it. In the present study, appropriate labels for moves were formulated to correspond with the communicative goals expressed in the abstracts. To establish the apposite labels, the types of information presented or the communicative goals of authors were examined and verified by a specialist informant in the field of International Studies.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Moves in Abstracts of Research Articles in International Studies (RQ 1a)

Instead of the 5-Move scheme established by past researchers, the current study proposed an analytic scheme comprising of 6 Moves. These include Move 1 – Providing background information, Move 2 – Justifying study, Move 3 – Stating purpose, Move 4 – Stating methods, Move 5 – Stating results, and Move 6 – Stating conclusion. The rationale for recategorising Move 1 (Introduction or Situating the research) of existing schemes into Move 1 and Move 2 stems from the findings that reveal justifying the current study as an important communicative intent in International Studies. This move is the second most frequent move after Move 3. Furthermore, this move was observed to appear at the beginning and repeated at the end of majority of the abstracts. Thus, it would not be logical to succumb this essential move under the existing Move 1, which is ‘Introduction or Situating the research’. The later four moves are in agreement with existing schemes. Table 4.1 shows an example for each of the six moves identified.

Table 4.1 Moves in abstracts of research articles in International Studies

Move	Example of Move
Move 1 Providing background information (current or past) e.g. citing analysts / past research / events / theories	S2.2: An influential literature in international relations argues that democratic institutions allow leaders to credibly signal their resolve in crises, thereby making their threats more likely to work than threats by nondemocracies. (p. 457)
Move 2 Justifying study	S3.1: The argument also helps explain why less-educated individuals are consistently more apprehensive about international economic integration than more educated individuals, even in the countries in which economic theory predicts otherwise. (p. 484)
Move 3 Stating purpose (Bhatia, 1993) (or focus / goals / aims / objectives)	SS2.1: This paper underlines some of the problems involved with this perspective and pushes forward an interpretation that is based on the logic of political survival. (p. 401)
Move 4 Stating methods (Bhatia, 1993)	SS3.2: As an illustration of what a model of practice might look like, we include a case study of Iroquois diplomacy as practice. Using a model , without relying on unstated assumptions exogenous to it, we represent this particular case through assuming that both the agents and their social environments emerge through practices. (p. 457)
Move 5 Stating results (Bhatia, 1993) e.g. summarising observations or results (Bhatia, 1993)	S1.6: Findings demonstrate that having a pro-war conversation partner greatly increases the probability that one will adopt similar views. They also show that when one’s social environment is taken into account as the source of information about the policy, the impact of mass media diminishes. (p. 103)
Move 6 Stating Conclusion (Bhatia, 1993)	SS1.4: It concludes that , despite frustrations over the Israel-Palestinian peace process in the absence of intensive external intervention, the Palestinian territories do not meet the proposed criteria for the effective and legitimate application of an international trusteeship. (p. 321)

4.2 Frequency of Moves (RQ 1b)

The frequency of the moves identified is as shown in Table 4.2. The most frequent move that occurred in the sample was Move 3. It was observed in 44 (91.67%) abstracts. This finding indicates that majority of the authors may find it a necessity to make the aim or purpose of their study clear to their readers. They proposed their arguments, hypotheses, or theoretical framework in this move. Closely behind Move 3, with a difference of only 1 abstract lesser in quantity, is Move 4 (43 abstracts, 89.58%). Similar to

the rationale proposed for Move 3, authors provide readers with information related to their research design, particularly the sample or data, brief outline of procedures, and scope of research.

The third most frequent move, Move 2 which occurred in 38 abstracts, can also be considered as important because authors might have to convince readers that their research have significant contribution in their specialised fields. To justify their research, they raised thought-provoking questions related to the foci of their studies, highlighted shortcomings in existing approaches or theoretical frameworks, stated limitations of current actions taken to overcome certain problems, promoted worthwhileness of research topic, and so forth. However, the fact that Move 2 appeared in only 80% of the abstracts may reveal that certain authors, particularly those in FPA (62.5%) and ISQ (50%) journals, have abstained from performing this move due to personal preference.

The data reveal Move 5 (28 abstracts, 58.33%) and Move 6 (24 abstracts, 50%) were of relatively lower frequency compared to the former four moves. The seemingly reluctance to reveal the results and conclusion of their research could be due to the authors' intention to attract readers to read their entire articles in order to find out this pertinent information. To these authors, the abstract serves as a stimulus to gain readership.

Table 4.2 Frequency of moves

Move	Frequency	
	Abstract	Ranking
Move 1 Providing background information (current or past)	34 (70.83%)	5
Move 2 Justifying study	38 (79.17%)	4
Move 3 Stating purpose (Bhatia, 1993)	44 (91.67%)	1
Move 4 Stating methods (Bhatia, 1993)	43 (89.58%)	2
Move 5 Stating results (Bhatia, 1993)	28 (58.33%)	3
Move 6 Stating Conclusion (Bhatia, 1993)	24 (50%)	6

4.3 Embedded Moves and Frequency (RQ 2a and RQ 2b)

The data analysis reveals that occurrence of embedded moves was evident in 40 abstracts (83.33%) and it involved 65 out of 314 sentences (20.7%). As shown in Appendices A and B, there were 17 pairs of moves and 10 triads that were embedded. The most frequent pair of embedded moves was Move 3 (aim of research) and Move 4 (method) with 14 occurrences (21.53%). The reversal of this combination (Move 4 and Move 3) was also evident with a frequency of four occurrences (6.15%). This result could imply that authors may prefer to relate the method employed to achieve the aim within the same sentence. The next pair of moves with 7 occurrences (10.6%) was Move 4 (method) and Move 5 (results). Similarly, after describing the method, authors announced the results.

As illustrated in Table 4.3, there could be a wide variety of permutations involving two and three moves. For the embedding of two moves, Move 3 appeared to be the most compatible partner for the other 5 moves as there were 20 occurrences (30.3%) that Move 3 was the move that was mentioned prior to the others. This was followed by Move 4 (16 occurrences, 24.24%), Move 1 (8 occurrences, 12.3%), Move 2 (7 occurrences, 10.77%), and Move 6 (2 occurrences). The only move that was not mentioned at the beginning of the sentence was Move 5. This could indicate that stating the results before other moves may not be the norm of this speech community. In the case of triads, which are three moves embedded in a sentence, Move 1 took the lead most frequently (4 occurrences out of 9) since it appears to be logical to begin the sentence by stating the background information. This move is followed by Move 4 (2 occurrences), Move 6 (2 occurrences), and the least frequent Move 2 (1 occurrence). Move 3

and again Move 5 were not mentioned as the first of the triads. The practice of embedded moves could stem from the need to economise the number of words due to the constraint of the word limit stipulated.

Table 4.3 Frequency, examples, and linguistic features of embedded moves

No.	Embedded Moves (Frequency)	Example of Embedded Moves	Linguistic Features
1	1 & 3 (3)	SI.8: <i>We extend the logic of the democratic peace to query</i> whether information about a foreign country's regime type affects US citizens' opinions of that country. (p. 143)	Infinitive
2	3 & 2 (2)	SS3.2: <i>We also argue that</i> this is not necessarily an efficient way of conceptualising 'practices', because practices might <i>end up being too general a concept to be analytically useful</i> . (p. 457)	Subordinator
3	3 & 6 (2)	SS2.4: <i>This article argues</i> that it is only possible to empirically ground institutions, a task on which all agree, by returning to the interpretive "insider" approach traditionally associated with the school—but employing it in a much more rigorous way . (p. 456)	Preposition + gerund
4	4 & 5 (7)	SI.4: Controlling for other possible influences on official development assistance (ODA) disbursements, and employing different measures of dyadic voting similarity, the study finds Japanese aid concentrates in members of the IWC that are microstates. (p. 409)	Nonfinite (present participle) phrase
5	1-3-2 (1)	SS3.3: Against arguments that the Internet reflects primarily economic or military concerns, <i>I argue</i> that notions of academic freedom are embedded in the fundamental technology of the Internet, TCP/IP, and that this embedded norm <i>is essential</i> to the Internet's consequences for modern political life. (p. 43)	Preposition Coordinator
6	3-1-5 (1)	S2.2: This article <i>revisits</i> the quantitative evidence for this proposition, which we call the "democratic credibility hypothesis," and finds that it is surprisingly weak. (p. 457)	Relative pronoun Coordinator
7	4-1-3 (1)	SS3.7: This article <i>employs the neo-Ricardian concept of quasi-rents – temporary above-market returns – to vindicate</i> the structuralist claim that patterns of international order are shaped by global inequality and the transnational division of labour. (p. 491)	– ... – (definition device) Infinitive
8	6-4-1 (1)	SS2.2: As a self-contained regime, <i>the EU is a puzzle because</i> international relations theory emphasizes the importance of <i>inter-state countermeasures as incentives</i> for states to fulfill costly obligations, <i>as is illustrated by scholarly debates</i> on the politics of both trade and human rights regimes. (p. 367)	Subordinator Subordinator

4.4 Linguistic Features and Frequency of Embedded Moves (RQ 3a and RQ 3b)

As listed in Table 4.4, the data yielded seven types of linguistic features employed in the embedded of moves at the sentential level. The linguistic features most frequently utilised by authors were prepositions and prepositional phrases (37.04%). The data reveal that more than a third of the embedded moves were realised by prepositions such as 'through', 'against', to, 'by' followed by gerunds, and a prepositional phrase such as 'to such an extent'. These prepositions were observed to connect the aim or justification of research with method or conclusion as well as background information with aim. The second most frequent grammatical unit was coordinators (29.63%). The predominant coordinator was 'and' whereas 'yet' was a rare occurrence. Generally, they seemed to connect background information, aim or method with justification, result or conclusion.

The third most frequent linguistic feature was nonfinite (present participle) phrases (22.22%), for instance 'adding value, employing different measures, controlling for, focusing on, building on, and drawing on'. Majority of these phrases were located at the beginning of the embedded sentence. They were noted to link background information with aim or method, justification with aim, method with result, as well as conclusion with justification. Next, subordinators (18.51%) and infinitives (14.81%) played a substantial role in joining different moves. Subordinators, such as 'while, after, because, and as' were observed to link

background information with method, justification with result, aim with justification and conclusion with method with background information as in the case of the embedding of three moves. The infinitives primarily served to indicate the aim of research. Thus, they connected background information or method with aim. It was also observed that the infinitive, which expresses a purposive function, connected justification with conclusion.

The least frequent linguistic feature was the relative pronoun, ‘which’. The function of this pronoun was prevalently to define technical terminologies used in the abstract. Occasionally, it was utilised to comment on an approach. In addition to ‘which’, a minority of the authors used the m-dash symbols to define certain terms.

The present findings reveal that the embedded moves generally do not determine the linguistic features employed by authors. The correlation between embedded moves and linguistic features could be absent in the data analysed. If it does exist at all, it would most probably be the relative pronoun ‘which’ that connect other moves to Move 1. This is because the communicative function for this move is to provide background information which includes defining terminologies.

Table 4.4 Frequency of linguistic features in embedded moves

No.	Linguistic Feature	Percentage
1	Prepositions (11.11%) Prepositional phrases (3.71%) Prepositions followed by gerunds (22.22%)	37.04
2	Coordinators	29.63
3	Nonfinite (present participle) phrases	22.22
4	Subordinators	18.51
5	Infinitives	14.81
6.	Relative pronouns	11.11
7	– ... – (definition device)	3.71

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Implications

The information enveloped in an abstract is in accordance to the communicative intents of the authors and to a certain degree dictated by the publishers. The findings of the present study disclose that there is potential uniformity in this diversity of communicative intents that exist in abstracts of research articles in International Studies. The rhetorical structures identified may function as scaffolding for novice authors in writing abstracts. With this genre knowledge, they could be initiated into their speech community with a higher degree of confidence that their abstracts would meet the conventions and expectations of this learned community and be acceptable for the purpose they are written.

Furthermore, the findings of the present study may be transformed into practical guidelines for teaching novice writers how to write the abstract by enlightening them on predominant moves associated with their communicative functions. English language instructors need to equip learners as well as novice researchers with this essential schematic knowledge. Only then can novice writers brace themselves to face global competitiveness and challenges in publishing research articles in reputable journals that are of international recognition.

5.2 Future Research

For possible generalisations to be made based on the findings of genre analysis, it is advocated that the number of journals and articles be increased substantially. Therefore, future researchers should examine more articles in diverse journals in the field of International Studies as well as other fields.

Since the present study only conducted a genre-based study on the abstracts of research articles, abstracts of other genres such as dissertations and theses may also be analysed to complement the findings of this study. Another area of particular interest to English language instructors would be the linguistic aspects utilised by authors to encapsulate their communicative intents through the moves identified. These aspects could be the focus of future genre-based studies on journal articles in the field of International Studies.

6.0 CONCLUSION

This study reveals that the primary concern of authors in the field of International Studies in writing the abstracts of journal articles is informing the reader of the salient parts of their research by providing a brief summary or synopsis. The essential moves include providing background information, justifying the research, stating the purpose, and method. It is optional for them to provide the results and conclusion within an abstract. The conclusion may include recommendations for future research and improvement of current state of international affairs.

The current genre analysis is an example of an approach to understanding of academic written text types recommended by Swales (1981) and Bhatia (1993). A nomenclature of six moves has been proposed for the analysis of abstracts of journal articles in the field of International Studies. The moves, embedded moves, and linguistic features identified can be a framework within which a model can be instituted and it can be relevant for pedagogical purposes, such as the teaching of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) or English for Research Purposes (ERP).

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APPENDIX A

Frequency, examples, and linguistic features of two embedded moves

No.	Embedded Moves (Frequency)	Example of Embedded Moves	Linguistic Features
1	1 & 2 (4)	S3.1: <i>Recent studies</i> also note a correlation between nationalist and ethnocentric sentiments and support for trade protectionism, yet <i>do not test</i> whether these non-economic sentiments are actually a cause of the opposition to freer trade. (p. 484)	Coordinator
2	1 & 3 (3)	S1.8: <i>We extend the logic of</i> the democratic peace <i>to query</i> whether information about a foreign country's regime type affects US citizens' opinions of that country. (p. 143)	Infinitive
3	1 & 4 (1)	S3.5: While <i>previous research has emphasized</i> domestic political factors, <i>we focus on</i> power politics in situations in which powerful states disagree on the merits of a treaty. (p. 13)	Subordinator
4	2 & 1 (3)	SS2.4: The concept of primary international institutions is a <i>core idea</i> of the English School <i>and central to those scholars from Bull to Buzan</i> who have sought to take it in a more sociological direction. (p. 567)	Preposition
5	2 & 3 (1)	S1.4: Focusing on <i>104 countries for the period 1994–2005, we investigate whether</i> Japan gives more aid to IWC members that vote with Japan. (p. 409)	Nonfinite (present participle) phrase
6	2 & 5 (1)	SS3.8: 4. After <i>outlining two advantages</i> the concept of autonomy of migration offers for the analysis of biometric border regimes, I demonstrate that <i>processes of biometric rebordering increase the warranty of the two allegations</i> , which feed this major critique. (p. 575)	Subordinator
7	2 & 6 (2)	SS2.1: The analysis offered in this essay <i>contributes to</i> our understanding of the relationship between IR and nationalism while also <i>highlighting the potential value</i> of the political survival framework for exploring macrohistorical puzzles. (p. 401)	Preposition + gerund
8	3 & 1 (4)	S1.7: <i>This article provides a framework</i> to improve our confidence that a policy shift represents “complex learning,” which entails the adoption of new goals, rather than “simple learning,” which refers to a change in means but not goals. (p. 203)	Relative pronoun
9	3 & 2 (2)	SS3.2: <i>We also argue that</i> this is not necessarily an efficient way of conceptualising ‘practices’, because practices might <i>end up being too general a concept to be analytically useful</i> . (p. 457)	Subordinator
10	3 & 4 (14)	SS1.6: Thus, <i>this study centers on</i> the complexity of climate change policymaking by focusing attention on <i>the evolution of climate change policy action in the New England region, the State of Connecticut, and its municipalities</i> . (p. 79)	Preposition + gerund
11	3 & 5 (1)	S2.5: <i>We use a case study and a novel survey of</i> former child recruits in Uganda to illustrate this argument and provide hard evidence not only that children are more easily manipulated in war, but also how—something often asserted but never demonstrated. (p. 65)	Coordinator
12	3 & 6 (2)	SS2.4: <i>This article argues that</i> it is only possible to empirically ground institutions, a task on which all agree, by returning to the interpretive “insider” approach <i>traditionally associated with the school—but employing it in a much more rigorous way</i> . (p. 456)	Preposition + gerund
13	4 & 2 (4)	SS1.7: 5. As far as <i>the chosen indicators show a legitimizing effect</i> , they should serve as a standard for upcoming research studies and , by this, <i>contribute to</i> further systematization of studies on global governance. (p. 150)	Coordinator
14	4 & 3 (4)	SS2.7: By examining <i>the issue of diplomatic knowledge in functional and historical contexts—and crucially by looking at it beyond information and intelligence gathering—the article examines</i> how humanism becomes a usable praxis in diplomacy. (p. 141)	Preposition + gerund
15	4 & 5 (7)	S1.4: Controlling for other possible influences on official development assistance (ODA) disbursements, and employing different measures of dyadic voting similarity, the study finds Japanese aid concentrates in members of the IWC that are microstates. (p. 409)	Nonfinite (present participle) phrase

No.	Embedded Moves (Frequency)	Example of Embedded Moves	Linguistic Features
16	4 & 6 (1)	SS2.5: <i>Illustrative examples</i> are provided for individual-level identity formation and for the implications for global politics in networked environments. (p. 5)	Coordinator
17	6 & 2 (2)	SS1.3: Building on this theoretical discussion, and after introducing the key assumptions of network institutionalism , it offers four broad clusters of research directions for further NGO studies as a way to think about future NGO studies <i>in a more comprehensive manner while also stimulating new research directions that can strengthen</i> the study of NGOs and the study of IR. (p. 366)	Nonfinite (present participle) phrase

APPENDIX B

Frequency, examples, and linguistic features of three embedded moves

18	1-2-4 (1)	SS1.5: This article builds upon <i>the existing literature</i> and fills a gap by presenting and analyzing <i>the empirical findings</i> of recent classroom research on the usefulness of five films for student engagement, understanding, and interpretation of various IR topics (IR theory, media and war, and human rights). (p. 14)	Coordinator Preposition + gerund
19	1-3-2 (1)	SS3.3: Against arguments that the Internet reflects primarily economic or military concerns, <i>I argue</i> that notions of academic freedom are embedded in the fundamental technology of the Internet, TCP/IP, and that this embedded norm <i>is essential</i> to the Internet's consequences for modern political life. (p. 43)	Preposition Coordinator
20	1-3-4 (2)	SS1.4: Building on the literatures on quasi-states, state building, liberal institutionalism, and critiques of international intervention, <i>the article tests</i> the utility of these criteria through illustrations of <i>international trusteeships in East Timor, Kosovo, and through a more extensive analysis of the Palestinian territories</i> . (p. 321)	Nonfinite (present participle) phrase Preposition
21	1-4-3 (1)	S3.2: Adding value to <i>existing aggregate cross-national analyses on forced migration</i> , I use <i>subnational-level data</i> to investigate circumstances that affect people's decisions of whether or not to flee their homes during civilian conflicts. (p. 590)	Nonfinite (present participle) phrase Infinitive
22	2-3-2 (1)	SS3.1: <i>It makes the case for</i> a heterodox recasting of the production of knowledge about the EU, and argues that post-Keynesian, post-Marxist and neo-Weberian political economy can make <i>significant contributions</i> in that regard. (p. 647)	Coordinator
23	4-1-3 (1)	SS3.7: This article <i>employs the neo-Ricardian concept of quasi-rents – temporary above-market returns –</i> to vindicate the structuralist claim that patterns of international order are shaped by global inequality and the transnational division of labour. (p. 491)	– ... – (definition device) Infinitive
24	4-5-6 (1)	SS3.8: Drawing on examples relating to the Visa Information System , I <i>show that</i> processes of biometric rebordering alter the practical terms and material conditions for moments of autonomy of migration to such an extent that <i>it becomes necessary to rethink</i> not only some of the concept of autonomy of migration's central features, but the notion of autonomy itself. (p. 575)	Nonfinite (present participle) phrase Prepositional phrase
25	6-2-6 (1)	SS3.8: In the final section, I therefore <i>point out some directions to develop</i> the concept of autonomy of migration as an approach, which is better equipped to investigate today's struggles of migration <i>without being prone to</i> the critique of implicating a romanticisation of migration. (p. 575)	Relative pronoun Infinitive
26	6-4-1 (1)	SS2.2: As a self-contained regime, <i>the EU is a puzzle</i> because international relations theory emphasizes the importance of <i>inter-state countermeasures as incentives</i> for states to fulfill costly obligations, as is illustrated by scholarly debates on the politics of both trade and human rights regimes. (p. 367)	Subordinator Subordinator
27	3-1-5 (1)	S2.2: This article <i>revisits</i> the quantitative evidence for this proposition, which we call the “democratic credibility hypothesis,” and finds that it is surprisingly weak. (p. 457)	Relative pronoun Coordinator