

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Review of Literature

1. Rhetorical Moves of Thesis Report

A thesis report is an academic genre that follows specific rhetorical conventions to communicate research systematically and convincingly. Rhetorical conventions in academic texts function to guide readers through the logical development of ideas and research processes, reflecting shared expectations within the academic discourse community (Hyland, 2004). Rhetorical moves in a thesis report refer to functional units of discourse that serve specific communicative purposes within each section of the thesis. These moves enable writers to present information in an organized manner and assist readers in understanding the progression of the research. Swales and Feak (2009) explain that academic abstracts consist of a sequence of rhetorical moves that help writers present research information in a clear and logical order.

In general, an undergraduate thesis report consists of several major sections, including the introduction, review of literature, methodology, findings and discussion, and conclusion. Each of these sections is organized through particular rhetorical moves that serve different communicative purposes within the overall structure of the thesis (Hyland, 2004). Each section is characterized by distinct rhetorical moves. For instance, the introduction typically includes moves such as establishing the research

territory, identifying a research gap, and stating the research objectives. The methodology section realizes moves related to describing research design, participants or data sources, instruments, and procedures. Meanwhile, the findings and discussion section focus on reporting results, interpreting data, and relating findings to previous studies.

The use of appropriate rhetorical moves in a thesis report is essential for ensuring clarity, coherence, and academic credibility. According to Hyland (2004), rhetorical moves organize information to achieve specific communicative purposes while reflecting the conventions of academic genres. Effective realization of these moves indicates the writer's awareness of genre conventions and academic discourse norms. For EFL students, mastering rhetorical moves in thesis reports can be challenging due to limited exposure to academic writing conventions in English. Nevertheless, understanding these moves is crucial because they form the foundation for producing well-structured academic texts, including the abstract, which serves as a condensed representation of the entire thesis.

2. Rhetorical Moves of EFL Thesis Abstract

The abstract is a crucial part of a thesis report as it provides a concise summary of the entire study. In academic discourse, abstracts function as a key rhetorical gateway that allows readers to quickly assess the relevance and value of a study (Hyland, 2004). In the context of EFL academic writing, the thesis abstract functions not only as an informative summary but also as a rhetorical text that represents the quality and value of the

research. Rhetorical moves in thesis abstracts refer to the structured communicative components used to present essential information such as the research background, purpose, methodology, findings, and conclusions.

One of the most widely used frameworks for analysing rhetorical moves in abstracts is Hyland's (2004) five-move model, which consists of Introduction, Purpose, Method, Product, and Conclusion. This model is grounded in genre theory and emphasizes how abstracts realize specific communicative functions across academic disciplines (Hyland, 2004). The Introduction move provides background information and situates the research within a broader context. The Purpose move states the main objective or research question of the study. The Method move describes the research design, data sources, and procedures employed. The Product move presents the main findings or results, while the Conclusion move interprets the findings and highlights implications or recommendations.

Previous studies have shown that EFL students often face difficulties in realizing all rhetorical moves effectively in their thesis abstracts. These difficulties are closely related to limited genre awareness and insufficient understanding of rhetorical functions in academic writing, particularly in EFL contexts (Hyland, 2004). Some abstracts tend to omit certain moves, particularly the method or conclusion, while others present the moves in an unclear or inconsistent order. These issues may reduce the clarity and effectiveness of the abstract as a communicative text. Moreover, the realization of rhetorical moves may vary across disciplines, such as English

Education, English Literature, and English Linguistics, due to different research orientations and epistemological traditions.

Therefore, analysing rhetorical moves in EFL thesis abstracts is essential for understanding students' awareness of academic genre conventions and their ability to communicate research effectively. Swales and Feak (2009) explain that academic abstracts are organized through rhetorical moves that serve different communicative functions, while Hyland (2004) each rhetorical move in an abstract serves a specific communicative function in presenting research information. By investigating the realization of rhetorical moves in thesis abstracts, this study aims to identify recurring patterns and variations in abstract writing across different fields within English studies. The findings are expected to contribute to the teaching of academic writing, particularly in helping EFL students produce more effective and conventionally appropriate abstracts.

B. Review of Relevant Research

Rhetorical move analysis has been widely applied in examining student and expert academic writing, particularly abstracts. Numerous studies have demonstrated its usefulness in identifying structural moves, measuring rhetorical competence, and assessing genre awareness.

Previous studies on undergraduate thesis abstracts have revealed recurring issues in the realization of rhetorical moves. Herlyna et al. (2024) found that while the Introduction, Purpose, and Method moves were realized consistently, the Product and Conclusion move occurred much less

frequently, indicating that many undergraduate students still experienced difficulties in constructing complete rhetorical structures in their abstracts. Similarly, a comparative study across academic levels demonstrates that while doctoral abstracts tend to be complete and systematically organized, undergraduate abstracts often suffer from a lack of coherence and consistency in move realization, reflecting a lower level of rhetorical awareness (Putri et al., 2021).

Although these studies provide important insights, they mainly emphasize educational level and do not sufficiently explore how disciplinary differences influence rhetorical structures. This study addresses that gap by focusing on rhetorical move variation across English education, literature, and linguistics within an EFL undergraduate context.

C. Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in genre-based approaches to academic writing, particularly in the analysis of rhetorical moves in thesis abstracts. Rhetorical moves are functional units of discourse that serve specific communicative purposes within a text. In academic abstracts, these moves organize information systematically in order to present a concise yet comprehensive overview of a research study.

One widely recognized framework for abstract organization is proposed by Swales and Feak (2009). They suggest that research abstracts typically consist of five rhetorical moves: Background, Goal, Methodology, Result, and Conclusion. The Background move introduces the research

context and establishes the general topic. The Goal move states the main objective or purpose of the study. The Methodology move describes the research design, participants, data collection techniques, or analytical procedures. The Result move reports the principal findings, while the Conclusion move provides interpretation, implications, or recommendations. This model offers a clear structural guideline and is pedagogically oriented toward helping writers construct well-organized abstracts.

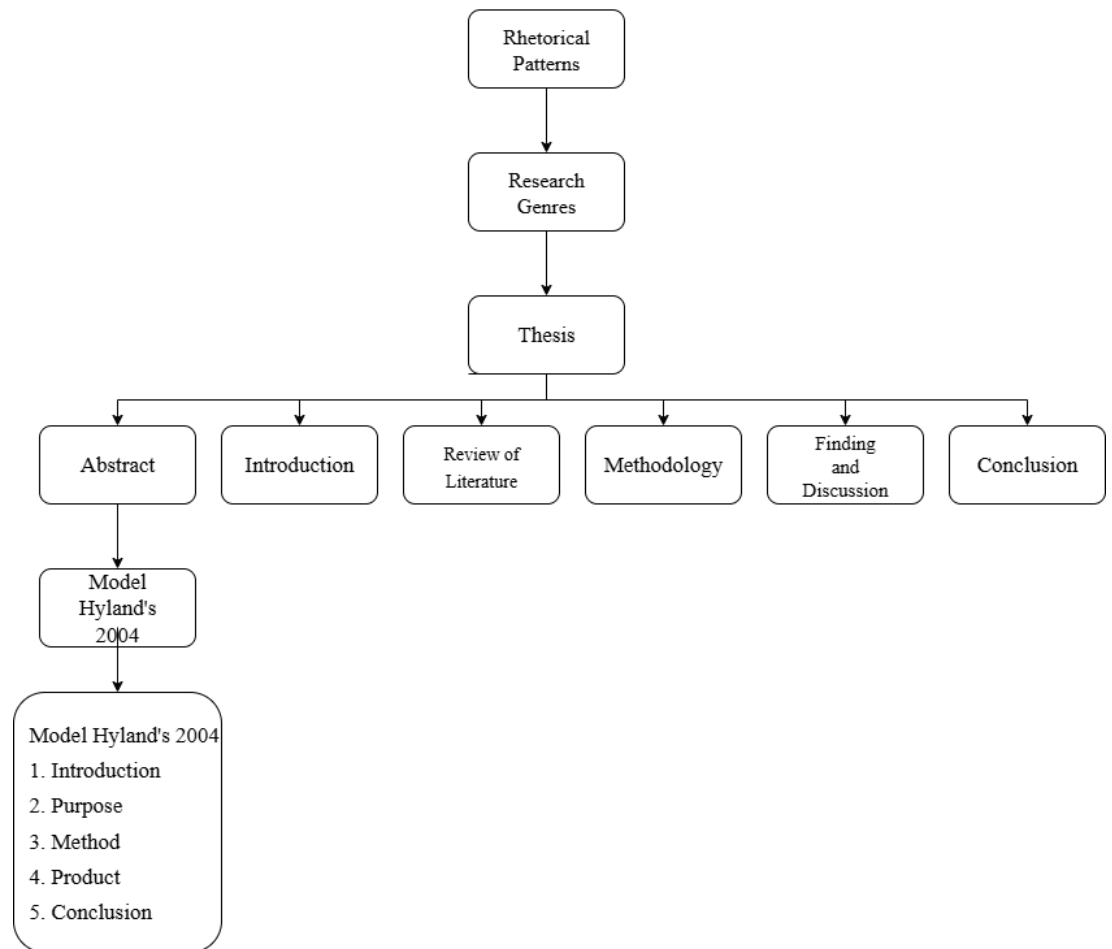
In comparison, Hyland (2004) proposes a five-move model consisting of Introduction, Purpose, Method, Product, and Conclusion. The Introduction move situates the research within a broader disciplinary context. The Purpose move explicitly states the research aim or research question. The Method move outlines the procedures or research approach employed in the study. The Product move presents the main findings of the research, and the Conclusion move interprets the results and highlights their significance within the discipline.

Although the two models share structural similarities in terms of the five-move organization, they differ in theoretical orientation. Swales and Feak (2009) provide a practical framework for organizing research article abstracts through a sequence of rhetorical moves, whereas Hyland (2004) emphasizes the communicative functions of these moves in presenting research information within academic genres. Hyland emphasizes that rhetorical structures are not merely organizational patterns but reflect

disciplinary conventions and epistemological orientations. Since the present study aims to analyse rhetorical move realization across three research subfields within English studies English Education, English Literature, and English Linguistics Hyland's model is considered more theoretically aligned with the objective of examining disciplinary variation.

Therefore, Swales and Feak's (2009) model functions as a comparative theoretical reference to strengthen conceptual understanding of abstract structure, while Hyland's (2004) five-move model serves as the primary analytical framework in identifying and analysing rhetorical moves in EFL undergraduate thesis abstracts. This integration provides a systematic and theoretically grounded basis for investigating how rhetorical moves are realized across different research within the English discipline. The theoretical relationship underlying this study is presented in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 illustrates the theoretical framework of this study is grounded in the understanding of rhetorical moves, which serve as the foundation for how academic texts are organized and structured. These moves manifest across different research genres, including theses, journal articles, and conference papers, each of which follows specific structural and rhetorical conventions. Within the academic thesis, various sections such as the abstract, introduction, review of literature, methodology, findings and discussion, and conclusion are organized in accordance with genre-based expectations that reflect academic discourse norms

Figure 2. 1

Focusing specifically on the abstract, this study adopts Hyland's (2004) five-move model as the main analytical tool. This model provides a clear framework for identifying five key rhetorical moves commonly found in research abstracts: Introduction, which situates the research topic; Purpose, which states the objective of the study; Method, which describes the methodology; Product, which presents the main findings; and Conclusion, which interprets the findings and discusses implications. As illustrated in the diagram, Hyland's model fits within the broader academic context by linking rhetorical theory with the genre of the thesis abstract, thus

providing a structured approach to examine how EFL students construct their abstracts across various research subfields in English studies.

By utilizing Hyland's (2004) five-move model, this study is equipped with a robust analytical tool that captures the rhetorical strategies employed by EFL undergraduate students in crafting their thesis abstracts. The model's comprehensive structure not only facilitates the identification of key communicative functions in abstract writing but also allows for a nuanced comparison across the three English research subfields: education, literature, and linguistics. This theoretical lens ensures that the analysis goes beyond surface-level features to reveal how writers from different disciplinary backgrounds construct meaning, present arguments, and demonstrate awareness of academic conventions. Therefore, this framework lays the foundation for a systematic investigation into how rhetorical moves are realized across varying research subfields within the EFL context.