

RHETORICAL STRUCTURE IN INDONESIAN RESEARCH ARTICLE INTRODUCTIONS USING LOI'S FRAMEWORK

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Abstract: This study explores the rhetorical structure of Indonesian research article (RA) introductions by examining how they align with or diverge from Swales' Create-A-Research-Space (CARS) model, as interpreted through Loi's contrastive rhetoric framework. Using a qualitative genre analysis of 30 RA introductions from SINTA tier 1-3 Indonesian journals in linguistics and education, published between 2022-2024, the research identifies the presence and realization of the three CARS moves. Findings show that while Move 1 (establishing a territory) and Move 3 (occupying the niche) appear in all texts, and Move 2 (establishing a niche) in most, their rhetorical realization diverges from conventional Anglophone patterns. Indonesian authors tend to expand Move 1 with philosophical or policy-based narratives, express Move 2 indirectly without explicit critique, and delay or repeat Move 3 in a recursive fashion. These patterns reveal dominant cultural-rhetorical strategies such as indirectness, collective voice, and contextual elaboration. The findings underscore the influence of local discourse traditions on academic writing and call for more culturally responsive genre models in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) pedagogy.

Keywords: *academic writing, contrastive rhetoric, Loi's framework, research article introductions, Swales' CARS model*

INTRODUCTION

In the globalized academic landscape, research article (RA) introductions serve as critical gateways for scholarly communication, shaping how knowledge is framed and legitimized. The rhetorical structure of these introductions varies significantly across cultures, reflecting distinct epistemological and pedagogical traditions. Swales (1990) Create-A-Research-Space (CARS) model has been widely adopted to analyze Anglophone RA introductions, emphasizing a linear, problem-solution approach. However, non-Western academic writing particularly in cultures with high-context communication styles often deviates from this model, favoring indirectness, collective voice (Hofstede, 2001; Hyland, 2004), and contextual richness (Connor, 1996; Kaplan, 1966). Understanding these variations is essential for promoting equitable scholarly dialogue and supporting non-Anglophone scholars in international publishing.

Indonesian academic writing, influenced by local linguistic and cultural norms, presents a compelling case for investigating such contrasts. Research on contrastive rhetoric has extensively examined academic writing across different cultural and linguistic contexts. For instance, studies have analyzed research article (RA) structures in Chinese (Flowerdew, 2001) and Japanese (Loi, 2010) academic discourse, while Samraj (2005) has explored variations in rhetorical organization across disciplines. However, few studies have investigated Indonesian academic writing, despite its unique sociocultural context. Indonesian scholarly communication is influenced by communal values and indirect communication styles, which may lead to distinct rhetorical patterns compared to Confucian-heritage or Western traditions. To date, no known study has systematically examined RA introductions in the Indonesian context, even as the country's research output grows. This gap makes Indonesia a compelling case for further contrastive rhetoric research, particularly in understanding how local linguistic and cultural norms shape academic writing.

While Swales' CARS (Create a Research Space) model offers a widely adopted framework for analyzing research article (RA) introductions, its applicability to Indonesian academic writing remains uncertain due to potential cultural-rhetorical divergences. Loi's (2010) contrastive study of Chinese and English RA introductions highlights how cultural preferences for indirectness and collective voice can reshape conventional move structures. For instance, her findings reveal that Chinese writers

often prioritize establishing a shared scholarly consensus (Move 2: “Establishing a Territory”) over overtly critiquing prior work (Move 3: “Occupying the Niche”), reflecting Confucian values of harmony and face-saving. Similarly, Adnan’s (2008) analysis of Indonesian academic discourse suggests that indirectness and communal ethos may influence rhetorical choices—such as softer gap indications or a preference for contextualizing research within local, rather than global, scholarly debates. However, unlike Loi’s (2010) systematic cross-cultural comparisons, no equivalent study has examined whether and how these tendencies manifest in Indonesian RA introductions, particularly in relation to Swalesian norms. This gap not only limits theoretical understanding of genre hybridization in non-Anglophone contexts but also hinders practical support for Indonesian scholars negotiating the competing demands of local rhetorical traditions and international publishing expectations.

Despite the central role of SINTA-indexed journals (tiers 1–3) in Indonesia’s scholarly landscape, no systematic study has examined the rhetorical structure of research article (RA) introductions within these outlets using Swales’ CARS framework. These journals form the backbone of Indonesia’s accredited research output and occupy a crucial space where local academic conventions intersect with global standards. Focusing on SINTA-indexed publications is essential for several reasons: (1) they serve as a key performance indicator for Indonesian academics, influencing career advancement and research funding; (2) their accreditation processes often reward rhetorical strategies that blend international academic norms with culturally rooted practices; and (3) they function as developmental platforms where scholars hone their academic writing skills before transitioning to international publication.

RA introductions, in particular, provide a rich site for exploring this rhetorical negotiation, as they are the first point of engagement and encapsulate the writer’s academic identity. They reveal how Indonesian authors navigate Swalesian expectations—such as articulating a clear research niche—while simultaneously honoring local norms, including indirect critique and collective voice. Without a systematic analysis of how these introductions are constructed, Indonesian scholars may struggle to meet the dual demands of domestic evaluation and international visibility. Addressing this gap is therefore critical not only for expanding contrastive rhetoric

theory but also for offering practical support to scholars working at the intersection of local and global academic cultures.

To contribute to this need, the present study applies Loi's culturally adapted CARS framework to analyze RA introductions in Indonesian SINTA-indexed journals. It seeks to answer the following research questions: 1) How do Indonesian RA introductions adapt Swales' CARS moves, as framed by Loi's contrastive approach? 2) What cultural-rhetorical strategies (e.g., indirect critique, policy narratives) characterize these adaptations?

The scope of this study is limited to research articles in the linguistics and education, published in Indonesian journals between 2022 and 2024. STEM disciplines were excluded due to their generally more standardized and universalist rhetorical conventions. Linguistics and education were selected because they are inherently interpretive fields, where argumentation, contextual framing, and cultural discourse play a more central role in shaping rhetorical choices. These disciplines also tend to reflect a wider range of writing styles and cultural influences, making them ideal for examining how local norms interact with global academic frameworks such as Swales' CARS model.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Swales' CARS Model

One of the most influential frameworks for analyzing research article (RA) introductions is Swales' (1990) Create-A-Research-Space (CARS) model, which conceptualizes introductions as a structured rhetorical space where academic writers establish the significance of their topic, highlight a research gap, and present their study. Swales later refined the model (2004), acknowledging variations across disciplines and languages (Basturkmen, 2006; Feak & Swales, 2011). The model consists of three major moves, as represented in Table 1. Each move may include several rhetorical steps that guide the writer in aligning with disciplinary expectations and discourse community norms. Swales' model has become a cornerstone in genre analysis and is widely applied across languages and academic cultures (Bhatia, 1993; Hyland, 2004; Swales, 2004).

The CARS model has been widely applied in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) research, demonstrating its adaptability across fields such as engineering

(Anthony, 1999; Samraj, 2002), medicine ((Anthony, 1999; Nwogu, 1997), and social sciences (Shehzad, 2008). However, critiques have emerged regarding its Anglophone bias, as the model assumes directness in gap indication (Move 2) and explicit purpose statements (Move 3), which may not align with rhetorical norms in non-Western academic cultures (Duszak, 1997; Loi, 2010).

Table 1: Swales' CARS Model for Research Article Introductions

Move	Steps
1. Establishing a Territory	1. Claiming centrality
	2. Making topic generalizations
	3. Reviewing previous research
2. Establishing a Niche	1A) Counter-claiming
	1B) Indicating a gap
	1C) Question-raising
	1D) Continuing a tradition
3. Occupying the Niche	1A) Outlining purposes
	1B) Announcing present research
	2) Announcing principal findings 3) Indicating article structure

(Adapted from Basturkmen, 2006, p. 57; based on Swales, 1990)

Contrastive Rhetoric and Loi's Adaptation

Drawing on contrastive rhetoric theory (Kaplan, 1966), Loi (2010) examined how Swales' CARS model is realized in non-Anglophone academic cultures, particularly in Vietnamese and Chinese RA introductions. Loi found that while the macro-structure of the three moves is often preserved, the realization of moves and steps is shaped by cultural preferences. For instance, writers from collectivist cultures may avoid direct criticism of previous work (in Move 2) and instead rely on hedged or implicit gap statements. Similarly, Move 3 may be more compressed, assuming shared knowledge among local readers. Loi's framework provides a culturally sensitive lens for analyzing rhetorical structures in academic writing beyond the English-speaking world. To better visualize the comparison between Swales' (1990) and Loi's (2010) models, Table 2 summarizes their main features.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative genre analysis approach to examine the rhetorical structure of Indonesian research article (RA) introductions, combining Swales' (1990) CARS model with Loi's (2010) contrastive rhetoric framework. The

analysis focused on identifying how Indonesian scholars adapt conventional CARS moves to reflect local rhetorical traditions.

Table 2. Comparison between Swales' CARS Model and Loi's Contrastive Adaptation (2010)

Move	CARS Model (1990/2004)	Loi's Contrastive Findings
Move 1	General topic introduction; literature review; asserting centrality	Frequently expanded; often includes extensive background; influenced by collectivist value of context-building
Move 2	a gap, raising questions, or challenging prior studies	Gaps stated indirectly ; critical stance is softened; often implied rather than explicit
Move 3	Stating aims, announcing research, outlining structure	Often condensed ; purpose is stated briefly; structure rarely outlined explicitly

Data Collection and Corpus

The research corpus comprised 30 RA introductions published between 2022-2024 in SINTA-indexed Indonesian journals for Indonesian scholars. The sample was stratified across two disciplines, linguistics and education, to account for disciplinary variations, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. List of Journals

Journals	Number of Introductions	Publication Year	Sinta Index	Disciplines
SCOPE: Journals of English Language Teaching	4 journal introductions	2022-2024	3	English Language Teaching
EduLearn: Journal of Education and Learning	4 journal introductions	2021-2024	1	Education and Learning
Indonesian Journal of Educational Research and Review	4 journal introductions	2022-2024	2	Education
SIELE: Studies in English Language and Education	3 journal introductions	2022-2024	1	English Language and Education
IJORER: International Journal of Recent Educational Research	4 journal introductions	2022-2024	2	Educational Research
English Franca: Academic Journal of English Language and Education	4 journal introductions	2022-2024	3	English Language and Education
Indonesian Journal of Educational Research and Review	4 journal introductions	2022-2024	2	Educational Research
IJEE: Indonesian Journal of English Education	3 journal introductions	2022-2024	2	English Education

Analytical Framework and Procedure

The study adopts Loi's (2010) genre-based comparative approach from her seminal work "Research Article Introductions in Chinese and English: A Comparative Genre-Based Study" published in the Journal of English for Academic Purposes. Building on Swales' (1990) CARS model, the research analyzes three core rhetorical moves in academic introductions: establishing the research territory (Move 1),

identifying the niche (Move 2), and occupying the niche (Move 3). This framework proves particularly valuable for cross-cultural analysis as it reveals how different academic traditions operationalize these moves through distinct linguistic and structural choices. Special attention was given to cultural-rhetorical features such as indirectness markers, collective pronouns, and narrative sequencing.

Coding was carried out by two analysts: the first and the fourth author. Both coders possess formal training in education and linguistics, along with research experience in genre analysis and academic-writing pedagogy. Before full coding, they jointly calibrated the scheme on 10% of the corpus, refining category definitions until agreement was reached. The analysis, achieving strong intercoder reliability (Cohen's $\kappa = 0.82$) after pilot testing and category refinement on 10% of the corpus.

Loi's comparative analysis of Chinese and English research articles demonstrates significant rhetorical variations shaped by cultural conventions. While English introductions typically adhere strictly to Swales' linear model with explicit gap statements, Chinese texts often employ more indirect approaches, blending moves or delaying research objectives through extended contextualization. These differences reflect deeper cultural orientations—Western academia's preference for direct problematization versus Confucian-influenced emphasis on harmony and narrative coherence. The current study applies this contrastive framework to Indonesian academic writing, examining how local rhetorical traditions might similarly adapt or diverge from the CARS model's conventional structure.

Validation and Limitations

Methodological rigor was ensured through triangulation of quantitative move frequency analysis and qualitative discourse examination. Member checking consisting of author 1 until 4 was conducted to validate cultural interpretations and ensure the credibility of the findings. While the study's design allowed for meaningful comparison of rhetorical patterns, limitations regarding potential translation biases in English texts and discipline-specific variations were acknowledged. This comprehensive approach provided systematic insights into how Indonesian scholars negotiate rhetorical conventions in academic writing.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The analysis is based on a final sample of 30 Indonesian research article (RA) introductions, selected from an initial pool of 50 articles published in SINTA tier 1 to 3 journals between 2022 and 2024. These articles were drawn from the fields of linguistics and education, reflecting the study's focus on disciplines where rhetorical variation is often influenced by cultural and contextual factors.

The filtering process involved several steps. First, journals were identified using SINTA indexing to ensure that all articles met national accreditation standards. Second, only full-length original research articles were considered; editorials, reviews, and short reports were excluded. Third, articles were screened for completeness and relevance—only those with clearly defined introduction sections written in English and focused on Indonesian educational or linguistic contexts were retained. Finally, to ensure disciplinary balance and genre consistency, 15 articles from linguistics and 15 from education were purposefully selected, resulting in a stratified qualitative corpus of 30 introductions. The detailed summary of the realization of CARS moves across 30 Indonesian RA Introductions presented in Table 4.

Move 1 in the Indonesian RA introductions is notably expanded. Rather than briefly establishing topic relevance through a few citations or claims of centrality, Indonesian authors tend to begin with broad, philosophical reflections (e.g., “Education is essential to human life”) or national development goals. Many introductions cite local legal frameworks as the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia or PERMENDIKBUD (i.e., ministerial regulations issued by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology and frequently incorporate statistics or policy language to support the importance of the topic). This approach aligns with Loi's findings that East Asian academic writing traditions often prioritize collective narratives and socio-cultural justification before problematization.

Example in datum 2, the authors establish importance by citing international and national legal frameworks for inclusive education before introducing any scholarly debate or research gap. While in datum 6, the introduction builds on Indonesian curriculum reform by referencing the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, linking it to national innovation agendas before any mention of previous research.

Another example in datum 24, the authors contextualize their topic by grounding it in Islamic educational values and curriculum integration efforts, which reflect national identity and religious priorities.

Table 4. Detailed Summary: Realization of CARS Moves Across 30 Indonesian RA Introductions

Datum	Move 1: Establishing a Territory (Topic, Importance, Background)	Move 2: Establishing a Niche (Gap, Problem Statement)	Move 3: Occupying the Niche (Purpose, RQs, Objectives)	Remarks / Rhetorical Notes
1	21st-century skills, national policy	PISA, indirect critique	Inquiry-based teaching stated later	Delayed purpose, indirect gap
2	International & national policy	Systemic mismatch in supervision tools	Clear RQs stated	Policy-heavy context, systemic critique
3	Vocabulary significance, global/local	Underexplored social media role	Explicit RQs	Local demographic gap, tech emphasis
4	Pandemic + educational shift	Lack of institutional strategies	Purpose + RQs stated	Recursive justification, digital focus
5	Policy + narrative context	Vague strategy research	Multiple RQs listed	Delayed RQs, layered purpose
6	Curriculum change discussion	Implementation issues	Clear goal & method	Policy framing + local implementation
7	Scientific identity context	Literature lacks deep analysis	Bibliometric goal clear	Clear purpose, soft niche
8	Dance education & media	Lack of engaging media	Development goal stated	Philosophical opening, practical focus
9	Civics & tech use	Lack of multimedia in civics	3 RQs listed	Gap embedded in Move 1
10	Math flexibility concept	Weak integration in practice	Lit review goal clear	Clear hybrid of Eastern & Western
11	Pesantren history	Entrepreneurship not explored	Goal implied	Gap soft, purpose indirect
12	Teacher professionalism	Limited co-teaching focus	3 clear RQs	Strong Move 3, long Move 1
13	ECE and resilience	Few studies on strategy	RQs stated	Mix of abstract and applied
14	EFL speaking importance	Coping strategy not explored	RQs listed clearly	Precise gap, localized context
15	Vocational education value	No clear gap	Entrepreneurship model aim	No real Move 2
16	Grammar teaching challenges	Digital tool limitations	E-book purpose clear	Western-style rhetorical structure
17	TikTok in education	Few studies on TikTok in EFL	Case study aim	Modern media, specific gap
18	Pop culture in learning	Learner view underexplored	Learner-centered RQs	Mix of global-local interest
19	Essay writing value	Lack of autonomy focus	Checklist-based RQs	Grounded in local data
20	Higher order thinking	HOTS strategy unclear	Strategy effectiveness RQs	Good blend of theory and

				practice
21	Visual media in EFL	Visual resource use gap	Clear development aim	Well-structured intro
22	Reading fluency challenges	Local teaching approach gap	RQs stated	Local issue with global frame
23	Entrepreneurship theory	Vocational readiness gap	Curriculum model goal	Narrative opening
24	Islamic curriculum issues	Application issues	Curriculum refinement aim	Cultural-religious emphasis
25	Academic resilience	Lack of motivation factors study	Student motivation aim	Practical classroom relevance
26	Teaching media innovation	Outdated learning tools	Multimedia-based RQs	Tech-focused solution
27	Storytelling in education	Skill development gap	Effectiveness goal	Descriptive + local insight
28	Intercultural communication	Local curriculum lacking	RQs on student understanding	Global issue, local data
29	Soft skills in education	Underdeveloped in curricula	Integration strategy goal	Abstract + policy mix
30	Speaking fluency in EFL	TikTok as a tool underexplored	App-based RQs	Social media meets pedagogy

Move 2, ‘Establishing a Niche,’ appeared in 29 out of 30 introductions (96.7%). However, its realization diverged from Swales’ ideal model. Instead of explicit critique or contrast with prior research, authors presented gaps through indirect means. Common strategies included citing general challenges in education, underexplored local issues, or mismatches between theory and practice. These techniques reflect a culturally nuanced, less confrontational approach that aligns with Loi’s findings on face-saving rhetoric in non-Anglophone academic writing.

While nearly all articles include a Move 2, the manner of expressing the niche diverges sharply from Swales’ expectation of direct problematization. Only a few articles use overt contrastive markers such as “however,” “few studies have,” or “this remains underexplored.” Instead, most Indonesian introductions present research gaps by highlighting systemic challenges (e.g., “teachers lack training tools”) or by emphasizing localized concerns (e.g., the specific context of East Java, or Islamic schools in Palembang).

Example in datum 5 highlights the general urgency of digital transformation in education during COVID-19 but only indirectly identifies the lack of institutional strategies through soft claims (“there is still a lack of research focusing on...”). In datum 9, the gap is illustrated through students’ disengagement in civics education without explicitly referencing prior research, suggesting a need for multimedia

innovation through observational accounts. Another example in datum 12, the niche is established by pointing out the lack of teacher preparation models through classroom challenges and legal benchmarks, without directly criticizing previous studies.

Move 3, ‘Occupying the Niche,’ was also present in all cases (100%). While this suggests alignment with Swales’ framework, the move was often delayed and embedded within a more extended narrative. Authors frequently stated their research purposes or questions only after multiple paragraphs of contextual background. Some introductions reiterated rationale or presented research aims in a recursive format, indicating a blend of rhetorical strategies influenced by both international academic norms and local writing traditions. Unlike Swales’ (1990) model, which typically expects the research purpose or question to be stated clearly and early in Move 3, Indonesian authors tend to delay this move. Many introductions take a recursive approach: first narrating the context, then suggesting a gap, and only after multiple layers of rationale, finally presenting research objectives or questions.

For example in datum 13, the study’s objectives are revealed only after reiterating the contextual problem from multiple angles (resilience, community branding, policy implications). The research questions in datum 19 are listed clearly, but only after a long explanation of educational writing challenges and a preliminary study. Example: In datum 25, the study’s aims regarding academic resilience are restated multiple times, each framed through different educational concerns such as student motivation and curriculum stress. Datum 30 provides the example of move 3 by supplying the purpose of studying TikTok as a speaking tool is embedded after multiple thematic discussions about media influence, Gen Z learning habits, and Indonesian digital literacy trends.

Cultural Rhetorical Strategies

Several prominent cultural-rhetorical strategies emerged across the corpus. The first is indirectness, particularly in the articulation of research gaps. Rather than directly stating what previous research failed to do, authors typically used contextual indicators (e.g., poor student performance, lack of resources) to imply a need for their study. This aligns with Loi’s (2010) findings that East Asian and Southeast Asian academic writing often avoids direct critique, favoring a more harmonious and implicit style of persuasion.

The second key strategy is the use of a collective voice. Authors frequently framed their research within broader national or institutional goals rather than emphasizing individual motivations. For instance, references to Indonesian educational reforms, ministerial regulations, and national curricula were used to justify the relevance of the research. This reflects a collectivist orientation where individual research efforts are portrayed as part of larger societal or governmental objectives.

Additionally, many introductions adopted a recursive rhetorical pattern. Rather than stating the study purpose in a single sentence, authors often revisited the aim or significance throughout the introduction. This repetition is indicative of a reader-responsible rhetorical style, where authors anticipate the need to reinforce their argument through reiteration and elaboration. Together, these strategies demonstrate a distinct rhetorical adaptation that blends global academic norms with local communicative values. The following Table 5 and Table 6 provides the key finding in Indonesian RA introductions and the comparison of English versus Indonesian rhetorical preferences.

Table 5. Frequency of Swales' CARS Moves in Indonesian RA Introductions

Move	Swales' Function	Typical Indonesian Realization (Loi-Inspired)	Occurrence in Data (n=30)
Move 1	Establishing importance of topic	Extended narrative, local policy/legal references, philosophical or moral generalizations	100% (30/30)
Move 2	Identifying a gap or problem	Soft critique, systemic or contextual gaps, implied rather than explicit critique	96.7% (29/30)
Move 3	Stating research purpose, questions	Purpose delayed, embedded in broader narrative, sometimes repeated	100% (30/30)

Table 6. Comparison of English vs. Indonesian Rhetorical Preferences

Feature	English RA Norm (Swales)	Observed in Indonesian RAs	Cultural/Rhetorical Rationale
Opening	Concise, focused on topic	Broad, philosophical, policy-driven	Confucian/communal traditions; value-laden discourse
Gap	Direct contrast, problematization	Soft critique, contextual gaps	Politeness, face-saving rhetoric
Purpose	Clear, early in Move 3	Delayed, often recursive	Reader-responsible style, rhetorical buildup

The analysis of 30 RA introductions revealed that all three of Swales' CARS moves were generally present, but realized in culturally distinct ways. Move 1 appeared in all cases and was often expanded with philosophical reflections, national goals, and policy references, rather than just topic centrality. Move 2 was found in 29 articles, but

expressed indirectly—research gaps were implied through contextual issues rather than explicit critique. Move 3 also appeared consistently but was frequently delayed or restated, with research purposes embedded within extended background narratives. These adaptations reflect a localized application of the CARS model, supporting Loi's (2010) view that rhetorical structures are shaped by cultural discourse norms.

Three main rhetorical strategies emerged: indirectness, collective voice, and recursive structuring. Authors tended to imply research gaps rather than state them directly, aligning with a preference for politeness and face-saving communication. Research was often framed within national or institutional goals, reflecting a collectivist orientation. Additionally, purposes were commonly repeated or embedded throughout the introduction, suggesting a reader-responsible approach. These strategies demonstrate how Indonesian authors blend global academic conventions with local rhetorical values, emphasizing the need for culturally responsive models in academic writing instruction.

Discussion

The analysis of 30 Indonesian RA introductions reveals both alignment and divergence from Swales' CARS model. While the macro-structure—comprising Move 1 (Establishing a Territory), Move 2 (Establishing a Niche), and Move 3 (Occupying the Niche)—is largely present, the rhetorical realizations of these moves reflect localized adaptations. This supports Loi's contrastive rhetoric framework, which acknowledges the influence of cultural and educational traditions on genre performance.

Move 1 appears in all samples, suggesting strong alignment with Swales' (1990) global norm of establishing relevance. However, Indonesian authors typically realize this move through extended socio-political narratives (Holliday, 1999), often citing national policies (e.g., PERMENDIKBUD), religious values, or constitutional mandates. This elaborated context-building serves as a legitimizing strategy (Canagarajah, 2002) that anchors research within national development goals (Duszak, 1997).

Move 2 appears in 96.7% of samples but manifests indirectly. Rather than using explicit adversative markers, gaps are suggested through observational remarks or institutional shortcomings, reflecting Loi's (2010) observed face-saving strategies in Asian rhetoric and Hinds' (1987) reader-responsible writing principles. This

indirectness aligns with Scollon and Scollon's (2001) politeness theories in hierarchical communication cultures.

Move 3, while structurally present, follows recursive contextual elaboration. The delayed purpose statement echoes Clyne's (1987) findings about German academic writing, while the thematic layering resembles Mauranen's (1993) Finnish-English contrastive analysis. These patterns collectively demonstrate Indonesian authors' adaptation of global conventions to local rhetorical norms (Adnan, 2008).

The adaptation of the CARS structure (RQ1) is intricately linked to the rhetorical strategies (RQ2) identified in this study. The Indonesian authors' preference for indirect critique and collective framing directly shapes how the research gap and purpose are presented in RA introductions. These strategies not only diverge from the explicitness expected in Swales' model (1990) but also illustrate how cultural values mediate academic discourse. Thus, the realization of each CARS move is both structurally guided and culturally nuanced.

Addressing RQ1 (adaptation of CARS moves) and RQ2 (cultural-rhetorical strategies), the findings reveal a symbiotic relationship between structure and style. While Indonesian RA introductions retain Swales' three-move framework (RQ1), their realization is deeply shaped by indirectness and collective voice (RQ2). For instance, Move 2's implicit critique (a cultural strategy) fulfills the niche-establishing function while adhering to local norms of politeness. This dual focus underscores how structural adaptations (RQ1) are inseparable from cultural preferences (RQ2).

The rhetorical strategies identified in the data reflect strong cultural underpinnings. Two dominant strategies—indirectness (Loi, 2010) and collective voice (Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999)—characterize the corpus. Indirectness is most visible in Move 2, where gaps are not explicitly stated but are implied through generalized or practical problem descriptions. This aligns with Asian communication norms where politeness, hierarchy, and indirect critique are valued over confrontation. The tendency to avoid overt criticism of previous studies can also be interpreted as deference to academic authority, a deeply rooted element in many collectivists' academic cultures.

The use of collective voice is equally significant. Instead of foregrounding the author's personal interest or contribution, many introductions frame research in terms of national importance, institutional goals, or societal relevance. This is achieved through

references to government initiatives, curriculum reforms, or broad moral values (e.g., educational justice, cultural preservation). Such framing elevates the perceived value of the research and aligns it with collective objectives. Loi's framework provides a lens to understand these patterns as rhetorical choices shaped by cultural values rather than deviations from an ideal norm.

Furthermore, the recursive structure of some introductions, particularly in Move 3, shows a preference for rhetorical elaboration over brevity. Rather than aiming for immediate clarity, Indonesian authors often reiterate the study's significance and purpose across several paragraphs. This strategy reflects not only local writing conventions but also pedagogical traditions where repetition is employed to reinforce understanding. We identified three broad rhetorical styles across the dataset:

1. Narrative-Hybrid Style (e.g., datum 1, 3, 7): Long contextual narratives, delayed purpose, indirect gap signaling.
2. Policy-Legitimized Style (e.g., datum 2, 6, 13): Anchored in legal/policy frameworks, often linked to national reforms.
3. Localized-Problem Style (e.g., datum 8, 10, 19): Focused on specific school settings, instructional issues, or learner needs, often grounded in classroom data.

These styles suggest that Indonesian authors are not merely following Swales' model but are adapting it to meet both international academic standards and domestic rhetorical expectations — an act of genre hybridization and rhetorical negotiation.

A comparison with previous research reinforces these observations while refining our understanding of the nuanced adaptations in Indonesian RA introductions. Prior studies grounded in Swales' (1990) CARS model often assume a universal progression of moves with clear, linear articulation—especially in Move 2 (gap) and Move 3 (purpose) (Burgess, 2002; Sheldon, 2011). However, the present findings confirm Loi's (2010) view that rhetorical performance is deeply embedded in cultural and educational norms. While Swales' model provides a functional scaffold, Indonesian authors tend to bend this scaffold to suit localized expectations—emphasizing socio-political and moral justifications, employing indirectness, and prioritizing collective over individual voice.

The key distinction lies not in the presence or absence of rhetorical moves, but in how those moves are realized. For instance, whereas Swales prescribes explicit

problematization to establish a niche, Indonesian writers favor implicit critique through systemic descriptions or national policy alignment—mirroring Loi’s observations of face-saving and reader-responsible strategies in East Asian academic writing. Thus, rather than a dichotomy between conformity and deviation, the findings illustrate a dynamic negotiation: Indonesian authors engage in genre hybridization, balancing the demands of international academic standards with culturally resonant rhetorical choices. This thin line, then, is not a gap but a site of rhetorical negotiation, where global forms are recontextualized through local values.

In sum, the Indonesian RA introductions analyzed here reflect a culturally hybridized genre performance (Loi, 2010). While the underlying structure aligns with Swales’ (1990) model, the rhetorical realization of each move reveals culturally distinct preferences. These findings affirm the relevance of contrastive rhetoric and underscore the need for flexible genre models that recognize the legitimacy of localized rhetorical practices in academic writing.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

This study explored the rhetorical structure of 30 Indonesian research article (RA) introductions through the lens of Swales’ CARS model and Loi’s contrastive rhetorical approach. The analysis revealed that while Indonesian RA introductions generally adhere to the three-move structure proposed by Swales, their realization of these moves is distinctly shaped by local cultural and rhetorical traditions.

In response to the first research question, the study found that all introductions included Move 1 and Move 3, while Move 2 was present in nearly all cases. However, the expression of each move reflects hybridized practices. Move 1 is expanded to include philosophical and policy-oriented narratives. Move 2 is typically framed through implicit rather than explicit critique. Move 3 is delayed and often repeated in a recursive fashion. These findings align with Loi’s observations of how non-Anglophone writers adapt global academic norms to local writing cultures.

In addressing the second research question, the study identified indirectness and collective voice as dominant cultural-rhetorical strategies. These practices suggest a rhetorical preference for harmony, deference, and national alignment rather than

individual authority or directness. The integration of these strategies into RA introductions underscores the importance of viewing genre as a culturally embedded and context-sensitive practice.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the sample was limited to 30 RA introductions from linguistics and education journals, which may not capture rhetorical variations across other disciplines such as law, business, or the sciences. Second, the analysis focused only on English-language publications in SINTA-indexed journals; RA introductions written in Indonesian or in non-indexed venues may reflect different rhetorical strategies. Lastly, while the study applied intercoder reliability procedures, the interpretation of rhetorical moves and cultural patterns may still be influenced by the researchers' own academic backgrounds and perspectives. These limitations suggest the need for broader, interdisciplinary studies and further exploration of multilingual academic writing practices in future research.

Suggestions

Based on these findings, several suggestions can be made for educators, researchers, and academic writing instructors: For academic writing instructors: It is essential to promote awareness of both international academic expectations and local rhetorical traditions. Instructors should guide students on how to balance clarity with culturally appropriate rhetorical strategies such as indirect critique and contextual elaboration. For curriculum designers: Academic writing instruction should include exposure to both global genre conventions and localized examples. Using comparative models can help students develop genre awareness and rhetorical flexibility. For researchers: Future studies could expand the analysis to other sections of RA writing, such as literature reviews or discussions, and examine rhetorical moves across different disciplines. Longitudinal studies could also track how Indonesian writers adapt rhetorical structures over time, particularly when publishing in international journals. For journal editors and reviewers: Greater awareness of culturally shaped rhetorical practices can foster more inclusive evaluation criteria. Recognizing the legitimacy of localized genre realizations can support the global diversification of academic discourse.

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