CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In recent times, a number of researchers have shown a great deal of interest in observing the importance of Research Article (RA), concentrated on overall structure of its various sections (Swales, 1990; Thompson & Ye, 1991; Holmes, 1997; Li & Ge, 2009; Qamariyah & Wahyuni, 2017). This is barely surprising since RA has constituted the most significant channel in reporting new knowledge in today's scientific field and, thus, the main network of scientific communication (Holmes, 1997, Salager-Meyer, 2001). Among the structure of various sections of RA, attention has been more largely focused on the introduction section (Swales, 1990; Cooper, 1985; Taylor & Chen 1991). This section has been considered important in offering the persuasive value of the whole article to determine the reader's intention to read the article (Swales & Najjar, 1987; Swales & Feak, 1994; Belcher, 2009).

Previous studies on RA introduction section have been found in various disciplines, examining its rhetorical function (or, communicative moves in Swales, 1981) (Swales, 1990; Samraj, 2003; Sayfouri, 2010; Adila, 2016; Qamariyah & Wahyuni, 2017) and its linguistic features (Nwogu, 1997). Among the focuses regarding to the rhetorical function of RA introduction, scholars have observed that Swales' CARS model is common to be used as a fundamental framework in the analysis (Nwogu, 1997; Pho, 2008; Adnan, 2009; Sayfouri, 2010; Suharno, et.al., 2012; Arsyad, 2013; Qamariyah & Wahyuni, 2017).

In his study of RA introduction, Suharno, et.al. (2012) employed Swales' CARS model in observing the rhetorical function of several science journals and found only a few number of the journals followed the model. In observing the same focus of three academic journals, Qamariyah & Wahyuni (2017) found that all of the journals systematically employed Swales' model. On the other hand, not only interested in the rhetorical function of introduction section, Nwogu (1997) also employed the model in analyzing the characteristics of linguistic features to compare the whole sections in medical research.

To date, an increasing amount of studies have started to explore how numerous linguistic features, such as hedging (Hyland, 1994, 1996, 1998), the choice of lexicon (Arsyad, 2013), voice (Matsuda, 2001; Hinkel, 2004), first person pronoun (Li & Ge, 2009), and verb tense (Hinkel, 2004; Li & Ge, 2009; Fryer, 2012), present the importance of introduction section. Of these numerous language features, the use of tenses in introduction section has been importantly considered to distinguish the moves and rhetorical function of RA (Swales 1990; Malcolm, 1987; Pho, 2008; Li & Ge, 2009) due to the close relationship between the rhetorical function of each specific introduction move and the meaning conveyed by the tenses (Gunawardena,1989).

As far as the data available for the study concerned, the choice of verb tense governed in ESP genre of RA was examined by Malcolm in 1987. In terms of Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) approach, he found that three types of tenses frequently used to report the knowledge in RA from Pediatrics Journals were (1) the Simple Present tense, (2) the Simple Past tense, and (3) the

Present Perfect tense. Following Malcolm's study, Li and Ge (2004) observed the tenses used in medical research articles to present several concrete evidences for the evolution of medical RAs. Bring it on to more specific analysis, Fryer (2012) demonstrated the use of SFL in investigating the lexico-grammar (tenses, epithets, and modality) of the whole medical RA sections in terms of the rhetorical function (Swales, 1990; Nwogu, 1997).

In fact, numerous research article writers in various disciplines, mostly the novice ones, have not put their awareness towards the choice of tenses in writing the research (Jaroongkhongdach, 2015). In his study, Jaroongkhongdach (2015) identified that this problem was not uncommon. He compared the way the novices and the experts in academic RAs wrote the article and found that the novices tended to use similar tenses while the experts used the various ones. Selecting one tense over the other, thus, has to be the concern since different tenses serve different functions (Saleger-Mayer, 1992).

Given these findings, the purpose of this article is to offer a detailed relationship between the rhetorical function and the use of tenses, as the important linguistic features, in introduction section of academic RAs by the use of the development of Swales' moves analysis and Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) approach.

1.2 Research Questions

    a. What tenses are used in the introduction section of three *TESOL Quarterly* RA?

b. What are the functions of each tense in the RA introductions?

1.3 Purposes of the Study

Based on the research questions above, the purposes of the study are:

1. To find out the tenses used in *TESOL Quarterly* RA introduction sections.

2. To construe the functions of each tense in the RA introductions.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on analyzing the tenses used, particularly in Introduction section of RA following the current Swales' moves analytical framework (2004). To find the function, Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) was employed. The data source is taken from three RA introductions of *TESOL Quarterly Journal.*

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is conducted to give contribution in theoretical and practical role in teaching-learning activity (TLA), particularly in teaching and learning academic writing. Theoretically, this study will give an insight on what tense can be used and what functions of each tense can be revealed in the academic RA introduction section. Practically, this study will help the future educators in teaching how to compose a good research article, particularly in introduction section, by the use of transitivity system.