



UNRAVELING THE STRUCTURE OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING UTILIZED BY THE SCHOOLS AND STAKEHOLDERS IN LOCALIZED SETTING: A MOVE ANALYSIS

Mary Grace O. Cero, Klein Mamayabay Ph.D
St. Mary's College of Tagum, Inc., Tagum City, Davao del Norte, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to unravel the structure of Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) utilized by schools and stakeholders in Sto. Tomas, Davao del Norte through move analysis. Fifteen (15) MOUs were analyzed based on the frameworks of Salim (2008) and the World Meteorological Organization (2012). The results revealed that the most frequent moves and steps across the gathered corpora were: Move 1 (M1) Logo of the Company, Move 2 (M2) Title, Move 3 (M3) Date of Agreement, and Move 4 (M4) Parties' Names, which consists of Move 4 Step 1 (M4.S1) Parties' Identity, Move 4 Step 2 (M4.S2) Parties' Addresses, and Move 4 Step 3 (M4.S3) Status/Position. Other recurring elements included Move 5 (M5) Aim of the MOU, and Move 6 (M6) Background of the Agreement, which consists of Move 6 Step 1 (M6.S1) Content, Move 6 Step 2 (M6.S2) Scope of Understanding, Move 6 Step 3 (M6.S3) Implementation and Termination, Move 6 Step 4 (M6.S4) Modifications, Move 6 Step 5 (M6.S5) Confidentiality, and Move 6 Step 6 (M6.S6) Mutual Expense and Reliance. Move 7 (M7) Signatures also appeared frequently and includes Move 7 Step 1 (M7.S1) Name and Move 7 Step 2 (M7.S2) Position. These findings indicate that the way MOUs are written can vary depending on local practices. These local versions often differ from the commonly accepted structure described in the study's framework. This supports the research's aim of exploring the actual structural patterns of MOUs, and the paper discusses the new patterns identified.

KEYWORDS: Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs), schools, stakeholders, qualitative move analysis, Davao del Norte

Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

Move Analysis is a discourse analysis approach that examines the structural organization of texts by identifying rhetorical moves and their communicative purposes (Kessler, 2024). By analyzing MOUs, researchers can uncover patterns in how agreements are framed, negotiated, and formalized, enhancing clarity and coherence (Bekouche, 2024).

In Thailand, the format of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) in academic settings lacks clarity, leading to inconsistencies and legal concerns (Pruprong, 2019, as cited by Libago, 2022).

In the Philippines, the MOU in education is mainly controversial legally and practically, mostly about regulatory standards and jurisdiction of agency (Medalla & Villosio, 2019).

Finally, a study summary will be shared through the school's intranet or newsletter, making the findings accessible to all staff and stakeholders for practical use.

Purpose of the Study

This study on qualitative move analysis examined how Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) were structured in

schools for their official establishment and use in educational settings.

Research Questions

1. What are the moves found in the memorandum of understanding between stakeholders and schools?
2. How are the patterns of moves found in the memorandum of understanding between stakeholders and schools presented in comparison to the moves of writing MOUs?
3. What structural changes can be proposed for school-stakeholder MOUs based on the discrepancies identified through a theoretical and corpus-based comparison with Salim (2008) and the World Meteorological Organization (2012)?

Theoretical Lens

This research drew from Genre Analysis Theory, which explored how language was purposefully structured and used within specific communication contexts. Created by Swales in 1990, this concept highlighted that texts within the same category had similar organizational, language, and persuasive elements that fulfilled specific communication goals.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This academic paper aimed to analyze the moves found in selected memoranda of understanding (MOUs) between



stakeholders and teachers in Sto. Tomas, Davao del Norte. A total of 15 MOUs were gathered and examined, aligning with the recommended sample size of 10–100 entries as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2013). The study took place from January to March during School Year 2024–2025.

Importance of the Study

This study holds significance as it seeks to support a range of individuals and organizations in tackling the primary concern highlighted in this research.

Teachers will benefit from this since teaching English for Academic Purposes, Technical Writing, and Business Communication will benefit.

This may also benefit the **students** in providing an additional resource to hone their writing skills in academic and business writing.

Definition of Terms

This part of the study outlined both the conceptual and operational meanings of the key terms used in the investigation.

Memorandum of Understanding. It refers to a formal document used by schools to establish agreements with external parties to achieve a shared goal or objective (Kenton, 2020).

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 explains the results, stressing the value of communication in education and the challenges of drafting MOUs in schools.

Chapter 2 this text reviews the literature surrounding the structure and use of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), particularly in educational settings within the Philippines.

Chapter 4 presents the analysis of the Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) structure, categorized based on the various moves and components identified within the documents. Chapter 5 summarizes the key findings of these research questions, providing the study's conclusions.

Chapter 2

REVIEW RELATED OF LITERATURE

This part provided a brief overview of important literature, laying the foundation for the main themes examined in the study.

Memorandum of Understanding

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a written document that outlines a mutual agreement between two or more parties who intend to collaborate (Kirvan, 2022).

Move Analysis

Move analysis is essentially a method for dissecting how texts are organized and what is trying to accomplish. Swales (1990) introduced the concept of a move, referring to each distinct segment of a text that fulfills a particular communicative function.

Moves Found in the Memorandum of Understanding

The genre analysis of Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) remains an underexplored scope of study (Valerio, 2024).

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter provided a detailed discussion of the approaches and procedures used to obtain the data relevant to the research.

Research Design

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2018), qualitative research focuses on understanding verbal or written communication within social settings.

Research Materials

In qualitative research, choosing the right materials is crucial for ensuring that the study is relevant, reliable, and valid. For this particular study, I used Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) as the main source of data.

Role of the Researcher

Qualitative researchers must deeply address their role in qualitative studies (Tenny, 2022). In this study, I referred to the specific parts that I contributed to in order to achieve the research goal.

Data Sources

Data sources in research are typically categorized into primary and secondary sources (Shanks, 2018).

Data Collection Procedure

Collecting data involved an ongoing effort to gather diverse perspectives that helped deepen the understanding of the research issue. (Gill et al., 2008).

Data Analysis

As noted by Hasko (2020), qualitative corpus analysis is used to examine real-life language use based on collected language samples from specific contexts, which are stored digitally for accessible searching.

Trustworthiness of the Study

Trustworthiness refers to how dependable and meaningful the results are for those who read and use them.

Credibility is determined by whether the findings accurately represent the participants' original views and are backed by credible evidence derived from their data (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Dependability, according to Korstjens and Moser (2018), who cited Lincoln and Guba (1982), it is all about how participants evaluate the study's findings, interpretations, and recommendations, making sure the backed up by solid data.



Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings of a study can be applied beyond the specific context in which the research was conducted (Cohen & Crabtree, 2008).

Confirmability refers to the extent to which the findings of a qualitative study are derived from the data itself (Tobin & Begley, 2004, as cited in Anney, 2014).

Ethical Consideration

There were ten ethical factors that helped guide and shape how this study was analyzed. These included making sure the research had social value, obtaining informed consent from participants, protecting vulnerable groups, weighing risks and benefits, ensuring everyone's safety, respecting privacy and confidentiality, promoting fairness, being open and transparent, confirming the researcher's qualifications, having the right facilities in place, and involving the community in meaningful ways.

Chapter 4 RESULTS

This chapter examines the structural components and organizational patterns of the Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) formed between the school and its stakeholders.

Moves of Memorandum of Understanding Utilized by the School and Stakeholders

According to the World Meteorological Organization (2012), this study took a closer look at the Memorandum of Understanding to identify the structural moves or sequences, using the frameworks suggested also by Salim (2008) as a guide.

Moves of Memorandum of Understanding utilized by the Schools and Stakeholders

To sum up, the analysis revealed that several elements appeared consistently across all MOU samples. These included the title, background information, date of the agreement, and identification of the involved parties.

Frequency of Moves and Steps in the Memorandums of Understanding utilized by the Schools and Stakeholders

The structure of school MOUs reflects both formal requirements and situational needs. Obligatory moves establish clarity and accountability, while optional elements allow flexibility.

Comparison of Moves Found in the Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) Utilized by the School and Stakeholders towards the Existing Moves in Writing MOUs

This section of the study provides a detailed examination of the various moves and steps identified in the MOUs collected from the research setting, comparing them with the established conventions of MOU writing as defined in the study's theoretical framework.

Presentation of Moves Found in the Memorandum of Understanding Utilized by the School and Stakeholders in Comparison to the Existing Moves in Writing MOUs

The analysis revealed a significant deviation in how the sub-moves under Move 6 (Content) were structured in actual MOU texts. While the theoretical model suggested a fixed progression beginning with Scope of Understanding (M6.S1), followed by Mutual Expense and Reliance (M6.S2), Confidentiality (M6.S3), Implementation and Termination (M6.S4), Modifications (M6.S5), and concluding with Governing Law and Jurisdiction (M6.S6).

Moves Identified in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Utilized by School and Stakeholders

Table 4 outlines the key moves and steps identified in the school's MOU, beginning with the logo and progressing through the title, date, party details, aim, background, content, and signatures.

Chapter 5 DISCUSSIONS

Moves Found in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Utilized by the School and Stakeholders

The findings showed that seven out of the nine standard moves were consistently present in the MOUs analyzed. These included the title, background statements, date of agreement, identification of the parties, purpose, main content, and signatures.

Implication for Teaching Practice

The findings of this study offer important implications for teaching, particularly in the areas of academic, professional, and technical writing.

Recommendation for Further Research

For this research, future studies could explore how Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) influence partnerships between schools and local organizations.

Concluding Remarks

Pursuing this study has been a journey of both academic growth and personal transformation. As I look back on the countless hours of reading, analyzing, coding, and writing, I am reminded that success is the result of consistent effort, no matter how challenging the road may seem.

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