Rhetorical Moves in Applied Linguistics Articles and their Corresponding Iranian Writer Identity

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Abstract

Emerging from Kaplan’s (1966) pioneering work on contrastive rhetoric, rhetorical organization is today practiced with current critical views in language teaching and is regarded as a major pedagogical tool in writing various articles. The present study aimed to investigate the possible relationship between generic organizations of research articles in applied linguistics Iranian journals and negotiation of researchers’ identities. Overall, 30 published research-based articles were selected randomly from four journals. After applying Pho’s (2008b) model of move analysis, the obtained results were associated with the instances of writer identity using Hyland’s framework (2002). The findings demonstrated different percentages of writer identity categories across different moves of articles. Results suggested that rhetorical moves performing various functions in articles need to be carried out by specific categories of authorial identity to better satisfy the expectations of their respective applied linguistics communities.

Keywords: rhetorical moves; writer identity; research-based articles; rhetorical organization; applied linguistics community

1. Introduction

In academic communities the members can express ideas and feelings to others via research articles (RA) (Hyland, 2000). The research article is the most important genre in academic community. While some studies have concerned themselves with organizational patterns of RA sections in terms of their constituent moves, such as studies on Introduction section (Samraj, 2002, 2005; Swales, 1990, 2004; Keshavarz, Atai & Barzgar, 2007), the

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Method section (Lim, 2006; Peacock, 2011), the Result section and Discussion section (Yang & Allison, 2003; Amnuai & Wannaruk, 2013), others focused on the overall organization of RAs (Nwogu, 1997; Posteguillo, 1999; Kanoksilapatham, 2005, 2007).

Genre ‘comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes’ (Swales, 1990: 58). Swales (1990) believed that the structure of research articles, presentations and grant proposals are different from each other because all of them follow a distinctive communicative goal.

Significant attention should be taken to different sections of a RA as a genre in the related academic community. The importance of RAs has been increasing in recent years due to existing a very huge amount of information being transferred in the academic world. Successful publication in the international community necessitates the scholars to acquire awareness of move variation in text structure.

Overall rhetorical variation within a specific discipline, applied Linguistics in this case, cannot be ignored. Up to now discourse analysts have been studying RAs either across disciplines or just one section of RAs within a specific discipline. Swales (1981) proposed a move analysis approach within the general field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). His main purpose was to think about the needs of advanced non-native English speakers, who learn to read & write RAs. Also he tried to help NNS professionals to publish their articles in English. Later on Swales’ framework was revised and extended by other scholars such as Pho (2008b).

Most studies on Move-Step structure of RAs have focused on special linguistic features utilized to fulfil a specific function in RAs. However a few studies have emphasized on authorial identity across specific moves and steps of applied linguistics articles. The definition of move in genre analysis was proposed by Swales (2004: 228-9). He defined move as a “discoursal or rhetorical unit that performs a coherent communicative function in a written or spoken discourse”. Pho (2009) noted “each move has its own communicative purpose, which, together with other moves, contributes to the general communicative purpose of the text” (p. 17). In move analysis, the fact of existing a series of moves within the general patterns of text is taken into consideration. All the moves together serve the overall communicative purpose of the genre (Connor, Davis and DeRycker, 1995). “Steps” are lower level parts of moves which fulfil the communicative function of the move to which they belong (Swales, 1990).

1.1. Writer identity

Expressing ideas through academic writing is the process of making identity. So, in addition to passing disciplinary content, it shows the authorial identity (Hyland, 2002). Also, Hyland (2002) suggested that special choices of structure in a piece of discourse lead us to certain principles that shape our identity. Several functional taxonomies have been proposed as a basis for the categorization of mainly the first person singular and first person plural pronouns (Fortanet, 2004; Harwood, 2005a; Harwood 2005b; Harwood 2005c; Kuo, 1999; Rounds, 1987; Tang & John, 1999).

Hyland (2001) and Tang and John (1999) believed that writers setting up a relationship with their readers can be obviously achieved through the use of first person pronouns. The degree to which authors can enter intrusively into their texts and make their personal involvement by using first person pronouns, explicitly varies across different sections of an article.

In academic writing assignments, students often believe that academic prose should be objective. They think that the process of writing should be anonymously done. There exists some textbooks and style guides for both L1 and L2 writers which focus on this phenomenon. This paper is hoping to contribute to this body of research by investigating the interpersonal aspects in experts’ research articles in the discipline of applied linguistics. The purpose of the present research was to study the variation in applied linguistics research articles (RAs) written by Iranian scholars and its relationship with the writer identity. Therefore the study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How is the variation in the moves of research articles examined for this study?
2. What are the semantic referents and the pragmatic functions performed by personal reference in journal articles?
3. What is the relationship between moves of the article and the use of personal pronouns in research articles?

1.2. Background

In the past two decades, there have been a considerable number of studies on the structure of research articles, especially after Swales’ (1990) introduction of the Create A Research Space (CARS) model, for example, Samraj’s (2002) study. These studies have focused on the importance of the awareness of the research article genre. However, research on the structure of research articles has tended to concentrate on only one or two individual sections of the article, especially on the Introduction section (Samraj, 2002; Swales, 1981) and, to a lesser extent, on the Discussion section (Dudley-Evans, 1997; Holmes, 1997).

There have also been a number of studies on the structure of the abstract of the article (e.g. Anderson & Maclean, 1997; Busch-Lauer, 1995a, 1995b; Huckin, 2001; Pho, 2008a; Samraj, 2002). However, very few studies investigate the organizational structure of other sections of the article, for example, the Method section (Lim, 2006) and the Results section (Brett, 1994) or of the research article as a whole (with all the main sections of the article: Introduction – Methods – Results – Discussion) (Kanoksilapatham, 2005). The unequal attention to the different sections of the research article may be due to the fact that Swales (1990) provides more detailed models for the Introduction and Discussion sections. Yet, as argued by Kanoksilapatham (2005), it is important to understand the complete rhetorical structure of the research article.

Hyland (2002) investigated the concept of writer identity in L2 writing. He analyzed 64 undergraduate theses in compare with RAs after locating the first person uses in their contexts. The purpose of the comparison of the two corpuses was to pinpoint the cases of students’ non-native like behaviour. The corpus which was written by experts consisted of 240 RAs from ten journals. One supervisor from each field was selected to be interviewed. Presenting arguments and claims were the most widely used cases of self mention in each article; however, this number was only a quarter in students’ texts. Stating the purpose was the least frequent use of self-mention in RAs. Therefore, rhetorical consideration was a task on the part of teachers to encourage students to realize the rhetorical functions in interaction.

Regarding the linguistic features of RA abstracts, Li (2011) suggested that presenting the authors position in the article can be achieved by using the first person pronouns. He found the effect of different disciplines on the authors’ visibility in their abstracts. In hard disciplines such as chemistry, writers don’t often show their attitude in the study. But they try to present procedures, materials and instruments of the study. These results was the same as that of Hyland & Bondi (2006) who believed that authors in linguistics often try to express their own ideas in the study.

Siami and Abdi (2012) explored the differences between IMRD sections of research articles in case of interactive and interactional metadiscourse strategies. They analyzed 60 Persian RAs from social and natural sciences. After applying the metadiscourse model of Hyland (2005), they found significant differences between two groups of writers in the use of metadiscourse features. The highest number of transitions and frame markers was seen in the RD sections of social sciences (SS) articles while the highest number of evidential and code glosses was found in the Introduction section of natural sciences (NSC). They concluded that these findings can help English for Academic Purposes (EAP) teachers when dealing with academic writing.

2. Methodology

2.1. Corpus

Thirty research articles written by Iranian scholars were analyzed in terms of their move structure as well as authorial identity. All of the articles were chosen from four journals in applied linguistics. To ensure that the results are generalizeable articles were selected randomly from Journal of Teaching Language Skills, Iranian Journal of
Applied Language Studies, Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning and Iranian Journal of Applied Linguistics. RAs were chosen to be examined for two reasons. First, RA is an outstanding and widely used genre of communication among academia. Second, the rejection of Iranian writers’ articles in international scholarly journals are generally said to be due largely to generalization problems.

2.2. Instruments

Move analysis as represented by Pho (2008b) represents academic research articles in terms of hierarchically organized text made up of distinct sections; each section can be subdivided into moves and each move can be broken down into steps. Following Pho’s (2008b) model, a structure of 19 rhetorical moves—four in Abstract, three in Introduction section, four in the Method, four in Result section and four in Discussion section were investigated. Another instrument used in this study was the model of writer identity proposed by Hyland (2002). Pronouns are said to help the writer organize the text and guide the reader through the argument, start personal opinions and knowledge claims, recount experimental procedure and methodology and acknowledge funding bodies, institutions and individuals that contributed to the study in some way. Each of categories present in Hyland’s (2002) taxonomy is described below.

- **Expressing self-benefits**: A number of writers included comments on what they had personally gained from the project and this category represents the least threatening function of authorial self-mention. This category is illustrated below:

  ….four items elicited information about their knowledge of English and the courses they had passed so far to trace their general English ability so that we could feel more confident in their responses. (RA2, P. 114: Jalilifar & Ansari, 2010)

- **Explaining a procedure**: There is a similar metatextual dimension to describing the research procedures used and this also reflects a similarly low degree of personal exposure. Here is an illustration of such a authorial identity category.

  The range of scores for MSSS is between 25 and 100 and this range for our participants calculated to be 50 to 87. (RA 10, P. 31:Ghonsooly & Elahi Shirvan, 2009)

- **Elaborating an argument**: This is a high-risk function where results contrast starkly between the two genres. Setting out a line of reasoning would seem to be a key purpose of academic writing but generally only the professional academics chose to stake their commitments to their arguments with the use of first person.

  We speculate the following reasons for the existing differences………. (RA 4, P61: Shooshtari & Jalilifar, 2010)

- **Stating results/claims**: This is the most self-assertive and consequently potentially the most face-threatening use of self-reference and, once again, it contrasts boldly with professional uses. The following example of this category was found in the corpus.

  The effect of motivational self-regulatory strategies on L2 learners’ achievement has scarcely been examined within the context of our country, Iran. (RA 10, P. 31:Ghonsooly & Elahi Shirvan, 2009)

- **Stating a purpose**: In a third of all cases students used authorial pronouns to state their discoursal purposes in order to signal their intentions and provide an overt structure for their texts. The following example will further elaborate on this function:

  … we will present some theoretical guidelines of setting and/or evaluating foreign language education policies in the context of broader social and educational policies. (RA3, P. 49: Kiany, Mirhoseini &

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† See the appendix
2.3. Data collection and analysis procedure

A total number of thirty applied linguistics articles were chosen randomly from the above mentioned journals. The selected articles for the current research were then analyzed in terms of the realization of those 19 rhetorical moves following Pho’s model of move analysis. After identifying and enumerating different moves, articles were analyzed in terms of how academic writers constructed their relationships with readers by performing pragmatic acts. To this end, Hyland’s (2002) first person functional taxonomy was used. Then the results of move analysis were correlated with the function of first person pronouns in each section of the article.

2.4 Inter-rater reliability analysis

It is possible that two individuals judge the move boundaries of a genre differently. Such a deficiency present in genre-based studies necessitates the researchers to include the inter-rater reliability analysis in their papers. In this way, they can increase the accuracy of the analysis integrated in their studies. This study dealt with this problem of subjectivity in identification of moves based on content or functions as well as different categories of writer identity by the inclusion of two coders. 15 of the articles were also coded by the second researcher who is an MA student in applied linguistics. As tabulated below, high inter-coder reliability rates were obtained.

| Moves | Kappa measure of agreement value | Moves | Kappa measure of agreement value | Moves | Kappa measure of agreement value | Moves | Kappa measure of agreement value |
|-------|----------------------------------|-------|----------------------------------|-------|----------------------------------|-------|----------------------------------|
| M1, A | 0.83                             | M1, I | 0.38                             | M1, R | 0.78                             | M3, D | 0.85                             |
| M2, A | 0.70                             | M2, I | 0.85                             | M2, R | 0.76                             | M4, D | 0.83                             |
| M3, A | 0.77                             | M3, I | 0.55                             | M3, R | 0.90                             | M5, D | 0.91                             |
| M4, A | 0.94                             | M1, M | 0.57                             | M1, D | 0.86                             | M6, D | 0.79                             |
| M5, A | 0.86                             | M2, M | 0.86                             | M2, D | 0.88                             | C1, A | 0.85                             |

(M: Move; A: Abstract; I: Introduction; M: Method; R: Results; D: Discussion; C: Category and AI: Authorial Identity)

3. Results and discussions

Regarding the first question, most of Abstract sections included the first three moves naming, Presenting the research, Describing the methodology, and Summarizing the results. So the general format of research article abstracts has been followed. The last move, “discussing the research”, was found in 75 % of abstracts which suggested that most of the writers were willing to draw implications from their studies.

An interesting feature of the abstracts, which is somewhat exclusive to this genre, is that a sentence can express two or three functions at the same time. Therefore, in RA abstracts, sometimes the first two moves or the last two moves are merged to construct a “dual move”, to use Pho’s (2008b) words. The “Discussing the research” should also be included if they are writing a paper in applied linguistics. In addition, they should learn to combine two moves in one sentence in the abstracts, especially the Presenting the research move and the Describing the methodology move. This enables the authors to write more concise abstracts.

All of the three moves in Pho’s (2008b) framework for the Introduction section occurred frequently in all articles, but with minor differences in the order the writers have set. Almost in half of the articles the third move, “Presenting the present work” occurred immediately after the first move, “Establishing a territory”. The “Establishing a niche” move (i.e. indicating a gap in previous studies) was also found in more than 80% of the articles. An added move which was found in one of the articles was “drawing implication” move. Also a few number of scholars included the “Giving background knowledge” move in their articles. Concerning Introduction section, a kind of dissimilarity was found between the results of this study and those of Posteguilo (1999) in which “Summarizing existing studies” move was not considered as an obligatory move in Introductions of Computer Science RAs. Hence, Due to the disciplinary variations of rhetorical organization of RAs, scholars should be
informed of their own disciplines. The third move of introduction section, “Presenting the preset work”, was fulfilled via two steps in AP RAs; however, this move was realized by an additional step, naming “Presenting findings”, in Kanoksilapatham’s (2005) study on biochemistry articles.

In a methods section, where authors describe how they collected and analyzed data, usually statistical analyses are included. In fact, whereas all the Methods sections contain the “Describing data collection procedure” move, only 50% of the articles describe how the data is analyzed. So move two was absent in half of the article introductions. An added move in this section was “Describing the overall design of the study” move. A phenomenon observed in some articles was that some Methods sections were so lengthy and incoherent. When the readers encounter with these sections they may become mixed up with the theoretical procedure having been displayed by the writers. The reason behind this incoherence may be the possible multiplicity of variables discussed in this section, and also to what extent the researcher thought about his responsibility in offering justifications for the data collection and analysis procedure. The inclusion of long lists of variables and the interpretation of data collection and analysis procedure confirm Gilbert and Mulkay’s (1984) and Myers’ (1985) opinions that the Methods sections are similar to a discontinuous outline.

Step two of move one in Results sections, restating research questions, was rare among articles. Also, most of the articles contained a “Preparing for the presentation of results” move, which normally occurred at the beginning of this section. Just as the “Preparing for the presentation of results” move is a frequent move in the Results section, the same can be said of the “Preparing for the presentation of the discussion section” move in the Discussion-Conclusions section. As findings suggested, the four most frequent things that authors did in this section are “Highlighting overall research outcome”, “Discussing the findings of the study”, “Deductions from the research” and Evaluating the study. Unlike the Results section where results tended to be reported without further comments, the Discussing the findings move was present in all the Discussion-Conclusions section of the articles.

With regard to the second question, all the five categories proposed by Hyland (2002) for authorial identity were found in the corpus. However, as table 2 indicates Elaborating on an argument, Stating results/claims, and Stating a purpose were the most frequent categories detected in these journal articles. Regarding writers’ use of personal pronouns, “Summarizing existing studies” move was the only move fulfilling all the five functions found in Hyland’s (2002) framework of writer identity (Table 3). In all sections of the articles the first move contained the Stating the purpose function except for Methods and Results sections.

Table 2. Relative frequency and percentage of categories of writer identity across different sections of RAs

| Article sections | stating a purpose (%) | Stating results/claims (%) | Elaborating an argument (%) | Expressing self-benefits (%) | Explaining a procedure (%) |
|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| abstract         | 3 (42)                | 2 (28.5)                    | --                          | 2 (28.5)                    | --                        |
| Introduction     | 18 (24.3)             | 17 (22.9)                   | 29 (39)                     | 8 (10.8)                    | 2 (2.7)                   |
| Method results   | --                    | --                          | 2 (12.5)                    | 14 (87.5)                   | 9 (22.5)                  |
| Discussion & conclusions | 7 (11.4) | 22 (36.06) | 26 (42.6) | 6 (9.8) | -- |
| Total            | 30 (15.1)             | 61 (30.8)                   | 58 (29)                     | 24 (12.1)                   | 25 (12.6)                 |

According to table 2 the most frequent category of authorial identity in Abstract sections of RAs was “Stating a purpose”. This may be due to the fact that the primary function of an Abstract section is presenting the study purposefully. Therefore, the authors preferred to establish their presence in the studies by expressing the primary goals. “Elaborating on an argument” and “explaining the procedure” were two categories which were not found at all in Abstract sections. The reason may lie in the nature of this section. Abstract sections usually function as a brief introduction to the research paper; therefore, there is little space for giving elaboration for the arguments presented by the authors themselves. Also, any kind of comprehensive explanation may not be seen in this section because the
process of discussing the research methodology should be so straightforward that other researchers can replicate the work easily. Hence, the researchers preferred not to involve themselves in such a process in Abstract sections. They postponed this kind of identity expression to the Method section. As it is clear from table 2, this category of authorial identity was the most frequent one in Method sections of RAs (87.5%). In contrast to Abstract sections, which did not contain “Elaborating on an argument” category, the Introduction sections have this category as the most frequent one among the five categories present in this section (39%). The only categories of writer identity employed by researchers in Method sections of applied linguistics articles were “Expressing self-benefits” and “Explaining a procedure”. In this section authors tried to explain the step-by-step procedure of collecting and analyzing the data for the study. Also, they pointed to what they had gained from the project.

The frequency of “Elaborating on an argument” category in Results section was much lower than its frequency in Discussion-Conclusion section. This result showed that authors withheld the interpretation of results to Discussion-Conclusion section of RAs. Overall, as Table 2 suggests the most frequent writer identity categories in this set of corpus were reported to be “Stating results/claims” (30.8%) and “Elaborating on an argument” (29%).

To probe the third question, different percentages of each authorial identity category present in Hyland’s (2002) taxonomy across different rhetorical moves were calculated.

| Sections of RAs | Moves of RAs | Stating a purpose (%) | Stating results/claims (%) | Elaborating on an argument (%) | Expressing self-benefits (%) | Explaining a procedure (%) |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Abstract       | M1: STR      | --                    | --                        | --                            | --                          | --                        |
|                 | M2: PTR      | 3 (10)                | --                        | --                            | --                          | --                        |
|                 | M3: DTM      | --                    | --                        | --                            | --                          | --                        |
|                 | M4: STF      | --                    | 2 (3.2)                  | --                            | 2 (8.3)                     | --                        |
|                 | M5: DTR      | --                    | --                        | --                            | 2 (8.3)                     | --                        |
|                 | Total        | 3 (10)                | 2 (3.2)                  | --                            | 2 (8.3)                     | --                        |
| Introduction    | M1: EAT      | 13 (44)               | 17 (27.8)                | 29 (74)                       | 6 (25)                      | 2 (8)                     |
|                 | M2: EAN      | 2 (6.8)               | --                      | --                            | --                          | --                        |
|                 | M3: PTPW     | 3 (10)                | --                      | --                            | 2 (8.3)                     | --                        |
|                 | Total        | 18 (60)               | 17 (27.8)                | 29 (74)                       | 8 (33.3)                    | 2 (8)                     |
| Method          | M1: DDCP     | --                    | --                      | --                            | 2 (8.3)                     | 3 (12)                    |
|                 | M2: DDAP     | --                    | --                      | --                            | --                          | 11 (44)                   |
|                 | Total        | --                    | --                      | --                            | 2 (8.3)                     | 14 (56)                   |
| Results         | M1: PFTPOTRS | --                    | 4 (6.5)                 | --                            | --                          | 6 (24)                    |
|                 | M2: RSIR     | --                    | 8 (13.1)                | --                            | 2 (8.3)                     | 3 (12)                    |
|                 | M3: COR      | 2 (6.8)               | 8 (13.1)                | 3 (7.5)                       | 4 (16.6)                    | --                        |
|                 | Total        | 2 (6.8)               | 20 (32.7)               | 3 (7.5)                       | 6 (25)                      | 9 (36)                    |
| Discussion & conclusions | M1: PFTPOTDS | 2 (6.8)               | --                      | --                            | --                          | --                        |
|                 | M2: HORO     | --                    | 3 (4.9)                 | 4 (10)                        | 2 (8.3)                     | --                        |
|                 | M3: DTFOTS   | 2 (6.8)               | 3 (4.9)                 | 3 (7.5)                       | 2 (8.3)                     | --                        |
|                 | M4: DCOTS    | --                    | 8 (13.1)                | 4 (10)                        | 2 (8.3)                     | --                        |
|                 | M5: ETS      | --                    | --                      | --                            | --                          | --                        |
|                 | M6: DFTR     | 3 (10)                | 8 (13.1)                | 15 (37.5)                     | --                          | --                        |
|                 | Total        | 7 (23.2)              | 22 (36)                 | 26 (65)                       | 6 (25)                      | --                        |

An investigation into the diversity of authorial identity indicators in different RA sections revealed that the degree of diversity was so rare in Abstract as well as Method sections of RAs in the field of applied linguistics. As Table 3 showed the highest frequencies of “Elaborating on an argument” category were seen in the first move of Introduction section and also the last move of Discussion-Conclusion section (“Establishing a territory” and “Deductions from the study” moves respectively). Most frequency values associated with the presence of different
categories of authorial identity across various rhetorical moves of RAs were observed to be below 15% except a few numbers of cases. For instance, the frequency of “Explaining the procedure” category in the second move of Method section, i.e. “Describing data analysis procedure”, was found to be 44%.

An investigation into the distribution of singular and plural personal pronouns across different sections of the articles showed that the only section that included singular pronouns in its moves was the Results section. The use of “I” was so rare in the texts denoting the fact that writers did not tend to take responsibility of their work.

4. Conclusion

The study investigates the application of move analysis to applied linguistics research articles in their entirety, thus adding to the ever-evolving knowledge of how writing in disciplines can be understood as having predictable and expected structures. The order of moves in majority of articles was found to be in accordance with Pho’s (2008b) model, but considerable number differed. The most frequent difference was that one or more moves were missing. This raises the question, which we couldn’t confidently answer, of whether the model should be adapted or whether the articles are defective; some alternative rhetorical strategies seem effective. The process of analysis was very subjective. The two analysts were in good agreement with each other in interpretation, but felt insecure about the basis of their judgments. Readers who have had the patience to study our example texts will realize that distinguishing different moves is a difficult task to be done. Move identification based on content or function only is supported by the analysis of linguistic realization.

Findings are in line with the proposal put forth by Harwood (2005) that “promotional devices can market the research from the start, underscoring novelty and newsworthiness in the introduction as they help create a research space. Pronouns can also help repeat claims and findings at the close, to show that the work deserves to be taken seriously, and that, by extension, the author deserves to be seen as a player in the discourse community”. The knowledge gained from this study contributes to an understanding of the discourse in research articles and reinforces how well move analysis gives an in-depth perspective on the formation of a distinctive section of a research article. The rhetorical organization delineated in this study contributes to demystifying academic writing, thus facilitating the entry of newcomers to the highly selective academic discourse community of applied linguistics researchers. In addition to the theoretical contributions to discourse analysis, this study offers practical implications to those interested in pedagogy—for native and non-native speakers, as well as novice and seasoned scientists, in reading and writing instruction. The rhetorical structure captured by move analysis can be presented in the classroom to raise learners’ consciousness of discipline specific reading skills. The awareness of the conventions of research articles can empower learners to become proficient academic readers. The analysis proposed by the study builds up a schema for research article readers as to what to expect while reading, in what sequence, and what purposes the authors have while writing an article. Similarly, the analysis also provides a foundation for less experienced authors to write in such a manner that conforms to the conventions or expectations of the discourse community.

The results of the study have pedagogical implications to help students, especially post-graduate students, and also non-native writers in their academic writing. Hyland (2002) stated that students should be aware of generic organization to be a member of their academic community. Bahatia (1997) emphasized that novice writers can benefit from the results of genre analysis. With generic information in mind, they can generate more complex genres. Lio and Evans (2010) claimed that generic awareness helps novice writers in both generating complex genres and enjoying the explicit knowledge of genre organization. The current study is a descriptive study of RAs in applied linguistics. Since only 30 articles were analyzed in the present study, future research should be conducted on a bigger corpus. The study can also be a cross-disciplinary one. Furthermore, the current study only includes written discourse analysis. In order to explore more socio-cultural factors and reader’s expectations on writing academic articles, it would be helpful to carry out interviews or conduct surveys with disciplinary informants and authors in future studies.

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### Appendix

#### Rhetorical moves in applied linguistics research articles (Pho, 2008b)

| ABSTRACT | RESULTS |
|----------|---------|
| Move 1: Situating the research | Move 1: Preparing for the presentation of the results section |
| Move 2: Presenting the Research | Step 1: Restating data collection and analysis procedure |
| Move 3: Describing the Methodology | Move 2: Reporting specific/individual results |
| Move 4: Summarizing the Findings | Move 3: Commenting on specific results |
| Move 5: Discussing the Research | Step 1: Interpreting results |

| INTRODUCTION | DISCUSSION-CONCLUSION |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| Move 1: Establishing a territory | Move 1: Preparing for the presentation of the discussion section |
| Step 1: Summarizing existing studies | Step 1: Giving background knowledge |
| Move 2: Establishing a niche | Move 2: Highlighting overall research outcome |
| Step 1: Indicating a gap | Move 3: Discussing the findings of the study |
| Move 3: Presenting the present work | Step 1: Comparing results with literature |
| Step 1: Announcing present research purposefully | Step 2: Accounting for results |
| Step 2: Presenting research questions | Move 4: Drawing conclusions of the study |
| | Move 5: Evaluating the study |
| | Step 1: Indicating limitations |
| | Move 6: Deductions from the research |
| | Step 1: Making suggestions/ drawing implications |
| | Step 2: Recommending further research |

| METHOD | |
|--------|---|
| Move 1: Describing data collection procedures | |
| Step 1: Describing the sample | |
| Step 2: Describing research instruments | |
| Step 3: Justifying data collection procedure | |
| Move 2: Describing data analysis procedure | |
| Step 1: Recounting data analysis procedure | |