

The logo for The Asian ESP Journal is a dark red horizontal bar with a white oval shape in the center. The text "The Asian ESP Journal" is written in a dark red, serif font across the bar, with the white oval partially overlapping the letters.

**The Asian ESP Journal**

# **The Asian ESP Journal**

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# The Asian ESP Journal

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# The Asian ESP Journal

Welcome to the Spring 2008 issue of the *Asian ESP Journal*. The common theme that ties the contributions in this edition together is discourse analysis, which is applied toward several different ends. Peter Sampson discusses applying discourse analysis to preparing students for overseas study, Le Cheng, King Kui Sin, & Jian Li apply discourse analysis to interpret differences between American and Chinese case briefs, Anil Pathak analyzes the discourse of mock job interviews, and Zahra Amirian, Zohreh Kassaian, & Mansoor Tavakoli examine corpora of linguistics papers to find differences between Persian and English in preferred discourse organization.

The papers in this volume follow in the tradition established by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), questioning assumptions regarding how English is used and offering often surprising insights into standard organizations of form and the functions those forms serve.

Peter Sampson begins the issue by discussing how teachers preparing their students for university study in English speaking countries can explicitly address the different contexts in which students will be expected to perform, including lectures, tutorials/discussion groups, writing essays, and reading textbooks and research articles. He includes some examples of practical pedagogic activities which other teachers will hopefully be able to apply in their own contexts.

Le Cheng, King Kui Sin, & Jian Li examine corpora of American and Chinese case briefs, or court judgments, to find areas where they may differ. As China increasingly moves toward adoption of WTO standards and rules, there is increasing pressure toward standardization of Chinese legal traditions. Beyond painting a compelling picture of the differences between Chinese and American law, their paper reveals standard genres for law students in both countries, and practitioners who straddle both legal systems. They systematically explain how the two different systems approach the common problem of interpreting law.

Next Anil Pathak deconstructs myths of job interviews perpetuated by textbooks, demonstrating how students, in conducting mock interviews, encountered and dealt with problems and

misinterpretations. The central message of this paper is one common to the discourse analysis tradition—actual discourse is generally much messier and more difficult to interpret than textbooks seem to suggest. The author concludes that teachers should take these findings into account when preparing students for job interviews; explicitly teaching where and how interview discourses can go wrong rather than uncritically following the cleaner discourses included in many textbooks.

Zahra Amirian, Zohreh Kassaian, & Mansoor Tavakoli complete the issue by comparing three different corpora of linguistics articles, a corpus of English articles published in linguistics journals, a corpus of Persian articles published in Persian journals, and a corpus of English articles written by Persian-speaking writers which were rejected by linguistics journals. They demonstrate some of the differences between English and Persian styles, offering a road map for Persian speakers hoping to successfully write English articles for publication in English language journals. More broadly, the conclusions they reach regarding discourse organization in English could inform native speakers of languages other than Persian regarding the norms of English language discourse and how to conform to those norms when writing.

This issue truly reflects the international nature of the *Asian ESP Journal*, with articles from China, Singapore, New Zealand, and Iran. I hope you enjoy the issue and find its contents compelling and provoking. If you would like to submit a paper yourself, I encourage you to do so. Please visit the submissions guidelines, linked from this page.

We're looking forward to hearing from you.

All the best,

**Theron Muller**

Associate Editor,

*Asian ESP Journal*

*Submission guidelines*

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**Using Discourse Analysis to Prepare Learners for  
Overseas University Study.**

**Peter Sampson**

*Waikato Institute of Technology, New Zealand*

**Biodata**

**Peter Sampson** has taught EFL in Egypt and ESL in New Zealand. He holds an MA in Applied linguistics from Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. He is currently a materials writer for English language online learning.

**Abstract**

Students coming to English speaking countries to study at university will encounter the English language being used in a number of contexts including lectures, tutorials/discussion groups, writing essays and reading textbooks and research articles. This discussion looks at each of these contexts individually. It proposes that the language teacher can help prepare their learners for this university environment through the deliberate study of relevant discourses, and suggests activities that facilitate such learning.

**Key words:** discourse analysis, university study, preparation, ESL, non-western students.

## Introduction

In the course of their university training, ESL learners will spend many hours listening to lectures and participating in tutorials with their native speaking classmates. They will write essays and read numerous articles and textbooks. The language teacher has an opportunity to equip their learners for university study before they enter the English medium universities. The analysis of authentic data from these contexts in the language classroom can provide a useful means of language learning and preparation for what the learners will face at university. This article looks at each of these contexts in turn and suggests that through the analysis of authentic data problematic areas can be identified. The article suggests approaches that language teachers can use to help prepare their learners.

## Lectures

One benefit of authentic lectures is observing the way they are structured. By identifying structure in a lecture, the learner is in a better position to comprehend the lecture content and relationships between it. Flowerdew & Miller (1997, p.33) found that micro-level discourse markers such as *and*, *so*, *but*, *now* and *okay* often help to divide up the text in the same way punctuation and conjunctions do in written text. Seldom, however, will they hear lecturers in clear, complete grammatical sentences. Analysis of lecture discourse can therefore help learners become aware of the messiness of real-time lectures with false starts, fillers, redundancies and repetitions occurring as the lecturer processes what he/she want to say.

E.g.    So, the sorts of thing. What are we finding?                    (topic shift, false start)

          We looked at ... um a series of ...                                   (filler)

It is important from a comprehension point of view to train learners to deal with these features. The language teacher can give mini lectures with transcripts for the learners to follow. Learners mark on the transcript the examples of the specific language features such as repetition, false starts, and topic shifts. This enables the learners to see what they will eventually have to identify through listening alone. This is achieved through steadily increasing the length of the lectures and decreasing the written support.

Flowerdew & Miller (1997) warn that the authentic use of macro-level discourse markers, such as *Okay*, *let's get started*, *we'll put up our last slide*, and *we come to the conclusions* may not be as consistent as the course books suggest. Learners will face a range of lecture styles and clarity and therefore need to be prepared for inconsistent use of discourse markers and develop other strategies to

use alongside these signals. Beneficial strategies include identifying lexical bundles and discourse intonation patterns.

As a result of their study of the 2.7 million word T2K-SWAL Corpus (TOEFL 2000 Spoken and Written Academic Language Corpus), Biber, Conrad & Cortes (2004) suggest that lexical bundles serve important functions in the construction of lecture discourse. They identify three common types of lexical bundles each with different functions, e.g. Lexical bundles such as *I want to talk about* and *What I want to do is* provide overt signals to the learner that a new topic is being introduced, while *has to do with* signal that the topic is being elaborated or clarified. These bundles act as discourse framing devices which are followed by a slot for new information. The frame tells the listener how to interpret the new information with respect to stance, discourse organization, or referential status (Biber, Conrad & Cortes, 2004, p.392). Structured note-taking exercises that provide the lectures topics and require the learner to identify the frame and the new information in the ‘slot’ help learners develop this useful strategy.

**Example 1:** Structured note taking exercise

Topic	Frame	Slot
Kinship	<i>has to do with</i>	<i>extended families</i>

Identifying the role intonation plays in structuring lectures provides a valuable tool for the learners in following the lecturer and assisting in effective listening.

Thompson (2003) reports on a finding in Barr (1990) where L2 learners used discourse intonation awareness to interpret lecture organization. Barr reported that students who had been given language awareness training in discourse intonation were better able to interpret lecture organization. Thompson’s (2003) study showed how authentic lectures were broken into fewer phonological paragraphs than EAP materials, giving an inaccurate representation of what learners will face at university. Teachers would benefit their learners by highlighting how phonological paragraphs are signaled, with low termination and a high onset, and used in conjunction with other text structuring devices.



### Tutorials/ Discussion groups

Learners involved in university study are expected to participate in tutorial/discussion groups with their native speaking classmates. The analysis of discourse from this context will offer insight to the learners as to the transactional and interactional nature of the groups. While learners need the skills to present their views to the group, Basturkmen (2002a, p. 235) advises that ‘this needs to be complemented with a view of discussion as interaction and talk and ideas as co-constructed’. Sinclair & Coulthard’s (1975) three-part exchange structure of initiation, response, feedback (IRF) is a useful tool for helping learners follow the discourse organization. Not all discussion, however, is as clear cut as the IRF model suggests. Learners sometimes respond negatively to the initial idea or comment and so the exchange is extended until a satisfactory outcome is achieved. Analysis of this form of negotiation highlights a second structure I R F/I R (F) – that will benefit learners preparing for university; see example 2 (Basturkmen, 2002a, p. 237).

**Example 2:** IRF/IR (F) model (Basturkmen, 2002a, p. 237 – 8)

Jo	<i>Initiation</i> The previous group seem to have more stress on the technology importance than yourselves didn't you feel that as a factor 1
Lee	<i>Response</i> I think I think it's irrelevant you don't need it you don't buy a TV on the basis of technology I don't think you buy dry cleaning on of technology I think you need to keep up with it because if they get well down their competitors can use it against them but I don't think it's important as a mechanism for gaining market share or maintaining market share
Jo	<i>Follow-up as initiation</i> So what's their competitive advantage
Lee	<i>Response</i> Quality the service they provide and the people they employ how they provide the service at the front end of the business
Pat	<i>Follow-up as initiation</i> I thought one of the main criteria for customers selecting a dry cleaner was the professional care of their clothes and how stain free they were when they came back so even though the customer may not be interested in technology surely it's critical that these people should be interested in technology
Lee	<i>Response</i> I didn't say they shouldn't be interested in it I said I didn't think it was something as highly important as something to give out to the customers

Analyzing examples of miscommunication between native and non-native speaking learners that occur in tutorial/discussion groups prepare language learners to communicate more effectively at university. Clennell (1997, p. 117) sees the successful use of discourse intonation as key to effective cross-cultural communication. Native speakers of English change the pitch of lexical items within an utterance as they follow a system of hierarchical prominence or tonic stress (Halliday, 1985, cited in Clennell, 1999, p. 119). When non-native speakers of English fail to identify this prominence they can easily misunderstand the propositional content of an utterance and themselves give inappropriate messages.

The illocutionary force or the pragmatic intention of an utterance is expressed through the use of ‘tone’ and ‘key’. Relatively small changes to these can have profound consequences on meaning. Clennell (1999, p. 84) cites the example of an overseas student incorrectly identifying her native speaking colleague’s intention in a tutorial group when he said ‘*Eva, YOU haven’t said much*’. The speaker placed tonic stress on YOU and used a low key falling tone over the remainder of the utterance to give the illocutionary force of gentle invitation. A high key and/or rising tone would be more likely to imply criticism. Eva understood the words but confused the illocutionary force because she didn’t correctly interpret the intonation features.

### Essay writing

Coherence is an important aspect of written texts. Basturkmen holds that ‘there are certain patterns by which texts are typically sequenced and typical ways that one clause, sentence, or part of a text is interpreted in relation to another’ (2002b, p. 52). These clause relations combine to form recognized macro-patterns of text organization, e.g. *problem-solution*, *question-answer* and *general-particular* (see table 1). Paltridge (1996) sees these patterns as representing ‘text types’ which are extremely useful in the language learning classroom as they cross over genre lines. Hewings & McCarthy (1988, cited in McCarthy & Carter, 1994, p. 58 – 61) suggest a useful activity called a ‘text frame’ for drawing attention to the macro-structure of a particular text.

**Table 1:** Macro patterns of text organization

<i>Pattern</i>	<i>Example</i>
problem – solution	situation > problem > solution > evaluation
question - answer	situation with question > answer 1 > evidence 1 > answer 2 > evidence 2 etc.
general - particular	general statement > specific statement 1 > specific statement 2 etc. > general statement

Learners who are trying to express, sometimes complex, ideas in a second language would benefit greatly from a good understanding of how texts are organized and the role that plays in creating coherence in their writing.

Vergaro (2005) points out that different cultures structure discourse in different ways; even discourse genres considered standardized or formulaic. Chinese learners might submit written work that follows Chinese academic discourse structures but differs from the conventions expected in New Zealand universities. A focus on genre analysis, therefore, provides the learners with the opportunity to acquire the culturally relevant knowledge that they can use in undertaking writing tasks at university. With the help of explicit models and specific marking schedules, practice writing can be peer marked to help both the writer and the marker become more aware of the specific features of different writing genres.

### **Reading textbooks and research articles**

Learners face a barrage of written material at university. Not knowing how to deal with it can be the source of much stress and an inefficient waste of time. Addressing some of these text types and genres in the language learning classroom in preparation for university will improve the learners' ability to handle authentic university texts.

Just as the writer benefits from analyzing discourse, so does the reader. Identifying macro-level features, such as structure, clause relations and coherence, and micro-level features, such as hedging, cohesive devices and the result of grammatical and lexical choices, help the reader effectively process the text. Understanding how a particular text is structured helps the learner follow the writer's argument or train of thought. McCarthy (1991) holds that good readers are constantly attending to the segmentation of the discourse and predicting what is coming up, both in terms of the next few words and in terms of larger patterns such as problem-solution, general-particular etc. This strategy can be worked on in class by the teacher giving learners the first few sentences of a text and asking them to predict what comes next. The teacher reveals the next few sentences of the text and discusses with the learners their predictions and the basis for them.

There are benefits in seeing how experts in a specific genre approach a text. Bazerman (1985, cited in Swales, 1990, p. 14) found that readers of research articles didn't read through the article from front to back, but used selective strategies in order to concentrate on what they considered to be 'news' for them. Language learners need to develop the strategy of selective reading in preparation for their university studies. Focused questions provided with a text can be used to train learners to search for specific information in the manner that an expert would. A timed 'treasure hunt' forces the

learners to move through the text quickly taking advantage of section heading and layout to find the relevant information within the time allowed.

### **Conclusion**

It is important that learners wanting to attend English speaking universities in a western environment are well prepared so that they can perform to their potential. English language teachers can play a large role in that preparation through well planned classroom activities that focus on the analysis of authentic discourse. By focusing on the specific contexts of lectures, tutorials/ discussion groups, essay writing and reading textbooks and research articles, the language teacher is able to show how the development of specific skills and strategies are relevant to the learners' future needs. To meet these needs, teachers need to help learners;

- identify structure within a lecture by becoming familiar with the use of discourse markers, lexical bundles and intonation
- understand the, sometimes, untidy nature of group interaction through the use of intonation patterns and common exchange structures
- write essays that follow patterns commonly used in the university context
- develop selective reading strategies that allow important information to be gleaned from large amounts of text.

It is hoped that the activities mentioned provide some direction for teachers wanting to prepare learners for university study and act as a catalyst for the development of their own resources to meet these needs.

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**A Discursive Approach to Legal Texts:  
Court Judgments as an Example.**

**Le Cheng, King Kui Sin & Jian Li**

*City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong*

**Biodata**

**Le Cheng** received his MPhil in law from Southwest University of Politics and Law and MPhil in linguistics from Zhejiang University, and is a Ph.D. candidate at City University of Hong Kong. He is also a researcher at Forensic Linguistics Center of China University of Politics and Law. His interest and publications are related to forensic linguistics, ESP, and discourse analysis.

**Dr. King Kui Sin** received his BA and MA from the Chinese University of Hong Kong and his Ph.D. from the Southern Illinois University. He is an associate professor at City University of Hong Kong and his interests cover the language of law, legal translation, and discourse analysis.

**Jian Li** is a Ph.D. candidate at City University of Hong Kong and her interest is in discourse analysis and forensic phonetics.

**Abstract:**

Whether in legal practice or jurisprudence, court judgments or case briefs are one of the most important legal genres for the legal profession. In the Common Law system, precedents constitute an essential basis in legal argument. In China, with the country's accession to the WTO, the transparency principles necessitate the study of the court judgments. With the economic globalization and the increasing interaction of legal affairs between countries, the paper examines contrastively the linguistic characteristics, moves and rhetoric of Chinese and American court judgments, with the aim of specifying the rhetorical preferences that are characteristic of "standard" judgments. The more significant point is that analysis of legal cultures is employed to account for the discursive differences. This study also has an underlying pedagogical motivation in that the results would be of great value and interest to the Chinese students of English for Legal Purposes (ELP) and the lawyers practicing foreign legal affairs.

**Key words:** ELP; legal texts; court judgments; discourse analysis

## 1 Introduction

Since the emergence of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in the 1960s, more and more studies of language use in specific contexts have been carried out. This is especially true when English has acquired the status of an international *lingua franca* in almost anyfield of study, and linguists have moved toward a contextualized notion of language. If the spread of the English language has turned English into a vehicle for international communication, on the other hand the orientation of linguistic studies toward language as communication in social contexts has largely contributed to the dignity of ESP studies.

In Chinese law, with the expansion of bilateral and multilateral agreements and treaties, international cooperation of justice and the effective function of the WTO usher in another period of radical change in the Chinese legal system as laws are revised to meet international standards. As China commits itself to open its legal services market internationally, much pressure will be put on China's fledging legal profession. This will indubitably have a significant impact on most aspects of the legal and judicial systems and will represent a challenge and opportunity for the legal profession in China. Chinese lawyers will face strong competition from abroad. At the same time, they will have access to both overseas and domestic markets. Therefore, those who are fluent in both Chinese and English will gain the upper hand. Against such a background, English for Legal Purposes (ELP) has gradually gained prominence in ESP. Especially after China's accession to the WTO, Legal English has been highlighted in China's ELP instruction of law, and practices of lawyers, for the transparency principle of the WTO requires member countries to publish timely reports and maintain transparency of trade-related laws, regulations, judicial decisions and administrative rulings (Article 10 of GATT).

Furthermore, legal genres are one of the top three factors causing difficulties for the Chinese lawyers involved in foreign affairs (Cheng, 2005), which requires the study of court judgments, one of the most frequently used genres in legal practice. Whether in legal practice or jurisprudence, among legal documents court judgments or case briefs (the abridged version of court judgments), are one of the most important legal genres for the legal profession. It is essential that legal professionals have a good command of the discourse conventions which characterize legal writing.

For some linguists, language has to serve various purposes, as there are different types of occasions for using it, that is, language serves different functions in accordance with concrete situations. This functional approach to describing language has its roots in the traditions of British linguist Firth (1957), who viewed language as interactive and interpersonal, as a way of behaving and making others behave. Halliday (1985) believes that language is what it is because it has to serve certain functions. In other words, social demands on language have helped to shape its structure. He provides one of the best expositions of language functions, using the term "function" to mean the purposive

nature of communication and outlining seven different functions of language. Legal documents serve a variety of functions, including eliciting information, persuading, memorializing events such as reciprocal communications, or accomplishing performative goals, such as creating or revoking legal relationships.

## **2 Literature review**

### *2.1 Contrastive studies in language and the law*

Contrastive rhetoricians maintain that different discourse communities' expectations are the primary reason for cross-cultural differences in writing styles, and that writers of second languages may transfer their L1 textual and rhetorical strategies into their second language before they have fully absorbed the expectations of their second language audience (Connor, 1996). Sub-cultural differences further entail the discourse contrast even within the same discourse community. In terms of legal community, there is basically a dichotomy about the division of legal systems: the Common Law system and the Civil Law system.

Contrastive legal studies in the United States have tended to focus mainly on the Romano-Germanic civil law tradition, or on the law of particular geographic regions (e.g., East Asian studies, Latin American studies) (Glendon et al, 2003). Those in China mainly deal with the comparison of two legal systems, the civil law system and common law system. For the comparative legalists, one of the pressing tasks is to capture how far in actual practice what is described as globalization in fact represents the attempted imposition of one particular legal culture on other societies. Indeed, with economic globalization and legal cooperation, the two major legal systems overlap with and influence each other. It is inevitable that Chinese legal culture is impacted. In China, some law specialists agree that the practice of legal precedents could help to protect the integration of the law and guarantee impartiality and efficiency in administering justice. There are however few contrastive studies, particularly in the field of language and the law, which highlight the significance of this possibility.

### *2.2 Genre analysis in ESP*

ESP is now well established as an important and distinct part of English Language Teaching. Since the late 1980s ESP has changed in two very significant respects. Firstly, English for Business Purposes has become an increasingly important, even dominant, area of ESP. Secondly, the work of discourse and genre analysis on the one hand and the results of computer-based analysis on the other provide a fuller understanding of how specific texts, both written and spoken, work. ESP is not only divided off into an enclave within the wider boundaries of English teaching, it is also parcelled up into subdivisions within itself. ESP is viewed as a cover term for teaching and learning English for multiple specific purposes: English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). EAP is implemented in educational institutions where students learn it for their



academic studies (Kenedy and Bolitho, 1984). In EAP, English for Science and Technology has been the main area, but English for medical Purposes and English for Legal Purposes have always had their place. As to EOP, it refers to English that is not for academic purposes and has further divisions according to different professional or vocational purposes such as English for Medical Purposes, English for Business Purposes, etc. (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998).

Various language issues are involved in the study of ESP, among which typical ones are grammar in ESP, vocabulary in ESP or genre analysis. There has been a growing interest in genre as a powerful means of analyzing and understanding texts in cross-disciplinary areas. The concept of genre evolves with a new perspective on the nature of language, which views language as a functional tool for achieving particular purposes. As a result a genre-based approach to language learning has gained an important place in language learning and teaching.

Genre is a macro level concept, a communicative act within a discourse network that represents the repertoires of typified social responses in recurrent situations and is used to package speech and make it recognizable to the exigencies of the situation (Berkenkotter and Huckin, 1995). Genre analysis refers to the study of the structural and linguistic regularities of particular genres or text-types and the role they play within a discourse community. (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998, p.xv)

Genre analysis in ESP began with Swales' pioneering work (Swales 1981, 1990) on the introduction to an academic article. Swales (1983, 1984) analyzed the introductions to a number of academic articles and found that the majority of the short introductions followed a four move pattern; he later modified this to three moves: (a) Establishing a territory; (b) Establishing a niche; (c) Occupying the niche (Swales 1990). Although his analysis targeted only the introductory part of an academic research thesis, his model has nevertheless been influential. Swales (1990) also analyses the development of the concept genre in the fields of folklore studies, literature, linguistics, and rhetoric. In the field of Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) there has been growing interest in the socio-cultural functions of disciplinary genres. Howe (1990; 1993) focuses on the "problem question" in law and analyzed the features of scripts from criminal law, public law, contract law, and tort. Bhatia (1993) has analyzed legal cases from two aspects; communicative purpose and structural interpretation. Maley (1985) and Bowles (1995) also provided their versions of law report analysis from a structural perspective.

The basic philosophy of a genre approach is entirely consistent with an ESP approach. It assumes that imparting genre knowledge is part of a short-cut method for raising students' proficiency in a relatively limited period of time to the level they require. The imparting of genre knowledge involves increasing awareness of the conventions of writing and teaching students to produce texts that, by following the conventions, appear well-formed and suitably structured to native-speaker readers

(Dudley-Evans, 1997). Thwaites et al. (1994,p.92) note that “genre foregrounds the influence of surrounding texts and ways of reading on our response to any one text. More specifically, it confirms textuality and reading as functions rather than things”. Genre analysis situates texts within textual and social contexts, underlining the social nature of the production and reading of texts. As well as locating texts within specific cultural contexts, genre analysis also serves to situate them in a historical perspective. Besides, genre analysis offers a chance to see synthesis, looking at similarities and differences across works. Bhatia (1997) holds that there are at least four distinct, though systematically related, areas of competence that an ESP learner needs to develop in order to get over his or her lack of confidence in handling specialist discourse. Genre analysis, thus, is an indispensable and feasible means employed in the analysis of court judgments, a discourse of professional communication for specific purposes.

### *2.3 Visuality of legal texts which facilitate text processing*

Graesser and Clark (1985, p.14) relate four knowledge sources to text understanding: the explicit linguistic material (including words, syntactic constructions, and linguistic signaling), world knowledge structures (including generic knowledge structures and specific knowledge structures), the goals of the reader and the pragmatic context of the communication. In legal documents there is the schematic structure (van Dijk,1985; Fairclough, 1995) that is important to recognize the broad passages of a text, there are the rhetorical connectives that indicate the relationship between text segments or sub clauses and there are typical thematic patterns; that is, there is a strong relationship between generic structure and content. Since the communicative goals of segments govern the distribution of content and presentation style, court judgments exhibit distinctive generic structures and patterns of message distribution. So knowledge of the generic structures of legal texts can increase processing precision by reducing search space and facilitating identification of rhetorical segments, thereby facilitating the working efficiency of legal documents.

## **3 Design of the study**

### *3.1 Composition of the Data*

The corpora contain judgments available on [www.findlaw.com](http://www.findlaw.com) and [www.chinacourt.com](http://www.chinacourt.com). 100 judgments in English and 100 judgments in Chinese were analyzed as indicated in table 1. The average size of the English judgments was between 1000 and 4000 words (2 to 8 pages), which constituted 75% of the English judgments. Judgments with less than 1000 or more than 4000 words represented about 8% of the corpus. The average size of the Chinese judgments was between 3000 and 7000 characters (3 to 7 pages), which form 85% of the total; 15% of the documents had 2000 characters or fewer (about 2 pages); only 5% had more than 8000 characters. Contrary to some

previous research that focused only on limited types of judgments, this study deals with many categories of judgment covering various fields of law. Moreover, the study extends to the judgments by courts of the first instance and second instance.

**Table 1:** Composition of Court judgments

	American Court Judgments	Chinese Court Judgments
First Instance	50	50
Second Instance	50	50
Civil Law	25	30
Criminal Law	30	20
Administrative Law	10	15
Procedure Law	15	20
Others	20	15

### 3.2 *Methods and Procedures of the Study*

Our approach includes qualitative and quantitative analysis. In combination with the literature review related to the genre analysis of court judgments and interview of 5 jurists, a qualitative analysis is used to decide the moves of a court judgment, including the relative length of each move and step. Analysis combined computer calculations and manual computation. In order to verify the validity and reliability of the study, the judgments were selected randomly. Furthermore, a literature review exploring legal traditions and legal systems was conducted in order to make the results and analysis more objective and exhaustive.

### 3.3 *Research Questions*

The major research questions in the thesis are included as follows:(1) Is there any difference in the moves and steps of Chinese court judgments and American court judgments?(2) Are the moves and steps of a judgment by a court of first instance the same as a court of second instance?(3) Do the judgments by courts of the same trial level follow exactly the same moves and steps?(4) Is there any difference in terms of legal analysis between Chinese court judgments and American court judgments?(5) Can any reasons be provided to account for the differences, if they exist?

## **4 Results and Discussion**

*4.1 Rhetorical Segments and Functional Analysis* Court judgments are performative in terms of the speech acts, and the fundamental act to be performed here is to adjudicate. In court judgments the judge aims to convince his professional and academic peers of the soundness of his argument.

Therefore, a judgment serves both a declaratory and a justificatory function (Maley, 1994). In truth, it

does even more than this, for what a court judgment shows is not only its justification, but also its legitimacy. Therefore, the facts and analysis supporting the decision or disposition are present in all cases. Under such a premise, a court judgment can be segmented according to different rhetorical roles. Table 2 provides an overview of rhetorical segments, contents and linguistic markers of court judgments. Table 3 provides a scheme describing the rhetorical segments of court judgments.

**Table 2:** Overview of the rhetorical segments, along with their contents and linguistic markers

Rhetorical Segments	Content	Linguistic markers
Heading	To make a brief summary of jurisdiction, decision time, title of proceeding, nature of the case the parties involved, etc.	decision, judgment, reason, order; Reasons for order, Reasons for judgment and order
		人民法院, 判决书, 民/刑/行, 初/终字
Introduction	To describe the situation before the court and answers these questions: who (the parties) did what (facts) to whom and how the court has dealt with the case.	introduction, summary
		提起诉讼, 开庭审理, 现已审理终结
Facts	To explain the facts in chronological order, or by description. It might include the disputed facts, the agreed facts and the found facts.	facts, background; The factual background, Agreed statement of facts
		原/被告认为, 经审理查明
Analysis	To describe the comments or arguments of the judge the application of the law to the facts as found.	analysis, , discussion arguments
		本院认为, 依照 xx 规定
Conclusion	To express the final judgment--- disposition or decision made by the court (in Chinese judgments) or judge (in American judgments) and specify the effects on the parties.	conclusion, disposition, costs ,revert, remand, affirm
		判决, 驳回, 维持, 改, 发回重审

**Table 3:** Percentage of Each Rhetorical Segments (C=Chinese Judgments; A=American Judgments; O=Optional)

Rhetorical segments		Percentage	
Label		Chinese Judgments	American Judgments
Heading		6%	1%
Introduction		4%	5%
Jurisdiction (A/O)			2%
Context/Facts	Facts Elucidated	20%	
	Facts Ascertained	40%	20%
Analysis	Legal Analysis	21%	68%
	Statutes	2%	
Decision/Conclusion		7%	4%
Judge's Postscript (O)		1%~4%	

Table 4 as follows is a match between the rhetorical distribution and functional analysis of a court judgment.

**Table 4:** rhetorical distribution and functional analysis of a court judgment

Rhetorical Segments	Functional Analysis
Head	Informative
Introduction	Informative
Jurisdiction (A/O)	Informative
Context/Facts	Informative
Analysis (ratiodecidenti)	Expressive/personal (binding)
Decision/Conclusion	Performative/regulatory
Judge's Postscript	Evocative/expressive/personal
Obiter Dictum	Evocative/expressive/personal (persuasive)

In American court judgments, there are two types of legal analysis: obiter dictum and ratio decidendi. Ratio decidendi has binding force for the later decisions of the same court or inferior courts and obiter dictum, persuasive but not binding. Ratio decidendi is usually associated with the first person plural pronoun and obiter dictum, concurring or dissenting, usually with the first person singular pronoun.

*Ratio decidendi*

“We review questions of statutory interpretation de novo. See *United States v. Jones*, 10 F.3d 901, 904 (1st Cir. 1993). The issue in this case is whether there was an “intercept” of a communication within the meaning of the Wiretap Act. In cases of statutory construction we begin with the language of the statute. See *Hughes Aircraft Co. v. Jacobson*, 525 U.S. 432, 438 (1999). We determine the meaning of a word from the context in which it is used. See *Holloway v. United States*, 526 U.S. 1, 6-7 (1999).”-per TORRUELLA, Circuit Judge (rendering court opinion).

*Obiter dictum*

“Unlike my colleagues, I believe that the district court erred in dismissing the indictment against Defendant- Appellee Bradford Councilman for violating Title I of the Electronic Communications Privacy Act (ECPA), Pub. L. No. 99-508, 100 Stat. 1848 (1986). To explain my disagreement, I will present some background information on the technology at issue and Congress’s passage of the ECPA. That background is critical to an understanding of the issue before us. I will then set forth Councilman’s arguments as I understand them and explain why I find them unpersuasive. I will then address the government’s persuasive arguments. In discussing this material, I will also respond to the reasoning of the district court and my colleagues.”—per LIPEZ, Circuit Judge (Dissenting).

In Chinese court judgments, whether the unanimous court opinion or majority court opinion (with concurring or dissenting opinion), lexical reference instead of pronoun is used to refer to the judge or the panel.

*Unanimous court opinion*

“The collegial bench was of the opinion that Standsted did not object to the truthfulness of the telex presented to the court by PICC Liaoning and this telex should be admitted as evidence....The collegial bench was of the opinion that the above evidence presented by Nantian and Standsted should be admitted as either party did not challenge the truthfulness of the other party’s evidence....The collegial bench was of the opinion that the above costs incurred by Nantian were evidenced by cargo handling and storage contract, list of costs, invoices and receipts and should be affirmed.”—per Qin Weiguo (Presiding Judge), Gong Jie (Acting Judge) and Fu Junyang (Acting Judge)

*Majority court opinion*

“...As to the ship priority, Judge Tan Weiguo and Judge Zhan Weiquan held that ...the claim for ship priority shall not be affirmed....Judge Cheng Shengxiang held that ... the claim for ship priority shall be affirmed. According to the majority opinion of this court, ... the decision is rendered as follows...”

4.2 Move Analysis

4.2.1 Move analysis of American judgments by the courts of first instance

	Move1 Heading
<i>UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</i>	Step 1 Trial Organization
<i>Civil Action No. 00-2195</i>	Step 2 Case No.
<i>FRANETTE McCULLOCH, Plaintiff</i> v. <i>GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, et al. Defendants.</i>	Step 3 Parties
<i>Plaintiff Franette McCulloch, an employee of the Executive Residence in the White House, alleges that... Defendants have moved to dismiss plaintiff’s claims for...</i>	Move2 Summary
<i>... The plaintiff, Franette McCulloch, has been employed as</i>	Move 3 Background

<i>an assistant pastry chef in the White House since 1983. As an assistant pastry chef, The President, or the designee of the President, is supposed to issue regulations that define the procedures for counseling and mediation.</i>	
<i>The President has moved under Fed. R. Civ. P. 12(b)(1) and 12(b)(6) to dismiss Count I for... The President has moved under Rule 12(b)(1) to dismiss Count II for... Both the President and defendant Mesnier have moved under Rule 12(b)(6) to dismiss Count III for failing to state a claim upon which relief can be granted.</i>	Move 4 Discussion
<i>... To survive a Rule 12(b)(6) motion to dismiss, “the complaint must set forth sufficient information to suggest that there exists some recognized legal theory upon which relief can be granted.”</i>	Step 1 Counts I and III
<i>FAILURE OF THE PRESIDENT TO ISSUE REGULATIONS</i>	Sub-step 1 Reason 1
<i>PLAINTIFF’S CONSTITUTIONAL CLAIMS</i>	Sub-step 2 Reason 2
<i>In Count , plaintiff brings a discrimination claim under the First and Fifth Amendments of the Constitution rather than the PEOAA...</i>	Step 2 Count II
<i>Accordingly, plaintiff’s complaint will be dismissed. A Final Order consistent with this Memorandum Opinion is being issued.</i>	Move 5 Conclusion

Sometimes, move 3 and move 4 cannot be clearly identified and some move may have additional embedded steps or sub-steps. In some court judgments moves and steps cannot be clearly identified or are omitted. In American judgments, Obiter Dictum, which is non-binding, is optional.

#### 4.2.2 Move analysis of Chinese judgments by the courts of first instance

	Move 1 Heading
<i>Beijing the Second Intermediate People’s Court</i>	Step 1 Trial Organization
<i>Civil Judgment</i>	Step 2 Nature of Case
<i>(2003)the second intermediate civil trial No.00464</i>	Step 3 Written Judgment No. and Trial Level
<i>plaintiff agent defendant agent</i>	Step 4 Parties
<i>As filed by the Plaintiff A against the Defendants B with respect to the dispute over XXX, this court accepted the case on January 2, 2003. On April 1, 2003, a collegiate bench, constituted in accordance with law, heard the case by public hearing. Party A’s agent xxx and Party B’s agent xxx participated in the proceedings. This case has now been concluded.</i>	Move 2 Summary
	Move 3 Facts and Evidence

<i>The plaintiff A claims:.... Therefore according to the stipulations of article 5.2 and article 22 of the Law against Undue Competition, the plaintiff filed the case to the court and asked the court to order the defendant that...</i>	Step 1 Facts and Reasons by Plaintiff
<i>The defendant B defended:.... Therefore, the plaintiff's claims can't be established, and the defendant asked the court to dismiss the litigation requests filed by the plaintiff in accordance with the law.</i>	Step 2 Facts and Reasons by Defendant
<i>During the hearing of this case, the plaintiff A submitted three types of evidence as follows</i>	Step 3 Evidence by Plaintiff
<i>As to the evidence above submitted by the plaintiff, the defendant B argued that....</i>	Step 4 Defendant's Arguments against Evidence by Plaintiff
<i>The defendant B submitted three types of evidence as follows:...</i>	Step 5 Evidence by Defendant
<i>As to the evidence above submitted by the defendant, the plaintiff A argued that....</i>	Step 6 Plaintiff's Arguments against Evidence by Defendant
	Move 4 Grounds of Judgment
<i>Based on the two parties' evidence and arguments on evidence, this court authenticate the evidential materials as follows:... Based on the two parties' evidence and arguments on evidence as well as this court's authentication, this court ascertains the facts as follows)</i>	Step 1 The facts and Evidence Established by the Court
<i>(This court take the view that...)</i>	Step 2 The Reasons for Judgment
<i>In Summary, according to article 5.2 of the Law against Undue Competition of the PRC</i>	Step 3 The Law Applied
<i>The decision is as follows:...</i>	Move 5 The Results of Judgment
<i>Any party which is not satisfied with this judgment may submit to this court within 15 days the Statement of Appeal with copies according to the number of the opposing parties. The appeal shall be instituted with the Higher People's Court of Beijing.</i>	Move 6 The Time Limit for Appeal and the Competent Appellant Court
<i>Chief Justice: ShaoMingyan Acting Judge: Zhang Xiaojin Acting Judge: He Xuan May 26, 2003 Clerk: Pan Wei</i>	Move 7 Signature by the Judge(s) and the Recording Clerk, and Seal by the People's Court

The above-mentioned move analysis is applicable to the judgments by the court of the first instance. In the judgments by the court of second instance, Move 6 can be omitted. In recent judgments, we find a trend that judge's postscript or epilogue, which is part of the judgment but not the legal reasoning or analysis of the decision, is favored by some judges.



*Judge's postscripts/epilogue in Chinese court judgments*

“The plaintiff’s father died when the plaintiff was young, and the defendant’s spouse died when the defendant was middle-aged, which WAS a tragedy in the secular world. The misfortune the two parties had therefore suffered was pitiable. But they came into dispute for the heritage of the deceased, adding salt to the hurt hearts, which was really a pity. Although Law can solve the dispute over heritage between the parties fairly, but money after all can’t substitute passion between relatives. The deceased has gone, and the relatives are still alive but come into dispute over the property of the deceased, can the deceased rest in the Dwelling Place of the dead? May the two parties discard their past animosity, respect each other and love each other, and repair the relation. To pursue that the family are harmonious and all the things are prosperous, isn’t it a pleasure!”

*4.3 Discussion*

From the above analysis, we can summarize the main differences between Chinese and American court judgments as follows:

- 1) legal analysis/reasoning takes more space in an American court judgment;
- 2) judge’s postscripts or epilogue in Chinese court judgments are more expressive than legally persuasive (obiter dictum) and don’t carry binding force (ratio decidendi in American judgments);
- 3) plural first person is used to refer to judges for ratio decidendi in American judgments and singular first person is used to refer to a judge in the obiter dictum; lexical reference instead of pronouns are used to refer to the judge or the panel in Chinese court judgments.

The system of law in the United States is unique among nations because of its combination of common law and constitutional hierarchy. Different from law created by the enactment of legislatures, common law comprises the body of principles and rules of action relating to government and security of persons and property, which derive their authority from usages and customs of antiquity, or from judgments and decrees of the courts recognizing, affirming, and enforcing such usages and customs. The “common law” is all the statutory and case law background of England and the American colonies before the American Revolution (Black’s Law Dictionary (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) pp. 250-251). The basis of the common law is the doctrine of stare decisis, by which is meant that once a ruling has been given on an issue of law by a judge of a certain level that decision becomes binding on all other judges of the same level and below. Therefore, to some extent, the doctrine of stare decisis provides a stimulus for the judges to express exhaustively their own opinions, whether in the opinion of the court (ratio decidendi) or in their personal opinion (obiter dictum) in order to gain prestige in the judge-made-law legal system, which may help to explain the adequacy of legal reasoning in many American court judgments, though not necessarily in every case.

The nexus that binds law to civil society operates differently in China from in the West. Traditionally, law in China doesn't encourage popular expression. Instead, the relationship between law, lawmaker, and governed in China is quasi-fiduciary in nature and based on trust (Alford, 1986). The governor rather than the governed preserves social balance by harmonizing natural and human orders, while rules are continually legitimated above and transmitted to society below (Peerenboom, 1993). Chinese legal thought posits a mutually complemented two-tier system of law: the first, a formal instrument of the centralized state authority; the other, an informal code of virtue and localized community norms. In other words, there exists the contrast between *li* (conventionally translated as rites or rituals) and *fa* (conventionally translated as law), which marks a distinction in Chinese political theory as to the nature of political order and the preferred means of achieving such order. *Li*, closely related with Confucianism, refers to social order achieved primarily with reference to traditional customs, mores, and norms, whereas *fa* indicates political order attained primarily through reliance on laws. The contradiction between *li* and *fa*, two dominant strategies for achieving social or political order began in the classical tradition, and has persisted to the present day. *Li* and *fa* help to explain Chinese attitudes toward law and law enforcement, including concrete form-court judgments and judge's postscripts, which are full of ideas for teaching and correction. Legal thoughts during the neo-democratic revolutionary period might provide a sound account for the phenomenon that the proportion of ratio decidendi or legal reasoning is relatively less than that in an American judgment. With China's post-1978 reforms and opening up, the legal system with Chinese characteristics has felt the impact of western legal systems—the Common Law system, which explicates why Chinese court reform has attached great importance to the expansion of legal reasoning in court judgments.

## **5 Conclusion and pedagogical implications**

By applying genre theory to court judgments, the findings and results are as follows: moves and steps of a Chinese court judgment are different from those of an American court judgment; moves and steps of a court judgment by a court of first instance are different from those of a court judgment by a court of second instance; judgments by courts of the same trial level do not necessarily follow exactly the same moves and steps; and some court judgments have embedded moves and steps.

This paper compared their differences between Chinese and American court judgments in term of moves, rhetorical segments and functions, and discussed the significance of ratio decidendi, obiter dictum and judge's postscript. We noted the different proportion of legal analysis in Chinese and American court judgments and analyzed obiter dictum and ratio decidendi, the two types of legal analysis in American court judgments with some subtle differences but sometimes overlapping. The paper analyzed the differences from a cultural perspective and holds generic and rhetorical structures

in court judgments are influenced by and can be accounted for via the legal cultures of the different legal systems.

The paper compares court judgments from different legal systems from a discursive perspective and helps to demonstrate the importance of discursive analysis, especially in cross-cultural study. It suggests ELP should not be limited to only the linguistic features of texts but should also consider genre, rhetoric and culture. Genre analysis, in combination with cultural analysis, will provide an interesting area in the discourse analysis of legal genres such as legislation, court judgments and other legal documents. When a generic analysis is carried out, we should not just do some superficial research such as the lexical, structural features, but go further to probe into the underlying rationales for those features from a socio-linguistic perspective such as cultural angle, for discourses have multi-dimensional features. In ELP teaching or learning, we should therefore adopt or develop discourse-oriented materials promoting legal community and culture, not just those based on legal content.

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**Deconstructing the Textbook Myth:  
Using Discourse-Disorders Analysis for Job Interview Training**

**Anil Pathak**

*Nanyang Technological University, Singapore*

**Biodata**

**Anil Pathak** teaches Professional Communication courses in Singapore. He has published books and research papers in this area, his latest book being 'Communication Skills Development Through Open Learning'. His interests include communication training through Toastmasters and delivering motivational speeches in developing counties.

**Abstract**

This paper focuses on training university students for job interviews. When we apply our understanding from the field of therapeutic communication to the situation of communication training, it becomes clear that developments in pragmatics and speech act theory can be meaningfully applied to a number of communication training situations. The term *therapeutic communication* might be suitable for the approach used in this project since we wish to depict a training situation in which action is almost exclusively verbal (in our case focused on text analysis), with the aim of self-reflection and a change in communication behaviour. Although the fields of therapeutic communication and therapeutic discourse have been widely researched, the term *therapy* is being used in this paper in a rather broad and divergent sense. From the point of view of training, it makes sense to use data from extreme and artificially created situations so that principles of communication can be easily derived and generalized in a practicable manner (Drew and Heritage, 1992). Therapy can take different forms. In this project, therapy takes the form of role-plays followed by analysis tracking the disruptions, interruptions, and communication failures evident through the role-plays. The aim is to present interview situations as examples of discourse disorders. By emphasizing the disorders of discourse rather than presenting the interview as a mythical structured event, we wish to shift the focus from the subject (the interviewee) to the event and to the actors. Therapy in terms of self-reflection has been achieved by this shift in emphasis.

**Key words:** Job Interviews, Discourse, Communication Training, Role-play

### **Recent Research on Job Interviews**

Earlier research on employment interviews focuses more on presenting (or recommending) a structure for an ideal employment interview. Campion, et al. (1997) describe and evaluate the many ways in which interviews can be structured. This work identifies fifteen components of structure that may enhance either the content of the interview or the evaluation process. Each component is explained in terms of its various operationalizations and impact on numerous forms of reliability, validity, and user reactions. Like some other works in this field, Campion, et al. (1997) conclude that interviews can be easily enhanced by using some of the many possible components of structure.

In a slightly dated review of employment training research, Harris (1989) provides extremely useful suggestions for future studies in this area. The review reports major changes in findings regarding the validity of the interview, the impact of applicant sex, and the effect of interviewer characteristics and behavior on applicant reactions. Contrary to the widely held belief that the interview has low validity, the paper reports research that indicates at least modest validity for this selection tool. Conversely, the effect of the campus interview on applicant reactions has been seriously questioned. The paper draws attention to several areas in social psychology, including the literature on attitudes-intentions-behavior, the elaboration likelihood model, and theories of discrimination.

Scheuer (2001) presents, discusses, and analyses data from a Danish empirical study of authentic job interviews. Drawing on critical discourse analysis and sociolinguistics, as well as other fields, the author explores the relationship between success in job interviews and communicative style. The recontextualization of life-world resources is approached through both qualitative and quantitative analyses of spoken language. The author demonstrates that certain communicative styles and recontextualizations formed by a combination of life-world and job-related perspectives are more successful in job interviews. On the basis of sociolinguistic evidence, Scheuer argues that these styles and recontextualizations are products of general processes of socialization rather than products of formal education.

More recent research on interactions involved in job interviews focuses on the fact that the second wave of globalization has made organizations strive for individualism among employees while continuing to protect and project organizational values. In real terms, this means that continuance of traditions sometimes has to pave way for individual innovation. Studies in interactions in interviews suggest that this emphasis on innovation is reflected in new demands by recruiters and interviewers. Research has shown that in institutional settings a candidate's performance in interview is more likely to be evaluated on the basis of their ability to recontextualize personal discourses in institutional settings (Linell and Thunquist, 2003).

A job interview session is an artificial communication event. In very few other professional situations do participants who are willing to share information about themselves have their personal details probed so deeply. Focus on a single person's biography, the apparent question-answer nature of the session, and the hidden competitive spirit that is behind the apparently co-operative communication make the job interview an artificial and sometimes awkward event. Apart from these intrinsic characteristics, the pragmatics of the situation can make some of the sessions chaotic and even contingent. Inexperienced interviewers, pressure on the time available, unclear expectations of the job position, and the nature of logistic support are some of the realities of any job interview. It then might be expected that even in highly planned situations there is a considerable degree of uncertainty and unpredictability in a job interview session. To come to terms with this unpredictability, recruitment agencies and recruitment personnel share a 'myth' of the idealized interview session. Although the recruiters sometimes have a clear understanding that the prescribed interview procedure is an exception rather than a reality, these procedures are formulated and prescribed widely in recruitment practices.

Campbell and Roberts (2007) examine the institutional and personal discourses of the competency-based interview and how their synthesis produces an 'authentic self'. Based on video recorded job interviews, the authors conclude that the interview's requirement for the synthesis of work-based and personal identities is particularly disadvantaging to foreign-born minority ethnic candidates. Examples of candidates producing a convincing synthetic persona are contrasted with unsuccessful candidates whose 'lack' of systemization marks them as having a hybrid identity. They are judged by interviewers as 'inconsistent', 'untrustworthy', and non-belongers to the organization. Because there is little relationship between the required skills of the interviews and the demands of the job, the authors observe that the interview ritual is as much about constructing the institution as it is about the fair and effective selection of candidates.

### **Research Objective**

The aim of this research is to formulate a novel method to train university students for employment interviews. The focus of the experiment is on familiarizing the students with the reality of interviews. This 'reality' consists of the interruptions, disruptions, inaccuracies, mishandlings, and failures of communication strategies mainly on the side of the interviewer. An apparent lack of transparent structure and arbitrariness are the features of many employment interviews, and the aim of this experiment is to enhance student awareness of these features.

To enhance this awareness, students were asked to (1) engage in role-play situations that involved a mock employment interview, and (2) act as mini-discourse analysts by attempting a critique of the mock interviews. This method is explained in detail in the next section.

### **Research Method**

The present experiment was carried out with Engineering students approaching graduation. The students were already facing campus interviews and other employment screening processes. To enhance student awareness of the frame conflict observed in earlier studies (as summarized in the previous section), role-play situations were set up in a communication classroom. Students were asked to read some 'textbook advice' on how to plan, conduct, and participate in a job interview session. In each role-played situation, two students played the role of an interviewer while a third student acted as an interviewee. The three students engaged themselves in preparatory discussions and agreed upon an imagined interview context (the organisation and the post applied for). After the role-play, the texts of the role-play were analyzed using the following three broad categories:

- The recruiters' problem solving procedures,
- The interviewees' attempts at initiatives, and
- The processes of discursive negotiation

The analysis was shared with the students with a view to enhance their understanding of how institutional context influences communication behavior. Students were then engaged in a transformative critique of the role-played interview event. It was hoped that this approach would make students realize how interruptions, disruptions, and lack of initiatives are directly built into interviews and are frequently left unattended or unresolved.

Since the use of role-plays integrated with analysis of their discourse is relatively rare in training for job interviews, I would like to explain the methodology in a little more detail.

In their research review paper, Posthuma, et al. (2002) point out that in terms of methodological issues, much of the research on employment training relies on experimental designs with mock interviews and college student participants. They rightly point out that this use of mock interviews may threaten generalizability to actual employment interviews where real jobs are at stake. This methodological feature is particularly important because of the rich social context that surrounds actual employment interviews. It may be more difficult for classroom studies to approximate the social environment of the interview. We agree with this view and wish to point out that the present paper does not intend to contribute to the findings about employment interviews. The focus here is on *training* and *education*. The aim of the present experiment was to help students focus on the mythical



interview presented in the textbook and expose the myth in its barest form to the students. The use of role-plays was considered useful to deconstruct the textbook myth of structured interviews. The use of role plays also brought forward the students' own understanding of the role of the interviewer and the interview process. By scaffolding this understanding at the end of the role-plays, it becomes easier to attempt a critique of the misconceived notions.

While much of the research on employment interviews focuses on factors such as social, cognitive, individual differences, measurement, and outcome (Posthuma, et al., 2002), the myth of the 'perfect' employment interview has been directly or indirectly perpetuated in the research and training fields. Although it is useful to base training and research on real-world experiences, using recruiters in the classroom to present model interviews has proved disastrous from this point of view. These recruiters may present more textbook-based interviews, thus protecting the myth of the structured interview that seldom occurs.

### **Analysis and Discussion**

To engage students in a transformative critique, the teacher needs to play the role of a discourse specialist. By presenting analysis of the discourse event, the teacher focuses on the political underpinnings, the power play, and the communication inadequacies that affect an interview event. Rather than narrowly focusing on the performance of a single individual (the interviewee), the focus of communication training is then shifted to a broad understanding of why the mini-events in the interview session happen the way they do, how they got to be that way, in what ways a change might be desirable (although out of control to a large extent) and what it would take for the mini-events to happen in a different way. To exemplify this approach, we have presented below extracts from two role-plays. The examples show how the extracts need to be analyzed as discourse events, and how this analysis could help students self-reflect.

#### *Case 1: The inexperienced candidate*

In this extract from a role-play, the recruiter has to deal with the problem of interviewing a candidate without any work experience. The job advertisement apparently asked for some experience related to administration. The position is for the job of a Senior Engineer.

1.	<i>I: Well, the experience.. You did not mention any experience here. Do you..</i>
2.	<i>C: In the resume under qualifications..</i>
3.	<i>I: No, No, I mean work experience. In the advertisement we clearly stated we want some experience. But your resume... still you applied..</i>
4.	<i>C: The advertisement actually say fresh candidate can apply.. I was in the main committee for engineering festival..</i>
5.	<i>I2: Yes, yes, that's ok. We just wonder whether you have any work experience..</i>
6.	<i>C: You mean in a company..</i>
7.	<i>I2: Yeah, in a company.. you know..</i>
8.	<i>C: I worked in North Electric for my attachment.. there some work involve.. administration</i>
9.	<i>I: Oh. Yes, and how long did you work there?</i>
10.	<i>C: Two months, also the committee work..</i>
11.	<i>I: Maybe we come to that later. Shall we say then that you do not have any longish work experience?</i>

The recruiter begins with an indirect accusation, accusing the candidate of applying to the position for which the candidate has no relevant experience. In fact, the advertisement does welcome applications from fresh candidates. The accusing tone can be detected in the recorded interview especially with the emphasis on the words ‘clearly stated’ and ‘some experience’. The candidate tries to explain and justify his position. However, the interviewer considers the detail irrelevant (“Yes, yes, that’s ok.”) and does not allow the candidate to complete his turn. In L5-7 it becomes clear that there is a definitional conflict in relation to the term ‘Work Experience’. While the interviewers would like to work on the narrower definition (experience of working for an organisation) the candidate has apparently taken the broader definition (experience of working in general). There is a possibility of negotiation of meaning here; however, the interviewer gives a definitive answer in L7 and thus denies any negotiation opportunity. In L11, the definition of ‘Work Experience’ becomes narrower, and the interviewer discounts the candidate’s work experience by implying that it is not long enough. The candidate would like to talk about the committee work, which he considers relevant. The interviewer however denies the candidate his turn (*Maybe we come to that later.*) It is interesting to note that the interviewer has arrived at a decision regarding the candidate’s experience, and tries to make it look like a negotiated process (*Shall we say then that..*). The extract clearly shows that the interviewer

needs to ‘efficiently’ arrive at the rejection decision. The interviewer considers all attempts by the candidate to offer additional information interruptions. The interviewer considers this a problem and tries to keep the discussion ‘on track’ by using a one-sided narrower definition of ‘work experience’. The process of negotiation is curtailed and a decision is quickly arrived at.

This analysis of the recruiters’ problem-solving procedures shows that recruiters may intentionally focus on narrow definitions, reject offers of the candidates to provide more relevant information, and choose efficiency over judicious decision making. However, we do not have data from actual interviews, and hence would not be able to comment definitively on this issue.

*Case 2: Role Reversal*

The extract below comes from the concluding part of an interview where the interviewer and the candidate are supposed to reverse roles. Textbooks normally project and protect the myth of interviews being a structured event with a logical communication flow. As the following extract shows, the divisions of an interview session may not always be clearly communicated to the interviewees. The resultant confusion seems to affect the performance of the interviewee.

1.	<i>I: Well, thanks for coming down to come and talk to us. You can feel free if you have any questions, or want to ask us something.. yes, yes</i>
2.	<i>C: No ok..(Silence) well just one thing I like to talk about. On the website I think it was saying that this was a nine to five job... but then the shifts..</i>
3.	<i>I: Yes, yes, the shifts..</i>
4.	<i>C: I mean, do you have to cover the shift sometime?</i>
5.	<i>I2: Erm- she is talking about twelve to six..Ithink..well you have any problem working in shifts? Because we thought..</i>
6.	<i>C: No, no, I am just asking..</i>
7.	<i>I2: I can understand.. you get used to it after a while..</i>
8.	<i>C: yes, yes, actually I don't really mind..</i>
9.	<i>I: well, the thing is we have this R2 project being moved from the operations to us..so that might..also we are reducing a number of staff..</i>
10.	<i>I2: yes, so staff may be working at different times..</i>
11.	<i>I: You want to ask anything else.. please feel free..</i>

In the concluding part of the interview, the candidate is supposed to ask information-seeking questions or clarifications, while the interviewers are to take the role of information provider. The above extract shows such role reversal may be more myth than reality due to unequal power positions. The interviewers end up asking questions and giving advice rather than answering the candidate's questions. However, what is more interesting is to observe is the result of the inadequate and incomplete knowledge the candidates have about the process of the interview. It is rather unclear in the extract whether the interview is over and whether the concluding part is merely to provide and obtain feedback. In L1 the interviewer seems to indicate the completion of a communication cycle (*Thanks for coming down to come and talk to us*). The candidate seems to respond to this signal of completion by using silence as a response. However, the interviewer's question in L5 (*well you have any problem working in shifts?*) indicates that the 'interview' is still on and decisions can still be made or reversed. This fact puts the candidate on the defensive in L6. Further, the candidate completely withdraws her question in L8. Moreover, the interviewers seem to be talking more among themselves in L9-L11. (Note the reference to the "R2" project.) The invitation to ask more questions in L11 seems a pseudo-invitation, and it sounds more like a signal to end the interview session.

It becomes clear in the extract that the interview session is a complex process. Although the structural myth of an interview session indicates a neat division of the session into several sections, in reality the opening, the decision-making, and the feedback stages seem to overlap in a manner unpredictable to the candidate. The interviewers are in a power position in the sense that they know the procedures and have freedom to go around or bypass the complicated network of tasks, roles, and hierarchies. The interviewees are the least familiar with these procedures, and no matter how much they read about the company beforehand, it is impossible for them to penetrate these complex processes. While textbook advice for such situations normally centres around the need for the candidates to be more proactive, the lack of information on the part of candidates is perhaps preplanned and central to interview sessions.

In addition to a lack of the knowledge of interview processes, candidates who are fresh graduates do not have much experience with organisations in general. Even if they have been through a few interview sessions, they may not know of routine procedures, interruptions and mid-interview consultations. At times, they are unaware of the fact that only part of the actual interaction in the interview room focuses on them. Interviewers may not normally tell the candidates which part of the interaction is being used for decision making. Also, in the student role-plays no indication was given when the focus of the interaction changed to or from casual conversation.

### **Conclusion: Using Analysis for Training**

Miscommunication, disorders in discourse, or lack of communication in the interview setting can have grave consequences. One particular issue is 'dehumanization' or 'objectification' (Foucault, 1973) of the interviewees. This seems to occur when the interview discourse focuses on a single aspect of the interviewees' professional personality. Todd (1983) describes this clash between the institutional world and the everyday world as a *frame* conflict, and a concrete manifestation of this conflict is in the fact that the recruiters wish to quickly arrive at a selection or rejection decision, while the interviewees often want to introduce their career biography.

The method presented in this paper seems to be a characteristically effective method for three reasons:

- It helps students establish an emotional connection with the topic of training.
- It includes students as actors rather than passive recipients. This is done by providing the students an insider view of the interview process. The role-plays followed by transformative critiques challenge the textbook myth of the all-knowing, in-control interview machine. It presents the realities of the interruptions, disruptions, and communication failures for which interviewees and interviewers are responsible.
- It helps students focus on the elements of the self. The activity presented in the paper helps students focus more on their perceptions and on their attribution behaviour. This focus helps them adapt their communication behaviour.

A major challenge this approach presents is the transformation of the discourse analyses into language that the students can easily understand. In our experiment we tried to use ordinary language to replace the terminology in discourse analysis. However, this is not always possible. It was useful to retain some of the terms in discourse analysis and explain them as we went along.

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## **Genre Analysis: An Investigation of the Discussion Sections of Applied Linguistics Research Articles**

**Zahra Amirian, Zohreh Kassaian & Mansoor Tavakoli**

*Isfahan University, Iran*

### **Biodata**

**Zahra Amirian** is a PhD student of TEFL in Isfahan University, Iran. She has taught English to EFL students for more than 8 years. Her research interests are academic writing and genre analysis.

**Zohreh Kassaian** holds a PhD in TEFL. She is an assistant professor in Isfahan University, Iran and has taught English to EFL students for 28 years. Her research interests are psycholinguistic studies and genre analysis.

**Mansoor Tavakoli** holds a PhD in TEFL from Isfahan University, Iran. He is an assistant professor and has taught English in Isfahan University for 12 years. His research interests are language teaching and assessment.

### **Abstract**

This study analyzes the discussion sections of applied linguistics research articles (RAs) from the perspective of genre. For this purpose, first the discussion sections of English RAs published in international English journals of the field are compared with a parallel corpus of Persian RAs published in professional Persian journals of the same field in order to find the differentiating factors between published English and Persian research articles at the level of move schemata. Then, a corpus of English RAs written in English by Persian EFL writers rejected by international journals of applied linguistics are studied in terms of their move schemata. The results of this study reveal considerable differences across the three corpora regarding the generic features under investigation. The results are useful particularly to native and non-native writers, allowing them to better understand published research articles and facilitating the process of writing research articles for publication.

**Key words:** Genre analysis, research article, discussion section, move schemata

## **Introduction**

### *Significance of corpus analysis of discussion sections*

Research articles represent the preferred medium of exchanging knowledge among members of the academic community (Flowerdew, 1999). RAs' concise format and limited length give prestige to this genre. On the other hand, due to the strategic position of English as the international language of publication, both native and non-native English speaking researchers are increasingly concerned with reporting their research findings in international academic journals (Mirahayuni, 2002). For the successful publication of RAs in English, non-native English speakers are required to meet the standard criteria and conventions of English research article writing practices, which are "a product of standardization, professionalization and linguistic economy" (Salager-Meyer, 1999: 295). This implies that English research articles are distinct in aspects such as structure of organization, conventions and features of the language being used, all of which reflect the values and beliefs that are held by that particular community of researchers (Bhatia, 1993). Swales (1990) notes that non-native speakers may need to pay more attention to maintaining and improving their English skills, since papers with evidence of non-standard English are more likely to be rejected than papers apparently written by native English speakers. Other scholars express the same concern regarding non-native English speakers publishing in international journals (Carter-Sigglow, 1996; Flowerdew, 1999). This is a concern for Persian speaking researchers too. They are expected to publish their articles in international professional journals but sometimes fail. One of the reasons for failure may stem from the fact that their articles do not follow the generic schemata and conventions associated with English RAs. One solution for mitigating this problem is to analyze research articles in terms of their generic structure. Consequently, this study compares the genre schemata of English and Persian RAs published in scientific journals in the two languages with a parallel corpus of English RAs written by Persian writers but rejected for publication in order to find the differentiating factors across the three corpora at the levels of moves and lexico-grammatical realizations.

### *The problem for Persian EFL writers*

Persian EFL writers often face serious problems when they attempt to publish their articles in English International journals. Among the different parts of an article, the discussion section seems to be the most troublesome (Dudley-Evans, 1986). In line with studies conducted by Dudley-Evans (1986); Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988); Holmes (1997); and Biria and Tahririan (1997), this study attempted to reveal the generic structure of the discussion sections of research articles written by proficient English and Persian writers which have been published in English and Persian professional journals. It also revealed the extent to which EFL writers' research articles follow the genre schemata



of published English research articles and possible transfer of Persian genre schemata to their writing. To achieve the above-mentioned purposes, the following research questions were addressed in this study:

### *Research Questions*

1. What are the move schemata of the discussion sections of published English research articles?
2. What are the move schemata of the discussion sections of published Persian research articles?
3. What are the move schemata of the discussion sections of rejected English research articles written by Persian EFL writers?
4. What are the lexico-grammatical features which realize each move in published English research articles?
5. What are the lexico-grammatical features which realize each move in published Persian research articles?
6. What are the lexico-grammatical features which realize each move in rejected English research articles written by Persian EFL writers?
7. What are the differences between the discussion sections of published English research articles and rejected English research articles written by Persian EFL writers in terms of genre schemata and lexico-grammatical features?

### *Review of the Literature*

English is increasingly becoming dominant as the international language of research and publication. So, non-native speakers of English who wish to take part in the international academic discourse community are required to write in English. Regarding this issue, a number of studies have expressed concerns about the disadvantages of non-native English RA writers. Some of these studies attempt to analyze research articles written by non-native English writers in order to find factors which might have led to their rejection (Swales, 1981; Canagarajah, 2002). Part of the reason for rejection of these papers is difficulties with the language. Some scholars assert that non-native speakers may need to pay more attention to maintaining and improving their English skills, since papers with evidence of non-standard English are more likely to be rejected (Swales, 1990; Carter-Sigglow, 1996; Flowerdew, 1999). Besides language, another crucial issue is the conventional structure of RAs (Mirahayuni, 2002). Some investigators seek to study the structure of RAs taking a genre analysis perspective. Genre analysis has been a favorite approach to text analysis in the past three decades. This approach has been developed by the works of such influential pioneers as Swales (1981), Dudley-Evans (1986), and Bhatia (1993). Their studies aim at providing a description of the

communicative conventions associated with particular areas of English use (Widdowson, 1983). In other words, they provide characterizations of organizational patterns through which different genres achieve their communicative purpose. One fruitful line of genre studies has been to explore the linguistic as well as rhetorical patterns of particular genres in order to identify their typical structural patterns. In other words, the principal aims of genre analysis are to identify the schematic structure, the strategies available which allow users of the genre to achieve their communicative purpose, and the linguistic choices available to realize those strategies (Swales, 1990; Bhatia, 1993).

Meanwhile, from a language teaching perspective, it is useful to think of a genre as consisting of a series of moves (Swales, 1990). A move can be thought of as part of a text which contributes in some way to fulfilling the overall purpose of the genre. "Move" is a semantic unit relevant to the writer's purpose. Nwogu (1997) specifies the definition of move as "a text segment made of a bundle of linguistic features (lexical meanings, propositional meanings, illocutionary forces, etc.) which gives the segment a uniform orientation and signals the content of discourse in it" (Nwogu, 1997, p. 114). These definitions indicate that the unit of move has the advantage of capturing the function of a particular part of the text under examination. In other words, it enables the categorization of chunks of text in terms of their particular communicative intentions (Ruiying & Allison, 2003). The term "strategy" is used by Bhatia (1993) to refer to the way in which the writer or speaker realizes or executes a move. If the move can only be realized through a series of strategies in a particular order, the strategies can be considered as steps (Swales, 1990). The essential point to note here is that a move is not coterminous with structural units such as a sentence or a paragraph (Afful, 2005). Ruiying & Allison (2003) maintain that:

A Move can be realized by either one step or a combination of steps. The concept of Move captures the function and purpose of a segment of text at a more general level, while Step spells out more specifically the rhetorical means of realizing the function of Move. The set of steps for a Move is the set of rhetorical choices most commonly available to RA authors to realize a certain purpose. The order of Steps presented in each Move only shows a preferred sequence for the choices to occur when in combination. (Ruiying & Allison, 2003, p. 370).

Since in a genre analysis approach the texts at two levels of moves and steps are analyzed, it is often referred to as a two-level rhetorical analysis. The work of genre analysis, especially various analyses inspired by the original works of Swales (1981, 1990) has had a profound influence on the teaching of English for Specific Purposes, especially the teaching of academic writing to graduate students. A number of these studies have been devoted to validating the Introduction-Method-Results-Discussion (IMRD) model, either dealing with the overall organization of RAs across different disciplines and their lexico-grammatical features (Posteguillo, 1999) or focusing on specific

RA sections. There is a vast amount of literature on the structure of different sections of RAs in natural science and humanities including applied linguistics. Most of these studies analyze one section of RAs within the IMRD framework such as introductions (Swales, 1990; Samraj, 2002), results sections (Brett, 1994), and discussion sections (Hopkins & Dudley-Evans, 1988; Ruiying & Allison, 2003). However, no published research article has so far taken account of the influence of the neighboring sections on the organization of an individual section and on the choice of section headings (Ruiying & Allison, 2003). This shortcoming is present even in studies that examine complete RAs (Nwogu, 1997; Posteguillo, 1999). In order to consider the influence of neighboring sections on the organization of an individual section, Ruiying and Allison (2003) analyzed 20 primary RAs in applied linguistics with regard to rhetorical choices among possible Results, Results and Discussion, Discussion, Conclusion, and Pedagogic Implications sections, and identified specific organizational choices within each section. They proposed a two-level account (moves and steps) of different sections of RAs in their corpus. The analysis of these four sections provided solid evidence that they can overlap and explains why three of the four sections can function as the closing section of RAs in the IMRD framework (Discussion). Ruiying and Allison (2003) claimed that nevertheless the sections differ in terms of their primary communicative purposes and this generally motivates the use of different section headings. In another investigation of humanities RAs, Biria and Tahririan (1997) attempted to analyze the discussion part of the articles in an issue of *The Sociology of Education Journal*. The results revealed that the texts under analysis were organized according to some explicit move cycles shared by all the texts. This uniform cyclicity of moves indicates that the text is a complete event with formularized organizational schemata. Likewise, in an analysis of 30 RA Discussion sections in political science, sociology, and history, Holmes (1997) took the main argument in history research articles as the Results section for convenience and the Conclusion section as the Discussion. He investigated the ways in which the rhetorical structure of social science research articles differed from that of natural science articles and the ways in which social science articles vary among each other. The discussion sections of 30 social science research articles, from the disciplines of history, political science, and sociology were analyzed. It was found that social science articles shared a common communicative purpose with natural science articles. However, social science articles displayed some distinctive features in the “introduction” and even more in the “discussion” sections. It was also observed that although there were fundamental similarities to the natural sciences, social science discussion sections also displayed some distinctive features. History texts were particularly distinctive, and of the three disciplines bore the least resemblance to those of the natural sciences.

Similarly, the literature on the structural analysis of natural science is immense and long-standing. Following Swales' (1981, 1990) three-move analysis of RA Introductions, Belanger (1982) analyzed 10 discussion sections from articles in the field of neuroscience. On the basis of this data, he showed that the structure of the discussion section is closely correlated to both the number and kind of research questions posed in the introduction sections of the paper. He proposed that after a possible general introduction and before a possible general conclusion, each research question is then passed through a "cycle" with three moves characteristic of the discussion section:

1. Background information;
2. Statement of results;
3. (Un)expected results;
4. Reference to previous research (comparison);
5. Explanation of unsatisfactory results;
6. Exemplification;
7. Deduction and hypothesis;
8. Reference to previous research (in support of a claim);
9. Recommendation
10. Justification.

These moves occur in cycles in which the writer chooses an appropriate sequence. Later, Dudley-Evans (1986) devised a nine-move model of RA Discussions (Dudley-Evans, 1986). This idea of cyclicity was earlier put forward by Swales who claimed the following:

Discussions, in strict contrast to Introductions, move during a cycle in an inside-out direction; they move from stating the results themselves, to placing them within the established literature, to reviewing their general significance. (Swales, 1990, p. 173)

Dudley-Evans (1994, p. 225) gives each move a largely self-evident descriptive label as follows:

1. Information Move, here called Background information (BI)
2. Statement of results (SOR)
3. Findings
4. (Un)Expected outcomes
5. Reference to previous research (RPR), both for comparison and support
6. Explanation
7. Claims, including deductions and hypotheses
8. Limitations
9. Recommendations

Dudley-Evans further pointed out that these moves are combined in different ways, often in cyclical patterns, according to the writer goals.

A similar adaptation of the original work on moves suggested for the discussion section (Hopkins and Dudley-Evans, 1988) was made by Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995). They argued that moves could be ordered into a set of higher level units that reflect the moves posited for the introduction. In other words, the moves are essentially the same as those in the introduction, but in reverse order:

1. Occupying a niche
2. (Re) establishing the field
3. Establishing additional territory

Docherty and Smith (1999) maintained structure is the most difficult part of writing, no matter whether you are writing a novel, a play, a poem, a government report, or a scientific paper. If the structure is right, then the rest can follow fairly easily, but no amount of clever language can compensate for a weak structure. They suggest a structure for discussion of scientific papers:

1. Statement of principal findings
2. Strengths and weaknesses of the study
3. Strengths and weaknesses in relation to other studies, discussing particularly any
4. differences in results
5. Meaning of the study: possible mechanisms and implications for clinicians on
6. policymakers;
7. Unanswered questions and future research

Williams (2005) examined discourse styles in Spanish and English discussion sections. The study was based on an extensive corpus of medical research articles (RAs) and compared the discussions of 64 Spanish RAs with 64 studies published in English language journals. The analysis of discourse style was based on a system of rhetorical moves (i.e., statements providing background information, expressing results, comparing current and previous findings, or making knowledge claims) and the amount of initial background information. The quantitative results provide evidence for the existence of two contrasting discourse styles; progressive and retrogressive, which are represented differently in the Spanish and English RAs. Spanish writers showed a preference for the progressive pattern whereas English language authors preferred the retrogressive pattern. Qualitative analysis of the texts suggested that adjustment of the rhetorical patterning to the preferred discourse style depending on the language used is feasible. Awareness of differences in rhetorical style could help nonnative writers and their editors or translators produce more acceptable target language texts.

Finally, Kanoksilapatham (2005) studied 60 biochemistry research articles and proposed a two-level rhetorical structure (moves and steps) for these texts. This structure consists of 15 distinct moves: 3 moves for the Introduction section, 4 for the Methods section, 4 for the Results section, and 4 for the Discussion section:

1. Announcing the importance of the field
2. Claiming the centrality of the topic assures that the article developed on the topic is worth investigating and the field is well established
3. Making topic generalizations give overviews about the subject of the study
4. Reviewing previous research reports previous research deemed to be relevant to the topic being discussed
5. Preparing for the present study
6. Indicating a gap
7. Raising a question
8. Introducing the present study
9. Stating purpose(s)
10. Describing procedures
11. Presenting findings
12. Describing materials
13. Listing materials
14. Detailing the source of the materials
15. Providing the background of the materials
16. Describing experimental procedures
17. Documenting established procedures
18. Detailing procedures
19. Providing the background of the procedures
20. Detailing equipment
21. Describing statistical procedures
22. Stating procedures
23. Describing aims and purposes
24. Stating research questions explicitly
25. Making hypotheses
26. Listing procedures or methodological techniques
27. Justifying procedures or methodology
28. Citing established knowledge of the procedure

29. Referring to previous research
30. Stating results
31. Substantiating results
32. Invalidating results
33. Stating comments on the results
34. Explaining the results
35. Making generalizations or interpretations of the results; Evaluating the current findings with those from previous studies or with regard to the hypotheses
36. Stating limitations
37. Summarizing
38. Contextualizing the study
39. Describing established knowledge
40. Presenting generalizations, claims, deductions, or research gaps
41. Consolidating results
42. Restating methodology
43. Stating selected findings
44. Referring to previous literature
45. Explaining differences in findings
46. Making overt claims or generalizations
47. Exemplifying
48. Stating limitations of the present study
49. Limitations about the findings
50. Limitations about the methodology
51. Limitations about the claims made
52. Suggesting further research

In the Persian literature, including the research article, the tradition of genre studies examining academic writing is not as extended as it is in English. On the other hand, it has been pointed out from contrastive rhetoric and English for Academic Purposes studies that cross-cultural differences related to particular academic backgrounds are reflected in the rhetorical and linguistic organization of texts (Connor and Kaplan, 1987; Connor, 1996). In this context, then, a comparative study between the different languages can yield interesting results. The aim of this study is to examine any variation in the structure of research articles written in Persian with reference to the models described for English RAs.

## Method

### *Design*

This study takes a descriptive approach to examine the generic structure and lexico-grammatical features of the discussion sections of English and Persian research articles to find the reasons for rejection of some English RAs written by Persian EFL writers. The purpose of this investigation is to find out possible differences across the three corpora at the levels of move schemata and lexico-grammatical features.

### *The Corpora*

This study investigates the generic structure of applied linguistics RAs. Applied linguistics is of particular interest for pedagogic reasons because raising awareness of genre features becomes directly relevant as part of its disciplinary content (Ruiying & Allison, 2003). To select the English corpus, at first a comprehensive list of English journals published in the field of applied linguistics was collected by searching the Internet and libraries. Then four journals with higher reputations among the academic discourse community were selected. According to Nwogu (1997, p. 121), reputation is defined as “the esteem which members of an assumed membership hold for a particular publication or a group of publications”. The selected journals were *Applied Linguistics*, *English for Specific Purposes* (ESP), *The Modern Language Journal* (MLJ), and *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (SSLA). In order to select articles from the journals, first 200 research articles on various issues of language teaching published in these journals between the years 2000 and 2007 were selected while editorials and reviews were excluded. From among these articles, 20 articles which had clear separation of sections within the article and were approximately of the same length were selected.

For the Persian corpus, four well-established journals of Persian language and linguistics were selected: *Faculty of Literature and Humanities Journal*, *Language and Linguistics*, *Faculty of Literature and Humanities Journal*, and *Persian Literature and Foreign Languages Journal*. These journals were selected by consulting experts from the field. These Persian journals, however, generally contained articles on “language and literature” and the articles which were specifically on language teaching issues were fewer in number. Therefore, in order to have a wider range of selection, the articles published between the years 1997 and 2007 were studied, and 20 articles written on language teaching issues were selected. Finally, a corpus of 20 English RAs written by Persian writers on applied linguistic issues which were rejected for publication was selected as the third corpus. All these articles were written by MA holders or PhD students of EFL in Isfahan, Najafabad, and Khorasgan universities and sent to different national or international journals of the field, but none was accepted for publication. The rationale behind using articles written by MA



holders or PhD students of EFL was that in this case it could be supposed that the rejection of the articles was not due to grammatical or lexical problems but that troublesome factors may lie at a higher level of organization.

### *Procedure*

The major concern of this study was to find out possible differences at the levels of move schemata and lexico-grammatical realizations across the three corpora of English, Persian, and English research articles written by Persian writers. For this purpose, initially a framework for the generic structure analysis of the discussion section of research articles based on Hopkins and Dudley-Evans' (1988) model of move schemata was developed. After selecting the articles for the three sub-corpora, for the purpose of identification and easier access, articles from each group were separately codified (E1-E20 for the English corpus, P1-P20 for the Persian corpus, and EFL1-EFL20 for the third corpus).

Regarding the move schemata of the discussion sections in the published English and Persian corpora, in order to find generic differences, the move schemata of the discussion sections of the two groups—the published research articles written in English and Persian—were identified and the frequencies of parallel moves were tallied across the two corpora. These two corpora were analyzed and obligatory and optional moves were identified along with their frequencies and sequences.

With regard to the move schemata of the discussion sections of rejected articles, the rejected articles written by Persian EFL writers were analyzed, their move schemata were identified, and the frequency of each move was calculated.

In order to examine the lexico-grammatical features of different moves, qualitative analysis of the three corpora identified the lexico-grammatical features which realized each move. These features included the most typical lexical phrases and syntactic structures. Finally, in order to find the differences between the discussion sections of published English research articles and rejected English research articles written by Persian EFL writers, parallel moves and lexico-grammatical features were compared across the three corpora. The similarities and differences between published English RAs and rejected Persian EFL RAs in terms of genre schemata and lexico-grammatical features of the discussion section were then identified.

However, by its very nature, this kind of analysis involves a certain degree of subjectivity. In order to minimize the risk of subjectivity and insure reliability, the corpora were analyzed by two other raters whose MA theses also involved genre analysis and who had expertise in genre studies. The author conducted a two-hour training session for the raters to acquaint them with the use of the coding system and to ensure they clearly understood how to analyze a sample text using the analysis scheme. Therefore, despite the inevitable discrepancies in the ratings, there was no statistically significant difference among the results of the three raters:

**Table 1.** The Chi-square Test Indicating the Non-Significance of Differences among Sets of Data Provided by the Three Raters

	D.F.	Critical	Chi-square
Corpus	2	0.87	0.26

**Results**

*Move schemata and lexico-grammatical features of the English corpus*

The model of move pattern for the discussion sections of articles and dissertations proposed by Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988) was selected as the framework for analysis. Then, the move schemata of the texts under investigation were identified. The frequencies of the moves from the English corpus are presented in Table 2. It is necessary to mention that optional moves are parenthesized. Furthermore, some moves such as findings and explanation appeared more than once in a single article. However, in the table only the frequency of different kinds of moves has been represented, and their repetitions have not been considered.

**Table 2.** The Identified Moves of the Discussion Section of English Articles

Move	Frequency	Percent
(Statement of aims)	12	60%
Findings	20	100%
Reference to previous research	20	100%
Explanation	20	100%
(Limitations of study)	17	85%
(Recommendations for further research)	14	70%

*Move 1: (Statement of aims)*

The communicative function of this optional move is to restate the purpose of the study and remind the readers of its aims. It is usually in past tense (60%). The most distinguished feature of this move is that if the sentence starts with the phrase “The purpose of this study,” it contains the “to be” verb (88%), for instance, “The purpose of this study was exploring the status of sexism in current language teaching textbooks” (E. 4). The move also uses such expressions as “we examined” or “we attempted to investigate” (42%): for example, “In this study we examined the correlation between students’ L2 proficiency and their performance on reading cloze tests” (E. 11). Therefore, it starts with either a

personal subject (“we” or “the researcher/s,” 42%) or a non-personal subject (“the purpose of this study,” 58%).

#### *Move 2. Findings*

This obligatory move appears in all discussion sections and usually refers to the results. It also usually refers the readers to a graph or table (90%). Therefore, it is distinguished by presenting numerical values and reference to tables or graphs. The most frequent verbs observed in this move are “show” (36%), “reveal” (33%), and “indicate,” “demonstrate,” “report,” a form of “to be,” or “confirmed” (31%). Nearly all the verbs of this move are in past tense (88%) and active voice (97%), and the sentences start with “This study,” “The results,” “The research,” or “The findings.” For example, “The research data confirmed the differences between the two experimental groups.” (E. 2)

#### *Move 3. Reference to previous research*

This move attempts to convince the readers of the credibility of the findings. It usually refers to other studies, and it is always in active voice (100%). The sentences start with either a non-personal subject (64%) such as “This study confirmed...,” or “The findings are in line with...,” or a personal subject (36%) such as “As Arnold-Gritty (1978) mentioned...”

Example 1: “The limited evidence provided by this study and by a previous examination of PLPSQ is in line with Reid’s (1990) idea.” (E. 10)

Example 2: “The findings of this study confirm Matsumoto’s results that proficient bilingual writers use the same strategies in L2 as in L1 writing.” (E. 5)

The important point about the sequence of move 2 and move 3 is that in some articles, “findings” precedes “reference to previous research” while in others it follows the “reference to previous research” move.

#### *Move 4. Explanation*

This obligatory move is very demanding because through it the writers should justify their results. The writer should have enough expertise of the topic and explain possible causes of the results. Therefore, such words as “because” or “due to” are frequent (61%). For instance, “This finding may be due to the fact that...” (E. 18) or “This is because...” (E. 9). Another linguistic feature of this move is that the English-speaking writer does not take a strong position in explaining the results; rather, he/she employs hedging language in expressing his/her claims: the copular verbs “seem” and “appear” (25%), the modal verbs “may,” “might,” “can,” “could,” and “would” (52%), and sentence adverbials which relate to the probability of the proposition being true, such as “perhaps” or “due to” (23%). Furthermore, in a small number of cases more than one hedging expression is provided (15%).

Example 1: The findings may be explained by the differences in how writing is taught at schools. (E. 5)

Example 2: Maybe the findings are due to the fact that the items in the questionnaire were difficult for freshman students. (E. 7)

*Move 5. (Limitations of the study)*

In most articles, after explaining possible causes of the findings, the writer expresses the limitations of the study. Through this move, the writer attempts to make the readers aware of the conditions under which the study was conducted and therefore make them cautious not to over generalize the findings. It explains the conditions in which the research was conducted in past tense (95%) and uses explicit words or expressions of limitation such as “caution,” “care,” “suffer,” (not sure about this last example as an expression of limitation) or “limitation” (30%)<sup>1</sup> or conjunctions which somehow reveal the limitations like “however,” “yet,” or “although” (10%). For example, “If writers were proficient in L2 and experienced in L1 writing, the amount of transfer would be minimal. However, in this study the participants were all freshman students.” (E. 7)

*Move 6. (Recommendations for further research)*

In this move, the writer recommends further research. This move represents a restatement of the limitations of the study. In other words, the writer recommends replicating the present study by addressing its limitations or by changing one or more of its variables. The most conspicuous linguistic feature of this move is the frequent occurrences of the verbs “need” or “require” (54%) and “research” or “investigation” (60%): for example, “further research” or “further investigation.” Some of the sentences are in future tense (18%) while most of them are in present tense with adverbials or verbs which imply future endeavor (82%). For example, “This study requires further investigation.” (E. 14)

*Move schemata and lexico-grammatical features of the Persian corpus*

In the next stage of the research, the move schemata of the Persian corpus were examined. Identified moves along with their frequencies are presented in Table 3:

**Table 3.** The identified moves of the discussion section of the Persian corpus

Move	Frequency	Percent
Reference to previously mentioned statement	13	65%
Findings	20	100%
Reference to previous research	20	100%
Explanation	20	100%
Hedging statement	16	80%
Limitations of the study	8	40%
Recommendations and expressing wish for further research	17	85%

*Move 1. Reference to previously mentioned statement*

In this move, the writer refers back to what has been mentioned before about the aims of research, restating the aims. The most frequent verbs observed are “gofte shodan” (42%) or “zokr shodan” (23%), which both mean “to mention.” These verbs appear in either active or passive voice and are preceded by the phrase “hamantor ke,” which means “as.” Therefore, this move is realized through such collocations as “hamantor ke gofte shod...” (P. 1) or “hamantor ke ghablan zokr kardim” (P. 13), which means “as mentioned before” or “as we mentioned before.” There is an almost equal distribution of passive (32%) and active (33%) voice for this move. For example, “Hamantor ke ghablan gofte shod, tadrise aghlame dastoori ke basamade pain or besyar pain darand kari bihoode ast” (p. 5), or “As mentioned before, teaching grammatical points which have a low frequency is a useless job.”

*Move 2. Findings*

In this obligatory move, the findings are reported. It usually refers the readers to a graph or table (68%) but the percentage of papers referring readers to tables or graphs is lower compared with the English corpus (98%). The most frequent verbs observed in this move are “neshan dadan” (56%), “yaftan,” (13%), “bayan kardan,” “peida kardan,” “ashkar shodan,” (31%), which all mean “show” or “reveal.” The sentences usually start with “In motalee,” which means “this study” or “Natayeje in motalee,” which means “the results” or “the findings.” Therefore, it is realized through such expressions as “in motalee neshan midahad ke...” (P. 4) or “natayej neshan midahad ke...” (P. 8), which both mean “this study reveals that...” For example, “Natayej neshan midahad ke tashihe dikte tavasote zabanamooz, tasiri mozaaf bar amre yadgiri va afzayeshe deggat darad” (p. 1), or “The

findings reveal that correction of dictation by the learner himself has a great effect on learning and increasing the amount of attention.”

*Move 3. Reference to previous research*

The writer uses this move to justify his/her findings. This move appears in the passive voice (53%) with either “tebghe yaftehayeh pishin” or “hamantor ke dar motalee...zehr shod,” which both mean “as it was mentioned before” or in active voice (47%) with “natayeje motalee tavassote...neshan midahad,” which means “The study by...reveals that...”: for example, “Tebghe yaftehayeh pishin, naghshah zabane avale daneshpajooohan ra nabayad nadide gereft...” (p. 2), or, “According to previous studies, the role of learners’ L1 should not be ignored.”

*Move 4. Explanation*

In this obligatory move, the writer explains the results. In other words, he/she explains the probable causes of why the results were obtained. In all cases the sentences are in active voice, and usually in present tense (84%; in the remaining cases, the sentences are in the past tense, perhaps to maintain consistency across the whole article.) The seeming difference between the English and the Persian corpora in this move is that while English writers use hedging language to avoid making strong claims, Persian writers express their claims rather firmly (without hedging in 88% of cases). However, in the Persian corpus, “explanation” is immediately followed by a “hedging statement” which plays the role of hedging.

Example of explanation move: “Zamanhaye hale kamel va gozashte kamel ke dar motoone engelisi omoomi porbasamad ast, dar motoone takhasosi az basamade chandani barkhordar nistand, az inroo nabayad morede takide besyar gharar girand,” (P. 5) which means “present perfect and past perfect tenses which have a high frequency in general English texts are not so frequent in ESP texts; therefore, they should not receive so much emphasis.”

*Move 5: (Hedging statement)*

Immediately after the explanation move, Persian writers usually employ a kind of hedging move which includes hedging expressions to suggest the probable causes of the results. It is realized through hedging words and expressions such as modal verbs “mitavanad” (can), “mishavad” (may) (23%), and sentence adverbials which relate to the probability of the proposition being true, such as “shayad,” “ehtemal miravad,” or “goman miravad,” (which all mean “perhaps” or “we guess”) (77%). However, the differentiating factor is that in most cases, Persian writers use more than one hedging expression (85%). As mentioned before, while in the Persian corpus “hedging statement” appears in a separate move, in the English corpus, hedging expressions serve the same function within the explanation move.

Example: “Ehtemalmiravadke daneshpazhoohan tahte tasire ezterabe emtehan gharar gerefte bashand,” (P. 18) which means “perhaps the learners have been affected by test anxiety.”

*Move 6: Limitations of the study*

Like English writers, in some articles, after explaining the possible causes of findings, Persian writers express the limitations of the study. In other words, this move somehow explains the conditions in which the research was conducted (45%) or uses explicit words or expressions of limitation such as “za’f” or “mahdoodiat,” which mean “shortcoming” and “limitation” respectively (40%).

Example: “Momkenastnatayej mojud be dalile zafe danesh dastoori dar zabanammozan bashad,” (p. 6) which means “The results are perhaps due to shortcomings in the learners’ syntactic knowledge.”

*Move 7: Recommendation and expressing wish for further research*

In this move, the writer recommends directions for future research. This move is a restatement of the limitations of the study. While only a small number of sentences have a verb in future tense (9%), a large number (91%) are in present tense with a clear indicator of future such as “dar ayande” and “dar ayandeye nazdik,” which mean “in future” and “very soon” respectively. However, the difference between the two corpora is that in the Persian corpus in most cases (78%), this move includes some words and expressions of “wish” like “omidvarim” or “omid miravad,” which both mean “we hope.”

Example 1: “Pasokhe in soal hanooz be roshani peida nashode va omid miravad ke dar ayande tahghigate bishtari dar in zamine anjam shavad,” (P. 3), which means “The answer to this question is not clear yet and we hope more research is conducted on this issue in the future.”

Example 2. “Pazhooheshgaran omidvarand shivehaye jadidi baraye rafe in masale peida konand,” (P. 17), which means “researchers hope that they can find new ways for solving this problem.”

*Identification of move schemata and lexico-grammatical features of the third corpus*

Finally, in the third corpus, the discussion sections of English articles written by Persian EFL writers which failed to be published were analyzed in terms of their move schemata. Table 4 presents the moves of the third corpus. Again, it should be mentioned that in the following table, only the frequency of different “kinds” of moves has been represented, and their repetitions have not been included.

**Table 4.** The Identified Moves of the Third Corpus

Move	Frequency	Percent
Reference to previous research	12	60%
Findings	20	100%
Explanation	18	90%
Restatement of aims	9	45%
Limitations of the study	11	55%
Recommendations and expressing wish for further research	14	70%

*Move 1: Reference to previous research*

This optional move attempts to convince the readers of the credibility of the findings and is realized through such expressions as “According to...” or “As...mentions/finds it...” The verbs “find” (73%); mention (18%); and suggest, reveal, and confirm (9%) are observed in this move.

Example: “the fluidity of electronic genres, as suggested by Bolter (2001), does not necessarily imply that there should be any differentiation in move schemata between cybergenres and their parallel conventional genre.” (EFL. 5)

*Move 2: Finding*

This obligatory move appears in all discussion sections and is usually realized through such expressions as “This study revealed that...”; “The findings confirmed that...”; or “This study showed that...” The findings are reported by such verbs as “show” (44%); “reveal” (31%); “to be, ” “ to confirm,” and others (25%). The sentences are distributed in either present (48.5%) or past tense (51.5%).

Example: “The results of chi-square analysis revealed no significant difference between the distribution of moves in hypertext and non-hypertext article.” (EFL. 5)

*Move 3: Explanation*

By using this obligatory move, the writer attempts to explain the results. The writer should have enough expertise of the topic and explain possible causes of the results. This move is usually realized through the same expressions as the English corpus and the same conjunctions: “because” (32%), “because of” (28%), or “due to” (2%).

Example: “This finding may be due to the fact that...” (EFL. 12) or “This is because...” (EFL. 3)

*Move 4: (Restatement of aims)*



Through this optional move, the writer refers back to the aims of the research. This move is usually explicitly realized through such expressions as “The aim of this study was...” (42%), “This study aimed at...” (15%), or “This study wanted...” (2%).

Example: “This study attempted to examine the ESP textbook for engineering students and the job-related needs of a group of engineers....” (EFL. 2)

#### *Move 5: Limitations of study*

Again in some articles of this corpus, after explaining possible causes of findings, the writer expresses the limitations of the study. The word “limitation” is observed in 51% of the cases.

Example: “Some caution must be exercised in interpreting the results because this study suffered from some limitations.” (EFL. 18)

#### *Move 6: Recommendations and expressing wish for further research*

In this move, the writer recommends further research. In this corpus, just like the English corpus, it may be realized through explicit expressions like “further research” or “further investigation.” However, the difference is that in this corpus, in a few cases, the words and expressions which are associated with “expressing wishes” are observed like “we hope” (2%).

Example: “This study may be expanded in several ways, for example...” (EFL. 7)

## **Discussion**

### *Differences between the English and the Persian corpora*

The generic analysis of the discussion sections of the English and Persian research articles revealed a clear resemblance in the kinds of moves (Tables 2 & 3). This confirms the fact that members belonging to the same academic discipline share a considerable amount of conventions and background knowledge (Yarmohammadi, 1995). However, the differentiating factors between English and Persian discussion sections mostly appear to be a matter of stylistic difference. These differences may be due to cultural discrepancies. According to Connor (2004), some differences are due to the dynamic nature of discourse and culture and are tied to the intellectual history and social structures of different cultures. Therefore, cultural discrepancies between English and Persian may have given rise to three moves in the Persian corpus which are absent in the English corpus. The first one is a “Hedging statement.” “Hedging statement” as a separate move is frequent (80%) in the Persian texts but absent as a move in the English corpus. In other words, in the English corpus, using hedging words like “perhaps,” “maybe,” or modal verbs in the “explanation” move suffices; however, in the Persian corpus, after the “explanation” move, the writer uses another move which contains one or more hedging words/expressions such as “ehtemal miravad” or “goman miravad” which mean “we guess...” or “perhaps.” The existence of this move may be related to another difference between

English and Persian writing, as Persian writers usually make strong claims, which is evident in the “explanation” move where writers explain and justify their findings. While in the English corpus all claims are moderated by using hedging words and expressions, in their writing in general Persian writers use hedging sparingly. Instead of using hedging language, Persian writers appear to follow the “explanation” move with a “Hedging statement” move which moderates their claims and plays the role of hedging.

“Reference to previously mentioned statement” is another move peculiar to the Persian corpus. The rather high frequency of “reference to previously mentioned statement” (65%) may reflect the cultural attitude of Persian writers who attempt to seek evidence and justification for what they have obtained in their studies. Another point about “reference to previously mentioned statement” is that its function in the Persian corpus seems to be somehow different from its function in the English corpus. In the English corpus, reference to previous studies relates the present research results to previous findings (Swales, 1990); for instance, “The findings of this study confirm Matsumoto’s results that proficient bilingual writers use the same strategies in L2 as in L1 writing” (E. 5). However, it seems that Persian writers hope to find credibility and validity for their findings by repetitively referring to past literature, for instance, “in yafteha ba natayeji ke dar motalee Brown (1994) bedast amad kamelan hamkhani darand” (P. 10), which means “these findings are completely in line with those of Brown (1994).”

“Expressing wish for further research” is the third move typical of the Persian corpus. It usually appears at the end of the discussion section. In addition to recommendations for further research, it usually contains clear linguistic clues such as “Omid miravad” or “omidvarim,” which both mean “we hope” in order to show the writer’s hope for further endeavors. “Expressing wish for further research” is sometimes separate from the recommendation move (17%) but mostly included within it (83%); therefore, they have been considered one move in this study.

Finally, “limitations of study” favors a higher frequency in the English corpus (85%) compared with the Persian corpus (40%). While English writers believe that all studies inevitably have limitations and reflect these beliefs in such sentences as “Like other studies, the present study has some limitations” (E. 19), Persian writers seem hesitant of talking about limitations and perhaps consider them signs of weaknesses and deficiencies in their studies; therefore, they appear to avoid talking about limitations as far as possible.

#### *Differences between the English and the EFL corpora*

The most conspicuous difference between English and EFL discussion sections has to do with the separation between the “results” and “discussion” sections. As Weissberg and Buker (1990) mention, in the results section, the researcher presents the statistical reports of the findings while in the

discussion section, he/she steps back and takes a broader look at the findings as a whole. Its purpose is to interpret the findings: explain what they mean, why they were obtained, in what ways they are in line with or contrary to other studies, and what applications they have. Almost all the English texts under investigation separated the two sections in content; however, in the EFL corpus, blending of the “results” and the “discussions” sections was sometimes observed. This may reflect the EFL writers’ knowledge of the structure of RAs in Persian because in the Persian corpus, the discussion section is not usually separated from the results section (as defined by Weissberg and Buker, 1990). As a result, the discussion section in these articles puts a great burden on the readers because it includes a blend of tables, statistical procedures, and diagrams as well as their interpretations, claims, supports and implications.

Another difference is concerned with the sequence of moves in the English and the EFL corpora. The communicative purpose of the discussion section in the English corpus is accomplished through a set of moves which appear in a logical sequence. For instance, “finding” should logically precede “explanation.” However, in some cases in the EFL corpus, the logical sequence of different moves has not been observed. For example, the “finding” move has sometimes been left without any “explanation” move. Thus there are “explanation” moves in 90% of the EFL corpus, which means 10% of the authors didn’t include this obligatory move.

*The extended model of move schemata for the English corpus developed in this study.*

On the basis of the frequency analysis, this study developed a model of move schemata for the English corpus. The analysis of the English corpus revealed that all the discussion sections of English RAs are made up of two levels of organization: a macro-level and a micro-level (moves-steps). The macro-level consists of Introduction, Body, and Conclusion. Since these three parts are observed in all English texts under investigation, they can be considered macro-moves. Meanwhile, each macro-move itself is made of some micro-moves. Table 5 presents the model of move schemata developed in this study for the discussion sections of English research articles. This table shows each macro-move along with its micro-moves. This model presents a clear framework of the sequence of moves observed in the discussion sections of published English RAs. It seeks to provide a framework for Persian EFL writers/scholars who want to have their English articles published in professional journals in the field. It will, it is hoped, help EFL professional writers write more effective research articles.

**Table 5.** The Extended Model of the Move Schemata for the English Corpus Identified in this Study

Introduction	Presenting background
	Reference to the previous research Statement of aims
Body	Finding
	Explanation
	Reference to previous research
Conclusion	Restatement of findings
	Reference to previous research
	Limitations of the study
	Recommendations for further research

One point is very important here: Not all the moves in the tables mentioned above are linearly sequenced; rather, some of them are cyclical: each move may be repeated many times in a single text. This is in line with the concept of cyclicity of moves mentioned by Dudley-Evans (1986) and Biria & Tahririan (1997).

### **Conclusion and Implications for EFL Writers**

The findings revealed that although there is a kind of universality in moves across English and Persian texts, there are some discrepancies in the frequency and sequence of these moves. Some culture-specific factors may give rise to these differences. According to Kaplan (1987), writing styles differ across cultures, a statement that has been widely supported through linguistic analysis (Ostler, 1988; Kaplan, 1987; and Connor, 1996). Thus, it is crucial to explore, trace, and describe the rhetorical differences between languages. As Bhatia (1993) believes, the most important function of learning writing style is not simply to be able to read and produce a piece of text as a computer does, but to become sensitive to its conventions in order to ensure the pragmatic success of the text in its academic or professional context. The proponents of this approach (Swales, 1990; Bhatia, 1993) analyzed different genres in order to provide language learners with explicit models of particular communicative activities. Therefore, a model or an explicit structural pattern provides a framework

for guided practice in the genre. This allows writers to concentrate on particular stages in order to polish strategies for organizing information and evolving realizations (Hyland 1992, p. 14). Likewise, the initial purpose of this research was to offer pedagogical suggestions for teaching the writing of the discussion section of English RAs for Persian EFL writers. In this respect, the findings of this study offer some implications regarding the rhetorical structure of the discussion section of English RAs. It was found that the discussion sections of English RAs tend to exhibit a certain macro-level pattern. This model can familiarize Persian writers/scholars with the move schemata of discussion sections of English research articles which they should follow when they write English research articles. It may also make them aware of some characteristics of Persian discussion sections which are different from the characteristics of English texts which they should be aware of when they write English research articles. It is hoped this information will empower them to publish their articles in international professional journals within their field.

This study does have some limitations. In this study, the articles written by EFL practitioners/writers on applied linguistic issues were selected and analyzed. The results would change if the articles were not written by practitioners/writers of EFL. Therefore, other studies should be conducted following the same procedure to identify the generic structure of research articles written by practitioners/writers from other fields. Several studies can also be conducted in which other academic genres or other sections of RAs across different languages are studied.

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