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## *Title*

*A Genre Analysis Study of Algerian Magister Dissertations in Linguistics and Didactics: The Case of English Department of the University of Algiers*


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# Abstract

The investigation of generic discourse in academic writing is gaining a sweeping interest among genre analysts. However, research into post-graduate writing as a genre is still in its infancy. This study is an attempt to analyse the genre of Magister dissertations produced by Algerian post-graduates in Linguistics and Didactics at the University of Algiers. The analysis is meant to investigate the schematic structures of three part-genres: Introductions, Abstracts and Acknowledgements and compare them to what was reported in similar genre studies. To reach this aim, I employed, as starting theoretical frameworks, Samraj's (2008) 3-move CARS model developed for Master's theses introductions, Samraj's (2002) move structure of Abstracts and Hyland and Tse's (2004) move pattern of Acknowledgments. It was found that the introductions do not share a common rhetorical structure and only half the texts supported Samraj (2008) framework. Furthermore, Move 2 and 3 were more commonly found than move 1 and new steps were identified in the first and the third move. The corpus of abstracts displayed a rhetorical structure similar to that proposed by Samraj (2002) although an additional move was identified. The acknowledgments' move pattern, in turn, was quite different from Hyland and Tse's model (2004). In fact, almost all the acknowledgements were framed around a unique thanking move instead of three moves. Overall, some shared shaping forces are behind the students' rhetorical practices such as: the discourse community in which the genre occurs, the nature of the DIs' discipline and lack of formal instruction in dissertation writing. Therefore, post-graduate students of the English Department of Algiers need an explicit learning of the dissertation genre in order to raise their awareness of the genre characterising features and help them make informed writing choices.

**Key words:** Genre, Genre analysis, move, step, dissertation, introduction, abstract, acknowledgment.

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Last but not least, this dissertation is dedicated to my parents and all my family members and friends.

I must confess in all humility and sincerity that only I am responsible for the shortcomings of this dissertation.

# Contents

# List of Abbreviations

**AC:** Article Compilation

**CARS:** Create a Research Space

**DI:** Dissertation

**DIs:** Dissertations

**ESP:** English for Specific Purposes

**ILrMRD:** Introduction- Literature Review – Methodology- Results and Discussion

**NR:** New Rhetoric

**RA:** Research Article

**RAs:** Research Articles

**SFL:** Systemic Functional School

**TB:** Topic-Based

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# General Introduction

Interest shown in academic discourse by applied linguists has produced a substantial and diverse body of research. A particularly rich seam running through the academic discourse literature is work which can be broadly described as 'genre analytic' (Bhatia, 2002). In fact, over the last two decades, the notion of genre has been used as a powerful means of organising and describing academic discourse (Hyon, 1996).

This emergent area of research is essentially based on the idea that genres are situated in social contexts and they are used to achieve social purposes. The notion of genre accounts for the fact that the recurrent expression of particular utterances to achieve the same communicative purpose in a specific social situation leads to the establishment of relatively stable forms or regularities in texts (Bhatia, 2002: 23). Put differently, *'genre is a means of achieving a communicative goal that has evolved in response to particular rhetorical needs'* (Dudley-Evans, 1994:219). As such, a research article (henceforth RA), a grant proposal, a lab report, a thesis and a dissertation (henceforth DI) is each regarded as belonging to a genre.

Beyond the common understanding that genres are intimately bound to social contexts and to rhetorical functions, studies on academic genres have different emphases. While some studies focus on textual features and the rhetorical realisation of a text's social purpose (text-based) (for example Martin, 1989, Swales, 1981, 1990), other studies are more versed in the investigation of the rhetorical situation in which the genre is realised (situation-driven) (such as Berkenkotter and Huckin, 1995, Miller, 1984). The pedagogical interests of the two perspectives are subsequently different. The first pleads for an explicit teaching of academic genres' features and the second focuses on fostering the students' awareness of the genres' social contexts. While both

perspectives have places in genre literature, the first seems to have the biggest impact on genre research into academic writing especially in English as a second or foreign language settings (Burgess, 2002: 196).

Actually, the need for describing and teaching generic features of written academic genres is motivated by the fact that the form and the purpose of academic genres are often elusive to students (Woodward-Kron, 2005:24). In fact, while members of a community usually have little difficulty in recognising similarities in the texts they use frequently and are able to draw on their repeated experiences of particular contexts to read, understand, and perhaps write the text that occurs in them relatively easily. Novice writers, because they are outside a particular genre-using community, lack this familiarity and therefore often struggle to create appropriate texts (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996). The struggle is doubtless more challenging for non-native speakers of English.

As a corrective response, a great number of written academic genres have been researched for the schematic structures they display, i.e. the way they realise their rhetorical function, as well as their characterising linguistic features. Within this perspective, Swales' (1981) pioneering study of research article (RA) introductions in which he presented his four-move schema, was most influential. Following Swales (1981, 1990), many studies have focused their attention on the RA introduction or one of the RA part-genres such as the abstract (Selager-Meyer, 1991, Samraj, 2002, Swales and Van Bonn, 2007) and the discussion section (Hopkins and Dudley-Evans 1988).  While for a long time academic professional genres, such as the RA, the grant proposal and the text-book remained attractive to genre analysts, it is only recently that academic genres produced by students have begun to be studied.

While the writing of post-graduate students is gaining an increasing importance seen mainly through the big number of published research manuals and guidebooks, it has,

surprisingly, received meagre attention from genre analysts. On the gap in research into the thesis and the DI [1] as genres, Vantola and Mauranen (quoted in Bunton, 2002: 57), state that:

> Innumerable guidebooks and manuals on writing up research have been published; however, very few of these are based on serious linguistic analysis of the kinds of texts that a novice academic might have to Master

However, of the two genres, the PhD thesis and the Master's DI, the second is much less researched than the first. In fact, very few studies have focused on the generic structure of the Master's DI (Samraj, 2008). Some of these have accounted for the generic structure of certain sections of this genre such as introductions and discussions (Dudley-Evans, 1986), conclusions (Hewings, 1993) and more recently, acknowledgements (Hyland and Tse, 2004) and introductions (Samraj, 2008). While these studies provide good insights into how different part-genres of the DI are rhetorically structured, much work remains to be done.

The dissertations (henceforth DIs) investigated in the above mentioned studies are generally produced by English native speakers and the textual features they display reflect, obviously, an Anglo-norm of writing a DI. Consequently, very little is known of the ways other language groups writing in English organise different parts of their DIs.

In Algeria, Magister DIs are an essential part of the Magister programmes in English Departments and are produced at the culmination of the Magister programmes comprising around one year of coursework. However, there has been, to date, no study on this student-produced genre in Algeria. Investigating the Magister DIs produced in English departments of Algerian universities can inform us on a student-produced genre

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[1] The terms 'thesis' and 'DI' are used differently in different countries. In most UK universities, a 'thesis' is written for the research degree of PhD while a 'DI' is written for a Master's degree. In many American universities, the two terms are reversed. This Dissertation uses the UK terms of a PhD thesis and a Master's DI.

which, according to Samraj (2008: 56), '*fills a place somewhere in between student-produced course papers, on the one hand, and published research articles, on the other, in a taxonomy of academic writing'*. Such a study can shed light on the nature of this student-produced genre in terms of its rhetorical structures as compared to those characterising English native speakers' DIs. The findings can be utilised in workshops on DI writing to facilitate the production of this genre by Magister students.

To address this gap, this paper reports on a genre analysis of twelve Magister DIs written in English by Algerian students in the field of Linguistics and Didactics at the English department of the university of Algiers. The purpose is to unveil the rhetorical structures characterising three sections or part-genres of the DIs, namely introductions, abstracts and acknowledgements and eventually compare them to those proposed for English Native Speakers reported in the literature on the three part-genres. Worth mentioning reasons lie behind the focus on these three part-genres. Due to the rhetorical salience of the research introduction, it is the part-genre most researched in the literature on academic genres (Bunton, 2002, Samraj, 2008, Swales, 1990). In fact, research introductions are the place where the author demonstrates to readers that her/his research has a place in the research landscape where her/his study is situated. Yet, the introduction is the most difficult part of the DI to handle by students (Dudley-Evans, 1986).

The abstract represents a condensed version of the paper it reports on and has the key function of helping the reader decide on the potential relevance of the paper for her/his interests. However, it is a part-genre which has not received due importance in genre analysts' research agenda and the only studies reported in literature focus on RA

abstracts (Bhatia, 1993). No study, to my knowledge, has been conducted so far on Master or Magister DI abstracts and therefore it is worth investigating this part-genre.

As for acknowledgements, they represent a particular part-genre, very different from the body of the DI. They offer students a unique rhetorical space to convey their genuine gratitude for assistance and to promote a favourable social and scholarly character. This makes them of considerable interest to discourse analysts and teachers of English for Academic Purposes (Hyland and Tse, 2004).

To analyse the introductions, the abstracts and the acknowledgements, I have employed three main starting frameworks: Samraj's (2008) 3-move CARS model developed for Master's theses introductions, Samraj's (2002) move structure of abstracts and Hyland and Tse's (2004) move pattern of acknowledgments.

However, our study does not rely solely on textual data; it includes another kind of data yielded from two ethnographic methods: a talk around texts conducted with some of the DIs' authors and an interview made with one of the supervisors who are in charge of directing the students' research in the department. The analysis of the textual data supplemented by the views of the informants is essentially meant to answer the following research questions:

1- What rhetorical patterns for DI introductions, abstracts and acknowledgements are used by Algerian post-graduate students?

4- How do the rhetorical patterns employed by Algerian post-graduate students writing in English in their introductions, abstracts and acknowledgments compare with those proposed in academic literature?

In terms of organisation, this DI follows the ILrMRD format (Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Results and Discussion) and comprises two main

parts which are, in turn, divided into chapters. Following the general introduction, the first part includes a chapter dealing with a review of the previous literature related to the topic of our research and a second chapter detailing the research methodology used to implement our study.  As for the second part, it counts three chapters where the results reached through the analysis of each part-genre and their discussion are reported. Finally, a general conclusion of the work is presented. It gathers a summary of the main research outcomes, some pedagogical implications and suggestions for further research.

# Part One
# Literature Review and Methodology

## Introduction

As I have already stated in the general introduction to my study, two main chapters are included in this part; the Literature Review and the Methodology. As its name denotes, the first chapter presents the published literature related to the topic of my research which is basically revolving around genre analysis of DIs. Three main aims are pursued through this chapter. One, to provide the reader with an overview of the spectrum of work undertaken within the area of genre analysis; two, to introduce some specific terminology that will be referred to all along the study and three, to draw the analytical frameworks that will inform the analysis of the introductions, the abstracts and the acknowledgements. The second chapter included in this part deals with the research methodology adopted to implement this research. It comprises a detailed description of the twelve DIs selected for analysis, the text-in-context approach adopted in the analysis of the texts that make up our corpus and the frameworks used to analyse the twelve sets of introductions, abstracts and acknowledgements.

# Chapter One
# Literature Review

As our study aims to analyse a sample of Linguistics and Didactics Magister DIs as a genre, we need to review some important aspects that relate to our research. First, we will attempt to bring to light the central notion of *genre* by reviewing the different descriptions it has enjoyed in the field of Applied Linguistics. Second, we will go through related research into postgraduate writing with a particular focus on DI writing. Finally, we will explore relevant studies on acknowledgements, abstracts and introductions, the three part-genres of DI we are concerned with.

## 1. The Notion of Genre in Applied Linguistics

The history of 'genre' may be traced back to the Aristotelian time and stretches to present day disc1iplines such as New Rhetoric, Composition Studies, Literary Studies, Linguistics and Anthropology (Johns, 1997). Traditionally, the term genre was confined to describing literary texts named according to their forms such as poetry, prose, drama etc. Within this view, genres indicate written texts that are *'primarily literary, entirely defined by textual regularities in form and content, fixed and immutable, and, classified into neat and exclusive categories and subcategories*' (Freedman and Medway in Johns, 2002:3).

Within the area of Linguistics and its applied relatives, and over the past 25 years the interest in genre appears to have a widespread impact. This is particularly the case in a number of fields concerned with L1 and L2 teaching such as Composition Studies, Rhetoric, Professional Writing and English for Specific Purposes (Swales: 1990). On the sweeping interest that the notion of genre has recently received Candlin says '*What*

*is it about the term and the area of study it represents that attracts such attention? ...clearly, a concept that has found its time'* (1993: ix in Hyon: 1996: 396).

An elementary answer to Candlin's question would be that the term genre within this field has moved from its traditional conceptualisation as a literary construct and has widely been adopted, in stead, as *'a popular framework for analysing the form and rhetorical function of non-literary discourse'* such as research articles, grant proposals, promotion letters, DIs/theses, news reports, textbooks; letters of recommendation, academic correspondences, lectures; etc. The analysis is meant as a tool for improving educational practices, especially in the fields of L1 and L2 teaching (Hyon, 1996:693). Beyond this shared concern, the notion of genre in Applied Linguistics is believed to be *'so controversial and fuzzy'* that the researcher needs to examine the various orientations it has taken in order to have a clear understanding of the term and to be able to adopt the most appropriate orientation for her/his own research.

One of the most cited state-of-the-art article in this respect is written by Hyon (1996) in which she explains that the concept of genre in Applied Linguistics has been conceived in three distinct ways by three distinct schools. She cites the international English for Specific Purposes (ESP) Tradition, North American New Rhetoric (NR) and the Australian Systemic functional School (SFL) also called the Sydney School. Building on Hyon's division of genre studies, Flowerdew (2002) claims that the three schools can rather be broadly distinguished as primarily *Linguistic* or *Non-linguistic* in their orientation. Since the two divisions are complementary, we will attempt to review the different approaches to the notion of genre as reported by Hyon (1996) and as further divided by Flowerdew.

## 1.1. Hyon's Categorisation of Genre Studies

Hyon (1996) argued that at the most basic level, ESP Tradition, NR and the SFL school share the belief that a relation exists between a text's form and purpose. However, differences in their perceptions of genre, the methodology they rely on in the analysis of genres and the pedagogical applications they offer to the classroom context quickly surface.

### 1.1.1. The ESP Tradition

Broadly speaking, ESP scholars (Bhatia, 1993; Dudley-Evans, 1994; Flowerdew, 2002; Johns, 1997; Swales, 1990 etc.) view genre as a class of spoken or written texts which share some set of communicative purposes (or rhetorical action) and display common textual features. These communicative purposes are recognised by the discourse community in which the genre is realised and shape the genre's internal structure (Swales, 1981, 1990, Bhatia, 1993). Their studies focus mainly on describing the discourse structure and linguistic features of specific academic and professional genres such as research articles, DIs and theses, lab reports, grant proposals, sales letters, promotion letters etc.

In terms of methodology, ESP genre analysts use *'structural move analysis'* to describe schematic structures or global organisational patterns in different genres. The outcome of their analyses is then used as a basis for the design of pedagogical material primarily directed towards Non-native speakers of English (NNS) to help them produce the types of language that are commonly required in academic and professional settings. Hyon (1996) argues that ESP genre analysis is not in tune with their conceptualisation of the notion of genre defined essentially in terms of both formal features and communicative purposes. She explains that ESP genre studies are more focused on detailing genres' formal properties at the expense of their social functions. The interest

in the social functions of genres and the situational context in which they occur is the most central feature of NR genre studies.

## 1.1.2. The New Rhetoric

NR genre scholars (Bazerman, 1988; Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995; Miller, 1984) hold the view that genres emerge as a response to recurrent rhetorical situations, which give rise to textual regularities in form and substance. For Rhetoricians, a sound definition of genre should be based not on formal properties of a genre but on the social functions it fulfils and the situational context in which it occurs (Miller, 1984). However, although genres are associated with repeated socio-rhetorical situations, which obviously constrain future responses to similar situations, genres for rhetoricians are dynamic and evolving (Berkenkotter and Huckin, 1995).

With their emphasis on genre context and function, ethnographic methods rather than linguistic and/or rhetorical methods are preferred in the investigation of the discourse communities within which genres are realised. As for the translation of NR ideals into pedagogic applications and unlike ESP scholars, New Rhetoricians are reluctant about the possibility of an explicit teaching of genre forms. In their view, there is more to replicating the identical structures of prototypical genres. They argue that teaching should rather proceed from an ethnographic exploration of the characteristics of the rhetorical situation which includes the purposes and functions of genres, the attitudes, beliefs, values of a particular community where genre is situated. They further claim that the knowledge of genre is acquired by participating in the activities of the discourse community of the genre in question (Devitt, 1993:582-583). Consequently, there is little discussion about converting NR approach into pedagogic applications and the existing attempts are directed towards composition and professional writing in L1 contexts (Hyon, 1996).

### 1.1.3. The SFL Tradition

SFL genre studies draw heavily on Halliday's systemic functional linguistics, which concerns *'the relationship between language and its functions in social settings'* (Hyon, 1996: 696). The forms of language are determined by three contextual variables including field (the activity going on), tenor (the relationship between participants) and mode (the channel of communication, spoken or written) (Woodward-Kron, 2005: 25-26). These three elements together shape the register of language. Martin (1984) defines genre as *'a staged, goal-oriented, and purposeful social activity'* (Martin, 1984 in Paltridge, 2002: 933). Martin (1984) moved beyond Halliday's description of the relationship between text and immediate situations in order to capture the contextual interaction between social purposes and text meanings. The notion of genre corresponds to the context of culture which shapes the schematic structure of the genre while register is responsible for the genre's linguistic features (Paltridge, 2002:932).

SFL genre studies focus mainly on the description of the organisational stages of texts and on a close linguistic (grammatical) analysis that accompany these stages. These analyses provide descriptions of the functional stages of a range of pedagogical genres used in primary and secondary schools including recounts, reports, explanations, expositions, descriptions, procedures and narratives. Textual scaffolding is seen as fundamental to EFL genre pedagogy and is implemented in a three-stage teaching-learning cycle, comprising modelling, joint construction and independent construction of text (Hyon, 1996).

Commenting on Hyon's work, Flowerdew (2002) believes that genre studies can be seen from two main perspectives instead of three. In fact, he further organised the three schools described by Hyon namely ESP, SFL and NR into two main groupings on

the basis of the most important theoretical difference between them. These are the linguistic and the non-linguistic orientation.

## 1.2. Flowerdew's Division of Genre Studies

Building on Hyon's work, which classifies approaches to genre in terms of scholarly tradition, Flowerdew (2002) argues that the three schools can be broadly distinguished as primarily *'linguistic'* or *'non-linguistic'* in their orientation. This classification is based on what Johns (2002) calls the *'most important theoretical foci'* that separates the three schools. The intellectual tension between ESP, SFL and NR arises mainly from whether they concentrate on language and text or they focus on the social theories of context and community (Johns, 2002:5). Those who foreground text and language belong to the linguistic orientation whereas those who have the tendency to focus on context and community represent the non-linguistic orientation.

Flowerdew defines linguistic approaches to genre studies as the approaches which apply '…*theories of functional grammar and discourse and [concentrate] on the lexico-grammatical and rhetorical realization of communicative purposes'*. As for the non-linguistic, they *'originate with the purposes and functions of genres and the attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviours of members of the discourse communities within which genres are situated'* (Flowerdew, 2002:91). Following this categorisation, FSL and ESP seem to fall within the province of linguistic approaches to genre theory while NR belongs to the non-linguistic approach (ibid).

In sum, genre studies can be put onto a continuum of those that focus on textual analysis at the one end, and on contextual and social analysis at the other. Within the first grouping, the concern is about detailing  the schematic structure of different genres (such as RA: Samraj 2002, Swales, 1981, 1990, Master DIs: Dudley-Evans 1986, Samraj 2008, PhD theses: Bunton 2002, Kwan 2005, grant proposals: Connor 1996,

2004, Business letters: Bhatia 1993) and part-genres (introductions in Research Articles: Swales 1981, 1990, abstracts in RA: Bhatia 1993, Yakhontova 2002, Swales and Van Bonn 2007, acknowledgements in Theses and DIs: Hyland and Tse 2004) .A variety of linguistic features has also been the subject of many linguistic genre studies. Most common among these are tenses, hedges, modality, negation and passive voice. Within the second grouping, genre studies focus on the details of the text's social context using ethnographic methods such as interviews, talk around text, narrative inquiry, observation etc.

Flowerdew's (2002) categorisation is particularly useful for signalling not only a researcher's theoretical orientation, but also the researcher's primary focus as foregrounding either text or context, depending on the researcher's purpose. However, it is important to notice that the two ends of the continuum are not dichotomous as they seem to be; they are rather to be considered as complementary, yielding interesting insights into the understanding of genre. In this light, Flowerdew's categorisation of genre analysis studies into linguistic and non-linguistic does not mean that the two are mutually exclusive as they seem to be. In fact, Flowerdew (2002) explains that a study adopting a primary linguistic approach can consider context and can make use of ethnographic techniques as well, and similarly NR may be concerned with linguistic realisation of genres. The difference between the two camps is actually one of focus:

> The linguistic approach looks to the situational context to interpret the linguistic and discourse structures, whereas the New Rhetoric may look to the text to interpret the situational context (Flowerdew 2002: 91–92).

## 2. Implications for the Study

Now that we have reviewed the major groupings that genre-based studies have spawn, as labelled by Hyon (1996) and as further developed by Flowerdew (2002), we can safely claim that the linguistic approach to genre theory is best suited to the purpose

of our research. Put another way, as this study aims principally at examining the post-graduate students' discourse organisation in different parts of their DIs along with other linguistic features, it is essentially linguistically oriented. However, both SFL and ESP genre studies have a strong research focus on analysing and describing textual patterns of genres (Chen, 2008). Among these two schools, ESP seems to best cater for the context and the purposes of the present study. This is the case for at least three main reasons:

First, the subjects of our research, Algerian post-graduates, represent the same audience targeted by ESP researchers. In fact, post-graduate students is an audience that has received much attention from ESP genre analysts (Bhatia: 1993, Bunton: 2002, Dudley-Evans: 1994; Swales: 1981, 1990, Flowerdew: 2002; Johns: 1997, 2002, Partridge: 2002; Upton, 2002). In contrast, Australian genre scholars address a much younger audience, namely pupils. Second, ESP genre studies provide us with a large body of empirical literature of various textual aspects of a variety of academic genres including DIs (Hyon, 1996:695). Third, and in terms of methodology, almost all textual genre-based studies have employed one or the other of move-analytic models developed by ESP scholars. This makes the study in tune with the present line of existing genre-based studies. Therefore, we will leave SFL analyses and turn our attention to providing a more elaborate view of ESP genre theory including the notion of genre, genre analysis, applied genre analysis and pedagogical applications.

## 2. 1. ESP Definition of genre

In the literature on genre analysis, Connor (1996) claims that, the most comprehensive definition of genre derives from Swales (1990) whose works (1981, 1990) have been seminal in shaping genre theory in ESP. For Swales a genre represents:

> […] a class of communicative events the members of which share some set of **communicative purposes**. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the **schematic structure** of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of **content and style**. Communicative purpose is both a privileged criterion and one that operates to keep the scope of a genre as here conceived narrowly focused on comparable rhetorical action. In addition to purpose, exemplars of a genre exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience.
>
> (Swales, 1990:58 my emphasis)

Swales' definition points to a number of crucial criteria for defining a target genre. They are communicative purpose(s) (the rhetorical actions intended), choice of contents, schematic structure (also understood as rhetorical movement), and linguistic style. Among these, Swales maintains that communicative purpose(s) is/are the most determinant aspect of communicative events to categorise a genre, the key factor that leads us to decide whether a text is an instance of a particular genre or not. The communicative purpose in its turn should be agreed upon or established by the members of the discourse community that uses the genre. A discourse community is that *'group of people within a discipline or area of special interest that communicates with each other in part through the genres which they possess'* (Dudley-Evans: 1994:220). On The importance of the discourse community, Swales notes that *'…genre belongs to discourse communities not to individuals'* (1990:09). Similarly, Bhatia (1993) points out that the cognitive structuring or the schematic structure in a genre is a property, not of the individual but of the genre itself as it derives from the *'accumulated and conventionalized social knowledge available to a particular discourse or professional community'*( 1993:21).

In addition to the centrality of the communicative purpose in defining a target genre, Swales claims that there has to be a relationship between the purpose accomplished by the genre and the schematic structure of the genre, the text and

language employed. The genre's communicative purpose *'constitutes the rationale for the genre'*, which means that the genre's communicative purpose triggers its schematic structure (move structure) and restrains the writer's rhetorical strategies (content and style). To conceptualise this interdependency, we offer a three-level model whose three constituents captures the essence of what we call 'genres'.

| |
|---|
| **Communicative purpose**<br>Realised by<br>**Move structure**<br>Realised by<br>**Rhetorical strategies** |
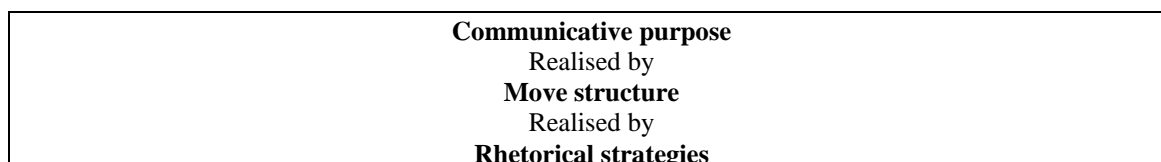
**Figure 1: The Notion of Genre in ESP**

The concern for both the communicative purpose or social action and form is echoed in other ESP definitions of genre. Bhatia (1993) elaborates Swales' definition and offers a similar view of genre which is according to him:

> A recognised communicative event characterised by a set of communicative purpose(s) identified and mutually understood by the members of the professional or the academic community in which it regularly occurs. Most often, it is highly structured and conventionalised with constraints on allowable contributions in terms of their intent, positioning, form and functional value (1993:22)

Through this definition, Bhatia asserts that the role of communicative purposes in genre identification is central. Though there are other features of genre, like content, form, intended audience; medium or channel, Bhatia maintains that genre *'is primarily characterised by the communicative purposes that is intended to fulfil'*(ibid). He further explains that a change in purpose will yield another genre whereas a change in any other features will give a sub-genre. To support his claim, Bhatia analysed the move structure of both the job application letters and sales promotion letters. He demonstrates that both are instances of the same promotional genre as they share the same communicative purposes where the former promoted the product or the service and the second

advertised the applicants themselves. The shared communicative purpose of both sales promotion letters and the job application letters has accordingly led to the establishment of a similar schematic structure that Bhatia described as being composed of seven-moves.

What is new in Bhatia's definition as compared to that of Swales is the paraphrasing of a number of expressions. First, Bhatia narrows what Swales referred to as *'expert members of the discourse community'*, to mean *'members of the professional or the academic community in which it [genre] occurs'*. *'The schematic structure of the discourse'* is further characterised as *'highly structured and conventionalised'*; and *'constrains choice, content and style'* as *'constraints on allowable contributions in terms of their intent, positioning, form and functional value'* (1993: 13). For Bhatia, then, although the writer has the freedom to choose the linguistic resources, he must conform to certain standardised practices within the limits of a particular genre and any mismatch in the use of generic resources is considered odd by the members of the academic or professional community which owns the genre. In short, Bhatia points out that *'each genre is an instance of a successful achievement of a specific communicative purpose using conventionalized knowledge of linguistic and discoursal resources'* (p. 16). In line with Johns (1997) who writes:

> One central point made by genre theorists and pedagogues … is that purpose interacts with features of text at every discourse level. If a writer's purposes are to be accomplished, then he or she should be aware of the forms, argumentation, and content that have become conventional in the tradition of a genre (1997: 24-25)

The understanding that genre is defined in terms of the function it fulfils and the linguistic features it displays and that the first shapes the second is reflected in the way ESP genre analysts approach genres (applied genre analysis). Actually, most of their

studies examine the way writers go about accomplishing the communicative purpose of the genre in which they are writing. The aim being to reveal the genre's schematic structure and/or linguistic features characterising it. Before we examine how ESP applies its conceptualisation of genre when analysing academic and professional genres, we will define first what genre scholars mean by genre analysis as a level of language description.

## 2.2. ESP Genre Analysis

### 2.2.1. Genre Analysis

It is important to define what ESP genre analysts mean by genre analysis, and to distinguish it from other approaches to text analysis. In a survey of the development of genre-based approaches to text analysis, Bhatia (1993) distinguishes three levels of language description that have developed over the last forty years before reaching genre analysis. These are register analysis, grammatical-rhetorical analysis, discourse analysis, and genre analysis.

**Register analysis**, which was prevalent from about 1960 to 1970, is concerned with providing surface-level linguistic description of the lexico-grammatical features of certain types of texts on the assumption that families of text would all have essentially the same linguistic and syntactic features (Bhatia: 1993:05). **Grammatical-rhetorical analysis** is a functional language description whose aim is to investigate the close interrelationship between grammatical choice and rhetorical function. It accounts for the values that the lexico-grammatical features realise in discourse. Language description as **discourse** has been qualified as *'interactional analysis'* as it is created as a result of the reader's interpretation of the text (Bhatia, 1993:8). This approach is based on the notion that in constructing a text, writers are not only concerned with the interconnection between language and rhetorical choices but with the constraints imposed by their

understanding of how the discourse will be received and interpreted by the reader (Bhatia: 1993:8-10).

Bhatia (1993) finds these three first approaches to text analysis inadequate on two fronts. One, they lack *'adequate information about the rationale underlying various discourse-types* including *'insufficient explanation of socio-cultural, institutional, and organizational constraints and expectations that influence the nature of a particular discourse-genre'*. Two, they pay *'little attention to the conventionalized regularities in the organization of various communicative events'* (p. 10).

Instead, Bhatia pleads for a fourth level of language description, **genre analysis** that he terms *'language description as explanation'* (1993: 10-12). This means that instead of offering a linguistic description of language use, it tends to offer linguistic explanation, attempting to answer the question, *'Why do members of specific professional communities use the language the way they do?'*(Bhatia, 1997:313). He then defines genre analysis as *'the study of situated linguistic behaviour in institutionalised academic or professional settings'* (2002:22).

### 2.2.2. Applied Genre Analysis

On a more practical level, ESP genre analysis is essentially text-driven or textual aiming principally at describing the way genres' communicative functions are linguistically realised (Flowerdew, 2002:90). Common among ESP genre analysts is the belief that the communicative purpose of a specific genre is achieved through a series of *'moves'* and thus each genre is characterised by a specific move structure or rhetorical structure. To unveil the move structure of a given genre or the moves the writer makes in a text in order to achieve her/his communicative purpose, the technique that is most used in the ESP tradition is referred to as *'move analysis'* (Swales, 1990; Bhatia, 1993).

Considered as a *'powerful tool for exploring a discourse's argumentative structure or internal organisation'* (Rowley-Jolivet and Carter-Thomas 2005: 47), the idea of move analysis is *'to interpret regularities of organization in order to understand the rationale for the genre'* (Bhatia, 1993: 32). According to Holmes (1997in Bunton, 2002: 58), move structure refers to the segments of meaning (moves) that a genre comprises and how they are organised so that a writer achieves the communicative purpose of the genre in which he is writing. It is composed of moves, steps or strategies, and their sequencing. A move may be defined as *'a segment of text that is shaped and constrained by a particular communicative function'* (ibid). Each move then serves as part of the total communicative purpose of that genre. Under each move, there are options of steps or strategies for writers to select to realize the purpose of the move. More detailed definitions of moves, steps and the way they are identified will be provided in the methodology chapter.

Among the characterising features of genres, move structure rather than content or style is the genre's formal property most researched in the ESP tradition (Kwan, 2005). In fact, it has been taken up as object of analysis in a wealth of studies in various genres. The pioneering work in this field was Swales' (1981) analysis of 48 RA introductions published in a number of different disciplines. Across these different fields, he identified four common moves with a number of possible steps within them. The work of Swales led directly to a flurry of publications in which the move analysis model that he developed has been validated and applied to other genres and part-genres. ESP genre analysis operates also at the micro level of discourse. At this level, particular attention is paid to the way certain linguistic features such as verb tense or voice, personal pronouns, negatives, referential behaviour etc are used in different places of a given genre. Whether ESP genre- related studies operate at the micro or at the macro

level of analysis, they are basically linguistic or text-based as apposed to context-based genre studies.

However, as a result of the over emphasis on textual analysis of genres, recent calls for a more context-sensitive genre studies begin to be heard. Bhatia (2004) argues that in addition to investigating the textual properties of a genre, there is necessity to examine the social forces that may affect the final form of the text (the discourse community that owns the genre) so that to reach a more comprehensible description of a genre. Consequently, more and more ESP genre studies are becoming *'increasingly context-driven'* (Johns, 2002:206). This is made possible through adopting ethnographic methods to complement but not replace the textual analysis which is cardinal in ESP so that to better understand genre structuring. On this shift, Bhatia has this to say:

> In the early conceptualizations of genre the focus was more centrally on text, and context played a relatively less important background role. However, in more recent versions of genre analysis context has been assigned a more important role   (Bhatia, 2004 in Kwan, 2005:169)

Similarly, many other views criticise the heavy emphasis on the linguistic characterisation of genres and call for the inclusion of other methods in addition to textual analysis in order to investigate what may influence the final textual product. In this respect, Connor reports that:

> […] there is a renewed interest in the study of written discourse in Applied Linguistics and EAP writing research. The focus is on context-sensitive text analyses, and the methods of study are diverse (Connor, 2004: 295)

Bhatia (2004) explains that one way of reaching a more comprehensible description of genre is to go directly to people involved in the production of these genres. Text-based interviews or talk around texts has been proposed as an appropriate research method that can help the researcher investigate the context. Hyland (2003), for example,

recommends supplementing text analysis with interviews of writers and readers to confirm findings and establish reasons for strategies and choices that writers make:

> One of the methods that have proved to permit the researcher to investigate the context which can supplement but not replace textual genre analysis is text-based interviews (Hyland, 2003 in Connor 2004: 296)

Similarly, Connor (2004), in a genre study, includes both textual genre analysis and context-sensitive interview method to investigate differences and similarities in grant proposals written by humanists and scientists. This technique, as Connor argues, *'provided invaluable information about the strategies and choices the writers made while writing proposals for a variety of granting agencies'* (Connor, 2004:297-298).

Drawing on genre related literature and in line with the recent developments in ESP genre analysis, the present study is subscribed to this mixed, text-in-context approach. To identify the rhetorical moves present in the Algerian post-graduate students' DIs, move analysis method will be used as it has been applied to various academic genres including DIs and/or its different parts and has proved to be successful in drawing the move structures characterising them. The study is also a context-sensitive one in that talk around text method will be included to supplement textual analysis in order to provide a more accurate picture about the reasons of the students' rhetorical choices. A detailed account of this combined approach will be provided in the methodology chapter.

## 2.3. ESP Genre-based Pedagogy

Based on the issue of the communicative purpose, which submits that a genre is a text which serves a given function in society, and that it is made up of segments or moves which realise its communicative purposes, ESP genre analysis produces generic

structures of moves that provide a basis for the development of pedagogic materials (Connor, 2002:294). The underlying rationale is that explicit teaching of schematic structures that characterise particular genres and their linguistic conventions is crucial to learners' success in appropriating these genres (Henry and Roseberry, 1998:147). Thus, pedagogically, genre analysis is a consciousness-raising attempt aimed at showing how these moves are organised, what linguistic features the expert users of the genre have chosen in order to realise the communicative purpose associated with the genre and how these choices can be explained.

ESP practitioners see in the explicit teaching of genres to non native speakers of English a powerful pedagogic tool valuable for learners and teachers alike (Cheng, 2005). They assert that unlike first language speakers, second or foreign language learners do not have an implicit knowledge of the genres they are required to produce or understand. Therefore, it is important to provide these learners with frameworks to draw on in order to help them overcome their academic fears and insecurities (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996). Teaching genres explicitly introduces the learner not only to the formal features of genres but also to the understanding of what has implicated these features, that is the functions they serve in the social context in which they are written. Yet, some approaches, mainly NR, have voiced the fear that the type of data provided by genre analysis will lead to prescriptive teaching practices in writing (Skulstad, 1999). The question of whether genre conventions should explicitly be taught is still very much alive.

In this light, genre practitioners argued that if a number of aspects are taken into account in genre-based approach to writing instruction, the dangers of prescriptivism are avoidable. Among these, preparing the students for real life tasks, highlighting the communicative purpose of the genre, contextualising the texts before they are presented,

introducing a variety of suitable and authentic text-genres and using genre and process-centred approaches (Kay and Dudley-Evans, 1998).

The issue of the extent to which a genre-based approach might limit student expression through its use of model texts and its focus on audience expectations is also raised by Swales who emphasised the necessity of helping learners bring their own voices when they are writing in a particular genre (Swales 2000 in Paltridge, 2002: 937). Bhatia explains that although genres are highly conventionalised, there is a possibility of manipulating genre conventions in order to communicate *'private intentions'* but within *'generic integrity'* (2002:23-24). Kay and Dudley-Evans in the workshops they organised on the pedagogical merits and demerits of genre-based approach to writing instruction have concluded that despite the controversial nature of genre-based instruction, it is positive, if it continues to stimulate discussion, debate and dialogue between researchers and teachers as well as between teachers experienced in this form of instruction (1998:313).

Many ESP genre analysts engaged in describing various genres with the intention of translating them into pedagogic materials. The preferred learners targeted by ESP genre-based studies, as already referred to, are non-natives, more particularly, tertiary level and beyond students. Therefore, descriptions of academic genres, which novice researchers encounter in the process of their graduate or doctoral studies or in the first years of their professional career, are very common in ESP. For example, Dudley-Evans (1986) proposes his analysis of the schematic structure found in scientific Master's DIs as a teaching/learning resource. Swales (1981, 1990) has also converted his analysis of RA introductions into writing classroom tasks to help non-native speakers gain awareness of the organizational and the stylistic choices of this part-genre

and use them in their own writings. The tasks include making up texts with coloured pens, reconstructing the proper order of mixed up introductions etc.

The structural models of various genres developed by ESP genre analysts may also be used as a point of reference for analysing deviations from recurrent textual patterns, i.e. as a basis against which non-native writing productions may be compared. This would help identify possible gaps or writing difficulties that will in turn aid in the design of effective pedagogical tasks to raise the students' awareness about the degree of prototypicality of their writing as compared to that of NS (Skulstad, 1999: 293).

Through the two first sections of this chapter, the main orientations of genre studies have been described with a focus on ESP which constitutes the approach adopted in our study. The third section reviews the most relevant ESP genre studies on academic writing. More particularly, studies on research introductions, abstracts and Acknowledgments. The purpose is to draw starting analytical frameworks that will serve in the analysis of the DI introductions, abstracts, ad acknowledgements of Algerian Post-graduates in Linguistics and Didactics.

## 3. Research into DI as a Genre:

### 3.1 Some Conceptual Contours of DI

The challenges which the DI poses to postgraduate students (both native and non-native speakers of English) have generated a need of training these learners in the writing of this genre (Kwan, 2005). Most of the work undertaken in this area has taken the form of guidebooks focusing mainly on the process of writing a DI; advice as to how to survive the DI. This kind of material provides the writer with information about the various kinds of research a DI/thesis subscribes to (qualitative, quantitative, experimental etc), about how to collect the data and how to analyse it etc (Burton,

2004). Studies on DIs as a genre, however, are much less available. Swales (1990) points out that this is an area of discourse analysis that has largely been avoided due to its daunting size. Genre studies on DIs may be summarised in those which investigated the overall organisation of the DI, i.e. their different formats, those which accounted for the schematic structure of different parts of the DI, and those which focused on the use of some linguistic features in different places of the DI.

So far, three major forms of DI have been identified which are the ILrMRD formats, the AC format and the TB format (Paltridge, 2002 in Kwan, 2005). The ILrMRD format (Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Results and Discussion) follows the traditional pattern, which Dudley-Evans describes as a *'blown-up'* version of the research article (Dudley-Evans 1994 in Kwan, 2005: 3). The AC format (article compilation) consists of chapters, each of which resembles research article containing its own introduction, methodology, results and discussion sections. The TB format (Topic-Based) where the thesis begins with a chapter headed introduction and ends with a Conclusion. The chapters in between are titled according to the topics and sub-topics of the writer's investigation. Different postulations about the choice of format have been asserted. Paltridge (2002) argued that the choice of format is likely a result of the methodological and theoretical orientation of the DI.

In addition to the overall organisation of the DI, and on a less obvious level of analysis, each part of the DI will display a different pattern of organisation according to the purpose it serves as asserted by different genre studies performed on the different parts of the genre. Studies that have focused on the introductory chapters of DIs s are those of Dudley-Evans (1986) and Samraj (2008). Acknowledgements were studied by Hyland and Tse (2004). All these investigations used one or the other of Swales' models (1981, 1990) initially developed for RA introductions. Below are presented some

relevant structural models of the introduction, the abstract and the acknowledgement; the three part-genres of the DI we are concerned with. Before going over these studies, it is essential to review Swales' (1981, 1990) seminal works on RA introduction since it proved to be applicable with slight discrepancies to DIs (Bunton: 2002, Dudley-Evans 1986, Kwan, 2005, Samraj, 2008).

## 3.2. Move Analysis of RA Introductions

Following Swales' seminal discovery of the four-move structure characterising the RA introductions (1981) and his later postulation of *the Create a Research Space* model (1990), research articles in general and introductions in particular have become like a research '*goldmine*' for genre analysts. In fact, most of the studies that came after Swales' pioneering work have been undertaken to investigate the validity of his two models (1981, 1990) and their probable applicability to other parts of the research article. Other researchers have tried to apply one or the other of the models developed by Swales (1981, 1990) on introductions of longer research genres such as DIs and theses. Below are reviewed the initial and the second version of the structural models originally developed for the RA introduction and their later application on the DI introduction by Dudley-Evans (1986) and Samraj (2008).

The initial model presented by Swales (1981) is composed of four main moves with a single progression from the first to the fourth. It is based on the assumption that RA introductions are rhetorical works in which the writer tries to persuade the reader that his work has a place in the research community, that something in the existing state of the subject is not satisfactory and his own research can help improve the situation (Swales, 1981). This communicative purpose is believed to be realised through four moves. The first move; *Establishing the Field*, deals with the field in which the research is located and its importance. The second move *Summarises Previous Research*, while

the third, *Preparing for the Present Research* moves on from the previous research questioning it in some way, showing an area it has not covered or indicating a way in which it could be extended. The fourth move is *Introducing the Present Research* by giving its purpose or outlining the work carried out.

However, some studies have observed that variations in the structure of introductions may occur especially at the level of steps and noted the difficulty of distinguishing move one and two; *Establishing the Field* and *Summarising Previous Research* (Bunton, 2002: 59). Another basic criticism addressed to the four-part model of Swales is that the four moves are not always occurring in a single progression but occur in cycles such as 1-2-3, 2-3-2-3-4 (Ibid). Therefore, drawing on some of the validation studies, Swales (1990) amalgamated move one and two and has reformulated the structure by scaling it down to three moves instead of four which he names accordingly The *Creating a Research Space* (henceforth CARS) as captured in figure 2.

---

**Move 1: Establishing a Territory**

---

Step 1: Claiming centrality and/or
Step 2: Making topic generalisations and/or
Step 3: Reviewing Items of Previous Research

---

**Move 2: Establishing a Niche**

---

Step 1A: Counter-claiming or
Step 1B: Indicating a gap or
Step 1C: Question –raising or
Step 1D: Continuing a tradition

---

**Move 3: Occupying the Niche**

---

Step 1A: Outlining purposes or
Step 1B: Announcing present research
Step 2: Announcing principal findings
Step 3: Indicating research article structure

---

**Figure 2: The CARS Model** (Swales, 1990: 141).

According to Swales' model (1990), introductions often begin with a move that establishes the general topic being discussed. Writers then create a niche for themselves

within this territory in a number of ways. Finally, the authors discuss the particular goals and research questions of the study reported. Swales' revised version of RA introductions move structure has later proved to apply in describing the rhetorical movement in introductions in both the research article and DIs (Kwan: 2005: 34).

## 3.3. Move Analysis of DI Introductions

It is important to point out that as in the RA introduction, the introductory chapter of the DI has the key role to create a research space for the researcher by *'relating the relevance of the research about to be reported in the thesis to previous work in the field'* (Bhatia, 1993: 82). Based on this understanding, some researchers have used one or the other move structure of Swales in order to unveil the rhetorical structure of introductions in DIs. However, despite the importance of DI as a research genre, only a small number of studies have accounted for the schematic structure of its different parts.

In this section, we will review the two most reported studies on DIs introductions in the literature on genre analysis; that of Dudley-Evans (1986) and that of Samraj (2008). Through the examination of the two studies, we aim to show the validity of CARS especially at the level of moves and to draw the framework that will inform the analysis of our text corpus. Dudley-Evans (1986) has conducted a study to examine the extent to which the four-move structure proposed by Swales (1981) can apply to describe introductions of a longer genre; DI. He identified six-move structure as set out in the following figure.

While Dudley Evans's work (1986) is not a validation study of CARS (1990), the comparison of the two frameworks suggests the possible presence of CARS in the introductory texts of DIs (Bunton, 2002, Kwan, 2006). For instance, move 5, *Preparing for the Present Research*, is similar to Swales' Move 2, *Establishing a Niche*, in that they both create the key link between the present research and the wider field. The steps

within the move are similar: both have a step in which a gap in the previous research is indicated, and Dudley-Evans's *Extension of Previous Research* could be similar to Swales' *Continuing a Tradition*. Swales' other categories of *Counter-claiming* and *Question-raising* add further possibilities to this key move (Kwan: 2005).

**Move 1: Introducing the field**

**Move 2: Introducing the general topic (within the field)**

**Move 3: Introducing the particular topic (within the general topic)**

**Move 4: Defining the scope of the particular topic by:**
    (i)    Introducing research
    (ii)   Summarising previous research

**Move 5: Preparing for the present research by:**

    (i)    Indicating a gap in previous research
    (ii)   Indicating a possible expansion of previous research

**Move 6: Introducing the present research by:**

    (i)  Stating the aim of the research
    (ii)  Describing briefly the work carried out
    (iii)  Justifying the research

**Figure 3: DI Introduction move structure** (Dudley-Evans, 1986: 135 in Bunton, 2002: 62).

The distinctive feature of Dudley-Evans's model is the initial three-move progression from field to general topic to particular topic, where Swales has only one move. Dudley-Evans explains that the greater number of moves through which DI writers go to place their work is due to the greater length of the DI as a text compared with the RA. He also notes that three shorter introductions have omitted Move 1, and that three others reversed the order of Moves 3 and 4. Bunton (2002:61) claims that by making it the central move in the CARS model, Swales gives a prominent importance to *Establishing the Niche* while it loses its prominence as this move is placed as the fifth of six-move in Dudley-Evans's model. In addition, the three moves of the CARS model highlights better the communicative purpose for the introduction namely showing the link between what has gone before and the present work.

More recently, Samraj (2008) applied Swales' CARS to describe the schematic structure of DI introductions taken from a variety of disciplines such as Philosophy, Biology and Linguistics. The framework developed by Samraj is presented below:

---

**Move 1: Establishing a territory**

---

Claim centrality
 – Importance in the real world.
 – Importance in research.
Review literature or present topic generalizations

---

**Move 2: Establishing a Niche**

---

Indicate a gap/question in research
Indicate problem in the real world
Positive justification

---

**Move 3: Occupying the Niche**

---

State goals/argument of thesis
Background
Present hypotheses
Present results
Preview organization of thesis

---

**Figure 4: Move Structure of Master's Theses Introductions** (2008: 58).

As shown in the framework, CARS can by large apply to the DIs introductions as all three moves of CARS were identified by Samraj (2008). However, some discrepancies at the level of steps are noticed where some steps are further developed and others newly identified. Within the first move, Samraj noted that Centrality Claims may be made either by '*assertions about the importance of the topic being discussed [importance in the real world] or by assertions concerning active research activity in the area concerned [importance in research]*' (Samraj, 2002 in Samraj 2008: 58). In addition, she (2008) noticed a difficulty in distinguishing topic generalisations and reviews of previous research. Therefore, she collapsed the two steps. As for the second move, *Establishing a Niche*, it is quite similar to that of Swales (1990) with a new identified step, which is providing 'positive justification'. The last move in DI introductions, i.e. *Occupying the Niche* is more developed than that identified in RA.

This is mainly related to the length of the DI as compared to the RA. In fact, Samraj (2008) observed that in addition to the goals of the research reported, the writers of Dis exhibit a long exposition of the focus of the study or of the background leading to a more specific description of the goals or purposes of the research embedded in the hypotheses or the predictions.

We find that the framework set by Samraj is suitable for the purposes of the present research for at least two main reasons. First, in terms of corpus, Samraj included DIs belonging to the field of Linguistics which is in fact the discipline of the DIs included in the textual data for this study. Second, this framework constitutes a further validation of CARS, a model that has proved to be suitable for describing the schematic structures of different research part-genres such as Grant proposals, PhD theses and DIs (Bunton, 2002, Kwan, 2005).

## 3.4. Move Analysis of Abstracts

Although less researched than introductions, research abstracts have recently received due attention from genre analysts (Swales and Van Bonn, 2007:94). The interest in this part-genre is due to its importance in academic reading and writing. abstracts have the key function of helping the reader decide on the potential relevance of the paper for his/her interests, so that it can be considered worth reading or discarding (Samraj, 2002:42). In fact, abstracts represent a condensed version of the paper they report on, and serve the purpose of rapidly describing the aims, the methods and the results of the study they summarize. As Bhatia (1993) contends, abstracts have the function of *telling all the important aspects of the very much lengthier research report'* including the DI.

Through the use of CARS, some studies have attempted to investigate and discover the conventional rhetorical structure of abstracts in order to help non-native students

produce linguistically and rhetorically acceptable abstracts for such purposes (Bhatia: 1993, Samraj: 2002, Selager-Meyer: 1990, Swales and Van Bonn: 2007). Bhatia (1993) advocates that the typical rhetorical structure of abstracts contains the following four moves: *Introducing Purpose*, *Describing Methodology*, *Summarizing Results*, and *Presenting Conclusions* (Bhatia, 1993: 78).

Another study of abstracts is by Santos (1996) in which he focused on Linguistics abstracts and postulates five moves to account for their overall organisation. In addition to the four moves proposed by Bhatia (1993) he identified a fifth one called *Situating the Research* where writers present current knowledge in their field and can optionally define a problem in the research area. Santos maintains that this move serves the function of attracting the readership (Santos, 1996 in Samraj, 2002: 43).

The schema that will be used in the present study is a combination of the two models; it includes the model postulated by Bhatia (1993) in addition to the 'Situating the Research' move proposed by Santos (1996). The model is set out in figure 5 bellow:

| |
|---|
| **Move 1: Situating the research** |
| **Move 2: Purpose** |
| **Move 3: Methods** |
| **Move 4: Results** |
| **Move 5: Conclusion** |
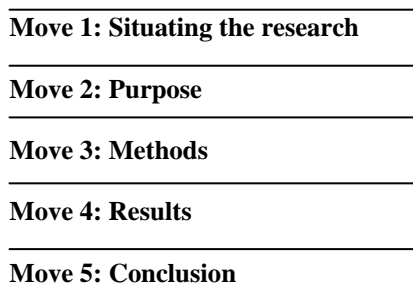
**Figure 5: Abstract move structure** (Samraj, 2002: 44).

## 3.5. Move Analysis of Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements in DIs are part of academic practice in that they allow students to reflect their gratitude for any kind of help received from others during the process of writing the DI. Although universally present in DI writing, academic acknowledgements have until recently been completely discarded from EAP research

agenda. Consequently, little is known about this particular part-genre and *'students are often left to their own devices when writing them'* (Hyland and Tse, 2004:260).

Conscious about this gap, some genre analysts have explored this very particular genre in order to find out what socio-cultural communicative functions are expressed and how they are textualised. Hyland and Tse (2004) have recently explored acknowledgements in theses and DIs and asserted the importance and the significance of this part-genre which they deduced from the *'positional prominence'* and the frequency of occurrence of this part-genre (2003 in Hyland and Tse, 2004:259). These works unveiled that acknowledgements offer writers a unique rhetorical space not only to convey their gratitude for the intellectual and personal assistance they received but also to promote a capable academic and social identity. In other terms, in acknowledgement *'the writer isn't just thanking people but showing he or she has friends and research networks and expertise'* (Hyland, 2009 personal communication). Thus, acknowledgements serve the following function:

> To give credit to institutions and individuals who have contributed to the DI in some way, while seeking to make a favourable impression on readers (Hyland 2004 in Hyland and Tse, 2004: 263).

The move structure which appeared most frequently in Hyland and Tse's (2004: 308) analysis of graduate student acknowledgements is listed below; each of these moves can be further divided into steps as shown in Figure 6. The schematic structure used to articulate the communicative purpose of acknowledgements consists of three-move components: an optional 'reflecting move' which refers back to the writer's research experience s/he has gained and the challenges that have been encountered and overcome, a main obligatory 'thanking move' and another optional 'announcing move'.

| I. Reflecting Move |
| --- |

| II. Thanking Move |
| --- |

1. Presenting participants
2. Thanking for academic assistance
3. Thanking for providing resources
4. Thanking for moral support

| III. Announcing Move |
| --- |

1. Accepting responsibility for possible shortcoming in the data
2. Dedicating the thesis

**Figure 6: Acknowledgements' Move Pattern (Hyland and Tse, 2004: 308).**

All in all, in a genre analysis study, one needs to make decisions as to what is the most suitable genre orientation to adopt depending on the objectives of one's research. Based on this understanding, this chapter provides a critical survey of the three main camps of genre namely ESP, NR, and SFL with a particular focus on ESP. The latter has in fact proved to be most suitable to the objectives set for this research both in terms of its theoretical orientation and its practical interests. The ESP approach to genre is predominantly textual but has recently become more context-sensitive. Genre in ESP refers to particular forms of discourse with shared '*structure, style, content, and intended audience,*' which are used by a specific discourse community to achieve certain communicative purposes through '*socio-rhetorical*' activities of writing (Swales, 1990: 8–10).

Although very scarce, some genre-based studies have focused on DI in order to unveil its overall structure as well as the move structure of some of its parts. This chapter highlights those studies to arrive at the different models developed to account for the schematic structure of the introductions, abstracts and acknowledgements. The next chapter will describe the research methodology adopted to analyse our corpus.

# Chapter Two
# Methodology

This chapter presents the research methodology adopted to implement our research into the analysis of introductions, abstracts and acknowledgements of Algerian Magister DIs. It includes a description of the text corpus created for analysis, the criteria of its selection and a description of the text-in-context approach to genre analysis to which our study subscribes. This mixed approach includes, on the one hand, a textual analysis of the text corpus and, on the other, a talk around texts and an interview, two ethnographic methods used to complement the textual analysis. In the methodology for the textual analysis, we will attempt to provide working definitions of the units of analysis that is the *'move'* and the '*step*' and the criteria of their identification in the DIs. The chapter includes also a description of the step-by-step research procedures followed in the analysis of the text corpus and the technique adopted to ensure its validity. Next, the talk around text method will be examined in terms of its definition and its application to our research. Finally, the interview I conducted with the supervisor will be described.

## 1. Corpus of the Study

The text corpus created for analysis consists of twelve sets of abstracts, acknowledgements and introductions taken from twelve Magister DIs. The DIs were produced within the past seven years by Algerian post-graduate students enrolled in the field of Linguistics and Didactics. All the subjects completed their post-graduate studies and obtained their Magister degree from the Department of English at the University of Algiers.

Before explaining the reasons behind the choice of the English department of the University of Algiers as a case study, the immediate question we may raise is why the research does not include DIs from other universities in order to generalise potential findings. The reason is that it is difficult to gather the necessary data from other universities; unfortunately, theses and DIs in Algeria are not made available for the research community. The only institution that compiles the theses and the DIs produced in Algerian universities is the CERIST (le Centre de Recherche sur l'Information Scientifique et Technique), however, most authors had not given the centre permission to photocopy and cite the theses or the DIs. In addition, the scope of a research genre such as the one undertaken here does not permit the inclusion of such a large corpus. Therefore I have opted for one English department as a case study.

The choice of the University of Algiers has been based on some practical reasons. First, this University enjoys a long tradition in post-graduate studies as compared to other universities; it counts an important number of post-graduates in Linguistics and Didactics and thus an important number of Magister DIs. Second, the DIs produced in this department, though not all of them are made available in the electronic catalogue of the University of Algiers. Another important consideration that played a part in the choice of this University is the need to get in touch with the writers of the DIs themselves as they were in their majority teachers in this same university.

## 1.2. Criteria of Selection

The DIs were selected by the order in which they appeared in the electronic catalogue of theses and DIs of the library of the University of Algiers, except where the author had not deposited his/her work as it is the case of one DI which was provided by its author. The other criteria of selection include: the discipline to which the DI belongs, the date of submission and the format. These criteria are presented below.

### 1.2.1. Discipline

The DIs included in the corpus are produced in Linguistics and Didactics. The choice of this specific discipline is essentially related to the need of controlling some variables that may have an impact on the results of the analysis. The first variable is linked to the influence of the discipline on generic variation. To be more explicit, some genre analysts have compared the macro-organisation of texts of the same genre but belonging to different fields of study and the conclusion drawn from these studies is that the structure of the text and its linguistic features are influenced by the text discipline (Samraj: 2002, Kwan: 2005). In this respect, Thompson (2005) points out that:

> What has been established to date is that there is variation between disciplines in terms of the macrostructures of the theses produced, and the ways that writer's position themselves in their texts (2005: 308)

In line with this understanding and in order to control this variable, the data used in this study belongs to the same field of study that is Linguistics and Didactics.

In addition to disciplinary variation, it is common practice in genre-related studies that the researcher chooses an area of research he is most familiar with. The reason is that, as we shall see in data analysis techniques, in a genre analysis study, like the one undertaken here, we need to have some understanding of the text's content in order to break it into functional units (Yakhontova, 2002:218). On this basis, I find it more practical to work on texts dealing with Linguistics and Didactics since I am a student in Didactics and I am not well acquainted with the two other disciplines in which English language post-graduates write their DIs, namely Literature and Civilisation.

### 1.2.2. Date of Submission

The DIs have also been examined according to their dates of submission and only those appearing within the last seven years were retained for analysis. The consideration of such a criterion is based on the fact that genres, though highly structured and conventionalised as stressed in the literature review, are constantly changing over time (Ayers, 2008, Bazerman, 1984, Bhatia, 2002). However, the speed with which genres change over time differs from one genre to another depending on the degree of its institutionalisation. The period of time chosen, that is seven years, is assumed to be suitable since the DI is a highly institutionalised genre and thus not subject to rapid change (Connor, 2008 personal communication). Besides, this will help reflect the most recent rhetorical features of DI writing in the English department of the University of Algiers.

### 1.2.3. Format

The DIs selected were later examined for the various formats they display. The selection shows both the ILrMRD (Introduction, Literature Review, Method, Results and Discussion) and the TB (Topic-Based) format (see chapter one, section 3); however, the first is more commonly invoked than the second. Therefore, in order to gather a sufficient number of texts as needed in this study, only those organised according to the ILrMRD layout were included in the corpus. This will help address the first step in the data analysis which is identifying the cut-off point between the different sections of the DIs, especially demarcating the introduction from the literature review.

The description of the twelve DIs is set out in the table below. The table specifies the title of each DI and the length of their introductions, abstracts and acknowledgements. The length of the different part-genres texts compiled for the study differs from one DI to another. Introductions' length varies from six to ten pages; one to two pages is the

average length of abstracts and one page for acknowledgements. This makes a total of (134) page of text printed in size 13 with double-spacing.

| DI No | Title | Number of Pages | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Acknowledg ement | Abstract | Introduction |
| 1 | Does the New Baccalauréat English Examination Exert Washback on Teaching? –A Case Study- | 1p | 1p | 8p |
| 2 | An Experimental investigation into the effect of explicit teaching of the present perfect tense on its internalization by adult learners: the case of first year university students of English. | 1p | 2p | 7p |
| 3 | Using Drama Scripts to Improve Students' Reading Skills in an EFL Context. | 1p | 1p | 11p |
| 4 | The Management of English Courses at USTHB: A rationale for the Design of Developmental Common-Core Syllabi. | 1p | 2p | 8p |
| 5 | Investigating The Use of Three Grammatical Items In Speaking Tasks: A case Study. | 1p | 2p | 8p |
| 6 | The study of the transfer of the writing ability in exposition from Arabic/French into English: A case Study of Ten Third Year Students in the English Department. | 1p | 1p | 9p |
| 7 | Designing task-based linguistics syllabus for first year students. | 1p | 2p | 9p |
| 8 | The effect of Teacher Form-Focused Feedback on EFL Learners' Accurate Use of the Simple Past in Composition Writing | 1p | 1p | 6p |
| 9 | The Place of Task-Based Learning in the New Algerian Curriculum: An Analysis of Some Tasks and Activities Designed for First Year Middle School Learners of English. | 1p | 1p | 14p |

| 10 | The effect of task-based consciousness-raising activities on FL learners' use of the past simple; past perfect, and past perfect continuous tenses. | 1p | 1p | 7p |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 11 | Textual Analysis and textual organisation analysis of Engineering Students' Project Writing. | 1p | 2p | 10p |
| 12 | What Do EFL Learners Do with a text: The Reading Styles and Strategies Used by First Year University Students of English. | 1p | 2p | 7p |
| | | Total Number of Pages: 134 | | |

**Table1: A table representing the titles of the DIs and the number of pages of each part- genre**

## 2. Data Analysis Techniques

Exploring the rhetorical structures of abstracts, introductions and acknowledgements in Algerian Linguistics/Didactics DIs forms the primary focus of this study. As already explained, the rhetorical or cognitive structure of a given genre refers to *'the typical regularities of organisation'* (Bhatia, 1993:21). These regularities are revealed through segmenting the genre into its constituent communicative units called *'moves'*; a move, in its turn, may incorporate one or more subsequent elements called '*steps*'(Swales, 1990).

The construct of move has widely been used to identify textual regularities in different genres of writing and to describe the functions which particular segments of the text accomplish in order to contribute to the realisation of the overall purpose (Meyer, 1991:520). However, the utility of this term is somewhat hampered due to the *'intra/cross study inconsistency'* (Kwan, 2005) as to which criteria should be used for defining the term as well as its *'textual boundaries'* (Paltridge, 1994). Put otherwise, genre analysts do not often share the same understanding of the constructs of move and step, and do not always apply the same criteria in the identification of the textual boundaries between theses units. Conscious of these discrepancies, Paltridge (1994) and

more recently Kwan (2005) argues for the necessity of a rigorous and transparent move/step coding system in future genre studies. Therefore, it is important to provide clear operational definitions of the concepts of move and step as well as the criteria of demarcating their textual boundaries that will inform the analysis of our text-corpus.

To reach this aim, I do not intend to go through the different approaches related the issue of whether a move in a schematic structure can be determined by the content of the move, grammatical or lexical patterns or functional features of the move (see Paltridge 1994). Instead, I will confine the description to the position(s) of Bhatia (1993), Hyland (2009), and Swales (1990). This is to assure consistency in the study since the structural models against which our text corpus will be compared are principally developed by these same authors. In addition and as it will be noticed, these authors do, in fact, adopt the same understanding of these concepts as well as the criteria of demarcating their textual boundaries, a view which has recently been shared among many other genre analysts.

## 2.1. Moves and Steps and their Identification
### 2.1.1. Move

Moves are considered central to genre analysis because they represent the kind of segments a genre is divided into or in Bhatia's words they are *'discriminative elements of generic structure'* (Bhatia, 1993:30). The set of moves forms the typical cognitive structure of that genre or the *'preferred ways of communicating intention'* (Bhatia, 1993, 29-30). Several operational definitions of a Move have been proposed particularly by Applied Linguists working in the area of ESP, some of the most relevant ones are presented here.

Swales (1990) defines a move as a functional unit used for some identifiable purpose. Thus, for Swales, a move has the key role of accomplishing a particular

function within the genre. This echoes Bhatia (1993) who maintains that a move is assigned a label only when it fulfils a function. The collaborative efforts of the moves' functions, in their turn, help achieve the overall communicative purpose of the genre (Swales, 1990, Bhatia, 1993). Similarly, Holmes (quoted in Bunton, 2002) considers that a move may simply be defined as a realisation of a specific overall communicative purpose through a variety of linguistic strategies.

The conception of moves as being defined according to the local function they fulfil in order to serve the overall purpose of the genre is suggested in CARS; the three move model postulated by Swales (1990) to account for the rhetorical structure of RA introductions. Based on the understanding that the overall purpose of RA introduction is *'to persuade the reader that the writer's research has a place in the community, and that something in the existing state is not satisfactory and one's research can improve the situation'* (Kwan, 2005: 24), the three moves show the efforts of the writer to accomplish this purpose. In fact, the writer first situates his research in a well-established area (Move 1 Establishing a territory), then he creates the value of a sub-area for further research (Move 2 Establishing a niche) and finally claims the sub-area for his own research (Move 3 Occupying the niche). In light of this, this study adopts the following working definition of a move:

> A move is understood as a macro discourse unit (a clause, a set of clauses or a paragraph) one tier below the genre. Each move aims to achieve a given rhetorical action which contributes to the overall rhetorical action of the genre.

### 2.1.2. Steps

Under each move, there are options of steps for writers to choose to realise the purpose of the move. Some of these are obligatory for the fulfilment of the move whereas others are optional (Swales, 1990, Bhatia, 1993, Dudley-Evans, 1994). Then, steps refer to the elements that realise the move; they are smaller units than moves

placed on a subordinate level to move. Similar to moves, a step is believed to be defined in terms of the rhetorical work it contains rather than by its content or linguistic realisation (Swales, 1990, Bhatia 1993). Hyland holds the same view when he says that:

> We should be consistent here and that, like moves, steps have to be identified in terms of their distinct (mini-) purpose, so seen as separate functions contributing to a broader move function, it may then be possible to think to linguistic cues which regularly signal theses ( Hyland, 2009 personal communication)

In addition to defining moves and steps, indicating the criteria that will be used to identify the textual boundaries of these communicative units is another important issue that has recently been brought to the fore.

## 2.2. Boundaries of Moves and Steps

Demarcating moves and steps in a text genre is not an easy task (Hyland, 2009; Swales, 2009 personal communication). This difficulty stems mainly from the fact that genre analysts do not make an explicit reference to the criteria they use in deciding where boundaries of moves and steps are to be drawn. As a result, some researchers have tried to bring to light this issue by surveying and evaluating the criteria used in genre studies. What may be drawn from their works is that the prevailing criteria employed in segmenting a genre into moves and steps gather content, lexico-grammatical attributes and functional or rhetorical criteria. However, these criteria are not granted the same emphasis across genre studies (Paltridge, 1994, Kwan 2005).

In fact, some genre analysts such as Nwogu (1997) rely principally on linguistic features in demarcating moves and steps. He argues that while *'moves and their sub-elements are partly determined by inferencing them from context'*, this process is largely dependent on linguistic clues such as '*explicit prefacing expressions, explicit lexemes, various grammatical specifiers of content, discourse conjuncts, and different kinds of semantic markers*' (114). Paltridge reported the difficulty of applying a linguistic

patterning in the identification of moves and steps and maintains that *'there are non-linguistic, rather than linguistic, reasons for generic staging in texts'* (1994:288). Paltridge means by non-linguistic reasons for text staging, content and function.

Swales (1990) treats move and step boundaries differently. His segmentation of text genres into moves and steps is based on both content, rhetorical or functional attributes and linguistic features. However, among these, he chooses to consider, first, the author's intention in the segmentation of text rather than its content or linguistic realisation. For Swales, though lexico-grammatical means and content are helpful in demarcating the move boundaries, they do not constitute uniform and unambiguous signals; the moves are therefore distinguished by their function. This perspective is shared by Bhatia (1993) who asserts that *'the ultimate criterion for assigning discourse values to various moves is functional rather than formal'* (1993: 87). Paltridge (2009 personal communication) holds an analogous view by saying that *'the key factors in this (textual boundaries) are content and convention. I think function is also a key factor, which is basically how the Swales model works'*. In line with Swales (1990, 2009), Bhatia (1993) and Hyland (2009), boundaries between moves and steps in our corpus are demarcated by:

> Changes in the communicative intent(s) in two neighbouring segments of a text noticeable through changes in content. Such changes, in turn, bring about changes in certain lexico-grammatical items. In addition "boundaries can be; but do not have to be, signalled by metadiscourse such as headings, section introductions, topic sentences and discourse markers" ( Kwan,2005: 86).

When we consider the function of a text segment and within the functional approach to boundaries and staging in a text, the analyst asks the question, *'How does this segment help in achieving the local purpose and the macro purpose of the text'* (Kwan, 2005: 87). For instance, in a research introduction, it is important to identify the local purpose that reviewing a group of research studies in a particular part of the

introduction serves (e.g., to evaluate the existing state of the art) and at the same time connect this local purpose to the overall purpose of the introduction (to create a research space and hence to justify one's own research). This coding approach is in line with the conception of move which is supposed to serve a particular communicative function and contribute to the realisation of the overall communicative purpose of that genre.

On the other hand, when the analyst relies on content for demarcating moves and steps in a text genre, he pays particular attention to recurring '*ideational criteria characterising a segment of text as belonging to a given move or step* (Kwan, 2005:61).These ideational criteria can be drawn from existing genre analysis studies of the genre in question. Such was the strategy adopted in this study, the majority of the ideational elements used to identify moves and steps are mainly drawn from findings documented in the works of Swales (1990), Dudley-Evans (1986) and Samraj (2008) for the analysis of introductions, Bhatia (1993) and Samraj (2002) for the analysis of abstracts and finally Hyland and Tse (2004) for the analysis of acknowledgements.

## 3. Analytical Models

In this section, we will provide the analytical frameworks that inform the analysis of the introductions, the abstracts and the acknowledgements of the DIs included in our corpus. The framework developed by Samraj (2008) to account for the rhetorical structure of DIs introductions is the model against which the twelve sets of introductions will be analysed. As previously highlighted, Samraj (2008) took Swales' (1990) CARS model as a point of departure and has proved its applicability to Master's DIs especially at the level of moves. Therefore, when describing Samraj model, reference will also be made to Swales (1990) as well as other genre analysts who paraphrased Swales' model such as Kwan (2005). As for the analysis of moves and steps in the abstracts, Bhatia's move analysis model which is further developed by

Samraj (2002) will be used. The analysis of acknowledgements will be based on the study Hyland (2004).

## 3.1. Samraj's CARS Model

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**Move 1: Establishing a territory**

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**Step 1**: Claim centrality and/or
– Importance in the real world.
– Importance in research.
**Step 2**: Review literature or present topic generalizations

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**Move 2: Establishing a Niche**

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**Step 1a**: Indicate a gap/question in research
**Step 1b**: Indicate problem in the real world
**Step 2**:  Positive justification

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**Move 3: Occupying the Niche**

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**Step 1**: State goals/argument of thesis
**Step 2**:  Background
**Step 2a**: Present hypotheses
**Step 2b**: Present results
**Step 3**: Preview organization of thesis

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**Figure 7: Samraj move structure of DIs introduction** (2008: 58).

**Move 1 Establishing a Territory**

**Step1. 1 Claiming Centrality**

Centrality claims are *'appeals to the discourse community whereby members are asked to accept that the research about to be reported is part of lively, significant or well-established research area'* (Swales, 1990: 144).  This step can be realised through claiming importance of the topic in the real world or through the importance the topic enjoys in the research area concerned. Examples of common or typical statements and linguistic signals of centrality claim found in actual RA introductions are presented below.

Recently, there has been wide interest in…
The explication of the relationship between... is a classic problem of…
Knowledge of ... has a great importance for...
The study of... has become an important aspect of... (Swales, 1990:144)

**Step1. 2 Review literature or present topic generalizations**

   Making topical generalisation or reviewing previous research refers to neutral statements about the existing state of the territory. This state of the art falls into three main categories where the author refers to the current knowledge, practice or phenomena of the topic in general terms. This step could be realised in sentences such as the followings:

There is now much evidence to support the hypothesis that...
The properties of … are still not completely understood.
Education core courses are often criticized for…
... is a common finding in patients with ... (ibid)


**Move 2 Establishing a Niche**

**Move Boundary Markers**

   This move constitutes the authors attempts to establish a niche (a research space) for his or her work. As Kwan explains (2005: 76), '*this move is realised in a series of evaluative statements made about the state of the art related in move 1*'. These evaluative statements are generally found to be negative, signalled by adversative discourse markers such as 'however', 'yet', 'nevertheless', 'unfortunately' and 'but'. The authors establish a territory by showing that the previous research is somehow incomplete or has many limitations and weaknesses or in other cases by providing a positive justification for the research. The move is commonly realised using one of the following options.


**Step 2 Indicate a Gap / Question in Research**

   A gap in research expresses deficits in knowledge, in research and non-research actions. The identification of this step is based on the following items:

- Scarcity of knowledge, realised in such expressions like 'little is known about', not much   is known about'

- Scarcity of research realised in such expressions as 'little research', 'few studies'

- Needs for action realised in such expressions as 'there is a need', 'research into x is valuable' or 'it is worthwhile to' (Ibid).

As for question rising, it is taken to mean the research questions, both direct and indirect, that writer's research asks about in previous research (Kwan, 2005).

**Step 2 Indicate a Problem in the Real World**

Within this step, the author justifies his research in terms of a problem that he noticed in the real world and to which he seeks a solution through the research to be reported. Samraj reported this example from a DI on 'Thai as a Less Commonly Taught Language' to illustrate the point in focus:

> This thesis is significant because Thai is one of the rarely taught ''exotic'' languages, a ''less commonly taught language'' (LCTL). This is exemplified…by the lack of Thai language textbooks written in English. (Samraj: 2008: 62).

**Step 3 Positive Justification**

Authors may not just justify their research in terms of the shortcomings of previous research or needs in the environment but also in terms of the positive aspects of the current study. Within this step, the author explicates the strengths of the research about to be reported. Samraj adds that 'positive justification' generally occurs together with the more common gap in the research or real world (Ibid)

**Move 3 Occupying the Niche**

Here, the writer claims that he will present how to deal with the problem identified in move 2. Move 3 is realised in various steps which are: the purpose or purposes of the about-to-be reported research, the hypotheses set by the author, a background discussion

which is a new step discovered by Samraj in her analysis of Masters' DIs, and the results or the findings reached by the researcher. The move includes also, a preview of the organisation of the research. Among these steps, stating the goal of the research is the obligatory step. Here is a brief account of the steps that appear in Samraj model:

**Step 1: State the Goals of the Thesis**

Among the steps of the third move, stating the goals of the research is the most common one. In fact, many genre studies have asserted the presence of this step in the third move. Samraj (2008) for example has found that this step is present in all her linguistics corpus. Through this step, the researcher presents the goals or the purposes of his/her research and thus occupies the space he has just created before. Here are some examples from Swales' (1990) RAs:

- The aim of the present paper is to give
- The main purpose of the experiment reported here was to...
- This study was designed to evaluate...
- The present work extends the use the last model...

**Step 2 Background**

It is a newly identified step in CARS which, according to Samraj, allows the author to further specify the goals of the study being reported. It ends generally with a return to the most important step of Move 3 that is 'stating the goals of the study' in more specific terms. As a matter of fact, Samraj noticed that when the introduction contains hypotheses they are listed just after the background.

**Step 3a Present Hypotheses**

Hypotheses or predictions are not very present in Samraj linguistic corpus, they were only listed in one out of the eight DIs included in her corpus.

### Step 3b Present Findings

The step reports findings of the writer's research which are characterised by such features as mental/analytic processes, data collected, phenomena observed, relations induced, general statistical description. These statements are partly realised in such words as 'found', 'confirmed', 'identified' (Kwan, 2005:85).

### Step3 Preview the Organisation of the Thesis

The step's main purpose is to provide the reader with the global organisation of the about to be reported research. In this step, reference is made to different parts of the DI realised in such lexical items like, chapter, number and the theme of each chapter (Kwan, 2005: 86).

### 3.2. Samraj's Move Model of Abstracts

As already referred to in the literature review, the twelve sets of DI abstracts included in our corpus will be analysed on the basis of the combined model of Bhatia (1993) and Santos (1996) adopted by Samraj (2002).

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**Move 1: Situating the research**

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**Move 2: Purpose**

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**Move 3: Methods**

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**Move 4: Results**

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**Move 5: Conclusion**

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**Figure 8: Samraj's abstract move structure (Samraj, 2002: 44)**

In the first move, namely *'situating the research'*, the writers present current knowledge in their field and can optionally define a problem in the research area. Santos maintains that this move serves the function of attracting readership (Santos, 1996 in Samraj, 2002: 43). The second move *'introduces purpose'* because it is perceived as

*'giving a precise indication of the author's intention, thesis or hypothesis'*. In turn, move 3 *'describes methodology'* as it is meant to *'give a good indication of the experimental design'*. Move 4 *'summarizes results'* by being perceived as the place where *'the author mentions his observations and findings'*. And finally, move 5 *'presents conclusions'* because it is 'meant to interpret results and draw inferences' (Bhatia, 1993:79).

### 3.3. Hyland and Tse's Move Pattern of Acknowledgements

When writing their acknowledgements, DI writers go through an obligatory thanking move framed by optional reflecting and announcing moves. The first move that is the announcing move presents '*introspective comments on the writer's research experience'*.

The second move, the core of acknowledgements, has the main function of *'mapping credit to individuals and institutions'*. This move is realised in a number of steps or sub-move where the first introduces those to be thanked, the second thanks for intellectual support, ideas, analyses, feedback etc. As for the third, it thanks those who have provided the writer with help in terms of '*data access and clerical, technical or financial support'*. Finally, the last include thanks for *'moral support'* such as encouragements, friendship, sympathy, patience, etc.

The third move is labelled '*announcing move'*, it is meant to delineate responsibility and inspiration. Two main steps are identified within this move where the writer asserts his responsibility for flaws or errors and then he makes a formal dedication of the thesis to an individual(s) ( Hyland an Tse, 2004: 264).

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|---|
| **I. Reflecting Move** |

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|---|
| **II. Thanking Move** |

1. Presenting participants
2. Thanking for academic assistance
3. Thanking for providing resources
4. Thanking for moral support

| |
|---|
| **III. Announcing Move** |

1. Accepting responsibility for possible shortcoming in the data
2. Dedicating the thesis

**Figure 9: Hyland and Tse's Move Structure of Acknowledgements**

In this section, I have made an attempt to detail the move structures characterising DIs introductions, abstracts and acknowledgements. These move structures represent the frameworks against which the corpus included in the present study will be analysed. However, more details are needed in terms of the different steps or procedures followed in unveiling the rhetorical structures of the three parts-genres.

## 4. Data Analysis Procedures

The text analysis process followed a step-by-step procedure. First I tried to gain a macro view of the writer's research and I started by studying the titles of the DIs , key words if available, abstracts, introductions, some major parts of the literature reviews, the methodology chapters, the discussion sections and the conclusions. Having gained an overall picture of the researcher's work, I selected the acknowledgement, abstract and introduction of the DI and I read them at least three times in order to familiarise myself with its propositional content. The survey of these texts was much needed for demarcating the different moves and steps at a later stage which required my understanding of the logical development of the text.

Once acquainted with the content of the part-genres, the next step I took was analysing the moves and steps of the texts beginning by the introductions, the abstracts,

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and then the acknowledgements. The communicative units or moves and their subsequent elements or steps in each of these part-genres were identified based on functional and linguistic criteria as already explained in the data analysis techniques. This process is obviously based on the previous models developed for each part-genre as surveyed in the literature review.

Next, the text analysis advanced to identifying the common rhetorical features of these part-genres and their linguistic realisation for the entire corpus. The focus of text analysis at this stage was to find out the common steps and moves, their frequencies, their position and sequence and their communicative purposes or functions. The resulting models are then compared to those frameworks developed initially for native writers to observe any discrepancy. What is important to notice is that although the process of demarcating moves and steps in our corpus may look linear, it is full of re-reading and re-analysis.

## 5. Validation of the Data Analysis Results

The identification of communicative units in a text involves subjective judgement. This raises the question of the validity of the analysis. According to Dudley Evans (1994) to establish the validity of identified moves and steps there are at least two possible approaches; the use of subject specialists and the use of independent raters. According to Bhatia (1993) since field specialists are active members of a particular discourse community, they are more aware of the generic features of the genre they regularly use. In other words, field specialist or informants can identify moves and steps more objectively than non-specialists.

Swales (1990), on the other hand, assumes that working with field specialists may be very time-consuming. He adds that although they seem to offer a good solution for the potential subjectivity of text analysis by genre analysts, discussions with genre

analysts are also *'... subject to all subjective features of personality, allegiance, status and so on that this repertoire exhibits'* (129). In addition, as Swales further claims, although genre analysts working on their own may be in danger of misleading particular instance of genre, relying too much on their knowledge from a field specialist may be equally dangerous (ibid).

One practical solution to the accuracy problem of text analysis is the use of inter-rater validity technique. The use of this technique requires first a clear definition of units of analysis; moves and steps in our case, so that independent raters can identify them. Second, confirming their findings with a sufficiently high degree of agreement. In this study the inter-raters were *'individuals with some linguistic sophistication'* (Crooks, 1986:62); two teachers with a Magister degree in Linguistics. The two raters were first trained in what moves and steps represent, and then, they were shown how they are identified in the texts using a functional and linguistic attributes as already explained. The training sessions used the fully analysed article introductions and representative examples given by Swales (1990), as well as some other additional relevant and suitable examples of genre-related studies. Any inter-rater disagreement on the identification of moves and steps was discussed in order to arrive at an agreement. Thus, although not completely objective, the identification of the communicative units in the data for this study was relatively valid for allowing accurate conclusions to be drawn.

This is, then, the methodology that informs the textual analysis, which is an integral part of the research. However, willing to give the study a contextual dimension and to complement the textual analysis, the study includes an additional technique, namely text-based interviews or talk around text. This technique is the concern of the following section where I will discuss the talk-around-text as an ethnographic method, and then I will describe the items that make up our talk.

## 6. The Ethnographic Methods

### 6.1 Talk around Texts

As we have already stated in the literature review, research in the field of academic discourse in general and genre analysis in particular has moved from the sole focus on collection and analysis of written texts into the consideration of context (Connor, 2004). To reach this aim, a number of methods have been employed; most common among these is the interview method or more precisely the *'talk around text'* method (Lillis, 2008:358). The particularity this method is that while it offers an additional perspective from which to understand the text that is the writer's perspective, the text remains central in the analysis.

In her discussion of how the gap between text and context is being filled in academic writing research, Lillis (2008) defines three main levels of ethnography; ethnography as a method, ethnography as methodology and ethnography as deep theorising. The choice of one of these techniques is often determined by the kind of research undertaken as to whether it foregrounds text or context. Along this continuum, talk around text represents the minimal level of ethnography, an ethnographic method which *'while offering the researcher an additional lens from which to understand the text, leads to only a truncated engagement with context'* (Lillis,2008:355). Therefore, such a method is usually used in ESP genre analysis studies where the talk offers an additional perspective from which to understand the text which is that of the text's writer while the textual data remains central to the study. In fact, the text's writer may provide the analysts valuable insights as to why and how he opted for specific writing aspects that the study seeks to explain (Connor, 2004). In light of this, the present study does not confine itself to the analysis of the text corpus as it includes talk around texts method which helped understand from the writers themselves the reasons for the choice

of the rhetorical features they use across the analysed part-genres. As for the design of the talk, that is the number and the kind of questions it includes, it draws from some previous studies that made use of this same method (Hyland 2004, Kwan 2005). The reason is that no specific required criteria are agreed on by the research community (Connor, 2008, personal communication).

## 6.2. Talk around Texts and the Present Study

### 6.2.1. The Informants

Six informants were invited to talk around the texts or the DIs they produced. Four of them are teachers at the University of Algiers and the two others are teachers at the University of Boumerdes. The informants were supervised by three different supervisors who are at the same time teachers at the same University that is Algiers. No specific criteria were considered in the choice of the informants apart from their availability and their acceptance to take part in the research.

The process of contacting the potential informants was time consuming since they are full time teachers and some of them are already engaged in a doctorate research. In addition, some showed reluctance and caution about the possibility that their DIs texts would be analysed for inadequacies. I assured them that their DIs were only studied for the schematic structures it displays and that they would not be studied for content flaws or language inadequacies.

### 6.2.2. The Design of the Talk

The main aim of the talk is to elicit the views of the writers about the writing aspects we investigated in the study. It is meant to explain the rhetorical choices that the researchers made in their introductions, abstracts and acknowledgements. Having

this in mind, an interview guide was prepared to better yield all the necessary information we needed.

The talk is organised into three main sections. The first introduces the purposes of my research and assures the informants of its anonymity. The second section contains questions which helped the interviewees remind the major aspects of their DIs such as the topic, processes and the results they reached. As for the third, the most important one in the talk, it is the section where the informants were guided to provide details about the communicative purposes and the cognitive structure of their introductions, abstracts and acknowledgements. Since the informants are not genre analysis specialists and therefore not well acquainted with concepts such as communicative purposes, or schematic structure, the questions were often simplified or paraphrased (a complete description of the talk may be found in appendix A). However, it is important to note that although the questions were prepared before the talk, the interviewees felt free to speak about their experiences in writing the longest piece of research they have never produced before.

## 6.3. The Interview with the Supervisor

In addition to the talk around texts that I conducted with some of the DIs authors, a second kind of talk is used in this research. It is an interview with one of the supervisors; she is a discipline specialist and an expert member as she has directed most of the DIs in Applied Linguistics at the University of Algiers.

The interview was meant to get some feedback as to how Magister research in Applied Linguistics is being undertaken in her department. During one hour, we discussed many issues related to DI writing. We have also taken the time to go into the details of each of the DIs parts such as the introduction, the abstracts and the acknowledgements (the interview guide is reported in appendix A).

This chapter presents the combined text-in-context methodology used to accomplish this research. It includes a detailed description of the corpus, the methodology followed in the textual analysis and the talk around text method. The chapter puts an accent on the units of analysis used in the study namely, the move and the step in order to assure consistency in the research. The results yielded from the application of the methodology described here are provided in the next chapter.

# Part Two
# Results and Discussion

## Introduction

Among the issues developed in the last chapter is the text-in-context approach that informs the analysis of the textual corpus created for our study. The approach consists in an analysis of the texts as well as an interview with a supervisor and a talk with the authors of the texts. The textual analysis aims to reveal the schematic structure of the texts whereas the ethnographic methods were meant as a means to better understand and explain the textual findings.

In this chapter, as its title denotes, I will attempt to report, discuss and interpret the findings reached through the application of such an approach in the analysis of our corpus. However, it is important to point out that given both the restricted sample and the complex universe of discourse from which it has been drawn, any conclusions must necessarily be tentative. That said, we can nonetheless clear up certain saliencies from the findings and provisionally attribute them to sources and origins.

This part is divided into three main sections, each dealing with a particular part-genre. The first is devoted to the introductions, the second to the abstracts and the third to the acknowledgements. As it may be noticed, the chapter is not organised following the usual order in which the three part-genres occur in a DI, I mean, the acknowledgement, the abstract and then the introduction; the order is rather according to the relative importance of the part-genres in the completion of the DI. However, the three sections show a similar macro-structure where findings are described first followed by a discussion and tentative explanations of the findings before drawing some conclusions.

# Chapter Three
# Analysis and Discussion of DI Introductions

One of the main concerns of this study is to describe DI introductions written by Algerian post-graduates in Linguistics in terms of their rhetorical structures. These writing aspects are compared and contrasted to those reported in previous literature on the part-genre. A corpus of twelve sets of introductions was analysed following Samraj's (2008) CARS model developed for theses introductions to help determine the schematic structure of the part-genre in question. In this section, we first report on the results of the analysis and then discuss them in relation to previous literature and to the views I recorded both from the supervisor and the authors.

## 1. Findings

## 1.1. Overall features

Before we describe the rhetorical features of the introductions included in our study, attention must be drawn to some overall formal characteristics such as page length and section headings. In terms of page length, the twelve introductions amount to 99 pages. Overall, they average 8.25 pages in length per introduction, the shortest being 6 pages and the longest 14. As for section headings, they are of interest because they tell us how the author sees the structure of her/his text. However, six of the twelve introductions were not divided into sections and so had no section headings. These tended to be the shorter introductions (mostly 5 to 7 pages), but two of them were from 7 to 9. In the six introductions that used section headings, only 05% of the headings were topic-specific, i.e. they related to some aspects of the research topic. The majority, however, (95%) were generic headings, i.e. they could be used in an introduction on any topic, for

example*, Aims and Rationale, Rationale, Structure of the Study etc.* The generic headings that occurred in the twelve analysed introductions are set out in the table below with the number of occurrences. They are sequenced in approximately the order they appeared in the introductions. Those occurring in four or more introductions are in bold type.

---

Aim of the Study (1)
Aim and Rationale (2)
Problematic and Rationale (1)
**Rationale (4)**
Introduction (1)
Aims and justifications of the study (1)

Summary of related literature (1)
Method (2)
Scope and Limitations (1)
Research questions (2)
**Structure/organisation of the study (4)**

---

**Table 2 Generic Section Headings in 12 Magister Introductions**

The generic headings indicate two overall focuses: the first is on introducing the *Aim* of the research and stating the *Rationale* or what justifies the research. In case the introduction does not include *Rationale* as a generic heading, the latter generally occurs under the heading of *Aim of the Study*. The second overall focus is on providing a more elaborate description of the present study. In this part of the *introductions*, O*bjectives, Methods* and *Research Questions* are usually described. The heading most frequently found in this part of the introductions is the *Structure or Organisation of the Study* (although still representing not more than half the texts), nearly always at the end of the introduction. While these generic headings provide a preliminary view of how some authors organise their introductions, a more complete picture of the structure of the their introductions cannot be attained without a rigorous move analysis of its content relying

on both the functional and the linguistic criteria that are adopted in demarcating the moves and the steps. The results of this analysis are the concern of the next section.

## 1.2. The Schematic Structure of the Introductions

As we have already explained, one of the major characterising features of a given genre is its rhetorical or schematic structure. It refers to the moves, the steps and the rhetorical strategies used to realise the established communicative purpose(s) of the genre in question (Swales, 1990). The raters and the author have agreed on common rhetorical structures of the introductions using move analysis technique and relying on Samraj's (2008) move structure model of Master's Theses introductions.

The analysis revealed that nearly all introductions had sequences of text identifiable with the three moves in Samraj's (2008) CARS model. *Establishing a Territory* (T), *Establishing a Niche* (N) and *Occupying the Niche* (O). The only exception is two authors whose introductions did not include *'Establishing the Territory'* move. It is also found that the moves occurred in various patterns instead of the linear ordering, T-N-O reported in Samraj's (2008) study. Hence, the twelve DIs do not display a common rhetorical structure. As for the steps that realise each of the three moves, they are quite identical to those proposed by Samraj (2008). Some are strongly preferred by the authors whereas other steps are totally absent from the introductions. A more elaborate description of the occurrences and the distribution of the three moves T, N and O across the twelve introductions will be provided next.

### 1.2.1. Moves

Across the twelve sets of introduction we analysed, a total of 50 moves were identified. Among these, 14 were qualified as the *Establishing the Territory*, 15 as the *Establishing the Niche*, whereas 21 showed the characteristics of *Occupying the Niche*.

The table suggests that on average there are 4.16 moves per introduction with the predominance of the third move namely the *'Occupying the Niche'* with an average occurrence of 1.75.

| Moves | | Occurrence | Average |
|---|---|---|---|
| Establishing a Territory (T) | | 14 times | 1.16 |
| Establishing a Niche  (N) | | 15 times | 1.25 |
| Occupying the Niche  (O) | | 21 times | 1.75 |
| **Total** | **Average** | **50 times** | **4.16** |

**Table 3: The occurrence of moves in the introductions**

Although all three moves are contained in almost every introduction (66.6%), the twelve sets of introductions do not share a common move structure. Instead, the three moves are configured in a variety of patterns as exemplified in the table above. Furthermore, of the twelve *introductions*, only two (16 %) follow a rigid T-N-O movement without any cycling or repetition. The remaining ones are characterised by move cycling (83.33 %). There were, one, two or three cycles of moves, the highest number being three, and the average 1.4. Nevertheless, some regularity has been observed.

Two introductions belonging to DI 1 and DI 10 show a common linear non-recursive pattern 1-2-3. Two other DIs, DI 3 and DI 5, show the following pattern 1-2-3-2-3. In addition, the pattern 3-2-3 is shared by DI 1 and 4. The table also suggests that seven (58.3%) introductions begin with the *Establishing the Territory* whereas the remaining ones (51.7%) begun by announcing the aim or the focus of the study, i.e. *Occupying the Niche* move. In almost all cases (80%), the opening O move was followed by a move to establish the territory (T). All the introductions, however, ended with '*Occupying the Niche'*. In all other cases, the introductions are all organised differently.

**Table 4: Move sequences and move cycles in individual introductions**

| Samples | Move Sequence | Number of Cycles |
|---------|---------------|------------------|
| DI 1 | 3-2-3 | 1 |
| DI 2 | 3-1-3-2-3 | 2 |
| DI 3 | 1-2-3-2-3 | 2 |
| DI 4 | 3-2-3 | 1 |
| DI 5 | 1-2-3-2-3 | 2 |
| DI 6 | 1-2-1-2-3 | 2 |
| DI 7 | 3-2-3-1-3 | 2 |
| DI 8 | 1-2-3 | 0 |
| DI 9 | 1-2-1-3-1-3 | 3 |
| DI 10 | 1-2-3 | 0 |
| DI 11 | 3-2-1-3 | 1 |
| DI 12 | 1-3-1-2-3 | 2 |
| | | **Average**: 1.4 move cycle per Introduction |

(1) *Establishing the Territory;*
(2) *Establishing a Niche;*
(3) *Occupying the Niche.*

## 1.2.2. Steps

The twelve Magister DI introductions showed a variety of steps which are very similar to those found in Samraj's (2008) analysis of Theses introductions. However, some of the other steps reported in the work of Samraj (2008) were not found in our corpus whereas five more steps which did not fit any of the descriptions in Samraj's model were identified. Table 5 sets out the number of introductions in which each step occurred. Those steps found in a majority of introductions are in bold and the newly identified steps are indicated with an asterisk.

## A. Establishing the Territory

In order to establish a research territory or field in CARS model, writers need to address one or more of the following communicative purposes: claiming centrality of the research, describing the state of the art related to the research topic and reviewing items of the previous research.

| Moves and Steps | Number | Rate |
|---|---|---|
| **Move 1: Establishing a Territory** | | |
| 1-   Claim centrality | 5 | 41.66 % |
| a-   Importance in the real world. | 1 | 08.33 % |
| b-   Importance in research. | 4 | 33.33 % |
| 2-   Story-telling* | 2 | 16.66 % |
| 3-   Review literature or present topic generalisations | 10 | **83.33 %** |
| **Move 2: Establishing a Niche** | | |
| a-   Indicate a gap/question in research | 4 | 33.33 % |
| b-   Indicate problem in the real world | 7 | **58.33 %** |
| c -  Positive justification | 6 | 50 % |
| d-   Continue Tradition* | 1 | 08.33 % |
| **Move 3: Occupying the Niche** | | |
| 1-   State goals | 12 | **100 %** |
| 2-   Defining terms* | 4 | 33.33 % |
| 3-   Background | 1 | 8.33 % |
| 4-   Present hypotheses | 6 | 50 % |
| 5-   Research Questions* | 10 | **83.33 %** |
| 6-   Present results | 00 | 00 % |
| 7-   Methods* | 9 | **75 %** |
| 8-   Limitations of the study* | 3 | 25 % |
| 9-   Preview organisation of thesis | 10 | **83.33 %** |

**\*** Newly identified steps

**Table 5: Moves and steps found in Magister DI introductions**

**Step 1 Claiming Centrality**

Five of the twelve DIs begin with centrality claims. These include statements about the importance of the research being reported in the real world (08.33%) or in the research world (33.33%). The following three examples from the corpus illustrate the different ways of claiming centrality:

**a- Importance in the Real world**

Writing is a very important skill for students in the English Department. In fact, it is mainly through essays that the students have to display their academic abilities in English in the majority of examinations.

**b- Importance in the research world**

The role of teacher error correction in target language learning has long been controversial in second language acquisition research …

**Step 2 Story-telling**

Our analysis revealed that in two introductions centrality claiming is replaced by another step which has not the same semantic attributes as centrality claims but performs the same function as an attention-getter. The step is labelled story-telling because the two authors chose to begin by narrating a personal experience in relation to the topic in order to attract potential readership.

Over the past few years of our teaching commitments in various institutions, we had the fair chance to experience the use of drama in our classes of intermediate and post intermediate levels of English and we were particularly *amazed* at the *favourable receptivity* shown by the students toward this somewhat unusual type of activity with which most of them, not to say all, were quite unfamiliar. [Italics added]

**Step 3 Review Literature or Present Topic Generalisations**

The step is found in 10 texts (83.33%) where the authors reviewed what was said and found in previous studies related to their topic or made statements about

general knowledge on the topic. These examples are taken from some introductions

to illustrate the step.

1 - The fact that grammar practice should get learners to learn the language structures and be able, later on, to produce and generate other structures is something shared among many researchers and foreign language teachers (topic generalisation)

2 - Recently, linguistic researchers, such as (…) have been moving towards more learner-centred approaches to teaching, sweeping away the former teacher-centred approaches to teaching (Literature review)

3 - There is a dispute among researchers about whether the term strategy refers to a deliberate and conscious behaviour or it can include a behaviour more or less unconscious. For Cohen (1986) and Pritchard (1990) the term strategy is clearly restricted to conscious actions. By contrast, Barnett (1989) uses this term to include both conscious and unconscious behaviour. Kletzien (1991) defines 'a strategy as a deliberate means of constructing meaning when comprehension is interrupted' (literature review)

## B. Move 2: Establishing a Niche

Move 2 of a DI involves establishing a niche for present research by using one of these strategies: Indicating a gap or raise a question in research (Step1A), indicate a problem in the real world (Step1B) and provide a positive justification (Step1C). All three steps were identified in our corpus though with varying rates. Identifying a problem in the real world seems to be the strategy most preferred by the authors (58.33%), followed by positive justification and indicating a gap or a question in research. In addition, continue the tradition (Step1 D), a step which was found by Swales (1990), was used by one author.

## Step 1 A Indicating a Gap or Raising a Question

The step occurred in 33.33% of the introductions, it is generally followed by a positive justification or indicating a problem in the real world.

It is worth noting that a great number of reported studies on the use of grammar in second/foreign language learning and teaching have focused on the how SL/FL learners use their grammatical knowledge in performing a *written task,* but very few attempts were made to see how well a grammar lesson can be a support an initial aid to promote a successful language *speaking* class. [Italics added] (Indicating a gap)

The overall motivation behind it lied in our wish to confirm the posited claim that the exploitation of plays or selected extracts of plays in teaching English as a foreign language could be a useful source of beneficial reading activities and a promising way towards progress and achievement in language learning (Raise a question in research).

**Step 1 B Indicate a Problem in the Real World**

Almost all instances of move 2 were, totally or partially, realised through indicating a problem in the real world. The step was found in seven introductions, these are some illustrations:

Though innovation is generally associated with improvement and some improvements have indeed been made to the B-E-E, a close scrutiny of this exam reveals that there is, at least with regard to some aspects, a clear mismatch between this exam and the objectives stated as stated in the official syllabus for English.

 The results of these [examinations] are, unfortunately characterised by an alarming rate of failure.

Of the seven introductions that make use of Step1B, four introductions realise the step in a particular way. The authors in these introductions referred to problems they have themselves experienced either as teachers or as students.

As an EFL *teacher* is the Engineering Department at Boumerdes University, I was motivated to carry out this study because of *recurrent errors* that I used to spot while assessing students' project reports.

*My* learning experience has been very far from my expectations, and so was the case of many Algerian pupils who were taught with the so called 'communicative approach'…The kind of instruction we used to receive at a Middle and a Secondary School proved to be *unsatisfactory* for most of us…Later on, as a *teacher* in Secondary Education, I noticed that many of my learners could *hardly* manage to communicate in English properly.

**Step1C Positive Justification**

Positive Justification was identified in half the introductions texts that contained Move 2. This step, which generally appears in conjunction with other Move2 Steps, reports on the positive aspects of the current study. Two instances of step 1C are realised as such:

If on the one hand explicit grammar teaching is likely to develop internal grammar teaching, grammar teaching in the first year aught to remain explicit […] If on the other hand it is

inefficient, it would be high time for first year grammar teachers to abandon this approach in favour of implicit instruction.

Our interest in investigating this topic, indeed, sprung from the importance of writing for students who are struggling to learn the target language and the writing skill at the same time. In addition, the crucial value of providing feedback in the language classroom as a as a rich source of input for both teachers and learners may well justify why investigating this topic could be interesting.

### Step1D Continue the Tradition

The step is the least favoured among all the four steps because only one author used it. This is the extract from the introduction:

This work is not intended to reinvent the wheel. It is just a glimmer of hope that could be added to the interesting contributions of some researchers, to shed light on the situation of ESP in Algeria.

### C. Move 3 Occupying the Niche

*Occupying the Niche* is where authors explain the way they are going to occupy the niches they have created for themselves. The move is a common segment in Algerian Magister DIs as it was found in every introduction. Of the five steps realising the move (Samraj: 2008), four were found in our corpus. However, five more options were identified such as *methods*, *research questions*, *defining term*, etc. All in all, the authors of the texts used nine different options to realise the last move in CARS. The nine steps are described below in greater detail.

### Step 1 Stating the Goal or Purpose of DI

'*The goal or the purpose of the study'* was found in all the introductions (100%). In fact, whether the occupying the niche move occurred at the end of the DI or elsewhere, it is always signalled by stating *the goal/aim/purpose of the study*. However, we have noticed that when move (O) occurs at the end of the DI, stating the purpose of the study occurs in conjunction with other steps that belong to the move whereas when it occurs for the first time in the introductions, it usually occurs alone.

The initial aim of the present study was:

1- To answer the question whether or not the Baccalaureate English Examination (henceforth B.E.E), innovated in 1994/1995, exerts a washback effect on the teaching of English in 3<sup>rd</sup> year classes of secondary schools in Algeria, and
2- If so, whether this examination exerts a positive or negative washback effect.


This study attempts to explore the relationship between explicit teaching of EFL grammar and the development internal grammar by adult learners.


## Step 2 Defining Terms

One of the newly identified steps is the *defining terms* step. The step is found in 4 introductions, it generally occurs after stating the purpose of the study or after the research questions. Here are some examples:

Before diving into any discussion about this topic, we ought to give operational definitions of the following key words, Grammar, explicit grammar teaching, and internal grammar. The most current definition of grammar is…

Briefly, the washback effect is the influence a test exerts on the teaching that precedes the test.


## Step 3 Background

This step is very infrequent in our corpus; only one author used it in his introduction. The step occurred after the statement of the purpose, its aim is to state the purpose of the study in more specific terms or to frame the hypotheses.


However, following Alderson and Wall (1993), who have refined the washback hypotheses at its general into more specific hypotheses, the aim of the study has been turned into the following research questions…


## Step 4 Hypotheses

Half the texts contained hypotheses. These usually occur after or before the research questions. These are some examples:

We hypothesise that there is a correlation between the difficulties encountered by the students when writing the introductions, conclusions and abstracts of their final reports and the English language syllabus in force in the engineering department at the University of Boumerdes.

The following hypotheses have been formulated:

The composing ability transfers into English provided it is present in either Arabic or   French…

**Step 5 Research Questions**

Research Question(s) is another newly identified step which is frequently used by the authors. Of the 12 introductions, 10 included this step.

R.Q.1 Do third year university students transfer their composing ability from Arabic/French into English?

**Step 6 Present findings**

This step is totally absent from the corpus. No author has reported the results s/he reached in her/his study.

**Step 7 Methods**

Similar to research questions, the methods is another new step which is commonly identified in our corpus (75%). Methods here include the research tools, the participants, the procedures etc. Here are some illustrations from the corpus:

**-** The teaching and testing experiment we planned to conduct was arranged to last 40 hours; it utilised two groups of students – an experimental and a control groups, and was broached by a pre-experiment test and closed by a post-treatment one…

**-** To investigate these questions, we adopted an empirical research approach that involves a comprehensive strategy for an experimental study design and depends on collecting subjects' first and second term essays a well as their experimental essays…

**Step 8 Limitations of the Study**

Another newly identified step is the limitations of the study where three authors describe what might hinder or limit the validity or the results of the study. Limitations are generally turned into proposals for further research. These portions of text illustrate the step:

First, though some measures have been taken to reduce the sources of invalidity, *lack of* a matched control group has prevented us from calculating the net effect and thus make sure that changes in the curriculum are indeed the result of washback effect exerted by the new B-E-E.

Although drama can be initiated in the classroom at lower levels in the form of short extracts carefully chosen and including fairly simple language as suggested by Lazar (1993) (see 2.3.2.), our focus was *restricted* more precisely to its use as a stimulating practice likely to give appreciable results with students at an intermediate level.

**Step 9 Preview Organisation of the Study**

Describing the organisation of the study is common practice in Algerian Magister DIs. The step is identified in almost all the introductions (83.33%). The authors in this step went through an extensive description of the different chapters that their DIs count.

In fact, we will discuss the research in more detail later in our work which is divided into: first, a review of literature about the different theories on reading process, and reading problems and strategies. Second…

We structured this study into seven chapters; the first two chapters are mainly theoretical…

**2- Discussion and Interpretation of the Findings**

Genre studies on Academic introductions indicate that this part-genre contains a rhetorical work enacted to persuade the reader that the research about to be reported is worth doing. Furthermore, most of the studies (see the literature review chapter for ample details) have validated Swales' (1990) CARS model as embodying the typical schematic structure that allows the achievement of introductions' established purpose. According to CARS, three main kinds of rhetorical work or moves need to be performed in an introduction: establishing the research territory, establishing a niche in the research territory and then occupying the niche that was created before. The moves, in turn, are realised through a number of strategies or steps. It is essentially against this established model that our corpus of DI introductions was analysed. More particularly, Samraj's modified CARS (2008) model developed for English Master's Theses introduction was used to help describe the rhetorical patterns of our textual corpus.

In this section, we will attempt to place the findings in previous research and compare and contrast them with those of Samraj (2008). The discussion will also be enlightened by the talks we conducted with the authors of the texts as well as the interview with the supervisor. The aim is trying to find out what reasons might be at the origin of the writing practices reported in the last section. However, before delving into any discussion of the results reached through the analysis, it is important to first state that at the move/step level, the introductions appear not to reflect a common rhetorical structure. The discussion then will not refer to a common rhetorical structure but to shared writing practices that characterise the sets of twelve introductions we analysed.

## 2.1. The Schematic Structures of the Introductions

Three main perspectives inform the analysis of the textual findings. Previous literature on introductions as a part-genre, the talk I conducted with some of the texts' authors and the interview I made with the supervisor.

Differently from Samraj (2008) whose corpus of Linguistics Master's DIs showed a similar move/step structure, no preferred common rhetorical organisation has been identified in our corpus. In other terms, the moves across the twelve introductions are configured within a variety of patterns instead of one common patterning. This means the DIs produced in the English Department of the University of Algiers are characterised by what Samraj calls '*intradepartmental variation*' (2008:65). The only possible categorisation of the twelve introductions is to divide them into those which begin with move 1(58.33%) and those which begin with move 3 (41.66%). All the twelve introductions, however, end with move 3. A more elaborate discussion of the schematic structures characterising our corpus of introductions necessitates a deeper analysis of each single move and its constituent steps.

## A. Establishing the Territory

Ten out of twelve introductions established a research territory (T). In seven introductions, the move is used as an opening strategy. However, while most studies on CARS (Swales, 1990, Bunton, 2002, Samraj, 2008) give evidence that move 1 often occurs in the first position, in three of the ten introductions the move is placed in the second or third position. Three main steps realise establishing the territory move: claiming centrality and/or story-telling and/or review previous research and make topic generalisation.

## Move1 Step 1 (Claiming Centrality)

While the centrality claims are commonly found in English RAs (Swales, 1990) and DIs (Dudley-Evans, 1986, Samraj, 2008) as an opening strategy, only five of the twelve texts we analysed (41.66%) contained the step. Swales and Frederickson (1994) obtained similar findings in their analysis of introductions in RAs written by Swedish language scholars where they observed that centrality claiming is absent in some texts. The authors argue that these findings could be the result of the small research community where the competition for publication is less fierce. Similarly, the redundancy of move1 step 1 in our corpus may be attributed to the emerging research community in the field of Linguistics/Didactics where the need for research cannot be met by the available number of the researchers. Thus, there might be no need for writers to be competitive to situate their work within a lively, significant or well established research context (Swales, 2009 personal communication)

Similarly to Samraj's (2008) findings, the centrality of the research area is asserted either in terms of the real world (14.28%) or the research world (57.14%), though the

second strategy is more common. These centrality claims occur as an opening strategy in 71.42% of the introductions that begin by move 1.

**Move 1 Step 2 (Story-telling)**

A noteworthy feature of move 1 is the replacement of centrality claims by a newly identified story-telling strategy used by two authors (16.66 %) to serve as an attention-getting device. The two authors resorted to narrating what they have experienced in the research area in which their study is situated. As shown in the results section, the quoted author went through a long account of his teaching experience with the use of drama in his reading classes to attract readership. While these findings are interesting, they are not surprising since a similar strategy was found in Swedish RAs (Swales, 2009 personal communication). Hence, this writing practice is not confined to Algerian students writing in English and, therefore, it is unlikely to be the result of cross-cultural variation. That being said, it is nonetheless difficult to attribute the use of story-telling strategy to a particular reason especially that the two authors were not interviewed so as to explain their writing choice.

**Move 1 Step 3 (Review literature or Present Topic Generalisations)**

This step occurs in ten introductions (83.33%). It reviews existing understandings of the topic as well as existing practices and phenomena which have bearing on the authors' own studies. This step performs different functions in our corpus. In some texts, the review of previous research and the topic generalisations are given for the purpose of drawing the theory to be adopted by the author or the operational definitions of terms and concepts that the author will use in his research. In some other cases, the step aims at capturing the gap existing in the state of the art so as to fill it later. All instances of this step, however, provide background knowledge about the topic at hand

to the reader. Sometimes, even a historical perspective of the topic is given. In addition, and in line with what is reported by Swales (1990), Move 1 Step 3 is characterised in our corpus by an extensive use of citations, both integral and non-integral.

**Absence of Move 1**

Interestingly, two authors did not establish the research space within which their studies are situated. Instead, only move 3 and 2 are employed. In the two introductions concerned, the authors begin by stating the purpose of their studies (Move 3), go on to justify their choice of the topic (Move 2), and finally state the purposes/objectives of the study in more specific terms, the research questions, the methods etc (Move 3). One of the two authors has even indicated a gap in previous research without surveying previous research.

The omission of move one cannot be attributed to lack of previous literature related to the topic being undertaken since the two topics, *syllabus design and testing*, are, I believe, *'classics'* in linguistics/Didactics and much research has been done in these research areas. Bhatia (1993) stated that there is always a need to comment on related research even in a new disciplinary area. He further adds that, statements such as *'There is hardly any work available in this area'* is an attempt to review previous research (Bhatia, 1993:85).

**B. Establishing a Niche**

Every author (100%) made an attempt to establish a niche (a research space) for her/ his own work and therefore justifies his research. With an average occurrence of 1.25 per introduction, move 2 is the second most preferred move after move 3. It is realised in a number of steps which proved to be slightly different from those described by Samraj (2008).

**Move 2 Step 1A Indicating a Gap or Raise a Question**

In previous studies, indicating a gap or raising a question in research (Step 1B) seems to be the most predominant step of Move 2 (Swales, 1981, 1990, Samraj, 2008). In our corpus, the step is much less prominent as only four cases were identified where the authors made a negative evaluative statement of previous research or raised questions in research to justify their own study. The scarcity of the strategy may be related to, at least, two main reasons. The first reason is deduced from the reflections of some authors about the DIs writing. Some of these are reported here

- In a Magister DI, one is not required to bring something new to the literature.
- A Magister DI is not like a PhD thesis, we are only asked to apply a given theory appropriately.
- The difference between my DI and the DIs of my colleagues is that I brought something new to the literature; it is about the contribution of the commas to text coherence.

The role of the introduction in DIs as apposed to theses is differently conceived by Samraj (2008) who argues that:

> Like doctoral students in previous studies, Master's students are purportedly reporting original research and the introduction is a site where the interplay of the student's agency in the research being reported and the role of previous research is manifested (Samraj, 2008:56).

Another reason, this time drawn from the textual findings themselves is the tendency to describe an actual problem in the authors' environment to justify their work rather than fill in gaps knowledge or extend present knowledge in their particular research field. Indicating a problem or a need is further developed below.

**Move 2 Step 1 B (Indicate a Need or a Problem in the Real World)**

Move2 step 1B is the most preferred by the twelve post-graduate students who participated in our research, it is utilised in seven introductions which makes an overall rate of 58.33%. It expresses a practical problem that needs to be addressed in the real world. As the above examples have shown, in this Move-2 strategy, authors describe extensively the problems that occur in a specific situation, with a traditional practice or an old method or technique. Four of the problems described in this step are problems that the authors have themselves encountered in their workplace, for instance, in schools or at university. On the importance of *'identifying a pro*blem' the supervisor said:

> - I'd say that detailing the problem is the most important thing in the introduction because what is important in research is to identify a problem *and* introductions are of course the most appropriate place to detail your problem.

What might justify the authors' preference for this strategy as compared to say indicating a gap or raise question in research, is perhaps the nature of the DIs' discipline and the research context in which they are written. On the one hand, Applied Linguistics is, in nature, a practical discipline and all the topics tackled in the DIs are concerned with improving a local teaching/learning situation. On the other hand, the research context in developing countries such as Algeria is different from English speaking countries where the research context is dense and most of the research fields are mature. Thus, the researchers in developed countries might have to search wider, not only in a local setting but also globally and universally, to find a research topic and, within large discourse communities.

**Move2 Step 1 C (Positive Justification)**

Positive justification is a new step proposed in Samraj modified CARS model (2008) to argue that establishing a niche may also be realised using positive statements about what the study might bring instead of negative statements about previous research. In

fact, the step is validated in our study as it occurred in half the texts. It generally occurs in conjunction with other move 2 steps, especially step 1 B.

In addition, it is important to notice that some introductions make use of more than one of the strategies developed here to create a research space. Two main strategies tend to occur together; indicating a problem or a need in the real world and positive justification

**Move 2 Step 1 D (Continuing the Tradition)**

The step is not reported in Samraj's move structure of thesis introductions (2008) but in Dudley-Evans's analysis of DIs introductions (1986) and Swales' CARS (1990). It was identified in one introduction where the author stated clearly that her work is meant to continue in the line of ESP research which is already established in Algeria.

**C. Occupying the Niche**

In the twelve introductions we analysed, Move 3 is very common. It is identified 21 times and occurred at least twice in every introduction. Actually, the move in CARS occurs often at the end of the introduction where the author occupies the niche s/he previously established (Dudley-Evans, 1986, Swales, 1981, 1990, Samraj, 2008). What is unusual is that Move 3 appears at the very beginning of the introductions in little less than half the texts we analysed (41.66%). Furthermore, nine instead of the five steps reported by Samraj (2008) are identified in this move with a marked preference for *stating the study goal/aim/purpose/objective, research questions, methods and organisation of the study.* We shall now consider steps that belong to Move 3. The four newly identified steps will be discussed separately.

**Move 3 Step 1 (Stating the Goals/Purposes of the Study)**

In line with previous studies on research introductions (Dudley-Evans: 1986, Samraj: 2008, Swales: 1990) stating the purpose of the work carried out is a fundamental practice for all the twelve introductions (100%). It is evident that without stating the goal/aim/purpose/objective of the work, it is impossible to occupy the niche since it indicates why postgraduate students undertake this task in the first place.

However, what deserves particular attention is that the step is employed as an opening strategy in five introductions. In other words, five authors occupied the research space very early in their introductions. The step, in this case, is realised in two to three sentences without any further details and it is immediately followed by establishing the territory.

Actually, it is not obvious to explain the authors' tendency to occupy the niche early in their introductions, especially when we consider the comments of the supervisor on the organisation of the DI introduction. She indicates that:

> An introduction is like a funnel, with the most general information at the beginning and gradually narrowing in level of generality until it ends with the specific purpose that will be tackled in the body of the DI.

There seems to be some dissonance between the structure of the five introductions and that proposed by the supervisor though most of these texts are supervised by the same supervisor. She goes on to assert:

> We aim, in our Department, to follow universal or world accepted research standards. This is what we ask our students to do; now if you ask me about what they actually do, it is something else.

Whatever reasons behind this writing choice, by stating the purpose of the study at the very beginning of the introduction, the authors miss the opportunity to situate the research in current contexts and prepare the ground to justify their research. Another characterising feature of Move 3 Step 1 is that when it occurs towards the end of the introduction, it is more elaborate than when it opens the introduction. Here, the aim(s)

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are developed into more specific objectives and generally followed by other move 3 steps.

**Move 3 Step 2 (Background)**

This step is rarely found in the twelve introductions we analysed as only one case has been identified. It occurred after the statement of the purpose and its function is to better frame the hypotheses. The infrequency of this step is not surprising given that, when stated, the hypotheses follow immediately the research questions without providing a background on which they are based. The background is perhaps stated before as part of 'establishing the territory' move and therefore is not labelled 'background' but review previous research or present topic generalisations.

**Move 3 Step 3 (Present Hypotheses)**

As shown in the findings, this step is identified in half the texts. Some of the hypotheses are explicitly expressed and enumerated on many occasions whereas other hypotheses are implicitly stated as they are only identified through the intended meaning of the statement. On including hypotheses in the introduction, the supervisor explain:

> …Hypotheses are also part of introductions though it is not necessary to include them. It all depends on the methodology that the student opts for. Generally, the hypotheses are more frequent in experimental research.

**Move 3 Step 4 (Findings)**

Unlike Samraj (2008) and Swales (1990) findings, no occurrence of announcement of the principal results is identified in the corpus. The prevalence of DIs without findings suggests that this was considered acceptable at least to the supervisors and external the examiners concerned. Furthermore, it should be noticed that, at any moment, the

supervisor and the authors did not refer to the possibility of including findings in the introduction. This may further be explained by the supervisor's perception of a good research. She stresses that:

> A good researcher is one who asks the right questions. It is not important to arrive at results or solutions, it is more interesting to raise the right questions, exploring is better than arriving at solutions.

**Move 3 Step 5 (Preview Organisation of the Study)**

A total of ten introductions end with indicating the structure of the study. This is in tune with most studies on CARS in which presenting the organisation of the study is quite common. However, it is important to notice that in our corpus, this step occupies a considerable space in the introductions because the authors gave a detailed overview of how the DI contents are organised and what will be presented in each chapter.

**Additional Move 3 Strategies**

As I have already referred to in the results sections, in addition to the five steps proposed by Samraj (2008) to realise the third move, four other steps were identified in our corpus: *Definition of Terms, Research Questions, Methods and Limitations of the Study*. These additional steps are also captured by Bunton (2002:74) in his analysis of PhD theses introductions. Among these, R*esearch Questions* and *Methods* are more frequently used in our corpus.

As far as R*esearch Questions* are concerned, they are identified in 10 introductions. Where they did occur, *research questions* were clearly enumerated immediately after the objectives/aims/goals but in other cases they were expressed within a paragraph.

There was a greater concentration on the method of research in these *introductions* then the Swales (1990) and Dudley-Evans (1988) models suggest. Most of the *introductions* (75%) gave ample details of the methods chosen, sometimes for several pages. The step includes a description of the nature of the research (qualitative,

quantitative, experimental etc) and indicates the *Materials or Subjects* and *Procedures* used in the study. We must underline here that both the supervisor and the authors put particular focus on the importance of the method adopted in academic research.

As for the two other additional steps, *Defining terms* and *Study limitations*, they are not as prominent as the two first ones. The first, reports on operational definitions of terms and concepts that will be used by the author. The second, *Limitations of the Study*, functions probably as a way of anticipating potential criticism by stressing the limits of the research and its shortcomings especially in terms of the methodology adopted in the research. When this step is not part of the introduction, it is usually found toward the end of the DI after the concluding chapters.

Through the discussion of each of the moves and their constituent steps, the profile of the twelve introductions we analysed begins to be addressed. However, for a more complete picture to be drawn, we need to consider the discussions of the moves and their steps all together. A more complete picture would include common features of the introductions such as the communicative purpose deduced both from the textual findings and the informants' views.

When we come to consider the schematic structures of the introductions and the informants' views, a number of significant features surface. First, whatever the organisation of the twelve introductions, a strong preference for move 2 and 3 is confirmed. In fact, Move 2 which constitutes the justification of the research or the *Rationale* as headed by some authors (see section 2.2), was repeatedly employed in all the introductions and apparently focused by the supervisor as an important research aspect of any academic introduction. Move 3, in its turn, was found to be a developed move with its nine steps which occupy considerable space in the introduction. Hence, it may be suggested that the DI introductions are, essentially, texts which serves to

introduce or summarise what *needs to be done* (Establishing the Niche) and *what is going to be done* (occupying the niche) with a manifest stress on the second.

This leads to the statement that the *introductions* are more informative than argumentative as they focus on introducing what is to be undertaken rather than arguing that the research is worth undertaking through situating one's study in its area of research and carve out a niche for one's own research. The authors' and the supervisor's comments seem, to a great extent, to reflect what is being advanced here.

In fact, while previous literature assigns to the research introduction the vital role of convincing readers that the research it reports on is of a value in the research territory in which it is situated, most interviewed authors agree that an introduction is essentially a summary of the work carried out:

1- An introduction informs the reader about what we intend to do.
2- The introduction mirrors the skeleton of the work carried out in the DI. It should be very clear about what is to be undertaken.
3- An introduction describes what is to be done, why it is to be done and how to do it.
4- As its name denotes, an introduction introduces the topic of the DI to the reader.

**Conclusion**

In this part of my study, I attempted to describe the schematic structures of twelve Magister DI *introductions* using, as a starting analytical framework, Samraj (2008) CARS model of Master's Theses. In terms of their generic structures, it was found that these introductions do not constitute a homogenous group of texts. Put differently, the results of the analysis didn't reveal a common rhetorical structure. This variation might mean that DI introductions as a part-genre is not yet conventionalised in our context. If genres develop through the recurrence of communicative events, we would expect that members of the community (post-graduates, supervisors, examiners) would have

exposure to exemplary texts, or the conventions of the genre. In this case, however, it is difficult to claim that people do have much experience of exemplar texts since the tradition of DI writing in Algerian English Departments is not as established as in say U.K or USA.

Though differently organised, the twelve sets of introductions we analysed all favoured move 2 and 3 with a predominance of the latter. This led us to claim that the introductions are perceived as a text summarising what the DI reports on. Discrepancies with Samraj (2008) CARS model were also noticed at the level of steps. The divergences relate mainly to the identification of new steps such as *Story-Telling* as belonging to Move 1, *Continuing the Tradition* as part of Move 2 and four additional steps realising Move 3. Other disparities are linked to the preference of some steps over others such as *Indicating a Need or a Problem in the Real World* and *Positive Justification* (Move 2) and the missing of some steps such as *Indicating a Gap in Research* (Move 1) and *Findings* (Move 3).

Some of these writing choices seem to be discipline dependent as it is the case for the prevalence of Move 2 Step B. Some other writing practices might be attributed to the relatively small size of the research community in which the DIs are written as in the case of the scarcity of *Claming Centrality* (Move 1). The authors' tendency to identify local problem that they encounter in their workplaces was attributed to the emerging Algerian research context in which need for research cannot be met by the available number of researchers.

# Chapter Four
# Analysis and Discussion of DI Abstracts

The second part-genre investigated in this study is the abstracts that accompany the DIs. The aim is to describe the moves through which the DI writers proceed in order to achieve their perceived communicative function. Thus, the first part of this section describes the results of the move analysis. As for the second, it discusses those results with reference to previous literature as well as the talks with the authors and the interview with the supervisor.

## 1. Results

### 1.1. Overall Features

Before I describe the cognitive structure characterising the DI abstracts, some formal features (paragraph organisation, length) are worth noting. First, the abstracts have an evident multiparagraph structure ranging from one (a writing block) to up to fourteen paragraphs with a mean number of four. Second, in terms of length, the abstracts vary from 5 to 40 sentences with an average length of 17 sentences. Third, the twelve abstracts do not include a list of key words which generally appears at the end of an abstract. At a less obvious level of analysis, the move analysis helped draw the schematic structure of the selected abstracts which is the concern of the next section.

### 1.2. The Structure of Abstracts

As already stated, in order to arrive at the rhetorical structure of the twelve abstracts included in our corpus, we have used Samraj (2002) model of abstracts' move structure (see section 4 of the chapter on methodology). The texts display a relatively common structure. In addition, there were no significant deviations from the usual linear

ordering: (1) *Situating the Research*, (2) *Purpose*, (3) *Method*, (4) *Results* and (5) *Conclusion* apart from some cycling of moves. Table 6 highlights the frequencies with which the five moves occur across the corpus and presents the newly identified moves marked by an asterisk (*).

| Moves | Frequency of Appearance | | Average Length |
| | Number | Rate | (sentences) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Situating the research | 01 | 08 % | 0.08 |
| Purpose | 12 | 100 % | 2.83 |
| Motivation* | 05 | 41.6 % | 01.2 |
| Methods | 12 | 100 % | 4.83 |
| Results | 11 | 91.6 % | 3.55 |
| Conclusion | 04 | 33.3 % | 01.8 |

* A newly identified step

**Table 6: Rhetorical Moves in Abstracts**

## A. Situating the Research

S*ituating the Research* shows the author's efforts to persuade the reader about the importance of the reported research by situating her/his work in its area of research and optionally delineate a problem in the research or the real world. Among the twelve abstracts, only one abstract contained this move where the author situated his work in its area of research. The move is articulated as such:

> The final external achievement test designer is responsible for the quality of the washback effect (positive or negative) of his/her exam.

## B. Stating the Purpose

*Stating the Purpose* has the key function of describing the researched goal or the purpose of the study. As shown in the table, the move was present in all the abstracts we

analysed (100%). Differences lie in the textual space that the move occupied across the twelve texts. The following portions of texts illustrate the move:

The present research aims at investigating EFL learners' reading styles and strategies. More precisely, we compare 'successful' and 'less successful' readers in terms of the use of some particular styles (receptive and reflective) and strategies (pre, in and post-reading strategies) of reading.

The present study tries to investigate the teaching and the learning of a content-based course, LINGUISTICS, taught at the University of Algiers.

## C. Motivations

The move analysis of the abstracts has revealed a new move which, to my knowledge, has never been described before in genre literature on abstracts. It is the '*motivations*' move; it generally precedes or follows S*tating the Purpose*' move where the author's motives that triggered the research are expressed. The move appeared in five abstracts which makes an overall rate of 41.66 %. These are some textual realisations of the move:

Our interest in the research emerges from our readings in the fields of formal instruction, consciousness-raising, and task-based language teaching […] our motivation to carry out this research grew further when we observed…

It [the study] was basically inspired from my teaching experience of English as a first foreign language to pupils learning this language from their fourth grade in the primary school. (My brackets).

Our particular interest in comparing EFL learners in their use of certain strategies was triggered by the divergent views about the differences between the 'successful' and 'less successful' readers.

## D. Methods

The *Methods* move is equally important in the abstracts we analysed as it occurred in all the texts (100%). The move described the methods that the researcher followed in order to implement his research. Here are some portions of texts expressing this function:

In this research, we described and critically analysed the new curriculum of the first year middle school with respect to its goals, syllabus design, methodology and assessment procedures. We also evaluated a three-year implementation of this curriculum through an investigation conducted with a group of middle school learners and teachers.

The study adopts a combination of methods (descriptive, experimental and comparative) and multiple instruments (pupil's written data, pre- and post- questionnaires and pre and post grammar tests). We used ten secondary school pupils as experimental and control subjects and examined their performances in three narrative essays …

**E. Results**

Similar to both *Purpose and Methods*, *Results* appear consistently in the abstracts (91.66%). This move reports on the principle findings reached by the author.

The results of this experimental longitudinal study showed that the experimental teaching of the P.P.T. had a positive effect on the internalization of this tense by subjects.

The results showed that there is no significant difference between consciousness-raising tasks and the traditional grammar teaching…

**F. Conclusion**

This move generally occurs at the end of the abstracts; it is meant to interpret results and draw inferences. Only four of the twelve abstracts contained this move. Here are some examples:

The findings were taken as positive evidence to conclude that explicit EFL grammar teaching is likely to develop internal grammar in the first year adult learners enrolled in the EFL teaching degree course.

These findings help us conclude that there can be no 'good' or 'bad' strategy but only an effective or ineffective use of it. On the basis of this, strategy training should be more concerned with the 'how' and 'where' to use a strategy. In addition, learners should work at increasing their vocabulary to facilitate reading.

To sum up, when writing their abstracts, the authors of the abstracts went through six different moves; S*ituating the Research*, *Purpose*, *Motivations*, *Methods* and *Conclusion.* Three of these are obligatory namely *Purpose*, *Methods* and *Results* as they were identified in almost all the texts.

In addition to describing the abstracts' move structure, the different ways in which the moves are linguistically realised are also noted. What follows, then, is a description of the most recurring move signals.

## 1.3. Move Signals

Across the twelve analysed abstracts, we have noticed that the authors used almost the same linguistic repertoire to signal the six moves that the abstracts count. The linguistic expressions most used may be summarised in the following expressions:

### Stating the Purpose

- The present research tries to investigate… (five other abstracts use the same expression)
- The present research considers…
- This study examines…
- The purpose of this study is …
- The present study aims at…
- This study is an attempt to analyse…

### Motivations

- The interest in the research emerges…
- It [the study] was basically inspired…
- Our particular interest in … was triggered by…

### Describing the Method(s)

- A questionnaire was completed…
- I carried out an experimental longitudinal…
- The study adopts a combination of methods…
- Before designing our linguistic units, we analysed…
- It [ the study] was carried out with …
- …we developed an experiment which consisted in…

### Results

- The results showed…
- A careful analysis of …revealed that...
- On the basis of the information collected from the questionnaire …we noticed that…
- The present study seems to lend support to …
- The results showed…

**Conclusion**

- The conclusion that may be drawn…
- The findings were taken as evidence of …
- The study concludes…


## 2. Discussion and Interpretation of the Results

Having presented the results yielded from the analysis of the abstracts, the next step is to discuss and interpret those results. The interpretation of the textual data will be supported by what is reported in previous literature about abstracts and when necessary, reference will be made to the talks I conducted with the authors of the abstracts as well as to the interview with the subject specialist (the supervisor). The discussion of the reported results is meant as an attempt to highlight what communicative function the abstracts written by Algerian post-graduates tend to fulfil and what recurring schematic structure they display in relation to the framework advanced by Samraj (2002). In addition, the linguistic realisations of the schematic structure will also be discussed. The picture will be, however, incomplete if we do not first consider some significant features concerning the formal layout of the texts chosen for analysis.


### 2.1. Formal Layout of Texts

The first salient feature to be noted in the analysed abstracts is their extensive length. With an average length of 17 sentences, the abstracts are in fact quite long. As shown in the results, the authors (though not all of them) tend to go through long stretches of sentences in order to realise each of the constituent moves of their abstracts.

There are perhaps no fixed standards reported in previous literature about the conventional length of the DI abstract but the established communicative purpose of this part-genre suggests that the academic abstract should be as short as possible. In other words and as Bhatia (1993) explains, if written properly '*an abstract is a*

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*description or factual **summary** of the much longer report, and is meant to give the reader an **exact** and **concise** knowledge of the full article*" (Bhatia, 1993: 78 my emphasis). The large textual space that each of the constituent moves occupies hinders the very nature of the DI abstracts whose main function is to save the reader's time and help her/him decide about the relevance of the reported research to her/his reading interests.

The second feature that characterises the abstracts is paragraph structuring. The abstracts have an evident multiparagraph structure ranging from one to up to fourteen paragraphs with a mean number of four. Most typically, the first and the second move namely the purpose and the motivation (when contained in the abstract) are generally realised in the initial paragraph while the third (Methods) is realised in two or three paragraphs depending on the length of the move in question. The results move is often put as a separate paragraph followed by the last paragraph which contains the conclusion of the research. In any case, either of the methods and the results occupy no less than one third of the texts.

## 2.2. Abstracts' Move Structure

Following Bhatia (1993), an academic abstract is normally written to briefly answer four main questions about the research being reported: what the author investigated, how s/he did it, what s/he found out and what her/his conclusions are (Bhatia,1993). The answers to these questions constitute the conventional schematic structure of abstracts which is in turn a translation of the function that this part-genre tends to fulfil. As far as our corpus of abstracts is concerned, the move analysis revealed a cognitive structure which is nearly similar to that advanced by Samraj (2002) as all of the five moves are contained in the twelve abstracts we analysed (see table 6).

However, between the two move structures, important discrepancies have been noticed. These are mainly related to the scarcity of some moves and, most importantly, the inclusion of an unconventional move. In fact, in addition to the five moves described by Bhatia (1993) and many other genre analysts such as Samraj (2002) and Santos (1996), a new move that I named *Motivations* has been identified.

To validate these findings, both the supervisor and the authors have been asked to explain what is contained in an abstract. The description of an abstract structure provided by the supervisor is similar to that unveiled in our study. The following interview quote highlights this:

> An abstract is a short text where the student is generally expected to speak about the motivations or the why of the study, to cite some scholarly research; I mean the principle works on which the student based his work, the purpose (research questions, hypotheses if any), the methodology, the results and the pedagogical implications if reported in the research.

The authors who participated in the research articulated the same view about the organisation of the abstracts. These are some of their views about what an abstract might contain:

> The abstract includes the motivations or rationale, the purpose, the main works which the researcher has relied on, the method adopted and the results reached through the study.

> The issue and the results are the two main things to include in an abstract.

> An abstract is a summary of the DI, it briefly reports on all the things said in the DI.

Overall, it seems that both the quantitative (the abstracts' schematic structure) and the qualitative data (the supervisor's and the authors' views) match the structure proposed by Samraj (2002). However, apart from these similarities, it is important to discuss the differences observed in the two structures. What follows, then, is a more detailed

discussion of the rhetorical structure characterising our abstracts with a particular focus on the discrepancies between this structure and that advanced by Bhatia (1993).

As shown in table 6 S*ituating the Research* move is almost absent in our corpus. This means that very little attempt is made to persuade readers about the value and the interest of the research being reported in the DI. In this respect, Hyland (2005) insists that despite appearances to the contrary, *'abstracts are highly rhetorical'*, and this move is particularly useful to make good impression on potential readers. (Hyland & Tse, 2005, in Swales and Sara Van Bonn, 2007: 95).

While the S*ituating the Research* move is underrepresented in the corpus, *purpose* is stated in all the abstracts. A very recurring way of realising this move is the tendency to describe first the general aim of the study before stating in more exact terms the purpose of the work. The move is consequently realised in not less than two sentences (2.8 sentences).

Interestingly, a new move, typical to our corpus, has been identified. It is found in five abstracts (41.6%) and is labelled *'Motivations'* as it bears the function of explaining what has prompted the author's interest in the research topic. The move has, to our knowledge, never been mentioned in previous studies on abstracts and therefore is considered as unconventional. The absence of this move from the previous studies on abstracts, at least those we are aware of, is quite understandable given that *'Stating One's Motivations'* does not play a role in the realisation of the established communicative function of this part-genre. Put differently, abstracts are a means of briefly informing the reader about the most relevant things reported in the research as rightly expressed by Bhatia (1993) and therefore, they do not constitute the most appropriate place in the DI to express the motivations that inspired the study.

The *Methods* move is identified in all the abstracts (100%) and is characterised by its extensive length with a mean length of 4.8 sentences. The move in our corpus generally provides a full description of the research methodology that informs the research being undertaken such as the approach, the research tools, the participants and the research procedures. In this respect, the supervisor spoke about what s/he called the *'Research distinctiveness of the Department'* which consists in granting a particular attention to the research methodology underlying the study. The supervisor explains that in Applied Linguistics one needs to be very clear about what methodology has been adopted to conduct the study and most importantly why such methodology has been employed. The particular importance granted to methodology in the department is reflected in the frequency of appearance of this move as well as its extensive length.

Eleven of the twelve analysed abstracts have a *Results* move. The move is quite developed (4.5 sentences per abstract); it contains a detailed report of the findings which correlate with the tools described in the *Methods* move. That is, the results obtained from each of the research tools used in the study are described separately

Providing the conclusion(s) reached through the analysis is uncommon in the abstracts we analysed. Only four abstracts contained the move where their authors answered the research questions they asked at the outset or reported some of the study's implications. The low presence of the fourth move may perhaps be related to the difficulty of distinguishing the conclusion from the findings as Martins (2003: 39) notes:

> This indicates that the division between the results and the conclusion is not always very clear, and this is especially so in the case of abstracts which have no headings that serve as lexical clues to identify different units.

The analysis of the schematic structure allowed us to draw important conclusions. Most importantly, though the texts include all the conventional rhetorical moves

reported in previous literature, most of them do not read as abstracts. The extensive length of the abstracts, the inclusion of an unconventional move namely the *Motivations Move*, the detailed account of some moves hinder the prototypicality of the abstract as a part-genre. The rhetorical orientations prevailing in the texts we analysed may perhaps be better comprehended, though partially, by resorting to the talks I conducted with the authors and the supervisor.

The most important fact I realised from the authors' answers to the questions about the abstracts is their unawareness of what an abstract fulfils as a social function. The following comments highlight the fact:

1- It is to make the academic community know that a DI has been written about a given topic so that not to reproduce it.
2- It is mainly used in the libraries, in the electronic catalogues mainly.
3- It has never been clear to me why I am required to write an abstract.
4- Just like the introduction an abstract introduces the research; the difference is that the first is longer.

The authors' unawareness of the conventional rhetorical purpose of such a genre is, I believe, due to the fact that they did not receive any formal instruction about how an abstract is written and what is expected from their part. In this respect, Alex Henry and Robert L. Roseberry (1998) in an evaluative study of genre-based approach to the teaching of writing point out that:

> …an awareness of the generic structure of the text makes it easier for writers to organize their material, which allows them to concentrate on combining the elements effectively in terms of both achieving their communicative goals and producing more highly textured writing  (1998:154).

Most authors asserted that when they were asked to write the abstract, a genre which they have never produced before, they did not know how to write it. To manage the task, they consulted previous DIs or asked their supervisors to get an idea about the

nature, the content and the organisation of this very particular text. Furthermore, as the authors' comments confirm, compared to the body of the DI, the *abstracts* are not given due importance.

> I have copied some extracts from my introduction to write the abstract.

> Writing the main parts of my DI was so tiring and frustrating that I did not make much effort to write the abstract.

Within the same context, one of the authors added that the abstracts are even not read by the examiners, he said:

> I wonder whether the examiners read the abstracts. I have never attended a viva where the abstract was commented upon.

As for the linguistic realisations of the different moves identified in the twelve abstracts, they do not seem to differ from the usual signals employed for such moves. What may be noticed is perhaps the small scale of language resources available for the authors to signal these moves. The expressions used for each of the moves are, in effect, quite similar in all the abstracts.

**Conclusion**

My findings on the move structure of the twelve DI abstracts included in our study suggest that all five moves proposed by Samraj (2002) are contained in these texts. The findings pointed also to the inclusion of an unconventional move (*Motivations*) whose function is to describe what has nourished the authors' interest in the research. Furthermore, *Situating the Research and Conclusion* moves were notably underrepresented in the corpus.

The analysis and discussion of these findings pointed to the fact that although each of the moves indicated by Samraj (2002) were identified in the abstracts, the communicative purpose set for this part-genre is not efficiently achieved (Bhatia,1993,

Samraj, 2002, Swales,1990). In fact, the extensive length of the abstracts and the integration of a new move which does not contribute to the achievement of the abstract's communicative purpose may not provide readership with a concise factual summary of the most important things reported in the body of the text.

This study also suggests that the rhetorical orientations found in the corpus, such as detailing the methodology and stating what has triggered one's interest in the research are perhaps shaped by institutionally established writing practices.

# Chapter Five

# Analysis and Discussion of DI Acknowledgements

In this section, we attempt to identify and describe the component moves found in DIs acknowledgements written by Algerian post-graduate students in Linguistics/Didactics. The section is, then, organised into two main parts. The first accounts for the results of the analysis and the second deals with the discussion and the interpretation of the results leading to drawing some conclusions. The results will be accompanied by instances from the corpus and the discussion supplemented by the talk around texts conducted with some of the authors as well as the interview with the supervisor.

## 1. Findings

### 1.1 Overall Features

Despite its optional status, the quantitative results show that each DI contained an acknowledgement, which makes an overall rate of 100%. At the formal level, the acknowledgements within the analysed texts often occur after the Dedications where students dedicate their work to family members and/or friends, and before the Declaration of Authorship. As for length, almost all the acknowledgements were short with an average length of 4 sentences. The shortest acknowledgement contains only one sentence while the longest reaches 9 sentences.

### 1.2. Generic Structure of Acknowledgements

As already explained, one of the research questions that the study aims to answer is related to the rhetorical structure the writers go through in order to achieve the communicative purpose of acknowledgements. To reach this aim, the

acknowledgements were analysed for their move structure and patterns of expression to determine how these student writers expressed thanks.

The results of the generic structure of Magister DIs acknowledgements reveal the following component moves that tend to occur in corpus texts. The order of appearance varies to an extent, so that the order in which the moves are presented here is not a canonical order; it is rather an order common to all the data analysed. Each individual move and related steps are described and exemplified by instances from the corpus. A simple, non-recursive structure can be seen in the following example:

**Move 1a**: I am most indebted to my supervisor Prof. X for her invaluable support and insightful comments.

**Move 1b:** I am also deeply grateful to Mrs Y and her pupils who volunteered to participate in this study.
I extend my thanks to the staff of El Mokrani Secondary School in M'Sila for providing me with the necessary administrative assistance to carry out this investigation.

**Move 1c**: I finally wish to thank all those who encouraged me at every step of my long journey.

| Components move of acknowledgements | Number of occurrences |
|---|---|
| **Thanking Move** <br><br> 1-a  Thanking for Academic Assistance <br><br> 1-b  Thanking for Resources <br><br> 1-c  Thanking for Moral Support | 12= 100% <br> 12 = 100 % <br><br> 11 = 91.66 % <br><br> 06 = 50 % |
| **Announcing Move** <br> a. Accepting Responsibility | 01 = 08.33 % |

**Table 7: The Generic Structure of the DIs acknowledgements**

### 1.2.1. Thanking Move

This move is collateral to the genre's main communicative purpose, as confirmed by its predominant presence (either entirely or in parts) throughout the corpus. This main

thanking move is realised by three component steps containing the debts embedded in the texts and allocating the intellectual credit and moral influences to deserving contributors. These component steps inform the readers about the people and the institutions to be thanked, and when and why to be acknowledged. The frequency with which each of these steps occurs is presented below.

**a. Thanking for Academic Assistance**

Thanking for academic assistance can be considered an obligatory constituent and the backbone of this part-genre since it is a step that has been found in all texts (100%). This step is meant to show that the writers are grateful for any kind of intellectual help they received from members in the academic community such as those who have acted as supervisors, teachers and/or members of the jury. Thus, it is reserved for individuals who have been influential in stimulating the reported research, and for those who have shaped the reported work through their ideas, insights, feedback, or critical analysis. A detailed account of this step as it occurred in our corpus is presented below.

Among the persons acknowledged for their academic assistance, supervisors are always mentioned first before the other academics. The following excerpts from the corpus illustrate the point:

It has been a great pleasure working under the supervision of Dr X to whom I owe a special debt. Many thanks go to him not only for his wise guidance and invaluable comments on the different drafts that have led to the completion of this work, but also for his patience and continued encouragements throughout my research.

I would like to convey my gratitude to my supervisor Prof X. I also wish to express my gratitude to the respectable members of the jury for accepting to examine my work, Special thanks are due to Mr (x) for the reassurance he gave us in the field of testing, Prof (Y) for all the knowledge…

In addition to supervisors, (36%) of the thanking for academic assistance step include thanking the writer's former teachers or the teachers of the department where the writer

completed his/her post-graduate studies without being directly helpful in shaping the

completed research. Here are some examples:

 I would also like to thank all my former teachers and lecturers, from the primary school to the university (Department of English, University of Algiers) for having aroused in me love for knowledge and interest in research.

 I would like to thank all my teachers in the Department of English especially Mrs (X), Mr (Y), Mrs (Z) etc.

The members of the jury within this step are also quite recurrently mentioned. This is, in

fact, the case of three acknowledgements which makes an overall rate of (25%).

I wish to express my gratitude to the respectable members of the jury for accepting to examine my work.

## b. Thanking for Resources

This step collates acknowledgements for support received from colleagues and

participants in the study. The corpus shows that the kind of help acknowledged in this

step includes collecting data, entry and analysis or use of institutional facilities, and

embraces access to clerical support such as typing. This step was found in (90%) of the

acknowledgements, it represents 36.7% of all steps.

 Special thanks are due to the administrative staff at the (x), the teachers…, and the students for their cooperation.

 I am also deeply grateful to Mrs (X) and her pupils who volunteered to participate in this study. I extend my sincere thanks to the staff of (Y) Secondary School in (Z) for providing me with the necessary administrative assistance to carry out this investigation.

 My thanks are also due to (X) in particular for his/her work on the typescript.

## c. Thanking for Moral Support

   This step includes thanks for encouragements, sympathy, patience and

understanding received from friends mainly and family members during the writing of

the DIs. The data showed that this strategy was evident in (50%) of the texts analysed. It

represents 20% of all the steps. The following portions from the acknowledgement texts illustrate the step.

I also thank all those who encouraged me at every step of my long journey.

Finally, thanks are due for my husband, son, relatives, and friends.

**d. The Announcing Move**

This is a marginal move with a very low frequency of occurrence. Only one author included partially the move by expressing his own responsibility (Accepting Responsibility step) as to possible shortcomings in the reported research. The step accounts for 03.3% of all the steps only. It is realised as follows:

All mistakes remaining are nonetheless my own responsibility.

Clearly the DI writers have gone through one central move, namely the thanking move which is in turn realised in three main steps. However, it is important to notice that though the cognitive structure described here seems to be linear, the steps of the thanking move do not always occur in this order. In fact, the analysis of the acknowledgements shows some cycling at the level of the steps of the thanking move. In the next section I focus on the ways these thanks were expressed.

**1.3. Patterns of Gratitude Expression**

There are 46 differently expressed acts of gratitude in our corpus used to realise steps 1a to step 1c. Referring to Hyland and Tse's (2004) classification of gratitude acts, thanking steps contain either an overt expression of gratitude, expressed through a nominalization, a performative, an adjective, or a passive, or they simply mention the name of the recipient without explicit thanks. The frequencies with which all these forms occurred in our corpus are shown in Table 7.

| Form | Occurrence |
|---|---|
| Performative verbs | 25 = 54.2 % |
| Nominalisations | 14 = 30.2 % |
| Adjective | 03 = 06.5 % |
| Passive | 04 = 09.1 % |
| Bare mention | 00 |

**Table 8: Patterns of gratitude expression**

As the table highlights, verbs and nouns were the main ways of expressing gratitude. Fifty four percent (54%) of the thanking acts are realised using a verb (Examples 1 and 2) while 30% are expressed through nominalisations (Example 3 and 4). The following segments from the corpus illustrate the point:

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor

I would simply like to express my gratefulness to all my professors and students without whom this work would not have been brought to light.

Special thanks to Mr (X)…

Finally, thanks are due to my husband, son, relatives, and friends.

Overall, there was a strong preference for the performatives *thank* and *acknowledge* forms and for the nouns *thanks* and *gratitude*. Adjectivals and passives are found in only 15% of the gratitude acts. Adjectival patterns occurred in three acts of gratitude (example 1) while passives were found in four (example 2).

I am grateful to the teachers and the pupils who participated in this research for their cooperation...

My sincere thanks are due to…

So far, our analysis accounted for the generic structure characterising acknowledgements and the most recurring patterns that the students used to express

them. The Discussion and the interpretation of these results our concern in the next section.

## 2. Discussion and Interpretation of the Results

One of the issues this research addresses is to identify and describe the component moves and their realisation in DIs acknowledgements produced by Algerian post-graduates writing in English. The discussion of the textual analysis results reported in this section is supplemented by some of the views recorded from interviewees who are the authors of the DIs themselves. However, before discussing the rhetorical structure the authors went through in order to achieve the communicative purpose of acknowledgements, we will discuss their views about the importance of acknowledgements in DI writing.

As already referred to, all analysed DIs contained an acknowledgement which makes an overall rate of 100%. In their study of Masters DIs acknowledgements, Hyland and Tse (2004) interpreted the high frequency (80%) with which acknowledgements occurred in their corpus as being synonymous of importance grant to this part-genre by the writers. In fact, their quantitative results were confirmed by the views they recorded from the informants, who, in their majority, regard this genre as ' *An important courtesy, and as a means of publicly recognising the role of mentors and the sacrifices of loved ones in what is often an exacting and lengthy task'* (Hyland and Tse, 2004: 262).

As far as our study is concerned, the predominant presence of acknowledgements in the DIs (100%) may not be interpreted to mean that the authors perceive them as being important. Indeed, four of the six informants, though they have all included an

acknowledgement section in their DIs, see in acknowledgements an academic routine with little or even no importance. These are some reflections about the fact:

 I do not see any importance in writing acknowledgements; it is just an academic    routine, a modality.

 I have written one because it is a must, for the completeness of the DI. If I had the choice I would not include one.

 It depends on whether the researcher has actually received a help or not. I did the DI all by myself, so I do not need to write an acknowledgement. I have written one because all the DIs include one.

On the other hand, the other interviewees see in writing acknowledgements an important academic practice. Some of their views are presented here:

 Acknowledgement is an important section in the DI because I think that we owe many debts to people whatever be the kind of help we have received from them.

 I think that a researcher must be honest by acknowledging debts.

Clearly, acknowledgements in our study are differently perceived by their writers. While two authors consider them as an important part of the DI, the others perceive them as an academic routine, an established academic practice with little value or importance. In addition to the authors' perceptions about the place they grant to acknowledgements in DI writing, these views reveal good insights into the communicative function that acknowledgements tend to serve.

## 2.1. The Communicative Function of Acknowledgements

Despite the authors' differing views about the importance of acknowledgements, all the informants have related both the insignificance and the significance of acknowledgements to either the absence of help or to the need to acknowledge the help received in the process of constructing the DI. This means that the function of

acknowledgements, as viewed by their authors, is constrained to expressing thanks to those who helped to complete the research. Hyland and Tse (2004) argue that this part-genre is more than a mere listing of thanks. Most importantly, acknowledgements tend to:

> Offer students a unique rhetorical space to both convey their genuine gratitude for assistance and to promote a capable academic and social identity. (Hyland and Tse, 2004: 259).

A capable academic identity is conveyed by balancing debts and responsibility and specifying the academic experiences acquired as a result of writing the DI. These, in fact, function as a meta-message to tell the academics, the jury mainly, that the writer has subscribed to this academic community and become a potential member since s/he has gained the rules of the game.

The view that acknowledgements are mainly a display of gratitude for assistance, as held by some authors, is also shared by the supervisor I interviewed. She has explained what a post-graduate student is expected to include in her/his acknowledgement by saying that:

> We ask our students to write a short acknowledgement (half a page), to be academic and avoid to include emotions. We ask them to mention the supervisor first, the intellectual support, institutions and other scholars.

Clearly, acknowledgements, as viewed by their writers and as confirmed by the supervisor, function exclusively as a means of expressing thanks for assistance. This is, in turn, reflected in the generic structure revealed through the move analysis of the acknowledgements. In order to achieve their perceived communicative purpose, the authors went through a unique move namely the *thanking move*. Thus, the coming point to discus is the move structure of the analysed acknowledgements.

## 2.2. The Move Structure of Acknowledgements

As compared to previous literature on acknowledgements, the texts we analysed display a considerably different generic structure from that identified by Hyland (2004). In fact, while Hyland portrays acknowledgements as having three moves, a central *'Thanking'* move framed by two optional *'reflecting'* and *'announcing'* moves, in this study, instances of this part-genre are rather built around a unique *'thanking move'* as shown in the first table. The reflecting move is completely absent from the corpus and the announcing move only partially identified in one DI. This generic structure shows clearly that the authors regard this part-genre as a writing space that aims to express thanks targeting the public academic sphere and the social interpersonal relationships without referring back to their research experience or expressing their responsibility as to possible shortcomings in the research. Discrepancies with Hyland and Tse's model (2004) are also found at the level of the steps that constitute the thanking move.

While the *'reflecting move'*, where authors' reflections about the writing of their DIs as research experience, is completely missing in the acknowledgements' move structure, the second step of the announcing move, *'dedicating the DI'*, was identified in the DI text but not as part of the acknowledgements. In fact, while the writers of the 240 theses and DIs analysed by Hyland and Tse (2004) included dedications as the last step of the acknowledgements' announcing move, in the present study they occur as a separate text occupying its own labelled space adjacent to the acknowledgements.

The absence of the reflecting and the announcing moves from the analysed acknowledgements might be due to the fact that the authors were constrained by the writing conventions that have been established in the department because, in essence, the established writing conventions are part of the norms that a novice writer has to learn. In this regard, Thompson (2005) argues that:

> Norms derive from social interactions at a range of levels—the general culture (for example, the scientific community at large), the local culture (the university department […] and the interplay between different levels (Thompson, 2005:311).

The writing norms established in the Department as to what it is acceptable to say, in what order, and the rhetorical options it is possible to consider in writing an acknowledgement, are also confirmed in a document often handed to post-graduate students of the department to help them organise the super-structure of their DI. The document is written in French, and is entitled *Modalités techniques concernant la presentation du mémoire de Magister d'Anglais* (Technical modalities concerning the presentation of the Magister DI of English) .This document describes acknowledgements as a concise optional part of the DI serving an academic purpose. This is the extract from the guide:

> Page de remerciements (éventuelle) conçue de la manière la plus sobre possible et dans un but strictement académique.

The extract from the document, especially the expression *'strictly academic'*, explains the fact that dedications do not figure in acknowledgements. Dedications express the author's feeling that he has something of great value to offer, if only symbolical, for the 'addressee', as a reward for a unique effort. The addressee here is generally family members and not members of the academic community. Therefore, the authors include dedications as a separate text that they entitle '*Dedications*'.

Despite observed discrepancies between the move structure identified in the acknowledgements included in this study and that of the corpus analysed by Hyland and Tse (2004), in both corpora, steps offering thanks are the core of the part-genre with *thanking for academic assistance* accounting for 40% of all steps, the *thanking for resources* comprising 36.7% and the *thanking for moral support* representing 20% of

the steps. However, a closer examination of the content of the thanking steps in our corpus reveals some specific writing practices. We will try to discuss these steps in the order by which they appear in the thanking move.

As already mentioned, the thanking move in this study contains three main steps; the *'thanking for academic assistance'* step, the *'thanking for resources'* and the *'thanking for moral support'*. Hyland and Tse's proposed rhetorical structure is slightly different; the thanking move begins by *'presenting participants'* step which is a textual function used as a means to introduce the people to be thanked who are then specified in the subsequent steps of the schematic structure.

Similar to Hyland and Tse's findings, thanking all those who helped by their ideas, analyses and feedback in the completion of the research, that is *thanking for academic assistance*, is the first most repeated step of the three steps that constitute the thanking move in our corpus. It is identified in all the acknowledgements and represents 40% of all the steps. However, what is perhaps particular in our findings is that some authors have the tendency to thank their former teachers without being directly involved in the DI writing. Some of the informants have revealed the following views about the fact:

Acknowledgements constitute the only formal opportunity to thank my previous teachers. Though they did not participate in the research, they have been helpful along my academic journey.

I think that acknowledgements are primarily meant to thank those who helped to construct the DI. Therefore, I find it exaggerated to include all my teachers of the department or my former teachers.

Some authors include some particular teachers of the department in their acknowledgements though they did not help in the completion of the DI. This is because these teachers are important powerful figures in the Department.

As for the two other steps, the *thanking for resources* and the *thanking for moral support*, the results of the analysis go with those of Hyland and Tse (2004). The former

often occurs after the thanking for academic assistance step and accounts for 34% of the thanking steps. The latter, however, is rather underrepresented as it accounts only for 3% of all steps.

In addition to the move structure characterising the acknowledgements texts, the patterns most used to express thanks have also been investigated in this study. As shown in the second table, *verbs* and *nouns* are the first two mostly used patterns in expressing thanks as they represent 84% of all the thanking acts, while the *adjective* and the *passive* account only for 15% of the acts. Furthermore, there is a strong preference for the performatives *'thank'* and *'acknowledge'* and for the nouns *'thanks' and 'gratitude'*. Comparing with the thanking expressions that Hyland and Tse (2004) identified in their acknowledgement corpus, our results point to the fact that the authors used a restricted range of expressions and relied particularly on performatives (54.2%) followed by nominalisations (30.2%).

**Conclusion**

The discussion and interpretation of the textual results obtained from the move analysis of the acknowledgements texts which were supplemented by the talks with the authors and the supervisor have allowed us to draw a clear picture about the practice of this part-genre in the English Department of the University of Algiers. Most importantly, the acknowledgements analysed in this study have proved to be constrained both in terms of their generic structure and their linguistic realisations. The generic structure of the acknowledgements, which is mainly framed around the thanking move, along with the author's and the supervisor's views revealed that this part-genre is a writing space exclusively reserved to convey gratitude.

Thus, though the communicative function of these texts is not altered, the missing of the *'the reflecting and the announcing moves'* from the generic structure renders these texts as mere list of thanks failing to convey a student's competent scholarly identity. The authors, in fact, missed the opportunity offered by this part-genre to make a more positive first impression on assessors through balancing debts and responsibilities and making reflections about their research experience acquired as a result of writing the DI. As Hyland and Tse rightly put it, *'While allowing variation, it is essentially this structure* [that identified in their study] *which enables writers to both convey their gratitude and to display an appropriate scholarly competence'* (2004:273 my brackets). Furthermore, and at the linguistic level, the authors seem to lack control of the varied ways in which thanks can be expressed in English.

Furthermore, the investigation has provided, though partially, some insights as to why these authors used language as they did. We come to the conclusion that the discourse community in which the part-genre is usually used, supervisors mainly, played an important part in shaping this part-genre. Besides, the authors, as they have revealed, had not received any explicit teaching in acknowledgements to raise their attention to the appropriate wording and staging of this particular part-genre whose formation is governed by conventions which are different from those of the main text.

# General Conclusion

So far in this study, the schematic structures of twelve DI introductions, abstracts and acknowledgements written in English by Algerian post-graduates have been described and discussed. On the basis of my findings, the main concern of this closing part is to summarise the research outcomes and show how some of the findings generated in this study can be turned into useful insights for Algerian post-graduate students and supervisors. Furthermore, this concluding part suggests directions for further research.

## 1. Major Research Outcomes:

Overall, the findings point to varying degrees of discrepancy between what emerges in the corpus in terms of how the DI introductions, abstracts and acknowledgements are rhetorically organised, and what are represented in the models used to analyse each part-genre (Samraj, 2002, Hyland, 2004). Of the three part-genres, it is the introductions' analysis that generated the most unexpected results. In fact, while most studies on research introductions (Bunton, 2002, Dudley-Evans, 1986, Samraj, 2008, Swales, 1990) reported that the part-genre displays the same conventional generic structure (CARS), the twelve introductions texts we analysed do not show a common rhetorical structure though all CARS Moves were identified. In other words, the introductions are not yet conventionalised in the English Department of the University of Algiers.

At the move/step level and as compared to Samraj (2008) study, the introductions show the following characteristics. First, both Move 2 and Move 3 figure more frequently than Move 1, and are thus considered as moves of strong preference. Second, some steps are underrepresented (Move 1 Step 1, Move 2 Step A), some other

steps are highly preferred (Move 2 Step B, Move 3 Step 1) while other steps are newly identified (Move 1 Step 2, Move 2 Step D, Move 3 Steps 2,5,7 and 8). Taken together, these findings point to the fact that, the DI introductions aim at informing the reader about what is to be done in the body of the DI. Furthermore, it is concluded that these writing practices are shaped by many factors: The communicative function assigned to DI introductions, namely summarising the research reported in the DIs, the discourse community in which the part-genre is used, the discipline to which the DIs belong, i.e. Linguistics/Didactics and the emerging Algerian research context.

The abstracts are found to be more conventionalised than the introductions. Their schematic structure is quite identical to that proposed by Samraj (2002) with some variations linked to the scarcity of some moves such as the *Situating the Research* and the *Conclusion,* and the emergence of a new Move that I named the *Motivations*. Although, all five moves of Samraj (2002) model are identified, the abstracts' average length (17 sentences) and the inclusion of an unconventional move have altered the achievement of the abstracts' social function.

Interestingly, the discussion of the two part-genres shows that the authors appear to attribute the same communicative function to the two part-genres. Bhatia (1993) also noted the confusion made by student researchers of the two part-genres purposes. He stresses that abstracts and introductions are two different part-genres shaped by two different functions and therefore displaying two different schematic structures. He goes on to add '...*an introduction ends where the abstract begins*'.

Finally, the acknowledgements were found to be restricted both in terms of their schematic structure and the range of language patterns used to express thanks. Differently from Hyland and Tse (2004) whose acknowledgements are framed around

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three moves; *Reflecting Move*, *Announcing Move* and *Thanking Move*, the acknowledgements we analysed are built around one single *Thanking Move*.

## 2. Pedagogical Implications

As in any ESP genre analysis study, our research into the schematic structures of the DI Abstracts, introductions and acknowledgements written in English by Algerian students in the field of Linguistics and Didactics suggests some pedagogical implications. The pedagogical implications of this study relate mainly to the need of an explicit teaching the DI genre and more particularly the teaching of the three part-genres we investigated.

### 2.1. Possible Ways of Organising the DI Introduction

The absence of a shared rhetorical structure in the twelve introductions we analysed and the mismatch noticed between some of the authors' writing practices and the supervisor's views might put the students in an uncomfortable situation as to what are the expectations of the examiners and how to best structure one's introduction. Therefore, we find it necessary to raise the post-graduate students' awareness on what communicative function that DI introductions are supposed to bear and how to best realise it.

To fill this gap, we propose a move model which is essentially based on Samraj's CARS model (2008) supplemented by those additional steps identified in our Introductions (the model is found in appendix B). The building of this model is based on a number of important assumptions. First, though they do not always appear in the order by which they are sequenced in CARS, all three moves of CARS are validated in our corpus of Introductions. However, the adoption of Samraj (2008) move model does not mean that I am pleading for an Anglo-Norm by paying an exclusive attention to

Introductions' practices by English Native Speakers. On this point, Mauranen (2001) argues that the teaching of academic genres should not be constrained by '*any one restricted cultural norm such as the Anglo-American*' (Mauranen, 2001:54). Second, genres are intimately linked to the discourse community which gives raise to them. Therefore, any suggested model that would account for the generic structure of Algerian DI Introductions must necessarily reflect the writing conventions of the discourse community in which it is used, i.e. the department.

While the suggested model is not a standard or a fixed prototype, yet it can serve as a guide to post-graduates and supervisors alike because, by following a guideline, fewer redrafting is needed. This eventually saves lots of post-graduates precious time

## 2.2. Teaching the Abstract

Based on the findings of our analysis of abstracts, the consideration of the following pedagogical aspects are, I believe, necessary to better handle the task of writing an abstract. One, DI abstracts need to be valued by teachers of academic writing, supervisors and examiners so that post-graduate students will grant more importance to this part-genre. Two, the abstract's communicative function must made clear because as our study reveals, knowing what to include in an abstract without knowing what purpose it serves does not ensure the achievement of the abstract's purpose. Three, an abstract gives the reader a concise knowledge of the full paper it reports on, and therefore it should be as short as possible. The move model we suggest for abstracts reflects that emerged in our corpus with the omission of the Motivation move which, I believe, does not contribute to accomplish the communicative function set for abstracts (The model is described in Appendix B).

## 2.3. Teaching Acknowledgements

Acknowledgments provide a valuable space for writers to present and promote themselves as thankers, indebters, and responsible academics having both a professional and a social identity (Hyland, 2004). Thus, acknowledgements are deserving of pedagogical attention since they offer a good opportunity for authors to put themselves in a positive light and make a good first impression on assessors.

Teaching acknowledgements to post-graduate students would be beneficial at the English Department of the University of Algiers. In fact, these students confined their acknowledgements to mentioning those who helped in completing the DI without making metatextual reflections on their DI or asserting their responsibility of possible shortcomings in the research. Though the communicative purpose of the acknowledgements we analysed is not altered, we find it unfortunate that the students miss the opportunity to promote a competent scholarly identity.

Therefore, we propose to make the students aware of the writing options offered by this part-genre and the effects they can make on readers. Hyland's model is particularly recommended in teaching this part-genre (see appendix B) (For a more detailed account of genre-based teaching; see chapter one section 2.2.3).

## 3. Where to Go From Here

Our research has tried to describe the rhetorical organisation of different part-genres in the DI. However, while the study offers some insights into how DI introductions, abstracts and acknowledgements written by non-native Algerian speakers of English are rhetorically organised and how and why they differ from findings in similar studies, many questions remain unanswered. More research is needed to probe into other DI

part-genres and other aspects of the DI writing in general. Some areas for further research are proposed as follows.

As our study was made on a limited corpus, validation of the schematic structures identified here is desirable. It would be useful to analyse DIs belonging to other Algerian local cultures (Universities, Departments) and see whether the results posited here are generalisable. This would confirm whether or not rhetorical features are the result of cross-cultural variation.

Comparisons between DI part-genres written by Algerian post-graduates and belonging to different disciplines such as linguistics and literature are equally interesting. Such comparisons can unveil the extent to which disciplines can affect the rhetorical organisation of a given DI part-genre. Cross-disciplinary genre analysis studies are particularly useful for English departments where workshops on DI writing gather post-graduates from various disciplines.

Further research can also be directed at the use of linguistic features characterising academic discourse in different parts of the DI. Citation practices, hedging and metadiscourse for example are now fashionable in genre studies. This would generate a more general and complete view of DIs written by Algerian Post-graduate students in addition to their global rhetorical features.

Finally, since this study adopts principally the ESP approach to genre analysis which is text-based in focus, further studies can adopt context-based approaches to the analysis of DIs written by Algerian post-graduate students in English. This kind of research includes essentially the way post-graduate students negotiate the writing of their DIs (writing process).

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# Appendix A

## Personal e-mail Communications with Connor, Hyland, Paltridge and Swales

**Re: asking for clarification**

Hi,

Good to hear that you are proceeding well.
Have you looked at a book by Biber, Upton and me "Discourse on the Move/" It is a
new Benajmins book and has a chapter that explains in detail how move analysis is
done.
UC

On 12/1/08 6:02 AM, "Farida Amara" <amara.farida@yahoo.com> wrote:

Dear Connor
I am an Algerian post-graduate student, I prepare a master thesis on genre analysis of
Algerian master dissertations. I have already written to you about 'text-based
interviews' as a means to supplement text analysis, and I was very happy to receive
your e-mail, it's not always easy to get in touch with a notorious writer. Thanks again.

I have another question, still of methodological concern. It's about the identification of
moves and steps. I have some trouble with demarcating these units; I mean how to
consider rhetorical, semantic and linguistic criteria.

I would be very grateful to you if you could help me clarify this point and perhaps send
any document that treats this issue.
Regards
Miss Amara farida

Ulla M. Connor, Ph.D.
Professor of English
Zimmer Chair in Intercultural Communication
Director, Indiana Center for Intercultural Communication
Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis
317-278-2441
<u>www.iupui.edu/~icic/</u>

## RE: asking for clarification

Hi,

I would refer you to an old boo by Odell and Goswami, 1985, Writing in nonacademic settings for a chapter on text based interviews. Ken Hyland's articles show text based interviews as well. Also, a study of mine in Text in 2000 used informants in text analysis focusing on grant proposals. You may also look up a brand new book from Benjamins on Contrastive Rhetoric edited by me and others; several chapters use interview data to supplement text analysis.

 I don't think there are specific numbers required.

 Ulla

---

**From:** Farida Amara [mailto:amara.farida@yahoo.com]
**Sent:** Monday, May 26, 2008 4:54 AM
**To:** Connor, Ulla M.
**Subject:** asking for clarification

 Dear Ulla Connor

 My name is Amara farida,I am an Algerian post-graduate student of English (Didactics) at the University of Tizi-Ouzou ( Algeria ).I  write to seek help and guidance in conducting a masteral thesis.

 My study is concerned with second language writing, more particularly, genre analysis. Actually, I am interested in a genre analysis study of Abstracts, Introductions and Conclusions in masteral theses produced by Algerian students. The study is linguistically oriented applying the ESP approach to genre analysis.

However, I want to make my study more '*context-sensitive'* as you have mentioned in one of your valuable articles entitled: **'Intercultural rhetoric research: beyond texts'** by using text-based interviews. My problem is related to methodology, I keep asking myself and about the kind of questions that a text-based interview may include and the number of informants that is sufficient to validate the study.

 I would be very grateful to you if you could help me on this.


Best Regards

 Miss Amara farida

## Re: Asking for clarification

Hi, Farida. i trust you are making good progress...

your findings, while interesting, do not entirely surprise me. i will be attempting to send you a scanned version of an old paper a graduate student I wrote about introductions to swedish articles in the language sciences; there, we found quite wide use of anecdotes and personal stories at the beginning. in that case, we concluded that their purposewas to attract a readership in a very small community.

best regards

John Swales
Emeritus Professor of Linguistics
----- Original Message -----
**From:** Farida Amara
**To:** jmswales@umich.edu
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 03, 2009 10:49 AM
**Subject:** Asking for clarification

Hello Pr Swales

I am analyzing the moves and the steps characterizing Introductions in Algerian Applied Linguistics master theses.

What I recurrently find is an initial sub-section, if I can call it so, that students entitle **'The Rationale'** where they justify their research in terms of previous literature or even in terms of their personal experience. How can I qualify this sub-section?

And do you find it academic in an introduction to begin by an extensive relating of one's own experience as I found in my corpus (When I was a middle school student....later on as an EFL teacher...etc)?

Your clarifications would be very helpful for me.

Regards

Farida

**Re: Asking for clarification**
Sunday, January 4, 2009 5:07 PM
From:
"John Swales" <jmswales@umich.edu>
View contact details
To: amara.farida@yahoo.com

Thanks, for you inquiry. Yes, moves are determined by shifts in communicative topics and purposes. Steps are a bit more confusing (my fault). In Article introductions, Move 2 steps are altrenatives, whereas elsewhere they are "part-move" structural elements. I hope this helps.

----- Original Message ----- From: "Farida Amara" <amara.farida@yahoo.com>
To: <jmswales@umich.edu>
Sent: Saturday, January 03, 2009 10:06 AM
Subject: Asking for clarification

> Dear Swales,
>
> I am a post-graduate Algerian student, I am writing a master thesis:'A Genre Analysis Study of Applied Linguistics Algerian master theses' (written in English.
>
> I would like to adopt your own method in drawing the boundaries between moves and steps. If I have well understood, I am not sure; boundaries between moves are principally identified by changes in the communicative intents in two neighboring segments of a text genre. What about steps?
 Another question, still in the identification of moves and steps. How can I combine rhetorical, semantic (propositional) and linguistic attributes?
>
> I would be very grateful to you if you could help me on this.
>
> Regards
>
> Miss Amara Farida

Wednesday, January 7, 2009 8:22 PM

**From:**

"Ken Hyland" <K.Hyland@ioe.ac.uk>
<u>View contact details</u>

**To:**

amara.farida@yahoo.com

Dear Amara

Thanks for your email. Yes, a tricky question. I think we have
to be consistent here and that, like moves, steps have to be
identified in terms of their distinct (mini-) purpose, so seen
as separate functions contributing to a broader move function.
It may then be possible to fink linguistic cues which regularly
signal these.

I hope this helps. Good luck with you r research.

Best regards,
Ken

Professor Ken Hyland, Director
Centre for Academic and Professional Literacies
Institute of Education
University of London

_____

From: Farida Amara [mailto:<u>amara.farida@yahoo.com</u>]
Sent: Wed 01/07/2009 11:12
To: Ken Hyland
Subject: Asking for clarification

Dear Hyland,

I am an Algerian student, I am writing a master dissertations
entitled 'a genre analysis study of Algerian master
dissertations'. It is particularly concerned with
Acknowledgments, Abstracts, and Introductions. In describing the
rhetorical structure of acknowledgments, I am using your own
model.

I am writing to you to help me shed some light on a problem that
is delaying my research. It is about drawing the boundaries
between moves and steps. My question is what your own technique
is; I mean is it functional, semantic, or linguistic?

I would be very grateful to you if you could help me on this.

Regards

Miss Amara Frarida.

## Re: Asking for clarification

"Brian Paltridge" <b.paltridge@usyd.edu.au>
Add sender to Contacts

amara.farida@yahoo.com

1 File (600KB)

Dear Amara

I will attach the article I wrote on this. In this paper I argue that the key factors in this are content and convention. I think function is also a key factor, which is basically how the Swales model works. Boundaries between moves and steps are often indicted linguistically, with the use of discourse markers, such as first second, in conclusion etc. This is not something I discuss in my paper, but is a point Swales makes, quite rightly I think, in his 2004 book Research Genres.

All best
Brian Paltridge

On 10/01/09 12:34 AM, "Farida Amara" <amara.farida@yahoo.com> wrote:

Dear Paltridge

I am an Algerian student, I am writing a master dissertation entitled *'a genre analysis study of Algerian master dissertations'*. It is particularly concerned with Acknowledgments, Abstracts and Introductions.

I am writing to you to help me shed some light on a problem that is delaying my research.It is about drawing the boundaries between moves and steps, an issue that yourself have raised. I did not read a particular article of yours about that (due to the luck of documents), but through my readings, I noticed that your name is often cited when this issue is discussed.

My question is what is your own technique; I mean is it functional, semantic, or linguistic?

I would be very grateful to you if you could help me on this.

 Best Regards

Miss Amara Farida

 Brian Paltridge
Director of Doctoral Studies
Professor of TESOL
Faculty of Education and Social Work
University of Sydney, NSW 2006
Australia
Tel 61 2 9351 3160
Email: b.paltridge@usyd.edu.au

http://www-personal.edfac.usyd.edu.au/staff/paltridb/brian.htm

**RE: Asking for clarification**

Sunday, February 15, 2009 12:14 PM
**From:**

"Ken Hyland" <K.Hyland@ioe.ac.uk>
View contact details

**To:**

amara.farida@yahoo.com

I think this should be clear from the analysis. The writer isn't just thanking people but showing he or she has friends and research networks and expertise.

Best, Ken

Professor Ken Hyland, Director
Centre for Academic and Professional Literacies
Institute of Education
University of London

_____

From: Farida Amara [mailto:amara.farida@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sat 02/14/2009 17:59
To: Ken Hyland
Subject: RE: Asking for clarification


Dear Hyland

I have already written to you about textual boundaries in genre analysis and I was very happy to receive your answer.

Since I am using the move structure that you have used in one of the valuable articles you have written with the collaboration of Tse on acknowledgments, I need to understand very well the communicative purpose of this genre.

My question is: what did you mean by 'promoting a capable academic and social identity'?


I would be grateful to you if you answer my question

Thanks a lot.

# Appendix B


## The Talks with the Authors and the Interview with the Supervisor

**1- Talk around Texts Guide**

1- Introduction to my topic, aims, nature etc. Confidentiality.
2- General background of informants' study
    a- Could you briefly introduce your study: topic, aims, methodology, findings etc?
    b- How did you find the process of writing a DI, was it difficult or easy? Why?
3- Let us come back to your DI, what is its global organisation; I mean the different chapters that that you have included?


**a- Introductions**

- When writing your DI, what did you want to communicate or simply what is the function of introductions? What is it for?
- How did you find the writing of the introduction? And why?
- How did you organise content or information in the introduction, I mean what did you put first, second etc?
- What have impacted the organisation of your introduction?
- Did you rely on some internet DIs written in English?


**b- Abstracts:**

- How can you define an abstract?
- Why are you required to write an abstract, what's for?
- What is to be included in an abstract?
- How did you organise your own abstract and why?
- What is the tense you generally used in this part?
- Did you find the writing of your abstract problematic?


**c- Acknowledgements**

- What about acknowledgement? Do you think that this part is important to include in a DI? Why
- What did you include in your acknowledgement? Why
- Did you feel obliged to cite your supervisor or any other particular person first?

### d-  About the Teaching of the Three Part-Genres

- What is the kind of instruction, if any, that you have received as to how a DI should be written?
- If not, how did you manage to write your DI?
- What are your suggestions about the best way to help post-graduate student write their DIs?

### 2- Questions used in the interview with the supervisor

1. How many theses have you supervised (directed and otherwise) in the last five years?

2. What is a good thesis in your discipline? What makes a poor thesis in your discipline?

3. Average length of thesis?

4. Number of chapters?

5. Organization of thesis?

4. How are abstracts organised?

8. How are introductions structured? What are the main things included?

10. What about the literature review? Do you have a separate chapter for this?

11. How could you define the acknowledgements section?

# Appendix C

Suggested Rhetorical Models for the Teaching of Introductions, Abstracts and Acknowledgements

**A- Suggested model for teaching the rhetorical structure of introductions:**

**Establishing a Territory**

1-    Claim centrality
   a-    Importance in the real world
   b-    Importance in research.
2-    Review literature or present topic generalisations

**Establishing a Niche**

a-    Indicate a gap/question in research
b-    Indicate problem in the real world
c -    Positive justification
d-    Continue Tradition*

**Occupying the Niche**

1-    State goals
2-    Defining terms*
3-    Background
4-    Present hypotheses
5-    Research Questions*
6-    Present results
7-    Methods*
8-    Limitations of the study*
9-    Preview organisation of thesis

**B- Suggested model of abstracts' schematic structure:**

Move 1: Situating the research
Move 2: Purpose
Move 3: Methods
Move 4: Results
Move 5: Conclusion

## C- Suggested model of abstracts' schematic structure:

**I. Reflecting Move**

**II. Thanking Move**

1. Presenting participants
2. Thanking for academic assistance
3. Thanking for providing resources
4. Thanking for moral support

**III. Announcing Move**
1. Accepting responsibility for possible shortcoming in the data
2. Dedicating the thesis

# Appendix D

## Samples of DI acknowledgements, abstracts and introductions

**Acknowledgements (DI 9, see chapter two, section 1)**

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Professor X, not only for her valuable suggestions and her patience with me all along this research, but also for helping me to acquire the necessary methodological background needed for my research.

I wish particularly to thank Mrs Y, at the INRE (National Institute for Research in Education) for her kindness, encouragement and assistance with the literature review in the competency-based approach and research methodology. My thanks also go to Mrs Z, co-author of Spotlight on English 1, for her help and insightful comments.

I am grateful to all the teachers and the pupils who participated in this research for their cooperation and without whom this study would not have been possible.

Special thanks to Mr Z, American Senior English Language Follow, who first triggered my attention to task-based learning, and whose training in Ben Aknoun (at the teacher training college-Algiers) was of great benefit to me both as secondary school teacher and as a post-graduate student.

To Insaf and Rosa, my colleagues and close friends, all my grateful thanks for their support.

To Aicha, my colleague, for her technical assistance, and to all the administrative staff of Mohamed Melouki Secondary School in L'Arbaa (Blida) for their support and understanding.

**Sample Abstract (DI 12, see chapter 2, section 1, table 1)**

The present research aims at investigating EFL learners' reading styles and strategies. More precisely we compare 'successful' and 'less' successful' readers in terms of the use of some particular styles (receptive and reflective) and strategies (pre-, in- and post-reading strategies) of reading. Twenty English students enrolled in the English Department of the University of Algiers participated in this study at the end of their first year. We could classify the subjects into degrees of successfulness: successful, average and less successful readers according to their scores on two academic tests in Reading.

Our particular interest in comparing EFL learners in their use of certain strategies was triggered by the divergent views about the differences between the 'successful' and 'less successful' readers. One view considers that 'good' readers use certain 'successful' strategies (mainly the top-down ones) that the 'less successful' readers are not even aware of (Hosenfeld, 1977); 'less successful' readers are seen to rely more on language decoding (a bottom-up strategy). Another view does not consider that strategy awareness distinguishes between these so-called 'successful' and 'less successful' readers because what makes the difference between the two is the effective or ineffective way in using the reading strategies (Carrell, 1998).

On the basis of these views, we developed an experiment which consisted in giving the subjects three short texts to read and then answer comprehension questions on each of them. Four techniques were used for the investigation: Text Marking, Questionnaire, Observation and Oral Interview. The results showed that no significant statistical difference existed among the subjects in terms of reading styles and strategies. In fact, most subjects seemed to adopt an interactive approach for reading the texts, though they probably were more reflective and used more strategies when they encountered difficulties in the text and more receptive using less strategies when reading a text they found easy. However, more and less successful readers could be distinguished in their way of using some strategies in addition to their background knowledge in vocabulary.

These findings help us conclude that there can be no 'good' or 'bad' strategy but only an effective or ineffective use of it. On the basis of this, strategy training should be more concerned with the 'how' and 'where' to use a strategy. In addition, learners should work at increasing their vocabulary to facilitate reading.

## Sample Introduction (DI 10, see chapter 2, section 1, table 1)

The role of teacher error correction in target language learning has long been controversial in second language acquisition research and so have answers to questions about how to treat learners' errors in writing and which language aspect (form or content) should be focused in teacher written feedback. Indeed, the debate over the value of error correction is rooted in the traditional debate over the utility of formal language instruction. Researchers such as krashen ((1981, 1982, 2004) and Truscott (1999), who question formal instruction on the ground that it is an unnecessary interference in the natural acquisition process, hold that correction is not of a great significance to learners' development as long as language acquisition follows its natural path. Moreover, Truscott (ibid) denies any learning gains out of teacher's correction.

However, proponents of benefits of formal instruction, who believe that learners should be aware of the target language system, argue that teacher's correction could help in raising learners' awareness of grammar and accuracy in accelerating language leaning (Ling, 1983), Sharewood Smith (1988), White (1991) and Nunan (1998). Evidence of this claim comes from studies carried out by Lightbown and Spada (1990), Lightbown (1991), and Carroll and Swain (1993).

One important area for research in L2 writing in whether correcting learners' grammar errors has any significant effect on their writing. Indeed, the controversy over the most effective corrective strategy (Grammar feedback vs. content feedback) is related to the teacher's focus on learner's final product (composition) or focus on the writing process (Silva, 1988). The articles written by Truscott (1996, 1999) defending the case against grammar correction in second language writing classes and the counter arguments given by Ferris (19999, 2004) in response are a good example of the ongoing debate over the issue.

Several research studies that examine the effect of teacher corrective feedback on second/foreign language learner's writing provide evidence that

content focused corrections more conductive to developing learners' writing skill that form focused feedback (Kepner, 1991, Ashwell, 2001). Researcher as Truscott (1996, 1999) and Gray (2004) recommended that feedback on grammar errors should be abandoned because it may be harmful for learners' writing skill development. In addition, Loewen (19998) research project showed no significant effect for grammar correction.

Truscott (1996) who reviewed a number of studies on the effect of grammar correction on student' writing provided some practical and theoretical bases for his arguments on grammar correction ineffectiveness. These arguments were challenged by Ferris (1999) who commented on Truscott strong opposition of form feedback as being 'premature' and 'oversimplified'. Truscott claims, indeed, do not stem from field work since he conducted no experiment in this respect. On the contrary, the studies carried out by Rutherford (1987), Ferris (1997) and Hyland (2003) concluded that focusing on learners' form errors helped in improving their accuracy in writing and raising their awareness of the target language grammar system.

The fact that research on the effect of grammar correction on learners writing development is insufficient to draw a clear relationship between the type of feedback the teacher provides and learners' progress in the target language gave us an impulse to contribute to the growing body of research in this matter. Our interest in investigating this topic, indeed, primarily sprung from the importance of writing for students who are struggling to learn the target language and the writing skill at the same time. In addition, the crucial value of providing feedback I the classroom as a rich source of input for both teachers and learners my well justify why investigating this topic could be interesting. Through feedback, the teacher can diagnose learners' difficulties and strengths and evaluate their performance level and progress. As for learners, feedback information, as Rinvolucri (1994:287) demonstrates, offers a frame that enables them to revise their output and to formulate and test out new hypotheses on the target language.

Second, we think it is worth to study the form-focused feedback and teacher correction in oral discourse as Allright and Bailley (1991) and Chaudron (198) acknowledge. Indeed, researchers are not interested in investigating teacher form-focused feedback because, as Leki (1991) explains, research is moving away to feedback on content. My observation, however, as an EFL teacher, informs us that this type of feedback is widely offered by teachers and preferred by students. It is motivating then to check if any learning gains are possible from the form-focused correction.

From the studies undertaken on the effect of teacher correction on learner writing performance, we have noticed the absence of some conditions that might facilitate learner's positive interaction with form feedback, and hence result in error correction effectiveness. These conditions are related to feedback focus on correcting specific grammar structures to draw learners' attention language forms, focus on a specific genre of writing that requires the persistent use of a given form such as narration which necessitates the use of the simple past, and allowing enough time to the learner to produce in the target language and to revise his output. Thus, we are motivated by the wish to examine the effect of form focused correction on English foreign language accuracy development of a specific grammatical item (the simple past tense) in narrative writing under some amenable affective, cognitive and contextual conditions for learners to interact positively with teacher feedback.

Therefore, this study is set on the ground that if grammar correction is offered in conditions that help the learner to b attentive to the teacher's form feedback; this is likely to improve learners' writing accuracy. This study does not focus on teacher form feedback as such but rather on its effect on EFL learners' accuracy in writing and whether they use it or not. For this basic concern, we seek to answer the following research questions: 'What is the effect of form-focused feedback (as opposed to unfocused feedback) on English foreign language learners' accuracy in using the simple past in writing?' from which we derive three research sub-questions:

- To what extent do learners make use of teacher form-focused feedback when revising their first drafts?
- Does teacher form-focused feedback result in any improvement in learners' accurate use of the simple past tense in composition writing?
- What are the relative delayed effects of teachers' form-focused feedback on learners' accurate use of the simple past tense in composition writing and in grammar tasks?

To investigate these questions, we adopted an empirical research approach that involves a comprehensive strategy for an experimental study design and depends on collecting subjects' first and second term essays, administering pre and post-questionnaires , and designing ore and post grammar tests for data triangulation. The research experiment which lasted about two months was carried out in an Algerian secondary school at M'sila (Algeria) with second year literary stream (2 e AS Litt.). They were low-intermediate English foreign language learners. We managed to have two matching groups with five subjects each.

The experimental group obtained form-focused feedback on three narrative essays over four weeks, while the control group subjects received unfocused correction on the three narratives over four weeks. Because there is no reason to think that successful revision will lead to learners' writing improvement (Truscott, 1996), we compared between the effects of the two types of feedback on learners' accuracy in their revisions and subsequent essays. Specifically, we checked the immediate and short-term effects on focusing on the simple past tense. We also intended to examine the difference this type of feedback may make in learners' accuracy level in further writings and in grammar tasks.

The whole work I constituted of two parts. The first part is the theoretical one. It includes the critical review of the literature (chapter one) in which we expose the main issues raised about learners' errors and the conceptual and

theoretical complexities that error correction in second/foreign language research raises. And we discuss the main research findings about the effect of teacher's form-focused corrective feedback on learners' writing accuracy and development.

The second part is empirical one which concerns the field work which was carried out with the experimental and control subjects and can be found in chapters two, three and four. Chapter two explains the rationale of the methodological design adopted in this study and describes the research instruments, the study design, and the data analysis procedures. Whereas chapter three is devoted to the analysis of the data obtainment from subjects' compositions, the responses to the pre and post questionnaires, students performances in the first and second term essays and their scores in the pre and post tests. In chapter four we interpret the results, discuss and study findings, and compare them to other research findings. It is worth to note that in the presentation and the analysis of the data and the discussion of the results we follow the chronological order of the experiment. This procedure enables us to notice any possible development in students' accuracy in writing and the different variables that contribute to make this change in students' accuracy level.

The study ends up with a conclusion that summarizes the experiments' findings, suggests some pedagogical implications for second language teaching and highlights the study contributions and limitations before making some further research suggestions.

# Résumé

La recherche sur le discours générique dans les écrits académiques reçoit de plus en plus d'attention parmi les analystes du discours et plus particulièrement les analystes du genre. Cependant, la recherche autour des écrits universitaires reste toujours naissante (Bhatia, 2002). Cette étude tente d'analyser le genre des mémoires de Magister écris en Anglais par des étudiants Algériens dans le domaine de la Linguistique Appliquée. Cette analyse se veut investigatrice des structures schématiques de trois sous-genres de mémoire à savoir l'introduction, le résumé et les remerciements. Pour ce faire, nous nous appuyons sur trois modèles de base, le model proposé par Samraj (2008) dans son étude des introductions des mémoires de Master, le modèle de Samraj (2002) pour les résumés ainsi que le modèle de Hyland et Tse (2004) pour les remerciements. Il a été révélé que les introductions ne partagent pas une structure rhétorique commune et que seulement la moitié des textes analysés correspondent au modèle de Samraj (2008). De plus, le deuxième et le troisième mouvement rhétorique (Moe 2 et Move 3) sont plus fréquemment identifiés comparés au deuxième (Move 2) et de nouvelles étapes (steps) ont été révélées, et ce dans le premier et le troisième mouvement (Move 3). Notre corpus des résumés a montré une structure rhétorique comparable a celle proposée par Samraj (2002) bien qu'un mouvement rhétorique supplémentaire dénommé *'motivation'* a été identifié. Quant à la structure générique des remerciements, elle est relativement différente de celle appuyée par Hyland et Tse (2004) puisque pratiquement tous les textes ont été structurés autour d'un seul mouvement rhétorique au lieu de trois. Les pratiques rhétoriques caractérisant les trois sous-genres sont éventuellement le résultat de forces régulatrices telles que la communauté de discours dans laquelle le genre apparaît, la discipline, ainsi que l'absence d'un enseignement efficace dans la rédaction des mémoires. Par conséquent, les post-graduants du département d'Anglais de l'université d'Alger ont besoin d'un enseignement explicite du genre de mémoire pour susciter leur conscience des caractéristiques du genre et de les aider à faire des choix discursifs éclairés.

**Mots-clés :** genre, analyse du genre, mouvement rhétorique (move), étape, mémoire, introduction, résumé, remerciements.