Preface Sections in English and Arabic Linguistics Books: A Rhetorico-Cultural Analysis

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Abstract

The present paper is a genre analysis of linguistics books prefaces in English and Arabic. Following Swales' (1990) genre framework, this study is a small scale-based generic analysis of 80 preface texts, equally divided into 40 texts from English and Arabic. The corpus analysis revealed that to perform its communicative function, the genre of the preface sections has nine component moves with some variation between the two languages. As to move type and frequency, the rhetorical structure of preface genre varies to some extent in the two different languages under investigation. In addition, the socio-cultural practices and assumptions of the book writers of the two languages are embedded in the language of preface genre. Due to the limitation of the present study, further research is required to examine this genre in depth.

Keywords: Preface sections, Genre analysis, Socio-cultural patterns, Rhetorical structure, Move

1. Introduction

The 1990s of the last century has witnessed an increasing attention to the study of the structure of different types of academic genre. This interest is highly motivated by the pioneering works of Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993). Of these different academic genres investigated recently are, but not exclusive to, abstracts (Martin, 2003), introductions (Rubio, 2011), acknowledgments (Hyland, 2004), book reviews (Shaw, 2004), journal editorials (Giannoni, 2008), and book blurbs (Basturkmen, 2009).

Genre analysis is "the study of situated linguistic behaviour in institutionalized academic or professional settings whether in terms of typifications of rhetorical action or consistency of communicative purposes. Genres are essentially defined in terms of the use of language in conventionalized communicative settings. They are meant to serve the goals of specific discourse communities, and in so doing, they tend to establish relatively stable structural forms" (Bhatia, 199, p. 181).According to Bhatia (1993), the defining factor of genre is the communicative purpose it fulfills. Communicative purpose, a key element in genre theory, is reflected in the rhetorical structure or organization of the genre. For Swales (1990), a genre is a class of communicative events, the members of which share some sets of communicative purposes. It is a social action, goal-oriented and cultural activity consisting of a sequence of moves. Each move has a minor function in the global communicative goal embedded in the genre. These moves are merely the realization of a particular social interaction (p.58).

Introductions in written works are of paramount significance since they serve as a gatekeeper for a work (Bhatia, 1993). Under the macro-genre of work introductions, preface sections are identified as one single micro-genre along with a colony of related genres including *forewords, introductions, acknowledgements, book blurbs* and *introductory chapters*. These related micro-genres serve a common communicative purpose of introducing a work. That is, they all have a dominating function which is that of introducing a written or spoken academic event. All these introductory sections are typically positioned outside the main content of the book, almost always at the beginning of a book. Bhatia (1997) defines a preface as "a section outlining the general purpose and scope of the book, and often indicating steps leading to the preparation of the book. Its communicative purpose is informative as well as promotional" (p.184). Despite its significance, the genre of preface sections has received little investigative attention, and very little research is available until recently. In this regard, Mohsenzadeh (2013) remarks that "the existing literature suffers from a gap in genre studies which is related to the fact that introductory genres such as book prefaces have been left untouched" (p.318). As a major type of academic introductions, it is the preface sections of linguistics books written in English and Arabic that have been selected as the main concern of the present paper. Motivated by the necessity to understand specialized

discourse, the present study is concerned with developing a framework to describe the move structure of the preface section in linguistics books.

Working within the theoretical frameworks of Swales (1990), the present paper aims at investigating the genre of prefaces in English and Arabic linguistics books. It is intended to contribute to the growing interest of research in the domain of genre analysis through the examination of a genre which has not received a deserving research attention. Its contribution can be derived from the fact that it finds out how members of a particular discourse community (i.e., linguists) achieve their communicative purposes when writing their preface sections.

2. Theoretical Framework

In the front matter pages of most books, there are usually a few introductory pages placed before the main book body which are not part of the book contents. With not necessarily a fixed sequence of presentation, these front pages can include the following sections: *foreword, preface, acknowledgements,* and *introduction*. Though all these various sections constitute relatively different genres, they are categorized under the prevalent genre of introductions as all of them share the same communicative function of introducing a book for readers (Bhatia, 1997).

A preface is an introduction to academic and non-academic works written by the works' authors. Originally, *"preface"* is a Latin word *"praefatio"* meaning *"'words spoken beforehand"*. It strongly implies an introduction written before the main body of the book (Online Etymology Dictionary). As far as the state of art is concerned, very few empirical studies are intended to investigate the rhetorical structure of the preface genre (Abdollahzadeh & Salarvand, 2013; Azar, 2012; Kuhi, 2007; Mohsenzadeh, 2013).

Abdollahzadeh and Salarvand (2013) investigate the preface sections in three disciplines of management, metallurgy, and mathematics to identify their generic structure, linguistic features and potential disciplinary differences. Identifying a similar generic structure for book prefaces in these three disciplines, the researchers suggest that book prefaces of these disciplines are very similar in terms of their communicative purpose, generic structure, and readers' expectation. Furthermore, there is no significant difference in the use of the rhetorical moves among the book prefaces in the three disciplines on the whole, suggesting that writers in the three disciplines generally use the same moves with rather similar frequencies. And, book prefaces fulfill a promotional purpose besides their common informative purpose.

Focusing on how sociocultural factors affecting genre writing, Mohsenzadeh (2013) examines literature book prefaces in English and Persian. The corpus of this study is 40 literature book prefaces, twenty of which are in English and twenty others in Persian. The general findings indicate a relatively different distribution of rhetorical move structure between the two different languages. She finds that Persian prefaces use quotations from famous people and Arabic expressions reflecting the influence of Islamic religion and culture on these authors. They also use poems to start and finish their speech. The findings of this study reinforce the notion that move structure of a genre may vary to some extent in different languages and cultures. In this connection, Halliday and Hasan (1989) view culture as a determinant factor of genre as a purposeful social practice, which in turn influences our writing habits.

Many research questions, concerning book prefaces and their generic structure, linguistic conventions, cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural differences and similarities, are still unanswered empirically. The need for extra examination of this text typology, and the ease of accessibility to book prefaces have motivated the present paper to examine some of the aforementioned questions. It is mainly intended to investigate the rhetorical structure of preface sections of linguistics books published in English and Arabic, and to explore the socio-cultural differences, if any, between the two languages as far as the genre of preface sections is concerned. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, the present study is the first exploratory study of its type that solely addresses itself to the investigation of the rhetorical structure of preface sections in two different languages and cultures, namely, English and Arabic. As such, it is hoped that the study results will fill a gap in applied linguistics literature.

On the basis of research aims stated above, the following three main questions are formulated:

1. What is the rhetorical structure of linguistics book prefaces in English and Arabic?

2. Is the rhetorical structure of linguistics book prefaces in English and Arabic similar or different?

3. What are the socio-cultural practices and assumptions embedded in linguistics book prefaces of English and Arabic?

3. Methodology

3.1 Corpus

After a careful scrutinization, the researchers selected only those linguistics books of English and Arabic that contain preface sections. Besides, preface sections written by other than the book author(s) were not considered. As a result, the texts examined for this study were selected from preface sections of 80 books published between 1990-2010, representing one specific field, namely, linguistics. Precisely speaking, these 80 books were equally divided into 40 linguistics book prefaces published in English, and 40 ones in Arabic. The books examined are personal belongings of the researchers' libraries. They cover various sub-disciplines within linguistics domain including morphology, syntax, semantics, discourse, pragmatics, etc. of both languages. The decision of selecting preface sections from a single

discipline is supported by Kuhi's (2008, p.67) argument that is "to avoid any overgeneralizations of the results due to possible discipline-specific characteristics".

3.2 Procedures

To achieve the objective of the present study, a qualitative procedure of analysis was used in coding the present corpus. That is, a content analysis of preface sections was followed to identify the different component moves. This involves scanning the texts to identify text units expressing particular functions. Assigning a function to each text unit is guided by the proposition that each individual unit communicates a particular rhetorical function which is different from that of the following contiguous text unit.

Swales' (1990) schematic move model is adopted for corpus analysis. This model has been found equally useful as an analytical framework within which the rhetorical structure of the genre of preface sections can be analyzed. In this regard, Kong (1998) states that "working within the framework of genre move analysis is more powerful in interpreting the rhetorical structures of text typology" (p.104). Therefore, the first stage in the present study is exploring the move structure of preface sections from a genre analysis perspective in order to determine their global communicative purpose. Next, the second stage focuses on the most salient linguistic and discursive features of these texts with an aim of unveiling the socio-cultural practices of English and Arabic encoded in the language of this genre. To deal with the present corpus, Swales' (1990) rhetorical model has relatively undergone some modifications and adjustments as Arabic corpus has not been tackled before. That is, some new moves are added whereas others are altered.

The term *"move"*, as a basic unit of analysis, can be defined as a discourse or rhetorical unit that performs a coherent communicative function in a written or spoken discourse. It can be realized by one sentence or more, or by a unit of analysis below the level of sentence, such as a clause, a phrase, or a word but a move normally contains at least one proposition (Swales, 2004, p. 229).

According to Dudley-Evans (1994), "decisions about the classification of the moves are made on the basis of linguistic evidence, comprehension of the text and understanding of the expectations that both the general academic community and the particular discourse community have of the text" (p. 226). In the present paper, the rhetorical moves are identified and coded on the basis of their propositional content and linguistic or textual clues. In a rhetorical-based research, it is often argued that the identification of moves on the basis of a semantic-functional criterion is not fully approved as it is largely subjective. The subjectivity of moves analysis often leads to a questioning of the reliability of its findings. In this connection, Shohamy, Claire and Roberta (1992) believe that if there is no inter-coder reliability, there can be no validity. Thus, a university professor of English linguistics was asked for coding 40% of the present corpus. As a result, the inter-coding reliability of moves identification is 83%. Although there are some differences in move identification, the 83% agreement between the researchers and the coder suggests a relatively high inter-coding reliability of the study corpus.

4. Results and Discussion

Based on Swales' (1990) theoretical framework, a move structure model has been constructed to account for the identification of component rhetorical moves of the research corpus. Quantitatively, statistical tools such as raw frequencies and percentages are used in calculating the component moves of prefaces sections of the study corpus. The following sub-sections detail how these preface texts are rhetorically realized.

4.1 Rhetorical Analysis

The present section is intended to answer question one and two stated above regarding the rhetorical structure of preface sections in English and Arabic linguistics books.

An overall examination of the entire research corpus shows that the preface sections of both languages comprise nine recurring component moves. The analysis of the present corpus indicates that these moves appear regularly in the texts, and the order of their appearance varies to a certain extent, so that the order in which the moves are presented here is the most common. Of those nine moves identified, recurrent moves are either optional or obligatory. Obligatory moves are those prevalent ones constituting100% of preface sections of the present corpus. These skeletal moves can be considered as the backbone for the main communicative purpose of this academic genre, without which no existence for this genre is possible, as confirmed by their entirely prevailing presence throughout the whole corpus.

Table 1 and Figure 1 display the distribution of the component moves of the entire corpus. As shown below, the overall statistical results of both languages indicate that there are three obligatory moves, viz, *heading, identifying the organization of the book,* and *signing off*, whereas the rest are optional ones.

Table 1. Overall distribution of recurrent moves in preface sections.

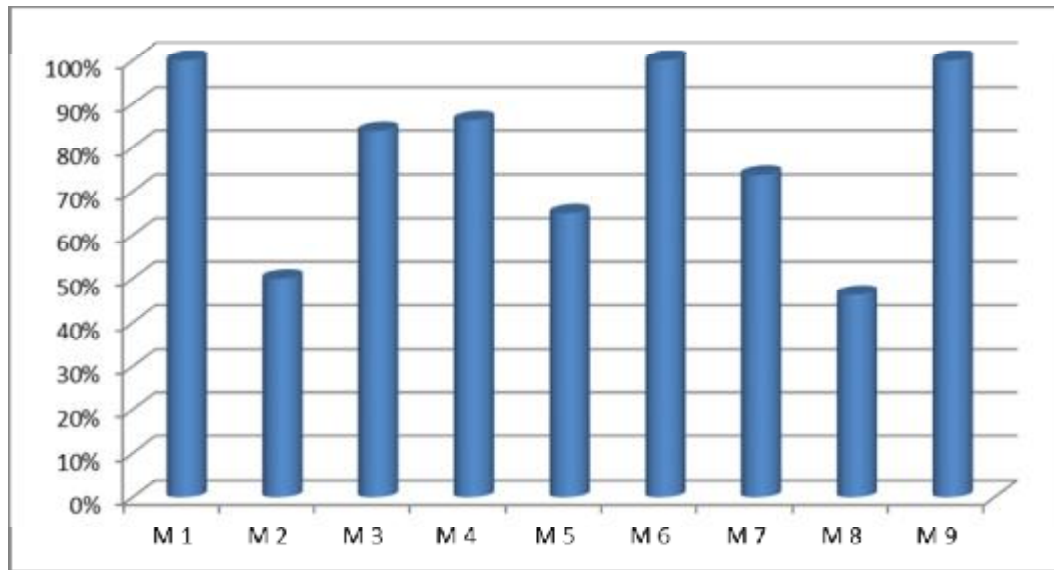| Move No.	Functional Moves	No & %
Move 1	Heading	80- (100%)
Move 2	Opening	40- (50%)
Move 3	Introducing the book	67- (83.75%)
Move 4	Identifying the purpose of book	69- (86.25%)
Move 5	Identifying the readership of book	52- (65%)
Move 6	Identifying the organization of book	80- (100%)
Move 7	Acknowledging	59- (73.75%)
Move 8	Closing	37- (46.25%)
Move 9	Signing off	80- (100%)
Total		564- 100%

Figure 1. Histogram of recurrent moves in preface sections.

Table 2 and Figure 2 present the detailed distribution of the component moves of preface sections in English and Arabic linguistics books. By and large, the statistical frequencies of the present corpus reveal relative differences in the move type and frequency of these texts. More specifically, some component moves are missing from one language while others are distributed with relatively varying proportions in the two languages. Another case in point is that some component moves are obligatory in one language while others are obligatory in both. The distribution and description of each individual move is detailed below.

Table 2. Distribution of recurrent moves in preface sections of English & Arabic

| Move No.	Functional Moves	English No & %	Arabic No & %
Move 1	Heading	40- (100%)	40- (100%)
Move 2	Opening	0- (0%)	40- (100%)
Move 3	Introducing the book	37- (92.5%)	30- (75%)
Move 4	Identifying the purpose of book	36- (90%)	33- (82.5%)
Move 5	Identifying the readership of book	32- (80%)	20- (50%)
Move 6	Identifying the organization of book	40- (100%)	40- (100%)
Move 7	Acknowledging	33- (82.5%)	26- (65%)
Move 8	Closing	0- (0%)	37- (92.5%)
Move 9	Signing off	40- (100%)	40- (100%)
Total		258- 100%	306-100%
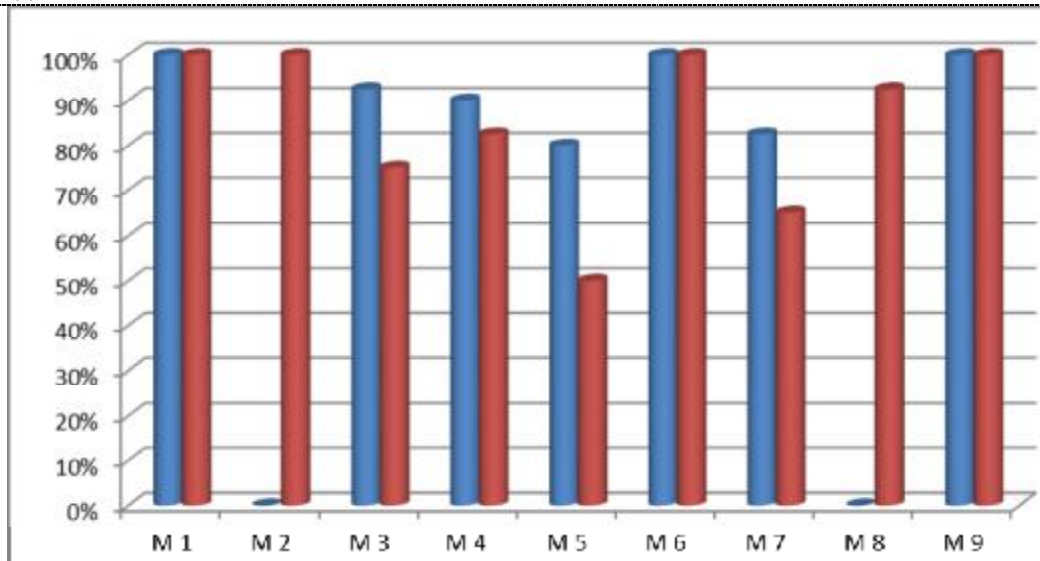
Figure 2. Histogram of recurrent moves in preface sections of English & Arabic

*Blue and red colors stand for English and Arabic preface sections respectively

The heading move comes first, and constitutes 100% of the entire corpus. Its statistical result shows that this move is an obligatory element in English and Arabic preface sections as it equally accounts for 100% of both English and Arabic texts. The heading move is integral to the genre's main communicative purpose and by no means negligible, as suggested by its occurrence in every single instance of the study corpus. It is usually realized as a nominal lexical item in the two languages. That is, it is normally the word *"preface"* that realizes this move in English corpus. In the Arabic corpus, on the other hand, it takes either one of the following words to realize this move *"توطئة"،"مقدمة"،"تمهيد"* which are all equivalent to the English word *"preface"*. The heading is normally stressed by being printed as a separate line, in a different bold font size. The heading move in the present corpus has not been reported in previous research (Abdollahzadeh & Salarvand, 2013; Mohsenzadeh, 2013).

The opening move is only found in the Arabic corpus, and constitutes 100% of the texts examined as nil occurrence of this move can be found in the English corpus. This move regularly occurs second in the Arabic texts and normally opens with the formulaic Qur'anic verse *"بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم"* *(In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful)*. In this move, invocations and prayers praising Allah and/or his Prophet are commonly used. That is, expressions of praise to Allah for his bounties, and in some cases, blessings and prayers to his Prophet Muhammad appear within this component move. This component is culture-specific for Arabic corpus (See section 5.2 below). Again this move has not been reported in previous research. The following are some illustrative examples from the Arabic corpus;

1.بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم والصلاة والسلام على خاتم الانبياء والمرسلين

"In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful, and prayers and peace upon His last Prophet and Messenger"

2. الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلاة والسلام على خاتم النبيين واله وصحبه الطاهرين..

"Praise be to Allah the Lord of Worlds, and prayers and peace upon His last Prophet, His decent Allies and Companions....."

The move of introducing the book accounts for 83.75% of the whole corpus. There is a relative variance in the frequency of this component as it constitutes 92.5% of the English corpus and 75% of the Arabic. Preface writers resort to the use of this move to establish the field of the work. In so doing, they attempt to highlight the book significance and genesis in the academia. In this respect, Azar (2012) suggests that "this move is employed to establish a niche in the relevant field of study, and it can be considered a typical promotional input" (p. 155). It almost appears third in the present corpus but with some exceptions. The same component has been reported in Abdollahzadeh and Salarvand's (2013) book prefaces corpus. The following examples are extracted from the study corpus;

3. "In my opinion, an understanding of semiotics is essential for anyone studying the mass media - or communication or cultural studies. No comparable text on the subject existed at the time so I rashly attempted to create one which suited my own purposes and those of my students."

4.يهتم علم اللغة الحديث بدراسة الواقع الحي للغة في صورتها المنطوقه بغرض الكشف عن اسرارها ومن هنا

نشط الاهتمام بدراسة العامية بين الباحثين للتعرف على خصائصها ان التعبيرات العامية في العربية لم تنل الاهتمام المناسب لها على نحو ما حدث في اللغات الاوربية الاخرى"

(Modern linguistics is interested in the description of real language in its spoken form to explore its secrets. This has led to an increasing interest in dialects research to examine its characteristics since slang expressions in Arabic are under researched)

As to the move of identifying the purpose of book, it accounts for 86.25% of the entire corpus. More precisely, it consists of 90% the English texts whereas 82.5% of the Arabic. Writers of both languages often use this move to announce why the book has been written and produced. In this way, they can establish the academic territory of their works and the gap in the market that the book aims at filling it. Therefore, it attempts to persuade the reader to purchase or use the book. In the present corpus, this move is an optional element in the two languages under investigation. With the same finding, Mohsenzadeh (2013) asserts the optional status of this move in her corpus of literature book prefaces of English and Persian. On the contrary, Kuhi (2008) reports its obligatory status in his corpus of preface sections of teaching textbooks. He adds further that "the frequent occurrence of this move in the majority of the book prefaces indicates the significance of mentioning the goals and aims before moving to the next stages of developing the preface" (p.69).Such contradictory findings between the present study and other studies can be attributed to possible discipline-specific characteristics. The following are some illustrative examples from both languages;

5. "The aim of this handbook is to capture this development and provide an overview over major trends in central aspects of pragmatics as realized across languages and cultures."

6. "هدفنا التوصل الى استجلاء البنية اللغوية الثابتة خلف الخطابات السردية والوصفية والقيام برصد هذه البنية في داخل نظرية لسانية وظيفية."

(Our aim is to investigate the linguistic structure of narrative and descriptive discourses, and explain the linguistic structure within the functionalism framework)

As for the move of identifying the readership of the book, it occupies 65% of the entire corpus, with an 80% of the English corpus and a 50% of the Arabic corpus. Statistically, there is a significant difference between the two languages. Functionally, this component move identifies the type of potential readers for whom a book might be of use since it assumes some prerequisite knowledge on the part of book readers. In other words, it suggests those for whom the book has been written. Regarding its textual function, Kuhi (2008) asserts that the significance of this recurrent move in book prefaces stems from the view that any reader who tries to access the content of a book might be interested in knowing whether s/he is among the target audience of the writer. Just knowing the objectives of the writer is not sufficient; potential buyers and readers should make sure the book is appropriate for their level of education and knowledge. The same finding has been reported in Abdollahzadeh and Salarvand's (2013) study. They maintain that "by naming the potential reading audience that can use the book, writers usually refer to a large group of readers to broaden the marketing domain" (p.1622). The following are examples extracted from the study corpus;

7. "I have tried to produce a text that is accessible to a fairly broad audience, including students of linguistics, philosophy, and psychology."

8. "يتوجه هذا الكتاب الى طلابنا الذين يتابعون تخصصهم في مجال اللغة العربية والى كل من يتعامل مع قضايا اللغة من الباحثين واللغويين".

(This book is written for students of Arabic language and those who are dealing with linguistic issues like linguists and researchers)

The move of identifying the organization of a book constitutes 100% of the whole corpus of preface sections. It equally comprises 100% of English and Arabic book prefaces, assuming its obligatory status in the present corpus. As for its textual function, it gives a general description and explanation of the book contents by describing it chapter by chapter. It serves as a map of the book and reveals the issues dealt with in each section. As not all parts of a book may be suitable for the identified audience, readers might find such book maps suitable to locate where to find information of interest (Kuhi, 2008, p.72). For Azar (2012), this component move is often used to guide readers as if with a roadmap to show the scope and contents of their academic books (p.159). The obligatory status of this move in the present corpus contradicts the findings of previous research (See Azar, 2012; Mohsenzadeh, 2013). Again, this can be due to cross-disciplinary differences. Consider the following examples from the study corpus;

9. "Part I splits linguistic acts into separate grammatical (encoded) and pragmatic (inferred) components. Part II presents evidence for an intimate association between the two. Finally, part III brings codes and inferences back together, as we consider interface levels where codes and inferences combine."

10. "الباب الثاني خصصناه لنظريات علم اللغة النفسي فعرضنا لهذه النظريات مع محاولة بيان علاقة كل نظرية بالمناهج النفسية ولقد اهتمننا في هذا الباب بالنظريات الكبرى فقط"

(Part Two deals with theories of psycholinguistics by reviewing them, and shows the relation between each theory and schools of psychology……….)

The move of acknowledgment accounts for 73.75% of the entire corpus. It comprises 82.5% and 65% of the English and Arabic preface sections respectively. As shown, there is a statistical difference in the move distribution of the two languages. Functionally speaking, this move acknowledges assistance, support or contributions from different individuals in the various stages of preparation and writing of a book.Normally, acknowledged bodies include colleagues, students, family members, and institutions. Kuhi (2008) remarks that "preparing a book is not possible unless a group of people join together in supporting the author. Therefore, acknowledging and thanking contributors are a significant move in the preface texts to wrap up the section" (p. 73). Similarly, Azar (2012) asserts that acknowledgements in academic book prefaces serve as an attempt to express gratitude to people whom a writer feels have helped differently in the preparation of a book. Though it is customarily that book writers commonly appear to write a separate acknowledgment section in their introductory pages, they sometimes write acknowledgements within their prefaces. The following are some examples extracted from the study corpus;

11. "We should like to thank the University of Strathclyde, the British Association of Applied Linguistics and Cambridge University Press for sponsoring the seminar series, which led to the commissioning of this book, and to David Alcock, former Education Librarian"

12."ولا يفوتني ان اشكر زملائي الاساتذة الذين ساعدوني من قريب او بعيد في انجاز هذا العمل المتواضع

واخص منهم بالذكر الدكتور حسن جلاب والدكتور الحسن بوتابيا والاستاذ الحسن بنعاشر"

(I cannot miss thanking my colleagues who helped me in one way or another to finish this work, particularly, Dr. Hassan Chilaab).

For the closing move, it constitutes 46.25% of the entire corpus. This component is only found in the Arabic corpus with a 92.5%.As a general tendency, it seems that Arab writers tend to close off their preface sections with some religious and formulaic phrases exposing their true heartfelt intentions of their book writing, and wishing their readers the most benefit expected from the book reading. Although different closings are employed in Arabic preface sections, they all share the same function of ending these texts. In the Arabic corpus, religious and formulaic expressions can be either one of the following;"] ܠ‍ܠܠܩ‍ܠܶܙ |u!", "2 ܢ‍ܝܠ‍ܙܕ‍ܝu!] ܠ‍ܠܠ‍ܘܶܝi","" ܠ‍ ܬ‍ܐܘ‍ن‍ ! 5ε |u!,or"] ܠ‍ܠܠ‍ܩ‍ܠܶܙ DŽ \‍ ̈llܟ‍j2‍ܫ‍ju 5ܠ‍ܝb", meaning(I testify to Allah hereby my true intention/ We ask Allah the best benefit of book reading, and He is the Arbiter of success). This move is typically realized by a sentence in the subjunctive mood. Its occurrence in the Arabic corpus suggests the socio-cultural practices and conventions of Arab writers. All research available on book prefaces does not report the closing move in their corpus.

Finally, the move of signing off accounts for 100% of the whole corpus. It is evenly distributed in English and Arabic with a 100%, suggesting its obligatory status. Here, writers often end their preface sections with a signature written in their full name or first name, and/or with their academic title. In some cases, not only the book writer is identified, the place and time of book writing are as well at the very end of these texts in both languages. In other cases, though very few, only the common noun *"the author"* is used in both languages. This move is generally realized by the frequent use of nouns, namely, proper names and titles. It is noteworthy that the use of academic titles is only found in the Arabic corpus. On the other hand, the use of first names of book writers is found in the English corpus only. This observation can suggest different cultural values and perceptions of the writers of the two languages. The obligatory move of signing off is unique to the present corpus as no previous research has reported its occurrence.

4.2 Cultural Analysis

The present section is intended to answer question three regarding the socio-cultural practices and perceptions embedded in preface sections of linguistics books of both languages. It is evident from the corpus analysis that the socio-cultural values and norms can, to a certain extent, shape the ways of how writers of the two languages construct their book prefaces, and influence the rhetorical structure of this genre.

The analysis of present corpus reveals some instances of the embodiment of the cultural norms and practices in the construction of the genre of preface sections in both languages. As to the Arabic corpus, the Islamic ideology is very dominant in the component moves of opening and closing. The two moves build on Islamic ethos and assumptions, and much of their linguistic content is based on Arabic writing conventions. There are certain prayers, invocations and wishes reflecting the Muslims' attitudes and tendencies towards their religious beliefs and ethics. The existence of such lexico-grammatical resources can reflect the far-reaching influence of the Islamic culture on the patterns of thoughts and speech of most Arabic speakers. Ferguson (1997) reports that in Arabic, God formulas, such as prayers, blessings and wishes, are frequently used in daily encounters, and can reflect one of the most distinctive types of politeness forms in Arabic language and culture. Such utterances can show the religious overtones of Islam.

Likewise, Al-Ali (2006) argues that the rhetorical structure of some genres written by Arab writers is best characterized by the existence of certain culture-based utterances, representing a peculiar feature of the Arabic writings. Normally, religion influences most aspects of Muslims' life to the extent that in most Arab societies there is no separation between religion and social life. Besides, compared to the English corpus, preface sections of Arabic books are noted for their relative use of academic titles. This is clearly realized in the signing off move. Titles such as *"doctor"* and "*professor"* are occasionally placed before the preface writers in the Arabic corpus. English writers of book prefaces, on the other hand, are noted for the relative use of their first names only without titles. Such an observation can suggest the cultural tendencies of the two languages investigated. As a pertinent feature of most Arabic-speaking countries, the parameter of social status, indicated through the relative use of academic titles, is highly valued in comparison to most English-speaking countries in which the parameter of social distance, indicated through the use of first names only, is more highly valued than social status (Hofstede, 1997). In the same vein, Nydell (2006) argues that most Arab countries are vertically organized where social status (power)   is dominating, while most Western countries are horizontally organized where social distance (familiarity) is highly valued. These observations reflect the interweaving of cultural aspects within the linguistic resources of preface sections of English and Arabic.

5. Conclusion

In this study, the schematic structure of preface sections of English and Arabic linguistics books are analyzed. The corpus analysis reveals that there are nine recurrent moves in the preface sections of English and Arabic. Preface writers devise and develop certain textual strategies or moves to promote the status of their productions. As to move type and frequency, there are some distributional variations between the two languages. That is, three moves, viz, *heading, identifying the organization of the book,* and *signing off,* are found obligatory in both languages, whereas two

moves, viz, *opening* and *closing* are obligatory in Arabic preface texts only. In between, there aresome moves which are found optional in the two languages. This finding asserts that move structure of a given genre can vary in different languages.

The dominant pattern of move structure in the study corpus provides evidence that preface sections constitute a genre characterized by its own communicative purpose. In this genre, writers' intend to establish a need for their work in the current competitive academic setting, and show their orientations and describe their work positively in order to promote them as products (Azar, 2012). The analysis also reveals that the preface genre fulfills a promotional purpose besides its common informative purpose. In addition, the socio-cultural practices and assumptions of English and Arabic are found to be deeply rooted and embedded in the schematic structure of this genre. Pedagogically, the finding of this study can be used to provide materials for teaching how to write an effective book preface within the discipline investigated. Mastery of such knowledge of academic introductory genres can be acquired by means of genre-based courses which attempt to increase ESP teachers' and EFL advanced learners' awareness and nature of the schematic genre structures (Swales 1990). It has been suggested that acquiring the ability to use different textual strategies in writing academic introductions and exposing EFL advanced learners to the academic introductory discourse norms can activate their schematic knowledge and raise their awareness (Azar, 2012).

As the present study is a small scale-based corpus, and this genre has surprisingly attracted little attention in applied linguistics research, more large scale-based research is needed to explore the preface genre within and across different languages. As such, it should attempt to find out more about how book writers of different languages and cultures manipulate rhetorically their preface sections to boost their products. Moreover, further research is suggested to investigate the rhetorical structure of this genre in and across different disciplines to examine if the schematic structure developed here can be extended to other disciplines as well.

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