

## Genre Analysis of Iranian TEFL Students' Master Theses

Shadi Shirani\*, Azizeh Chalak

English Department, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Isfahan, Iran.

**Corresponding Author:** Shadi Shirani, E-mail: shadi\_shirani66@yahoo.com

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history

Received: December 17, 2017

Accepted: February 19, 2018

Published: April 30, 2018

Volume: 9 Issue: 2

Advance access: March 2018

Conflicts of interest: None

Funding: None

#### Key words:

Academic Texts,  
Genre Analysis,  
Iranian TEFL Students,  
Rhetorical Features

### ABSTRACT

Genre analysis dealing with the study of situated language in a particular context is regarded as a crucial component in every communication in general and academic writing texts in particular. Furthermore, recently it has been set as a requirement for the graduated students to pursue a shared rhetorical pattern for generating an academic text. Several researchers have recommended detailed explanations for rhetorical structures of various parts of academic texts, and an extensive literature is dedicated to investigate different academic genres such as research articles, theses, and dissertations in English. But, there are not enough studies that work on the thesis as a whole product and analyze all sections together and not separately. Therefore, 40 M.A. theses produced by Iranian TEFL students at Islamic Azad University (IAU), Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch were collected and analyzed for the rhetorical structures of the Introduction, Method, Results, and Discussion (IMRD) sections in order to accomplish the objectives of the study. Through calculating the frequencies and percentages of data, it was revealed that a number of moves in different sections was absent in the theses.

### INTRODUCTION

Over the last twenty years a large body of studies has been dedicated to the academic writing. Writing in academic settings can be definitely difficult and inconvenient for native and especially nonnative speakers. Furthermore, academic writing has always been the most significant focus of formal education and is an increasingly important area in applied linguistics. Furthermore, after Swales' (1990) influential work in the area of genre analysis, this issue has become the focus of a significant number of research studies and researchers as well.

Accordingly, a considerable amount of literature has been published in genre analysis of academic writing. These studies have investigated different sections of theses or RAs, which are Introduction, Method, Results, and Discussion (IMRD). Most studies in the area of genre analysis have only focused on these sections separately, for example, just on the introduction section (Jalilifar, 2010) and so forth.

Although extensive research has been carried out on genre analysis of academic writing, no single study exists which works on the thesis as a whole product and analyze IMRD sections altogether and not separately. With the intention of filling this gap, this study was carried out to scrutinize all of the abovementioned sections of M.A. theses altogether so that the students' actual academic productions would be analyzed to see how their problem may be remedied.

The major objective of this study was to investigate M.A. theses written by Iranian EFL students majoring in TEFL at IAU, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch to see to what extent they observe the rhetorical structures of different sections that are approved by the field experts. In another word, to what extent these academic writings are in line with what has been published as the standard and acceptable frameworks.

Furthermore, by gaining some information about the features of master theses being written by Iranian graduate students, and also by pinpointing their drawbacks and their deviation from standard and scientific conventions approved by the field professionals, valuable outcome may result.

The abovementioned argument leads to the following questions which the present study endeavored to provide answers to:

1. What rhetorical structures (moves) are characterized in the introduction section of Iranian EFL learners' M.A. theses?
2. What rhetorical structures are characterized in the method section of Iranian EFL learners' M.A. theses?
3. What rhetorical structures are characterized in the results section of Iranian EFL learners' M.A. theses?
4. What rhetorical structures are characterized in the discussion and conclusion section of Iranian EFL learners' M.A. theses?

This project may provide an opportunity to advance the understanding of the rhetorical structures of IMRD sections of M.A. theses of Iranian TEFL students at IAU, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, in order to see where their main problem in producing academic writing lies. This study may also offer an insight for students to improve their academic writings. Actually, students would be familiarized with other students' styles of writing and try to avoid the same problems, and become more conscious in their writings.

In addition, the practitioners may also benefit; in a way that, they would be more familiar with students' main areas of problems and try to work and focus on those areas more on academic writing classes and workshops.

Due to practical constraints, this paper does not engage with many factors such as the students' abilities and skills in writing, their gender and age, the professors' skills and knowledge, the applicability of academic writing course-books.

Swales (1990) defines genre as a recognizable communicative event characterized by a set of communicative purposes identified and mutually understood by the members of the professional or academic community in which it regularly occurs.

The investigation of situated linguistic behavior in established academic or professional setting is defined as genre analysis (Bhatia, 1993).

Topics, propositions, and other information are connected together in order to construct a unit through which various types of discourse are differentiated (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). Move is a rhetorical unit which performs a communicative and social function. A move is functional in nature and realized formally or linguistically in terms of one or more steps (Jalilifar, 2009, p. 19).

In this article, the abbreviation IMRD stands for Introduction, Method, Results, and Discussion. Introduction sets the scene and provides the reader with background materials as well as an outline of the purpose of the research (Mackey and Gass, 2005, p. 7). In method, the author describes how the study was carried out, with sufficient details so that another researcher could replicate the study (Jalilifar, 2009, p. 53). Results section embraces a wide range of data analysis, which can be defined as studying the organized materials from many angles in order to find out inherent facts (Jalilifar, 2009, p. 65). In the discussion section, the author attempts to pull together or integrate the various parts of the study by summarizing the major findings (Jalilifar, 2009, p. 73).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The structure and organization of academic writings has been the focus of different researchers ever since Swales' (1990) definition of communicative moves in research articles. So, a great number of studies have been done in the field of genre analysis especially in academic writings. Holmes (1997) states that

interest, in genre analysis, in teaching ESP and EAP, has been motivated by pedagogical concern, and in particular by the need to provide satisfactory models and descriptions of academic and scientific texts and to enhance the ability of

non-native students to understand and, where it is appropriate, to produce them. (p. 321)

According to Dudley-Evans and John (1998), the knowledge of genre is a crucial factor in all types of communication especially in writing academic texts. They believe that knowledge of genre entails an understanding of the expectations of the discourse community that reads the text and the conventions that have generated over time about the structure, the language, and the rhetoric of genre.

After Swales' publication of genre analysis, many researchers have proposed precise descriptions of rhetorical features of different sections of academic written texts, and a considerable literature in English on various academic genres has been provided. As Swales (2004) noted, academic writing is a highly complex process in which the product obtains from primary notes to an exactly modified final draft.

### Genre Analysis of the Introduction Section

The Introduction which is the first chapter of all theses, according to Jalilifar (2009), introduces a research by presenting research questions, stating why and how the problem will be solved.

Samarj (2008) examined the Introduction section of 24 masters' theses from three disciplines. In the analysis of the corpus, he employed both discourse analysis and interviews with subject specialists. An analysis of the complete structure of the thesis Introductions indicated discourse features that separate this genre from research articles and also pointed to disciplinary variation within this genre.

Studying the Introduction Sections of research articles, Keshavarz, Atai, and Barzegar (2007) investigated 60 research article Introductions written by Iranian and non-Iranian applied linguists based on Swales' (1990) CARS model. The results of this analysis revealed no significant difference between the frequency of Move 1 and Move 2 in both categories of Introductions. Nevertheless, they found a significant difference between the frequency of Move 3 in RAs written by both Iranian and non-Iranian English writers, and many of Iranian writers did not use Move 3.

In a same study, Shirani and Chalak (2016) analyzed the Introduction section of 40 master theses written by Iranian TEFL students which were selected randomly. The descriptive analysis of the data including frequency and percentage indicated that the rhetorical structures (moves) that are suggested by Swales' (1990) CARS model were present with a high degree of occurrence in nearly most of Iranian M.A. theses.

### Genre Analysis of the Method Section

In this section the researcher attempts to explain how the study was conducted with related details which may pave the way for other researchers to replicate the study (Jalilifar, 2009).

Duenas (2007) conducted a contrastive study of the rhetorical organization of the method sections of 24 RAs, in business management, written in English and in Spanish. There were three steps seeming obligatory in the methods

sections of RAs published in English, namely Describing participants/the sample, Outlining variables and measures, and Reference to past research which follows a similar methodological procedure, while two steps that were included in all Spanish RAs were Describing participants/the sample and Describing data collection procedure.

Lim (2006) examined the Method section of 20 articles and closely studied their rhetorical move and step structures. He found that most method sections in the corpus contain three major moves: describing data collection procedures, delineating procedures for measuring variables, and elucidating data analysis procedures.

### Genre Analysis of the Results Section

Results section mainly deals with "quantitative and qualitative analyses" of research (Jalilifar, 2009, p. 65). He continued as "the researchers make use of quantitative analysis and statistical methods, such analyses provide answers to educational problems".

Atai and Fallah (2005) examined the result sections of 80 applied linguistics RAs written in English by English and Persian native speakers. They used models proposed by Brett (1994) to analyze the move structure of result sections. The analysis demonstrated that there were no significant differences between the type, sequence, and the frequency of moves in the corpus. Finally, they pointed out that not all moves proposed by Brett (1994) appeared in the corpus; Structure of the section, Further research suggested, Implication, and Summarizing were absent in two groups.

In a study, Posteguillo (1999) analyzed the Results section of RAs in computer sciences in the light of Brett's classification. His findings were in line with Brett's categories. According to Ruiying and Allison (2003), Results section in RAs "report results and comment on results, and a recycled pattern of reporting and commenting may occur" (p. 367).

### Genre Analysis of the Discussion/Conclusion Section

Through Discussion section researchers "seek to establish their importance" (Ruiying & Allison, 2003, p. 366). The author tries to integrate different parts of the study by summarizing the major findings.

In a study, Peacock (2002) studied a corpus of RAs Discussion sections across seven disciplines. He investigated communicative moves in the Discussion section along with their interdisciplinary and NS/NNS variations following Dudley-Evans' (1994) model. Overall findings demonstrated that the most widespread moves were Claim, Finding, Reference to previous research, and Recommendation. The least widespread move was Explanation (p. 486).

Jalilifar, Hayati, and Namdari (2012) examined the generic structure of the Discussion section of 80 applied linguistics RAs, in terms of Dudley-Evans' (1994) modified model. The study was based on the perspective that various elements such as the nature of knowledge being communicated, context of use, participants involved, and the writer's understanding and ability to employ the resources available build the meaning making in the language. The two most

frequent moves were Information move and Claim (present in all the papers), showing that these two moves are compulsory in both groups of Discussions.

The studies presented thus far outline a critical role for genre analysis of academic writing, whether RA or thesis and each of the IMRD section should include specific rhetorical structures or moves in order to be explanatory and scientifically acceptable. Consequently, the present study examines these moves in M.A. theses written by Iranian TEFL students to observe to what extent they are consistent with the existing literature.

### METHODOLOGY

The present study addressed the questions of rhetorical structures of IMRD sections of M.A. theses written by Iranian TEFL students and the level of consistency between this corpus and the approved frameworks established by the field specialists. Therefore, the research used a corpus-driven, genre-based study in the use of rhetorical moves.

Genre analysis is a qualitative method of analysis which focuses on different sections and detailed structures of the related genre. According to this orientation, the authentic M.A. theses that are the real production of students, has been considered as the main source of data in genre analysis. Hence, a descriptive design may fulfill the objectives of the study.

The research was carried out at IAU, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, in order to satisfy the need of availability and accessibility from November 2015 to January 2016. Also, to ensure the reliability and validity of data and avoid the intervening variable of time, only theses submitted in 2010 onward were collected.

The data of this study was master theses from which a convenient sample of 40 theses was selected randomly. The decision about the number of selected theses was made on the assumption that the corpus was large enough to reveal major changes and allow the researcher for valid generalizations.

In order to homogenize the sample, a few restrictions were imposed; all of the theses were experimental research studies produced by TEFL students. Experimental studies ensure compatibility with the IMRD structure, as according to Jalilifar (2009), experimental studies "lend themselves well to IMRD".

The name of students and supervisors, and the title of theses were kept confidential and anonymous, that is the ethical issue was observed.

The instrument that was employed to collect the relevant data was conceptual frameworks approved by the field professionals. For analyzing the Introduction section of theses, Swales' (1990) CARS model was applied. Since, according to Swales (2004), this model is simple, practical, and corpus-based for describing introduction section and provides a tripartite schema that is employed in many academic disciplines.

Lim's (2006) model was exploited in order to reach an analytic view for the Method section. The justification for using this model as a framework was that it is a comprehensive model for analyzing Method section and offers a very detailed

description of each move. Also, Lim arrived at this model by conducting research in the field of management which is a Humanities sub-branch; therefore it is close to the Linguistics which is related to the same discipline to some extent.

To analyze the Results section and gather the required data, Brett's (1994) model was employed as an instrument. The rationale behind using this model is that it is reasonably provides wide range of information about this section. Furthermore, many researchers have exploited this model as an analytical framework for carrying out their research studies.

The last framework selected for the analysis of the Discussion section was Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) model. Appearing to be the most thorough model mostly practiced in the previous related studies in different disciplines, this model was used as an instrument for collecting data.

Data were collected by either referring to the library or searching through digital library of the university from IMRD sections of theses and analyzed according to the conceptual frameworks presented previously. Analyzing the collected data entails examining the data in ways that shows the relationship, patterns, etc. that can be found within it. It means that by using statistical operations the relationship or pattern of IMRD sections of master theses would be revealed and also the answers to research questions obtained through data analysis would be trustworthy.

This process of data analysis may compare the present study information to that of standard frameworks and models and draw some valuable conclusion from data. In the present study, quantitative data was crucial for rhetorical features of IMRD sections, therefore the coded data from these different sections was quantified.

The present study pursued an analysis of moves used in IMRD sections of M.A. theses. The statistical analysis involved two types of analysis, frequency analysis and percentages. By measuring the frequency of occurrence, it was intended to indicate how often each move occurs.

The analysis was carried out mainly by the researchers; however, in order to improve and ensure the intra-rater reliability of the analyses, the data was also analyzed for the second time by the researchers after a month interval. In addition, having analyzed the data twice, the identification of certain ambiguous moves and the data was rechecked by another researcher.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Making this study more objective and reliable, the researchers collected the authentic data that are the students' real productions in writing academically. Then, each IMRD sections of theses were analyzed meticulously to see whether rhetorical structures (moves) were present or not. In this stage, the number of present and absent moves was counted and finally the descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were calculated.

### Results of the Genre Analysis of the Introduction Section

According to Swales (1990), the Introduction section of theses contain: (a) *Establishing a territory*, (b) *Establishing a niche*, (c) *Occupying the niche*.

Table 1 illustrates the distribution of the Introduction Moves. The results are the same as those of another study we conducted on the Introduction section of master thesis (Shirani & Chalak, 2016). Move1 was present in almost two third of theses, indicating that one third of corpus did not contain this obligatory move; which seems that students were not aware about its importance and further emphasis is needed in this regard. The degree of distribution of Move 2 in this section revealed that although most of the theses included this move, again nearly one third of students had not provided the readers with information regarding a niche. Furthermore, the last move of this section was present with a high degree of occurrence in the corpus showing the compulsory role of filling the gap in the area under investigation.

### Results of the Genre Analysis of the Method Section

According to Lim's (2006) model, every method section should contain three moves that are (a) *Describing data collection procedures*, (b) *Delineating procedures for measuring variables*, (c) *Elucidating data analysis procedures*. These three moves are presented in detail in Table 2.

Table 2 shows the distribution of the three obligatory moves of the method section of the theses. As the table shows, only half of the corpora employed Move1 as a methodology subsection while in another half, they did not so. According to the above table, all of the examined theses included Move2 of the method section except one of them. This led the results of calculation to the point that, most of the students were conscious about the importance of this Move, so they followed it carefully. Move3 of the method section was present in nearly half of the theses (45.0%), which was less than absent ones.

### Results of the Genre Analysis of the Results Section

The Results section of theses should contain three categories and moves. Brett (1994) identifies these three moves or communicative categories as (a) *Metatextual*, (b) *Presentation*, (c) *Comment*.

According to Table 3, metatextual category as the first move of the Results section was present just in less than half of theses and the amount of absent items was higher in comparison to the present ones. Presentation Move which mainly deals with presentation of data in the Results section is the second move of this section. Surprisingly, this move was present in all of theses and there was no single Results section without this move. It shows that, all of the students were careful about this move and tried to keep it as an obligatory move. Additionally, Move3 was absent in most of cases, although it seems that this move may offer valuable information for readers.

### Results of the Genre Analysis of the Discussion/ Conclusion Section

The last section of theses is Discussion/Conclusion and contains three moves. According to Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995), the Discussion section should include: (a) *Occupy-*

ing the niche, (b) (Re)-establishing the niche, (c) Establishing additional territory.

Table 4 demonstrates the distribution of the Discussion/Conclusion section. It shows that half of the corpora exploited Move 1 as the first move of this section. This means that there was a balance between present and absent moves. Accordingly, the second Move was present in more than two third of the theses, but it seems that because of the importance of this Move, more emphasis may be useful for the students. The last Move of this section which deals mainly with establishing additional studied in the field was present almost in all of the theses, although in a few number (n= 9), it was absent.

## DISCUSSION

The results of genre analysis of the Introduction section indicated a higher proportion of present items to the absent ones in observing Move1. Therefore it can be concluded that establishing a territory for beginning a research study is a crucial factor and students were careful about following this move and considered it as an obligatory move. On the other hand, Move2 (i.e., establishing the niche) was present in two third of these, but it seems that it would be more satisfactory if the students become more conscious about writing this move, because this move provides the justification for conducting the related study. Moreover, Move3 that is occu-

pying the niche was present in most of the theses, indicating that this move was again regarded as an obligatory move for this section.

The results of genre analysis of the Method section revealed that Move1 was present in only half of the theses. The amount of present items with contrast to that of absent ones seems to be the same in quantity. For the Results section, the first move was present just in less than half of theses and the amount of absent items was higher, therefore, students should become more cautious regarding following this move. Surprisingly, move2 was present in all of the theses, indicating that students consider this move compulsory; because it is through using this move that lots of information about the presentation of results are provided. Finally, Move3, that is comment category, was absent in most of cases, although it seems that this move may offer valuable information for readers.

The results of the genre analysis of the Discussion section discovered that move1 was present in half of theses. Actually, the amount of present and absent items for this move was the same. Move2 that is, (re)-establishing the niche, was present in more than half of theses, which in comparison to absent items was in a higher place of distribution, meaning that this move was followed by the students, however, with being more careful and having more detailed instruction, students may perform better. Finally, the third move of the Discussion section that is, establishing additional territory was present in most of corpora.

**Table 1.** Distribution of the introduction section moves

	Moves of the introduction section		
	Move 1	Move 2	Move 3
Frequency	28	26	33
Percentage	70.0	65.0	82.5

**Table 2.** Distribution of the method section moves

	Moves of the method section		
	Move 1	Move 2	Move 3
Frequency	20	39	18
Percentage	70.0	97.5	45.0

**Table 3.** Distribution of the results section moves

	Moves of the results section		
	Move 1	Move 2	Move 3
Frequency	19	40	16
Percentage	47.5	100.0	40.0

**Table 4.** Distribution of the discussion/conclusion section moves

	Moves of the discussion section		
	Move 1	Move 2	Move 3
Frequency	20	29	31
Percentage	50.0	72.5	77.5

## CONCLUSION

This study set out with the aim of assessing the rhetorical structures of IMRD section of theses through a corpus-based genre analysis. According to Bhatia (1993), genre analysis is the study of situated linguistic behavior in institutionalized academic or professional setting. As mentioned in the literature review, many prominent academic figures have been attracted to genre analysis. Scholars have long been interested in analyzing texts around the world but because they belong to various cultures, they have used various approaches in analyzing genre. According to Bhatia (2002), analyzing genre means investigating instances of conventionalized or institutionalized textual artifacts in the context of specific disciplinary practices, procedures, and cultures in order to understand how members of specific discourse communities construct, interpret and use these genres to achieve their community goals.

Therefore, it can be concluded that three Moves of the Introduction section were followed in Iranian master theses with a high degree of distribution. Accordingly, students' performance in writing the first chapter of their theses seems fulfilling, but there are still some points to be emphasized more for better achievements.

For the second section of master theses, it can be concluded that it is needed to put more emphasis on the move 1 in academic writing classes. It is interesting to note that the second Move that is, delineating procedures for measuring variables, was present in all of the theses, except one. This percentage indicates that most of the students observed this

Move in writing their method section and considered it as an obligatory Move, because it provides lots of information about specifying the procedures. The last Move of method section was not present significantly in the theses. It seems that this move should be used more frequently, because it helps the reader to get some insight about the data collection procedure, so this move should be emphasized more in academic writing classes and workshops.

In addition, for the Results section, it would be necessary for the instructors to put more emphasis on Move1 and Move3 and for students to be more aware about the importance of this section. Again the proportion of present items to absent items in Discussion and Conclusion section of master theses led the findings to the conclusion that this move was observed meticulously by the students. Therefore, it can be concluded that Iranian master theses contained all three moves of the Discussion and Conclusion section with a high degree of occurrence, but it would be better to emphasize Move1 of this section to the students a little more in academic and workshop settings.

The findings of this study could be advantageous for students because they provide good opportunities for students to improve their academic writings. Actually, students would be familiarized with other students' styles of writing and try to avoid the same problems, and become more conscious in their writings. The results of this study may be beneficial for the practitioners as well; in a way that, they would familiarize with students' main areas of problems and difficulty and try to work and focus on those areas more in academic writing classes and workshops.

There are a number of limitations which might have influenced the findings of this study. First of all the number of the collected corpus in this study was limited. Then, the choice of a larger sample for genre analysis would increase the reliability. Secondly, in this study, only moves as the only rhetorical structure were examined. In this regard, steps could be considered as another rhetorical structure for investigation. Thirdly, in this study, only IMRD sections of master theses were examined. Other sections such as literature review, and abstract could be analyzed too.

Through investigating the research area in this study, a number of pedagogical and methodological questions have been raised. This study was the genre analysis of master theses written by Iranian TEFL students. However, additional works in this area clearly is needed. More research studies are needed to explore the other sections of M.A. theses or other studies can be conducted on the genre analysis of PhD dissertations.

There is still a room for conducting the same study with a larger sample and a larger corpus for collecting and analyzing the data. Furthermore, the theses that were collected were from the same discipline of TEFL, in another study, one may use other majors such as Translation Studies or English Literature, to see whether there exist any differences or not.

## REFERENCES

- Atai, M.R., & Fallah, S. (2005). A contrastive genre analysis of results and discussion sections of applied linguistics articles written by native and non-native English speakers. *Proceedings of PAAL Conference*, 2005, Edinburgh, UK.
- Berkenkotter, C., & Huckin, T.N. (1995). *Genre knowledge in disciplinary communication: Cognition/culture/power*. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Bhatia, V.K. (1993). *Analyzing genre language use in professional settings*. London: Longman.
- Bhatia, V. K. (2002). Applied genre analysis: A multi-perspective model. *Iberica*, 4, 3-19.
- Brett, P. (1994). A genre analysis of the results section of sociology articles. *English for Specific Purposes*, 13, 47-59.
- Dudley-Evans, T. (1994). Genre analysis: An approach to text analysis for ESP. In M. Coulthard (Ed.), *Advances in written text analysis* (pp. 219-228). London: Routledge.
- Dudley-Evans, T., & St. John, M. J. (1998). *Developments in ESP: A multi-disciplinary approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Duenas, P. M. (2007). A cross-cultural analysis of the generic structure of business management research articles: The method section. *Odisea*, 8, 123-137.
- Holmes, R. (1997). Genre analysis and the social sciences: An investigation of the structure of research article discussion sections in three disciplines. *English for Specific Purposes*, 16(4), 321-337.
- Jalilifar, A. R. (2009). *Research articles in applied linguistics: A genre-based writing guide*. Ahvaz: Shahid Chamran University.
- Jalilifar, A. R. (2010). Research article introductions: Sub-disciplinary variations in Applied linguistics. *The Journal of Teaching Language Skills (JTLS)*, 2(2), 29-55.
- Jalilifar, A. R., Hayati, A. M., & Namdari, N. (2012). A comparative study of research article discussion sections of local and international applied linguistic journals. *The Journal of Asia TEFL*, 9(1), 1-29.
- Keshavarz, M.H., Atai M.R, & Barzegar, V. (2007). A contrastive study of generic organization of research article introductions, written by Iranian and Non-Iranian writers in applied linguistics. *Teaching English Language and Literature Society of Iran*, 1(2), 13-34.
- Lim, J. M. H. (2006). Method sections of management research articles: A pedagogical-ly motivated qualitative study. *English for Specific Purposes*, 25, 282-309.
- Mackey, A., & Gass, S. M. (2005). *Second language research: Methodology and design*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates: London
- Peacock, M. (2002). Communicative moves in the discussion section of research articles. *System*, 30, 479-497.
- Posteguillo, S. (1999). The schematic structure of computer science research articles. *English for Specific Purposes*, 18(2), 139-160.
- Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. (2010). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied Linguistics*. Great Britain: Pearson.

- Ruiying, Y., & Allison, D. (2003). Research article in applied linguistics: Moving from results to conclusions. *English for Specific Purposes*, 22, 264-279.
- Samraj, B. (2008). A discourse analysis of master's theses across disciplines with a focus on introductions. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 55- 67.
- Shirani, Sh. & Chalak, A. (2016). A genre analysis of Iranian EFL learners' master theses with a focus on the introduction section. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 6 (10), 1982-1987.
- Swales, J. M. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Swales, J. M. (2004). *Research genres: Explorations and applications*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.