

**A Demarcation of the Moves in Discussion and Conclusion  
Sections of Doctoral Dissertations: A Genre-Based Analysis**

Lilian Banlasan-Dupa and Renan P. Limjuco  
University of the Immaculate Conception, Davao City, Philippine  
ldupa@uic.edu.ph; rlimjuco@uic.edu.ph

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the rhetorical move structure of the discussion and conclusion sections of Applied Linguistics and Educational Leadership dissertations. By genre analysis, this study specifically scrutinized the difference between the two sections, analyzed the manner in which linguistic signals are written with reference to the moves, and consequently determined the demarcations between them. Two corpora composed of 15 Linguistics and 15 Educational Leadership dissertations were analyzed using Yang & Allison's (2003) move model. The results revealed that all the seven moves in discussion and three moves in conclusion of the move model occurred in the corpora, however, with differences in their frequency of occurrence. It was noted that Applied Linguistics and Educational leadership writers did not focus on the importance of generalizing and contributing to existing knowledge. Their conclusion sections summarized the key points of the findings of the research conducted. The findings obtained in the current study may be useful particularly for graduate student writers by facilitating them to better understand the rhetorical structure of research article discussion and conclusion sections in the context of academic research writing. Also, the findings may yield implications for a pedagogical framework for the teaching of academic writing.

KEYWORDS: Applied Linguistics, doctoral dissertation, discussion section, conclusion section, moves, demarcation, genre analysis, Davao City, Philippines

## INTRODUCTION

In more than two decades of being an English teacher, I have always been asked questions regarding how to write a thorough research discussion and how to formulate its corresponding conclusion without redundancy. Thus, I have started reviewing many published literatures on research article (RA) writing and the Introduction-Method-Result-Discussion (IMRD) format and consequently, I take it upon myself to unveil the mystery which masks the borderline between discussion and conclusion sections. This becomes my inspiration for the conduct of this study.

For many years, genre-based analysis is the center of discussion among most linguistic writers in different sorts of text. Many studies in genre analysis include exploration of language use in broader sense in order to account not only for the way text is constructed but also for the way it is likely to be interpreted used and exploited in specific contexts to achieve specific goals (Bhatia, 2002). Authors usually explore the way text is constructed and exploited in specific contexts for them to achieve their goals.

Recent studies employing genre analysis focused on the “moves” found in research articles (RAs) which qualified for international journal publication. These research articles went through peer review process implemented by different international publication (Burrough & Boenish, 2013). This fact implies that the submitted manuscript and its texts must adhere to the discourse style and cultural norms of English specifically in terms of moves as observed by the editors of these publications.

At present, many schools and universities throughout the world aimed to be counted among the institutions whose research articles may be accepted in international level. Thus, to conform to the prescribed format and style of the international journals has become the major goal of higher education for their research outputs, especially those that encounter constraints, in their submissions. Moreover, one of the several problems that confront these institutions is the lack of knowledge in the framework for format of the research articles from thesis and dissertation manuscripts.

One of the genre-based approaches used to describe the structure of a research article is move analysis which has recently become an important interest for research. Some influential research on this particular form of analysis has been conducted in Swales' (1990) studies, which paved the way to Swales' Create A Research Space (CARS) model that has been used to analyze research articles in different disciplines.

A move means a discursal segment that performs a particular communicative function (Swales, 2014). It represents semantic and units of texts that have specific purpose (Connor, Upton & Kanoksilapatham, 2007). The focus of a move-based analysis is on the hierarchical schematic structures of texts (Nwogu, 1997). With this in mind, it can be said that a move is a semantic unit that must be learned to clarify and strengthen the writer's purpose. Swales (1990) presents the moves of the research discussion and conclusion as a general terrain or layout of a research.

According to Yang and Allison's (2003) move model the discussion and conclusion sections serve critical roles in the research article (Basturkmen, 2012; Holmes, 1997; Lim, 2010; Peacock, 2002; Yang & Allison, 2003). In the discussion section, the authors stake claims about how their results integrate with and contribute to disciplinary knowledge (Basturkmen, 2012). As Weissberg and Buker (1990) stated, when writing the discussion section, the author steps back and takes a broad look at the findings as a whole, trying to move the readers back from the specific information presented in the results section to a more general view of how the findings should be interpreted. The conclusion section, has been considered as part of the discussion section. This may be the reason why studies on this particular area are limited. It is also known that the conclusion sections of research provide not only an outline of the study but also other important elements such as implications and recommendations (Sandoval, 2010 cited in Morales, 2012).

Yang and Allison's (2003) move model for research article in discussion sections are Move 1: Background information, Move 2: Reporting results, Move 3: Summarizing results, Move 4: Commenting results, Move 4 has its four steps namely: Step 1: Interpreting results, Step 2: Comparing results with literature, Step 3: Accounting for results, Step 4: Evaluating results. Move 5: Summarizing the studies, Move 6: Evaluating the study, and Move 7: Deductions from research, Move 7 has its steps namely: Step 1: Making Suggestions, Step 2: Recommending Results, Step 3: Drawing Pedagogic Implications. On the other hand, Yang and Allison's (2003) move model for research article conclusion sections are Move 1: Summarizing the study, Move 2: Evaluating the study, Move 2 has its steps namely: Step 1: Indicating significance/ advantage, Step 2: Indicating limitations, Step 3: Evaluating methodology. Move 3: Deductions from the research, Move 3 has its two steps namely: Step 1: Recommending further research, Step 2: Drawing Pedagogic implications.

Moreover, previous research studies have shown that there are some significant variations in the structural organization in corpora of research discussion section. For example, Holmes (1999) revealed that the rhetorical structure of social science discussion sections displayed some distinctive features,

such as the non-implementation of some moves— a departure from the obligatory move as defined by the Swales' model. In an earlier similar study, Dudley-Evan's (1988) also developed his own model which consisted of eight moves. Likewise, in a study carried out by Peacock (2002), it was found that there was no compulsory move in 252 discussions from seven disciplines. In addition, there were some differences in terms of move employment in the discussion section written by native and non-native writers.

On the other hand, research studies which aimed to analyze the rhetorical structure of research conclusion sections are limited. According to Swales (1990) and Postegillo (1999), the conclusion section has been considered as part of the discussion section. This can be the reason why research studies on the structural organization of research conclusion sections are limited. It is known that the conclusion sections of research provide not only a structure of the study but also other important elements, such as implications and recommendations (Sandoval, 2010 cited in Morales, 2012).

Meanwhile, Kanoksilapatham (2007) has revealed considerable differences across disciplines, languages, and native versus non-native writers, in terms of the rhetorical structure of research articles (Jogthong, 2001; Kanoksilapatham, 2007; Peacock, 2001; Samraj, 2002). In the Thai context, Kanoksilapatham (2007) for example found that the move structures of Thai biochemistry RAs were different from those of English biochemistry RAs for example, Commenting results' and „Stating limitations' moves were optional in the Thai corpus, while they were conventional in English corpus. Thai writers tended not to contextualize their results to the fields or relevant literature by comparing results obtained from the study with those found in previous research studies.

Having reviewed many literatures and related studies, I observed that there have been no enough studies relating to the demarcation of moves in discussion and conclusion sections in our local area. Another relevant reason why I undertook this endeavor is that many dissertations in my institution have been written and yet are not published. This question remains unanswered until I found that the format for the international publication differs greatly from that in our PhD dissertation. Because of this observation, I became committed to pursue this study to contribute to the improvement of dissertation format in the graduate school of the University of the Immaculate Conception.

Thus, this present study focuses on the discussion and conclusion sections in PhD in Applied Linguistics and PhD in Educational Leadership dissertations. These materials are compared and described with respect to the rhetorical moves of the discussion and conclusion sections using Yang and Allison's (2003)

model. Although some studies written by PhD in Applied Linguistics have been investigated through the schematic structure of research articles in our local area, I noticed that the focus was on other section such as the Abstract and Introduction.

Lastly, the analysis of differences found between the two corpora may contribute significantly to the teaching of academic writing, specifically in the development of discussion and conclusion sections of research articles in PhD in Applied Linguistics and other disciplines. Further, this effort would surely raise the level of awareness on genre analysis, particularly move structures and become relevant as a major consideration in the writing of thesis and dissertations of the graduate students.

### Purpose of the Study

Seeing the importance of rhetorical moves in genre analysis, this study aimed to record the move occurrences in the discussion and conclusion sections of doctoral dissertations. In particular, the study sought to discover the difference of the two sections of both corpora. I also would like to analyze the manner in which linguistic signals are written with reference to the moves.

### METHOD

In this study, I made use of genre analysis. As a type of discourse analysis, genre analysis is a process for grouping texts together, representing how writers typically use language to respond to recurring situation (Hyland, 2004). The genre involved in this study is the academic genre, specifically research manuscripts' discussion and conclusion sections. Hence, similar to other types of discourse analysis, this study involves interpreting and analyzing corpora taken from sample research articles. The moves including steps constituting the organization and the development of the corpora being studied were analyzed.

Two corpora, specifically the PhD in Applied Linguistics and PhD in Educational Leadership dissertations from the University of the Immaculate Conception (UIC) graduate programs were purposively selected, including 15 Applied Linguistics and 15 Educational Leadership dissertations from the submissions during the last three years (2011-2013) before this present study was conducted. For the purpose of anonymity of identifications and organization of data, the corpora were codified ALC1 to ALC15 for the Applied Linguistics

corpus, and ELC1 to ELC15 for the Educational Leadership corpus. Permissions and approval from relevant institutional authorities were secured prior to the conduct of this study.

Each corpus was analyzed comprehensively following the rhetoric model of analysis. In determining the moves of the research discussion and conclusion sections in both corpora, Yang and Allison's framework model (2003) was used, specifically their move model for the discussion and conclusion sections because it was developed from an analysis of research article in other researches in Applied Linguistics, which is the focus of the present study. Moreover, it is remarkable that some moves in their model contain a wide coverage of the constituent steps which are used to realize the moves explicitly.

In the process of move identification, the notion of communicative purpose was central for the analysis of research discussion and conclusion sections. Therefore, if there were cases where the communicative purpose of a unit of text was not self-evident, where multiple functions were served in the context, or where one sentence contained two or more moves, they were assigned to the move and step that appeared to be most salient (Del Saz-Rubio, 2011; Holmes, 1997; Ozturk, 2007).

Although the identification of moves based on function or content can be criticized for its subjectivity, the findings of my study were checked and validated by professional experts in their field.

### Trustworthiness of the Study

To obtain credibility, as defined by Holloway and Wheeler (2002), Macnee and McCabe (2008) as the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings, I employed actual text from each corpus. I made sure that I gathered the data through reading and note taking the details from both corpora. I made sure that everything went smoothly, that no one got offended or subjected to risk as I went with my undertakings. Credibility can also be noted during the transcription and translation process. My research was credible because the corpora were real and authentic. The data were gathered straight from the UIC library, particularly in the graduate program area without alterations whatsoever to change the outcome of the result. Moreover, I rechecked the collected data from corpora, and after data interpretation, I conducted another rechecking of the collected data and my interpretation.

While strongly stressed by Lincoln and Guba (1998) that ensuring credibility

is one of the most important factors in establishing trustworthiness of the study, I also considered transferability, dependability, and confirmability. In the study, dependability or the stability of the findings overtime (Bitsch, 2005) was realized through a coding strategy. In the coding process that I employed, I coded the same data aside for me to see if they were in agreement with the information that I got from the various relevant sources and assessed if the patterns remained the same and unaltered.

Finally, for transferability and confirmability, I incorporated the findings of other researchers to corroborate with my own findings to see if the interpretations I put into my study were not just my sole analyses; but rather, they were also supported with the findings of other studies delving on the same objectives. Transferability is the generalization of the study findings to other situations and contexts (Tobin & Begley, 2004) while confirmability depends on the research findings' relatedness to the findings of other authors (Bowen, 2009).

**Ethical Considerations.** Although no direct human participants were involved in this study, as institutionally required, the procedures and manners for the conduct of this study, from data collection, documentation, interpretation and validation up to reporting of findings were reviewed and approved by the UIC Research Ethics Committee. Necessary permissions from relevant authorities were secured. Confidentiality of the identities of the dissertation owners was given utmost importance. That none of the information collected would embarrass or harm them in any case was assured. All included corpora were treated with high respect.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the process of move identification, communicative purpose was considered for the analysis of the moves and texts in discussion and conclusion sections. This is how I found that the communicative purpose of the text in each unit was not clear. In some cases, I observed that there were two, or more moves and there were also multiple functions intended by the writer in one particular paragraph. Since these were variations in the moves, I assigned them to be assumed in the move and step that appeared to be most salient as Homes (1997), and Del Saz-Rubio (2011), and Ozturk (2007) established.

The occurrence of each move in each research article discussion and conclusion sections was recorded in order to determine the boundary to which a particular move was used. The criteria for justifying and classifying the occurrence of each move are defined according to Yang and Allison's (2003) model.

### Moves and Steps of Discussion Sections with Linguistic Signals

Move 1 which is background information is used to prepare the readers for the report or discussion of results that follows. This function includes some main statements describing research questions, the aims and purpose of the study, theoretical background or established knowledge and the research methodology. In the present study, the occurrence of discussion section in both corpora showed obligatory move, meaning most of the authors often use this move to restate the aims, objectives, procedural information, theories, and research questions. For this purpose, authors often use meta-discursive elements to signal their move to the reader. Below are examples of Move 1.

*The findings, analysis and interpretation of data are presented in this chapter. (ELC-15)*

*This chapter contains the interpretation and analysis of findings. (ALC-11)*

The function of Move 2 which is reporting results is used by authors to present the results of their studies. The main textual features that often signal this move are 'reporting verbs' and 'past tense'. The move is often made through the presentation of examples, numerical values, graphs, tables, or observations as well as comments on the expectedness and unexpectedness of outcomes (Rasmeenin, 2006). This is commonly known as data commentary. To indicate this move, some linguistic signals or expressions associated with numerical values, reporting verbs, and statements about upcoming outcomes involving graphs, figures, examples and tables were employed extensively. Both the past and present simple tenses were used in this move. This step is realized in the given examples below.

*As shown in the table, the data reveal the top three common errors in passivization. (ALC-12)*

*Result also indicates that having high levels of well-being, these doctoral students are frequently in a state of positive emotional and social functioning. (ELC-9)*

The function of Move 3 which is summarizing results is to sum up results. Results in this move differs from Move 2. Here, only a summary of the results is presented whereas in Move 2, particular results and factors are discussed.

*Linguistics signals used to identify this move were summarizing verbs/nouns/phrases such as to sum up, to summarize, in summary, and in brief.*

*Passive voice can also be used in summarizing results. Below are the following examples of Move 3.*

*In summary, teacher-level factor as an indicator is rated as high (3.69) while school-level factors are rated moderate (3.27). (ELC- 10)*

*In summary, the participants of the study were able to provide innovative words which can be regarded as neologisms. (ALC-6)*

The objective of Move 4 which is commenting on results is to establish the meaning and significance of the research results in relation to the relevant field. Authors make this move for such purposes as providing subjective judgments about their studies' results, interpreting their findings, and comparing their studies with the literature (Rasmeenin, 2006). The move very often draws on one or a combination of these four steps: (1) Step 1: Interpreting results, (2) Step 2: Comparing/Contrasting results with literature, (3) Step 3: Accounting for results, and (4) Step 4: Evaluating results

Move 4, Step 1 which is interpreting results is where authors make claims or generalizations based on the results of the study. In the present study, most of the authors from both corpora presented results and expounded their ideas on the results accordingly.

To interpret the results, the authors preferred using some words indicating either certainty or tentativeness such as seem, suggest, indicate, appear and modal verbs such as may, might, would, could, and likely to. These linguistics signals were likely to be used in the form of present simple tense either in active or passive voices. The first person pronoun 'we' was sometimes found to present the

author(s)'s comments, particularly in the applied linguistics corpus. Below are the following illustrations.

*The result discloses that the probability values of pluralization, adjective form, adverb form, verb form, pronouns, and passivization are all greater than the level of significance at alpha 0.05 which means that the null hypothesis is accepted. (ALC-8)*

*The implication here would be that present language analyst and even language teachers are challenged whether to treat passive constructions at a morphological or at a syntactical level. (ALC-7)*

Move 4, Step 2 which is comparing results with literature allows the authors to compare their study's findings with those of previous works. The high occurrence of this step indicated that Move 4 Step 2 was one of the preferred options to comment on the results in research discussion. Some distinct linguistic features were used to realize this step, particularly in the forms of 'be' plus some adjectives (e.g. be consistent with, be similar to) or certain words or phrases such as agree with, reported in, run counter to, supported those of. Noticeably, these linguistic signals coexisted with citations. This step is realized in the given examples below.

*In a similar vein, Dobel (1999) stipulated that an aphasic individual tend to substitute a word by another word that is present in the participant's language range. In conformity is Code's idea (1989) who purported that thos type of occurrence according to him is considered as "neologisms which cpontain recognizable pieces of real words from the speaker's language" (p.113). (ALC-11)*

*This finding is confirmed by the study of Kindt (2006) that statistical analysis of the relationship between measures of organizational climate and measures of job satisfaction revealed that the overall mean is of high level in the descriptive level. (ELC- 7)*

In Move 4, Step 3 which is accounting for results, the authors provide the readers with further explanation or give the reason for the observed differences in findings or unexpected outcomes. The rational explanations of the occurrence of this particular communicative purpose were highlighted by the use of words or phrases such as because, possible explanation for, it is possible, may be caused from, can be explained by. Authors in this study used present simple tense in the passive form. The first person singular pronoun 'I' was also used in the applied linguistics corpus. Below are the following examples in Step 3.

*Based on the insights of this study, I reflected on how students perceive their teacher's code switching in the classroom. I have become more aware of these perceptions because I believe that they give optimistic effects and deterrent effects as well as to the language learning process of the students. (ALC-3)*

*These types of writing the research introductions are common because introductions are believed to be the section where the problem must be pointed out and the need to solve or deal this problem must be put in mind while writing this section. (ALC-6)*

Move 4, Step 4 which is evaluating results is where authors evaluate their results by stating the strengths and weaknesses of the results. In the current study, Move 4 Step 4 is optional step in both corpora. It is optional because the result in the present study has zero occurrence in both corpora. It has the same result in Yang and Allison's (2003) study. This is exemplified by the lines below.

*Despite the two low levels found in this study, which were due to the limitations of the subjects' proficiency, this information is useful for the institution. (A)*

The function of Move 5 which is summarizing the study is to provide the readers with the main findings of the research study. Here, authors provide a summary of the whole study, but not just a summary of the results like in Move 3. Authors, often use such lexicogrammatical signals as the present perfect tense together with such words as 'study' and 'research' (Rasmeenin, 2006). This move is very often found at the end of discussions.

Discussion corpora was an optional move in the dissertations. There were only four occurrences in Applied Linguistic corpora discussions and no occurrence found in Educational Leadership corpora. The keywords used to signal this move were similar to those found in Move 3; however some differences were observed. The major difference is that summary or conclusive words or phrases, such as in sum, in conclusion were commonly followed by particular statements related to overall results, while those in Move 3 were followed by specific results. Below are the following illustrations.

*Finally, almost seventy percent (68.83%) of the teachers do not have other teaching jobs. (ALC-8)*

*As a whole, the sentence structures of the participants are illustrative of participants having Brocas' aphasia. (ALC-9)*

The objective of Move 6 which is evaluating the study is to evaluate the overall study by pointing out the limitations, indicating the contributions or evaluating the methodology. Move 6 is often made by authors to judge their studies in term of its significance, limitations, delimitations, generalizability, novelty, strengths, and weaknesses. Like Move 4, this move, too, often draws on one or a combination of steps: (1) Step A: Indicating limitations, (2) Step B: Indicating significance/advantage, and/or (3) Step C: Evaluating methodology (Rasmeenin, 2006). To this end, authors often use 'positive' verbs to signal what their studies 'expand on' or 'add to' the literature, 'gain' new things, 'contribute' to the existing body of knowledge, 'are confined to' certain bounds, are 'only a means' to an end, 'do not claim being exhaustive'.

The objective of Move 6, Step 1 is to describe the limitations of the research being conducted. Move 6 Step 1 commonly coexisted with Move 7 Step 1 (Making suggestions) or Move 7 Step 2 (Recommending further study). Present simple tense was the preferred tense used to present this communicative unit.

This step is realized in the given examples below.

*The finding is relatively obscure when considering the descriptive statistics (the means and standard deviations) of the three variables of the three groups of students which are more or less the same... (A)*

*It should be noted, however, that this is an exploratory study, and that the size of the corpus is quite small, being limited to... (A)*

The function of Move 6, Step 2 which is indicating significance/advantage is to allow the authors to point out the strengths of the study which may be significant for applications or implications. There were only two occurrences found in Move 6 Step 2 in both corpora. Statements in present simple tense relating to the significance of research conducted, such as value, benefit, advantage, essential were commonly used. Below are the following illustration.

*Another important thing, citations that show researcher as passive agent is not common. (ALC-5)*

*Davenport and Morse (Eds, 2010) assert that a structural approach to decision-making helps decision-makers act objectively. (ELC-7)*

Move 6, Step 3 which is evaluating methodology is used in realizing Move 6, and to comment on the strengths or weaknesses of the research methodology. In the present study the occurrence of Move 6 Step 3 is considered optional because there were only few occurrences found in this step in both corpora. Lexical items used as a clue to identify this step were some words related to design, model, approach, which were used in the form of tentative statements. This step is realized in the given examples below.

*According to the finding which indicated that the design of the program should be more creative to match learner age and preference, this issue had been raised significantly. (ELC-11)*

*For textual function, there are no textual themes present in the substantive topics because the message is devoid of any interaction to its reader. (ALC-9)*

Move 7 which is deductions from research is where authors draw inference about the results by suggesting what can be done to solve the problems identified by the research, proposing areas for further study or drawing pedagogical implications. This step allows authors to state the pedagogical significance of the study or indicate necessity for pedagogic changes. In this move authors often make suggestions concerning areas for further research or solutions to certain problems. They may as well provide implications for teaching. The move is quite often made in one or a combination of steps: (1) Step A: Making suggestions, (2) Step B: Recommending further research, and/or (3) Step C: Drawing pedagogic implications.

I have observed that the Yang and Allison's move model, is the most preferred model among the Applied Linguistics for move analysis. There are several other frameworks for move analysis.

The reason could be, Yang and Allison's move model is the most suitable move model for applied linguistics research (Holmes, 1997; Kanoksilapatham, 2005; Nwogu, 1997). Moreover, this model is an extension and modification of several other models, and its developers have found it to be the most comprehensive model for move analysis in Applied Linguistics (compare Holmes, 1997; Hopkins & Dudley-Evans, 1988; Peng, 1987; Yang & Allison, 2003).

Move 6 Step 1 commonly coexisted with Move 7 Step 1 (Making suggestions) or Move 7 Step 2 (Recommending further study). Present simple tense was the preferred tense used to present this communicative unit. In the present study this step is considered optional because, no occurrence found in both corpora. The examples given below are research made by the researcher for the reader to understand the move and apply it in the future. Below are the following illustrations.

*The finding is relatively obscure when considering the descriptive statistics (the means and standard deviations) of the three variables of the three groups of students which are more or less the same... (A)*

*It should be noted, however, that this is an exploratory study, and that the size of the corpus is quite small, being limited to 10 RA introductions from each subfield. (A)*

Move 7, Step 1 which is making suggestions allows authors to highlight how the research contributes to the existing knowledge in the field. Also, the authors provide some guidelines from the research findings for the readers in order to solve the problems identified by the research. Modal verbs were found in this step. In the present study, Move 7 Step 1 is considered optional because there is only one occurrence found in both corpora. Below are the examples of Step 3.

*On the part of the university... a university-wide research should be done focusing on the present... (ALC-6)*

*Still, the principals have to look into this indicator reflectively. (ELC-4)*

Move 7, Step 2 which is recommending further research states some possible areas for further studies. Its occurrence suggests that it was optional in both corpora. This step is to be signaled by words/phrases such as 'further studies/research', 'more studies are needed'. In the present study, only two occurrences found in ALC while, while no occurrence was found in ELC. Below are the following examples of Step 2.

*Lastly, further research should focus on the use of genre- approach in teaching writing, where communication topics are matched with the language functions. (ALC-12)*

*I likewise suggest that another study be conducted similar to this but perception of high proficient... (ALC-5)*

Move 7, Step 3 which is drawing pedagogical implication allows authors to state the pedagogical significance of the study or indicate necessity for pedagogic changes. In this study, there is one occurrence found in Move 7 Step 3 in ALC while no occurrence was found in ELC. Research findings may serve this particular need. This part of the results tells that authors of dissertations in both disciplines do not consider Step 3 obligatory statements relating to application of the results to learning and teaching contexts were used to address this step. This step is realized in the given example.

*The findings of this study suggest a number of pedagogical implications. Most of which rest in the teachers' accountability... (ALC-4)*

*These findings also have practical implications for EFL vocabulary instruction. (A)*

Aside from Yang and Allison's move (2003) model, I used criteria for justifying and classifying the occurrence of each move similar to Kanoksilapatham's (2005) study. Three categories are used in discussion and conclusion sections in the current study. If a particular move occurs 100% in every discussion and conclusion section, it is regarded as 'obligatory' if the occurrence of a move is below 60%, it is considered as 'optional'; and if the occurrence ranges from 60% to 99%, a move can be classified as conventional.

As shown in Tables 1a and 1b, the most frequent move of both data sets was Move 4 (Commenting on results), followed by Move 1 (Background Information). The frequent occurrence of move 4 in the written materials confirmed Yang and Allison's findings that in Discussion section, 'Commenting on Results' was the most substantial and frequent move. Moves 2 and 3 were considered conventional, while the remaining move were less frequent and they were optional in the two corpora.

### Moves of the Discussion Sections from the Two Corpora

Based from the analysis, there was no straightforward linear structure (M1-M2-M3-M4-M5-M6-M7) appearing in both ALC and ELC. All discussions in both corpora were constructed in various move structures. The patterns (Move 4, Move 1, Move 2, Move 3) were found in each corpus. The individual results and comments occurred alternatively. From the findings, the large variation in move structures that were found in the two corpora may be due to the fact that in the discussion section the author presents his/her point based on the research findings. The author has greater freedom in generating the ideas which is relevant to the research conducted.

Most discussions in both corpora were constructed cyclically (100% of the Linguistic Corpora and 87% in Educational Leadership Corpus), Move 4 (Commenting on results) and Move 1 (Background Information) were the most cyclical moves in both datasets.

Two moves including Move 2 (Reporting results), and Move 3 (Summarizing results) were also cyclical in nature, whereas, Move 5 (Summarizing the study) and Move 7 (Deductions from research) were non-cyclical moves.

### Moves and Steps of Conclusion Sections with Linguistic Signals

Conclusion is the last paragraph in a research paper, or the last part in any other type of presentation. In some research studies, dissertation conclusion sections are limited. According to Swales (1990) and Postegillo (1999), this particular section has been considered as part of the discussion section. This may be why the research studies on the structural organization of conclusion section are limited. It is known that the conclusion sections of research provide not only an outline of the study but also other important elements, such as implications and recommendations (Sandoval 2010 as cited in Morales 2012). Although there is a small number of research studies which analyzed the structural organization of this particular sections, the findings of two studies (Moritz et al., 2008 and Yang & Allison, 2003) in particular are interesting. For example, in Yang and Allison's (2003) study, it was found that the conclusion sections of applied linguistics articles contained three moves (Move 1: Summarizing the study, Move 2: Evaluating the study, and Move 3: Deductions from the research). These moves were organized linearly and Move 1 was found to be the most frequent move. In Moritz et al.'s (2008) study, which compared three corpora of conclusion sections in the field of applied linguistics written by three groups of different authors (Portuguese L1, English L1, and English L2), six moves were found including 'Restating the introductory statement', 'Consolidating the research space', 'Summarizing the study', 'Commenting on results', 'Evaluating the study', and 'making deductions from the research'. It was found that 'Making deductions from research was the most frequent move'.

In order to have a clear picture of the rhetorical moves employed in both corpora, the function and the occurrence of each move are presented below. In the examples given, citations used in the original texts were replaced by (A), the distinct linguistic signals that are regarded as the key words for each example are given in bold text.

The primary objective of Move 1: summarizing the study is to summarize the research or study by highlighting the findings. Here, authors provide a summary of the whole study – but not just a summary of the results/findings. The researcher observed that move appears in the very beginning of the conclusion of research and can be clearly identified. The occurrence of Move 1 in the present

study conformed to Yang and Allison's (2003) findings. There has been no difference found in both corpora regarding the occurrence of Move 1. It was the dominant move in both corpora.

In this move, authors highlight the main purpose, method, reference to previous research, and reviewing research results briefly. This implies that writers consider it compulsory to review and restate their study in the starting section of conclusion. Moritz et al. (2008) have carried out a study on research conclusion and Move 1 'Summarizing the study' is the least frequent move in their study. On the other hand, in Annuai and Wannaruk (2013) study on conclusion sections of RAs, Move 1 has higher occurrence than other moves. In this move authors often use such lexicogrammatical signals as the present perfect tense together with such words as 'study' and 'research'.

Also, the occurrence of the move in the present study conform with Yang and Alison's (2003) findings which found higher frequency of the summarizing move than for the other two moves. In this study Move 1 (Summarizing the Study) was the most frequent move in both corpora (Applied Linguistic Corpus and Educational Leadership corpus). Below are the following examples of Move 1.

*Crafting a story on the wild experiences of a child with Asperger syndrome is merely an attempt to scratch the tip of an ice berg.*  
(ALC-2)

*Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:* (ELC-11)

In Move 2: evaluating the study, authors justify the study by using three available options, which are 'Indicating significance/advantage', 'indicating limitations', and 'Evaluating methodology'. The occurrence of Move 2 is clearly different in both corpora: the occurrence of the Applied linguistic is optional, same with the results in Educational leadership. Authors often make this move to judge their study in term of its significance, limitations, delimitations, strengths, and weaknesses. So, the findings of our selected corpus have shown that in both corpora authors give less preference to Move 2. They mostly jump to the Move 3 after Move 1 by ignoring the significance of Move 2. This move is realized in the given examples below.

The purpose of Move 2, Step 1: indicating significance/advantages is to state the usefulness and importance of the study regarding the study's applications or

implications. Authors used prominent words which are used to indicate this step. This step is realized in the given example below.

*Moreover, the words that the participants produced are created through semantic relations either through attribution or circumlocution.* (ALC-4)

*The study shows also that there is a significant relationship between decision-making skills and quality of curriculum and instruction.* (ELC-5)

The function of Move 2, Step 2: indicating limitations is to state the limitations and weak points of the study. In this study, it has been noticed that both have the same occurrence in Move 2 Step 2. The result is optional because there were 5 of 15 occurrences found in both corpora. The authors indicate their limitations using linguistic signals. Below are the following illustration.

*However, in this study there remain many limitations that pave way for future research on this topic....* (ALC-14)

*Public elementary school/leads should always be aware of their leadership practices to enhance job satisfaction among their employees.* (ELC-5)

*Innovative leadership however, has a higher degree of significant relationship with ICT integration as compared to the attitudes of teachers towards ICT which shows a lower measure of significant relationship. It means that if principals exert more effort in encouraging innovative practices, and if teachers exhibit favorable attitudes towards ICT, the result would be a well implemented ICT integration program.* (A)

In Move 2, Step 3: evaluating methodology, authors evaluate their research methodology in terms of its strengths and weaknesses. As shown in Table 2, Move 2 Step 3 do not have any occurrence as compared to other steps of Move 2 in both corpora. Although, there is zero occurrence in both research corpora.

*I incorporated the method used in the study of Lunzaga (2012) morphological analysis of Gay Spoken Discourse. (A)*

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*The research shows that the corpus driven methodology has been proved very successful in fulfilling this objective.... (A)*

*To test hypothesized relationships between negative feedback, modified output, and L2 development, it was necessary to operationalize development very narrowly. (A)*

The function of Move 3: deductions from the research is to state, keeping in view the overall study, what the research adds to existing knowledge in the relevant area. This move is further articulated by two steps, namely 'Implications' and 'Recommendations'. In this move authors make suggestions regarding solutions to certain problems provide implications as well. The ALC reflects less occurrence of this move while no occurrence in educational leadership corpora. This implies that authors of applied linguistics are more inclined to present recommendations and practical implications for the purpose of exhortation to the readers.

Move 3, Step 1: recommending further research is the step where the authors offer some useful applications of their studies. Applied linguistics have five occurrence of this step. While no occurrence found in Educational leadership corpora. In Bunton's (2005) study Practical implications are more common in

Natural sciences conclusions than in Social Sciences corpora. In the case of the present study, the situation is different because Move 3 Step 1 do not have the same occurrence with each other. Authors used certain words, such as implication, application, help and modal verbs in recommending further research. This step is realized in the given examples below.

*This could as well hold true with their written discourse especially on the same grammar-structure items since errors committed in oral discourse are usually translated into written discourse or the other way around. (ALC-8)*

*This study provides a starting point for further research in understanding the field of email as an emerging genre. (ALC-11)*

Move 3, Step 2 which is drawing pedagogical implications offers suggestions as to how knowledge claims can be made for explicit purposes, both in real world and educational contexts. In present study, authors explicitly presented ways of using research findings in practical way. The statements of the authors clearly shows that making claims about research findings does not only authenticate the studies but also shows that how new knowledge can be put to practice life and pedagogical use. Below are the following examples in Step 2.

*The media should play its part to minimize its intelligibility gap. As the acceptability of a new language variety depends on intelligibility so it should not be compromised and media could play its part in removing the barriers in intelligibility of this variety..... (A)*

*Moreover, we recommend that a simple manual of herbaceous flora including local names and uses of species must be made for identification. Policy for the conservation of Natural plants should be also made..... (A)*

*Teachers must be aware of the different conventions inherent in any field of discipline. (ELC-3)*

*Swales model provides a framework in structuring an RA introductions, however, one must take into consideration that introductions are sometimes institutional and policies in writing RAI must be followed, thus, differs with Swales' has designed. (ALC-2)*

### Move Structure of the Conclusion Section from the Two Corpora

Based from my analysis, there were three move structures that were shared by at least two different conclusion sections including M1 -M2- M3, M1- M2 and M1, M2 and M3. The distributions of these three move patterns in the two corpora were different, for the Applied Linguistics corpus, the most frequent pattern was linear (M1-M2-M3). The second most frequent pattern was the M1 and M2, each of them was employed in two conclusion sections. In the Educational Leadership, the M1-M2 sequence was the most frequent.

The overall pattern from the conclusion corpora was M1 from the ELC got 100% while M1 in ALC got only 80% while Move 2 of both got the same percentage which 5 of 15 (33%). Meanwhile, Move 3 of ALC got 5 of 15 (33%) while there was no occurrence found in Move 3 ELC. This finding holds true with that found in Yang and Allison's (2003) study that three moves were found to be commonly organized in a linear structure. There was no occurrence in Move 3 (Deductions from Research in ELC since it was reflected in the table 2 that there was no occurrence found in Move 3, or writers might feel that deductions from research is not part of the conclusion section and have reflected it in other sections of the RAs.

In summary, three moves proposed in Yang and Allison's (2003) model were found in both corpora. Move 1 (Summarizing the Study), followed by move 2 and 3 respectively. The occurrence of each move in the ALC was far lower than that of the ELC especially the frequency of Move 1 summarizing the study. The linear structure of Move (M1-M2 –M3) was found in both corpora.

As shown in Tables 2a and 2b, all moves and steps proposed in Yang and Allison's (2003) model appeared in both corpora. It was noticed in Table 2 that the occurrence of each move in Applied Linguistic corpus was relatively different from those in the Educational Leadership corpus. Based on the percentage of occurrence, all three moves of the linguistic corpus were optional. This is different from Educational Leadership where move 1 (Summarizing the Study) was obligatory, move 2 (Evaluating the Study) was optional because the frequency of occurrence was lower than 60% and no trace of occurrence in move 3 (Deductions from Research) in Educational Leadership Corpora.

### Demarcation of the Moves in the Discussion and Conclusion Sections

The obvious differences found in the moves between discussion and conclusion sections in research in the present study were the moves and steps. The discussion section has its seven moves while the conclusion section has three moves. Out of seven moves from discussion section, three moves and two steps were actually found in the conclusion section, meaning these moves are duplication in both discussion and conclusion sections. These moves are Move 5 Summarizing the study, Move 6 Evaluating the study, Move 7 Deduction from Research, Move 7 step 2 recommending Further Research and Move 7 step 3 Drawing Pedagogic Implications. Because of these observations there are instances that these moves are present in both sections of the research. That is

why if multiple functions were present or served in the context or where sentence contained two or more moves, this move will be assigned to the move and step that appeared to be the most salient (e.g. Del Saz-Rubio, 2011, Holmes, 1997, Ozturk 2007).

Discussion varies from conclusion section according to its function. For discussion, it has been known that it is considered as the most difficult section. It has been noticed by some scholars in the field of second language teaching. (Swales & Feak, 1994, Swales & Feak, 2003). Swales and Feak, for example argued that – the problem is that discussion varies considerably depending on a number of factors. They noticed that one factor that determines this variability is the difference in the type of research questions from different studies set out to investigate; while some research questions require description of a particular phenomenon, others may be oriented towards finding solutions to a problem (Swales & Feak, 1994). In the discussion section the authors stake claim about how their results integrate with and contribute to disciplinary knowledge (Basturkmen, 2012). As Weissberg and Buker (1990) stated, when writing the Discussion section, the author steps back and takes a broad look at the findings as a whole, trying to move the readers back from the specific information presented in the results section to a more general view of how the findings should be interpreted. However, it is widely recognized that the discussion section is difficult to write and troublesome in both native and non-native speakers (Flowerdew, 2001, Jaroongkhongdachetal, 2012, Swales, 1990, Swales & Feak, 2004). This maybe because writers need to meet the cognitive demands of writing the discussion and the skills for writing in persuasive and argumentative styles (Pojanapunya & Todd, 2011).

On the other hand, conclusion section is the final part of the research. According to Swales (1990) and Postegillo (1999), this particular section has been considered as part of the discussion section, however, the most important element of conclusion that cannot be found in discussion is the implications and the recommendations (Sandoval 2010 cited in Morales 2012). In summary, the two conventional sections of research Discussion and Conclusion sections vary in pattern from Yang and Allison's (2003) model.

### Moves and Steps of the Discussion and Conclusion Sections

It was noted that there were similarities and differences in move occurrences and move structures of the discussion and conclusion sections in the two corpora.

For discussion section, three points are focused in here. First, with regard to move occurrence, the most frequent move in both sets of data was Move 4 (Commenting on results). This is due to the fact that the main function of the discussion section of research is to comment on the results by interpreting, accounting, and comparing with the previous work. Move 1 (Background information) was the second most frequent move in the two corpora appearing slightly less frequently than Move 4. Although, the third most frequent move in the two data sets was different, Move 2 (Reporting results) for the Applied Linguistics and Move 3 (Summarizing results) for the Educational Leadership corpus.

Second, Move 5 (Summarizing the study) was present in the Applied Linguistics dissertation but none in Educational leadership corpus. The reason for this is that this move is present in other sections of the graduate dissertations of both corpora. In general, members in the academic communities as well as the graduate students in all levels are required to include this move as part of the discussion section. In order to attract attention to the educational communities stating the value of the main findings, evaluating the study by pointing out limitations and providing practical implications for pedagogic implications are likely to be found in the research. In addition, English is considered as a medium of instruction in the classroom. Multiple and variety of topics concerning English language learning and teaching are being investigated in the field of applied linguistics. Therefore, it is possible that the findings of research that can contribute to English language pedagogy are stated in the research discussion. Likewise, some practical suggestions based on the research findings are usually made in order to encourage the graduate students to conduct more researches.

Third, the results showed that Move 4 (Summarizing results) was used to open the section in most Applied Linguistics discussion (15 of 15) whereas Move 2 (Reporting results) was the initial move in most Discussions in the Educational Leadership (15 of 15). This result demonstrates that Applied Linguistics graduate students preferred starting with results, as opposed to offering background information. On the other hand, Applied linguistics graduate students discussion sections were likely to be closed by either Move 1 (Background information) or Move 3 (Summarizing results, that is, 9 discussions ended by Move 2. This is significantly different from the Educational Leadership Discussions, where Move

4 was the most frequent choice to end the section.

Findings from previous literature showed various differences of move occurrence. Based on the frequency analysis, Move 4 (Commenting on results) stands out in the two sets of data. This finding is consistent with some past research. For example, this move occurred at one hundred percent in the biochemistry research analyzed by Kanoksilapatham (2005). Despite the fact that she relates this move as 'Consolidating results', its function is similar to Move 4, the commenting on the results move was an obligatory move in a study of Basturkmen (2012) who found out that the writers of Dentistry Discussions preferred to make comments on the results through two prominent steps (explaining result and comparing with results in literature). The second most frequent move was Move 1 (Background Information). It was a common move in Swales (1990) and Kanoksilapatham (2007). In addition, in a study conducted by Amirian, et al. (2008), the move called 'Finding' was obligatory. With the high frequency of Moves 4 and 2, it can be noted that these moves are substantial rhetorical moves in RAs discussion section.

Move 7 (Deductions from research) in both corpora contained least occurrence. Move 7 Step 1 contained 1 occurrence, Move 7 Step 2 contained 2, and 1 occurrence for Step 3 (Drawing Pedagogic implications). However, for the Educational Leadership corpus, only Move 7, Step 1 (making suggestions) contained only 1 occurrence.

This is contrary to the study of some previous research studies in which employment of such step varied in frequency. For example, in health science, its frequency was 53 and 33% in the biochemistry corpus (Kanoksilapatham, 2005) and 46% in her subsequent study (Kanoksilapatham, 2007). It occurred at a frequency of 57% in a computer science corpus (Posteguillo, 1999) and 40% in English Medical Discussions in ElMalik and Nesis's (2008) study. On the other hand, in soft science, the frequency of this step in Applied Linguistics discussions was 70% in an English corpus (Amirian et al., 2008) and 70% in Language and Linguistics discussions in Peacock's (2002) study. In short, the results of the previous research indicate that authors in the social sciences are more likely to recommend potential research directions more frequently than those in the heart sciences. This reflects the existence of Disciplinary Variation.

On the other hand, the research of the conclusion section of Applied Linguistics and Educational Leadership corpora in the present study have similarities and differences in terms of move occurrence and move structure. Move 1 (summarizing the study) was a conventional move in both sets of data. This finding is in consonance with that found in Morales' (2012) study in which Move 1

was employed at a frequency of 75 and 100% in the Filipino and Japanese corpora respectively. This is in consonance of the study of Moritz, et al. (2008), Move 1 was the least frequent move. It is likely to be noticed that although the corpus of both Moritz et al.'s (2008) study and Morales' (2012) study were from the field of applied linguistics the results of Moritz et al.'s (2008) study were significantly different. This shows the presence of rhetorical variations within the discipline.

The differences between the two corpora were the frequency of Move 2 (evaluating the study) and Move 3 (deductions from the research). Though the move of both data sets were the same, it varies from the steps of Move 2 in both sets of data. Move 2 Step 1 in Applied Linguistic corpora contained 5 of 15, while the Educational Leadership Move, 2 Step 1 has 2 of 15. Move 2, Step 2 in Applied Linguistics contained 6 of 15 and Educational Leadership contained 5 of 15. In Moritz et al.'s (2008) study, this particular move was the third most frequent move. Also in comparative study conducted by Morales (2012). Move 2 was an obligatory move, in which Step 1 (Indicating significance/advantages) was the frequent step (accounting for 100%) used by Filipino authors. The other two steps (Step 2: indicating limitations and Step 3: Evaluating methods) were commonly used by Japanese authors. Accounting for 63 and 50% respectively.

From the results, it could be inferred that there were evaluations however, these were placed in other sections of research. So, in other words there may be certain factors affecting the authors in writing and indicating significance and limitations of the study or evaluating the study as stated by some scholars (Jogthong, 2001; Kanoksilapatham, 2007). In addition, the scholars believe that writing includes the use of argumentative and evaluative skills. According to them, writing may affect one's communication norms, modesty, and humility may to some extent, have an influence to the non- native speaker. From these findings (previous research studies and the present study). It can be observed that when writing research articles, students or experienced writers need to be aware of the importance of evaluating their studies and contextualizing the findings of their research with reference to the existing knowledge in the field. So that the research may not only be more interesting, however may also be possibly considered for publication by well-known journals worldwide.

The frequency of Move 3 (Deduction from research) in Applied Linguistics was only five compared to Educational Leadership in which there was no occurrence on the said move. Compared to Morales' (2012) findings, the frequency of this move was relatively high, He found that both Step 1 (recommending further research) and Step 2 (drawing pedagogic implications) were extensively used to realize Move 3. In the same way, In Yang and Allison's

(2003) study, Move 3 was substantial move which was mainly realized by Step 2. This implies that deduction from the study (Move 3) is an important move in the conclusion sections of research in all disciplines. The difference in terms of the moves employed in the two sets of data can be used to raise the graduate students who are currently writing their dissertations' awareness of the structure/move of research articles and it may also be used to provide a practical guide for those who aim to publish in scholarly international academic journals.

The most important noticeable between the proposed model (Yang & Allison's, 2003) and the present study was the cyclicity Move 1 (summarizing the results). Yang and Allison's (2003) study found that Move 1 was the most cyclical move; which is also true in the present study, Applied Linguistics move occurrence in Move 1 was 12 of 15 (80%-conventional), while Educational Leadership corpus was 15 of 15 (100%-obligatory). The Educational Leadership authors are likely to provide deductions from research, recommending further research and drawing pedagogic implications from the study. This means that only Move 1 and Move 2 were sometimes reiterated in the move sequences, such as M1-M2-M3, M1-M2, M1-M2-M3 structures, where the structures are in the form of these two moves (Move 1 and Move 2) which occur alternatively.

Based from the results of the study, important implications can be drawn. Pedagogically, integrating the research article genre in the curriculum would be a practical option to language teachers. For example, to accomplish academic writing learners/graduate students need to be made aware of the relevance of the rhetorical moves and they should be encouraged or instructed to see the complexities and relationships among functions and language usage. It is expected that the findings will assist the graduate students as well as the writer specifically those who are encourage to publish international journals. As Sheldon (2011) pointed out, when writing a research article, writers need to contextualize their studies to wider audiences. Understanding the rhetorical move structure of research articles, particularly the discussion section which functions mainly to highlight and generalize research findings to the public, will enable novice writers to organize their work accurately which lead to an increased chances of being accepted. The template also provides a foundation for less experienced authors to write in such a manner that conforms to the conventions or expectations of the discourse community (Kanoksilapatham, 2007).

Likewise, in the conclusion section the present study attempts to compare the rhetorical moves of RA conclusion sections of doctoral dissertations. The results revealed that the three move proposed by Yang and Allison (2001) were employed in two data sets. However, with different frequency of occurrence.

Move 1 (summarizing the study) was the most frequent move in both sets of data. So it is considered as conventional move. The frequency of Move 2 (evaluating the study) of both sets of data have the same occurrence while Move 3 (deduction from research) in Applied Linguistics has five or 33% move occurrence compared to Educational Leadership with none occurrence on the said move.

In the present study, the rhetorical move structures of discussion and conclusion sections of Applied Linguistics and Educational Leadership are analyzed. Therefore, further research should compare the rhetorical move structure of discussion and conclusion sections written by the same writers published in both local and international contexts. With this suggestion, we may obtain explicit evidence on what are the influential factors that might contribute to the rhetorical strategies adopted by a particular writer when writing and publishing in different published environment.

A pedagogical suggestion, based on the study, would be that academic instructors and professors in research should teach their graduate students about the rhetorical move structure not only the discussion and conclusion sections but the conventional sections (IMRAD) as well. They should also overtly tell their graduate students the relevance of such moves and that following the correct structure would encourage graduate students to publish their work in international publication.

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**A Tracer Study on the Employability Status of the University of the Immaculate Conception Accountancy Graduates: Implication of their Academic Training**

Leonora M. Caminade, Lorna P. Flores, and Emma V. Sagarino<sup>1</sup>  
University of the Immaculate Conception, Davao City, Philippines  
<sup>1</sup>esagarino@uic.edu.ph

ABSTRACT

The primary goal of the University of the Immaculate Conception is to produce competent graduates who can help transform the society. The competence of the UIC graduates could be manifested in their employability mainly on their field of expertise. Hence, this research was designed to gather information on the employability of the UIC's Accountancy graduates. The survey was conducted in a nationwide scope using the social media network like Facebook, personal distribution, and short messaging approaches. Results show that 75% of the respondents are Certified Public Accountants; 79% was employed with 26% landing on their first job in less than a month after submitting their application; and a majority (56%) is employed with the commerce and industry sector. The primary reason of changing job is for economic – better salary scale. On the other hand, the abilities identified by the respondents useful in their job include: the skills on entrepreneurial, human resource, communication, critical thinking, information technology and problem-solving.

KEYWORDS: Accountancy, tracer study, employability, descriptive survey, Davao City, Philippines