# Analyzing the Conclusion Sections of Language Research Articles in Asia: A Move-Based Approach

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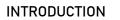
**Abstract**

This paper reports on the analysis of the conclusion sections of Asian-authored applied linguistics research articles (RAs) published in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) from 2010 to 2017. A total of twenty RAs were qualitatively analyzed using Yang and Allison's (2003) Conclusion Move Model (CMM), which categorizes rhetorical structures into three primary moves: Move 1 (M1-Summarizing the Study), Move 2 (M2-Evaluating the Study), and Move 3 (M3-Deductions from the Research). The study aimed to determine the frequency and sequence of these moves to better understand the rhetorical conventions employed by Asian scholars. Findings revealed that all three moves were present in the corpus, but with varying frequencies. Move 1 was the most prevalent, appearing in all analyzed RAs, highlighting its essential role in research article conclusions. Additionally, eight distinct move structure patterns were identified, including M1-M2-M3, M1-M2-M2-M3-M3, M1-M3, M1-M2-M3-M3, M1-M2-M2-M3, M1-M2-M2-M2-M3-M3, M1-M2-M2-M2, and M1-M3-M3. These patterns suggest flexibility in structuring RA conclusions while still aligning with Yang and Allison's (2003) model. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of rhetorical structuring in academic writing within the Asian research context. The findings offer pedagogical implications for teaching academic writing, particularly in English as a Second/Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) settings. It can help non-native English researchers develop well-structured and effective RA conclusions. Future research may also explore comparative analyses with Western-authored RAs to further examine cross-cultural variations in rhetorical conventions.

Keywords: language research articles, conclusion section, move-based analysis, conclusion model, research article sections, Asia, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)

## INTRODUCTION

Academic research articles (RAs) serve as essential vehicles for knowledge dissemination across various disciplines. The study of their structural organization, particularly through genre analysis, has gained considerable traction in recent years. Genre analysis (Swales, 1990) investigates the communicative events within specific discourse communities, providing insights into how texts are structured to achieve their intended purposes. Among the various approaches to genre analysis, move analysis has been widely applied to examine the hierarchical schematic structures of RAs (Flowerdew & Wan, 2010). Scholars, such as Bhatia (1993) and Swales (1990), have significantly contributed to this domain by identifying distinct rhetorical moves that characterize different sections of RAs.

While substantial research has focused on RA introductions and discussions, the conclusion section remains relatively underexplored (Posteguillo, 1999). This section plays a crucial role in summarizing key findings, evaluating research contributions, and proposing future research directions. Understanding its rhetorical structure is particularly important in academic writing instruction, as it guides novice researchers in crafting well-structured and coherent conclusions. Despite the growing scholarly contributions from Asia, limited studies have examined the structural patterns of conclusion sections in Asian-authored RAs. Given the increasing number of Asian scholars publishing in international journals, it is imperative to analyze their rhetorical conventions to bridge gaps in genre-based academic writing research.

The conclusion section of an RA is more than a mere summary of findings; it serves multiple rhetorical functions that contribute to the overall coherence of the study. Yang and Allison (2003) emphasized that an effective conclusion should not only synthesize key insights but also evaluate the study's contributions and suggest future research avenues. However, genre-based studies have largely overlooked this section, with most research focusing on introductions and discussions (Moritz et al., 2008). The scarcity of research on RA conclusions presents a gap that needs to be addressed, especially in the context of non-Western academic writing traditions.

In applied linguistics, various studies have investigated the rhetorical organization of RAs across different disciplines and cultural settings (Amirian et al., 2008; Kanoksilapatham, 2007; Samraj, 2002). These studies reveal considerable variations in the use of rhetorical moves, influenced by disciplinary norms and linguistic backgrounds. For instance, Hirano (2004) found that non-native English writers tend to structure their conclusions differently from native speakers, often emphasizing summary over evaluation. Similarly, Jogthong (2001) and Peacock (2002) observed differences in the frequency and sequencing of moves across disciplines. These findings underscore the need for further research into how Asian scholars structure their RA conclusions, as cultural and linguistic factors may influence their rhetorical choices.

Yang and Allison's (2003) Move Model: A Theoretical Framework. To analyze the structural organization of RA conclusions, this study employs the move model proposed by Yang and Allison (2003). This model, specifically designed for applied linguistics research, provides a comprehensive framework for identifying rhetorical moves in conclusion sections. It consists of three primary moves, each serving a distinct communicative function:

*Move 1: Summarizing the Study.* This move provides a concise overview of the research objectives, methods, and key findings. It ensures that readers recall the study's purpose and major contributions.

*Move 2: Evaluating the Study.* This move critically assesses the research's significance, methodological strengths, and limitations. It consists of three steps: Step 1 – Indicating significance/advantage; Step 2 – Indicating limitations; and, Step 3 – Evaluating methodology.

*Move 3: Deductions from the Research.* This move extends the discussion beyond the study itself by proposing implications and future research directions. It includes: Step 1 – Recommending further research; and, Step 2 – Drawing pedagogical implications.

Yang and Allison's (2003) framework has been widely utilized in genre-based research due to its adaptability and relevance to applied linguistics. Studies adopting this model have revealed variations in move patterns across different academic communities, emphasizing the need for further investigation into Asian-authored RAs. By applying this model, the present study aims to identify common move structures and deviations in Asian-authored RA conclusions, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of genre conventions in applied linguistics.

This study contributes to the growing body of research on genre analysis by examining the rhetorical structuring of RA conclusions in an Asian research context. By identifying prevalent move structures and patterns in Asian-authored RAs, the findings offer insights into genre conventions specific to this region. The study also highlights the influence of cultural and linguistic factors on rhetorical structuring, emphasizing the need for further contrastive research in academic writing.

From a pedagogical perspective, this research underscores the importance of incorporating move analysis into academic writing instruction. By equipping students with a deeper understanding of rhetorical conventions, educators can enhance their ability to produce well-structured RA conclusions that align with international publication standards. Future studies can expand this research by comparing RA conclusions across different disciplines and

linguistic backgrounds, further enriching the field of genre analysis and academic discourse studies.

LITERATURES

The process of evaluating a literary style or type in order to comprehend its standards, expectations, goal, and intended audience is known as genre analysis. Despite having a long history that extends back to the study of rhetoric and literature, the term "genre" has only recently started to gain recognition. Its current range of applications is quite extensive and includes the analysis of songs, movies, and everyday spoken and written language (Imtihani, 2010). "Genres are staged, structured, communicative events, motivated by various communicative purposes, and performed by members of specific discourse communities," according to Berkenkotter & Huckin (2016), as cited in Flowerdew (2011, p.516). According to several scholars (Amirian et al., 2008), genre-based research is a valuable source of information and contributes to the literature, especially for non-native research authors. Furthermore, as previously stated, the term "genre" refers to a type or style of writing. As a result, there are different writing styles that can be classified into two categories: academic and non-academic writings.

Academic writing refers to writing that is utilized in educational environments such as schools, colleges, and universities, as well as libraries. These writing genres can include academic books from primary to higher secondary levels that are related to any subject, while at the higher (university) level, there are many fields and subfields with different books such as psychology, sociology, linguistics, literature, business, genetics, information technology, and math. As a result, academic writing includes a wide range of writing styles (genres), such as research papers, book reviews, articles, theses, emails, letters, and applications. The sections of a research paper are as follows: abstract, introduction, literature review, methods, discussion, results, and conclusion. Furthermore, literature classes usually cover a wide range of literary genres, including both nonfiction and fiction. Poetry, drama, novels, novellas, short tales, prose, and fantasies are all forms of fiction.

Non-academic writing can take many forms, including newspaper articles, autobiographies, magazine articles, personal or business letters, novels, websites, text messages, diaries, Facebook posts, Instagram posts, WhatsApp posts, blogs, and other social media posts. The foreword, prologue, epilogue, and other portions that comprise a book are also known as its subgenres. Genres are divided into two categories: pure and hybrid. There are various non-academic pure genres, such as newspapers, editorials, and business letters, therefore all academic genres do not have to be pure genres. The bulk of academic genres are pure genres, such as books, research papers, letters, and applications. However, the word "pure genre" simply refers to a genre that, as demonstrated by the examples above, has distinct characteristics and can stand alone. The phrase "mixed" or "hybrid" genre denotes the blending or mixing of two or more genres. Examples of this style of work can be found in literature, television, and cinema. Examples include "advertorials," which blend editorial and advertising, "docufiction," which combines documentary and fiction, "dramedies based on documentaries," and "comic science fiction," which combines humor and science fiction. Furthermore, spoken forms such as casual discussions, official and informal lectures, public speeches, and so on have genres, and each spoken form has a distinct structure. The preceding examples of several genres demonstrate how each genre can be analyzed in a unique manner, although there are numerous linguistic features that can be utilized to study any genre. This study encourages young researchers to learn about common thought, expand their knowledge, and improve their academic writing skills.

However, when studying genre method, move-analysis is the most useful in determining how research articles are written. As a result, one of the most popular topics of study for researchers right now is movement and step analysis, which can generate informative

recommendations for future research publications and improve their quality.

In the field of academic writing, particularly in applied linguistics, the conclusion portion of research papers (RAs) is critical. It summarizes the study's findings while also providing evaluations, implications, and recommendations for further research. Understanding the rhetorical structures of these conclusion sections is critical for both new and experienced researchers seeking to successfully explain their findings. This literature review digs into many research that have examined the move structures in RA findings, with a particular emphasis on applied linguistics and Asian-authored publications.

Move Analysis in Research Article Conclusions. Move analysis, rooted in genre analysis, examines the functional components or "moves" within a text that collectively achieve its communicative purpose. Swales (1990) pioneered this approach, highlighting how specific sections of academic texts serve distinct rhetorical functions. Building upon this foundation, Yang and Allison (2003) proposed a model specifically for RA conclusion sections, identifying three primary moves:

*Move 1: Summarizing the Study.* Provides a concise overview of the research objectives and findings.

*Move 2: Evaluating the Study.* Assesses the study's significance, limitations, and methodological strengths.

*Move 3: Deductions from the Research.* Offers implications, recommendations, and potential applications derived from the study.

This tripartite framework has been instrumental in subsequent analyses of RA conclusions across various disciplines and cultural contexts.

Comparative Analyses of Conclusion Sections. Several studies have employed Yang and Allison's (2003) model to compare the structures of Research Article (RA) conclusions across different linguistic and cultural contexts, providing valuable insights into how academic writing conventions may vary depending on both disciplinary expectations and cultural norms. These comparative analyses reveal that while certain moves, such as Move 1 (summarizing the study), are universally present in RA conclusions, the frequency, realization, and sequencing of other moves, such as Move 2 (evaluating the study) and Move 3 (suggesting future research or implications) can vary depending on the cultural background and academic practices of the authors.

One prominent study by Amnuai and Wannaruk (2013) focused on a move-based analysis of RA conclusions in English articles published in both international and Thai journals within the field of applied linguistics. Their findings indicated that while all three moves were present in both corpora, the frequency and realization of these moves differed notably. Move 1, which involves summarizing the study's findings, was consistently present in both international and Thai-authored RAs, underscoring its obligatory nature in academic writing. This finding aligns with the general understanding that summarizing the study's main points is an essential part of the conclusion, regardless of the cultural or linguistic context.

However, the study also highlighted that Moves 2 and 3 exhibited significant variability between the two corpora. Thai-authored RAs showed less frequent use of evaluative (Move 2) and deductive (Move 3) moves compared to their international counterparts. In particular, the omission or reduced emphasis on Move 2, which involves the evaluation of the study's strengths and limitations, suggests potential cultural influences on rhetorical preferences. In many Asian cultures, particularly in Thailand, there may be a cultural tendency to avoid overt self-criticism or the acknowledgment of weaknesses, as doing so may be perceived as undermining the credibility of the researcher or the research itself. This cultural inclination could explain why Thai authors were less likely to include a critical evaluation of their studies in the conclusion section.

Similarly, the less frequent use of Move 3, which involves suggesting directions for future research or discussing the broader implications of the study, may also reflect cultural preferences for modesty and restraint in academic writing. In some cultures, particularly those in the East, there is often a reluctance to make bold or speculative claims, which may explain why Thai authors were less inclined to make strong deductive statements in their conclusions. These cultural nuances point to the need for academic writing instruction that is sensitive to the specific rhetorical tendencies of students from diverse cultural backgrounds. In this context, targeted instruction that addresses these differences—such as training in how to evaluate research critically while maintaining cultural respect and how to frame future research suggestions appropriately—can help bridge the gap between local and global academic writing norms.

In a similar vein, Kawase (2024) conducted a study that examined how authors sequence moves in the conclusion sections of applied linguistics RAs to achieve coherence and enhance the persuasive impact of their writing. Kawase's findings revealed that authors often present a summary of the study or previous research trends as background information (Move 1), which then guides the reader to recognize the significance of the study or its findings. This background summary serves not only as a concise recap of the study but also as a means to contextualize the research within the broader field, helping readers appreciate the study's relevance and contributions.

The strategic sequencing of these moves, where background information is provided before highlighting the study's significance (Move 2), enhances the persuasive impact of the conclusion by effectively demonstrating the study's contributions to existing knowledge. By first establishing the context and summarizing the study's key findings, authors can then use the evaluative and deductive moves to stress the importance of their research and its implications for future work. Kawase's research emphasizes that the combination of these moves is crucial for crafting coherent and impactful conclusions that resonate with the reader, persuading them of the value of the study while also guiding them toward an understanding of its broader relevance.

Kawase's findings also underscore the importance of move combinations, illustrating that simply using individual moves in isolation may not be sufficient to create a persuasive and coherent conclusion. Instead, the effective combination and sequencing of moves are key to guiding the reader through the conclusion and highlighting the study's academic contributions. For authors from different cultural backgrounds, understanding the strategic function of these move combinations is essential for constructing conclusions that not only adhere to global academic conventions but also respect local cultural expectations.

Cultural Influences on Rhetorical Structures. The rhetorical structures of Research Article (RA) conclusions are not only shaped by disciplinary conventions but also by cultural factors, which play a significant role in the way academic arguments and conclusions are framed. These cultural influences can often manifest in subtle yet distinct ways, affecting the organization, tone, and content of academic writing. In the context of research articles, particularly in non-Western settings, understanding the intersection of cultural and disciplinary conventions is essential for scholars striving to produce work that aligns with both local practices and global academic expectations.

Arsyad (2013) examined Indonesian-authored RAs within the social sciences and humanities and found that, although Indonesian authors generally adhered to the conventional move structures, there were notable differences in how these moves were constructed. One of the key observations was the tendency of Indonesian authors to provide more elaborate background information in Move 1, which deals with introducing the study's context or problem. In contrast to the Western academic style, which often values brevity and succinctness, Indonesian writers would dedicate considerable space to setting the stage for their

conclusions by offering an extensive historical, cultural, or theoretical backdrop. This practice reflects the Indonesian cultural norm of valuing thoroughness and context-setting, where providing detailed background information is seen as an important way to demonstrate depth of understanding and respect for the subject matter.

Such an approach in the RA conclusion is indicative of the broader Indonesian cultural preference for holistic explanations, as well as the societal tendency to prioritize relational understanding. This can be seen as an effort to connect academic work with real-world implications, positioning it not just as an intellectual exercise, but as a contribution that needs to resonate with local experiences and perspectives. In contrast, Western rhetorical conventions in academic writing often emphasize a more straightforward and concise approach, particularly in conclusions where the focus is typically on summarizing the findings and implications without rehashing extensive contextual information.

The significance of these cultural differences extends beyond mere stylistic preferences. The way conclusions are structured can influence the perceived credibility and effectiveness of the RA in the global academic community. For instance, scholars aiming for international publication must carefully navigate the tension between adhering to local cultural norms and meeting the expectations of international audiences, who may be more accustomed to concise, direct conclusions that highlight key findings without providing substantial background context.

Moreover, such cultural nuances also highlight the importance of intercultural competence for authors seeking to publish in international journals. Authors must strike a balance between adhering to global academic standards—such as clarity, conciseness, and objectivity—while still retaining elements of their cultural identity that make their work distinct and meaningful within their local academic context. This process often involves revising rhetorical structures to align with both

international norms and the author's cultural values, which can be challenging but ultimately rewarding in achieving a wider readership.

Implications for Academic Writing Pedagogy. The insights derived from move analysis of research articles (RAs) carry profound implications for academic writing pedagogy, particularly in contexts where English is a second or foreign language. As the process of academic writing is deeply intertwined with cultural and disciplinary conventions, a nuanced understanding of these variations is crucial for developing effective instructional strategies. In non-native English-speaking contexts, where writers may be influenced by the rhetorical structures and conventions of their native languages, academic writing pedagogy must be responsive to these differences in order to improve the clarity and effectiveness of their academic communication. Morales (2012) conducted a contrastive rhetoric study comparing Filipino and Japanese RA conclusions, shedding light on the distinct ways in which these two cultural groups approach academic writing. The study found notable differences in the rhetorical moves employed by Filipino and Japanese authors. Specifically, Filipino authors were more inclined to include a section on recommendations for future research (Move 3), whereas Japanese authors were more focused on summarizing their study (Move 1) in the conclusion. These findings reflect broader cultural tendencies, such as the Filipino inclination toward future-oriented discourse and a focus on expanding knowledge, which is often seen in their academic culture as a way of contributing to broader scholarly conversations. On the other hand, Japanese authors' focus on summarizing findings suggests a more restrained and modest approach to presenting conclusions, reflecting the Japanese cultural value of humility and restraint in academic writing.

These contrasting practices have important implications for academic writing pedagogy. First, they underscore the necessity of tailoring writing instruction to the specific rhetorical and cultural needs of students from different linguistic backgrounds. Traditional academic

writing pedagogy, particularly in English, often assumes a uniform set of expectations, focusing on a generic approach to RA conclusions that prioritizes clear and concise summary and a straightforward presentation of findings. However, as Morales' study demonstrates, these conventions do not necessarily align with the writing practices of all cultures. Therefore, writing instruction must be adaptable to account for these differences, providing students with strategies to navigate and integrate local rhetorical conventions with global academic norms.

One effective approach to addressing these cultural differences is the incorporation of genre-based pedagogies that emphasize the functional purposes of each rhetorical move within academic writing. Genre-based instruction enables students to understand the purpose and typical structure of various parts of academic texts, particularly conclusions, and to make informed decisions about how to structure their writing according to both disciplinary expectations and cultural norms. For instance, students can be taught the global expectations for academic conclusions, such as the need for a clear summary of findings and the inclusion of practical implications, while also being encouraged to retain cultural elements that add value to their writing, such as recommendations for future research or context-setting that may resonate with their local academic community.

Furthermore, a move-based approach to teaching writing can help students break down the structural elements of RA conclusions into distinct rhetorical functions, such as summarizing the main findings, offering recommendations, or discussing limitations. By understanding these functions, students can better tailor their writing to meet the specific needs of their academic field and the cultural expectations of their intended audience. This approach not only improves the students' ability to write more effectively in English but also helps them develop greater intercultural competence, enabling them to communicate more confidently across diverse academic and cultural contexts.

Additionally, instructors should be aware of the challenges faced by students from different linguistic backgrounds, particularly when their native rhetorical conventions diverge significantly from those expected in English academic writing. For example, some cultures may place more emphasis on indirectness or formality, while others may prioritize directness and conciseness. Addressing these tendencies in writing pedagogy helps students build a more flexible and adaptable writing style, allowing them to negotiate the varying expectations of global academic audiences without sacrificing their own cultural identity.

Challenges in Move Realization. Despite the existence of established frameworks for structuring Research Article (RA) conclusions, authors often encounter significant challenges in effectively realizing certain rhetorical moves, especially when it comes to Move 2, which involves evaluating the study. This move is essential in academic writing because it allows authors to critically reflect on the strengths and limitations of their research, contributing to the transparency and credibility of the study. However, as highlighted by Aslam and Mehmood (2014), many authors, particularly in non-Western contexts, struggle to incorporate critical self-evaluation into their conclusions. Their analysis of Pakistani-authored RAs in both the natural and social sciences revealed that authors often omitted key evaluations of their studies, including discussions of limitations and areas for improvement.

The omission of Move 2, particularly the evaluation of the study, may be attributed to various factors, including cultural norms and a lack of emphasis on critical self-assessment in academic training. In some cultural contexts, there is a tendency to avoid directly addressing the limitations of one's work, as doing so may be perceived as undermining the authority and credibility of the researcher. This reluctance to acknowledge flaws or weaknesses in research can be linked to broader cultural values, such as the importance of maintaining face and avoiding criticism. In such cultures, there may be an implicit belief that highlighting limitations could reflect poorly on the researcher,

diminishing the perceived quality of the work or the reputation of the author.

Moreover, a lack of training in critical self-assessment and constructive critique can exacerbate this challenge. In many academic settings, especially those outside the Western context, education often places greater emphasis on producing "flawless" work rather than fostering an environment where students are encouraged to critically engage with their own research and reflect on its limitations. This may stem from traditional teaching practices that prioritize rote learning and the production of idealized, error-free results, rather than encouraging students to engage in reflective and self-critical thinking that is central to the scientific and academic process.

Addressing this challenge requires a fundamental shift in academic writing pedagogy. One important step is to foster a culture of constructive critique, where acknowledging the limitations of a study is viewed not as a weakness, but as a strength. In academic writing, the ability to critically evaluate one's work demonstrates intellectual maturity, transparency, and an understanding of the complexities inherent in any research process. Acknowledging limitations allows researchers to position their work within the broader context of ongoing academic discourse, showing that they are aware of its boundaries and that further research is needed to address unresolved questions or gaps.

To overcome the reluctance to evaluate one's own study, academic writing instruction should place a strong emphasis on the importance of self-reflection and critical thinking. This involves teaching students to view the evaluation of their research as an opportunity for growth rather than as a negative assessment of their capabilities. Instructors can use scaffolding techniques, such as guided peer reviews or group discussions, where students can practice identifying strengths and weaknesses in research collectively. This can help normalize the process of evaluating one's work and make it less daunting or uncomfortable for students who may feel that

admitting flaws could jeopardize their academic standing.

Additionally, instructors should encourage students to understand the value of limitations in advancing knowledge. Limitations are not an indication of poor research; rather, they provide valuable insights into the scope and context of the study, offering a roadmap for future research directions. By incorporating explicit instruction on how to effectively frame limitations—such as recognizing them as avenues for future exploration—students can learn how to position their findings within a larger academic conversation.

Another crucial aspect of addressing this challenge is integrating the concept of a "growth mindset" into academic writing pedagogy. When students are encouraged to view research as an evolving process that is continually subject to revision and refinement, they may feel more comfortable acknowledging the limitations of their work. This mindset fosters an environment where critical self-assessment is not only accepted but actively encouraged.

Advancements in Move Analysis Research. The field of move analysis continues to evolve, with recent studies expanding the scope beyond traditional textual analysis. Li et al. (2024) introduced RAs Move, a comprehensive corpus dedicated to the annotation of move structures in RA abstracts across multiple disciplines. This corpus facilitates both manual and automated move analysis, providing a valuable resource for researchers and educators. The development of such corpora enables large-scale analyses, offering deeper insights into disciplinary conventions and aiding in the refinement of academic writing pedagogy.

The body of literature on move analysis in RA conclusion sections underscores the intricate interplay between rhetorical structures, disciplinary conventions, and cultural influences. For authors, particularly those from non-native English-speaking backgrounds, understanding these dynamics is crucial for effective scholarly communication. Educators

and mentors play a vital role in imparting this knowledge, guiding authors to navigate the complexities of academic writing. As the field progresses, continued research and the development of resources like annotated corpora will further enhance our understanding and teaching of effective RA conclusion writing.

METHODS

The present study used qualitative content analysis, to examine the moves in the conclusion sections according to Yang and Allison's (2003) move model. The researcher randomly selected 20 research articles in the field of applied linguistics from Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), which is an online directory that indexes and provides access to quality open access, peer-reviewed journals. The researcher selected Asian research articles (RAs) published in the DOAJ during the period 2010–2017. Only Asian authors who published their works in DOAJ were included in the random selection of articles. It was further noted that the selected RAs have the conclusion (conclusions and implications) section as an independent section in the article and that it is not embedded in any of the parts of the RA. Moreover, RAs with combined sections of Discussion and Conclusion and the like were excluded from the corpus.

This study employed a qualitative research design using move analysis to examine the rhetorical structures of conclusion sections in research articles. The primary analytical framework utilized was Yang and Allison's (2003) Conclusion Move Model, which categorizes rhetorical moves into three key functions: Move 1 (Summarizing the Study), Move 2 (Evaluating the Study), and Move 3 (Deductions from the Research). This model was selected due to its specificity in analyzing applied linguistics research articles and its established validity in previous genre-based studies.

Corpus Selection. The dataset consisted of twenty research articles in applied linguistics published in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) between 2010 and 2017. The selection process followed strict inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure the representativeness and reliability of the corpus. Only articles with a distinct and separate conclusion section were included, while those in which conclusions were embedded within discussion sections were excluded. Additionally, only research articles authored by scholars from Asian institutions were considered to maintain the regional focus of the study.

Analytical Procedure. The methodological procedure involved multiple stages of analysis to ensure the rigor and reliability of findings. Initially, the articles were manually reviewed to identify the presence of the three moves outlined in Yang and Allison's (2003) model. Each conclusion section was segmented, and the rhetorical moves were coded based on predefined functional criteria. The analysis was independently conducted by two researchers to ensure inter-rater reliability, with discrepancies resolved through discussion and consensus.

Following the identification of moves, a frequency analysis was conducted to determine the prevalence and distribution of each move across the corpus. Additionally, patterns of move combinations were analyzed to explore variations in rhetorical structuring. Eight distinct move structures were identified, ranging from linear (M1–M2–M3) to recursive patterns with multiple occurrences of evaluative and deductive moves. These variations were further examined in relation to possible cultural and disciplinary influences.

Ensuring Reliability and Validity. The methodological approach employed in this study ensures a rigorous and systematic examination of the rhetorical structures in RA conclusions, offering insights into the writing conventions of Asian scholars. The findings contribute to academic discourse analysis and have implications for genre-based writing instruction, particularly in English as a Second/Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) contexts.

RESULTS

Move Frequency. Table 1 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of rhetorical moves and steps found in research articles (RAs). It outlines three main moves typically observed in research article conclusions. Move 1, Summarizing the study, appears in all analyzed RAs (100%), indicating that summarizing the research is a universally employed strategy. Move 2, Evaluating the study, includes three steps: Indicating significance/advantage (50%), Indicating limitations (40%), and Evaluating methodology (35%). These figures suggest that, while half of the RAs highlight the study's significance, fewer discuss its limitations or critically assess its methodology. Move 3, Deductions from the research, consists of two steps: Recommending further research (60%) and drawing pedagogic implications (70%). The higher occurrence of pedagogic implications suggests a strong emphasis on practical applications in the analyzed corpus. Overall, the data indicate that summarizing the study is an obligatory move, while evaluation and deductions vary in frequency, with methodological evaluations being the least common.

Table 1
*Frequency of moves and steps found in the conclusion sections in 20 RAs*

| MOVES/STEPS | FREQUENCY OF OCCURENCES IN THE RAs | PERCENTAGE** |
|---|---|---|
| Move 1: Summarizing the study | 20 | 100% |
| Move 2: Evaluating the study | | |
| Step 1: Indicating significance/advantage | 10 | 50% |
| Step 2: Indicating limitations | 8 | 40% |
| Step 3: Evaluating methodology | 7 | 35% |
| Move 3: Deductions from the research | | |
| Step 1: Recommending further research | 12 | 60% |
| Step 2: Drawing pedagogic implication | 14 | 70% |

*\*\*Note. Percentage for each move and step is derived using the formula n/20\*100, where n is the number of moves/steps occurrence divided by 20, then, multiplied by 100.*

In order to have a clear picture of the rhetorical moves employed in the corpus of 20 RAs, the function and realizations of each move are presented below:

Move 1: Summarizing The Study. The primary aim of this move is to summarize the research by highlighting the findings. The occurrences of the move in the present study is aligned with Yang and Allison's (2003) findings which found a

higher frequency of the summarizing move than for the other two moves. The examples of Move 1, which was extracted from the corpus, are as follows:

1. In this study, the three levels of L1 interference represent more negative transfer than positive transfer in the students' written English. The former shows many issues of errors on vocabulary use, phrases, clauses and sentence structures, as well as language style of paragraph writing. The latter indicates only the creativity of Thai lexicon in written English.

2. After analyzing and classifying the data from Biology book, the research questions can be answered. For the first question, the answer can be seen in the table 1 that the most frequent error is misformation error with 32 cases. For the second question, the probable intended texts are made by correction of the errors and the reconstruction of English structure while the SL text used as the guidance.

Move 2: Evaluating The Study. This is the move where authors justify their study using three available options, including 'Indicating significance/advantages', 'Indicating limitations', and 'Evaluating methodology'. Based on the frequencies presented in Table 1, Move 2 (Evaluating the study) was the least frequent move observed. The examples of Move 2 which were analyzed via three steps are as follows:

*Step 1: Indicating Significance/Advantage*

1. The study of radiotelephony communication radio conversation will be helpful to fix relevant documents and materials in written form. The study of preposition omission has an important role to flight safety in a long time.

2. The linguistic study from a SFL perspective of cohesive ties and their respective chaining techniques represents a fundamental but singular component of a larger, fuller discourse analysis.

*Step 2: Indicating Limitations*

1. Although the sample size involved in this study is relatively small. The experiment chooses the key classes, but it does not completely exclude the factors of students' willingness to learn. Therefore, <u>there are some limitations in the study</u>.

2. <u>The lack of high-quality studies and empirical data</u>, however, makes it difficult to draw conclusion of what strategies are more benefit to vocabulary acquisition through video games

*Step 3: Evaluating Methodology*

1. However, <u>the frequency and preferences of employing language learning strategies are the most significant factors</u> that distinguish the proficiency of successful language learners and poor language learners.

2. This <u>paper integrates the research results of cognitive linguistics on the omission</u> into practical application of aviation English. The Aviation English study gradually began to pay attention to the omission, but the domestic research of Aviation English is lack of professionals and systematic study.

Move 3: Deductions From The Research. The purpose of this move is to state, with respect to the overall study, what the research contributes to existing knowledge in the field. Two options are used to analyze this move, namely, 'Recommending further research,' and 'Drawing pedagogical implications.' Move 3 was the second most frequent move occurring with a frequency of 60% and 70% of the corpus. The examples of Move 3 with these two steps are presented as follows:

*Step 1: Recommending Further Research*

1. <u>Further studies are needed to verify</u> the role of grammatical expressions on authorial stance in academic discourse.

2. <u>Future research may</u> also examine gender differences in email communication.

*Step 2: Drawing Pedagogical Implications*

1. The findings regarding learners' proficiencies in second language (Arabic or Hebrew) <u>contribute to debates regarding the best methods or the strategies that might be chosen to teach learning to read second language.</u>

2. <u>In addition, the freshness and flexibility indicated in the metaphors they used to illustrate teaching and learning are highly conducive to motivating students.</u>

In sum, three moves proposed in Yang and Allison's (2003) model were found in the corpus. Move 1 (Summarizing the study) was the predominant move in the two datasets, followed by Move 3 and Move 2 respectively.

<u>Move Structure Patterns.</u> Table 2 presents the frequency and distribution of move structure patterns identified in the conclusion sections of 20 research articles (RAs) in applied linguistics. A total of eight distinct move structure patterns were observed, with the M1–M2–M3 pattern emerging as the most prevalent, occurring in 7 out of 20 RAs (35%). This was followed by the M1–M3 pattern, which appeared in 4 RAs (20%). The remaining six patterns exhibited varying degrees of frequency, ranging from 1 to 3 occurrences each, indicating a degree of structural diversity in RA conclusions.

Table 2
*Frequency of Identified Move Structure Patterns*

| Move Structure Pattern | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| M1-M2-M3 | 7 | 35% |
| M1-M3 | 4 | 20% |
| M1-M2-M2-M3-M3 | 2 | 10% |
| M1-M2-M3-M3 | 2 | 10% |
| M1-M2-M2-M3 | 2 | 10% |
| M1-M2-M2-M2-M3-M3 | 1 | 5% |
| M1-M2-M2-M2 | 1 | 5% |
| M1-M3-M3 | 1 | 5% |

*Agenda: M1- Summarizing the Study; M2- Evaluating the Study; M3- Deductions from the Research*

These findings suggest that while a linear three-move structure is dominant, alternative

configurations are also employed, reflecting flexibility in rhetorical structuring within the academic discourse of applied linguistics.

## DISCUSSION

It can be noted that the conventional move in the 20 Asian-authored RAs is the Move 1 (Summarizing the study). This finding is consistent 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 and Amnuai and Wannaruk's (2017) study which generated 60% in the Thai corpus. However, in a study carried out by Moritz et al. (2008), Move 1 was the least frequent move. It is noticeable that although the corpus of both Moritz et al.'s (2008) study and Morales' (2012) study were from the field of applied linguistics as in the present study, the results of Moriz et al.'s (2008) study were significantly different. This reflects the existence of rhetorical variation within a discipline.

The observed move structure patterns underscore the flexibility within a genre-constrained structure in RA conclusions. While the dominance of the M1–M2–M3 pattern affirms a conventional approach, deviations from this structure suggest authorial choices shaped by research focus, target audience, or publication guidelines.

For academic writing instruction, these findings emphasize the need to equip EFL and novice researchers with an understanding of genre-based writing strategies. Incorporating move analysis in pedagogical practices can enhance students' awareness of rhetorical structuring and improve their ability to craft well-organized conclusion sections. Furthermore, recognizing the prevalence of evaluation and deduction moves can guide writers in making informed decisions about their rhetorical positioning and argumentation in research discourse.

The findings of this study have several implications for academic writing instruction, research, and journal publication practices. In the context of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction, the results suggest the need for explicit genre-based teaching of move structures in research article conclusions. Educators should emphasize the conventional M1-M2-M3 pattern while also introducing students to alternative structures to enhance their flexibility in academic writing. This approach can help non-native English researchers develop a more structured and coherent way of presenting their study's final section.

For researchers and scholars, further investigation into rhetorical patterns in research article conclusions across different disciplines could provide a broader perspective on disciplinary variations in academic writing. Additionally, a comparative analysis between Asian and Western-authored RAs may yield valuable insights into cultural differences in rhetorical structuring. Such studies could contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how academic writing conventions evolve in diverse linguistic and cultural settings.

Finally, journal editors and peer reviewers may benefit from these findings by incorporating explicit recommendations on structuring research article conclusions in their publication guidelines. Standardizing expectations for conclusion sections could enhance consistency in scholarly writing and improve the clarity and effectiveness of research dissemination. By integrating these recommendations, this study contributes to the ongoing discourse on genre analysis and academic writing, offering practical applications for researchers, educators, and academic publishers alike.

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