

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction to the study. It covers the background of the study, problem statement, research questions, the study's objective, the research's significance and the definitions of key terms

1.1 Background of the Study

Research article conclusions play a crucial role in academic writing. They summarize the research findings, reflect on their implications, and often suggest areas for future study. The conclusion is typically the final section of a research article, and it serves as a critical part of the overall narrative, providing closure and reinforcing the main contributions of the study (Swales & Feak, 2012). Understanding how to effectively write a conclusion is essential for academic success, particularly for students who are developing their writing skills (Hyland, 2004; Paltridge & Starfield, 2007).

The primary purpose of a research article conclusion is to succinctly restate the main findings of the study and discuss their broader implications. A well-crafted conclusion helps readers understand the significance of the research, its limitations, and potential future directions. This section not only reinforces the main arguments made throughout the article but also leaves a lasting impression on the reader. According to Swales and Feak (2012), a strong conclusion can significantly enhance the impact of a research article by highlighting its contributions and guiding readers towards further inquiry.

Conclusions in research articles typically follow a structured approach known as "move-based" analysis, where each move serves a specific

communicative function. According to Yang and Allison (2003), common moves in research article conclusions include restating the research problem and objectives, summarizing key findings, discussing the implications, acknowledging the study's limitations, and suggesting future research directions. This structured approach helps in clearly communicating the study's contributions and guiding readers towards potential future investigations.

Writing effective conclusions is crucial in academic research as it ensures that the study's findings are clearly communicated and their significance is fully understood by the readers (Swales & Feak, 2012). A well-crafted conclusion provides a sense of closure by succinctly summarizing the main findings and reflecting on their broader implications (Hyland, 2004). This helps in reinforcing the main arguments presented in the study and leaves a lasting impression on the readers (Paltridge & Starfield, 2007).

Effective conclusions also highlight the contributions of the research to the existing body of knowledge, demonstrating how the findings advance understanding in the field (Swales & Feak, 2012). By discussing the implications, researchers can show the practical and theoretical relevance of their work, which is essential for justifying the study's value and impact (Hyland, 2004). Moreover, acknowledging the limitations of the research in the conclusion shows transparency and allows for a more nuanced interpretation of the results (Paltridge & Starfield, 2007). It also helps in setting realistic expectations about the study's findings and their applicability (Swales & Feak, 2012).

Furthermore, a strong conclusion can guide future research by suggesting areas that need further investigation. This not only helps other researchers in identifying gaps in the literature but also ensures the continuity of scholarly inquiry. According to Swales and Feak (2012), and Hyland (2004), an effective conclusion

can significantly enhance the overall impact of a research article by summarizing key points, emphasizing the study's significance, and pointing towards future research directions.

Novice student writers are those who are either currently pursuing or have finished a bachelor's degree but have only written one research article. On the other hand, experienced student writers are individuals who are currently enrolled in or have completed a master's program and have published their research articles at least three times. The distinction between novice and experienced student writers in the context of academic writing, particularly in higher education, is an important one. The key differences revolve around their level of experience in research writing, publication record, and the depth of their engagement with the research process. There are several differences between novice and experienced student writers.

Several studies have investigated the differences in how novice and experienced writers construct research article (RA) conclusions using move-based frameworks. Yang and Allison (2003) introduced a move-based model for analyzing RA conclusions, identifying three main moves: summarizing the study, evaluating the study, and deductions from the research. This framework has since been applied to compare the rhetorical strategies employed by writers at different levels of expertise. For example, Amnuai and Wannaruk (2013) analyzed conclusions in applied linguistics RAs written by native and non-native English speakers, finding that experienced writers tended to follow the move structure more consistently, demonstrating better integration of evaluation and deductions. Similarly, Ozturk (2007) explored the variation in rhetorical structures of RA conclusions and noted that novice writers often failed to adequately address evaluation and implications, focusing predominantly on summarizing the study.

Studies comparing novice and experienced writers have consistently highlighted disparities in their ability to construct effective conclusions. Pho (2008) examined RA conclusions in the field of applied linguistics and revealed that novice writers often struggled to implement evaluation and deduction moves, resulting in less persuasive and coherent conclusions. Meanwhile, experienced writers not only utilized all moves more frequently but also exhibited a nuanced understanding of disciplinary conventions. These findings suggest that novice writers require further guidance and instruction in crafting conclusions that meet academic expectations, particularly in achieving balance across all rhetorical moves.

In Research Skills and Methodologies contexts, Creswell (2017) note that novice researchers often require guidance and mentorship to develop strong methodological skills and to ensure the rigor and validity of their research. Their research skills are often still developing. They may have a narrower range of methodological expertise and might be less adept at designing robust research studies or employing complex statistical analyses. However, Bryman (2016) highlights that experienced researchers are often more innovative and confident in their methodological choices, which can lead to more impactful research outcomes. With more research articles under their belt, experienced writers typically have a wider array of methodological tools and techniques at their disposal. They are more capable of designing comprehensive studies and conducting sophisticated data analyses.

Mewburn (2010) discusses how novice researchers need to build their academic networks and how initial publications play a crucial role in this process. These writers may have limited networks within the academic community. Their exposure to conferences, workshops, and collaborations with other researchers is often just beginning. However, Lee and Kamler (2008) emphasize the importance

of networking for experienced researchers in advancing their careers and enhancing their research impact. Experienced writers usually have more extensive networks, having presented their work at multiple conferences and collaborated with other researchers. These connections can provide valuable feedback, opportunities for collaboration, and support in navigating the academic landscape.

1.2 Scope of the Study

The present study focuses on the comparative analysis of move structures in research article conclusions written by novice and experienced student writers. Specifically, it examines the differences and similarities in the rhetorical patterns and communicative moves utilized by these two groups when crafting conclusions for academic research articles. This study is grounded in move-based analysis, which systematically examines the organization and purpose of each textual segment, known as "moves," within the conclusion section. By narrowing the focus to this specific section, the study aims to provide insights into the distinct rhetorical strategies and language choices that differentiate novice from experienced academic writers.

The research is limited to analyzing research article conclusions produced by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The novice group comprises undergraduate students with limited academic writing experience, while the experienced group includes graduate students who have completed several research articles. The conclusions examined in this study are drawn from a sample of research articles written within the field of English language studies, ensuring a uniform context for comparison. This field-specific approach is intended to highlight variations in rhetorical strategies within a common academic discourse community.

Moreover, the study employs the move model for conclusion sections proposed by Yang and Allison (2003), which structures conclusions into three main moves: summarizing the study, evaluating the study, and making deductions from the research. Each of these moves encompasses various steps, such as indicating the study's significance, addressing limitations, evaluating methodology, recommending further research, and discussing pedagogic implications. By focusing on this framework, the study aims to provide a structured understanding of how novice and experienced writers employ these moves, shedding light on the areas where novice writers may need further support and instruction.

1.3 Research Question

The following research questions guide the researcher in conducting this research:

1. How do novice students and experienced student writers employ the common move patterns in writing research article conclusions?
2. What are the differences in the overall structural organization of research article conclusions produced by novice students compared to those by experienced student writers?

1.4 Research Objective

Departing from the problems mentioned above, the present study aims to:

1. To elaborate the common move of the research article's conclusions written by novice students and experienced student writers
2. To elaborate the differences in the overall structural organization of research article conclusions produced by novice students compared to experienced writers.

1.5 Significances of The Research

Theoretically, this research contributes to our understanding of the developmental trajectory of academic writing skills by elucidating the specific strategies and moves employed by novice and experienced writers in constructing conclusions (Swales & Feak, 2012). By examining the cognitive and linguistic processes underlying the writing of research article conclusions, this comparative analysis provides insights into how writing proficiency evolves over time and across experience levels, thereby enriching our theoretical understanding of academic writing development.

Practically, the findings of this research can inform targeted instructional interventions aimed at supporting novice writers in enhancing their academic writing proficiency (Hayes & Flower, 1986). Educators and writing instructors can use the insights gained from this study to design effective pedagogical approaches tailored to the needs of novice students, ultimately improving their ability to communicate research findings effectively.

Policy-wise, the results of this research have implications for the design and implementation of writing curricula at educational institutions. By highlighting the specific writing strategies and moves that contribute to effective research article conclusions, policymakers can develop guidelines and standards for academic writing instruction that promote the development of essential writing skills among students across different experience levels. Overall, this research has the potential to inform theoretical frameworks, improve educational practices, and shape policy decisions related to academic writing instruction.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

1. Novice student writers are those who are either currently pursuing or have finished a bachelor's degree but have only written one research article.

2. Experienced student writers are individuals who are currently enrolled in or have completed a master's program and have published their research articles at least three times.
3. Research article is a scholarly document that presents the original findings of a study conducted by researchers. Typically published in academic journals, research articles aim to contribute new knowledge to a particular field and provide evidence-based insights on a specific research question or problem. Research articles are usually structured in a standardized format to maintain clarity, objectivity, and replicability.
4. Research article conclusions are the final sections of academic papers where authors summarize their findings, discuss the implications, and suggest future research directions.
5. Move-based analysis is a method used in discourse and genre analysis to examine the structure of texts, particularly academic and professional writing. This approach identifies distinct sections or "moves" within a text, each serving a specific communicative function. Moves can be further broken down into "steps," which are more detailed components within each move.
6. The Scopus Index is a comprehensive, multidisciplinary abstract and citation database operated by Elsevier. It indexes a vast range of peer-reviewed research articles, conference papers, books, and patents across a variety of scientific fields, including natural sciences, technology, medicine, social sciences, arts, and humanities. The Scopus Index is widely regarded as a reliable source of high-quality academic content, making it valuable for researchers, students, and professionals who rely on credible research.

7. A non-Scopus index refers to academic journals and publications that are not indexed by Scopus, Elsevier's renowned database. While Scopus is highly regarded for its stringent standards, indexing only high-quality, peer-reviewed publications, there are many other indexes that also cover academic journals. Non-Scopus indexed journals can vary widely in terms of quality, scope, and credibility, and can include both reputable and emerging publications.