

English Language Teaching Graduate Students' Use of Discussion Moves in Research Articles

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Abstract : Genre and discipline-specific knowledge of academic discourse in writing has long been acknowledged as being a core skill to achieve formidable tasks that are expected of graduate students in academic settings. Genre analysis approaches can be adopted to unveil the challenges encountered in these tasks to be able to take instructional actions addressing the aspects of graduate writing that need improvement. In an attempt to find genre-specific academic writing needs of Turkish students enrolled in a graduate program in ELT, this study examines the rhetorical structure of discussion sections of research articles written during the course load stage of their graduate studies. The 35.437-word specialized corpus of graduate papers compiled for the purpose of the study includes discussions of 58 unpublished reports of empirical studies, 31 written in MA courses and 27 in Ph.D. courses by a total of 44 graduate students. The study does sentence-based move structure analysis using the framework developed by Eveyik-Aydin, Karabacak and Akyel in a corpus-based study that analyzed the discussion moves of expert writers in published articles in ELT journals indexed by Social Sciences Citation. The coding of 1577 sentences by three graders using this framework revealed that while the graduate papers included the same moves used in published articles, the rhetorical structure of MA and Ph.D. papers showed considerable differences in terms of the frequency of occurrence of main discussion moves, including interpretation of the results and drawing implications. The implications of these findings will be discussed with respect to the needs of graduate writers and the expectations of discourse community.

Keywords : discussion moves, genre-specific rhetorical structure, move analysis, research articles, the specialized corpus of graduate papers

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