



## A corpus-based study of genre specific discourse: M.A. TEFL thesis abstracts

Aamir Aziz <sup>a 1</sup> , Muhammad Asim Mahmood <sup>b</sup> , Shabbir Ahmad <sup>c</sup> , Nabila Akbar <sup>d</sup> 

<sup>a</sup> University of Sahiwal, Pakistan

<sup>b</sup> Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan

<sup>c</sup> University of Sahiwal, Pakistan

<sup>d</sup> University of Sahiwal, Pakistan

### APA Citation:

Aziz, A., Mahmood, M.A., Ahmad, S., & Akbar, N. (2021). A corpus-based study of genre specific discourse: M.A. TEFL thesis abstracts. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 17(Special Issue 2), 884-898.

Submission Date:11/10/2020

Acceptance Date:06/01/2021

---

### Abstract

At present, genre analysis of various types of texts has gained much attention by the researchers worldwide. The focus of genre analysis in this study is on the examination of thesis abstracts written by Pakistani students in the field of TEFL in connection with move structure, lexico-grammatical features and style of the writer. The corpus of this study consisted of 30 TEFL thesis abstracts, collected through convenient sample method directly from the students via personal contact. For rhetorical move analysis, Bhatia's (1993) and Hyland's (2000) models were used as analytical framework. The results of the study reveal that the thesis abstracts do not meet the criteria as mentioned in the said analytical framework. Further the rhetorical moves are not properly organized. Simple present tense has been used in 66% thesis abstracts. 90 % thesis abstracts have been written in active voice. 80% writers prefer to use impersonal style of writing. This study recommends that the novice researchers in Pakistan in the field of TEFL may be provided proper guidelines for writing thesis abstracts.

© 2021 JLLS and the Authors - Published by JLLS.

*Keywords:* thesis abstracts; genre analysis; rhetorical structure; TEFL in Pakistan

---

## 1. Introduction

The language of global communication is English. After the world war – II, with the advancement of technology and trade, flair for communicating in English has become sign of survival in this global village (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Among the four skills of communication, writing is the most complex of all. With the passage of time different theorists have given suggestions to improve writing skill. So far as English as second language (ESL) learning is concerned, academic writing for novice writers is a challenging task. According to Johns (1997) the ESL learners are usually unable to handle the structures of academic writing. With the rise of profession specific communication in the world, the new forms of rhetoric emerged to satisfy the ever-changing demands of the academic world.

---

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding author.

E-mail address: [aamiraziz@uosahiwal.edu.pk](mailto:aamiraziz@uosahiwal.edu.pk)

In Pakistan M.A. TEFL (Teaching of English as a Foreign Language) is offered by English Language and Applied Linguistics Department of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU), Islamabad, through distance learning program. The students who want to complete their masters degree have to write a thesis as fundamental requirement. According to Zhu (2011), to write a thesis is a thought-provoking project for ESL learners. Much work has been done on the rhetorical structures of ESL students writing worldwide but “L2 postgraduate thesis remains something of a neglected genre” (Hyland, 2004, p. 134) both at national and international level.

Emilia (2009) is of the opinion that thesis abstract (TA) is viewed a vital part of a thesis. It attracts the reader to read the further matter. It is an entry point of a thesis and examiners read it first (Paltridge & Starfield, 2007). Though TA is short in length, its primary function is to communicate information to the world of academic readers. For this purpose, the writers apply certain rhetorical and linguistic features. TA should be well written in flawless and comprehensible manner. Williams (2005) is of the opinion that “lack of writing proficiency can be a barrier to academic and professional success” (p. 1).

Structurally speaking, based on communicative purposes an abstract can be grouped under two elementary subtypes that is conference abstract and research article abstract (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 2016). The aim of conference abstract is to convince the members of conference committee for paper presentation while the purpose of research paper abstract is to provide information about research paper. The thesis abstract may fall in the category of research article abstract because it provides information about already written thesis.

At present, genre analysis of various types of texts has gained much consideration of the researchers worldwide. The major reason for the introduction and advancement of genre analysis in the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) was to raise understanding of the learners towards different sorts of texts. Among these texts the focus is on academic texts with the purpose to enrich non-native pupils’ competence towards proper understanding and skillful production of these texts. Academic genres such as research articles and textbooks have obtained a significant amount of recognition of the researchers in the past. With the passage of time various subgenres i.e. abstract, introduction and discussion etc. have been the focus of attention of the researchers in the domain of genre analysis.

Atkinson (1997) believes that the analysis of the texts of dissertation and thesis have been less focused by the researchers because they cannot be easily retrieved like research articles. In most of the cases, the researchers do not have direct access to university libraries to obtain text for analysis. The current study tries to fill this gap by undertaking analysis of M.A. TEFL thesis abstracts.

In the present research the key purpose of genre analysis is the examination of M.A. TEFL thesis abstracts written by Pakistani researchers in connection with move structure, lexico-grammatical features and style of the writer.

### *1.1. Literature review*

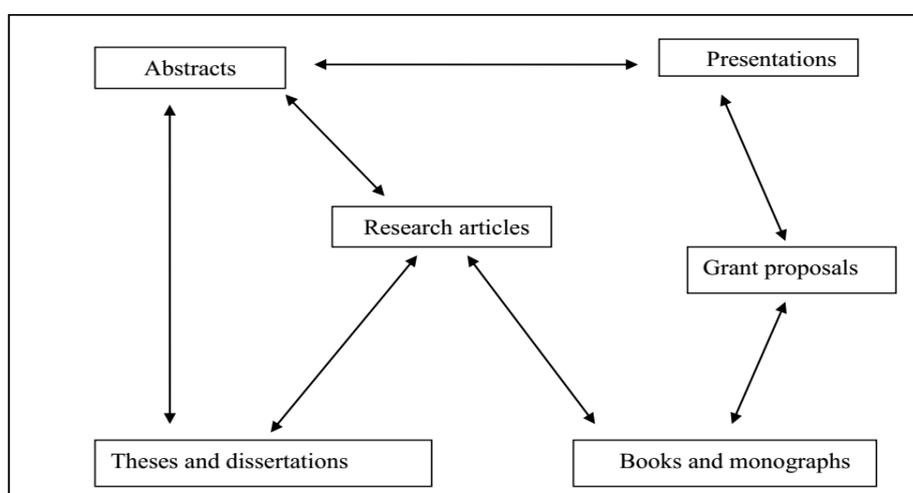
This part of the paper comprises theoretical background regarding concept of genre, genre analysis, abstract as genre, the rhetorical move and theories of move analysis.

#### *1.1.1. Concept of Genre*

The Latin word “genus” is the origin of the term genre which means kind or class. According to Swales (1990) “A genre comprises a set of communicative events, members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the

schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style” (p. 58). Bhatia (1993), believes that a genre is an identifiable communicative event that has fix communicative purpose and that purpose is commonly agreed upon by the dwellers of that professional community where it frequently took place. Holmes (1997) describes about genre that it is “a class of text characterized by specific communicative functions that tend to produce distinctive structural patterns” (p. 322).

Bloor and Bloor (1993) opine that genre is a product of a social practice that can be interpreted and communicated owing to its proper features. Martin (2003) is of the view that genre has necessary rules and these rules govern communicative purposes in particular social circumstances. Swales (2004) termed genre as “Genre network” that is the whole setting that can capture other notions within a genre constellation as genre chains, genre hierarchies and genre sets. In this regard Todorov (2000) remarks that genres come from other genres and a new genre is ever conversion of the previous one, or of numerous: by inversion, by displacement, by combination.



**Figure 2.1.** The Research Article and other Research-Process Genres (Swales, 1990, p. 177)

Swales (2004) believes that in the research world, genres form intertextual relationships with other genres. He mentions that presentations can lead to research articles, just as research articles can lead to presentations. He further asserts that published research articles can equally precede and follow theses, and articles can be combined into theses.

In 1980s, genre was first appeared on the horizon of ESP. With the passage of time scholars give different impact to genre analysis such as the “examination of children’s writings in Australia, composition studies and new rhetoric in North America and Miller’s notion of genre as social action” (as cited in Paltridge, 2007, p. 931).

### 1.1.2. Genre Analysis

Swales (1981) presented the concept of genre from move structure perspective. According to him genre analysis is “a system of analysis that can reveal a system of organizing a genre” (p. 1). According to Kay and Dudley-Evans (1998) “genre is a very powerful pedagogic tool” that describes the various kinds of discourse that the learners must be able to produce, taking into consideration of social perspective that can expound “why a discourse is the way it is” (p. 310). Richards and Schmidt (2002) hold the notion that genre analysis is an examination of context specific use of language i.e. legal writing, business communication etc.

Robinson (1991) considers genre analysis as an approach that focuses on the process of language within the whole manuscript. Bhatia (1993) asserts that the communicative function of a specific genre is important in genre analysis. Kanoksilapatham (2007) states that the main purpose of rhetorical pattern is to express “the communicative purpose of a text by categorizing the various discourse units within the text according to their communicative purposes or rhetorical moves” (p. 23).

#### *1.1.3. Concept of Abstract*

In the realm of academic discourse, the researchers need to share their findings with rest of the community. There are different modes of this communication. Among them research articles and dissertations are the main sources of academic communication. In this academic domain, Bhatia (1993) states that “an abstract is a description or factual summary of the much longer report and is meant to give the reader an exact and concise knowledge of the full article” (p. 78). Martin-Martin (2005) is of the view that function of an abstract is to give an overview of the subsequent article. Recently abstracts are considered significant in academic world because the readers choose to read a paper based on an abstract (Marin, 2016; Moisander et al., 2006).

Abstracts carry out different roles. Firstly, they tell the reader about purpose of the research, secondly, they offer an overall view of the research report, and thirdly they help to recall the main contents of the study. In this perspective Dos Santos (1996) states that “abstract is an important site for the visibility of scientific endeavor in so far as it makes the research widely known, more discussed, and more influential” (p. 483). Hyland (2000) believes that the abstracts might be regarded “a rich source of interactional features that allow us to see how individuals work to position themselves within their communities” (p. 63).

It is noteworthy for researchers to keep in mind the function of an abstract that precedes a thesis. Bitchener (2010) is of the view that major purpose of a “thesis abstract” is to acquaint the reader concerning the key aspects of a thesis. The commonly stated functions usually comprise “the aims of the study, the background and context of the study, the methodology and methods used in the study, the key findings of the study”, and “the contribution of the study to the field of knowledge” (pp. 10-11). The thesis abstract has cogent function i.e. to persuade the readers that the thesis carries firsthand and valuable knowledge.

#### *1.1.4. Abstract as Genre*

According to Swales (2004) the abstracts are considered a genre because they are communicative events that comprise of written scripts and having a structure and accomplish a social role in a particular community. Abstracts are regarded as a genre because they meant for specific audience. Abstracts have specific features, in case of research articles; they have been mentioned in “guideline for authors” section of a journal, in case of thesis they have been written in the books about thesis writing. So far as length of a thesis abstract is concerned, there is no fixed pattern but preferably they are comprised of “350-500 words” (Bitchener, 2010, p. 31).

As regards specific features of abstract, Graetz (1985) states that “the abstract is characterized by the use of past tense, the third person, passive and non-use of negatives .... It is written in tightly worded sentences, which avoid repetition, meaningless expressions, superlatives, adjectives, illustrations, preliminaries, descriptive details, examples, footnotes. In short it eliminates the redundancy which the skilled readers count on finding in written language and which usually facilitates comprehension” (p. 125).

#### *1.1.5. The Rhetorical Move*

Different experts have defined the word ‘move’ differently. According to Kanoksilapatham (2007) “a move can be defined as a section of a text that performs a specific communicative function” (p. 23).

Nwogu (1997) defines move as “a text segment made up of a bundle of linguistic features (lexical meaning, propositional meanings, illocutionary forces, etc.) which give the segment a uniform orientation and signal the content of discourse in it” (p. 122). On the other hand, Swales (2004) is of the view “that a move is a discursal or rhetorical unit that performs a coherent communicative function in a written or spoken discourse” (p. 29).

Corresponding to Swales’ (2004) notion of move, Ding (2007) believes that a move is “a functional unit in a text, being related to the overall task, which is used to identify the textual regularities in certain genres of writing” (pp. 369-370). Martin-Martin (2005) opines that a move is obviously an important component of a text and having a specific order. According to Ruiying and Allison (2003) a move divides the parts of a text in connection with their specific communicative purposes. Relating to the purpose of the present paper, the word move is restricted to the moves of M.A. TEFL thesis abstracts written by Pakistani students.

#### 1.1.6. Theories of Move Analysis

Several researchers have done scholarly work on move analysis such as Swales (1981, 1990), Salager-Meyer (1992), Bhatia (1993, 1996), Kaplan (1994), Santos (1996), Hyland (2000, 2007) and Swales & Feak (2004). Among these intellectuals, Swales’ (1981) work on the move analysis of the introduction section of research articles is regarded pioneer. Afterwards in his model (1990) he formed a research space (CARS) and has mentioned the subsequent three moves.

<b>Move 1</b>	<b>Establishing a territory</b>
Step 1	Claiming centrality and/or
Step 2	Making topic generalizations and/or
Step 3	Reviewing items of previous research
<b>Move 2</b>	<b>Establishing a niche</b>
Step 1A	Counter-claiming or
Step 1B	Indicating a gap or
Step 1C	Question-raising or
Step 1D	Continuing a tradition
<b>Move 3</b>	<b>Occupying the niche</b>
Step 1A	Outlining purposes or
Step 1B	Announcing present research
Step 2	Announcing principal findings
Step 3	Indicating R[esearch] A[r]ticle structure

**Figure 2.2.** CARS Model (Swales, 1990, p. 141)

Later Swales (1996) presented a structural model for research article abstracts. This model includes five moves like situating the research, presenting the research, describing methodology, summarizing the findings and discussing the findings. Previously the same model has been used by different researchers like Tseng (2011), Lin (2012), Doro (2013) and Pho (2013) for the analysis of move structure of both the research paper abstracts and thesis abstracts. Moves of the abstracts can be further divided into obligatory and non-obligatory moves. The moves, for instance presenting the research,

describing methodology and summarizing the findings are considered obligatory moves. If a move appears in 80% of the abstracts, it is considered an obligatory move (Swales & Feak, 2009).

Bhatia (1993) presented the four-move rhetorical structure as “introducing the purpose, describing the methodology, summarizing the results and presenting the conclusions” (pp. 78-79). In contrast, Hyland (2000) proposed five move rhetorical structure that is “introduction, purpose, method, product and conclusion” (p. 67). Corresponding to Hyland’s (2000) model, Santos (1996) and Swales & Feak (2004) offered five move rhetorical structures as background, aim, method, result and conclusion. Even though various researchers give various names to the moves, the overall recognized organization of IMRD model contains the moves for instance: Introduction (also named as background, aim or purpose), Method, Results (or product) and Discussion (or conclusion).

The present study answers the subsequent research questions:

1. What is the move structure of M.A. TEFL thesis abstracts written by Pakistani students?
2. What are the differences among Pakistani, native and other non-native students’ practice of move structure?
3. What are the lexico-grammatical features of M.A. TEFL thesis abstracts written by Pakistani students?
4. What is the style of the writers in terms of M.A. TEFL thesis abstracts written by Pakistani students?

## 2. Method

This paper attempts to analyze M.A. TEFL thesis abstracts written by Pakistani students at English Language and Applied Linguistics Department of AIOU, Islamabad.

### 2.1. *The Corpus of the Study*

The corpus of current research consisted of 30 M.A. TEFL thesis abstracts. These theses were submitted from 2013 to 2017 in the respective department of the university. The sample for this corpus was selected through convenient sample method. The abstracts were collected from the students of M.A. TEFL through personal contact. All the students, from whom the data were collected, had done their M.A. English before doing M.A. TEFL. All of them are serving as teachers in different educational institutes of Sahiwal division.

### 2.2. *Data analysis*

The data of this study were analyzed in connection with the following:

Bhatia’s (1993) model and Hyland’s (2000) model were selected as analytical framework for rhetorical move analysis

**Table 2.1.** Bhatia’s Model (1993, pp. 78-79)

Sr. No.	The Move	Function of the Move
1	Introducing the purpose	What was done by the researcher?
2	Describing the methodology	How was done by the researcher?
3	Summarizing the results	What was found by the researcher?
4	Presenting the conclusions	What was concluded by the researcher?

**Table 2.2.** Hyland's Model (2000, p. 67)

Sr. No.	The Move	Function of the Moves
1	Introduction	Establishes the context of the paper and motivates the research and discussion
2	Purpose	It indicates purpose, thesis, hypothesis, outlines the intention behind paper
3	Method	Provides information on design, procedure, assumptions, approach, data, etc.
4	Product	States main findings or results, the argument, or what was accomplished.
5	Conclusion	Interprets or extends results beyond scope of paper, draws inferences, points to applications or wider implications.

Analysis of the Lexico-grammatical features

Analysis of the style of the writer

### 3. Results and Discussion

The main aim of this research was rhetorical move analysis of M.A. TEFL thesis abstracts written by Pakistani students. The analysis was done with the help of Bhatia's (1993) model and Hyland's (2000) model respectively. First, we coded all the abstracts then manually rhetorical move analysis was done. Some writes do not use linguistic indicators in the abstracts to point out the moves. According to Lores (2004), if linguistic indicators have not been applied to point out the limit of the moves then subjectivity can have effect on move analysis. To avoid such an effect the double analysis of the moves was done with the help of co-researchers.

#### 3.1. The Rhetorical Move Analysis

In response to the research question 1, the rhetorical move analysis was done using Bhatia's (1993) model and Hyland's (2000) model separately. In the subsequent part of the paper, the results of the move analysis are discussed with the help of frequency and percentage. The moves are taking place in the sample (N= 30).

Tables 3.1 & 3.2 illustrate the results of rhetorical move analysis in connection with Bhatia's (1993) model.

**Table 3.1.** Analysis of Moves in connection with Bhatia's (1993) Model

Sr. No.	The Moves	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Introducing the purpose	23	76.66%
2	Describing the methodology	27	90%
3	Summarizing the results	16	53.33%
4	Presenting the conclusions	7	23.33%

The analysis presented in the table 4.1 expressed that the move 1 "introducing the purpose" appeared in 23 (76.66%) of M.A. TEFL thesis abstracts. The move 2 "describing the methodology" appeared in 27 (90%) of the abstracts. The move 3 "summarizing the results" was present in 16 (53.33%) of the abstracts while the move 4 "presenting the conclusions" was found only in 7 (23.33%) of the abstracts. The analysis reveals that the move 2 has the highest occurring rate i.e. 27 (90%) of

thesis abstracts. Alternatively, it shows that the move 4 has the lowest presence in the corpus of thesis abstracts.

**Table 3.2.** Structural unanimity with the moves

Sr. No.	The No. of Moves	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	4 Moves	5	16.66%
2	3 Moves	10	33.33%
3	2 Moves	9	30%
4	1 Move	4	13.34%
5	0 Move	2	6.67%
		30	100%

The analysis in table 4.2 shows that only 5 (16.66%) thesis abstracts in the corpus comply with the model as having all the four moves. Among the thesis abstracts 10 (33.33%) contain three moves of the model. 9 (30%) of the thesis abstracts comprise two moves. 4 (13.34%) of the thesis abstracts have one move only while 2 (6.67%) of the thesis abstracts have zero move. The result indicates that only 5 (16.66%) of the abstracts have complete harmony with the model. Occurrence of 3 moves having the highest ratio in the corpus i.e. 10 (33.33%). On the other hand, 2 (6.67%) of the thesis abstracts do not carry a single move. These abstracts are just like an introduction.

Table 3.3 & 3.4 illustrate the results of rhetorical move analysis regarding Hyland's (2000) model.

**Table 3.3.** Analysis of Moves (Hyland's Model)

Sr. No.	The Moves	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Introduction	17	56.66%
2	Purpose	23	76.66%
3	Method	27	90%
4	Product	16	53.33%
5	Conclusion	7	23.33%

The analysis given in table 3.3 establishes that the move 1 "introduction" found in 17 (56.66%) of the thesis abstracts corpus. The move 2 "purpose" exists in 23 (76.66%) of the thesis abstracts. The move 3 "Method" exists in 27 (90%) of the thesis abstracts. The move 4 "product" and the move 5 "conclusion" appeared 16 (53.33%) and 7(23.33%) respectively. The analysis demonstrates that the move 3 appeared highest and the move 5 appeared lowest in the thesis abstracts.

**Table 3.4.** Structural unanimity with the moves

Sr. No.	The No. of Moves	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	5 Moves	0	0%
2	4 Moves	9	30%
3	3 Moves	13	43.33%
4	2 Moves	6	20%

5	1 Move	2	6.67%
		30	100%

The analysis in the table 3.4 points out that not a single abstract in the corpus of thesis abstracts corresponds to 5 moves of the model. 4 moves appeared 9 (30%) in the corpus. 3 moves appeared in 13 (43.33%) of the thesis abstracts. Further 2 moves and 1 move appeared 6 (20%) and 2 (6.67%) in the corpus in turn. The analysis further exposed that none of the TEFL thesis abstracts in the corpus is representative of the model. Existence of 3 moves remained the highest i.e. 13 (43.33%) in the corpus while presence of 1 move i.e. 2 (6.67%) remained the lowest in the corpus.

One thing is common in the analysis of the thesis abstracts with the help of both the models that occurrence of three moves remained the highest.

### 3.2. Comparison of Rhetorical Move Analysis

To trace out the similarities and the differences in the use of rhetorical moves, the following analysis with the help of table 4.5 is being presented here.

**Table 3.5.** Comparison of Move Analysis

Sr. No.	The Moves	Native		Iranian		Pakistani	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	Introduction	17	85%	10	50%	17	56.66%
2	Purpose	19	95%	19	95%	23	76.66%
3	Method	16	80%	20	100%	27	90%
4	Product	15	75%	19	95%	16	53.33%
5	Conclusion	5	25%	5	25%	7	23.33%

Table 3.5 presents the comparison of move analysis of the thesis abstracts in the field of TEFL written by native and Iranian writers. The data for comparison was adopted from Nasserri & Nematollahi (2014). Their corpus was consisted of total 40 thesis abstracts with the ratio of 20:20. They have applied Santos' (1996) model for move analysis.

The comparison of the move analysis presents that the move 'Introduction' was present 85%, 50% and 56.66% respectively in the thesis abstracts written by native, Iranian and Pakistani writes in the field of TEFL. It shows that the non-native writers (Iranian and Pakistani) have close resemblance while native writers have significant difference. The comparison of the move 'Purpose' reflects that the native and Iranian writers have same usage i.e. 95% while Pakistani writers have the occurrence of this move 76.66%. The comparison of the third move 'Method' indicates that it appeared 80% in the thesis abstracts of native speakers, 100% in the abstracts of Iranian and 90% in the thesis abstracts of Pakistani writers. The analysis shows that it is the only move that is present 80% and above among the thesis abstracts of native, Iranian and Pakistani writers. The occurrence of move four 'Product' was 75%, 95% and 53.33% among the native, Iranian and Pakistani writers. A clear difference is present in the application of this move. The last move 'Conclusion' occurred 25% each in the thesis abstracts of native and Iranian writers and 23.33% in the thesis abstracts of Pakistani writers. A close resemblance is present among the thesis abstracts of native, Iranian and Pakistani writers.

### 3.3. Analysis of Lexico-grammatical features

#### 3.3.1 The use of Tense

According to Paltridge & Starfield (2007) there are following two possibilities in the use of tense in thesis abstracts:

The present tense is used if thesis abstract is treated as a summary of thesis

The past tense is used if thesis abstract is a report of the research work completed in the past

Table 3.5 demonstrates the findings of the use of tense in the thesis abstracts in the field of TEFL by Pakistani students.

**Table 3.6.** Analysis of the use of tense

Sr. No.	Tense	Percentage %
1	Simple Present	66%
2	Simple Past	24%
3	Present Perfect	6.66%
4	Modal 'will'	3.34%

The analysis of data in the above table reveals that simple present tense (66%) is the most frequently used tense in the thesis abstracts. The use of simple past tense is 24%; the use of present perfect tense is 6.66% while the use of modal 'will' is 3.34% in the thesis abstracts. The results of the current study are strikingly similar with the results of a study done by Krajňáková (2015). The study was done on English written thesis abstracts at Presov University. The findings of the study show that simple present tense 65%, simple past tense 23%, present perfect tense 7% while modal 'will' has been used 4%.

The above stated findings of the current study conform to Wallwork's (2016) statement "The most commonly used tenses in all kinds of abstracts are the PRESENT SIMPLE (we show) and the past simple (we showed)" (p. 225).

#### 3.3.2 The Voice

The use of voice is an important feature of thesis abstracts. The table 3.7 shows that 90% of thesis abstracts have been written in active voice while only 10% of the thesis abstracts have been written in passive voice.

**Table 3.7.** The Use of Voice

Sr. No.	Voice	Percentage %
1	Active Voice	90%
2	Passive Voice	10%

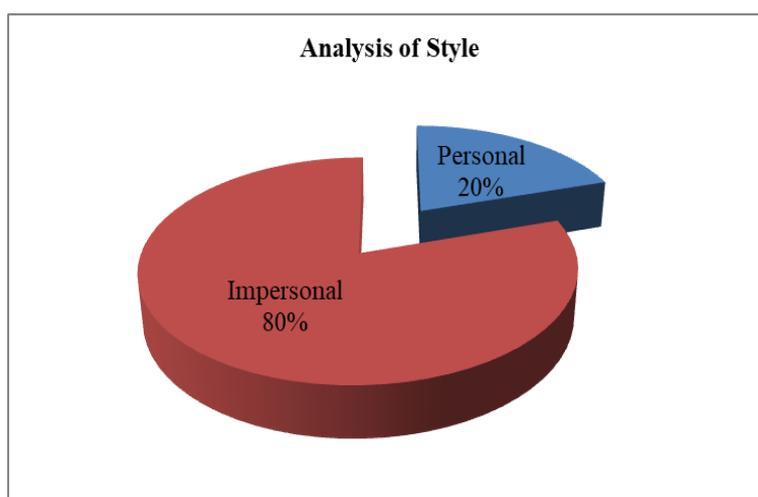
### 3.4. Analysis of the style of writers

Broadly speaking, style can be categorized into personal or impersonal style. According to Soledad Loutayf (2017), "It can be argued that a personal style introduces the writer as an agent and depicts the researcher as an owner or producer of knowledge. By contrast, the impersonal style aims at highlighting objectivity, and, thus, the researcher adopts a secondary role" (p. 29). Wallwork (2016)

states that “there are four possible styles for writing abstracts and papers” (p. 223). These styles can be categorized in the next table.

**Table 3.8.** Categories of Style

Sr. No.	Styles	Description	Category
1	Style 1	I found that $x = y$ .	Personal
2	Style 2	We found that $x = y$ .	Personal
3	Style 3	It was found that $x = y$ .	Impersonal
4	Style 4	The authors found that $x = y$ .	Impersonal



**Figure 3.1.** Analysis of Style

The analysis of the corpus of thesis abstracts reveals through figure 3.1 that majority of Pakistani students in the field of TEFL at masters level prefer to use impersonal style of writing i.e. 80% while 20% of the writers prefer to use personal style of writing. Soledad Loutayf’s (2017) study almost corresponds similar results i.e. 70.6% abstracts use impersonal style while 29.4% abstracts use personal style.

#### 4. Conclusions

This study is an analysis of M.A. TEFL thesis abstracts. The corpus of the study was consisted of 30 abstracts, collected through convenient sample method. The rhetorical move analysis was done by applying Bhatia’s (1993) model and Hyland’s (2000) model. In this study, the researchers focus was on the analysis of move structure and comparison of move structure with native and non-native writers of abstracts of postgraduate thesis in the field of TEFL, lexico-grammatical features and style of the writer.

The findings of the study tell that the abstracts written in the field of TEFL are not properly structured. The analysis further shows that the moves ‘purpose’ and ‘methodology’ has the highest occurrence i.e. 76.66% and 90% respectively. Structural unanimity with the moves shows that according to Bhatia’s model only 16.66% abstracts in the corpus have four moves. On the other hand, the analysis discloses that not a single abstract of the corpus is aligned with Hyland’s model. The analysis shows that the three moves in the abstracts have the highest frequency on both the models. Comparison of the moves shows that resemblance is found among native and non-native writers of

thesis abstracts. Analysis of lexico-grammatical features shows that 66% abstracts have been written in simple present tense. So far as voice is concerned 90% abstracts have been written in active voice. Analysis of the style of the writer shows that 80% of the writers used impersonal style of writing.

Based on the findings, it is recommended that a model of writing abstract (IMRD) may be incorporated in the “Thesis Handbook for M.A. TEFL Research Students” published by the Department of English and Applied Linguistics of Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, Pakistan. The said book does not suggest any model of writing thesis abstracts. It only states the length of thesis abstract i.e. two pages long. It is further suggested that some suitable length of thesis abstract may be incorporated instead of the length in terms of pages. Further the inclusion of Genre Analysis Approach for novice writers in teaching of writing can prepare students to overcome rhetorical problems in genre specific discourse – writing of thesis abstracts.

## References

- Atkinson, D. (1997). Teaching and researching the thesis / dissertation in ESP. Colloquium introduction, *TESOL*, 97. Orlando, FL.
- Bawarshi, S. A. & Jo Reiff, M. (2010). *Genre: An Introduction to History; Theory, Research and Pedagogy*. West Lafayette, In: Parlor Press.
- Berkenkotter, C., & Huckin, T. N. (2016). *Genre knowledge in disciplinary communication: Cognition/culture/power*. Routledge.
- Bhatia, V. K. (1993). *Analyzing Genre. Language Use in Professional Settings*. Harlow, Essex: Longman.
- Bitchener, J. (2010). *Writing an applied linguistics thesis or dissertation: A guide to presenting empirical research*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bloor, M. & Bloor, T. (1993). *How Economists Modify Propositions*. Henderson, W.
- Ding, H. (2007). Genre analysis of personal statements: Analysis of moves in application essays to medical and dental schools. *English for Specific Purposes*, 26(3), 368-392.
- Doró, K. (2013). Selling their research: The linguistic realization of rhetoric moves in English thesis abstracts written by Hungarian undergraduates. *Romanian Journal of English Studies*, 10(1), 181-191.
- Emilia, E. (2009). *Menulis tesis dan disertasi*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Flowerdew, J., & Dudley-Evans, T. (2002). Genre Analysis of Editorial letters to International Journal Contributors. *Applied Linguistics*, 23(4), 463-489.
- Graetz, N. (1985). Teaching EFL students to extract structural information from abstracts. In: Ulijn JM, Pugh AK, eds. *Reading for professional purposes*. Leuven, Belgium: ACCO.
- Holmes, R. (1997). Genre analysis and the social sciences: an investigation of structure of research article discussion sections in three disciplines. *English for Specific Purposes*, 16(4), 321-337.
- Hutchinson, T. & Waters, A. (1987). *English for Specific Purposes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hyland, K. (2000). *Disciplinary Discourses. Social Interactions in Academic Writing*. Harlow, Essex: Longman/Pearson Education.

- Hyland, K. (2004). Disciplinary interactions: Metadiscourse in L2 postgraduate writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 13(2), 133–151. doi:10.1016/j.jslw.2004.02.001
- Hyland, K. (2007). Genre pedagogy: Language, literacy and L2 writing instruction. *Journal of second language writing*, 16(3), 148-164.
- Johns, A. M. (1997). *Text, role, and context, developing academic literacies*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Kanoksilapatham, B. (2007). Writing scientific research articles in Thai and English: Similarities and differences. *Silpakorn University International Journal*, 7, 172-203.
- Kaplan, R. B., Cantor, S., Hagstrom, C., Kamhi-Stein, L. D., Shiotani, Y., & Zimmerman, C. B. (1994). On abstract writing. *Text-Interdisciplinary Journal for the Study of Discourse*, 14(3), 401-426.
- Kay, H., & Dudley-Evans, T. (1998). Genre: What teachers think. *ELT Journal*, 52 (4), 308-314.
- Lin, A. (2012). Multilingual and multimodal resources in genre-based pedagogical approaches to L2 English content classrooms. *English—A Changing Medium for Education*, 79, 103.
- Marin, M. (2016). *Escribir textos científicos y académicos*. Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Economica.
- Martin-Martin, P. (2003). A genre analysis of English and Spanish research paper abstracts in experimental social sciences. *English for Specific Purpose*, 22 (1), 25-43.
- Martin-Martin, P. (2005). *The rhetoric of the abstract in English and Spanish scientific discourse: A cross-cultural genre-analytic approach* (Vol. 21). London: Peter Lang.
- Miller, C. R. (1984). Genre as social action. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 70, 151–167. Reprinted in A. Freedman & P. Medway (Eds.) (1994). *Genre and the new rhetoric* (pp. 23–42) London: Taylor and Francis.
- Moisander, J., & Valtonen, A. (2006). *Qualitative marketing research: A cultural approach*. London/New York: Sage.
- Nasseri, D., & Nematollahi, B. A. B. A. K. (2014). A Contrastive genre analysis of abstract of master of arts (MA) theses in applied linguistics written by native and non-native speakers of English with respects to moves and move markers. *Indian J. Sci. Res*, 7(1), 1353-1366.
- Nwogu, K. N. (1997). The medical research paper: Structure and functions. *English for Specific Purposes*, 16(2), 119-138.
- Paltridge, B. (2007). Approaches to genre in ELT. *International handbook of English language teaching* (Vol. 15, pp. 931-943). Springer.
- Paltridge, B., & Starfield, S. (2007). *Thesis and dissertation writing in a second language: A handbook for supervisors*. New York: Routledge.
- Pho, P. D. (2008). Research article abstracts in applied linguistics and educational technology: A study of linguistic realizations of rhetorical structure and authorial stance. *Discourse Studies*, 10 (2), 231-250.
- Krajňáková, D. (2015). Genre analysis of English-written Master's theses and dissertation abstracts in the setting of Prešov University.

- Richards, J. C. & Schmidt, R. (2002). *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics* (3rd ed.). London: Longman.
- Robinson, D. (1991). *The work of Pierre Bourdieu: Recognizing society*. Milton Keynes, ENG: Open University Press.
- Ruiying, Y. & Allison, D (2003) Research in applied linguistics: Moving from results to consultations. *English for Specific Purposes*, 22 (4), 365- 385.
- Salager-Meyer, F. (1992). A text-type and move analysis study of verb tense and modality distribution in medical English abstracts. *English for Specific Purposes*, 11/2, 93-113.
- Santos, M. (1996). The textual organization of research paper abstracts in applied linguistics. *Text*, 16 (4), 481-499.
- Soledad Loutayf, M. (2017). Analysis of abstracts in English: A study of abstracts written by EFL writers in Argentina. *ARGENTINIAN JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS*, 5(1), 15-36.
- Swales, J. (1981). *Aspects of articles introductions*. Birmingham: Aston University.
- Swales, J. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Swales, J. M. (2004) *Research Genres: Exploration and Applications*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Swales, J. M., & Feak, C. (2004). *Academic writing for graduate students: Essential tasks and skills*. (2nd ed.). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Todorov, T. (2000). *The Origin of Genres*. *Modern Genre Theory*. Ed. David Duff. London: Routledge.
- Tseng, F. (2011). Analysis of move structure and verb tense of research article abstracts in applied linguistics. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 1 (2), 27-35.
- Wallwork, A. (2016). *English for writing research papers*. Springer.
- Williams, J. (2005). *Teaching Writing in Second and Foreign Language Classrooms*. McGraw-Hill.
- Zhu, W. (2001). *Performing Argumentative Writing in English: Difficulties, process, and strategies*. *TESL Canada Journal*, 34-50.
- www.aiou.edu.pk

## Tür Söylemlerine İlişkin Bütünce Tabanlı Çalışma: YDİÖ Yüksek Lisans Tez Özetleri

### Öz

Günümüzde metinlerin farklı türlere ait analizleri tüm dünyada araştırmacıların dikkatini çekmektedir. Bu çalışmada tür analizinin odak noktası YDİÖ alanındaki Pakistanlı öğrenciler tarafından yazılan tez özetlerinin yapı, sözcük-gramer özellikleri, ve yazarın tarzı açısından incelenmesi üzerinedir. Bu çalışmanın bütüncesi 30 adet kişisel iletişim yolu ile direk olarak öğrencilerden YDİÖ tez özetleri mevcut ulaşılabilir örneklem yöntemi ile toplanmıştır. Çalışmanın sonuçları tez özetlerinin ifade edilen analitik çerçeve ölçütlerini taşımadığını göstermektedir. Daha da önemlisi retorik yapı doğru dürüst düzenlenmemiştir. Tez özetlerinde Geniş Zaman

%66 oranında kullanılmıştır. Tez özetlerinin %90'ı aktif yapı kullanılarak ifade edilmiştir. Yazarların %80'i ise gayrişahsi yazım türünü tercih etmiştir. Bu çalışma Pakistan'da YDİÖ alanındaki acemi araştırmacıların tez yazma konusuna ilişkin doğru dürüst yönlendirmelerini önermektedir.

*Anahtar sözcükler:* tez özetleri; tür analizi; retorik yapı; Pakistanda YDİÖ

---

## **AUTHOR BIODATA**

**Mr. Aamir Aziz** is Lecturer at the Department of English, University of Sahiwal Pakistan. He is a PhD Scholar at the Department of Applied Linguistics at Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan. His research interests are English Language Teaching, Sociolinguistics, Learner Autonomy, Language Testing and Evaluation, and Genre Analysis.

**Dr Muhammad Asim Mahmood** is Professor of Linguistics. He is Chairperson Department of Applied Linguistics and Dean Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan. He worked as a visiting research associate in University of Birmingham, UK. His research interests include Pakistani English, World Englishes, Corpus Linguistics, Applied Linguistics, and Teacher Education. He has published more than one hundred research papers on language and linguistic issues in national and international journals.

**Dr Shabbir Ahmad** is Assistant Professor and working as Incharge Department of English at University of Sahiwal, Pakistan. He earned his PhD in English from Nanjing University, China. His research interests include English Language Teaching, South Asian Literature and Shakespearean Drama.

**Ms. Nabila Akbar** is Lecturer at the Department of English, University of Sahiwal, Pakistan. Her research interests include English Language Teaching, Learner Psychology, modernism and post-modernism.