**Contrastive Rhetorical Move Analyses of the PhD Theses’ Introductions Written in English by Turkish and American PhD Students**

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**Abstract**

Writing as a non-native speaker of a language adds on to the difficulties which come along with the learning processes of that language. Under some circumstances as academic writing needs of PhD thesis dissertation, the processes may even get more challenging. Considering these challenges, genre-based analyses which generally focus on the rhetorical moves in a specific kind of text that are also be called as conventions to a specific discourse community to comprehend the message these texts contains. From that angle, PhD theses and particularly the introduction section of these theses may give the most significant messages to its target discourse community, as these sections initially frame the whole research and the background philosophy it leans on. Accepting the key role of introduction sections of PhD theses, the study believes that linguistic and cultural difference may play essential role in the production of these sections. Therefore, the study contrastively investigates the introduction section of PhD theses written in English by Turkish and American PhDs in the field of ‘language education’. The corpora are constructed which consist of five theses of Turkish (TR) corpus and five theses of American (US) corpus. To unfold the rhetorical moves of the corpora, Swales’ (1990, 2004) *Create a Research Space (CARS)* model is utilized. Also, lexico-grammatical analyses are conducted to reveal the similarities and differences in the TR and US corpora. It is found that the TR corpus and the US corpus in the study resemble each other concerning the employment of all moves in the CARS model. On the other hand, these corpora diverge regarding the frequency rates of the moves in the CARS model. Also, lexico-grammatical analyses revealed that the density of the US corpus regarding word, paragraph and sentence frequency, readability scores, and passive/active voice is more complicated than TR corpus. Finally, a *Genre-Based Instruction (GBI)* is given as an implication of the study.

***Keywords:*** *Genre analysis, introductions, PhD thesis, GBI,*

**Introduction**

Writing is a challenging skill for especially foreign language learners (Nation, 2008). Due to this fact, it is essential for the foreign language learners to have a guiding framework for writing before they start. To Ahamad and Yusof (2012), such a framework is possible through knowledge of genre on which these students will write. This knowledge of the genre is attributed as the conventions or rhetorical moves to convey messages of writing to a specific discourse community (Ahamad & Yusof, 2012; Bhatia, 1997; Paltridge, 1994; Paltridge & Starfield, 2007; Swales, 1990, 2004). To Bazermann (1999), beyond message transferring to a specific discourse community, the genre knowledge also helps not only the native but also the non-native students in terms of their writing skills, writing strategies and general knowledge that those students need to know.

With the genre studies conducted, the trend in the literature has shifted from focusing on a specific kind of a corpus (i.e. abstracts, book reviews, introduction sections and so on) to comparison based corpus analyses of rhetorical moves. The central focus of these recent genre analyses has been mainly on the inter-textual comparison of the rhetorical moves of the ‘book reviews, research articles and theses’. As stated before, each section of these writing activities has certain rhetorical design as conventions to a certain discourse community who might be listed as scholars, undergraduate and higher levels of students, researchers and many others having a motivation in various writing genre. Of these sections, introductions has gained much attention by many scholars as well (Ahamad & Yusof, 2012; Bal-Gezegin, 2016; Bazerman, 1999; Devitt, 2015; Kawase, 2015, Martin & Perez, 2014; Paltridge & Starfield, 2007, Soler-Monreal, Carbonell-Olivares & Gil-Salom, 2011; Swales, 1990, 2004). The initial endeavours regarding unfolding the rhetorical moves of these introduction sections were of Swales (1990, 2014) who in conclusion come up with the *“Create a Research Space (CARS)”* model. This model consists of the rhetorical moves as ‘*Establishing the Territory (M1,) Establishing the Niche (M2)* and *Occupying the Niche (M3)’*. To Swales (2004), M1 deals with the already existing literature and its presentation in relation to the research, M2 aims to contrast the ideas in the literature and gives the reason for another study and research gap, the last move M3 finalizes the research claim by giving the research aims, design and related terminology of the study. At this extent, Swales (1990), Bunton (1998) and Paltridge and Starfield, (2007) compare introductions of theses and research articles. They all claim that even if the introductions of both theses and research articles deploy similar rhetorical move design, they differ regarding the length of the rhetorical moves. When the logic of thesis dissertation that focuses on in-depth analyses of the existing literature is considered, it is more understandable why such difference in the length of the rhetorical moves is apparent in the introduction sections. Following these contrastive analyses, the orientations of the genre studies have moved towards the cultural and linguistic differences in the specific field of research (Ahamad & Yusof, 2012; Devitt, 2015; Kawase, 2015, Martin & Perez, 2014; Soler-Monreal et al., 2011).

Considering the shift in the focus of the genre studies towards the linguistic and the cultural differences, it has been widely discussed that the cultural and the linguistic background of a foreign language learner have an impact on their language learning or acquisition processes (Alptekin, 2002; Byram, 1997, 2012; Celce-Murcia, 1995; Soler-Monreal et al., 2011). Such impact is also believed to have an effect on the writing-production phases of language learning as well (Soler-Monreal et al., 2011). At that point, Devitt (2015), Kawase (2015), Martin and Perez (2014) and Soler-Monreal et al. (2011) claim that there are differences in the production of introduction parts of the PhD theses writings regarding rhetorical move design and their sequences. To Soler-Monreal et al. (2011), even though there are some overlapping steps concerning the rhetorical moves, differences are apparent which are claimed to be due to linguistic and cultural background of the students. In the light of Soler-Monreal et al.’s (2011) findings and claims, there is a niche to be investigated comparatively concerning the writing productions of native (American) and non-native (Turkish) language learners coming from different language and cultural background.

As the attribution of the reason for the divergence in the linguistic and cultural background of the theses’ writers, the study contrastively analyzes the Turkish PhDs as non-native context and American PhDs for native context. For the Turkish context of the study, there has not much research been conducted. Besides, the studies conducted are focusing on the rhetorical moves of research articles, students’ essays and various PhD sections writing genres in the field of language education. For instance, Bal-Gezegin (2016) conducted a study on the rhetorical moves of the ‘Book Reviews’. She focused on “how interpersonal meta-discourse was used in Turkish and English book reviews (p. 713)”. She concluded that Turkish and English book reviews show variations in the use of hedging devices which is claimed to be blocking narrowing down statement writing. Also, Yaylı (2011) focused on the awareness level of EFL students on genres while writing. To increase the level of genre-based writing of those students, she implemented a genre-based instruction and concluded that practising genres and reflecting on productions of students increase the writing productivity of the students. Also, Uzun (2016) tested the impact of genre-based instruction on essay writing skills of the English Language and Literature Department’s students. He concluded that genre-based instruction affected students’ adherence to criteria list developed for essay writing. These criterions were the moves detected from the genre analysis of the essays. Even though the invaluable contributions of the given studies in the Turkish context, when the scope of these studies that conducted in the Turkish context are considered, it looks as if the number and the contribution span of the studies are still too limited. Beyond these, there has not been conducted any comparative genre analysis which is specifically focusing on the writing productions of the natives (American PhDs) and the non-natives students (Turkish PhDs). Such research gap is also stated in Soler-Monreal et al. (2011) focusing on the comparisons of the introduction sections written in Spanish and English by Spanish (non-native) English language users. Therefore, this study adds to the expanding literature of comparative rhetorical move analyses in the global context as well. Therefore, the study portraits the introductions’ rhetorical move design of Turkish and American students which are both in the field of ‘language education’ in particular. Bearing this stated niche in the scope of the study, introductions of the PhD theses of Turkish and American students in the field of language education is aimed to be scrutinized.

To sum up, stated as a problem, there might be differences in the productions of PhD students, who are coming from different linguistic and cultural background, concerning rhetorical moves in the introductions parts of their theses. Besides, if the competencies of native and non-native users of a language concerning the writing production skills are compared, the linguistic background might impact students’ rhetorical move designs and sequences in particular. Also, cultural differences (Byram, 1997, 2012) may have an impact on production skills as well. Those differences may affect the ways, in other words, the rhetorical moves of the students in production processes. What is meant by production skills is the writing and speaking skills which are known as the production phases of language. Of these skills, the study takes the writing skill to the centre of its investigation. In light of these claims, the purpose of the study is to reveal rhetorical moves of the introduction sections of PhD theses which are written in English by Turkish[[2]](#footnote-2) (as a non-native speaker) and American[[3]](#footnote-3) (as a native speaker) students and also written in the field of Language Education.

RQ1: A) What are the rhetorical moves and the sequences of these moves of the introduction sections of PhD theses of Turkish and American students which are written in English and in the field of Language Education?

B) What are the similarities and differences of the introduction parts of the selected theses concerning the rhetorical moves they contain?

RQ2: What are the lexical and grammatical similarities and differences of the introduction sections of theses written in English by Turkish and American PhDs?

**Methodology**

**Research Design**

The study is in the nature of qualitative research design. Of the qualitative research designs, the study utilizes “Genre Analysis” of the selected corpus which is constructed by the researcher. To Creswell (2007), qualitative research design seeks for deeply understanding of research data and object at their contexts. In particular, genre analysis is the inquiry of rhetorical moves in specific type of texts addressing to a certain speech community (see, Swales, 2004; Paltridge, 1994; Bhatia, 1993). To utilize genre analysis, the rhetorical moves are scrutinized in the written corpora. In this study, Swales’ (2004) three stepped move analysis *“Create a Research Space (CARS)”* model is embraced for the scrutiny. These moves are ‘*Establishing the Territory, Establishing the Niche* and *Occupying the Niche’*. The moves are identified, and the sequences of these moves for each text are presented separately. Beyond rhetorical move analyses, register analysis is conducted as well, for the aim of portraying the context structures of the introduction section of theses selected for the study. As Halliday (1978) explains register analysis is “the set of meanings, the configuration of semantic patterns, that are typically drawn upon under the specific conditions, along with the words and structures that are used in the realization of these meanings” (p. 23). Lastly, by taking into consideration of the findings, A *Genre-Based Instruction* is given for the implication of the study. This *Genre-Based Instruction* is designed within the framework proposed by Osman (2004) as follows;

“Stage 1: Exposing learners to models of the target genre

Stage 2: Guiding learners to analyse the structural patterns

Stage 3: Providing learners with practice to construct the genre

Stage 4: Assigning the learners to independently construct the genres” (p. 21).

**Materials and Data Collection Tools**

As the purpose of the study is to reveal rhetorical moves and move designs of the introduction sections of PhD theses of Turkish and American students which are written in English and also written in the field of ‘Language Education’, a corpus consist of 5 PhD theses by native English speakers (American) and 5 PhD theses by non-native English speakers (Turkish) is created. The criterions for corpus inclusion of the thesis are; (1) the theses are to be written in English and (2) in the field of Language Education. In line with the purpose of the study and criteria for corpus construction, the theses are chosen among those published between the years of 2010 to 2018. With the criterions and the purpose of the study in mind, the theses selection begins from the recently published to downward, for the sake of reaching a more current use of language in the selected PhD theses. For 5 PhD theses of Turkish students ‘YÖK-Tez’ database is benefitted. The search engine is utilized in the YÖK-Tez with the restrictions of “Language Education” and years from 2010 to the current date. For 5 PhD theses of American Students “ProQuest” theses database is chosen. The same searching restrictions are utilized in this database as utilized for the Turkish context, too. Besides, the nativity of these students is checked as much as possible through an online search of each author’s *Curriculum Vitae (CV)*. As a result of CV hunting, all Turkish PhDs are found to be non-native users of English, and all American students are found to be native users of English.

**Data Analysis**

In this study, Swales’ (1990, 2004) three-step *“Create a Research Space (CARS)”* rhetorical move analysis model is embraced for the scrutiny. These moves are ‘Establishing the Territory, Establishing the Niche and Occupying the Niche’. The moves are identified, and the sequences of these moves for each text are presented separately. Tallying (Nunan & Bailey, 2009) is utilized to unfold the rhetorical moves and the sequences of these moves. Beyond the rhetorical move analyses, register analyses are conducted for lexico-grammatical (Halliday, 1978; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013) concern of the study and the context structures of the theses chosen for the study. Halliday (1978) explains register analysis as “the set of meanings, the configuration of semantic patterns, that are typically drawn upon under the specific conditions, along with the words and structures that are used in the realization of these meanings” (p. 23). To conduct the lexico-grammatical analyses, three different text-analysis software are utilized; (1) “*Word Count Tool*” (<https://wordcounttools.com/>) for the frequency and the percentage analyses of the words, also for sentence level (frequency, length) analyses; (2) “*Analyze My Writing*” (<http://www.analyzemywriting.com/index.html> for readability scores of the theses, also for grammatical ( percentages of nouns, adjectives, adverbs, verbs, prepositions, pronouns and auxiliary verbs) analyses, and passive and active sentence frequency analyses; (3) “*AntConc*” software for unfolding the left-hand and right-hand collocations of the most frequent words in the theses. As having a comparative nature in the design, all of the analyses conducted will be administered separately regarding the native and non-native grouping of the PhDs and introduction parts of their dissertations.

**Findings and Discussion**

To present the findings and to discuss these findings by the related literature in the field of genre analysis on the introduction sections of the PhD thesis, the study follows the order of research questions’ sequence. Thus, the first research question of the study will be scrutinized first to unfold the rhetorical moves designs of the introductions of PhD thesis written in English by Turkish and American students.

*RQ1: A) What are the rhetorical moves and the sequences of these moves of the introduction section of PhD theses of Turkish and American students which are written in English and in the field of Language Education?*

*B) What are the similarities and differences of the introduction parts of the selected theses concerning rhetorical moves?*

To answer the first question, initially, the corpus which is constructed, within the restrictions as stated in the ‘Data Collection’ and ‘Data Analysis’ sections, is given in Table 1. In the table, the classification of the selected theses, codes of the theses that are going to be used in the following sections, the titles of the theses and the universities these theses are defended are given in details.

**Table 1**

*PhD Theses selected for this study (Publication year of each thesis is 2018)*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Thesis Group** | **Author** | **Title** | **Thesis Dissertation University** |
| **TR\* Corpus** | (TR-1)  İsmail GÜRLER | Evaluation of the Current Curriculum in ELT Departments from the Perspectives of Lecturers and Students: A Needs Analysis | Atatürk University-TR |
| (TR-2)  GÜLÜMSER EFEOĞLU | Second Language Acquisition of Nominal Inflection in Turkish | Boğaziçi University-TR |

*\*Theses written by Turkish students; \*\*Theses written by American students.*

**Table 1***(continued)*

*PhD theses selected for the study (All theses are published in 2018)*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **TR\* Corpus** | **Author** | **Title** | **Thesis Dissertation University** |
| (TR-3)  Zekeriya KAZANCI | Reading Comprehension in Paper and Digital Based English Texts: A Comparative Study | Çukurova University-TR |
| (TR-4)  Kadriye AKSOY | An Investigation into Collaborative Behaviours in Task-Based Foreign Language Peer Interactions | Hacettepe University-TR |
| (TR-5)  Kübra OKUMUŞ DAĞDELER | The Role of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (Mall) in Vocabulary Knowledge, Learner Autonomy and Motivation of Prospective English Language Teachers | Atatürk University-TR |
|  |  |  |  |
| **US\*\***  **Corpus** | (US-1)  Sean P. ARMSTRONG | Chinese English Teachers’ Perceptions of Foreign English Teachers: A Qualitative Study in Positioning | Northcentral University-USA |
| (US-2)  Julie DELL-JONES | Intersecting Stories: Cultural Reflexivity, Digital Storytelling,  and Personal Narratives in Language Teacher Education | University of South Florida-USA |
| (US-3)  Beverly N. WILLIS | A Qualitative Study: Understanding English Language Literacy Instructions through Teachers’ Perceptions and Experiences in one County School District in North Carolina | Northcentral University-USA |
| (US-4)  Brandy C. JUDKINS | Administrator Preparation Gap: Knowledge of English Language Learners and English Language Teaching | University of Nebraska-USA |
| (US-5)  Brad COLE | Qualitative Content Analysis of Non-Native Speakers Using Communication Strategies to Ameliorate Misunderstandings in Manila, Philippines | Northcentral University-USA |

*\*Theses written by Turkish students; \*\*Theses written by American students.*

Table 1 illustrates the details of the corpus designed for the study. There are two types of theses regarding the language background of the authors *(TR and US)*. By this classification, the theses under these two titles are coded with the *TR-corpus* and *US-corpus* as main title codes. It is obvious to see that there are five theses for each classification of *TR* and *US corpora*. Both TR and US theses are defended in the field of ‘Language Education’ as can be concluded from the titles of the theses. When TR theses are considered, TR-1, TR-2, TR-4 and TR-5 are defended in a top ten high-ranked[[4]](#footnote-4) universities in Turkey. This ranking signals the possible high quality in the PhD programs and hence the output as theses defended there.

On the other hand, when the US theses are considered US-1, US-3 and US-5 are defended in the same university which is a 100% doctoral[[5]](#footnote-5) university as they claim in their mission and vision announcements. When US theses’ rankings[[6]](#footnote-6) are considered, US-2 is defended in the 41st and US-1-3-5 are defended in a not-ranking-included university, Finally the US-4 is defended in the 79th high-ranked university in USA. Besides, all of the theses presented in the corpus are defended in the academic year of 2017-2018, which shows the currentness of the corpus as well.

**Table 2**

*Rhetorical moves\* in the introduction sections of the theses*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | M1 | | M2 | | M3 | |
|  | *f* | % | *f* | % | *f* | % |
| TR | 18 | 39.14 | 14 | 30.43 | 14 | 30.43 |
| US | 22 | 34.38 | 24 | 37.50 | 18 | 28.12 |
| Total | 40 | 36.40 | 38 | 34.57 | 32 | 29.03 |

***\**** *M1=Establishing the Territory, M2=Establishing the Niche, M3=Occupying the Niche*

To answer the first research question, tallying (Nunan & Bailey, 2009) is utilized. Table 2 illustrates the rhetorical move design of each thesis inserted into the corpus created. When the overall move frequencies are considered it is apparent to see the total application of M1- Establishing the Territory (*f = 40, %= 36.40)* is more frequent than M2- Establishing the Niche *(f = 38, %= 34.57)* and M3- Occupying the Niche *(f = 32, %= 29.03)*. This result claims that both TR and US PhDs have the tendency to give the background literature denser than research purpose or examination. However, as having a contrastive aim of the research, within groups, within case comparisons are to be considered before conclusions. Due to this fact, Table 2 gives within case descriptive statistics as well. In Table 2, a total number of rhetorical moves by TR *(NTR-total= 46)* is found to be less frequent than of US *(NUS-total= 64)*. This shows that the theses in the TR-corpus employ less density concerning rhetorical moves than the US-corpus. While TR theses display M1 (*fTR-M1=18, %=39.14*) as the most frequent move, US theses display M2 (*fUS-M2=24, %=37.50)* as the most frequent move. In addition, when the frequencies of the moves are investigated, the lowest frequency of US theses (M3) is equal to the highest frequency of TR theses (M1). The frequencies and the percentages in Table 2 displays that American PhDs give significance to an indication of a research gap denser than the Turkish PhD. This finding diverges with the claims of Soler-Monreal et al. (2011) which claims that Spanish students employ M1 and M3 more frequent than M2. Thus, such divergence in the finding supports the claim of Martin and Perez (2014), in that, they claim the difference in the linguistics and the cultural background may cause a difference in the productive skills (as writing and speaking) of the language users. Furthermore, presence of each move in all theses coincides with Ahamad and Yusof (2012) which also claims the presence of each move in the introduction sections of ‘Islamic Research Articles’. In an overall sense, the introduction sections of the PhD theses by American students display more importance giving on the indication of research gap, whereas the introduction sections of the PhD theses by Turkish display more importance on establishing the territory by orienting towards the already existing literature. On the other hand, occupying the niche through research aims, terminology and focus is the least frequent rhetorical move for both groups of the thesis. This shows that both Turkish and American PhDs share less for giving the research aims, focus, terminology and related issues of the study. To comprehend the comparisons of the introduction sections better, Table 3 illustrates the rhetorical move sequences for each case in the study.

**Table 3**

*Rhetorical move\* sequences of the theses under scrutiny*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| TR-1 | M1 | M2 | M1 | M2 | M3 | M1 | M2 | M3 | M1 | M3 |  |  |  |  |  |
| TR-2 | M1 | M2 | M1 | M2 | M1 | M2 | M3 | M1 | M3 | M2 | M1 | M3 |  |  |  |
| TR-3 | M3 | M1 | M2 | M1 | M3 | M2 | M3 | M1 | M2 | M3 |  |  |  |  |  |
| TR-4 | M3 | M1 | M2 | M1 | M3 | M2 | M1 | M2 | M3 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| TR-5 | M1 | M2 | M1 | M2 | M3 | M1 | M2 | M1 | M3 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| US-1 | M1 | M2 | M1 | M2 | M1 | M2 | M3 | M2 | M3 | M1 | M2 | M1 | M2 | M3 |  |
| US-2 | M3 | M1 | M3 | M2 | M3 | M2 | M1 | M3 | M2 | M3 | M1 | M2 | M1 | M2 | M3 |
| US-3 | M1 | M2 | M1 | M2 | M1 | M2 | M1 | M2 | M3 | M1 | M2 | M1 | M3 |  |  |
| US-4 | M1 | M2 | M3 | M1 | M2 | M3 | M1 | M2 | M1 | M2 | M3 |  |  |  |  |
| US-5 | M1 | M2 | M1 | M2 | M1 | M2 | M3 | M1 | M3 | M2 | M3 | M2 | M3 |  |  |

***\**** *M1=Establishing the Territory, M2=Establishing the Niche, M3=Occupying the Niche*

Table 3 gives the move sequences of introduction sections of each thesis in the study. For overall analysis, the sequences in the American students’ introduction parts are more complex than of Turkish students, and this overlaps with the findings of Soler-Monreal et al. (2011). In addition, both TR theses and US theses in the study have cyclical patterns of M1 and M2 frequently. These cyclical M1 and M2 moves display the endeavours of each PhD student in illustration of existing knowledge and to further that knowledge by addressing a gap in the existing knowledge. After appealing M1 and M2 moves, all PhDs subsequently seem to tend to declare a focus, aim and related terminology for the intended research studies (which are PhD theses for the context of this study). This sequential rhetorical move design of all theses shows the convergence of Swales’ (1994, 2004) CARS model to introduction sections of PhD theses even for such contrastive approach to analyze introductions’ moves design of intercultural and native and non-native users of languages as in this study. For a final remark, the presence of each move of CARS model is also apparent as in the study of Soler-Monreal et al. (2011) as well as a supporting claim.

*RQ2: What are the lexical and grammatical similarities and differences of the introduction sections of theses written in English by Turkish and American PhDs?*

To answer this question, register analysis is utilized in the following section. Table 4 and 5 is get through the software of “Word Count Tool” (<https://wordcounttools.com/>).

**Table 4**

*Most frequent top-ten word-list of the corpus*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | TR | | | US | | |
|  | Word List | *f* | % | Word List | *f* | % |
| 1 | Study | 95 | 0.8 | English | 172 | 1 |
| 2 | Learning | 78 | 0.7 | Language | 160 | 1 |
| 3 | Learners | 71 | 0.6 | Teacher | 142 | 0.9 |
| 4 | Language | 70 | 0.6 | Study | 94 | 0.6 |
| 5 | Interaction | 58 | 0.5 | Research | 84 | 0.5 |
| 6 | Mobile | 57 | 0.5 | Education | 61 | 0.4 |
| 7 | Curriculum | 56 | 0.5 | Student | 52 | 0.3 |
| 8 | Program | 40 | 0.3 | School | 46 | 0.3 |
| 9 | Teacher | 36 | 0.3 | Critical | 39 | 0.2 |
| 10 | Research | 35 | 0.3 | Experience | 36 | 0.2 |

In Table 4, the most frequent words in the TR and US theses corpora are given. Of the word lists, for TR corpus the words ‘Study’ (*f = 95, %=0.8)*, ‘Learning’ *(f =78, %= 0.7),* ‘Learners’ *(f = 71, %= 0.6)* and ‘Language’ *(f = 70, %=0.6)* are the most frequent words used in the introductions parts of theses by Turkish PhDs. On the other hand, for US corpus, ‘English’ *(f= 172, %= 1)*, ‘Language’ *(f =160, %= 1)*, ‘Teacher’ *(f =142, %= 0.9)* and ‘Study’ *(f =9, %= 0.6)* are the most frequent words used in the introductions parts of theses by American PhDs. In general, of the top-ten words ranking, *study, teacher, research* and *language* are overlapping words in the introduction sections of the corpora.

**Table 5**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| PhDs | Words | Sentences | Paragraph |
|  | *f* | *f* | *f* |
| TR | 11551 | 551 | 244 |
| US | 16200 | 658 | 1428 |

*Frequency of the words, the sentences and the paragraphs of the corpora*

In Table 5, quantification of the words, the sentences and the paragraphs is given. There is a clear sign of differentiation regarding the number of the sentences, the words and the paragraph frequencies in both of the TR and US corpora. It is clear that the US corpus outnumbers the TR corpus in each circumstance, which can be a sign for the higher sentence length and density of US corpus. To investigate this claim more, “Analyze My Writing” (<http://www.analyzemywriting.com/index.html>) software is run for the readability scores of each corpus.

**Table 6**

*Readability score (Index) of each corpus*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | TR | US |
| Readability Score (Index)\* | Grade Level of Entire Text\*\* | |
| Average Grade Level: | 15.03 | 17.23 |
| Median Grade Level: | 15.14 | 17.06 |

*\*See Appendix A for Criterions of Index*

*\*\*12-16 =Undergraduate Level of writing, 16+ =Graduate, Post-Graduate or Professional Level of writing.*

In Table 6, the readability score of each corpus is tested via “Analyze My Writing” software. It is found that the TR corpus readability level (*15.03)* is at the ‘Under-*Graduate’* level, whereas it is at the ‘*Graduate, Post-Graduate or Professional’* level of writing for US corpus *(17.23)*. This finding supports the claim that US corpus of introductions in the study has a more complex and dense nature of language use. Following these, Passive and Active Voice design of sentences is scanned in order to see possible effect of these passive and active voices to readability scores of the introduction corpora.

**Table 7**

*Frequencies and percentages of passive and active voices*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Voice | TR | | US | |
|  | *f* | % | *f* | % |
| Passive | 190 | 34.49 | 174 | 26.44 |
| Active | 361 | 65.51 | 484 | 73.56 |
| Total | 551 | 100 | 658 | 100 |

When Table 7 is examined, it is certain that Active voice use in both TR and US corpora outnumbers the passive voice use. For TR corpus active voices (*f =361)* almost doubles the passive voices *(f = 190)*. For US corpus active voices (*f =484)* almost triples the passive voices *(f = 174)*. Thus, it is obvious to claim that US corpus uses more active voices than the passive voices compared to TR corpus. Thus, passive voices seem not to have a negative impact concerning readability of a written text.

**Table 8**

*Percentages of parts of speech*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | TR | US |
| Parts of Speech | % | % |
| Nouns | 33.46 | 35.58 |
| Adjectives | 7.49 | 8.25 |
| Verbs | 11.71 | 11.09 |
| Adverbs | 3.57 | 2.6 |
| Prepositions | 14.01 | 13.81 |
| Pronouns | 1.75 | 1.77 |
| Auxiliary Verbs | 5.32 | 3.86 |

When the parts of speech in the corpora are considered, the values are close to each other, and there are not any huge differences regarding the percentages as can be seen in Table 8. In contrast, if the frequencies and the percentages of sentences, paragraphs and words in Table 5 are examined via a critical lens, even if the percentages are close concerning parts of speech to convey the message between each corpus, the quantities of each corpus differs in a remarkable way.

Moving out of lexico-grammatical analyses of the corpora, for the final analysis of the most top-ten frequent words in Table 4, left hand and right-hand collocations test is administered. So Table 9 gives the lists of the left-hand and right-hand collocates of the top-ten most frequent words. “AntConc” software is utilized for collocation analyses. At that point, left-hand and right-hand collocates of each corpus’ top-ten most frequent words are scrutinized.

In the following analysis, Table 9 (TR-Corpus) and Table 10 (US-Corpus) gives the left-hand and right-hand collocates of the top-ten most frequent words of each corpus in the study. Firstly, the most frequent word of the TR-Corpus ‘Study’ collocates with the words “significance of the, purpose of the, limitations of the, and current” for its left-hand collocates. Besides, ‘Study’ also collocates with the words “presented, determine, aims, follows, tried, and conducted” for its right-hand collocates.

Table 9

*Most frequent words of TR-Corpus and their collocates*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Left Hand Collocates\* | TR-Corpus | Right Hand Collocates\* |
| significance of the, purpose of the, limitations of the, current | Study | presented, determine, aims, follows, tried, conducted |
| mobile, language, assisted, logic, computer, vocabulary | Learning | anytime, vocabulary, teaching, mobile, language, process, |
| adult, mobile, collaboration, task, different, between, peer, interaction | Learners | engage, collaboration, roles, group, interaction, peer, language, mobile |
| foreign, second, assisted, learning, learners, computer | Language | skills, related, teaching, learning, learners, |
| suggest, investigating, peer, group, learning, learner | Interaction | classroom, studies, research, mostly, learners, |
| learning, extent, language, using | Mobile | application, devices, improving, learning, vocabulary |
| ELT, current, education, understanding, studies | Curriculum | practice, especially, studies, evaluation, |
| ELT, current, evaluation of | Program | general, evaluation, needs, |
| prospective, students, English, ELT | Teachers | trainers, of English, |
| following, current, based, study, participants of the, interaction | Research | questions, study, problem, context |

*\*f > 3 for each collocation*

Table 10

*Most frequent words of US-Corpus and their collocates*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Left Hand Collocates\* | US-Corpus | Right Hand Collocates\* |
| British, foreign, speakers, native, learning | English | language, instruction, teacher, school, proficiency |
| English, foreign, instruction, native, teaching | Language | learners, literacy, proficiency, domain, skills, instruction |
| English, language, pre-/in-service | Teacher | training, programs, course, education, preparations |
| significance of the, case, purpose, single, overseas, qualitative | Study | qualitative, phase, design, research, English |
| proposed, further, prior, qualitative, little, case | Research | method, appropriate, relevant, question, design |
| prosperity, area, teacher, foreign, language | Education | first, teacher, language, research, English |
| discussion of, improve, hinder essential for | Student | involvement, progress, teacher, outcomes, success |
| district, administrators of , English, language | School | site, district, administrators, systems, research |
| understanding, theoretical, larger, towards | Critical | multiculturalism, pedagogy, approach(es), issues, practices, narrative, theory |
| personal, expertise, knowledge, educational, teaching | Experience | in classroom, for ELL students, as, for, to |

*\*f > 3 for each collocation*

On the contrary, the most frequent word of the US-Corpus ‘English’ collocates with the words “British, foreign, speakers, native, and learning” for its left-hand collocates, in addition, ‘English’ collocates with the words “language, instruction, teacher, school, and proficiency” for its right hand collocates. Moreover, the contrastive tabulation design of Table 9 and 10 on the single page lets one compare the most frequent word preferences and their left and right-hand collocates of Turkish and American PhDs in their theses’ introductions. For instance, as stated earlier, there are common words in the corpora when beheld. These are ‘study, research, teacher and language’ in each corpus. Besides, the left and right-hand collocates of these common words also share common collocates as well. This resemblance signals the similarities in the lexico-grammatical design of the corpora in the study as well.

**Conclusions**

The purpose of the study is to unfold the rhetorical move design of Turkish and American PhDs’ theses and introduction sections of these theses in particular. To reach that purpose, the study utilized CARS model of Swales (1990, 2004) to give the rhetorical move design and move sequences of each thesis in accordance. Following the rhetorical move design and sequence analyses, the study conducted lexico-grammatical/rhetorical analyses of TR and US corpora. In conclusion, the study has found that both TR and US corpora regarding introduction sections of Turkish and American PhDs employs Swales’ CARS model. Also, each thesis in the study follows all three moves of the CARS model. On the contrary, the TR and US corpora differ in term of move preferences in the introduction parts. That is, introduction sections in the theses of TR-corpus employs M1 (*Establishing the Territory)* more frequent than the other rhetorical moves. Whereas, introduction sections in the theses of US-corpus employs M2 (*Establishing the Niche)* more frequent than the other rhetorical moves. Such divergence unfolds the significant philosophy that lies in the background of the Turkish and American PhDs’ theses’ introduction. In other words, while Turkish PhDs care for explaining the previous studies conducted in the field, American PhDs seem to prefer going a step further than literature review and care more for digging out or hunting for a research gap or needs in that field. Though there appeared divergences in the employment of the rhetorical moves of the theses by Turkish and American students, it is undeniable to accept the fact that Swales’ (1990, 2004) CARS model is a useful analytical tool to analyze introduction sections of PhD theses (Ahamed & Yusof, 2012; Soler-Monreal et al., 2011; Kawase, 2015) of Turkish and American students. In addition to the rhetorical moves comparisons, register analyses in the study also unfold that there is a higher degree of language use concerning the word, sentence, and paragraph count, readability level scores, parts of speech and passive or active voices implementation in introduction sections of American PhDs. As a final remark, more contrastive studies are suggested to be conducted to compare and contrast the validity of the findings in this study particularly in the field of language education.

**Constraints and Solutions**

One of the difficulties of the study is the detection of the language background of the authors regarding nativity in English language use. To solve this, CV scanning is conducted at the construction phase of the corpus. It is assumed that it will not be possible to reach a 100% certainty in the globalized and migrating world. Another constraint is that the study is limited to 5 PhD theses by Turkish non-native English speakers and 5 PhD theses by American native English speakers. Through the expansion of the numbers of the theses and the verification concerning the language background of the authors, more accurate rhetorical move designs are possible to be claimed. So, the suggestion for the following studies can be the reconsideration of the corpus and its components as the final point to highlight.

**Implications (GBI)**

The findings of the study can also present implications for English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses at the graduate or post-graduate level of higher education programs. Rhetorical move design and the sequences of these moves may be the sources to be integrated into “English Academic Writing” courses at the graduate and post-graduate levels. Therefore, as an implication of the study a *Genre-Based Instruction (GBI)* is proposed within the framework of Osman’s (2004) GBI model as follows;

“Stage 1: Exposing learners to models of the target genre

Stage 2: Guiding learners to analyse the structural patterns

Stage 3: Providing learners with practice to construct the genre

Stage 4: Assigning the learners to independently construct the genres” (p. 21).

Following the steps of Osman (2004), a four-week-long GBI is planned; please find ***Appendix B*** for the details of the particularly designed GBI.

**NOTE: Word Count= 6691 References excluded**

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**Appendices**

**Appendix A**

**Readability Index**

<http://www.analyzemywriting.com/index.html>

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Readability Index** | **Level** | **Examples** |
| 3 and below | Emergent and Early Readers | [Picture and early reader books.](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Picture_book) |
| 03-05 | Children's | [Chapter Books.](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chapter_book) |
| 05-08 | Young Adult | [Advertising copy, Young Adult literature, some news articles.](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Young-adult_fiction) |
| 08-12 | General Adult | Novels, news articles, blog posts, political speeches. |
| 12-16 | Undergraduate | College textbooks. |
| 16 and above | Graduate, Post-Graduate, Professional | Scholarly Journal and Technical articles. |

**Appendix B**

*A four-week-long GBI suggestion to write introduction of the theses through a specific genre*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Course Title** | Academic Writing |
| **Level** | Advanced (Graduate -Level /PhD)-Max. 10 students |
| **Course Aims and Description** | The course is designed with the aim of developing writing introduction sections at the PhD level. The course is a four-week-long EAP course. The aim of the course is;   * to develop knowledge of PhDs through genre-based instruction, * to help them write introduction sections for their theses by following the moves of the specific introduction genre.   The medium of instruction will be English. |
| **Duration** | Four weeks |
| **Objectives** | At the end of the course;   * The Students will be able to recognize and distinguish the rhetorical moves of an introduction section of a PhD thesis as a genre. * The Students will be able to reveal the differences in the moves design and sequences in the introduction section of theses written in English by Turkish and American PhDs. * The student will be able to write an introduction section for a possible/proposed research topic they would like to study for their PhD theses. |
| **Materials** | There will be introduction sections selected purposefully from the PhD theses written by Turkish and American students in the field of language education. The aim is to increase awareness of the students about the possible divergences in the implications of rhetorical moves in the introduction sessions of Turkish and American PhDs. |
| **Assessment** | There will be a formative assessment regarding the introduction writings of the students.  Assessment 1: (20%) At the end of the 1st week students will find the possible research ideas to study for their PhD theses and so does for the final work of this course. Feedback will be given right after their submissions.  Assessment 2: (30%) The initial drafts of their introduction writings will be peer-reviewed by their classmates after the third week of the course, and the reporting of these peer reviews will be assessed. Subsequently final feedback will be given.  Assessment 3: (50%) The final work of students will be submitted a week after the four-week-long course. The final versions of the introduction section written by students will be assessed, through the lens of a specific introduction genre design discussed during teaching sessions. |
|  | **Course Content**  Each week, there is a two-hour-long session. |
| **Week 1** | **Introduction and exposure to the introduction genre samples**  For an introduction, explicit way of defining the basics of genre knowledge and purpose of the course is given. After, the rhetorical move unfolding task is conducted implicitly, with the aim of increasing the students self-awareness of the genre. The revealed moves at the final phase of the session is matched with the Swales’ (1990, 2004) CARS model. |
| **Week 2** | **Contrastive genre analyses of theses by Turkish and American PhDs written in English.**  In the second week, more samples are brought into the classroom from both Turkish and American contexts. The move identification and the classification concerning the Turkish and the American PhDs’ introduction sections are aimed to be succeeded. Finally, the moves found in the given samples by students are compared and contrasted to comprehend and name the move design and sequencing of the introduction sections. |
| **Week 3** | **Draft writing for the final work**  Initial drafts for their final works are structured. Peer revision samples are presented and the criterions to consider while reviewing are given explicitly to the students. |
| **Week 4** | **Revision of the rhetorical moves for introduction sections and controlling for the peer revision reports.**  Initially, the revision reports which are randomly selected will be scrutinized as a whole group task. After, revisions of the move steps in introduction sections are completed. Finally, questions and needs of the students are responded for their final work. |

1. Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, [orcinkaradag@gmail.com](mailto:orcinkaradag@gmail.com) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. It refers to expanding-circle classification of Kachru’s (1985) model. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. It refers to inner-circle classification of English of Kachru’s (1985) model. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. UniRank Asia: <https://www.4icu.org/tr/> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <https://www.ncu.edu/student-experience/our-difference/why-northcentral/doctoral-faculty> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. <http://www.shanghairanking.com/World-University-Rankings-2018/USA.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)