

A CORPUS-BASED ANALYSIS OF GENRE-SPECIFIC DISCOURSE OF
RESEARCH IN THE PHD THESES AND RESEARCH ARTICLES IN
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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PREVIEW

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ABSTRACT

A CORPUS-BASED ANALYSIS OF GENRE-SPECIFIC DISCOURSE OF RESEARCH IN THE PHD THESES AND RESEARCH ARTICLES IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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This study aims to investigate the genre-specific features of the introduction parts of the PhD theses (PhDTs) and research articles (RAs) in International Relations (IR). The study examines the followings: the use of lexico-grammatical features, the move step structure to find out the fitness of the CARS Model (Swales, 2004), and the rhetorical features of the two corpora.

In this regard, a mixed methods research was designed to answer the research questions. Two corpora were utilized: the introduction parts of the RAs published in IR and the introduction parts of the PhDTs written at METU at the Department of IR.

The results indicated that regarding the lexico-grammatical features, the language of the introduction sections of the RAs was more academic, lexically more dense, and thus, more difficult to read compared to the introduction sections of the PhDTs in IR. Concerning the fitness of the CARS Model, it was concluded that the model accounted for the overall pattern of the RA introductions better than the PhDT introductions in IR. However, the two corpora were quite similar in their use of all the three moves proposed by Swales' CARS Model in the sense that they included all the three moves.

However, the two corpora differed in their use of obligatory and optional steps. Regarding the rhetorical features, the RA and PhDT authors differed greatly. The results would be useful for novice authors who are writing or planning to write the introduction sections of their PhDTs and/or RAs in IR.

Keywords: Corpus, Discourse, Genre, Thesis, Research Article

PREVIEW

ÖZ

BİR TÜR OLARAK ARAŞTIRMA SÖYLEMİNDE ULUSLARARASI İLİŞKİLER ALANINDA YAZILMIŞ OLAN DOKTORA TEZLERİ VE ARAŞTIRMA MAKALELERİNİN BÜTÜNCEYE DAYALI ÇÖZÜMLENMESİ

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Bu çalışma Uluslararası İlişkiler alanında yazılmış olan makale ve doktora tezlerinin türe has özelliklerinin araştırılmasını amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma iki bütüncedeki dilbilgisel-sözcüksel özellikleri, CARS (Swales, 2004) Modelinin uyumunu bulmak için adım ve birim yapısını, ve söylem özelliklerini inceler.

Araştırma sorularını cevaplamak için bir karma yöntem araştırması tasarlanmıştır. Çalışmada iki bütüncü kullanılmıştır: Uluslararası İlişkiler alanında basılmış olan makalelerin giriş bölümleri ve Uluslararası İlişkiler alanında ODTÜ’de yazılmış olan doktora tezlerinin giriş bölümleri.

Çalışmanın sonuçları dilbilgisel-sözcüksel özellikleri açısından Uluslararası İlişkiler alanında yazılan makalelerin giriş bölümlerinin, tezlerin giriş bölümlerine göre, daha akademik ve sözcük yükü açısından daha yoğun olduklarını ve bu nedenle okunurluk düzeylerinin daha düşük yani daha zor olduğunu göstermiştir. Ayrıca, CARS Modelinin (Swales, 2004) araştırma makalelerinin giriş bölümlerinin genel birim yapısını, doktora tezlerinin giriş bölümlerinin genel birim yapısına göre daha iyi açıkladığı sonucuna varılmıştır. Diğer yandan, makale ve tezlerin giriş bölümleri Swales’ın CARS Modeli tarafından önerilen üç birimi içerdiklerinden dolayı oldukça benzerdir. Ancak, makale ve tezlerin giriş bölümleri özellikle zorunlu ve tercihe bağlı

aşama kullanımı açısından farklılık göstermiştir. Son olarak, makale ve tez yazarları arasında kişi zamiri kullanımları ciddi farklılık göstermiştir. Bu sonuçlar Uluslararası İlişkiler alanında tez ya da makalenin giriş bölümlerini yazan ya da yazmayı planlayan deneyimsiz araştırmacılar için yararlı olacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Bütünce, Söylem, Tür, Tez, Araştırma Makalesi

PREVIEW

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To My Beloved Family

Yener, Elif, Ela

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter consists of the following sections: background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, overview of methodology, limitations of study, definitions of key terms in the study, and acronyms.

1.1 Background to the Study

English has acquired the status of an international language, especially for science and technology (Crystal, 2003; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996; Jenkins, 2003; Johns & Dudley-Evans, 1991). Therefore, research publication in English has earned profound importance, and academicians are expected to participate in academia successfully. However, publishing research in English is a challenging experience for scholars. They are required to use the language effectively in accordance with the needs and conventions of the academia. In order to be successful academically and professionally, these scholars need to undertake the task of academic writing (Kanoksilapatham, 2012).

This issue brings about more difficulties for writers for whom English is an additional language (Canagarajah, 1996; Flowerdew, 2001; Gosden, 1995; Misak et al. 2005). Thus, the demand for English courses that cater for the specific needs of specific groups has increased. As stated by Hutchinson &

Waters (1987: 8), “the English needed by a particular group of learners could be identified by analyzing the linguistic characteristics of their specialist area of work or study”. With this motivation, research in English has focused on English for Specific Purposes (ESP), which is explained in the following section.

1.1.1 English for Specific Purposes

There has been a growing interest in the field of English for Specific Purposes. Several studies have focused on ESP genre tradition and pedagogy, and they have provided implications for genre analysis (e.g. Bhatia, 1993; Flowerdew, 1993; Hyland, 2003, 2004; Johns, 2002; Paltridge, 2001; Swales & Feak, 2000, 2004; Tardy, 2006).

To define ESP, Dudley-Evans & St John (1998: 4-5) list the characteristic information of ESP as follows:

I. Absolute Characteristics

- ESP is defined to meet specific needs of the learner;
- ESP makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves;
- ESP is centered on the language (grammar, lexis and register), skills, discourse and genres appropriate to these activities.

II. Variable Characteristics

- ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines;
- ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of general English;
- ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be for learners at secondary school level;
- ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students;
- Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language system, but it can be used with beginners.

One of the most prominent figures in ESP is Swales (1990). Bawarshi and Reiff (2010) state that “although ESP has existed since the 1960s and although ESP researchers began to use genre analysis as a research and pedagogical tool in the 1980s, it was especially John Swales’ groundbreaking book *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings* that most fully theorized and developed the methodology for bringing genre analysis into ESP research and teaching. It is largely due to Swales’ work and the research it has inspired over the last twenty years that ESP and genre analysis have become in many ways synonymous” (Bawarshi and Reiff, 2010; p.41).

Swales (1990) mentions that the main purpose of his book *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings* is to offer an approach to the teaching of academic and research English. The approach suggested by Swales in the book develops and utilizes three key concepts, which are discourse community, genre and language learning task. These key concepts are explained in the following sections in detail.

1.1.2 Academic Writing and the Discourse Community

The role of writing in the life of the academic community is powerful and pervasive. Writing for an academic discourse community is an important step particularly for novice researchers to enter the discourse community and share their research results.

A discourse community can be defined as a group of people who share a set of social conventions that is directed towards some purpose (Swales, 1990). Kuhn (1970) characterizes the discourse community as consisting of the practitioners of a scientific specialty who share language, beliefs, and practices as they have undergone similar educations and professional initiations and they have absorbed the same technical literature and drawn many of the same lessons