



Exploring Reciprocity between Move Patterns and Authorial Stance in the Conclusion Section of MS/ MPhil Theses of Linguistics: A Genre Analysis

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Abstract: *In the recent years, academic discourse in the form of academic genre has become attention of focus of many researchers. In order to extend this convention of exploring academic genre, the present study was conducted to perform a genre analysis of 30 conclusions of MS/ MPhil theses of English linguistics collected through convenience sampling from three universities (Air University, International Islamic University and National University of Modern Languages) in Islamabad, Pakistan. A research design consisted of two theoretical models was utilized to conduct this study at two levels: macro and micro. At macro level, the rhetorical move sequences and occurrences were explored according to Yang and Allison's (2003) model, whereas at micro level authorial stance was explored through Biber et al. (1999). The results identified a 3-move (M_1 , M_2 and M_3) and 13-step (M_{1I} , M_{1S} , M_{1F} , M_{1A} , M_{2A} , M_{2B} , M_{2C} , M_{2R} , M_{3A_1} , M_{3A_2} , M_{3B_1} , M_{3B_2} and M_{3C}) pattern in the sample corpora. Thus, seven additional steps (M_{1I} , M_{1F} , M_{1A} , M_{2R} , M_{3A_2} , M_{3B_2} and M_{3C}) were found with respect to Yang and Allison (2003). Moreover, M_{1F} and M_{3A_1} were observed as the most frequent steps, whereas M_{3C} was identified as the rarest step by Pakistani scholars at MS/ MPhil level. Furthermore, the results revealed M_{1F} , M_{3A_1} , M_{1S} , M_{3A_2} and M_{1I} as mandatory steps; M_{1A} , M_{3B_1} , M_{2B} , M_{2C} , M_{2A} and M_{2R} as conventional steps and M_{3B_2} and M_{3C} as optional steps. Similarly, the findings also suggested that ESMs were the most widely employed class of adverbs across M_1 , M_2 and M_3 . The findings of the study will contribute to the genre of academic discourse particularly thesis writing: move analysis and authorial stance.*

Keywords: *Genre analysis, Academic Genre, Academic Writing, Rhetorical Move Sequences and Occurrences*

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Introduction

In recent years, significant academic advancements have been made. Consequently, the various instances of discourse that are practiced within educational and academic settings become paramount as they dominate the rest of the aspects of our lives (Hyland, 2009). As a result of this leading role, the popularity of academic discourses on the rise despite the fact that it is relatively a young field. Research in academic discourse is rapidly attracting the attention of scholars across the world. Hyland (2009) claims that exploration into the academic discourses grew significantly since Huddleston, Hudson and Winter's study in the mid-1960s focusing on the linguistic aspects of scientific English. With the passage of time, research in academic discourse has channelized its focus down to specific genres within particular disciplines focusing mainly on the communicative purpose of discourse whether it is spoken or written. Becher and Trwoler (2001) regard communication as an essential component of academia since it promotes learning, thus, helps in establishing one's credentials. Without sound communicative skills, it is really difficult to publish one's work as it involves a complex process of publishing. The process involves various steps such as persuading the editors of research journals to accept the researched claim. Similarly, it is important in terms of convincing the reviewers and peers to acknowledge and approve the proposed work as valid and genuine (Hyland, 2009). Thus, communicative skills play decisive role in conducting an academic event successfully.

Moreover, one of the key aspects that motivate the researchers to take a keen interest in academic discourse remains in the fact that neophyte researchers face too many problems in academic communication (Shehzad & Abbas, 2015). Such communication becomes more challenging with respect to a change and development across various academic disciplines. Every academic discipline has got its own characteristic nature; therefore, the researchers need to adopt themselves according to the literacy demands of the particular academic institution where that discipline is practiced. The peculiar nature of academic writing makes it highly technical; thus, it requires a lot of expertise to use it efficiently. Bartholomae (1986) explains that whenever the students are asked to write in academic setting, they need to inculcate not only the institutional variations, but also disciplinary specifications. In other words, the writer has to make sure to use the language in such a manner that the text may be categorized from the very use of language as a science text or humanities one. This step further leads to the phenomenon where writers understand if they are using appropriate language or not, based on the writing traditions and genres of the respective discipline in which they are writing.

For Hyland (2009), academic discourse has played important role in reshaping the world view and thought process. It has become a dominant source of presenting facts and information across various levels within a society. It also encounters other discourses within a society such as discourses of media, technocracy, show business, bureaucracy, medicine and so on. Academic discourse has achieved the status of a well reputed and respected form of communication and argument in the contemporary world. It represents reality, experimental evidence and logic in the form of absolute truth. Owing to its prestigious nature, Lemke (1995) regards academic discourse as the discourse of 'truth'. It describes the world objectively by giving us a better view of the real world and our personalized view of the world.

Academic discourse is practiced at various levels within academic setting. They include a variety of practices ranging from simple to complex academic enterprises. According to Hyland (2009), the various forms of academic representations such as textbooks, essays writing, lectures, dissertations, conference presentations and research articles are regarded as the various examples of academic discourse. These examples combine together to create and disseminate knowledge. Discourse depicts the real representation of any social setting whether it is academic, religious, political, cultural or media. In academic context, the discourse of an academy is considered to be the heart of academic ventures. It refers to the way in which individual academicians work together, interact, compete, generate knowledge, and sharing their knowledge with the young scholars. That is the reason; academic discourse has been the centre of attention of researchers. It is considered to be a very rich source of knowing about the social aspects of an academic community both on individual and communal level.

Statement of the Problem

Academic discourse in the form of thesis writing is a highly challenging task especially for neophyte researchers. With the growing trend of researching in Pakistan, the competition among the researchers has reached a new level. It has turned into a 'survival of the fittest' kind of situation where it is really difficult to make one's way into a successful research oriented skill. Therefore, keeping in mind the technicalities of academic discourse, exploration of academic genre in general and research discourse in particular become necessary to bring forth issues of academic writing.

Research Questions

The research in hand addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the rhetorical move patterns and occurrences employed in the conclusion section of selected MS/ MPhil theses?
2. How do the researchers employ authorial stance in the conclusion section of theses at MS/ MPhil level?
3. How are the rhetorical move patterns and authorial stance inter-related with each other in the conclusion section of theses at MS/ MPhil level?

Literature review

Research in the field of academic world has channelized its focus down to specific genres within academic discourse. A genre is a set of properties within a text that are distinctive in nature; therefore, they involve specific purposes based on linguistic conventions (Choe & Hwang, 2014). Swales (1990) defines genre as a series of interactive speech events represented by members who share common set of goals through their communication. Though, thesis writing, a genre of academic discourse, serves as a crucial aspect of academic life, yet it proves to be an uphill task especially for inexperienced apprentices. It is challenging because of its interpersonal, technical and implicit nature. Swales (2004) believes that each discourse genre has a particular structure. Thus, the sequence of ideas makes one academic genre distinct from another. Genre analysis explores a text through structural and organizational point of view to identify the communicative aspects of discourse such as move sequences, move occurrences, authorial stance and engaging the audience.

A text is usually marked by semantic units which are known as moves. Swales (2004) defines moves in terms of specific communicative purpose, therefore, serve as functional constituents of a text. Although, the study of academic discourse is a relatively young field, yet it is rapidly attracting the attention of scholars across the world. Hyland (2009) argues that academic discourse analyses grew significantly since Huddleston, Hudson and Winter's study in the mid-1960s. They explored the linguistic aspects of scientific English, thus, provided a solid foundation to the field. Afterwards, the range of researches was expanded from the linguistic features of scientific English into academic genres. They not only focused on the rhetorical features but also dealt with the grammatical and lexical aspects

of academic discourse. Thus, a number of scholars across the globe have explored academic genres especially research discourses and the various sections of research articles and theses through move analysis.

Table 1. Overview of Studies on Macro Structure of Theses

Macro Sections	List of the Researchers
Introduction	(Shehzad & Abbas, 2015 & 2016; Choe & Hwang, 2014; Shehzad, 2005 & 2007; Shim, 2005; Bunton, 2002; Samraj, 2002; Swales, 1990)
Literature Review	(Akindele, 2008; Bruce, 1994; Kwan, 2006; Thompson, 2009)
Methodology	(Bruce, 2009; Harwood, 2005; Lim, 2006)
Results	(Brett, 1994; Williams, 1999 Yang and Allison, 2003),
Discussion	(Holmes, 1997; Peacock, 2002),
Conclusion	(Bunton, 2005; Yang & Allison, 2003; Morales, 2012, Amnuai & Wannaruk, 2013; Jahangard, 2014; Aslam & Mehmood 2014, Moritz, 2008; Dudley-Evans 1988)

A review of the previous studies particularly in RAs suggests that conclusion has been dealt in relation with other related sections such as discussion, results or even findings (Swales, 1990; Dudley-Evans, 1994; Yang and Allison, 2003). In this regard, Swales (1990) located the conclusion as part of the discussion section which is comprised of eight moves: *Background Information*, *Statement of results*, *(Un) expected outcome*, *Reference to previous research*, *Explanation*, *Exemplification*, *Deduction and Hypothesis*, and *Recommendation*. Unlike Swales (1990), Dudley-Evans (1994) treated the conclusion as a subsidiary part of discussion section in MSc dissertation. The conclusion chapter consisted of *Explanation*, *Claim*, *Limitation*, and *Recommendation*. Thus, *limitation* of the study was observed as an additional step. Similarly, Yang and Allison (2003) found that researchers in Applied Linguistics RAs followed a pattern consisted of *Results*, *Discussions*, *Conclusion* and *Pedagogic Implications*, thus, proposed three models with one each for results, discussion and

conclusion. They identified 3-moves (*Summarizing the study*, *Evaluating the study*, and *Deductions from the research*) and 6-sub-moves or steps (*Indicating significance/advantages*, *Indicating limitations*, *Evaluating methodology*, *Recommending further study*, and *Drawing pedagogic implication*) in the conclusion part of the sample corpora.

Unlike these studies where the focus was on the discussion section or conclusion as a subsidiary section, Bunton (2005) found five moves in the conclusion of PhD dissertation across several disciplines: *Introductory Restatement*, *Consolidation of Research Space*, *Practical Applications/ Implications/ Recommendations*, *Recommendations for Future Researches*, and *Concluding Restatement*. However, variations were observed at disciplinary level as move-4 '*Recommendations for future researches*' was not found in the field of Science and Technology whereas; it was an obligatory part of PhD dissertation in humanities and social sciences. Furthermore, Jahangard, Rajabi-Kondlaji and Khalaji (2014) also confirmed interdisciplinary variation in the application of moves across Applied Linguistics and Mechanical Engineering. Similarly, linguistic background plays a significant role in the application of moves within the same discipline (Azimi & Tabatabaei, 2015; Moritz et al., 2008). Moreover, the cultural and social background of the author cause variation in move patterns (Morales, 2012; Amnuai & Wannaruk, 2013).

Authorial stance serves as a distinctive textual feature of any discourse. Stubbs (1986) argues that a writer's attitude in a text cannot be avoided as it is part of the textual makeup of the discourse. According to Hyland (2009), convincing the audience is partially done through mentioning the contribution and importance of one's work and partially through positive self-portrayal of the author. Since a writer is the creator of a text, therefore, it is imperative to enquire the authorial voices for understanding the true meaning of that specific text. Several researchers have focused on authorial stance with respect to communicative purpose of the discourse (Biber et al. 1999; Hyland, 2009; Ahmad & Mehrjooseresht, 2012; Adams & Quitana-Toledo, 2013; Ağçam, 2014). However, this area of knowledge needs further exploration in Pakistan to contextualize academic genre according to the needs and demands of Pakistani setting. Thus, the present study aims at exploring the inter-relation between move patterns and authorial stance within the conclusion section of MS/ MPhil theses in the field of English Linguistics in Pakistani context.

Research Methodology

The current study was conducted to carry out genre analysis of 30 conclusion sections from MS/ MPhil theses, in the field of English Linguistics, collected from three universities: Air University Islamabad (AU), National University of Modern Languages Islamabad (NUML) and International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI) from the year 2010 to 2016. The study was based on mixed method approach where data were explored both quantitatively and qualitatively at two levels: macro and micro level analysis. The identification of moves and steps was conducted through content analysis which was validated by two inter-coders applying 'Inter-coder relativity techniques'. The results of this technique were very productive as initially the inter-coder agreement was up to 98 percent which reached 100 percent after the justification and explanation of the researcher. On the other hand, the micro level analysis dealt with the sample quantitatively focusing the AS through 'AntConc 3.4.4w Corpus tool'(Anthony, 2014).In addition, the inter-relation between the move patterns and AS was also researched during the course of the current study.

Theoretical Framework

A research design consisting of two theoretical models has been applied to conduct this study. At macro level, the rhetorical move sequences and occurrences were explored according to Yang and Allison's (2003) model since it was more recent and comprehensive as compared to the other models. At micro level, authorial stance was explored through Biber et al. (1999) model.

Yang and Allison's (2003) model

In this study, Yang and Allison's (2003) 3-move and 5-step model was employed to explore the rhetorical move patterns and occurrences employed in the conclusion section of MS/ M Phil Thesis of English linguistics.

Table 2. Yang and Allison’s Conclusion Model (2003)

MOVES		SUB STEPS
Move-1	Summarizing the Study	
Move-2	Evaluating the Study	2.1 Indicating Significance/Advantages
		2.2 Indicating Limitations
		2.3 Evaluating Methodology
Move-3	Deductions from the Research	3.1 Recommending Further Study
		3.2 Drawing Pedagogic Implication

Biber et al. (1999) model

Along with the move analysis, the present study focused on the AS in the light of Biber et al. (1999) theoretical model which consists of three main groups of adverbs: *circumstance, linking and stance*. Since the current study focused on the authorial stance, therefore, only stance adverbs were considered for the identification of authorial stance. Stance adverbs were further divided into three semantic categories: epistemic, attitude and style. Similarly, each of these sub-categories was divided into further steps.

Table 3. Biber et al. (1999) Model for Stance Adverbs

Stance Adverbs	Sub classes
Epistemic Stance	a. Doubt and Certainty
	b. Actuality and Reality
	c. Source of Knowledge
	d. Limitation
	e. Viewpoint or Perspective
	f. Imprecision
Attitudinal Stance	a. Evaluation
	b. Value Judgment
	c. Assessment of Expectations
Style Stance	a. Manner

Results and Discussion

This section deals with the analysis of data and results which are presented in three folds: Macro Analysis, Micro Analysis, and Inter-relation between Macro and Micro structures within the conclusion sections of MS/ MPhil theses in English Linguistics.

Macro Analysis

At macro level, the analysis was conducted to explore the macro structures such as moves and steps within the conclusion section of the collected sample. In this regard, the move patterns were identified by the researcher and validated by inter-coders qualitatively through content analysis using Yang and Allison (2003) Model.

In this regard, symbols were used to designate the moves, steps, frequency of occurrence and non-observance of moves and steps. They include M₁, M₂ and M₃ for the representation of move-1 (*Summarizing the Study*), move-2 (*Evaluating the Study*), and move-3 (*Deductions from the Study*) respectively. Similarly, the symbols for the steps within move-1 include: M₁I (*Introduction/ Background*), M₁S (*Summary of the Study*), M₁F (*Findings of the Study*) and M₁A (*Accomplishment of Research Objectives/ Questions/ Hypothesis*). Moreover, the steps found in Move-2 consist of M₂A (*Significance, Advantages and Contribution of the study*), M₂B (*Limitation of the Study*), M₂C (*Evaluating the Methodology of the Study*), and M₂R (*Reference to the Previous Works/ Current Research Trend in the area*). Lastly, the steps included in Move-3 are M₃A₁ (*Recommendations for Further Studies*), M₃A₂ (*Recommendations for Action, Policy Change and Change in Methods/ Application*), M₃B₁ (*Pedagogic Implications*), M₃B₂ (*Impacts/ Effects on other Variables*) and M₃C (*Concluding Remarks*). Furthermore, the research has employed the star symbol ‘★’ in the tables to show the frequency of occurrence of each step. Thus, a single star ‘★’ shows that the step has been employed once whereas; two stars ‘★★’ mean twice and so on. Similarly, the symbol dash ‘-’ means non-observance a step.

Rhetorical move and step sequence in the conclusion section

According to the findings, as shown in table (4), 29 out of 30 conclusion sections contain M₁ as their opening move whereas only one conclusion contains M₃ as its opening move. These results reflect the researchers’ schema of initiating their conclusion chapters. Furthermore, it can be observed that 21 out of 30 conclusions have their opening step in the form

of M_1I , six of the conclusions have M_1S , two of them have M_1F and only one has M_3A_1 . Thus, these schematic patterns indicate that Pakistani researchers at MS/ MPhil level prefer to initiate their conclusion from M_1I which serves either as an introduction to the concluding chapter or background to the research area or study. In case of introduction to the chapter, the researchers present a brief overview of the conclusion chapter in terms of the content discussed in the succeeding paragraphs. In addition, M_1I is used to provide background information about the research under investigation where the researchers usually provide an account of the research problem, purpose of investigating it, research sample and the methodology. Similarly, M_1I is also used to provide general background information regarding the research area under investigation. The findings of the current study identify a schematic pattern in which 11 conclusions out of 21 starts with the background information related to the study, six begin with an introductory whereas four commence their proceedings with background information to the research area under investigation. This indicates that researchers in Pakistan at MS/ MPhil level in linguistics prefer to provide background information regarding their studies in the opening step.

Table 4. Rhetorical Move and Step Sequence

Conclusions	Move Sequence
C ₁	<i>M₁I, M₁F, M₁S, M₁A, M₃A₂</i>
C ₂	<i>M₁I, M₂C, M₁F, M₂C, M₁F, M₃A₁, M₂A, M₂C, M₃A₁, M₂b, M₃A₁, M₂C, M₃A₁</i>
C ₃	<i>M₁I, M₂C, M₁A, M₂A, M₁A, M₃A₁, M₃B₂, M₃A₁, M₃A₂, M₂C, M₃A₁</i>
C ₄	<i>M₁S, M₁F, M₃A₁, M₂R</i>
C ₅	<i>M₁I, M₁S, M₂R, M₃B₁M₃B₁M₂R M₂R</i>
C ₆	<i>M₁I, M₁F, M₂R, M₂A, M₃A₁, M₂A, M₃A₁</i>
C ₇	<i>M₁I, M₂C, M₁A, M₁F, M₂C, M₁F, M₂C, M₁F, M₃A₁, M₂B, M₃A₁, M₂A, M₃A₁</i>
C ₈	<i>M₁S, M₁F, M₁A, M₁F, M₁A, M₁S, M₁F, M₁S, M₃B₂, M₃A₁</i>
C ₉	<i>M₁S, M₂B, M₂A, M₁F, M₂B, M₁F, M₃B₂, M₃B₁, M₃B₁, M₃B₂, M₃A₁, M₂B, M₃A₁</i>
C ₁₀	<i>M₁F, M₁S, M₁A, M₃A₁, M₂B, M₃A₁</i>
C ₁₁	<i>M₁I, M₁S, M₂B, M₁F, M₁A, M₂R, M₃A₂</i>
C ₁₂	<i>M₁I, M₁F, M₁A, M₁S, M₁F, M₃A₁, M₃A₂, M₃A₂, M₃B₁, M₃A₂, M₃B₁, M₃A₂</i>
C ₁₃	<i>M₁F, M₁A, M₁S, M₃A₁</i>
C ₁₄	<i>M₁I, M₁S, M₁F, M₃A₁, M₂C, M₃B₁, M₃A₁</i>
C ₁₅	<i>M₁I, M₁S, M₃B₁, M₃A₁</i>
C ₁₆	<i>M₁I, M₁S, M₂C, M₁A, M₂R, M₂B, M₁A, M₃B₁, M₃A₂, M₂R, M₃B₂, M₂R, M₂A, M₂R, M₃A₂</i>
C ₁₇	<i>M₁I, M₁S, M₁F, M₃A₁</i>
C ₁₈	<i>M₁I, M₁A, M₁F, M₂B, M₃A₂, M₃B₁, M₃A₁, M₃C</i>
C ₁₉	<i>M₁I, M₁F, M₃A₂, M₃A₁, M₃C</i>
C ₂₀	<i>M₁I, M₁S, M₁A, M₃A₂</i>
C ₂₁	<i>M₃A₁, M₁I, M₁F, M₃A₁, M₁F, M₃A₁, M₃A₂, M₁F, M₃A₂, M₃A₁</i>
C ₂₂	<i>M₁I, M₁F, M₂R, M₃A₁, M₁S, M₃A₂, M₂A, M₃B₁, M₃B₂, M₃A₁</i>
C ₂₃	<i>M₁S, M₁F, M₃B₂, M₃A₂</i>
C ₂₄	<i>M₁I, M₁A, M₁F, M₂C, M₁A, M₁F, M₁S, M₃A₂</i>
C ₂₅	<i>M₁S, M₁F, M₁A, M₁S, M₂A, M₂R, M₃B₁, M₃A₂, M₃B₁, M₃A₂, M₂B, M₃A₁</i>
C ₂₆	<i>M₁S, M₃B₁, M₂B, M₃B₁, M₁F, M₂A, M₂C, M₂A, M₃A₂</i>
C ₂₇	<i>M₁I, M₁F, M₁A, M₁S, M₃A₂, M₂B, M₃A₁, M₃B₂</i>
C ₂₈	<i>M₁I, M₁S, M₁F, M₃A₂, M₁F, M₃A₂</i>
C ₂₉	<i>M₁I, M₁S, M₁F, M₃B₁, M₂R, M₃A₂, M₃B₁, M₂B, M₃B₁, M₃A₁, M₁S, M₃A₂, M₃A₁, M₂A, M₃B₂</i>
C ₃₀	<i>M₁I, M₁A, M₁F, M₃A₂, M₃C</i>

Rhetorical move and steps occurrences in the conclusion sections

Table (5) illustrates cumulative occurrences of each move and step. M_1 , M_2 and M_3 are observed with an overall frequency of 245. M_1 is found to be the most frequent move with 103 (42.04 %), M_2 with 50 (20.40 %) and M_3 with 92 (27.55 %). The preponderance M_1 indicates that the researchers take this move very seriously in their conclusion chapter. M_1 is broadly concerned with the *summarization of the study* whereas it deals specifically with the *introduction or background, summary, findings and accomplishment of research questions, objectives and hypotheses*. Thus, the researchers value this aspect highly in their theses' conclusions. In addition, it can be mentioned that the three types of moves observed by Yang and Allison (2003) prove valid for the current study as well.

Though the types of moves observed in this study remain the same as identified by Yang and Allison (2003), yet the findings identify that additional steps are employed by Pakistani researchers at MS/ MPhil level. These steps include M_1I (*Introduction/ Background*), M_1F (*Findings of the Study*), M_1A (*Accomplishment of Research Objectives/ Questions/ Hypothesis*), M_2R (*Reference to the Previous Works/ Current Research Trend in the Area*), M_3A_2 (*Recommendations for Action, Policy Change and Change in Methods/ Application*), M_3B_2 (*Impacts/ Effects on other Variables*) and M_3C (*Concluding Remarks*). The findings show that M_1F and M_3A_1 are the most frequent steps with a frequency of 36 and an overall percentage of 14.7 each whereas; M_3C is observed as the rarest step with 3 (1.22%) occurrences. Moreover, M_1S and M_3A_2 both have equal representation with 26 (10.5%) each, M_1I with 22 (9%), M_1A 19 (7.75%), M_3B_1 18 (7.34%), M_2B and M_2C with 13 (5.3%) each, M_2A and M_2R both with 12 (5%), M_3B_2 with 9 (3.63%) and M_3C with 3 (1.22%).

The step occurrences are divided into three categories: mandatory (having a representation of 70% or above), conventional (ranges between 69% and 35%) and Optional (a step with an observance of less than 34%). In this regard, M_1F (120%), M_3A_1 (120%), M_1S (86.6%), M_3A_2 (86.6%) and M_1I (73.3%) are observed as mandatory steps, while M_1A (63.3%), M_3B_1 (60%), M_2B (43.3%), M_2C (43.3%), M_2A (40%) and M_2R (40%) are considered to be conventional steps. Similarly, M_3B_2 (30%) and M_3C (10%) are observed as optional steps. These findings indicate the schemata of researchers in Pakistan while writing the conclusion sections of their theses especially in English Linguistics as they give a considerable importance to the steps

concerned with the themes of findings, recommendations, background information, and summarization.

Table 5. Overall Rhetorical Move and Steps Occurrences

Moves													Total
M ₁ -Summarizing				M ₂ -Evaluating				M ₂ -Deductions					03
M ₁ I	M ₁ S	M ₁ F	M ₁ A	M ₂ A	M ₂ B	M ₂ C	M ₂ R	M ₃ A ₁	M ₃ A ₂	M ₃ B ₁	M ₃ B ₂	M ₃ C	13
22	26	36	19	12	13	13	12	36	26	18	9	3	199
9.0 %	10. 5 %	14. 7 %	7.7 5 %	5 %	5.3 %	5.3 %	5 %	14. 7 %	10. 6 %	7.3 4 %	3.6 7 %	1.2 2 %	Overall %
M₁ = 103				M₂ = 50				M₃ = 92					Moves
42.04 %				20.40 %				37.55 %					
73. 3 %	86. 6 %	12 0 %	63. 3 %	40 %	43. 3 %	43. 3 %	40 %	120 %	86. 6 %	60 %	30 %	10 %	% per 30 Conclusions
M	M	M	C	C	C	C	C	M	M	C	O	O	
Mandatory Steps (M) = 70+ %, Conventional (C)= 69-35%, Optional (O) = 34-0%													

Micro Level Analysis

At micro level, the overall results suggest that *ESMs* are the most widely employed class of adverbs across M₁, M₂ and M₃ with 212 (98.1 %), 44 (97.7 %) and 96 (98.9 %) respectively. On the other hand, *ASAs* serve among the rarest stance categories across M₁, M₂ and M₃ with the frequencies of 3 (1.3 %), 1 (2.2 %) and 1 (1.03 %) respectively whereas *SSAs* is observed only once in M₁ whereas in M₂ and M₃ it is not found.

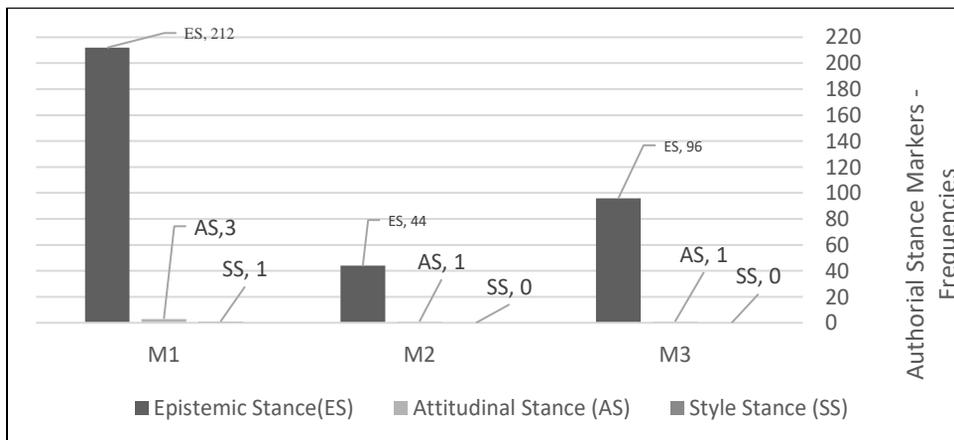


Figure 1. Inter-relation between Move Patterns and Authorial Stance

Inter-relation between move patterns and authorial stance

The inter-relation between move patterns and AdSMs shows that *ESAs* are the most widely employed class of adverbs in the sample corpus. Although the overall percentages across all the moves almost remain the same with 98.1 %, 97.7 % and 98.9 % respectively, their overall frequencies of vary significantly across all the three moves with 212, 44 and 96 respectively. Such variations in the inter-relation between ESMs across all the three moves have been analyzed below.

The first instance of the inter-relation between *ESAs* across all the three moves can be linked with the overall frequencies of the moves and steps. Since, M_1 was found to be the most frequent move with 103; therefore, it was imperative to have the highest frequency of 212. Similarly, in M_3 , the second most frequent move with an overall frequency of 92, the number of ESMswere 96 which served as the second highest category of stance adverbials. As far as M_2 is concerned, it was observed as the rarest of the moves with 50 occurrences. Consequently, the *ESAs* were found rarely across M_2 with an overall frequency of 44. Thus, an increase in the application of AdSMs can be observed with an increase in the move frequencies. However, the frequencies of the AS did not remain constant with respect to move occurrences. For instance, the increase in the stance instances in M_1 (212) is double to that of move occurrences (103) whereas, the increase in M_2 (50) and M_3 (92) remains the same to that of the stance markers which is 44 and 96 respectively. The double increase in the frequency of the *ESAs* across M_1 seems to be the result of the presence of two heavy steps M_1S (*Summary of the Study*) and M_1F (*Findings of the Study*) in terms of length. In M_1 of the sample corpora, these two steps are not only heavy in terms of length, but also the most frequent steps as well. In this regard, M_1F serves as the most frequent step in M_1 with 36 occurrences whereas M_1S as the second most frequent step. Furthermore, the thematic structures of both these steps demand the need of using ESMs. Since M_1S deals with an overview of all the key aspects whereas M_1F addresses the outcome of the study in the form of findings, therefore, a lot of *ESAs* are used in these two steps to present the arguments and findings of the study. Consequently, the application of epistemic adverbials is higher in M_1 than in M_2 and M_3 .

Furthermore, among sub-categories of ESMs, *Imprecision* was found as the most frequent sub-class in M_1 with 131 (60 %), M_2 with 29 (64.4%), and M_3 with 54 (55.6%). The next frequent category of ESMs is *doubt and*

certainty which has the frequencies of 31, 3 and 24 across M_1 , M_2 and M_3 respectively. The third most frequent category of ESAs is *limitation* which has been observed 29 times in M_1 , 5 in M_2 , and 8 in M_3 . The fourth most frequent *ESMs* include the category of *source of knowledge* with the frequencies of 17, 5 and 7 across M_1 , M_2 and M_3 respectively. Thematically all these categories are important which can be inter-related with the thinking pattern of the authors. For example, stance adverbs of *imprecision* are generally employed in a text to mark the impreciseness of the proposition whereas *Doubt and Certainty* deal with the stance adverbs that are concerned with the writer's level of doubts and certainty about the information provided. Similarly, *Limitation* talks about the proposition in terms of limitations of the information provided. On the other hand, *Source of Knowledge* serves as supportive detail to connect the provided information with the findings. Thus, the higher frequencies depict the timid approach of Pakistani researchers while writing the conclusion. On the other hand, the rarest *ESMs* employed is *Viewpoint or Perspective* with the frequency of one each in across M_1 , and M_3 . Similarly, the second rarest category of stance adverbs includes *Actuality and Reality* with the frequency of 3 in M_1 and 2 each in M_2 and M_3 . The findings indicate that researchers at MS/ MPhil level prefer using language in a roundabout way rather than in explicit manner.

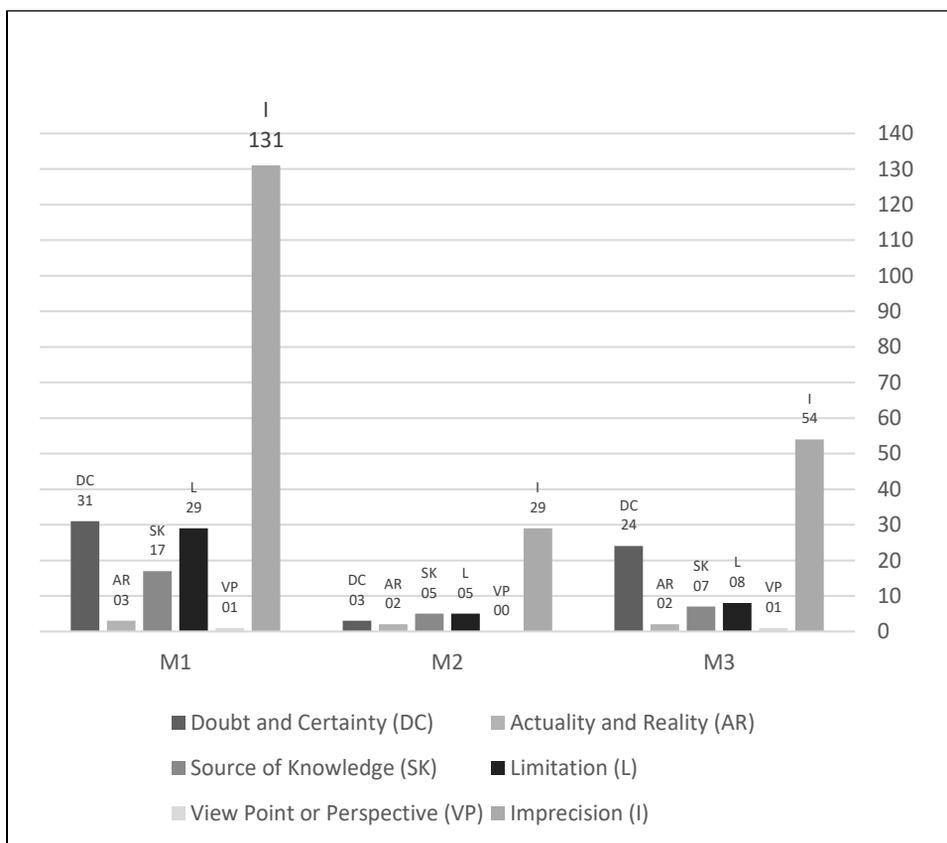


Figure 2. Sub-Categories of Epistemic Stance across Moves

Moreover, ESAs have been applied in abundance because the sample corpora have been taken from soft sciences. Unlike hard sciences where experiments are conducted in laboratories to get some real, tangible results, research in soft sciences is based on interpretation and explanation of language in use. Since, research in soft sciences is not measured in terms of tangible data always, therefore, researchers in such fields use language in the form of possibilities. Thus, they end up using language which is influenced by imprecision, doubt and certainty and limitations.

Unlike ESMs, ASMs and SSMs have been employed rarely. The frequencies of ASMs across M₁, M₂ and M₃ are 3, 1 and 1. Similarly, SSMs have been used only once in M₁ whereas in M₂ and M₃ it has not been observed. These two categories are considered as the rarest employed ones since they are more suitable to be applied in spoken discourse than written one keeping in mind the thematic function of their sub-categories such as value judgment, assessment of expectations, evaluation and manner.

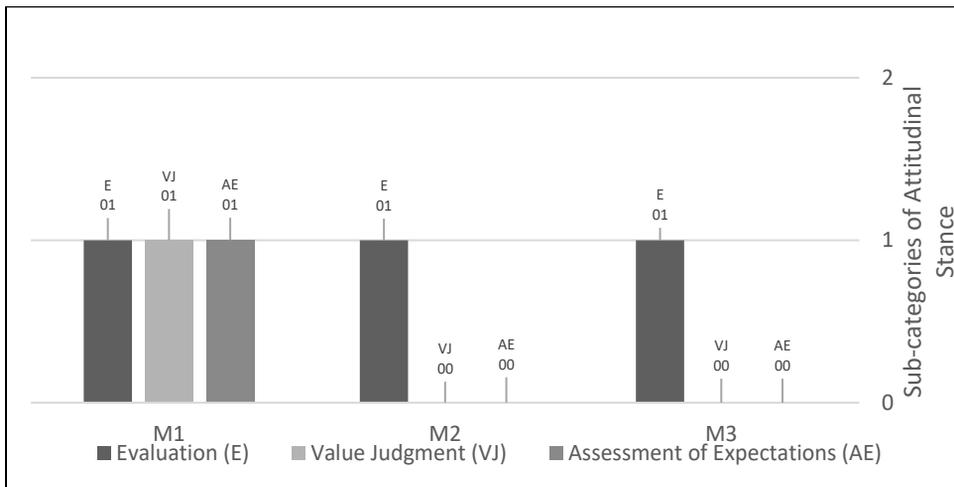


Figure 3. Sub-categories of Attitudinal Stance across Moves

Another reason for the rare use of ASMs and SSMs lies in the fact that academic discourse in the form of thesis writing is marked by the phenomenon of impartiality where it is recommended to avoid using language that shows partiality. Since these markers project the personal being of the writer, therefore, they are discouraged to be used. In addition, the sample corpora for the current study have been taken from MS/ MPhil theses which are meant for academic qualification, therefore, sweeping statements and controversial language is discouraged. It is advisable to use formal and academic language for writing research discourses.

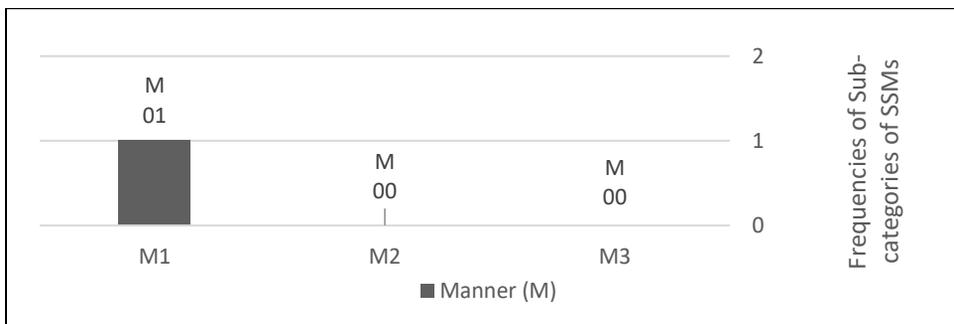


Figure 4. Sub-categories of Style Stance across Moves

Table 6. AdSMs Across M₁, M₂ and M₃

Ad SMs	Sub-categories	M ₁		M ₂		M ₃	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
ESMs	Doubt and Certainty	31	14.3 %	3	6.6 %	24	24.7 %
	Actuality and Reality	3	1.38 %	2	4.4 %	2	2.0 %
	Source of Knowledge	17	7.8 %	5	11.1 %	7	7.2 %
	Limitation	29	13.4 %	5	11.1 %	8	8.2 %
	Viewpoint or Perspective	1	0.4 %	0	-	1	1.03 %
	Imprecision	131	60 %	29	64.4 %	54	55.6 %
ASMs	Evaluation	1	0.4 %	1	2.2 %	1	1.03 %
	Value Judgment	1	0.4 %	-	-	-	-
	Assessment of Expectations	1	0.4 %	-	-	-	-
SSMs	Manner	1	0.4 %	-	-	-	-
		212		44		96	
		98.1 %		97.7 %		98.9 %	
		3		1		1	
		1.3 %		2.2 %		1.03 %	
		1		-		-	
		0.4 %		-		-	

Adverbial stance markers: analysis of M₁

In M₁, the findings reveal that the total number of stance adverbs employed is 216 where ESAs are the most widely employed category with a frequency 212 (98.1 %). On the other hand, attitudinal stance adverbs have been found with the frequency of 3 (1.3 %) and SSAs with 1.

Moreover, among the sub-categories of ESMs, Imprecision stands out with a frequency of 131 (60 %), Doubt and certainty 31 (14.3 %), Limitation 29 (13.4 %), Source of knowledge 17 (7.8 %), Actuality and reality 3 (1.38 %) and Viewpoint or perspective 1 (0.4 %). This clearly shows that the writers

have been more inclined towards using the devices of imprecision to conclude their theses.

Furthermore, the results depict that the most commonly used adverbs of imprecision across M₁ include: *about* (82), *like* (29) and *likewise* (14). Such devices are used to present facts which are not precise. For instance,

- Stars in universe are probably *like* total number of grains of sand on
- *Likewise*, the textbooks do not provide information

Similarly, ESAs showing doubt and certainty are also applied which indicate that the writers are not very sure about the proceedings, thus they end up using such devices of doubt and certainty. For example,

- Introduced a smile policy but the Occidentals *certainly* launched a warm hug.
- ‘natural’ human way of being, *probably* our most functional and useful.
- *Perhaps* the medium of written text has
- It *may be* caused by internal forces such as
- It seems most *likely* that the human race came into existence

The next frequent sub-category of ESAs employed in M₁ includes *limitation* which has a frequency of 29 (13.4 %). Such class of adverbs is used to show limitations of the arguments in terms of presentation of precise and valid facts. For example,

- The book is *mostly* based on narrative and descriptive texts.
- people have used these two characteristics *mainly* to attract
- Teachers *generally* base their teaching and assessment on the

On the other hand, adverbs that show actuality and reality, viewpoint or perspectives, value judgment and evaluation have been given less attention which depicts the thinking of the writers as they want to remain neutral, thus avoid giving their own account. Secondly, the sample corpora belong to the

field of linguistics where nothing can be certain. Mostly the debate is based on subjective interpretation and explanation which results in a kind of text influenced by imprecision, limitation and doubt.

Adverbial stance markers: analysis of M₂

The total number of stance adverbs employed in M₂ is 45 in which ESAs are the most widely employed category with a frequency 44 (97.7 %). On the other hand, only one attitudinal stance adverb is found whereas the category of style adverbs is left out.

Among the sub-categories, ESAs such as *Imprecision* stands out with a frequency of 29 (64.4 %), *Limitation* 5 (11.1 %), *Source of Knowledge* 5 (11.1 %), *Doubt and Certainty* 3 (6.6 %), and *Actuality and Reality* 2 (4.4 %). M₂ is concerned with the theme of evaluation, yet the researchers have preferred the sub-categories such as imprecision, limitation, source of knowledge and doubt and certainty. This show that the researchers are not very much sure about their findings, therefore, they prefer to use devices which are based on possibility, imprecision, hypothesis and indirectness.

Moreover, the most frequent employed adverbs of imprecision across M₂ include *like*, *about*, and *according to* with the frequencies 14, 13, and 5 respectively. For instance,

- Pakistani advertisers and add knowledge *about* semiotic analysis of ads
- all types of signs *like* sounds, picture, image, art work etc.

Similarly, the adverb *according to*, a sub-category of ESAs known as *Source of knowledge*, is used to provide the specific reference for the given piece of information by the writer. Such as,

- *According to* researcher's investigation from inter

Adverbial stance markers: analysis of M₃

The overall application of AdSMs across M₃ is 97 where ESAs are the most abundant category of adverbs with a frequency of 96 (98.9%) whereas; the class of ASMs is found only once. As far as the category of SSMs is concerned it is not opted by the researchers. The non-observance of SSMs shows that Pakistani researchers avoid them since they want to remain neutral in their arguments.

On the other hand, among the sub-categories of epistemic adverbials, *Imprecision* is frequency used with 54 occurrences (55.6 %), *Doubt and Certainty* 24 (24.7 %), *Limitation* 8 (8.2 %), *Source of Knowledge* 7 (7.2 %), *Actuality and Reality* 2 (2 %) and *Viewpoint or Perspective* 1 (1.03%). As far as *ASMs* are concerned, only one adverb is found in M_3 . The results suggest that the researchers in Pakistan at MS/ MPhil level prefer to use ESAs more often than attitudinal and style stance. Thus, they make use of such devices to show imprecision in the presentation of facts. Similarly, devices of doubt and certainty are also used along with that of limitation to remain impartial in the presentation of deductions of the researches in M_3 . The most commonly employed adverbs in M_3 include: *like* (32), *about* (21), *may be* (18), *definitely* (6), *according to* (5) and *mostly* (4). For Instance,

- . . . by following the authentic dictionaries *like* Oxford Learner's dictionary.
- . . . will also bring variety in class and *definitely* will motivate the students as well.
- . . . pocketing, prostitution etc. should be punished *according to* Law.
- . . . as it can be seen that *mostly* organizations comprised of male population.

Conclusion

The study was conducted to perform a genre based analysis of the conclusion chapter of MS/ MPhil theses in the field of English linguistics. In this regard, a sample of 30 conclusions was collected through convenience sampling techniques from three universities: AU, NUML and IIUI. The analyses of data were carried out at two different levels: macro level analysis and micro level analysis.

Findings of the Study

The findings of this research validated the three moves (Summarizing, Evaluating and Deductions from the Research) suggested by Yang and Allison (2003). Furthermore, M_1 was found to be the most frequent move with 103 (51.75 %) whereas M_2 with 50 (25.12 %) and M_3 with 46 (23.11 %). In addition, Pakistani researchers at MS/ MPhil level employed seven additional steps such as M_{1I} , M_{1F} , M_{1A} , M_{2R} , M_{3A_2} , M_{3B_2} and M_{3C} . Moreover, the findings show that M_{1F} and M_{3A_1} are the most frequent steps with a frequency of 36 and an overall percentage of 18.1 each, whereas M_{3C} is observed as the rarest step with 3 (1.5%) occurrences.

As for as the occurrences of moves are concerned, the results show that M_{1F} (120%), M_{3A_1} (120%), M_{1S} (86.6%), M_{3A_2} (86.6%) and M_{1I} (73.3%) were observed as mandatory steps; M_{1A} (63.3%), M_{3B_1} (60%), M_{2B} (43.3%), M_{2C} (43.3%), M_{2A} (40%) and M_{2R} (40%) as conventional steps and M_{3B_2} (30%) and M_{3C} (10%) as optional steps. Furthermore, the findings revealed that *ESAs* were the most widely employed class of adverbs across M_1 with 212 (98.1 %), M_2 with 44 (97.7 %) and M_3 with 96 (98.9 %). Similarly, *Imprecision* was found to be the most frequent sub-categories of *ESAs* in M_1 with 131 (60 %), M_2 with 29 (64.4%), and M_3 with 54 (55.6%).

Emerg ed Model for the Conclusion Section

In the light of the findings of the current study, a model has been proposed for the rhetorical composition of the conclusion section of MS/ MPhil theses in the field of English linguistics. The proposed model is an adapted version of Yang and Allison (2003) with the inclusion of additional steps that were found in Pakistani context in the sample corpora. The following table (7) illustrates the proposed model of the study.

Table 7. Proposed model of the study

MOVES		SUB STEPS	
Move 1	Summarizing the study	M ₁ I-Introduction/ Background	
		M ₁ S-Summary of the Study	
		M ₁ F-Findings of the Study	
		M ₁ A-Accomplishment of Research Objectives/ Questions/ Hypothesis	
Move 2	Evaluating the study	M ₂ A-Significance, Advantages and Contribution of the study	
		M ₂ B-Indicating limitations	
		M ₂ C-Evaluating the Methodology of the Study	
		M ₂ R-Reference to the Previous Works/ Current Research Trend in the Area	
Move 3	Deductions from the research	M ₃ A- Recommending	M ₃ A ₁ - Recommendations for Further Studies
			M ₃ A ₂ - Recommendations for Action, Policy Change and Change in Methods/ Application
		M ₃ B- Implication	M ₃ B ₁ - Pedagogic Implications
			M ₃ B ₂ - Impacts/ Effects on other Variables
		M ₃ C-Concluding Remarks	

Although, the researcher successfully accomplished the research questions and the research objectives, yet certain limitations were observed during the study. Firstly, exploration of AS through AdSMs focuses only on one aspect of stance, therefore, relying purely on adverbial stance could not be a perfect idea. Secondly, the findings of the study could not be easily generalized

keeping in view the size of the sample corpora and diverse academic practices across Pakistan.

Although at the start of the research, the researcher had various options in terms of data collection techniques, research methodology and theoretical models, however, he made use of convenience sampling for data collection with a mix-method approach to explore move sequences and occurrences and the inter-relation between moves and AS using Yang and Allison (2003) model and Biber et al. (1999). These methodological aspects were appropriate keeping in mind the nature and objectives of the study.

The findings of the study are very encouraging as they contribute to genre based analysis of academic discourse. However, a number of gaps can still be found in the area which can be explored in future researches. Some of these research gaps and suggestions for future studies are as follows. A genre analysis of conclusion chapter can be conducted through historical, gender, perspective to see if there is any shift in thesis writing with respect to these characteristics.

The research is significant as it explores one of the key areas of academic discourse that is thesis writing. Therefore, the findings of the study need the attention of academicians and policy makers to ensure positive change in the genre of thesis writing particularly conclusion chapter. In addition, it is suggested to teach academic discourse as a subject at all degree programs to equip the students with the techniques and technicalities of research discourses.

Pedagogically, the findings can be utilized to teach the art of research discourses. This will help neophyte researchers to master the implicit practice and regulations of theses writing. It will not only help the researchers to cope the intricacies of researching, but also help the teachers who look after research affairs in academic settings. Similarly, it is proposed that research supervisor can find the results of this study very helpful in negotiating the research supervision.

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