Generic Moves in The Literature Review Section of PhD Dissertations

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ABSTRACT

The dissertation/thesis as an academic genre has evolved in academic circles in the past 30 years or so. Research into various aspects of the academic genres in general and thesis writing, in particular, started more than two decades ago. However, not much research has been carried out regarding the theorizing of literature review writing as a separate genre in theses, especially in non-native English contexts. The present study aimed to fill the theoretical voids in the research area of Literature Review (LR) section in thesis writing in Pakistani academic settings; thus this study probes into the process of construction of literature reviewing to find out that how students organise this section and deal with the potential problems as an analytical piece of writing with sound argumentation. The current study has investigated the schematic patterns in the literature review through the framework of move analysis in genre theory. The data was drawn from fifteen (15) doctoral theses in the field of English linguistics. The methodology allows for an in-depth coding of the LR chapters in theses to investigate the rhetorical organization. In the coding process, the study has also taken insights from the two previous models of Kwan (2006) and Swales' seminal CARS model (1990) in order to study the moves (and steps) as rhetorical units. The results of the study reflect the dominant presence of Move 1, Move 2 and Move 4, whereas the employment of Move 3 is comparatively less which justifies the worth of writer's work. This reveals that the students resort to these moves more often to perform a ritual of literature reviewing and in dire need to be trained enough to craft the LRs argumentatively. Thus, researchers have proposed a revised model to overcome the shortcoming.

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1.   Introduction

In the past few decades, the constant surge in new knowledge has resulted in increasing the significance of literature reviewing in the realm of academia and thesis writing in particular (Jian, 2010; Kwan, 2006). This has led to the emergence of literature reviewing as a consistent theme and a daunting activity that students have to undertake in their research degree programs when writing a thesis. Doing justice with writing a LR is often deemed challenging for postgraduate students at the university level. Students, more often, find it difficult to coordinate many relevant sources and ideas into a logical argument. The students' inability to cope with the lengthier part paved the way for research in the said area over the last two decades. Theorizing into this section seems inevitable as it will help students to rhetorically organize the chapter and hence achieve the communicative purpose. Research in the area of thesis/ dissertation writing has evolved in the last few decades all over the world (e.g., (Bunton, 2002; Dudley-Evans, 1999). However, there has not been much work done concerning the postulating of theoretical frameworks and investigation into the area of reviewing the literature. Thus, this study serves as an attempt to fill the theoretical voids. It has been asserted by many researchers ((Jian, 2010; Kwan, 2006) as a scarcity of attention to literature reviewing can be observed (Kwan, 2006).

The relative lack of research in PhD thesis writing as a genre may have two plausible reasons. The first can be attributed to the length of the thesis/dissertation. Swales and Swales (1990) highlighted this point and drew our attention to the dearth of work in this area of research mainly because of the gigantic size of the text of theses/dissertations. Bunton (2002) acknowledged the fundamental and pivotal position of LR in the domain of Academic Writing but similarly pointed to the limited research on LRs ascribing to its length. Another probable justification for the dearth of research carried out in this part-genre of thesis writing has been described aptly by Swales and Feak (2000):

In writing a research paper, research proposal, thesis writing, or dissertation, the Literature Review has been repeatedly considered as a tedious and redundant phenomenon yet it is deemed an inevitable part of them. Literature Reviews of this sort are mostly overlooked and there is hardly any recognition. After all, there is no such admission of praise for writing a brilliant Literature Review and we rarely hear remarks like "The most striking section of your thesis was the section named as Literature Review"! (Swales & Feak, 2000).

The current study aims at occupying the niche that is present in the given field, which is essentially identified as uncovering the use of rhetorical patterns and subsequent organization in the LR chapters as found in PhD theses.

1.1. The Notion of Literature Reviewing

In writing a thesis, the literature review is generally considered an important part. A comprehensive LR aims at providing a strong theoretical perspective and justification of research. It also establishes an appropriate niche and thereby elucidates the links between the already undertaken research studies and the researchers' own insights into in the research area (Swales & Feak, 2000).

While embarking upon the process of defining Literature Reviewing, it is always useful to break it down into two components. Firstly, it includes the complete product of the literature review that takes a proper form in the concluding draft of thesis writing. Secondly, the practice of doing a review of the literature is multifaceted and detailed in nature.

Literature review in a dissertation can potentially take different forms or realizations while writing and organizing it. It may take the form of citation practices dispersed in various sections of a dissertation. Another form can serve the purpose of an introduction to every chapter in an article or a thesis. However, the present study would focus on the literature review as an individual chapter that is placed between the Introduction and Methodology in the traditional structure of a dissertation. In the Pakistani context, the structure of the dissertation follows a set format (i.e., Introduction – Literature review – Methodology – Results – Discussion (ILrMD)) that the students are expected to follow and produce in their dissertations. Thus, it is of great significance to see how the scholars shape their literature review as an individual section/chapter in the dissertation.

The literature review reflects the writer's talent and natural ability to critically view his/her research area, and explore and find something new, which has not been studied and explored yet. If the literature and theoretical review are poorly constructed, the rest of the dissertation may likely be regarded as a failure, for a research scholar cannot conduct viable research before understanding the very nature of literature in the given field (Boote & Beile, 2005).

Apart from the form and the complex content/nature of a literature review, the very essence of embarking upon writing an apt literature review lies in its rhetorical organisation and which is quite axiomatic and is the ultimate objective of this important and inevitable part of a thesis. The structure and proposed contents in the genre of literature review get modified due to the rhetorical organization of the genre (Kwan, 2006). The notion of literature reviewing has been accorded as a rhetorical act to establish the worth of the writer's research.

1.2. Structure of the Literature Review: Applying Move Analysis

The writing of a literature review is defined as a rhetorical act (Kwan, 2006) to establish the worth of a researcher's study. The introduction sections in research articles (RAs) and post-graduate theses are categorized rhetorically and have been registered in many research works as a part-genre (Bunton, 2002; Samraj, 2002; Swales & Swales, 1990). John Swales' work in this respect is pioneering in this field since he first proposed his genre analysis model (1984) and

ultimately the organizational model named 'Create a Research Space' – CARS model (1990, 2004) for RA introductions. This model was the first of its kind and its emergence in the field of genre studies was no less than an epoch as it opened up new vistas for research scholars in the area. Later, Kwan (2006) and Jian (2010) carried out research on the Literature Review section of dissertations and research articles respectively. Owing to its exclusive function, many researchers have been trying to propose different models for different sections of various written or spoken genres. A considerable number of them are related to isolated sections of written genres such as abstracts, introductions, literature reviews, methods, results and discussion, and conclusions mainly in research articles and theses.

In his model, Swales and Swales (1990) employed and coined the term 'Move Analysis'. Move analysis is a significant method now used in genre studies to explore the texts rhetorically at various levels. It involves the identification of multiple text segments, which help in conveying distinctive rhetorical meanings and functions, with a certain purpose of communicating with the potential and hence target fellows of the various academic communities. Swales terms the move employment as a conscious effort by scholars involving discourse and organizational elements that aim at "attaining a clear understanding of the communicative value and purpose both in the academic realms of written or spoken world of discourse" (1990, p. 29). Therefore, the concept of a 'move' could potentially be interpreted as an element of the target text that is formed and confined to a particular communicative objective. Therefore, it also serves as a semantic unit linked to the ultimate goal a writer achieves through texts, further comprising smaller units called 'sub-moves' or 'steps'.

Swales' CARS (1990) move analysis model comprises two segments namely, move and step, in proposing any structure pertaining to the organization of a genre by studying its rhetorical patterns. There are three essential requisite moves present in the said model and every move has further been categorized in different steps (as shown in Table 1 in the next section). The purpose of the given prototypical model in the field of Genre studies is to delineate the structural organization underlying certain rhetorical objectives of the Introduction section. The model that explains the rhetorical organization of LR is proposed by Kwan (2006) that further expands the Swales model (see Table 2 in the next section).

By drawing on available works (Kwan, 2006; Swales & Swales, 1990), the objective of this study is primarily to explore the structure employed in the organization of LRs in Pakistani PhD theses and thereby potentially reveal the patterns inevitable in constructing literature reviews. With this in mind, the given research questions will address the answers to be sought.

- What Move Patterns are present in the section Literature Reviews of PhD theses?
- How do Pakistani researchers structure their section on Literature Reviews of PhD theses?

2.   Theoretical Framework

The seminal work in the field of genre dates back to Swales and Swales (1990) who first introduced his popular genre model that was then relevant to only the Computer Sciences field. With the passage of time, its relevance to social sciences was acknowledged and it was used by researchers (Bunton, 2002) who applied the model to the various sections in RAs and later on in thesis writing too. The study primarily follows two popular analytical models in the field of genre analysis; Swales and Swales (1990) and Kwan (2006) to understand the basic structural/rhetorical elements as far as Move Analysis is concerned (Table 1 and Table 2). Later, the study combines the elements from the two models to incorporate it in the proposed model for Literature reviews in PhD theses (Figure 3).

The rationale for using and applying the two popular models of Swales and Swales (1990) and Kwan (2006), is that they both align in terms of relevance to the current study and the proposed models fall in the domain of genre studies. Also, Jian (2010) and Hyland's work scope is limited to research articles. Therefore, these models have been carefully selected so as to serve the purpose in the current study. It is pertinent to mention here that, Kwan's work 2006 been instrumental in carrying out research in the said field, Literature Reviewing (LR); and it's the only model that can potentially be used to study the schematic and rhetorical organization of LR section in theses.

Table 1: **Swales (1990) CARS Model for RA Introductions**

Move 1	**Establishing a territory** by
Step 1	Claiming centrality and/or
Step 2	Making topic generalization(s); and/or
Step 3	Reviewing items of previous research
Move 2	Establishing a niche by
Step 1A	Counter-claiming; or
Step 1B	Indicating a gap or;
Step 1C	Question-raising and/or
Step 1D	Continuing a tradition
Move 3	Occupying the niche by
Step 1A	Outlining purposes or
Step 1B	Announcing present research
Step 2	Announcing principal findings; and
Step 3	Indicating research article structure

Table 2: Kwan's (2006) model of Literature Review

Move 1	**Establishing one of the territory of one's own research** by
Strategy A	Surveying the non-research-related phenomena or knowledge claim
Strategy B	Claiming centrality
Strategy C	Surveying the research-related phenomena
Move 2	Creating a research niche (in response of move 1) by
Strategy A	Counter-claiming
Strategy B	Gap-indicating
Strategy C	Asserting confirmative claims about knowledge or research practices surveyed
Strategy D	Asserting the relevancy of the surveyed claims to one's own research
Strategy E	Abstracting or synthesizing knowledge claims to establish a theoretical position
Move 3	Occupying the research niche by announcing
Strategy A	Research aims, focuses, research questions or hypotheses
Strategy B	Theoretical positions/theoretical frameworks
Strategy C	Research design/processes
Strategy D	Interpretations of terminology used in the thesis

3.   Methodology

3.1.   The Literature Review (LR) Corpus

The present corpus that has been analysed in the current study comprised texts pertaining to the LR section of PhD theses. The corpus was drawn from fifteen (15) doctoral theses following the ILrMRD format on a range of topics in the academic realm of English Linguistics. The theses were all completed until the year December 2020 and were submitted by a number of Pakistani PhD scholars from the field of English Linguistics from various universities in Islamabad. The theses were downloaded online by using the archive method from the HEC repository (http://prr.hec.gov.pk/jspui/). The random purposing sampling technique was used in the collection/downloading of data owing to the availability of the theses in the repository that fall till the year 2015- 2020.

For this study, only and exclusively the section of the thesis that runs between the introduction section and the methodology section/chapters, named Literature Review, was selected for genre analysis. The length of the LR sections of PhD theses varied from text to text as has been explained in the tables below (Table 3 & 4). Fifteen (15) LR chapters were collected with a view that being lengthier pieces that pose a challenge while carrying out manual rhetorical move analysis, the data that amounted to a total of approx. 251,650 words were considered enough for the purpose of analysis for the current study. The researchers along with an expert in the genre field determined and decided what they considered to be the Literature Review of the theses collected considering the research norms in the given culture and the overarching patterns being followed in Pakistani universities. All the collected material attested the presence of this section as an independent chapter.

3.2.   Coding

The researchers primarily resorted to manual coding. Coding refers to the in-depth reading of the text followed by the identification of certain patterns by adapting a certain model. In the present study for this purpose, the researchers have used the inter-coder reliability whereby the frequencies of moves and steps in the data set were observed and hence recorded by the researchers manually. An expert in the field with his assistance ensured the reliability factor. In addition, for in depth understanding and analysis the researcher carried out coding by

using and subsequently adapting the popular functional-semantic approach, Eisenhart (2004) cited in Kwan (2006). The rationale for incorporating this scheme primarily was to counter the challenge pertaining to the length of the chapter. Since it was considered one of the limitations of the research, the said scheme helped identify the 'Moves'. The scheme was adapted as the data reveals some new features and lexical realisation in terms of moves as discussed in the proposed model for LR, in Figure 1 below. Also, the researcher with the help of research expert in the said field included some new Moves/Steps as the data revealed. It involved an entirely different functional approach to text analysis.

The knowledge of the field was a prerequisite as it primarily relied on cognitive judgment for attaining a thorough understanding of the phenomenon, rather than focusing on linguistic criteria, with the aim to ascertain the objective of the target academic text and the marked textual boundaries (Vijay K Bhatia, 1991). The method undertaken completely and directly aligns with the notional underpinning of the term 'Move'. It is often undertaken that in the study of academic texts, every move has a confined start, that eventually leads to the overarching theme that studies the rhetorical patterns, and it becomes the essence of the target text. Therefore, in the present study too, the role of every text segment was first scrutinized and observed owing to the purpose which is local and residing there, such as to identify the key studies in the said academic realm, and hence with the ultimate aim of justifying the writers' research. The rigorous procedure involved the doing of manual coding initially was also primarily done with a clear purpose that aimed at identifying the principal semantic features of the various text elements present in the LR sections. As this study relied on popular models such as Swales, CARS 1990 and Kwan, 2006 to explore certain features pertaining to moves and steps of the given models and to identify the same in the LR corpus of the present study, the study incorporated the scheme used in Eisenhart (2004). The said scheme helped in identifying certain semantic features which helped in understanding the nature of the structural organisation of the target texts.

With the aim of conducting manual coding, a pilot study of a small scale was also directed, which involved the researchers and a research expert in the said research field, who enjoyed a thorough understanding of the CARS model, as he had a great insight into understanding the models used in genre studies. The purpose was to assess whether the application of models seems pertinent or otherwise. The procedure was such that the researchers with the assistance of the research scholar initially randomly selected two LR chapters and it was followed by the process of coding two LR chapters independently to assess the inter-rater reliability. At first, we encountered certain overwhelming problems. One was related to the length of sections named LR, as the inclusion of multi-themed sections made it even more challenging to control certain inherent variables. In order to cope with the immediate challenge, it was decided that a sectional analysis would serve the purpose, which means that we decided to divide each long and lengthy chapter into various themes, also highlighting the confines that were signaled and reinforced by such bold heading/titles such as certain section headings, subheadings, and the very systematic numbering allotment to the different pages and sections.

Initially, with an aim to have a fair idea as to what these section names as thematic sections are all about, an analysis, keeping in view the CARS model, was done on every section that was found to be a separate unit. It was interestingly observed and found that many of such sections carry certain elements that resemble the patterns found in the steps employed in Bunton (2002) model. Later, it was compared with Kwan (2006) to see the compatibility between the two popular models. To researchers' satisfaction, the coding done at this level gave a satisfactory inter-coder reliability that in any way would suffice as it turned out to be precisely 80.1%. The understanding of certain aspects/features related to the semantic domain was time-consuming. They were informed by rigorous interpretations that involved steps. They were interpreted and named afterwards after gaining a clear understanding of the terms. It was done primarily by attaining clarification regarding the semantic facets followed by a thorough description of their central criteria. The second challenge revolved around the first segment of this LR chapter i.e. Introduction part. It sprang from the introductory sections of the LR target texts and stretched until the end i.e. the concluding texts found at the end of some of the chapters. The LR texts involved segments that were clearly identified with the components in the popular Swales' CARS structure. However, it does not necessarily amount to the fact that they were all meant to justify the writers' research; they were thoroughly studied distinctly for the analysis. Later, while doing the proper coding, we had to resort to the action of separating and converting every LR chapter

of writers that were in the form of electronic texts to readable word form. After going through each of the chapters and analysing different sections, they were named as three separate categories including introductory texts, concluding texts and thematic sections, to arrive at an analytical understanding of the texts. The researcher afterwards coded the entire corpus. Inter-coder analysis was carried out on one-third of the given data as the size of the corpus in the current study was too huge to deal with and it would have been a time-consuming and laborious activity to handle and would presumably affect the thorough understanding of the target texts. Therefore, the researcher was circumspect in this regard.

4.   Data Analysis and Results

The literature review chapter in the selected theses can be broadly categorised into three sections or portions namely, the introduction section, the thematic section, and the conclusion section. Table 3 below shows the word count of each section in the data.

Table 3: **Data Description of the Literature Review Chapter**

| Section/Segment	Introduction Section	Thematic Section	Conclusion Section	Literature Review Corpus
Word Count	3900 (1.54%)	244,500 (97.17%)	3250 (1.29%)	251,650 (100%)

As the table above shows, the total word count of the corpus amounts to 251,650 words. The bulk of the literature review chapter (97%) comprises the thematic section whereas the introduction and conclusion sections are almost similarly distributed (1.54% and 1.29% respectively) in the data. The total word count per literature review chapter within the corpus varies significantly, with the lowest of 8812 words to the highest of 27,946 words, as shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: **Data Distribution of Literature Review Chapters**

No. of LR Chapters	Max. Word Count of a Chapter	Min. Word Count of a Chapter	Mean	SD
15	27, 946	8812	16776.67	5015.09

The move analysis of the selected literature review sections through manual coding revealed a 4-Move organisational pattern, along with four sub-moves/steps in Move 2 and two sub-moves in Move 4. Figure 1 below provides the *Moves & Steps model* of literature review chapters in Pakistani PhD theses.

Figure 1: The Proposed Moves & Steps Model of Literature Review Chapters
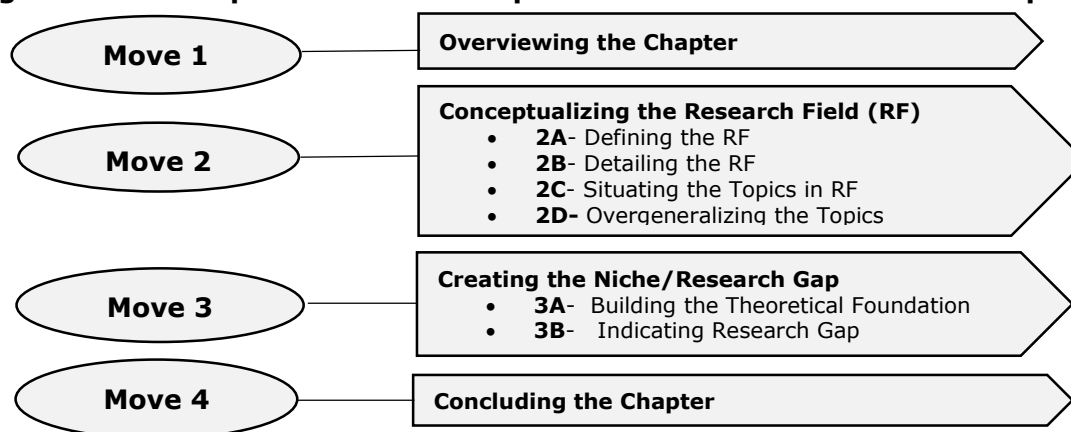
The description, explanation and examples of each move and step from the data are provided below.

4.1.   Move 1: Overviewing the Chapter

This overarching move singularly sets the tone for the whole section as it outlines the targets/aims in the opening paragraph(s). It serves as an overview/synopsis of the whole chapter to prepare the readers for the potential themes/ideas related to the given study and anticipates readers' readiness by outlining the aims/targets in the chapter. It has no sub-steps/strategies as opposed to the rest of the moves. It also highlights the significance and distinctiveness of this

chapter as it goes with the title of the introduction and hence establishes it as a separate entity and not to be confused with the Introduction Chapter that runs before Literature Reviews in dissertations. Kwan (2006) also lays bare the very fact and establishes that both chapters Introduction and Literature Reviews in dissertations are different as far as the communicative purpose is concerned and are realized through different moves.

The opening paragraphs/section of the LRs serves as a predominant move in the current corpus as it gives an overview, and a brief introduction to the work and prepares the readers for the potential scope of the study that inevitably works as a Move and which essentially encompasses the targets, structures and potential running themes/notions covered in the given section. For instance,

Example 1
The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section deals with an historical overview of theoretical developments made in the area of metadiscourse, in addition, and its underpinnings in arena of discourse studies in general and metadiscourse exegeses in particular have been discussed in this section. (LR 3)

It has been clearly stated that the paragraph which serves as an outline or an overview essentially occurs as a predominant theme (Move 1). Also,

Example 2

4.1.1. Introduction
The section Literature review and the related conceptual framework have been debated with a view to scrutinized relevant literature. It primarily traces three main parts pragmatics, Discourse analysis and the study of essential concepts and philosophies that at the heart of academic discourse and code switching. (LR 6).

The opening section is named as the introduction and it announces the targets of the study. As mentioned earlier it remains one of the most significant units of analysis.

All LR sections in the data display this pattern, whereas 13 of 15 LRs open with the same paragraphs that act as a move. Though the section is brief, its significance cannot be overlooked in the organisation of the chapter.

4.2. Move 2: Conceptualising the Research Field
The move aims at conceptualising the research field/area. It starts with a broader area of research and a subsequent discussion on various facets/branches so as to connect it thematically with the main notion/subject. It is more generic in nature as it only surveys the broader area of research.

Example 3
Academic English contains a range of varied registers and its kinds, such as economics, science, and mathematics (Johns, 1997). Every field has its own diverse yet distinct inter-related linguistic practices in terms of dimensions, dynamics, components, and features. (LR 2)

Example 4
It is appropriate to initially have a brief yet thorough knowledge and understanding of the respective field that is to say, literature on textual and discourse studies which paved way for genre studies. (LR 4)

Example 5
Academia comprises Educational institutions that includes the oldest and the most prestigious and famous institutions which have always been recognized to transmit desired standards, skills, knowledge and culture to the younger generation and a teacher always holds the most valued position in this organisation. (LR 11)

The above-mentioned instances clearly reveal how the researchers introduce the research topic to explicate the conceptualising of the said research topic.

4.2.1. 2A- Defining the Research Field

It includes the definitions of the various terms related to the undertaken study that is to say the broader research area. It aims at clarifying the basic concepts related to the research field/area and subsequently moves from generic to specific (topics/notions) – from the broader thematic discussion that starts with typical definitions of the key terms and moves towards the narrowing or delimitation of the undertaken subject/topic.

Example 6
Discourse is, most often, described as a stretch of spoken language or it can also refer to different schools of thought in different domains of life (Van Dijk, 1997a). (LR 1)

Example 7
Biletzki (1996) refers to two different yet interesting types of definitions of the various fields such as pragmatics; intentional and extensional. (LR 6)

Example 8
The term communication has its roots in Latin "Communes" that refers to something that is commonplace. That is to say, communication is a way of expressing and sharing at the same time certain ideas, thoughts, words and attitudes, with someone. (LR 12)

The above-mentioned examples clearly show the nature of data that aims at defining the notion/research topic under study. It is perhaps to familiarise the readers with the topic.

4.2.2. 2B- Detailing the Research Field

It encompasses the detailing of the research field/area, which includes the historical background of the research area so as to locate/trace the genesis/origin of the research topic and gradual development in the research field in terms of theory and practice and the emergence of sub-fields in the said research field/area. It aims to explain the sub-fields, starting from its definition to the detailed account of the field.

Example 9
The Notion of genre has been much researched , thoroughly investigated, and rigorously questioned, answered and widely debated by a number of esteemed scholars such in the said field (Barber Jr, 1962; V. Bhatia, 2004; Vijay K Bhatia, 1991; Vijay Kumar Bhatia & Nodoushan, 2015; Couture, 1986; Gustafsson, 1976; Halliday, 1964; Miller, 1995; Nerad & Miller, 1997; Spencer, 1975; Swales & Bhatia, 1983).

Example 10
In the 1990s, research carried out in the said realm in the United Kingdom remarkably by the figures like Lea and Street (1998) result in the expansion of "practice-oriented' patterns in the field of education at tertiary level / higher education that initiates the notion and practice of "Academic Literacies". (LR 1)

Example 11
Emergence and Development of English for Academic Purposes. (LR 2)

Example 12
'You shall know a word by the company it keeps' (Firth, cited in Palmer (1986), p. 75-76).
This makes many researchers and scholars believe that the word collocation was first used by Firth (1957). (LR 1)

The examples above refer to the historical background of the research field. It covers a holistic picture of the study that a research notion/area evolved over a period of time. The developments in theory and its application and link to the current study are made to provide the readers with a clear insight and picture of the current state of the research field.

4.2.3. 2C- Situating the Research Topic in Research Field

It involves the reviewing of previous research in the given field of research which includes the integration of previous studies with the main thematic research field. It refers to the citations that is citing the previous research/sources that lead to synthesising it with the present study to establish the relevance with the topic of research.

Example 13

Furthermore, many a research study focuses on the significance of lexical bundles in academic arena and how these notions can be instilled and taught. Hyland (2008) and Cortés Suárez (2004) favor productive exercises for the use of lexical bundles so that students can understand and use the lexical bundles in their own writings. (LR 1)

4.2.4. 2D- Overgeneralizing the Topic(s)

This sub-step of Move 2 indicates the drifting away from the main topic, at times, digressing too much and entering another related branch of the same topic and hence committing over-generalisation and at times irrelevance.

Example 14

The two fields akin to each other such as Language acquisition and language learning are different routes intersecting time and again. Acquisition is like children's unconscious process (Krashen, 2003, 1982, 1976). (LR 15)

At times, the researchers digress from the main point and get involved in a more generic discussion whereby they drift from the main topic. Since the topic has many subfields, threads and shades, it is virtually impossible to cover all the shades. Therefore, it has been observed as in the example above that the researchers make a discussion that is way too generic and hence overgeneralisation leading to irrelevance.

4.3. Creating the Niche/ Research Gap

This move is very significant as it builds the theoretical foundations by referring to theory/theoretical frameworks and including pertinent models that have been previously proposed by many a researcher in the said field. Thus, it also involves the summarising of the previous research works related to the given field/area of research in the present study which eventually leads to indicating or establishing the research niche/gap and hence justifies the worth of the current study.

Example 15
Pragmatic Model of Linguistic 3E (Establishing theoretical positions). (LR 6)

Example 16
Theorising Language and Gender (1D). (LR 9)

Example 17
The concept of Metadiscourse which creates a sound debate that subsequently leads to creating niche for metadiscourse expersts in fields of pragmatics by rigorously following a top down method of metadiscourse analysis. (LR 3)

Example 18
2.3 The Niche. (LR 7)

Example 19
Moreover, the literature also helped in identifying the research gap to be filled in by the present study. (LR 2)

The examples above encompass the instances from the theory pertaining to the work undertaken. Some of the instances show how Niche/research gap is indicated either explicitly through headings as in examples 16 and 18 or through discussion leading to the research gap. It builds a theoretical foundation wherein the present study situates followed by the mentioning of relevant analytical models based on theory. It also points out the research voids to make space for the research gap such as highlighting the research niche.

4.3.1. Building Theoretical Foundation

This sub-move specifically involves the ransacking of the previous research including various theories and models and ultimately linking it to the current field of research whereby the researchers could come up with the proposed theory or model for that matter.

Example 20
In this part (2.1.6), The researcher ventures to make an attempt to elaborate the numerous varied theoretical approaches and models to metadiscourse. (LR 3)

Example 21
Many researchers (such as Paquot, 2007; Scott & Tribble, 2006; Simpson, 2004) have contributed in different areas and aspects of collocations and multiword combinations, in different academic and non-academic disciplines. (LR 1)

Example 22
The framework CGA (Bhatia, 2002, 2004, 2012, 2017)is in itself an amalgamation of various viewpoints and frameworks and was primarily suggested proposed following a three-space model in 2004 by Bhatia. (LR 4)

4.3.2. Indicating the Research Gap
The researcher, after surveying the previous researches, points out the research gap/niche, whereby he could make some contribution in the given field of research and hence justifying the value of the current work**.**

Example 23
A debate on the fluid nature of the concept gives sufficient niche for the current study to contribute in, firstly, theoretical understanding of the concept by exploring variation and rhetoric of interdisciplinary and interdisciplinary metadiscourse. (LR 3)

Example 24
The Review of literature establishes the way this research bridges the gap in the research base about testing ESS. Testing English-speaking skill has not been compassed in Pakistan. (LR 15)

By referring to the research gap through different examples, the writer justifies his work in the wider body of knowledge. It is often mentioned with a clear announcement that how the current study fits in the research scenario and how it fills the research voids.

4.4. Concluding the Chapter
It clearly concludes the chapter by giving a conclusion at the end of the literature review section as a concluding argument to the previous running discussion in the whole chapter. It is often coupled with implications for future research by highlighting the potential areas of research. The concluding paragraphs which mark the conclusion of this chapter also remain one of the key components of this section. The clear presence of this section is indicated by its occurrence in 12 out of 15 LRs. Such as,

Example 25
Finally, this chapter is concluded after presenting the key concepts and the research conducted in the area of study. The review of literature in the chapter also helped to discuss results and findings of some of the similar studies which will be used to compare with the results of the present study. (LR 1)

Example 26

4.4.1. Conclusion of the Chapter
In this chapter Literature review the focus of the researcher has been to explore the process of teaching SL writing along with assessment done through the same medium with an aim to develop certain level of competence in the field of Essay writing which is an intricate art in itself. It is not only deemed a process but also seen as a product along with its social and cognitive relevance in the broader scope of the field. So its both form and content oriented. (LR7?)

This section has been clearly marked as a separate component in the organisation of the chapter. In comparison, it has been revealed that the results of this undertaken study are interestingly different and revealing from that of Kwan's (2006) study. In the current study, the opening section does not necessarily or always open with marked titles such as 'Introduction' or

the conclusion section as 'Conclusion' for that matter. However, they do appear in the LRs. It has been observed that it goes untitled at times in a few texts/ instances. The most plausible explanation is that the former was composed by native the English-speaking writers and the latter by the non-natives writer so of the English language. And, it could be attributed to the fact that the local writing conventions vary from academic community to community and it has led to the certain noticeable variations in the texts. Thus, it can be ascertained from the current data that shows that more of than not, the data reveals the section Introduction in the current corpus are not titled or goes untitled as "Introduction" suggests that it perhaps it is all pervasive and local writing conventions follow the pattern across in the construction of writing LR chapters is concerned.

5.   Findings and Discussion

Move 1 and Move 4 named as overviewing the chapter and concluding the chapter respectively, are one of the most noticeable findings of the current study. These moves have not been mentioned and realised previously by the researchers in their studies such as in Swales and Swales (1990) and Kwan (2006). Instead, their findings revealed that the writers established the territory by claiming its centrality from the very outset. However, in the current study Move 1 refers to the opening section as it outlines the targets/aims in the opening paragraph(s). It serves as an overview/synopsis of the whole chapter to prepare the readers for the potential themes/ideas related to the given study. The rhetorical significance is evident as it seems that these are inevitable moves in the given genre culture as the data reveals that 100 percent (15 out of 15) LRs reflect the presence of the aforementioned Moves. The researchers in the local context divide the LR section in different sub-sections thematically to say by drawing certain boundaries that help in the clear recognition of the different sub-parts of the seemingly long chapters. Earlier in the previous works, such as in the case of Swales 1990 followed by Kwan, 2006 and Jian 2010 have not treated these sections as separate Sub-Moves and are merged with the other sub-sections. However, the prevalent practice in the local context reflects the genre culture of the given local context where it has become more of an established norm and practice to treat these sections as separate section in LRs writing, which essentially work as Moves.

The study revealed that the writers/ PhD scholars rely more on Move 2 that is conceptualizing the Research field than any other move. It is, perhaps, to situate the subject in the wider body of knowledge and hence earn acknowledgement for the undertaken study as it is one of the objectives of constructing a good Literature review in writing PhD theses. The recurrent Move 2 is virtually omnipresent in all the selected LRs, 15 out of 15 LRs (100 percent) follow the same patterns of conceptualising the research field that shows yet another established practice among PhD scholars while embarking upon writing the LR section in thesis writing. In addition, the Literature review section is 25 percent of the whole thesis, so in order to achieve the word count the researchers resort to Move 2 to cover certain space as one of the LRs spanned for about 80 odd pages (LR 3).

As far as communicative purpose of the Literature Review is concerned, Move 3 that is Creating research Niche is more relevant than any other Move. As it highlights the significance of scholar's contribution, his stance/voice and more importantly, how through this work a viable link can be established to the wider body of knowledge. However, it has been observed that the researchers do not always refer to research gap to fill the research voids. It is, perhaps assuming that the research in itself is sufficient to contribute. The tabular forms above testify the findings, as Move 3 as rhetorical move has not been realised often while constructing Literature reviews. Studies such as Hart (1998) lay great emphasis on Move 3 as an obligatory Move.

In the current study, the moves have been categorised with different names such as obligatory, optional and conventional and it is done on the basis of occurrence of sub-steps in the data of current corpus in relation to certain move that step represents. Table 5 reflects the occurrence, nature of moves and frequencies.

Some of the moves were obligatory as they were found in all the literature reviews (Move 1 and Move 4) whereas Move 3 and Move 4 were optional as they were not found in all the literature reviews. Move 3 was optional as the writers/scholars laid more stress and explicated the notion/themes in LR more to situate their work and build some relation with the present work instead of establishing a niche for their study which ultimately justifies the worth of the current

study and hence they fail to make this point in constructing LRs. Move 4 too was not taken as a separate component and the writers moved straight to the results in the Discussions and Result section and thereby summarising the findings of the undertaken study. Whereas in previous studies such as Kwan (2006)the writers in some LRs treated it as a separate component.

Table 5: **Occurrence of Moves and Steps**

S. NO.	Move	Steps	Nature
Move 1	Overviewing the Chapter		Obligatory
Move 2	Conceptualizing the	2A- Defining the RF	Obligatory
	Research Field (RF)	2B- Detailing the RF	Obligatory
		2C- Situating the topic(s) in RF	Optional
		2D- Overgeneralizing the topic(s)	Optional
Move 3	Creating the Niche/Research	3A- Building the Theoretical Foundation	Optional
	Gap	3B- Indicating Research Gap	Optional
Move 4	Concluding the Chapter		Obligatory

6.   Conclusion

Through the results attained, this study aims at establishing and hence reinforcing the importance of discourse community and the conclusion that every discipline and subject practises, propagates, and follows their own writing conventions to effectively communicate, debate, and discuss the importance of achieving certain aimed communicative purpose. The data reflects the lack of organisation skills as achieving coherence in such long lengthy chapters has been one of the issues as pointed out by (Swales & Feak, 2000). Multiple themes in the LRs (spread in some cases across multi-chapters) are arguably needed in order to establish complicated conceptual and epistemological contours of the writers' research topics however it has to have some coherence to look like one argument and thereby establish the communicative purpose of the literature review at large. The data of move percentage show that some of the moves such as Move 3 which is the most relevant one for the scholars while construction literature reviews, have not been followed and thus overlooked.

In the present study on Literature Reviews, the preponderance of Move 1, Move 2 and Move 4 reveal that the students resort to them more so to perform a ritual and have not been trained as such to craft the Literature reviews argumentatively by employing Move 3 whereby establishing the niche for the current study/ and hence justifying the worth of the undertaken study. The lack of argumentation can be clearly seen in the organisation of the chapter as virtually in all LRs, the section LR has been divided into chapters. The uniformity testifies that it lacks arguments and a set pattern regardless of the communicative purpose that has been followed. Hyland (2008) also opines every discourse community has a distinct communicative purpose and therefore it owns its genre(s), with defined lexis, rhetorical structures, and certain conventions. In addition, the results of the current study also attest to our perception that ESP students including the PhD scholars should have prior knowledge of the discipline such as the genre(s) that they pursue in order to learn the rudimentary concept and essence of the notion. Similar observations are discussed in the studies conducted in the related domains (e.g., (Hsiao, 2010); Yen (2012).

In addition, the emphasis on conducting the seminars and training from related courses aiming at yielding the desired results. The advisors' guidelines and direction, reviewers' commentaries, and proposals were all central in guiding the postgraduate students to write the section of theses/dissertations. Thus, the study sheds light on the importance of teaching Literature review as a separate course potentially by following certain proposed models and the findings. It will also, thus, establish the significance of providing the scholars with much-needed guidance and assistance who face certain challenges when it comes to writing for academic purposes in English. It is highly recommended that guidelines at this level coupled with thorough training in the pertinent fields will help acquire the necessary discoursal understanding that will help in the construction of arguments and will help in organising and writing well-structured Literature Reviews.

This study was only limited to the local context and carried on relatively smaller data including theses written by non-native users of the English language. In order to validate the findings of the current study, further studies in the said field will not only highlight the scope of the said domain but also replicate the various aspects left untapped so far in our part of the world. As far as pedagogical implications are concerned, a model based on collocation, and

concordance may be introduced to study and explore the varied linguistic insights of each of the approaches that have been studied in this current study and which can potentially be of great help in using it in the ESP and more precisely teaching domains.

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