

A Genre-Based Investigation of Book Reviews in Applied Linguistics and System: An Analysis of Rhetorical Structure

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Research Paper

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Abstract: Book reviews play an essential role in helping researchers and authorities keep up with the newest advancements in their respective field. Most genre-based reviews in the past have focused their analysis on linguistic characteristics of book reviews, dismissing rhetorical structures. Therefore, the current study aims to rectify this belief by looking for obligatory and conventional moves in two of the most famous linguistics journals, Applied Linguistics and System, while also comparing the sequencing of their rhetorical structures. Seventy book reviews, thirty-five from each journal, were investigated in this study. The rhetorical structures used in this investigation were based on Motta Roth's (1995) Model. Data coding was done by utilizing MAXQDA. The results were as follows: while none of the four rhetorical move was obligatory in these journals, they were all at least used in more than 70% of the book reviews investigated. Move 2, outlining the book, was utilized in every book review. On the matter of move sequencing, it was observed that book reviews in both journals generally adhere to the conventional linear move sequencing. These findings show that rhetorical structures are still widely used by book reviewers and can provide a good starting point for researchers interested in doing book reviews.

Keywords: Applied Linguistics Journal, Book Reviews, Genre Analysis, Rhetorical Structures, System Journal

Introduction

Over the past few decades, genre analysis has been employed to perceive the communicative characteristics of discourse and explore how people participate in specific communicative situations. Genre analysis facilitates the comprehension of how texts are shaped in terms of moves, steps, stages, and strategies, as well as the understanding of the communication purpose (Kyei & Afful, 2021; Marefat, et al., 2021; Ulum, 2016). Studying genres demonstrates the knowledge and abilities of authors in a particular subject and helps to determine how they attempt to connect with users to achieve communication purposes (Hyland, 2004). Therefore, genre analysis provides a helpful framework for the analysis of language usage in applied linguistics (Bhatia, 2004). Moreover, genre analysis focuses on explicit and implicit deviations to lead to genre theory and provides a concrete framework for new members.

In this respect, Nodoushan and Montazeran (2012) point out that the writer's problem arises from the lack of familiarity and experience with standard rhetorical features in genre analysis. That is, the analysis of rhetorical structures can help inexperienced authors understand discursive tools in

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academic writings (Swales, 2004). Additionally, researchers may fail to obtain communicative purposes due to the lack of knowledge about generic conventions in their study. Analyzing the rhetorical features of academic writing provides discursive tools for inexperienced writers who are required to participate in academia. As Ding (2007) proposes, the rhetorical characteristics consist of semantic and functional units that clarify communicative objectives and linguistic boundaries. Genre analysis aims to make the structures clear, often for pedagogical purposes (Rau & Shih, 2021). Move analysis and genre analysis are commonly used together, as genre analysis is a method that analyzes the text and divides it into moves and steps (Moreno & Swales, 2018). Structural moves are schematic units that explain bounded communicative acts to achieve significant communicative purposes (Swales & Feak, 2004). Additionally, this method has been widely used to study the structure of academic genres, such as research articles, dissertations, and academic reports (Rau & Shih, 2021, Regueir & Sáez 2013, Saidi & Khazaei, 2021, Xia, 2023).

The field of genre analysis, due to its recent developments, has renewed researchers' interest in academic Book Reviews (BRs) (Liou, 2015). BRs are defined as a process in which field authorities evaluate the specific researcher's contribution and the validity of the books (Hyland, 2002). Merriam-Webster describes BRs as an evaluative or descriptive account of a book, demonstrating their significant role in academia. BRs are utilized to guide readers in selecting books to read or purchase. Besides, they can be an instrument for publication and visibility (Carvalho, 2001; Hyland, 2002; Motta-Roth, 2001). If researchers and authors are required to keep abreast of books in any specific field, it is impossible to read all the books on the market (Junqueira, 2013). For this reason, researchers need to be selective about the information they want to read, and BRs often aid in discerning which books are valuable to spend time on (Suárez & Moreno, 2008). In addition, BRs help readers choose what to read in a short period of time due to the descriptive nature of the genre (Carvalho, 2002).

BRs serve several functions in academia, such as exploring new books and evaluating "how valuable their contribution may be to the development of the field" (Suárez & Moreno, 2008, p. 147). In academia, BRs are commonly used as a way to evaluate a student's synthesis and reflection abilities (Moreno et al., 2010; Regueiro & Sáez, 2013). Furthermore, as Hyland (2002) emphasizes, BRs serve dual purposes: ideational and interpersonal. BRs are ideational in providing an overview of the book and addressing specific doubtful issues in the study. They are also interpersonal in explaining the book's goals, rhetorical structures, emphasizing all parts of chapters, and attempting to assess them. Therefore, BRs may employ numerous lexical structures, syntactic structures, and all the rhetorical moves (Etaywe, 2017).

The rhetorical structure of BRs was first recognized by Motta-Roth (1995), who investigated the rhetorical macrostructure of English BRs in three domains: economics, linguistics, and chemistry. She identified three key aspects of rhetorical moves in those BRs, which can be listed as follows:

- A common communicative goal: explanation and assessment of recent publications in those three domains.
- A particular discourse community: experts who perform specific roles in a social text.
- An organized communicative occurrence: the whole of the analyzed examples share an essential structure.

In the light of the aforementioned, Motta-Roth (1995) enhanced her move analysis approach based on Swales' (1990) CARS model, which declares genre as a group of organized communicative events accomplished by an unequivocal communicative purpose. Therefore, he introduced four moves for writing academic BRs: 1. introducing the book, 2. outlining the book, 3. highlighting parts of the book, and 4. providing a closing evaluation of the book. These four moves may share some steps that are not always obligatory. The rhetorical structure of BRs has been studied by other scholars (Carvalho, 2001, 2002; Bezerra, 2002; Nicolaisen, 2002; Suárez & Moreno, 2008), and the rhetorical structure has been utilized in most of these studies according to the moves recognized by Motta-Roth (1995) (Junqueira, 2013). Moreover, Babaii and Ansari (2005) argue that the significant goal of BRs at the end of most academic journals, such as Asian EFL Journal, ESP, System, and TESOL Quarterly, is to assess the

produced knowledge, thus demonstrating academic literacy. Additionally, no study has been conducted on BRs in two popular journals: *Applied Linguistics* and *System*.

Most research has focused on the analysis of the linguistic characteristics of BRs, such as praise and criticism (Hyland, 2002; Itakura, 2013), critical attitudes (Giannoni, 2006; Itakura & Tsui, 2011; Moreno & Suárez, 2008a, 2008b, 2009; Salager-Meyer & Alcaraz Ariza, 2004), appraisal (Li-ping, 2004; Wang & An, 2013), reporting and evaluation verbs (Bondi, 2009; Diani, 2009), and disciplinary variation (Babaii & Ansary, 2005; Samraj, 2002; Williams, 1999). However, the rhetorical structures of BRs (Junqueira & Cortes, 2014; Nodoushan & Montazeran, 2012) have been dismissed despite their helpfulness as significant contributions to academic genres. Therefore, in light of the above conventions, the objective of the current study is to analyze the rhetorical structure of BRs in these journals. Furthermore, this study sheds light on the moves and steps that are obligatory and optional from the point of view of Motta-Roth (1995). In other words, the researchers compare all of the BRs genres in both journals and attempt to identify similarities and differences to investigate the rhetorical aspects of these two journals.

Literature Review

Most writers prefer to write their academic works in English because it is a superior language for communicating scientific research information (Flowerdew & Dudley-Evans, 2002). Recently there has been a renewed interest academic writing, which has led to a movement in the genre-based approach in the last four decades (Nodoushan & Montazeran, 2012). Researchers have divided genres into two parts: lexico-grammatical characteristics of the text and the recognition of rhetorical characteristics (Hyon, 1996). The rhetorical structure is a crucial segment of genre studies. Rhetorical characteristics are a semantic and functional part of any communication that clarify communicative goals and linguistic barriers (Ding, 2007). They tend to reveal the total of genres in an organization and their innate linguistic characteristics in a way that links to the social context (Henry & Roseberry, 1997). Rhetorical structures may be explained by means of moves and their corresponding sub-functions called steps. Ding (2007) considers move analysis as an indispensable part of genre studies. He claims that moves are considered as the building block of genres and communicative goals.

BRs are considered as a part of a genre that shares primary rhetorical organization. BRs are a type of evaluation that includes an analytical point of view. This implies that the communicative goal of BRs is to assess knowledge, and it may be asserted that they can help in the acquisition of academic literacy. Besides, Swales' (1990) explanation of genre appears to apply here because BRs are composed of communicative events, for instance, an association between people who perform in *Applied Linguistics* journal and perform specific roles. The roles are connected with the situation and specific purposes, such as introducing and assessing the latest publications in specific fields. Moreover, academic discourse community members identify communicative occurrences. Discourse community members or experts identify the schemata of genre utilizing prior knowledge that leads their beliefs about texts. They commonly utilize prior knowledge of academia and disciplinary culture (content schemata) and prior knowledge in inclusive textual characteristics of BRs (formal schemata).

Additionally, BRs serve as a guide for reviewers to identify both the lexico-grammatical features and rhetorical structures of the genre (Lindermann & Mauranen, 2001; Motta-Roth, 1995). This enables reviewers to participate in the discourse community and understand the specific norms, practices, and requirements (Etaywe, 2017). However, a lack of familiarity or understanding of the discourse community can impede the achievement of BRs' conceptual and interpersonal goals. Genre analysis of BRs is a significant area of research in academia, but few studies have been conducted in this field. For instance, Babaii and Ansary (2005) investigated the effects of disciplinary variations on BRs. They aimed to categorize BRs in terms of transitivity and understand the effect of lexical characteristics on disciplinary variation in 90 BRs from professional journals in physics, sociology, and literature. They found significant differences in the type and frequency of processes and participants, with BRs in physics journals using passive structures and non-human concrete contributors more

frequently than BRs in sociology and literature journals. BRs in sociology and biology used a lower percentage of specific human contributors.

Moreno and Suárez (2008a) investigated critical attitudes towards English and Spanish academic BRs, comparing 20 academic BRs of literature in English and 20 BRs in Spanish. They found that the type and frequency of critical attitude were explained in terms of critical acts, which were recognized and measured based on the co-text and context. Spanish writers were found to be less critical than English writers and displayed a lower eagerness to assess books negatively.

Nodoushan and Montazeran (2012) compared the rhetorical structures of EFL and ESL BR writers, selecting 60 BRs randomly from applied linguistics journal published in Asian EFL journals, ESP, System, and TESOL Quarterly between 2004 and 2010. They used Motta-Roth's (1995) framework for move analysis and found that authors' linguistic backgrounds influenced their selection of BRs and rhetorical structures. They identified two categories of reviews: informative and evaluative, related to the presence and absence of the author's focused assessment of the books.

Junqueira (2013) conducted a study on genre analysis of applied linguistics BRs in English and Brazilian Portuguese, investigating the rhetorical structure of academic applied linguistics and examining how the genre is contextualized in English and Brazilian medium journals. She found that English BRs tended to use critical words more than Brazilian Portuguese, proposed the books just after signifying potential weaknesses, while most Brazilian Portuguese reviews tried not to use caveats. Brazilian Portuguese BRs indicated more variations, which might reflect that English medium journals are more established than Brazilian Portuguese ones.

Ulum (2016) aimed to examine the appropriateness of genre analysis of ESP BRs, analyzing 12 ESP BRs from well-known journals. He found that all the analyzed ESP BRs contained particular rhetorical structures, such as the general topic of the book, providing focus and evaluations, but some moves were not used. Lexical, special keywords, and grammar had the most and different frequencies. Etaywe (2017) investigated the rhetorical structure of Arabic BRs, selecting 30 Arabic BRs in ten journals from 1999 to 2015. He found that Arabic BRs tended to use an informative and descriptive approach and were eager to utilize the six notable rhetorical structures, four of which were descriptive and informative, and two of which were evaluative. Arabic BRs tended to use formal schemata and defining content similar to English and Spanish BRs. The differences observed may be related to discourse community expectations and editorial requirements.

In summary, while genre analysis of BRs is a significant area of research in academia, a few studies have been conducted on the topic. Researchers have investigated the effects of disciplinary variations, critical attitudes, linguistic backgrounds, and rhetorical structures of BRs in different languages and contexts. Understanding the lexico-grammatical features and rhetorical structures of BRs is crucial for reviewers to participate in the discourse community and meet the expectations of the genre.

Research Question One: Is there any significant difference between BRs in Applied Linguistics journal and System journal in the choice of rhetorical moves?

Research Question Two: Do Applied Linguistics journal and System journal differ in the choice of obligatory moves?

Research Question Three: Are there any similarities or differences between the choice of the sequences of rhetorical moves in BRs in Applied Linguistics journal and System journal?

Methodology

Corpus

The corpus utilized in this research consists of 70 academic BRs published in Applied Linguistics journal and System journal between 2012 to 2022. The most important reason for choosing these two journals was that they were considered as authoritative in the field of applied linguistics. Besides, only high quality BRs will be accepted and published. In other words, BRs in these journals were selected in order to confirm that the writings had been conducted by professional authors. Thus, their choices have been considered appropriately and acceptable. Since the length of the texts is regarded as a potential confounding factor (Moreno & Suárez, 2008b), another factor scrutinized in this study was the length of the BRs. Therefore, the researchers did not select BRs that were too short or too long. The BRs chosen for this review from these two journals ranged between 600 to 2300 words. Table 1 presents the summary of corpus characteristics.

Table 1*Corpus Characteristics*

	Date Range	Word Range	No. of BRs
Applied Linguistics journal	2012-2022	1080-2300	35
System journal	2012-2022	600- 1008	35

Instruments

Two Instruments were used for this analysis: the *MAXQDA* and Désirée Motta-Roth (1995) move structure model, each of which will be explained below.

MAXQDA

In the present study the MAXQDA (VERBI Software, 2020) was used to find the significant different between rhetorical structure of moves in Applied Linguistics journal and System journal. It was used to find the frequency and sequence of the moves and steps.

Motta Roth (1995) Model

Swales (1995) defines a genre as a set of communicative events that are distributed by communicative goals and accomplished by specific discourse communities. Motta-Roth (1995) proposed a logical framework for BRs to be considered an independent genre. This framework indicates that high-quality BRs contain four moves: 1. Move 1 (M1) Introducing the book, 2. Move 2 (M2) Outlining the book, 3. Move 3 (M3) Highlighting the parts of the book, and 4. Move 4 (M4) Providing a closing evaluation of the book. Additionally, this framework identifies the steps that are related to each move. In this research, the analysis of moves and steps in the corpus was done by a human coder. Table 2 presents Motta-Roth's (1995) framework for analyzing the rhetorical structures in BRs

Table 2*Motta-Roths' (1995) Framework*

Move	Step	Description
Move 1		Introducing the book
	Step 1	Defining the general topic of the book
	Step 2	Informing about potential readership
	Step 3	Informing about the author
	Step 4	Making topic generalizations
Move 2	Step 5	Inserting book in the field
		Outlining the book
	Step 1	Providing general view of the organization of the book
	Step 2	Stating the topic of each chapter
Move 3	Step 3	Citing extra text material
		Highlighting parts of the book

Move 4	Step 1	Providing focused evaluation
		Providing closing evaluation of the book
	Step 1a	A definitely recommending/disqualifying the book
	Step 2a	Recommending the book despite indicated shortcomings

Move 1: Introducing the book

As can be seen from the above table, the first part of the four main moves is introducing the book which is in the form of instructive abstracts which expresses basic features, for example if the information is collected by different authors or if it is written based on a variety of books. In this move, writers often give an explanation of the book. Let us now show an example from Ding (2007):

Based on his experience in developing the British National Corpus (BNC) and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), which are the most noticeable available lists of word families, Nation was inspired to compile this book. He was encouraged by the contradiction between the improvement of new word lists and the progressive methodologies to do so. Additionally, move 1 includes some steps and sub-functions. It can be found out as lower level parts that carry the certain information for every move (Motta-Roth, 1998; López Ferrero, 2015). These steps are presented below:

Step 1: Defining the general topic of the book

Step 2: Informing about potential readership

Step 3: Informing about the author

Step 4: Making topic generalizations

Step 5: Inserting book in the field

Move 2: Outlining the book

The second move, outlining the book, provides detailed information about how the book is classified based on sections and chapters. This move is commonly the lengthy part and it can be seen at the beginning of BRs. Furthermore, it details what kind of graphs, pictures, and tables are contained.

Step 1 supplies common information about topics, parts, and chapters through the use of lexical phrases. For example, Ding (2007) states that:

The introduction section starts by x.

This part is useful for readers who have a vocabulary teaching and learning background or eager to make a word list. Besides, it is helpful for novices, Nation suggests two introductory books and also presents brief definitions of key terminology. These chapters own five sections with appendixes that contain the full lists of proper noun tagging conventions in the BNC, closed lexical set headwords utilized to improve high-frequency word lists and the Essential Word List for elementary discussed by Dang and Webb in Chapter 15.

Step 2 emphasizes the chapters and provides detailed information with lexical phrases. For instance:

Chapter 1 of the book describes x.

The following steps are used in move 2:

Step 1: Providing general view of the organization of the book

Step 2: Stating the topic of each chapter

Step 3: Citing extra text material

Move 3: Highlighting parts of the book

The most important features of BRs are the evaluative part and move 3 is well-known for its evaluative characteristics. In contrast to move 2 which is more descriptive in nature, in move 3 the authors emphasize some parts of the book. In addition, the authors put their minds on particular characteristics,

giving positive or negative comments and some criticism or praise. Move 3 concentrates on the most important and the least important in the book and displays which parts the BRs attended, the area pursued, the purpose for evaluation, and gives some examples to support evaluation. As such, move 3 consists of just one step:

Step 1: Providing focused evaluation

To elaborate the point, take the following example:

As far as is known, as the first book particularly describe word list study, this volume closely analyzes aspects that has an important influence on corpora and list creation. However, there are, perhaps, a few sections where the book might have been stronger. First, the aim of word lists tends to scattered throughout Chapters 1, 12, and 16, which could make reader confused.

Move 4: Providing closing evaluation of the book

Finally, the last move supplies the latest evaluation and uses some lexical phrases such as 'sum up' and 'in sum' to manifest that the text is reaching its end. Besides, in this move, the authors give some recommendation to the readers and they state that whether the book is worth to read or not. Move 4 contains a final evaluation about all of the book and summarizes detailed attitudes adopted in move 3. It includes a lot of lexical phrases and opinion of totality, termination, and conclusion. Sometimes, authors utilize lexical phrases to conduct a kind of evaluation. For instance, 'a significant contribution' or 'an amazing book'. Furthermore, authors often utilize the modal 'should' for their final recommendation. This move has two possible steps:

Step 1a: A definitely recommending/disqualifying the book

Step 2b: Recommending the book despite indicated shortcomings

For instance: Polio and Friedman have an important message in this part: there is a crucial requirement for a more reflective approach to the L2 writing academic procedure that should also find its way more fully into research papers. However, the book could have emphasized on research ethics, data protection and a summary of potential research questions for those wanting to start on L2 writing research similar to those offered by Hyland (2016), it is nevertheless an exceedingly guide for both novice and experienced L2 writing researchers alike.

Procedure

After a total of 70 BRs were collected from two journals, a set of analysis were carried out based on Motta-Roths' (1995) framework. For the aim of this research, Motta-Roth (1995) model was used to recognize and classify the moves and steps. Moreover, this model was utilized as a reference for rhetorical characteristics analysis and helped to give guidance to find out the role of BRs semantic units. The authors coded all of the BRs and recognized and labeled the moves. Additionally, they calculated the number of words and identified the moves and steps. The frequency of moves was calculated to authenticate the extent to which any given move had been utilized. Therefore, this study followed the three categories of move occurrence introduced by Rasmeenin (2006) to find obligatory, conventional or optional. He states that the obligatory move is a specific move that has a move frequency close to 100% and has been utilized in all BRs. Only then, can the move be considered obligatory. Next is the conventional move that occurs quiet often in each BR. It is between 66% and 99%. The last is the optional move which is used less frequently in BR genres and it is less than 66%. In summary, the collected data were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively.

Results

This section explains the findings of the analysis of 35 BRs in Applied Linguistics journal and 35 BRs in System journal regarding rhetorical move structures and the difference between the usage of the

moves and steps. The obtained results from the analysis of rhetorical structure of moves are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

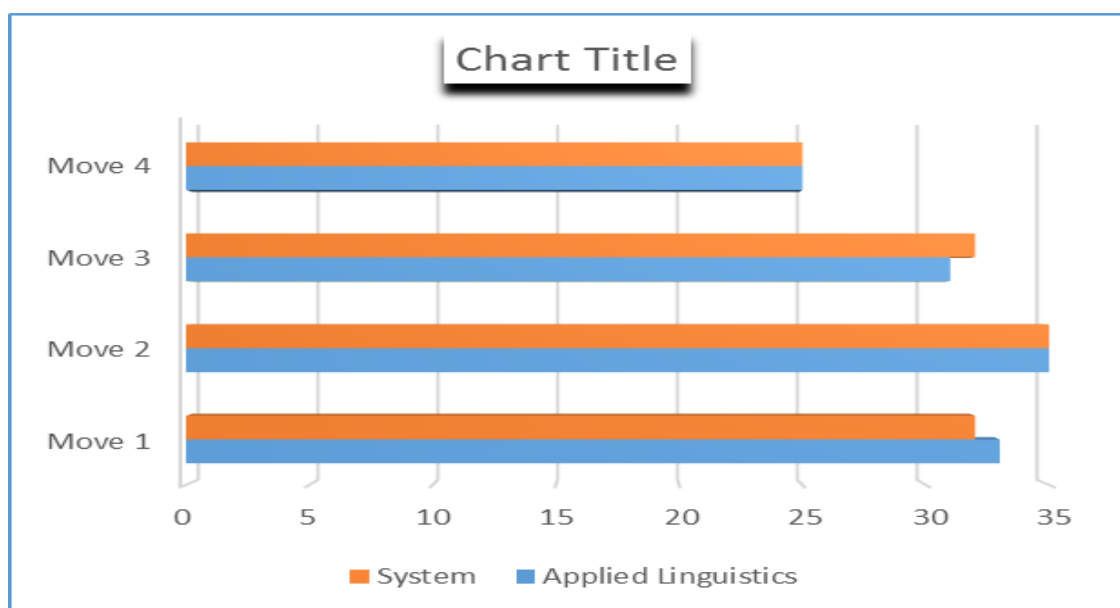
Difference between Applied Linguistics Journal and System Journal in the Choice of Rhetorical Moves

Move	Applied Linguistics (35)	Percentage	Classification	System (35)	Percentage	Classification
Move 1	33	94.3	Conventional	32	91.4	Conventional
Move 2	35	100	Obligatory	35	100	Obligatory
Move 3	32	91.4	Conventional	31	86.4	Conventional
Move 4	25	71.4	Conventional	25	71.4	Conventional

As shown in Table 3, Motta-Roth's model has one obligatory move, M2, which occupies the largest space among the other moves and provides a general outlook about the books. The findings indicate that reviewers in both journals also frequently used M1 and M3. In Applied Linguistics journal, M1, M2, M3, and M4 were utilized at rates of 94.3%, 100%, 91.4%, and 71.4%, respectively. Similarly, in System journal, reviewers used M1, M2, M3, and M4 at rates of 91.4%, 100%, 86.4%, and 71.4%, respectively. It seems that the introduction moves (M1) is closely related to M2, as authors attempt to emphasize its importance. Comparing the four corpora, it is evident that M4 has the lowest frequency among moves, indicating that reviewers are less inclined to provide evaluations about the books. Figure 1 illustrates the similarities and differences between the two journals in terms of the rhetorical structure of moves, following Motta-Roth's (1995) model.

Figure 1

Difference between Applied Linguistics Journal and System Journal in the Choice of Rhetorical Moves



	Move 1	Move 2	Move 3	Move 4
Applied Linguistics	33	35	31	25
System	32	35	32	25

Figure 1 illustrates that the most commonly used moves are M1, M2, and M3. In Applied Linguistics journal, M1 is used 33 times, while in System journal M1 is used 32 times. This suggests that there is not a significant difference in move 1 usage between the two journals. Additionally, M2 is utilized 35 times in both groups, indicating that both journals emphasize the organization of books and the topic of the chapter. However, there is a notable difference in the frequency of M3 between the two groups. In Applied Linguistics journal, M3 is used 31 times, whereas in System journal M3 is used 32 times. This suggests that reviewers in both journals make an attempt to use focused evaluation more on certain parts of the book. An interesting similarity was also observed between the two journals in their use of M4, which was used 25 times in both groups. It is evident that the frequency of M4 has the lowest frequency among moves, indicating that reviewers are less inclined to recommend the books. Table 4 presents significant differences in the sequence of move patterns in the occurrence of linear and non-linear moves.

Table 4

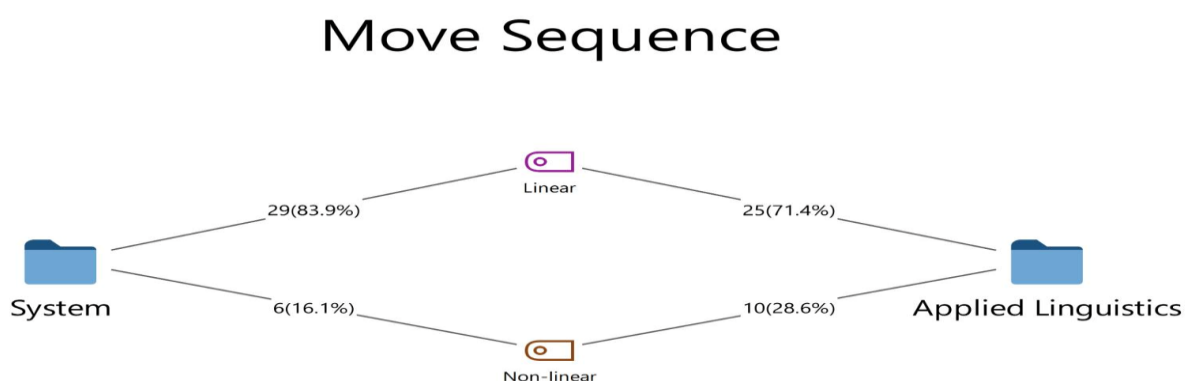
Differences Between the Sequence of Move Patterns

Journal	Linear	Percentage	Non-linear	Percentage
Applied Linguistics	25	71.4	10	28.6
System	29	83.9	6	16.1

The prevalence of the linear pattern was more pronounced in Applied Linguistics journal than in System journal. The linear pattern was observed in 29 instances (83.9%) in Applied Linguistics journal and in 25 instances (71.4%) in System journal. This finding suggests that reviewers in Applied Linguistics journal may be more conservative than those in System journal in adhering to the conventional linear sequence. Figure 2 shows the significant difference between the sequence of moves in both journals.

Figure 2

Differences Between the Sequence of Move



It can be seen from the data in figure 2, reviewers in System journal endeavored to follow the linear sequence based on Motta-Roth's (1995) model more than reviewers in Applied Linguistics journal. Furthermore, in system journal reviewers do not utilize the linear sequence %16.1 of the time, however, in Applied Linguistics journal they do not follow the linear sequence %28.6 and it shows that reviewers pay attention to linear sequence less.

Discussion

This study aimed to investigate the significant differences between Applied Linguistics journal and System journal regarding the information provided in book reviews (BRs). The results suggest that M1, M2, and M3 are the most frequently used moves in both journals, with reviewers tending to introduce the book, summarize its contents, and highlight significant parts. Furthermore, the findings demonstrate that reviewers in System journal tend to follow the sequencing of moves in a more orderly fashion than those in Applied Linguistics journal. The most notable finding of this study is that both journals place a clear priority on the use of moves, particularly in the correct order. Reviewers of both journals display a clear preference for using M2, which could be considered an obligatory move in all BRs. These findings are consistent with those of Rashidi and Meihami (2018), who reported that the introduction and purpose of studies received the most attention, while the conclusion received the least.

Additionally, these findings are in line with Junqueira's (2013) study, which examined the cross-cultural rhetorical structure of academic BRs in English and Brazilian Portuguese and identified four moves in BRs, particularly between M2 and M3. These findings also provide comparable insights into Mozaheb et al.'s (2014) study, which compared Iranian and English ISI articles and found that both Iranian and English native speakers utilized the main types of information (moves) while investigating each individual move and sub-move.

However, the results of this study do not support the findings of Saidi and Khazaei (2021), who stated that the frequency of purpose, method, and product was higher than that of the introduction move (M1). They also claimed that only one-fourth of the abstracts followed the conventional sequence. Furthermore, the findings of the present study contradict those of Etaywe's (2017) investigation, which indicated that all moves were employed in Arabic BRs, with M4 occupying the largest space among reviewers.

Conclusion and Implications

Book reviews play a vital role in keeping researchers up to date with the newest topics in the field. And while there exist multiple guides on how to write book reviews, seldom is there any focus on the importance of generic rhetorical structures in book reviews. This Study aimed to investigate the importance of these structures in book reviews in the field of applied linguistics. While the findings suggest a liberal use of rhetorical structures in book reviews of both System and applied Linguistics, there is still room for more research on the use of rhetorical structures in other fields. Of note is the lack of closing evaluations, one of the integral parts of Motta-Roths' (1995) Framework, in quite a number of book reviews, suggesting that authors might hesitate to give a recommendation for reading or not reading the book.

The current research provides some implications for genre analysis of BRs in Applied Linguistics. The result of this study could be helpful for readers to understand the writer's intention and it raises reader's awareness of generic rhetorical structure of academic writings. Besides, the result of this study will guide authors to explore or practice academic writings in terms of moves and rhetorical structures. It is essential for those who want to be in academic circles to utilize academic disciplines. Even the terms and disciplines in the present study might be helpful for EAP teachers and assessors. This study is limited to explanations of BRs in two famous journals. Further research should be done on more academic journals and on a larger corpus. Furthermore, Further works is needed to use different frameworks such as Hoey's (1983) or Swales' (1981, 1990) IMRD and CARS models.

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Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

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