



A Schematic and Linguistic Analysis of the Literature Review Section of MPhil Research Proposals in English

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Abstract: Writing a literature review has been noted as a challenging activity for novice writers in recent times. This study was conducted based on observations made in existing literature. It has been noted that novice writers hardly assess or evaluate their literature review sections. The study used the modified version of Swales' CARS model and Halliday's interactional resource respectively to help identify the various moves and steps used in the English of MPhil Research proposals of students of University of Cape Coast, specifically, MPhil in English Language students. Data was randomly selected from forty MPhil Research Proposals. The study identified three Moves in the literature review section of the proposals. The study found that Moves in the literature review section are sequentially arranged. The study also found that 25% of the research proposal writers use interactional resources to evaluate their literature. Hence, the study has confirmed that Bruce's observation that novice writers do not assess the literature review section but just summarize related studies, as true, since the majority of the research proposal writers were found not to have used any of the interactional resources to evaluate their related studies. The research proposal writers showed interest in summarizing related studies as compared with criticizing the method, theories and other related matters in the related studies. This study has significant implications for academic writing instructors, genre analysts and further studies.

Keywords: Genre analysis, research proposal, literature review, meta-discourse features, novice writing

1. INTRODUCTION

For over three decades, scholars have shown overwhelming interest in genre analysis of the research article (hereafter, RA). Indeed, multi-sections of the RA have been given attention by scholars. Sections such as the abstract, introduction, method, discussion and conclusion in different disciplines have been studied using Swales' (1998, 2004) modified version of the Create-a-Research-Space (CARS) model. Each section of the RA has unique moves identified. For example, the RA introductions according to Swales (2004) has three moves with different steps emerging from each discipline. (Jogthang, 2001; Samraj, 2002; Renu et al 2013). Apart from the RA introductions which have been observed to have different steps but the same three moves, other related studies focused on different sections of the RA. Research has shown that after Swales' (1998) pioneering work of the introductions of RA in three different disciplines, other scholars (Bhatia, 1993; Santos, 1996; Hyland, 2000; Bruce, 2014) of genre analysis have adapted the CARS model to work on different sections of the RA. At the same time that the CARS model has been used in analyzing the RA, it has equally been adapted for undergraduate writings (Afful, 2005; Kwan, 2006), graduate writings (Bunton, 2002, Daniels, 2017) and many other related studies. One observation noted is that in a study conducted by Bruce (2014), he found that novice writers have been found guilty of not establishing a critical stance when writing the literature review. Partridge and Starfield (2007) also assert that students are expected not just to know the literature on their topic but also to evaluate it. The literature review according to Bruce (2014), should be more than a summary; it includes a critique that assesses or evaluates theories, ideas, claims, research designs, methods and conclusions. From the perspective of Kramer et al (2003), the literature review should make critical compilations of studies done previously, make a critical evaluation of the literature that was studied and progress by having a critical attitude. According to Swales and Feak (2013), the literature review section can explain clearly which potential areas for inclusion have not been covered in the review and why they have been omitted.

The current study has critically considered the above assertions as crucial to reporting or sharing knowledge and has shown considerable interest in finding out if indeed the review of literature by Master of Philosophy students of the Department of English, University of Cape Coast summarize their literature without critically assessing the value of theories, methods, findings and conclusions of previous studies.

This study has two observations guiding it. The first is in connection with the research proposal of graduate students; one section which has not received attention from genre scholars is the literature review. This observation has created a gap in the existing literature and the current study hopes to fill this gap. Secondly, the study hopes to examine the extent to which research proposal writers in English evaluate the literature review section. We hope to measure the assertion noted by Boote and Berlie (2005) by applying Hyland's (2005) interpersonal meta-discourse taxonomy specifically and interactional markers to evaluate their literature on research proposals.

2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study adopted Swales' (2004) modified version of the Create-a-Research-Space (CARS) model to identify the moves and steps used in the literature review sections of MPhil research proposals in English and Hyland's (2005) interactional resources used in evaluating the literature section of research proposals.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following questions were formulated to guide the current study:

1. What moves and steps are used in achieving the communicative purpose of the literature review section of MPhil research proposals?
2. What interactional resources are used in realizing the moves?
3. To what extent is the assertion that novice writers do not evaluate their literature?

4. METHODOLOGY

Twenty MPhil research proposals written and submitted within the year 2012 were randomly selected from a total of forty. The data were collected after permission had been sought from the head of the Department of English, University of Cape Coast. Photocopies were made from the original copies and they were returned to the Department. To ensure anonymity and the avoidance of ethical problems in connection with research, we found it significant to provide a pseudonym for each data. The first data sample, for instance, was given the pseudonym EN1 and the second was named EN2. In all, the twenty data samples had different names ranging from EN1 to EN 20. This method of coding helped to identify the various data samples easily. After the coding, the literature review section in each data was thoroughly read to identify the various moves and steps used in realizing the communicative purpose of the research proposal (henceforth, RP) writers. The RP writers have their research proposal put into sections. Section one for instance, is the abstract, followed by section two, the introduction and so on, making it easier for one to work on each section. This method of dividing the research proposal into sections makes it similar to the traditional method of writing dissertation known as Introduction, Method, Result and Discussion (IMRD) in the literature, making it easier to work on each section.

5. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

The study adopted Swales' CARS model in helping us to identify the schematic structure of moves found in the literature review section of the research proposal data. Three moves were found in the literature section:

Move 1- Introducing history, theories and concepts

Step 1: Defining technical terms in theories and concepts

Step 2: Explaining concepts

Step 3: Indicating different ideas from wide range of scholars' points of view

Move 2- Reviewing related studies

Step 1- Using integral citation in introducing a related study

Step 2- Stating the methodology of the mentioned study

Step 3- indicating findings of the study

Move 3- Indicating a gap in existing literature

Step 1- Comparing previous studies to current study

Step 2- Contextualizing the current study

The above moves were found in the literature review section of the twenty RPs used as data.

In addition to the above, the study showed interest in finding out whether the assertion that neophyte writers do not assess or evaluate related literature is a factual. To help us find out the bear fact, we used Hyland’s (2005) interpersonal model of meta-discourse. The term “meta-discourse features” was first used by Harris (1951) as a way of understanding language in use which helps writers or speakers to guide the receivers’ understanding of a text;lately, different definitions and clarifications have been made. These meta-discourse markers have been defined by different scholars. The markers provide useful approach to systemizing the linguistic resources employed by writers in establishing their stance in respect to their subject matter and the engagements with their audience (Bruce, 2010). Hyland (2005) has developed a model which aids in identifying certain linguistic features which when used by a writer help to guide the reader to understand the message in the text. Hyland further provides additional linguistic features that writers use to express their views in relation to the text. He provides the model known as interpersonal model of meta-discourse by providing two main divisions for the model: The interactive resources which has five sub-categories-transitions, frame markers, endophoric markers, evidentials and code glosses. Thus, these interactive resources are used in a text to guide readers comprehend the text. The second major division is the interactional resources and these are used by the writers to express their opinions in relation to the text. The interactional resources have been sub-categorized under five sub-headings: hedges, boosters, attitude markers, self-mentions and engagement markers. We were interested in finding out the assertion made by (Bruce 2014; Boote&Beile, 2005; Casanave& Hubbard, 1992) that novice writers hardly critique the literature review sections of their studies. The claimers find the literature review as a summary of related works instead of assessing and weighing the value of theories, ideas, claims, research design, methods and conclusions. We share the view that the interactional marker, specifically, attitude markers, will to a large extent, help us substantiate the above assertion in research proposals of novice writers.¹ The use of attitude markers helps writers to express their attitude to propositions. The table below illustrates a number of attitude markers that writers use:Culled from: (Hyland, 2005, p. 49)

Table1.*Interactional metadiscourse resources*

Macro category	Subcategory	Examples
1. Hedges	a) Epistemic verbs b) Probability adverbs c) Epistemic expressions	may, might, it must be ... probably, perhaps, maybe... unlikely, clear, ...
2. Boosters	a) Emphatics b) Amplifying adverbs c) Cognitive verbs	certainly, demonstrate, really, ... totally, always, in fact, definitely it is clear that
3. Attitude markers	a) Deontic verbs b) Attitudinal adverbs c) Attitudinal adjectives	have to, need to, we must know unfortunately, remarkably, it is absurd, it is surprising....
d) Cognitive verbs	I feel/ I think/ I agree/ I believe	
4. Self- mentions	a) First person pronouns	I, me, my mine
5. Engagement markers	a) Second person pronoun b) Interjections c) Imperative verbs	you, your, yourself by the way, you may notice consider, note that, see, look at
	d) Necessity modals	must, have to, should

The table above shows that the five-macro category are clearly spelt out with their various strands and examples. In this study, our focus is to limit ourselves to the use of attitude markers. This means that we will examine the research proposals closely to identify if the proposal writers use any of the four sub-categories: deontic verbs, attitudinal adverbs, attitudinal adjectives and cognitive verbs to measure their literature review sections. The use of these markers in the literature review sections of the proposals, will help in measuring how the writers assess the literature review of related studies. The writers will make use of these attitude markers to express their views in relation to the methods, analysis, conclusions and thereby create a niche in the literature. When the attitude markers are used by the novice writers, it implies that novice writers do not evaluate the literature review section of their work but dump related studies in a form of summary; this is applicable to novice writers in Ghana as well.

6. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The study identified three *Moves* in the literature review sections of MPhil research proposals. We analyze the data based on two parameters: frequency of occurrence of the *Moves* and sequencing of the *Moves*. In the case of frequency of occurrence of the *Moves*, we used the table below to illustrate what was found in the data:

Table3. *Frequency of Moves and Steps in ELS data*

Moves	Steps realizing the Moves	No of ELSRPs with Moves/Steps	Total= 20 Freq. %
1. Introducing history, theories, technical terms	1. Defining technical terms in theories	20	100%
	2. Explaining concepts	18	90%
	3. Relating ideas to wide range of scholars' points of view	17	85%
2. Reviewing related studies	1a. Using integral citation in introducing a related study	13	65%
	1b. Using non-integral citation to introduce a related study	7	35%
	2. spelling out a methodology	19	95%
	3. summarizing findings/conclusions	20	100%
3. Indicating a gap in existing literature	1. comparing previous studies to current studies	17	85%
	2. contextualizing the current study in existing literature	16	80%

The above table indicates the three moves found in the literature review section of the MPhil research proposals: Move 1 (introducing history, theories and concepts) has three Steps. These are Step 1- defining terms in theories, Step 2- explaining concepts in theories, Step 3- relating ideas in concepts to wide range of scholars' points of view. Move 2 (reviewing related studies) has three Steps: Step 1a- using integral citation in introducing a related study, Step 1b- using non-integral citation in introducing a related study, Step 2- stating the methodology of the stated study and Step 3- indicating findings of the study. Move 3 (indicating a gap in existing literature) has two Steps: Step 1- comparing previous studies to current study and Step 2- contextualizing current study in existing literature.

The following are examples of the various Moves found in the data:

Move 1 Step 1 has the following examples:

1. This section will review related literature on the topics of the study. It will begin by presenting the theoretical framework and definition of some key concepts that are relevant to the study.

EN6

2. The emergence of mobile phones was dated as early as 1947 but the actual use was first documented in 1982. The first text message in the world was sent in 1992 by Neil Papworth in United Kingdom on a Merry Christmas day. **EN10**

3. This section reviews work on the concept gender, gendered language and noun phrase. **EN11**

4. This section discusses Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) as the theoretical framework: health communication, institutional discourse, elicitation and responses as key concepts and some empirical studies in doctor-patient interaction ... **EN13**

Move 1 Step 2 can equally be found in the following:

5. In the Appraisal theories, there are three main interactive spheres that help in analyzing and interpreting a given discourse. These strands are attitude, engagement and graduation. Within the framework of the Appraisal theory, attitude encompasses the feelings, emotional reactions (affect); opinion on a behavior together with the evaluation of things and events (judgement) and Appreciation.. **EN17**

6. The Communication Theory (CAT) also known as Speech Accommodation Theory (SAT) was developed by Gile, Coupland and Coupland in 1987. The theory is a process theory that attempts to explain the mechanism by which communication produce messages or how they process information in the reception of messages... there are three main tenets or basic strategies associated with CAT: convergence, maintenance and divergence. Convergence according to the theory is when speakers move towards each other's communication... **EN17**

7. The term rhetoric can be traced to the ancient Greek word rhetor which means speech or spoken. Aristotle defined it as the faculty of observing in any case all available means of persuasion in a given situation. **EN19**

Move 1 Step 3 can also be observed in the following examples:

8. The debate on gender and language has witnessed three main theoretical positions: theories of dominance in 19970s, theories of difference in 1980s and newly-developed performative theory. Theories of Dominance treat male-female differences as indicative of women being dominated in interaction by men. This position can be traced back to Jersperson (1992). His claims are supported by Lakoff (1975), whose early feminist work on gender and language may be seen as the most influential. **EN1**

9. Similarly, Simpson (1993) postulates that the set of patterning and wording that language consists of offers language users different choices from which they select options to create the kind of meaning that is desired to suite the context in which the language is used. This assertion of Simpson (1993) is in line with what Halliday (1994) postulates when he says that language enables human beings to build a mental picture of reality to make sense of what goes around them and inside them. **EN13**

Move 2 Step 1a can also be found in the following:

10. Edu-Buandoh (2013), explores the discourses of some public universities in Ghana. **EN12**

11. In their study, Brubaker et al (2011) investigate the language of bereavement to identify the distressed comments that exhibit emotional distress posted on Social Network Sites (SNS). **EN7**

Move 2 Step1b can be observed in the following:

12. Some other researchers have also undertaken comparative or contrastive studies that have examined the cross-cultural similarities and differences between two or more languages in the performance of the same speech act (Blum-Kulka, 1983; Wierzbicka, 1985). **EN16**

13. Studies have also examined response to elicitation for instance in courts, doctor-patient and survey interviewing (Tracy & Robles, 2009). **EN17**

The following are examples of Move2 Step 2.

14. Hui (2009), in his study, applied Bhatia’s (1993) model of applied genre analysis to identify and analyze the moves and Halliday’s (1994) functional grammar approach to examine how introductory pages of the university prospectuses represent experiential and interpersonal meta-functions of language. **EN6**

15. The data collection was through a self-reporting questionnaires and structured interviews from respondents made up of 14 mothers and 20 children. **EN9**

Move 2 Step 3 are also found in the following:

16. Her analysis revealed that Conversation Biology introductions fulfill a greater promotional function than the Wildlife Behaviour introductions through the use of steps such as centrality claims. **EN18**

17. The findings pointed to the fact that advertisements in Ghana choose words and expressions that reflect society’s beliefs, values, aspirations and experience concerning what is right and what is wrong. **EN5**

Move 3 Step 1 can be found in the following examples:

18. It is, however, noteworthy that these studies shed some light on the language of mourning as to how people communicate their feelings on the death of a loved. Nevertheless, the distinguishing factor between their studies and this present proposed research stems from the fact that they focused on how to present the news of death to sympathizers but not on the linguistic features which really look at the sentiments of the people affected that are evident in the tribute presented. **EN17**

19. The difference between the present study and the related studies is that the present study will consider marketisation of schools using a different data (the anniversary speeches) and in a different context (the Ghanaian context). **EN6**

The following are few examples of Move 3 Step 3. The examples indicate how the MPhil researchers contextualize their findings in existing literature.

20. The current study is however different from other related works in many ways. Firstly, Owusu-Ansah (1992) and Torto (2002) used students, lecturers, and non-academic workers of University of Cape Coast. The sample frame for the present work would be programme hosts in radio stations and listeners of radio programmes. **EN7**

21. The study seeks to depart from some stereotypes by adopting the social constructionist theory where variables such as age, gender, level of education, place of training among others will be used to measure the attitudes of Heads of these institutions towards English variation. **EN9**

It can equally be observed from Table 3 that core/obligatory Moves fall in the majority. This is because in the case of Move1 Step 1 for instance, 20 (100%) of the data used the Move in their literature review section. Again, Move 2 Step 3 registered 20(100%) of the data. All the three Moves and their individual Steps are found extensively used by the researchers in the data.

In terms of the sequencing of the Moves, it was found that the Moves were ordered sequentially. Thus, the researchers begin their review section strictly by using *Move 1*, then to *Move 2* and finally to *Move 3*. The patterning of the *Moves* followed a linear sequence. *Move 3* together with its two Steps was found cyclic, in that the research writers did not state a single related study but a number of studies. This is in tandem with reviewing the literature in a study. It is relevant for a researcher to explore to identify what pertains in the area of study in order to be conversant with knowledge in the area and to contextualize findings in the existing literature(Kumar, 2011). Hence, exploring the literature will equally help the researcher avoid repeating what pertains in the literature and to create a niche. After creating a niche, a researcher then can add new knowledge to existing literature. The table below explores how the Moves are ordered in the data:

Table4

Move patterns	Count T- units	Percentage
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3-Move pattern 1>2>3>3>3>3>3>3>3>3	16	80%
1>2>3>3>3>3>3>3	2	10%
1>2>3>3>3>3>3>3>3>3>3>3>3>3>3>3>3	1	5%
1>2>3>3>3>3	1	5%
Total	20	100%

The above table indicates how the moves are arranged in the research proposal data used for the study. A total of 16 (80%) of the data has a 3-Move pattern with *Move 3* being cyclic in a sequence of ten. 2(10%) of the data has a 3-Move pattern with *Move 3* being cyclic in a sequence of seven. There are two unique patterns that emerged from the data: 1 (5%) has a cyclic sequence of seventeen whereas 1(5%) has a cyclic sequence of four. It can be interpreted that the writers who fall in the majority group 16 (80%) reviewed ten related studies whereas 2(10%) reviewed seven related studies. Surprisingly, 1(5%) reviewed as many as seventeen related papers. It can be deduced that information presented in the research proposals vary in relation to the number of related studies reviewed. It can also be said here that the cyclic nature of the data does not mean the same related study is repeated in each *Move*. We identified different related studies in each cyclic *Move*. This gives the impression that the writers are interested in finding out what pertains in the existing literature in relation to their studies so as to help them create a niche and fill the gap with their studies.

One major observation that is made is that the writers are not limited to number of pages written and that constitutes a major reason for discrepancies found in the number of related studies reviewed. Despite this observation, since the majority of the writers reviewed ten related studies, that can be set as a parameter for subsequent research proposal writers to ape. In the case of the writer who reviewed seventeen related studies, it can be an exceptional case whereas the writer who also reviewed four related studies can also be noted as sub-standard for such a study.

We begin to analyze the use of interactional resources, specifically, the attitude markers used by the research writers in their studies. The following observations were made in the course of analyzing the data. Five out of the twenty use attituded markers in their studies to indicate the author's attitude towards the related studies. Fifteen out of the twenty proposals had the literature review on related studies summarized without indicating their views on methodology, theoretical framework, statement of the problem and other sections of the studies reviewed. Five of the research proposal writers made use of attitude markers in critiquing the views of work reviewed. In the 15 research proposals, it was observed that the research proposal writers summarized other related studies and in addition to that compared their current studies with previous studies in terms of considering, for example, the methodology, method of analysis and theoretical framework used. The current study provides examples of related studies that summarize other related studies.

Examples:

EN3

Duah (2006) investigated the discourse strategies that advertisers in Ghana use to persuade their audience. He used Lee Whorf (1897-1941) linguistic relativity theory and Ivan, P. Pavlov (1849-1936) as theoretical frameworks. The method used was qualitative content analysis. The study acknowledged that advertisements in Ghana are often a reflection of the culture of the audience. The findings pointed to the fact that advertisers in Ghana choose words and expressions that reflect society's beliefs, values, aspirations and experience concerning what is right and what is wrong.

Quist (2004) explored how advertisers use imagery to attract consumers and maintain their interest in their products. It was a qualitative study; questionnaires and interviews were used to collect the data. The findings supported the fact that the various types of imagery (visual and kinesthetic) are an important device in creating memorable advertisements. The main focus of this research....

Starc (2008) analysed advertisements in the Slovene newspapers: *Edinost* (1876-1928) and *Slovenski Narod* (1866-1945) to determine the role of salience in these adverts. The analysis was done within the grammar of visual design as proposed by Kress & van Leeuwen, 2005; the theory of culturally popular patterns of text organization proposed by Hoey, 2001 and pragmatics and analysis

suggested by Kunst Gnamus,1984; Bester 1992, Kranjc, 19998, Schiffrin, 1996, Verschueren, 2000, Cook, 2001). The main focus of the study was to determine the constants in development of the adverts' structure, the use and functions of semiotic codes in the discourse of advertisements through time. The study revealed that salience

Norris (2007) examined an analysis of banking and finance job advertisements in newspapers for different targeted readers. In the study, twelve samples of advertisements were used of which six were for trainees and other six for professionals. The main focus was the analysis of the structural similarities and differences of job advertisements between trainees and professionals in the field of banking and finance.....

Comparison:

The study of Norris (2007) is similar to this work in that it looks at advertisements using Bhatia's model. However, there is a difference in that while Norris' study was concerned with advertisements in the area of banking and finance, this study is in the area of managerial and secretarial position advertisements. Further, this study goes further to look at lexico-grammatical features which was not considered by Norris' study.

EN 17

Ho (2007) researches into the linguistic form of Cantonese-English code mix and explored its socio-cultural meaning in Hong Kong, using both quantitative and qualitative methods. In her work, eighteen hours of recordings covering a wide range of situations, topics and interlocutors were selected and studied in detail. The study reveals that Cantonese—the native language of the majority-- - plays an important in maintaining cross-generation and cross-class cohesion in society...

Amuzu (2006) explores evidence of the grammatical principles that constrain intra-sentential code-switching and visits some factors that guide the speakers in matters concerning which English lexemes and phrases they can fully integrate in their mother tongue grammatical frames and which ones they cannot. Amuzu analyzes various mixed construction types involving English and two local Ghanaian languages-Ewe and Akan - and has demonstrated that in the production of the mixed constructions code switchers endeavour, although unconsciously, to maintain the integrity of their mother tongue grammars and aspects of their lexicons.

Owusu-Ansah (1992) looks at language choice in various interpersonal relationships. His research shows that depending on the level of formality, three possible code choice exist in Ghana. These comprise unmixed Ghanaian languages, mixed English-Ghanaian languages and unmixed English...

Forson (1968) investigates sociolinguistic situations in Ghana with a focus on Akan-English bilingualism. According to Forson, Akan-English bilinguals can normally be said to have at least three languages to choose from: Akan, English and Akan mixed with English words, phrases, clauses and sentences. He reports that the Akan-English bilinguals mix the two languages when communicating in the environment

Comparison:

To this end, it has been established from the literature that investigations conducted by other researchers are similar to the present study in the domain of code choice and language and radio broadcasts. Aspects of Ho (2007) and Amuzu (2006) for example are based on code choice in a sociocultural situation. The present work also talks about code choice in radio discourse. Amuzu (2006) explores evidence of the grammatical principles in code-switching. The present work would show the grammatical resources code-mixers use. Owusu-Ansah (1992) and Forson(1979) talk about three possible code choice that exist in Ghana: the unmixed Ghanaian languages and unmixed English. The present study thus, agrees with the assertion of OwusuAnsah and Forson...Thecurrent study is however different from the other related works in many ways. Firstly, Owusu- Ansah (1992) and Torto (2002) used students, lecturers and non-academic workers of the University of Cape Coast. The sample frame for the present work would be programme hosts in radio stations and listeners

EN8

In a study involving Haitian, Creole, Korean, Russian, Serbian and Chinese speakers, Tanck (2002) investigated the difference between native and non-native English speakers' production of refusals and complaints. In all, 25 participants consisting of 121 native speakers of English and 13 non-native speakers gave their responses in written form using the Discourse Completion Test (DCT). The test

included six prompts or situations. Four prompts were created to elicit specific speech acts related to the focus of the study and two distractors.... The findings showed that while native and non-native speakers produced the same speech acts set components for complaints, the quality of the components produced by the former differed from those by the latter.

Similarly, in a related research, Moon (2001) examined the difference between native and non-native speakers' complaint strategies. The results indicated that non-native speakers of English were not always successful in complaining and in communicating as has been observed by Tanck (2002). In her comparative study of Russian and American English, Kolova (2004) investigated the structure and cultural styles of indirect complaint and politeness strategies used by the native speakers of these languages when complaining.... The results of the study showed that Americans used negative politeness strategies or went off record to safeguard the hearer's negative face, whereas Russians were less sensitive to negative politeness and favoured more positive politeness strategies. Further, in an indirect study of complaints by Boxer (1993a), 295 interlocutors produced 533 indirect complaints. Boxer identified three different types of indirect complaint themes (personal, impersonal and trivial) and six types of indirect complaint responses (noting or topic switch, question, contradiction, joke or teasing, advice and commiseration). The study focused mainly on the role of gender, social, status, social distance, and theme in connection with indirect complaints. Since half of the interlocutors in Boxer's study were Jewish, it was possible to investigate ethnicity. She found out that approximately 25% of griping sequences served to distance the interlocutors from one another, while 75% of the griping was found to be rapport inspiring by a group of ten native English-speaking raters. The study also showed that women mostly commiserated with indirect complaint, while men contradicted or gave advice.

Comparison:

To sum up, the review of the literature related to complaints (whether direct or indirect) revealed three major areas that had previously been studied: (a) functions of complaints, (b) responses to complaints, and (c) conversational strategies used by complainers for trouble-telling. According to the literature, the functions of complaints are threefold: (i) to further conversation, (ii) to build relationships and (iii) to establish solidarity (Boxer 1993a). However, this study will focus on complaint in the print media so as to examine what types of linguistic features and politeness strategies complainers use to make complaint in the Daily Graphic.

From the data samples above, one can deduce the following reasons: First, the research proposal writers identify related studies in their study areas, state the researcher's name by using integral citation in commencing the study as found in the following:

- a. Duah (2006) investigated the discourse strategies that advertisers in Ghana use to persuade their audience.
- b. Quist (2004) explored how advertisers use imagery to attract consumers and maintain their interest in their products
- c. Starc (2008) analysed advertisements in the Slovene newspapers
- d. Norris (2007) examined an analysis of banking and finance job advertisements in newspapers for different targeted readers.

All the studies above were found in one data-EN7. It can be deduced that a research proposal writer states a related study by using an integral citation. The procedure is that after mentioning the study, the research proposal writers state the methodology and various findings of related studies. The research proposal writers then compare their studies with related studies in order to establish a lacuna in the literature for them to fill.

After a careful study of the data, it was found that the research proposal writers do not criticize the related study in terms of assessing the effectiveness of the methodology, findings and conclusions. This confirms what was initially indicated by Bruce (2014) and Boore&Berlie, 2005; Cassanave& Hubbard (in Bruce, 2014).

One is likely to ask what the research proposal writers used to criticize or evaluate the study. This question is not far-fetched because a number of researchers have identified the use of meta-discourse features- interactional resources (Hyland, 2005) to find out the stance of the writer specifically, the use of the interactional resources. In this study, we showed interest in finding out if research proposal

writers make use of attitude markers to express their views in their review of related literature. Upon a thorough reading of the data, the following observations were made. It was found that out of the twenty (100%) research proposals used as data for the current study, only five (25%) of them made use of attitude markers to assess the value of their related studies. The following excerpts from the data will be useful:

a. A critical analysis of this study shows that **to some extent**, it is similar to the work of Nalan (2009) mainly because both of them focused on some linguistic structures in their selected data set to achieve their varying objectives... **EN15**

b. Again, **I think** that this form does not occur frequently in Ervin-Tripp's data because the form is considered appropriateTrip's findings are **relevant** and must be reviewed.... **Insightful** as her findings are, there are few weaknesses in Ervin-Trip's data collection methodology and analytical procedures. In the first place, as she rightly indicated.....**EN16**

c. From the above studies, it is clear that most non-native speaker attitude towards varieties of English is mostly tilted towards the Standard British and American varieties. The reason for the favourable attitude to these varieties may stem from the fact that **EN9**

d. However, the methodology used by them makes their study **susceptible** to errors. ...Though the results of the study conducted by Herring (1995) are similar to those previously observed in spoken discourse, her methodology is **susceptible** to errors. She collected her data from internet discussion; and from her own words, it was an academic oriented discussion... It therefore presupposes that those who were academically inclined were excluded from the study... This makes the findings **difficult** to be generalized because in a study, if a significant proportion of people cannot be included in the sampling population..... This renders the credibility of the results **doubtful**, not only because the number of males and females did not commensurate, but also the latter did not have equal and independent chance of being selected. Though Herring's work is consistent with other works, some of the explanation she gives are **ludicrous** because.... As a programmatic piece, Lakoff's work has been **extremely influential** as evidenced by ubiquitous references to the work in the later literature... Despite the **importance** of her work, both her methodology and conclusions are **questionable**. **EN11**

e. The above **suggest** that research focuses more and more on the analysis of individual conversation patterns such as questions-answer sequences and other adjacency pairs. **EN13**

In each of the examples above, a number of observations can be made. One can find that some words are in bold print. In example *a*, for instance, one can find the phrase *to some extent* and in example *b*, words such as *think*, *relevant* and *insightful*. The current study is interested in measuring the stance of research proposal writers in their literature review sections. Indeed, the study is not just interested in the use of these words but the extent to which they have been used to critique the literature review sections of their research proposals. Hence, it can be observed that these attitude markers have been correctly used by the research proposal writers in critiquing some aspects of methodology, data analysis, findings and conclusions. By reviewing the literature sections as done in the five research proposals above, their studies become understandable, clear and also aligned with expert writing.

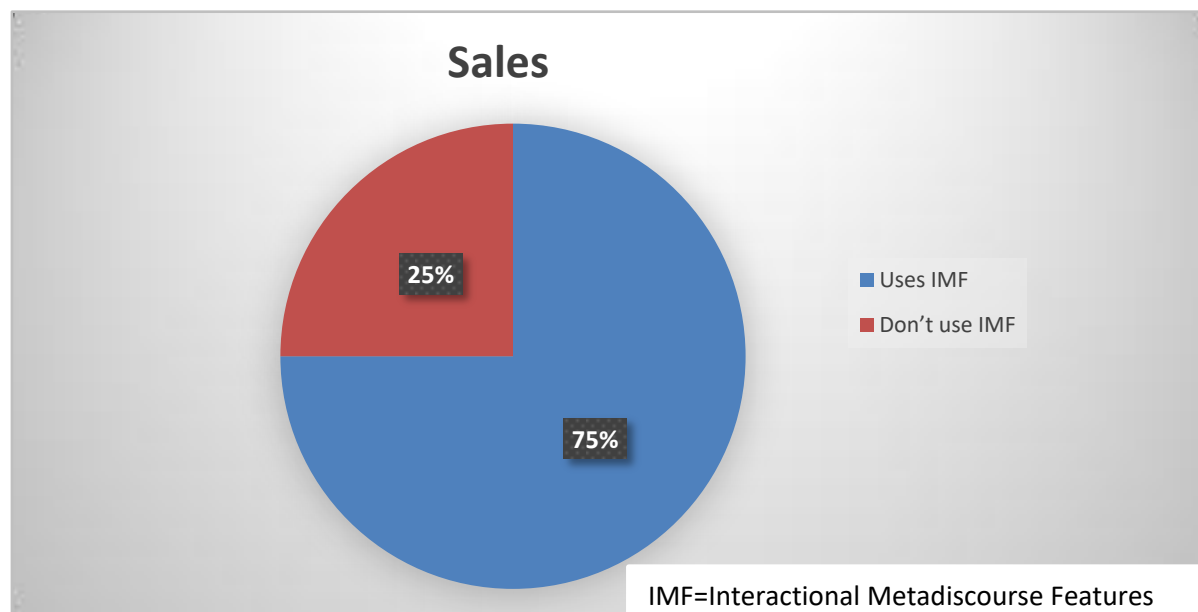
It is highly commendable that novice writers will be taught to adopt this mode of writing to add maturity and a kind of academic writing traits to their mode of writing. The most worrying aspects of this study is that only 25% of the research proposal writers assessed their related literature. This makes the current study crucial as it calls for a number of implications which will be discussed later in the study. 75% of the research proposals summarized related studies without making use of attitude markers to assess the content of methodology: data collection procedures, sampling procedures and data analysis in addition to the content of findings and conclusions.

The following pie chart can be used to clarify the above finding. It is obvious that as many as 75% of the research proposal writers do not assess their related literature; they just summarize them in their studies. 25% of the research proposal writers on the contrary, appraise the related literature by using the various types of attitude markers. By implication, this study has confirmed the finding made by Bruce (2014).

7. CONCLUSION

Two main issues were considered in this study. It first of all, showed interest in using the CARS model to identify the frequency of moves and sequencing of moves in the literature review sections of research proposals of MPhil students of the Department of English, University of Cape Coast. It also used Hyland's (2005) interpersonal model of metadiscourse, the interactional resources, specifically,

attitude markers to account for how the research proposal writers use these markers to express their views in the related literature of their studies. The interpersonal markers were used to help substantiate claims made by Bruce (2014) that novice writers do not critique the literature review section of their studies. The following findings were made: in the first place, it was found that the research proposal writers use three moves which are sequentially ordered in the research proposal. The finding has confirmed that indeed, the majority of research proposal writers known as novice writers do not evaluate the literature review section of their studies. The study has implications for academic writing instructors, graduate students and future research.



8. RECOMENDATIONS

The following recommendations will be useful to academic instructors. It has brought to light how novice writers develop their literature review section and this will help the academic instructors to either adjust their methods of teaching academic writing or provide enough assignments for their graduate students to develop the requisite skills for writing any of the academic genres. Again, graduate students should learn to evaluate their related literature. They can do peer editing to help them have a thorough knowledge in the academic genre they hope to publish. For future studies, this work limited itself to research proposals in English language, however, interested researchers can replicate the study using different disciplines to find out how novice writers in different disciplines also develop their literature review sections. In addition, interested researchers can do a comparative study on expert and novice writing to find out if there are clear differences or similarities between the way both writers develop their thesis or any academic genre.

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