



ABSTRACT

This study sets out to examine the rhetorical structure and language mechanism of the discussion section of qualitative research articles (RAs) in applied linguistics. Descriptive qualitative design using genre analysis was employed to achieve this purpose.

Data analysis revealed that this part can be described by a total of ten rhetorical moves. Of them, five were found to contain steps and of these steps, eight were found to contain sub-steps, thus making the framework a three-layer one. Move 1 and Move 5 were the most frequent opening and closing move, respectively. Move 3 and Move 5 were the only two obligatory moves. Also, Move 5 was the most frequent move. The most frequent sequence was Move 3 followed by Move 5. Text analysis of each move and step revealed some evident lexico-grammatical features.

The significance of the study lies in two aspects. First, it contributes to the line of research of genre analysis by proposing a more detailed and pedagogically more informative three-layer analyzing framework for qualitative RA discussion sections in applied linguistics. Second, it fills the research gap by providing linguistic descriptions to every identified move and step in this section, thus bridging the function-form gap of this sub-genre. The move-linguistic feature connections could not only contribute to move-schema theory but also to EAP pedagogy.