RHETORICAL STRUCTURE OF PROMOTIONAL GENRES: THE CASE OF RESEARCH ARTICLE AND CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the rhetorical structure of research article and conference abstracts in Linguistics. The study employs quantitative and qualitative analysis and is based on a self-compiled corpus of abstracts from two prestigious linguistic journals (*Linguistics* and *The Journal of Linguistics*) and conference abstracts from the 49th Annual Meeting of the international society of linguists *Societas Linguistica Europaea*. The results show that the key moves ('Background', 'Purpose', 'Methods', 'Results') are distributed fairly similarly across the two types of abstracts; however, the ways they are employed are not always similar. Two additional moves were identified in our data set ('Niche Opening' and 'Announcing Position'), which signal different promotional strategies employed by researchers.

Keywords

research article abstract, conference abstract, moves, move analysis, rhetorical structure, academic discourse

1   Introduction

The past decades have witnessed an increasing scholarly interest in academic discourse: numerous studies have revealed existing patterns and emerging trends in the structure of academic texts and their generic features (Bhatia 1993, 2002, Swales 1990, 2004), author stance, engagement and identity expression (Hyland 2005a, Hyland & Sancho Guinda 2012, Matsuda 2015), metadiscoursal choices (Ädel & Mauranen 2010, Crismore et al. 1993, Hyland 2005b, Vande Kopple 1985), as well as more generally the ways in which social interactions and disciplinary practices shape up academic rhetoric (Bazerman 1988, Berkenkotter & Huckin 1995). Due to the increasing role of the English language in academia, many scholars have also approached academic discourse from cross-linguistic or cross-cultural perspectives (Bondi 2009, Dontcheva-Navratilova 2016, Duszak 1997, Fløttum et al. 2006, Mauranen 1993, Suomela-Salmi & Dervin 2009), frequently comparing rhetorical practices in English with those in other languages. As Hyland (2009: 4-5) claims:

> With half the world's population predicted to be speaking the language by 2050, English is becoming less a language than a basic academic skill for many users around the world. <...> This growth in English medium publications, moreover, is occurring not only in contexts where English is the official language but also where English is used as a foreign language, so that academics from around the world are now almost compelled to publish in English.

As a consequence of this global spread of English, scholars all over the world are expected to become proficient in the *Lingua Franca* of the academia, as well as master the conventions and practices academic writing in English entails, thus generating demand for extensive research on academic discourse in English.

One of the most productive conceptual frameworks academic discourse can and has been approached from is *genre*. As Hyland (2008: 543) puts it, genre is "a robust pedagogical approach perfectly suited to the teaching of academic writing <…> as it serves a key instructional purpose <…> of illuminating the constraints of social contexts on language use". Swales (1990: 58) emphasises the importance of communicative purposes which have to be recognisable by the members of the discourse community in order to place a communicative event into a particular genre schemata:

> A genre comprises **a class of communicative events**, the members of which share some **set of communicative purposes**. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style. (our emphasis)

In fact, a significant change in the purpose(s) is "likely to give us a different genre" (Bhatia 1993: 13). The purpose gives rise to the rationale for the genre which, in its own turn, shapes its overall structure and influences the choice of content, style, lexical devices as well as the arrangement of ideas/argument.

It should come as no surprise, therefore, that different academic genres have become the focus of research in the field of academic discourse, including studies on such genres as the research article (Tankó 2017), the acknowledgements section (Hyland 2004), the textbook (O'Keeffe 2013, Qadeer 2013), student presentations (Zareva 2013), classroom teaching (Biber 2006), and the like. Among numerous other academic genres, *the abstract* seems to have generated considerable attention recently. As a matter of fact, it is generally acknowledged as one of the most crucial scientific genres in academia at the moment (Busch-Lauer 2014).

Indeed, with the estimated 2.5 million new scientific papers produced annually (Jinha 2010), the role of the abstract can hardly be overstated. With their nutshell presentation of the research and free accessibility in different databases and online, abstracts have become indispensable for disseminating knowledge and facilitating decisions on what is worth reading in this age of "information explosion" (Benselin & Ragsdell 2016). The abstract is, therefore, generally seen as a "time-saving device" (Martín-Martín 2003: 26).

Abstracts, or rather Research Article Abstracts (RAAs), to be precise, are generally regarded as an *independent genre* (Bhatia 1993, Hatzitheodorou 2014, Martín-Martín 2003, Sala 2014), yet they are naturally thought of in relation to the larger texts they precede. Their ambivalent status is particularly apparent from the diverse terminology found in the literature. Swales and Feak (2009) refer to abstracts as *part-genres* precisely due to their proximity to other texts; several other scholars use the term *macro-genre* when discussing abstracts to differentiate them from different parts of the research article (Hood 2010, Martin & Rose 2008). Biber and Conrad (2009) put forth the idea of *embedded genres*, encouraging the view that abstracts as well as other sections of the research article may function as genres in their own right within larger genres. In connection to that, Bordet (2014) stresses the fact that abstracts are no longer only read as headings to certain texts, but are also accessed through various databases online as independent entities. That is to say, abstracts are becoming less dependent on the texts they present and are often examined on their own.

Viewed from the generic perspective the abstract is not a homogeneous genre and Research Article Abstracts are usually distinguished from Conference Abstracts (CAs) (Swales & Feak 2009). Although both are closely related, they appear in significantly distinct contexts. The CA precedes a spoken genre of conference talks, whereas RAAs represent written texts. The fact that CAs may present research that is still a work in progress while RAAs report on a fully finished piece of research (Bhatia 1993) is also important. More significantly, however, the communicative purpose of CAs and RAAs has been proposed to differ as well (Swales & Feak 2009). The RAA is meant to give concise information to assist the readers in deciding whether an article is relevant to them or not. CAs, on the other hand, are primarily organised to impress the scientific committee. It is a panel of experts who evaluate the quality of the submitted abstracts and determine whether the submitted work might add value to the conference and therefore should be accepted (Albarran & Dowling 2017).

A number of scholars have focused on the rhetorical move structure of the RAA in different disciplines, such as Computer sciences (San & Tan 2012), Cultural studies (Doró 2013), Business (Li & Pramoolsook 2015), Linguistics

(Lorés 2004, Diani 2014, Povolná 2016). In her small scale analysis of abstracts within the field of Applied linguistics, Lorés (2004) found that the majority of abstracts mirrored the research paper by following the IMRD (Introduction-Method-Results-Discussion) structure, though some of them also followed the so-called CARS model (Swales 1990), which means that abstracts resembled the introduction section of a research article. However, there were also some abstracts that combined both structures. Approaching the same question from a slightly different angle, Diani (2014) observed that there was variation in the overall structure of the RAA, and they did not always fall neatly under the IMRD structure. In fact, three main patterns emerged against the backdrop of Santos's (1996) five-move framework: Purpose-Methods-Results; Introduction-Purpose-Results-Conclusions, and Introduction-Purpose-Results.

CAs have received significantly less attention in terms of their rhetorical organization. However, some general trends have still been observed. Relying on a revised version of Hyland's (2013) five-move framework (Introduction-Purpose-Method-Product-Conclusions), Sidek et al. (2016) found that only a small fraction of CAs followed the pattern in sequential order and included all the moves. In their analysis, two major patterns emerged: Purpose-Methods-Product-Conclusions and Introduction-Purpose-Product-Conclusions. Povolná (2016), on the other hand, observed some slightly different trends. The majority of abstracts included two and three moves, and only some abstracts were composed of four and five moves.

Even though there is a substantial body of research investigating rhetorical moves employed in RAAs, as well as some studies on CA rhetorical structure, they focus either on one or the other genre. There are far fewer studies comparing CA and RAA structure in one work side by side. Bearing in mind that abstracts are considered promotional genres, they have to be convincing in order to attract readers or facilitate the acceptance of the abstract by the scientific committee. This becomes especially important with regard to prestigious international publications or conferences, which tend to be very selective in accepting academic texts for publication or to be presented at a conference. Among other elements, the structure of the abstract becomes crucial for a coherent flow of the argument and, consequently, a convincing text. Since RAAs and CAs differ in their communicative purpose, it is important to investigate whether researchers apply similar or different strategies in building them. Therefore, the present paper sets out to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent and how does the rhetorical composition of CAs and RAAs differ?
2. Which of these two genres appears to be more promotional?

2 Data and methods

The study employs corpus-based quantitative and qualitative analysis as the main methodology, and a self-compiled comparable corpus (nearly 32,000 words) of RAAs and CAs as the source of empirical material (Table 1).

Sub-corpus	RAAs	CAs
No. of abstracts	50	50
No. of words	9,496	22,396

Table 1: The size and composition of the corpus

For the sub-corpus of RAAs, two international prestigious linguistic journals were selected: *The Journal of Linguistics* (volumes 51, 52) and *Linguistics* (volumes 53, 54) published in 2015 and 2016. Both journals are indexed in Master journal list of Clarivate Analytics database (Arts and Humanities citation index) and, based on their impact factor, are included among the first top 100 journals in Linguistics. In order to collect a comparable sub-corpus of CAs, we looked for an event that would be compatible in prestige and quality to the two linguistic journals used for the sub-corpus of RAAs. We have selected the Book of Abstracts of the 49th Annual Meeting (year 2016) of the international society of linguists *Societas Linguistica Europaea* (SLE). Annual SLE conferences are generally considered to be one of the most prestigious linguistic events in Europe, which also follow a rigid peer review policy of the submitted abstracts. Like the two journals, SLE conferences deal with all areas of Linguistics, i.e. they are not restricted to any particular linguistic field or specific theoretical framework.

All single-authored abstracts from the specified volumes of the two research journals were included into the corpus for the analysis. As for the single-authored CAs, there was a big number of them, therefore specific abstracts to be used for the analysis were selected with the help of online randomiser resource at www.randomizer.org, which randomly generated a list of 50 different authors. We did not attempt to differentiate the texts according to the nationality of the authors. An abstract is a very brief genre; therefore, to collect 50 texts authored by scholars from the same nationality would have been too complicated. Also since the articles have already been published and the conference abstracts accepted for the conference, the authors must have had a proper command of scientific English to convince the scientific committee or peer reviewers.

We have also checked whether any requirements were set for the prospective authors in the submission guidelines for both research journals and conference

abstracts. While the journals did not indicate any structural prerequisites required for the abstracts, in the CA submission guidelines it was indicated that CAs should include research questions, approach, method, data and (expected) results. We will comment briefly on this aspect in discussing the results of the analysis. The number of words, however, was indicated clearly in the submission requirements of both journals and conference abstracts. RAAs were supposed to be up to 200 words in length and CAs could not be longer than 500 words.

When the corpus was compiled, bibliography lists and linguistic examples were removed, primarily from the CAs, so that it would not raise the actual running word counts. Then the corpus was carefully read and rhetorical moves identified. For the analysis of the rhetorical composition of abstracts we employed the five-move framework suggested by Swales and Feak (2010).

Move #	Typical labels	Implied questions
Move 1	Background/introduction/situation **\<B>**	what do we know about the topic? why is the topic important?
Move 2	Present research/purpose **\<P>**	what is this study about?
Move 3	Methods/materials/subjects/procedures **\<M>**	how was it done?
Move 4	Results/findings **\<R>**	what was discovered?
Move 5	Discussion/conclusion/implications/ recommendations **\<D>**	what do the findings mean?

Table 2: Move structure used for the analysis (Swales & Feak 2010: 172)

Following Can et al. (2016), such cases when moves comprised only a clause or a phrase within the sentence were treated as *embedded moves* and counted separately, as in (1):

(1)   **\<M>** *Situated within the theoretical perspective of Cognitive Grammar,* **\<P>** *the paper argues that the conceptual content of the linguistic unit that introduces the conditional clause determines mood choice.* (RAA 37)

In this case, the 'Methods' move is considered to be embedded within the 'Purpose' move, but both moves were counted separately.

Different moves are marked in the examples presented in the paper by using the abbreviations \<B>, \<P>, \<M>, \<R>, \<D>, presented in Table 2.

3 Results and discussion

Table 3 below displays the number and percentage of abstracts which contained each move type at least once.

Moves	CAs	RAAs
Background	**43 (86%)**	**31 (62%)**
Niche Opening	16 (32%)	4 (8%)
Purpose	**47 (94%)**	**44 (88%)**
Announcing Position	16 (32%)	28 (56%)
Methods	**39 (78%)**	**33 (66%)**
Results	**45 (90%)**	**42 (84%)**
Discussion	29 (58%)	25 (50%)

Table 3: The distribution of moves in abstracts (raw numbers and percentages)

As we can see, out of seven moves, four moves were used in more than 60 per cent of all CAs and RAAs, which means that these moves constitute the so-called conventional moves (Kanoksilapatham 2005) of the discipline. These include 'Background', 'Purpose', 'Methods' and 'Results' moves. Although, as mentioned in the previous section, there were submission instructions provided as to which structural parts had to be included in CAs, the conventional moves coincide in both genres. The 'Methods' and 'Results' moves, specifically, were singled out in the CAs submission guidelines, but their distribution is fairly similar in RAAs and is only twelve per cent and six per cent (respectively) less frequent. It would seem therefore that the presence or absence of the requirements for the key structural parts has little influence on the actual composition of the abstract.

Similarly, announcing the purpose of the study was not only the most frequent move in both sub-corpora, but it was also used rather consistently across the analysed genres. We relied upon certain linguistic cues to determine when the author was expressing purpose, mainly upon the so-called procedural verbs (Frels et al. 2010), for example:

(2)   **<P> *The present paper analyzes*** *the mood alternation between Spanish conditional clauses introduced by the particle si 'if', on the one hand, and by conditional conjunctions such as a condición de que 'on the condition that', con tal de que 'provided that' and siempre y cuando 'as long as', on the other hand.* (RAA 37)

(3)   **P> *In this paper I look at* *one particular type of multi-event constructions across* *a sample of South American languages: the encoding of want-constructions.* (CA 30)

Naturally, if researchers want to have the paper published or the abstract accepted to the conference, the purpose of their research has to be very clear. The findings of this paper echo those of Diani's (2014), whose analysis of RAAs yielded very similar results; it was found that the 'Purpose' move was present in 98.97 per cent of the analysed abstracts. The same is the case in Povolná's (2018) analysis of CAs written by native and non-native speakers of English, where the 'Purpose' move was an integral part of the abstracts, excluded only once by a Ukrainian scholar.

However, it is interesting to investigate how the purpose of the research is formulated in both RAAs and CAs. The prototypical formulation of the purpose in RAAs is exemplified in (2). The move starts with an inanimate subject taking an active verb, a construction which Hyland (1996: 444) aptly calls "abstract rhetors". Thus such collocations as *this paper / study / article analyzes, offers*, *aims to contribute*, *considers*, *examines*, *develops*, etc. are found in 83 per cent of all cases of the 'Purpose' move in RAAs. The personal pronoun *I* is used in only six statements of purpose in RAAs (i.e. 15%). In contrast, in CAs personal pronouns, especially *I*, feature in the 'Purpose' move in 36 per cent of all cases of stating the purpose. The use of self-mention is typically associated with a strong stance of the author, the one who is "firmly established in the norms of the discipline and reflecting an appropriate degree of confidence and authority" (Hyland 2001: 216). A fairly frequent use of the first person pronouns in CAs may be an indication of the wish of the authors to emphasise their role as researchers in this particular genre.

The other noticeable difference in the way the 'Purpose' move was used across CAs and RAAs was the position in which it appeared. Again, similarly to Diani's (2014) findings, there was a tendency to start a RAA immediately with the 'Purpose' move in half of all the RAAs (50%); however, only 30 per cent of CAs were initiated with the 'Purpose' move. A more frequent strategy of CA authors was to state the purpose after the 'Background' move in CAs, a tendency also observed in Povolná's (2018: 160) study. She notes that "most writers consider it important to start a CA with Move 1 (STR)" (i.e. Situating the research). Since research text abstracts are frequently considered to be "screening" tools (cf. Wallwork 2011), the tendency of RAA authors to present the purpose at the beginning of the abstract may be their attempt to capture the attention of the reader from the very start.

Introducing the results was another important rhetorical move in CAs and RAAs alike, although Swales and Feak (2009) suggested that scholars might not necessarily have all the results available while submitting their CAs to the review committee. The following examples illustrate the typical way of presenting results in the abstracts:

(4)   **<R>** *Results: in general, the tests* **show** *robust effects of the morphology in the predicted direction.* (CA 1)

(5)   **<R>** *Results of the study* **show** *that it is possible to create the textual profile of antonyms using these lexico-syntactic constructions, and that the unmarked member has a richer contrastive profile in text.* (RAA 28)

As we can see, in both cases, the authors use the so-called "factive" (Yang & Tian 2015) verb *show* to present their findings, thus exhibiting dialogically contractive tendencies and making it virtually impossible to challenge the presented observations.

Although the 'Methods' move was employed fairly consistently across the two genres, there were also some differences. The move was not only less frequent in RAAs by 12 per cent, but it also exhibited different trends in the way it was incorporated into RAAs. To be precise, the 'Methods' move was embedded within other moves in 38 per cent of the cases in RAAs:

(6)   **<M>** *Departing from a proposal by Keizer on how to bridge the gap between the grammar and the lexicon in Functional Discourse Grammar (FDG),* **<P>** *this article deals with three aspectual verbal periphrases in Spanish <...>.* (RAA 32)

In (6) the author first mentions the framework the paper will follow and then proceeds with describing the aim of the study, thus including the 'Methods' move only as a clause and not developing it any further. As mentioned in the 'Data and methods' section above, RAAs are significantly shorter, the fact that might have resulted in the tendency to embed the 'Methods' move. In order to save space for other moves, authors need to be as laconic as possible. This kind of presentation seems to add to the overall conciseness of the RAAs.

In CAs, on the other hand, the 'Methods' move was embedded within other moves only in 20 per cent of the cases, which means that in the majority of the cases the move was presented separately and typically with quite many details, for example:

(7) **\<M\>** *This* approach *is illustrated by means of a corpus-driven case study of the ACC/DAT alternation with 19 German contact verbs (including aufprallen, landen, einschlagen,anstoßen etc.). First, for each verb, a sample of 300 sentences (extracted from the Deutsches Referenzkorpus Mannheim) was analyzed qualitatively to determine potential morphosyntactic, semantic and lexical factors that exhibit a preference for either case. Second, the effect of these factors was tested quantitatively using bivariate (chi square, fisher's exact) and multivariate (classification tree analysis) analyses. Finally, the corpus data were compared with acceptability judgments from native speakers.* (CA 20)

As we can see in (7), the 'Methods' move spans the entire paragraph, and the author not only indicates the composition of the corpus used, but also specifies how the data was analysed, which could again be due to the fact that CAs are much longer. In comparison, in RAAs the move would span not more than one or two sentences even when presented separately.

One of the biggest differences between the distribution of different types of moves manifested itself regarding the 'Background' move. The authors of CAs would usually include a long and detailed background, which at times spanned over many lines, for example:

(8) **\<B\>** *Despite the fact that in Modern Standard Arabic plural human controllers categorically require strict agreement (i.e. plural agreement, either masculine or feminine depending on the inherent gender on the controller) and plural non-human controllers categorically require deflected agreement (i.e. feminine singular agreement; for the terms "strict" and "deflected" agreement see Ferguson, 1989), in the spoken dialects a remarkable amount of variation concerning plural agreement has been documented (see Belnap 1993 for Cairene, Brustad 2000 and Cowell 1964 for Damascene, Brustad 2000 and Harrell 2004 for Moroccan, Holes 1990 for Gulf Arabic). A number of factors have been found to influence the kind of agreement which a given plural referent attracts, and these are: the morphological status of the controller (i.e. whether it is a "sound" or "broken" plural, see Belnap 1993 and Brustad 2000), the distance between target and controller in terms of phonological words (see Belnap 1993, who builds on Corbett's 1983 work on agreement in Slavic), and the distinction between "scattered" and "grouped" plurals (i.e. plurals where collectivity is emphasized as opposed to particularity; see Cowell 1964 and Belnap 1991, who draws on Barlow's 1988 work on agreement in various languages of the world). Brustad (2000), in particular, drawing on Khan's (1984) work on Semitic languages, maintains that an individuation hierarchy exists which affects the syntactic behavior of nouns: this list includes features such as agency, animacy, definiteness, concreteness, quantification and qualification.* (CA 16)

In (8) the 'Background' move spans over 18 lines, and the author includes a lot of information, among which an array of references to the works of others

is present. In RAAs, on the other hand, such lengthy descriptions were not observed. Authors would instead use one or two sentences at most to set the background, if they included the move at all:

(9)   **<B>** *Morphological marking of negation through verbal reduplication and tone is a typologically rare phenomenon attested in Eleme (Niger-Congo; Nigeria).* (RAA 10)

In (9), for example, a succinct sentence serves as the introductory section in the RAA without including too much information or alluding to external sources.

Having so far discussed the moves that were conventional in both genres, the ones that were below the line of 60 per cent will be discussed now. The least dramatic difference manifests itself regarding the 'Discussion' move. It was slightly more frequent in CAs, but showed no substantial differences in the way the move was actually used across the two genres. Interestingly, unlike Povolná's (2018) analysis, where the 'Discussion' move was present only in 4 per cent of CAs, here it appeared in 58 per cent of CAs and 50 per cent of RAAs. In this move authors would usually summarise the most important findings or emphasise their implications:

(10)   **<D>** *In summary, the study confirms that syntactic alternation research benefits from a lager focus on verb-specific particularities (alongside generalized regularities) and individual (alongside collective) preference norms.* (CA 20)

(11)   **<D>** *The TNT thus offers a clear space from which to view the interplay of conventional meaning in cognitive and construction grammars with classic Gricean pragmatics.* (RAA 3)

In (10) the author very explicitly signals the shift to the 'Discussion' move by means of the expression *in summary* and then recapitulates the most important point of his research. Similarly, in (11) the author specifies how his study can help dealing with the interplay of conventional meaning, thus highlighting the importance of his study. This was also the move that displayed remarkable stability with regard to its position within the abstract; it would almost exclusively be the last move in both RAAs and CAs.

Being the last item in the text, the 'Discussion' move has the potential to leave the reader with the most important elements of the research to remember or "food for thought". As the updated model of the CARS structure of research article introductions shows (Swales 2004), in research articles stating the value of the present research was an optional step used by researchers towards the end of the introductory part of the paper. In the present study, the abstract authors

did not seem to be willing to opt for this possibility. In RAAs only two abstracts showed some signs of promotion of their research in the 'Discussion' move. In CAs, this strategy was used by five authors who attempted to state explicitly that their findings are important or bridge the research gaps (note *important* and *limited* in (12) and (13) below):

(12)   **<D>** *These findings have important implications.* (CA 32)

(13)   **<D>** *My study adds to a limited body of studies on Latin from a cognitive constructionist perspective and to the developing field of Latin Corpus Linguistics.* (CA 34)

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, we identified two optional moves that were not originally part of the five-move framework (Swales & Feak 2010), namely the 'Niche Opening' and the 'Announcing Position' moves. The former move deals with cases where authors try to motivate their research by indicating a gap in previous research, for example:

(14)   **<B>** *Since the destructive phenomenon of mobbing, also known as moral harassment, workplace bullying and psychological terrorism, emerged in the 1990s, it has been the subject of scientific and legal attention, particularly in Europe and more recently in the United States and Canada. Ethologists (Lorenz 1963) and evolutionary psychologists (Leymann 1990) have extensively studied workplace bullying.* **<NO>** *However, the language of mobbing has not received much attention in the field of forensic linguistics to date.* (CA 2)

In (14), the author gives general background for the study and then indicates an aspect that has not received sufficient attention in other studies, in this case the language of mobbing in the field of forensic linguistics. The 'Announcing Position' move, on the other hand, is adopted by authors to specify or signal their own position in an overt and straightforward manner towards the discussed phenomenon. Unlike the 'Purpose' move, where authors would state their goal by means of a procedural verb, such as *examine, discuss, deal with* and similar, in the case of the 'Announcing Position' move knowledge-stating verbs, such as *argue* or *claim,* (Malmström 2008) would be used, for example:

(15)   **<B>** *Morphological marking of negation through verbal reduplication and tone is a typologically rare phenomenon attested in Eleme (Niger-Congo; Nigeria).* **<M>** *Using Lexical Functional Grammar (LFG) and Paradigm Function Morphology (PFM) to model first-hand data,* **<AP>** *I* **argue** *that reduplication is not a direct exponent of negation in Eleme, but an asemantic morphomic process, indirectly associated with the presence of a negative polarity feature in LFG's m(orphological)-structure.* (RAA 10)

In (15), the author first of all introduces the general context of the study in a manner typical of RAAs using only one sentence and then by embedding the 'Methods' move states his argumentative position in a clear manner. In other words, instead of setting a goal, the author advances a proposition. Interestingly, it would seem that the 'Announcing Position' move substitutes the 'Purpose' move in RAA 10 since it is not included at all. However, in the majority of the cases, the 'Announcing Position' move follows the 'Purpose' move (although in some cases other moves could be included between them), for example:

(16)   **<P>** *In this paper, I analyze two clause combining strategies in Ossetic that exhibit mixed properties between coordination and subordination.* **<AP>** *I argue that the 'mismatch approach' proposed by Culicover & Jackendoff (1997) and Yuasa & Sadock (2002) is best suited to account for their properties.* (RAA 24)

As we can see, the author first of all introduces the general goal of the paper and then pronounces his argumentative position. We can say that in a certain way the two moves complement each other.

The 'Niche Opening' move was significantly more frequent in CAs where it occurred in 32 per cent of abstracts, whereas in RAAs it was present in only four abstracts (8%). Since the move was less frequent in RAAs and played a more prominent role in CAs, it would be possible to argue that CAs, as a genre, are more promotional and more inclined to justify the need of the study in the field by indicating a gap in previous studies. This strategy is exactly the same as in the CARS structure of the introduction (Swales 1990, 2004) and its prototypical use could be exemplified once again in (17):

(17)   **<B>** *Baṭhari is one of the six Modern South Arabian languages (henceforth, MSAL) spoken in Oman and Yemen and belonging to the West branch of the Semitic family. Although said to be a dead language at the present time (Morris 2005), recent field studies (Morris, p.c.) revealed the presence of less than 20 proficient elder speakers (all above 50 years of age) scattered across the Eastern coast of the Dhofar Governorate. Nonetheless, the evident status of severe endangerment of the language foresees its imminent disappearance due to the spread of Arabic in the area.* **<NO>** *Before this happens, it is thus important to conduct research on this heavily understudied language.* **<P>** *The present paper aims to show the main outcomes of a preliminary synchronic study of phonetics of Baṭhari emphatic consonants <...>* (CA 12).

Again considering the fact that CA authors have to convince the scientific committee of the worthiness of the study in order to have the abstract accepted, this strategic choice is not surprising. On the other hand, research article authors also have to emphasise the novelty of the study in order to get the article published. They, however, have more possibilities to do this in the space of the article itself.

Conversely, the 'Announcing Position' move was more frequent in RAAs. In fact, it was present in more than half of all the RAAs (56%), but only in 32 per cent of CAs. In the 'Announcing Position' move the authors employ two choices of expressing their position. They either phrase it tentatively by using such verbs as *suggest*, *propose* or such hedges as *may* or *might*, or strongly, by employing such argumentative verbs as *claim* or *argue*. The first group of verbs would fall under the dialogically expansive markers, which leave space for alternative opinions; the second choice closes the dialogue as it presents the opinion of the writer as strong and non-debatable with the help of the so-called dialogically contractive markers (cf. White 2003).

In our data set, dialogically expansive markers seem to be slightly more preferred over dialogically contractive ones in CAs. Authors use such markers as *propose* and *suggest* to announce their position as well as modal verbs to open up the possibility for dialogue even further (18). In RAAs, on the other hand, the majority of markers used in the 'Announcing Position' move are dialogically contractive; authors especially prefer the verb *argue*, as in (19). The following examples encapsulate the typical way of constructing the 'Announcing Position' move in the two genres:

(18)   **<AP>** *In this paper **I suggest** that subjectification **may** also be approached fruitfully from an onomasiological perspective <...>.* (CA 35)

(19)   **<P>** *This paper offers the first empirical and theoretical account of an NP construction referred to as that noun thing (TNT) in English.* **<AP> I argue** *that the construction is a Langackerian reference point construction, with the basic use of referring in situations in which speakers find it difficult to characterize the referent in question.* (RAA 3)

In (18) the author uses the tentative marker *suggest* and then entertains alternative views again by using *may* to express epistemic modality. In (19), on the other hand, the author displays a very strong stance by using the argumentative verb *argue*, which in combination with the first person *I* acquires an additional rhetorical power. The beginning of the text itself already points to the strong rhetorical potential of the abstract (note *the first empirical and theoretical account*).

The higher frequency of the 'Announcing Position' move in RAAs in comparison to CAs could be due to the fact that in a research article the study is already completed, so the results are very clear and it is easier to argue for a particular position. The study for the CA is usually in progress, which could be the reason why the authors choose a more tentative and consequently safer position.

4   Concluding observations

This study employed the five-move framework suggested by Swales and Feak (2010) to investigate the rhetorical structure of research article abstracts and conference abstracts written by scholars in Linguistics. The results show that the structure of both types of abstracts is generally similar; there was a tendency for most of them to include four moves – 'Background', 'Purpose', 'Methods' and 'Results' moves. The 'Purpose' move was the most frequently employed move in both data sets.

The ways these moves are employed, however, suggest some differences. CAs usually provide more extensive background to the study as well as a more detailed description of the methodology. This information is typically presented in RAAs in a much more concise manner, obviously due to a smaller length allowed for the abstract. In the formulation of the 'Purpose' move RAA authors typically used an inanimate subject with an active verb or passive constructions, whereas CA authors employed personal pronouns more frequently.

We have also identified two additional moves that did not feature in Swales and Feak (2010) model: 'Niche Opening' and 'Announcing Position' moves. Though these moves were not as frequent as the four above mentioned moves, they provided a good opportunity for the authors to promote their research and emphasise its significance. CA authors favoured the 'Niche Opening' move, which allowed them to show the gaps in the research area and thus justify their own research more effectively. The RAA authors, on the other hand, fairly frequently resorted to the 'Announcing Position' move, which frequently featured the verb *argue*, thus helping to create strong argumentative flavour of the abstract.

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