

## Rhetorical Structures and Features of Literature Review in Graduate Theses across Disciplines

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### ABSTRACT

This study attempted to analyze the various moves, move sequences, and evaluative expressions employed in the literature review section in graduate theses using genre-analytic system of moves. Results showed that rhetorical moves and patterns varied across disciplines. There were differences in the use of moves which were found to be influenced by the specific writing context and situation (academic discipline) to which the graduate students belonged: expectations of the audience (panel members; adviser, program director) and the researchers' writing style. The data also showed that there were only few instances of definitely bounded evaluation paragraphs indicating the graduate students' need for analytical and critical abilities to express their stance towards other writers' papers.

**Keywords:** Evaluative expressions, literature review, rhetorical moves, genre approach

## INTRODUCTION

Rhetorical structures and features of academic and professional papers have been extensively studied in recent years. A survey of Contrastive Rhetoric studies has revealed that there are a number of research works conducted locally and internationally on rhetorical structures across institutional/ academic cultures specifically on research paper writing. Although considerable research has been devoted to the rhetorical moves and linguistic exponents in the introduction, methodology and discussion sections of research journal articles, theses and dissertations, no analysis has been done to examine the rhetoric of literature review. According to Swales (2004), this part of research is obligatory; hence, it must be analyzed in terms of its rhetorical moves and features.

In many graduate studies contexts, the emphasis of academic writing mainly lies on constructing research papers. Within this genre are subgenres of writing which include writing literature review. A review is a required part of research work whose purpose is to analyze critically a segments of a published body of knowledge through summary, classification, and comparison of prior research studies and theoretical articles (Torres, 2005). This requires the researchers to gather all literature related to their proposed research topics from various sources like books, journals, magazines, theses and dissertations. This section, however, must not simply enumerate the gathered ideas but integrate these with the proposed topic and establish their relatedness and/or differences. Diverse viewpoints must be synthesized and most importantly, researchers should evaluate literature by citing its strengths and weaknesses.

## FRAMEWORK

Scholars such as Dudley- Evans (1989); Swales and Feak (2004); and Torres, (2005) have identified sets of rhetorical patterns in various academic and professional texts. In conducting their analysis, they used the ‘move’ as a basic unit for study. A move is a functional unit which has a minor communicative

purpose to perform, which in turn serves the major communicative function of genre. Literature review, for example, fulfills the communicative purpose to evaluate. Surrounding this main purpose are minor functional units or moves.

In research articles, the Literature Review is found in the introduction section of Swales' (2004) Create-a-Research-Space (CARS) model. Accordingly, the introduction involves three rhetorical moves, namely: Move 1 Establishing a Research Territory, Move 2 Establishing a Niche, and Move 3 Occupying the Niche. In Move 1, the research territory is established by showing that the general research area is important, central, interesting, problematic or relevant (Move 1a); and by introducing and reviewing items of previous research in the area (Move 1b). As Swales and Feak (p.181, 2004) emphasize, Move 1b or Literature Review is obligatory in the Introduction Section. According to them, it is through which researchers are able to describe what has been previously done, point the way to what has not been done and so prepare a space for new research.

Expanding Swales' model, Dudley Evans (1989) identifies a larger, 6 move pattern of writing theses and dissertation introductions. The moves include Move 1 Introducing the Field, Move 2 Introducing the General Topic, Move 3 Introducing the Particular Topic, Move 4 Defining the Scope of the Particular Topic by introducing research parameters and summarizing previous research, Move 5 Preparing for Present Research and Move 6 Introducing Present Research by stating the aim of the Research. As noted, the Related Literature has been given a space in Move 4 in a form of a summary of previous research. However, the review of Related Literature is usually done in the second chapter of the thesis or dissertation.

Although considerable research has been devoted to the rhetorical moves of the aforementioned sections in research papers and articles, less attention has been paid to the Review of Related Literature. In Torres' (2005) paper, she provided a useful model for writing the RRL section in research papers as shown in Figure 1.

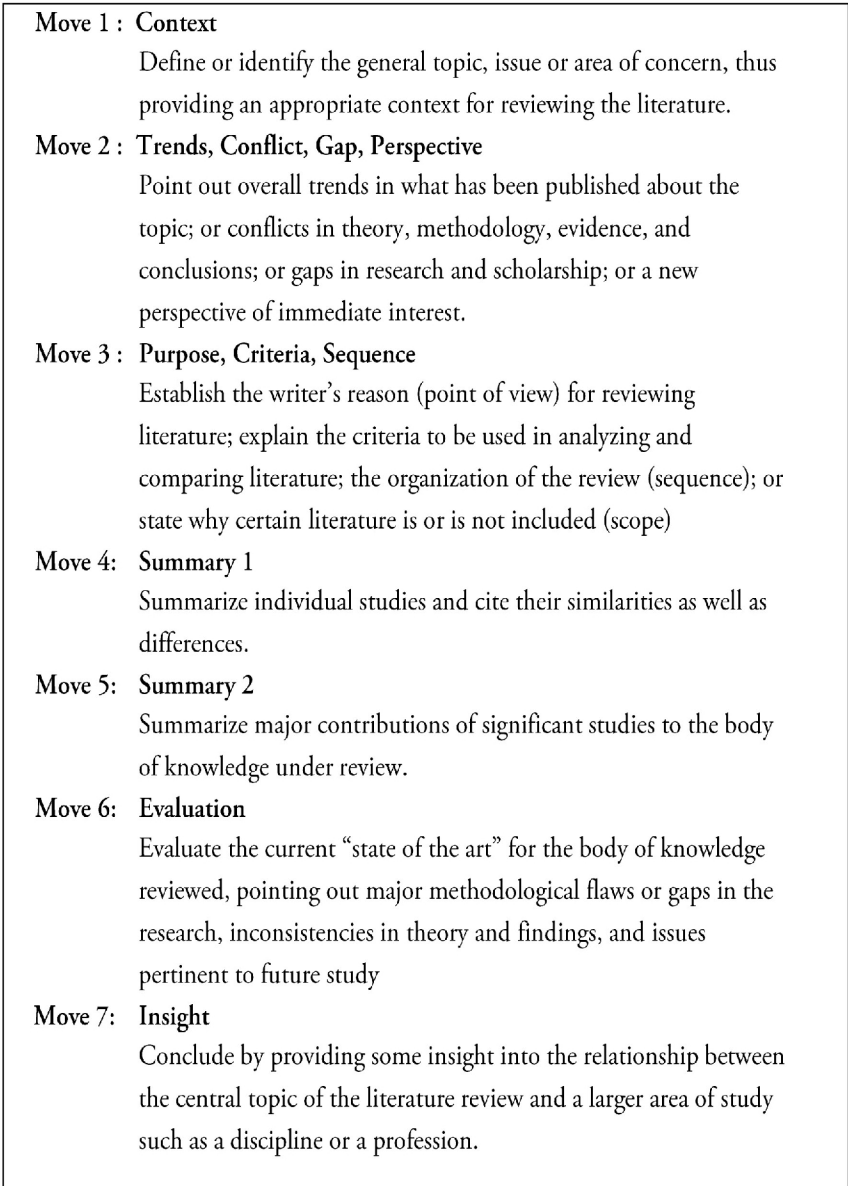


Figure 1. Model for Writing the RRL Section



Motivated by genre analysis and the need to analyze the unexplored Literature Review section of graduate theses, the researcher was prompted to do a preliminary study on the rhetorical structures and features of this subgenre in research paper writing.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study sought to: (1) determine the variations in the rhetorical structure of Related Literature section of graduate theses across disciplines in terms of move types and move sequence; and (2) identify the evaluative expressions employed to review previous studies in terms of their strengths and weaknesses

## METHODS

The research study utilized genre and text analysis to examine the rhetorical structures and features of Review of Related Literature section of graduate theses. It is generally descriptive because it illustrates the variations in this section of the theses. Aside from focusing on individual speech act types, it also describes the sequential relationship between utterances. A simple frequency count was employed to determine their frequency of use. Graduate theses were purposively selected to ensure that they are empirical studies and representatives of the following disciplines in the graduate school of Bukidnon State University. Prior to the gathering of the sample theses, the researcher sought the approval of the Graduate School Dean and the program coordinators to peruse theses available in the library. Since this study is more of a discourse and textual analysis, the researcher was allowed to use the theses provided that the names of the writers were sanitized to maintain confidentiality of their identities.

The rhetorical structures and features of Literature Review Section in graduate studies were to be analyzed using the framework of Swales and Feak's

(2004); and Torres (2005). The first round of analysis involved the examination of rhetorical structures. The texts were broken down into various moves and each move was labeled. Then outline structures were constructed to illustrate the sequence of moves in each text. Alternative movements were noted among academic disciplines. The second round involved the analysis of linguistic features, specifically evaluative expressions.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Rhetorical Moves

#### Move 1: Context

**Context** defines or identifies the general topic, issue or area of concern of the research paper which appears as the initial move of theses. This move appeared in more than half of the graduate theses across disciplines (66.70%).

This move can either be a definition or identification of the research topic, issue or area. The following extracts exemplify this move:

- (1) *The following are studies on classroom interaction.*
- (2) *This chapter presents studies and literature on the factors to[sic] insurgency.*
- (3) *Some studies conducted in the Philippines and abroad on questioning strategies were reviewed by the researcher. The following studies provided the researcher some insights on how teachers' questioning strategies was [sic] done in the classroom.*
- (4) *This chapter presents the different readings and researches on motivational activities in English.*

As shown in the examples, the researchers used the second type of Move 1 which involved the identification of research topics. This contextualization strategy enabled the researchers to bring back their readers' focus to the main

topic of the research work. It is therefore, essential to start the discussion of the RRL with a clear statement about the research topic. The rest of the RRLs that did not include the **Context** move integrated the identification or definition of topic within another move such as **Moves 2 and 3**.

### Move 2: Trends, Conflict, Gap, Perspective

This section of RRL can be organized using one of the four alternatives: Trends, Conflict, Gap, Perspective. The researchers can point out either the overall trends in what has been published about the topic; or conflicts in theory, methodology, evidence, and conclusions; or gaps in research and scholarship; or a new perspective of immediate interest. However, the analysis of theses reveals that this is rarely emphasized in the RRL section. Of the six theses, only one used Move 2.

*The Dibaloyons have never been the subject of a comprehensive study, a fact which make it difficult to collect related literature concerning the group. Thus, the researcher had to resort to reading and examining a variety of sociological, anthropological and ethnographic studies on other cultural minorities to enlighten her on the work she had to undertake.*

In this exemplar, the move was indicated by a gap in tribal research as expressed by the opening negative statement, *The Dibaloyons have never been the subject of a comprehensive study, a fact which make it difficult to collect related literature concerning the group*. The word *never* was used to reinforce the conclusion that something was missing in the research field. As noted, the researcher followed up the 'gap' statement with a 'need to resolve the gap' statement *Thus, the researcher had to resort to reading and examining a variety of sociological, anthropological and ethnographic studies on other cultural minorities to*

*enlighten her on the work she had to undertake.* Notice that the researcher used the imperative 'had to' to indicate the need to fill the gap.

### **Move 3: Purpose, Criteria, Sequence or Scope**

This unit is integral in RRL for it establishes the writer's reason (point of view) for reviewing literature; explains the criteria to be used in analyzing and comparing literature; indicates the organization of the review (sequence); or state why certain literature is or is not included (scope). Most of the examined theses employed this move. The data clip on the next page illustrates **Move 3**:

*The review follows the following order: Teaching Strategies, the Teacher, Teachers' Preparation/Qualification, and Teaching Experience/Length of Service, In-service, Professional Growth and Affiliation to Mathematics Professional Organization, Extra-Curricular Activities/Mathematics Competition, Social Features of Extra-Curricular Activities, Features of Mathematical Problems of Competition Types and Motivation.*

In this particular RRL, the researcher specified the sequence of the review according to the variables he included in his study. Hence, the presentation of previous related studies and articles did not follow the chronological order (from the traditional or seminal works to the most current); nor logical order (from the most established studies to studies associated with individual authors). The researcher opted to introduce items of previous research following the topical order. **Move 3** can also be constructed as a statement of purpose of the literature review. Specifically, it explains the reasons why the researcher is reviewing previous studies and article, as in the examples below.

*In an effort to assess the factors that contribute to insurgency in Bukidnon, literature on insurgency was considered in order to give meaning to the present study. Likewise, from other sources, the researcher was able to review some studies on the factors to insurgency which have provided the researcher valuable ideas and insights on the concept of the study.*

Evidently, the researcher indicated in this move what he wanted to get done. Although the purpose was not signaled by the typical explicit expressions like *The purpose/objective of this review is . . .*, the researcher clearly conveyed what he wanted to attain as reflected in the opening statement, *In an effort to assess the factors that contribute to insurgency in Bukidnon, literature on insurgency was considered in order to give meaning to the present study.* The infinitive phrases, *to assess, to give meaning* were used as signals of purpose. In the subsequent statement, the researcher gave his impressions on the studies he reviewed in the form of evaluative expressions *valuable ideas and insights*. This statement should have been indicated in **Move 6**; however, the researcher integrated it within **Move 3**. Another type of **Move 3** is the statement of the scope as shown in the following data clip.

*Documentary evidences being the best source of information were intensively used in the study. Among these documents were those declared top secret and highly confidential by the Armed Forces of the Philippines and by the Civilian Intelligence Community of the Department of National Defense.*

This move indicated an explanation of the scope, specifically the kind of literature he reviewed. By stating the parameters of the content dimension of his RRL, he was able to delimit his review to those materials that were available

and relevant to his study. Mentioning the sources of reviewed documents also established authority and reliability of his study.

#### **Move 4: Summary 1**

The main bulk of the RRL section as found in the graduate theses was in **Move 4**. In the model presented by Torres (2005), this segment must indicate summary of individual studies and establish relationship between these studies and the current study. Research paper writing instructors have always emphasized that a summary should highlight the important ideas made by other researchers both local and foreign. Moreover, their relatedness to the present study must be explained. To do this, theses writers must do comparative summaries rather than just simple summaries. This type of summary is relevant for it enables them to infer and make explicit the relationship among sources (Swales and Feak, 2004). The findings revealed that the researchers summarized previous research works; however, only very few mentioned how these studies relate to other previous studies and the present study in terms of methodology and findings, conclusions, etc.

For each of the related research studies, researchers followed certain patterns of organization. Generally, they started with a sentence containing two elements: the source and the main idea (Swales & Feak, 2004). Then, they elaborated this main idea sentence with relevant supporting ideas. Other patterns included subjects, methods, and instruments. The following paragraphs were extracted from the RRL section to illustrate the sub-moves under **Move 4**.

*The National Unification Commission (NUC) discovered the reasons for continued armed conflict in the country. These are poverty and economic inequity; poor governance and implementation of law; injustice and inequity; defects in the political system; and exploitation and marginalization of indigenous cultural communities.*

As illustrated, the summary began with a sentence indicating the source, *The National Unification Commission (NUC)* and the main idea, *the reasons for continued armed conflict in the country*. Then, specific supporting points were pointed out to elaborate the main idea. These were *poverty and economic inequity; poor governance and implementation of law; injustice and inequity; defects in the political system; and exploitation and marginalization of indigenous cultural communities*. This pattern only involved two sub-moves, main idea and supports. No conclusion was indicated within the paragraph. Findings revealed that summaries do not necessarily contain conclusion within the paragraph. It is only after all the summaries have been presented that a general conclusion and/ insights were stated.

Another pattern observed was a summary of *Source-Topic-Objective-Findings*. Notice how these were organized in RRL.

*Hembree (1994) studied about differentiated effects of staff development activities on teacher questioning practice. The study was designed to investigate the questioning practices during recitation and the subsequent students' responses elicited by teacher's questions. Results indicated that students' responses increased in number from pretest to post-test. It also impacted teacher questioning patterns as shown more in probing for students' responses.*

As can be seen in the box, the summary starts with the citation of source, *Hembree (1994)* and the research topic, *differentiated effects of staff development*



*activities on teacher questioning practice.* The following sentence states the objective of the cited study which was *to investigate the questioning practices during recitation and the subsequent students' responses elicited by teacher's questions.* Then, it ends with the results.

From the data gathered, a more complex type of summary emerged called a *comparative summary.* Two or more studies with related findings were summarized in one paragraph. As claimed by Swales and Feak (2004), this type of summary is relevant for it enables researchers to infer and make explicit the relationship among sources. This is exemplified in the following paragraph.

*Another relevant study related to thought processes is that of Yoke (1982). The study focused on a secondary class and three teachers teaching English, Mathematics and Science, respectively. In his findings, factual questions were overwhelmingly emphasized against reasoning. Interaction consisted mostly of teacher talk. This finding was also supported by Kalimutu (1982), when he observed English classes in two primary and secondary schools. The findings showed that most of the lessons were also teacher dominated and the pupils' responses were limited only to one or two words.*

This type of summary involved five sub-moves: *Topic + Source - Subjects/ Participants - Findings- Another Source-Corroborations of Findings.* Notice that the summary began with the topic, *thought processes* followed by the attribution of source Yoke (1982). Then the subsequent sentence mentioned the subjects of the study. This was followed by the general finding of the first author. The next sentence linked the finding of the previously mentioned study with the finding of another author whose study yielded a similar finding. This pattern shows that a summary can cite several sources within a paragraph provided that they share similarities.

After the individual studies have been summarized, they were arranged accordingly. Below is an outline structure of one RRL showing the sequence of summaries of related studies.

- (S1) *A study was conducted by Barnes and Snortum (1973) on . . .*
- (S2) *Another study was on “Classroom Interaction: A Sociological Approach” conducted by Calonico (1972). . .*
- (S3) *Beuneet (1973) researched on “Curricular Organizing, Strategies, Classroom Interaction Patterns and Pupil Affect.”*
- (S4) *Mohan (1977) as cited by Danao (198) came up with a model. . .*
- (S5) *Another inquiry which contributed to the study was that of Danao (1980).*
- (S6) *Heath (1983), as cited by Nunan (1992) is perhaps . . .*
- (S7) *“Interaction Analysis: An Innovative Technique for Analyzing Behavior,” is another study that gave insights to the present study.*
- (S8) *Another relevant study related to thought processes is that of Yoke (1982).*
- (S9) *Another study on classroom interaction was conducted in the Division of Sulu by Julhamid (1993) on verbal interaction in Science and Technology 1 classes.*
- (S10) *Chavez’ (1989) study analyzed classroom verbal interaction of the grade six Science classes.*
- (S11) *Another study that proved to be of help to this research was that of Abuel (1983) on . . .*
- (S12) *Valdez (1993) in her study analyzed . . .*
- (S13) *The study of Balmocena (1993) is . . .*

Notice that Move 4 basically involves introduction and survey of related studies and/or articles. As noted, there was no clear criterion for the sequence of sub-moves whether it was chronological, logical or categorical. Research paper writing instructors observed that a prevalent error in RRL section was the practice of most graduate students to just list all related studies or articles without considering their organization and relevance. Although the school did not prescribe a particular organizational pattern, writers must explain whether the summaries were arranged according to time sequence that is from the established seminal works to the current ones; or according to categories which form as bases for the sequence; or according to order of relevance or importance.

The analysis reveals that majority of the theses just enumerated summaries of previous works without proper arrangement. Another flaw that was common among the theses was the lack of cohesive devices. In the given example, the writer's signals were limited to the expression 'another.' It is then imperative that writers must learn how to sequence their summaries in the RRL. According to Swales and Feak (2004), the key element in literature reviews is that order is imposed on the material, not so much order in the researchers' minds, but order in the readers' mind. Hence, RRL must be reader-oriented.

### Move 5: Summary 2

**Move 5** summarizes major contributions of significant studies to the body of knowledge under study. Upon examination of the theses, the researcher found out that only few researchers attempted to indicate the contributions of previous studies to the current study. This is shown in the following data clips:

*The diagnosis of Coronel (1991) has shown a new perspective to the formidable factors that breed and compound communist insurgency. And how these insurgency-breeding conditions or root causes are being exploited by the communist to continue agitating, organizing, and mobilizing more people from all walks of life, in more areas. . . [sic]. His study is closely related to the present study since both aimed at analyzing or investigating the cause or nature of insurgency. This study, therefore, guided the researcher in the design and plan of the current research.*

The example illustrates the contribution of a previous study to the study under review. As indicated, the reviewed study was found to be relevant to the current study because it shared a parallel research objective which was to investigate the cause or nature of insurgency. Considering that there was no extensive study on the said topic, finding a study which had a similar aim

would provide reinforce the validity of the research topic. Also, the reviewed paper was perceived by the researcher to provide him with a model on which to pattern his research design.

Although **Move 5** is integral in RRL, the analysis of theses reveals that this move was optional in other disciplines such as Social Sciences while in other areas, it is embedded in Move 4. Embedding Move 5 is exemplified below.

*Another study that proved to be of help to this research was that of Abuel (1983) on "Grade Three Pupils Oral English in Communication Arts" classes. Abuel tried to determine how much oral English was used by Grade III pupils. The study revealed that 96% of the oral responses used by the pupils were English statements. Pupils were mostly influenced by mass media like the television. Pupils were able to relate their own experiences to the lessons presented in the class. The language they used English which the researcher taped as observed in the classes.*

Notice that the paragraph exemplifies Move 4 because it provided a summary of a previous work. However, the opening statement was indicative of Move 5 because it explicitly stated that the reviewed study was beneficial to the researcher. The blending of moves into the same paragraph was evident in most of the theses.

### **Move 6: Evaluation**

Move 6 is the most crucial unit considering that RRL is essentially evaluative in nature. This unit usually comes after the summary of a previous study. In this unit, theses writers point out the strengths and weaknesses of the reviewed studies in terms of methodology, scope, theories, findings and issues to future study. Below is an illustration of Move 6.

*Arrieta's study is a detailed description and analysis of the essential features of Batak culture. Prevalent beliefs in relation to their life cycle and kinship concept were dealt with. Findings in the study show that from birth to death their lives are influenced by their physical surroundings. Their ways are in conformity with their customs and traditions that affect and direct their daily routine; these even govern the people's very existence.*

As shown, the researcher's review of Arrieta's study was positive as indicated by the evaluative comment *Arrieta's study is a detailed description and analysis of the essential features of Batak culture*. Specifically, the positive adjective *detailed* was used to signal the review.

On the other hand, evaluation can also be negative in tone as in the following example:

*Studies and researches related to this topic were not very extensive. The diagnosis of insurgency by Miguel G. Coronel stated that the communist insurgency is likened to a disease. The parasite is the Local Communist Movement consisting of the CPP/NPA/NDF, which started practically from scratch . . .*

As noted, the evaluation is negative as indicated by the negative expression *not very extensive*. The researcher was trying to point out here the lack of previous works on which to anchor his study. Since the study dealt with a sensitive issue, he deemed it important to corroborate his study with substantial related studies.

### Move 7: Insight

The final unit in RRL states the conclusion of RRL. Specifically, it provides some insights into the relationship between the main topic of the literature review and a larger area of study such as a discipline, an endeavor or a profession. Graduate theses across disciplines perceive this as a necessary move in the closing part of the RRL section. The paragraph below shows how RRL is wrapped up.

*(1) The insights gained from the literature and studies reviewed inspired the researcher to pursue further by giving emphasis on the causes of insurgency particularly in Bukidnon.*

*(2) All the researchers cited above recognize the responsibility one has to assume in studying a tribal group. The researcher appreciated the need to be as objective as possible and to be very careful against making hasty and biased judgments or conclusions when investigating tribal groups.*

The concluding paragraphs extracted from two RRLs indicate Move 7. The first example shows that the writer concluded his RRL by expressing how the insights motivated him to continue a line of research on the topic *insurgency* in the Bukidnon context. In the second illustration, the researcher drew her conclusion by stating how the previous researchers provided her the necessary ethical considerations when undertaking tribal study. Here, the researcher gives insights into the relationship between the topic in RRL and an area of endeavor.

In general, the results show that the Review of Related Literature sections written by graduate students across disciplines did not contain the assumed seven moves except for Move 4 or the Summary of Individual Studies. All theses indicated Move 4 in the RRL section which researchers perceived as an

obligatory move. Other moves which were more likely to be essential because they consistently appeared in more than half of the samples were **Moves 1 and 3**. As can be recalled, Move 1 involved the definition or identification of the research topic, issue or area while Move 3 specified either the researcher’s reason; organization; or scope of literature review.

On the other hand, **Moves 2, 5, 6 and 7** were not frequently used. Of these moves, **Move 6** Evaluation should have been a fundamental unit in RRL section considering that a review or a survey of related studies is considered an evaluative genre of academic writing. This, therefore, requires the researchers’ critical assessment of previous studies whether positive or negative. It is through which they are able to express what the strengths and weaknesses of these studies. Integrating Move 6 would have made the reviews strong and successful.

**Rhetorical Move Sequence**

Equally significant as the types of moves found in RRL sections across disciplines was the pattern of their use/rhetorical move sequence. As found, the researchers followed a variety of move progressions. For the purpose of illustrating the types of sequences, outline structures representing the RRL Section in the graduate theses are indicated. Each structure specifies the different moves and the commonly used phraseology in each move.

| RRL1   |           |   |
|--------|-----------|---|
| Moves  | Paragraph | Opening Phrase/Clause   |
| Move 2 | 1         | <i>According to the US census, the number of unmarried fathers doubled from 1980 to 1992.</i> |
|        | 2         | <i>Single parents have increased considerably over the past two decades.</i>                  |



## RRL 1 Continued

| Moves  | Paragraphs | Opening Phrase/Clause   |
|--------|------------|---|
| Move 4 | 3          | <i>Gershoff (2002) as cited by Israel (2003) analyzed . . .</i>   |
|        | 4          | <i>In her findings in her study of fourth year students, Abregana (2000) . . .</i>  |
|        | 5          | <i>Baumrind in his study with Blacks in 1967 . . .</i>  |
|        | 6          | <i>In a study conducted by Christian Family Movement of the Philippines in 2001 . . .</i>   |
| Move 3 | 7-8        | <i>The review of related literature was done in three parts.</i>  |
| Move 1 | 9          | <i>The review of literature on the four childrearing styles depict a single theme on . . .</i>                                    |
| Move 6 | 9          | <i>It provided essential information on how each childrearing style . . .</i>   |
| Move 5 | 10         | <i>The researcher finally adopted the democratic, permissive and authoritarian styles of Rebecca Edwards (2001) and the . . .</i> |

The outline structure of RRL 1 shows a six-move pattern configuration (Trend-Summary of Individual Studies-Organization-Identification-Evaluation-Contribution). Note that the RRL began with Move 2 by stating the overall trends in a research area. The next move was the summary of individual studies (Move 4) which occupied more textual space in the review compared to other functional units. Then, the researcher popped in Move 3 (Organization) and Move 1 (Identification of Thesis/Topic) respectively. Move 6 (Evaluation) was done minimally. Lastly, the researcher stated the contributory studies that helped her shape her paper. Evidently, RRL 1 is characterized by a reversed sequence of moves as compared to the conventional

move sequence. This suggests that a particular discipline does not necessarily prescribed a definite rhetorical structure for RRL.

RRL 2

| Moves  | Paragraph | Opening Phrase/Clause   |
|--------|-----------|---|
| Move 1 | 1         | <i>The following are studies on classroom interaction.</i>                        |
| Move 5 | 1         | <i>These related studies provided the researcher insights on . .</i>              |
| Move 4 | 2         | <i>A study was conducted by Baines and Snortum (1973) on . . .</i>                |
|        | 3         | <i>Another study was on . . .</i>   |
|        | 4         | <i>Beuneet (1973) researched on . . .</i>   |
|        | 5         | <i>Mehan (1977) as cited by Danao came up with . . .</i>                          |
|        | 6         | <i>Another inquiry which contributed to the study was . . .</i>                   |
|        | 7         | <i>Heath (1983) as cited by Nunan (1992) . . .</i>                                |
|        | 8         | <i>. . . is another study that gave insights to the present study.</i>            |
|        | 9         | <i>Another relevant study related to . . . is that of . . .</i>                   |
|        | 10        | <i>Another study on classroom interaction was conducted . .</i>                   |
|        | 11        | <i>Chavez' (1989) study analyzed . . .</i>  |
|        | 12        | <i>Another study that proved to be of help to this research was that of . .</i>   |
|        | 13        | <i>Valdez (1993) in her study analyzed . . .</i>                                  |
|        | 14        | <i>The study of Balmocena (1993) is perhaps one of the most relevant studies.</i> |
|        | 15        | <i>Troike's study (1986) gave the researcher the most significant insights.</i>   |

As the outline illustrates, RRL 2 was a configuration of Identification-Contribution-Summary of Individual Studies. The structure was characterized by the blending of Moves 1 and 5 into the same paragraph. The rest of the RRL was composed of the summary of previous works with no further closing

in as shown in the outline. This implies that the writer decided to allocate more textual space for Move 4 in the RRL. Just like the first review, the structure also illustrated move reversal of Moves 5 and 4. A notable deviation under the RRL was the integration of the Conceptual Framework as the first sub-section of the chapter. This was also noted in two other theses. The program directors of these disciplines explained that concepts were also drawn from related articles and studies; hence, integrating it was sensible. In other disciplines, this component was positioned in the introduction.

| RRL 3    |                  |  |
|----------|------------------|--|
| Moves    | Paragraphs       | Opening Phrase/Clause  |
| Move 1   | 1                | <i>This chapter presents studies and literature on the factors to insurgency.</i>  |
| Move 2a  | 1                | <i>Though it could be noted that researches and studies related to this topic were not very extensive.</i>   |
| Move 3   | 2                | <i>In an effort to assess the factors that contribute to insurgency in Bukidnon, literature on . . . was considered in order to give meaning to the present study.</i>   |
| Move 6 + | 3                | <i>Documentary evidences being among the best source of information were intensively used in the study.</i>  |
| Move 4   | 3                | <i>Among these documents were . . .</i>  |
| Move 1   | 4<br>5<br>6<br>7 | <i>The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) is among the . . .<br/>In Bukidnon, it was in early 1980s when insurgency . . .<br/>In lifting Martial Law, Presidential Proclamation 2045 provided<br/>Bukidnon is one province in the nation today where peace and<br/>order is perceived to be a vital precondition to the development<br/>that is pursued.</i> |
| Move 4   | 8<br>9           | <i>In a bid to achieve a more durable peace, in 1983 the AFP . . .<br/>LOI "KATATAGAN" has been issued in order that . . . (The<br/>Constable &amp; INP Journal, 1983)</i>   |

RRL 3 Continued

| Moves              | Paragraphs | Opening Phrase/Clause  |
|--------------------|------------|--|
|                    | 10         | <i>The basic doctrine of subversion and insurgency is the battle . . . (GHQ, AFP Security Campaign Plan, 1979).</i>  |
|                    | 11         | <i>In an interview with General Renato S. de Villa, he said that . . .</i>   |
|                    | 12         | <i>Former President Cory Aquino asserted her belief that . . . (Phil.Intl.Forum, 1987)</i>   |
|                    | 13         | <i>Another cause of insurgency based on documents of the . . . (Justice &amp; Peace Review, 1988)</i>  |
|                    | 14         | <i>The National Unification Commission (NUC) during its nationwide consultations discovered the reasons for . . .(PDI, 1993)</i>   |
|                    | 15         | <i>The NUC further asked . . . (PDI, 1993)</i>   |
|                    | 16         | <i>Gold Star Daily Editorial on AFP propaganda dated July 6, 1993 stated that . . .</i>  |
| Move 6 _           | 17         | <i>Studies and researches related to this topic were not very extensive.</i>   |
| Move 2b            | 18         | <i>It should be emphasized that with or without these problems, communist insurgency will still exist. . . (Coronel, 1991)</i>   |
|                    | 19         | <i>In the study of . . . , he found that . . .</i>   |
| Move 5             | 20         | <i>Valuable ideas from literature and studies cited provided the researcher with insights that helped in conceptualizing and formulating the framework and design of the study. . .</i>    |
| Move 2c            | 21         | <i>In the last twenty-four years considerable emphasis has been given . . . However, it is lamentable to note that . . . has not been faring well in the quest for peace and security.</i> |
| Move 5             | 22         | <i>The diagnosis of Coronel has shown a new perspective to the . . .</i>   |
|                    | 23         | <i>The study of T anael et al helped the researcher in formulating . .</i>   |
| Move 6 +<br>Move 7 | 24         | <i>The insights gained from the literature and studies reviewed inspired the researcher to pursue further by giving emphasis on the</i>  |

The structure of RRL 3 employed six moves of which the most frequently occurring were Moves 2 ( a. Gap, b. Problem c. Trend) and 6 (Evaluation). As shown, Move 2a indicated a gap in research on insurgency; Move 2b a

persistent problem on insurgency; and Move 2c development of insurgency. Move 6, on the other hand, were stated positively (+) and negatively (-). In paragraphs 3 and 24, the writer criticized the documentary evidences and the related literature in general as exhaustive and motivating. However, he issued a negative criticism when he said in paragraph 17 that the related research works were not very extensive. He then implied that he found in-depth documents relevant to his work but found limited number of studies. In terms of the size of textual space, Move 4 was consistently found to be given more space compared to other moves. It is further observed that there were instances of move embedding as in the combination of Moves 1 and 2 in paragraph 1; 6 and 4 in paragraph 3; and 6 and 7 in paragraph 24. The blending of Moves 1 and 2 showed that the writer introduced the research topic and at the same time the gap in research within one paragraph. In paragraph 3, he blended an evaluative statement and a summary of the documents used in his study. The concluding paragraph of the RRL also illustrated a combination of evaluation and at the same time a general statement that the writer gained insight from the study. One common style in writing the conclusion is that of writers saying that the related studies were insightful but without citing and explaining specific aspects which they learned from other writers' works.

In terms of the move sequence, RRL 3 was characterized by move reversals. There was actually no clear-cut boundary for each move and the progression was more of cyclical than linear. Cyclicity is a writing phenomenon which is characterized by several loosely-connected moves. From the corpus, cyclicity was more evident in the Public Administration and social sciences graduate theses while linearity was a characteristic of the language teaching, mathematics and natural sciences research. As observed, a considerable amount of repetition happened especially with regard to context and evaluation indication.

RRL 4

| Moves  | Paragraphs | Opening Phrases/Clauses  |
|--------|------------|--|
| Move 2 | 1          | <i>The Dibaloyons have never been the subject of a comprehensive study . . .</i>   |
| Move 3 | 1          | <i>Thus, the researcher had to resort to reading and examining a variety of studies on other cultural minorities to . . .</i>  |
| Move 4 | 2          | <i>Written accounts by a Spanish missionary, Jose Maria Clotet, the work of Zoilo Galang, and the investigations of Eric C.Casino have shed light on . . .</i>               |
|        | 3          | <i>This belief is collaborated by . . .</i>  |
|        | 4          | <i>By the time the Spaniards occupied Mindano. . . Fr. Jose Ma. Cloet in his letter to the Rev. Father Rector of the Ateneo Municipal de Manila in 1889 noted that . . .</i> |
|        | 5          | <i>It is quite apparent that . . .To understand and explain their claim, Eric Casino stated that . . .</i>   |
|        | 6          | <i>The researcher also noted . . .</i>   |
| Move 5 | 7          | <i>The unpublished manuscript of Ludivina R.Opena . . . helped the researcher in . . . This knowledge and understanding . . . further convinced the researcher to . . .</i>  |
| Move 4 | 8          | <i>Opena’s work is a description of . . .It describes the . . .The manuscript also depicts . . .</i>   |
|        | 9          | <i>The researcher shares the desire of Corazon H.Roqueo . . . to bring to light the culture of the . . so that . . .</i>   |
|        | 10         | <i>The study shows some similarities . . .</i>   |
| Move 6 | 11         | <i>Arrieta’s study is a detailed description and analysis of the</i>   |

## RRL 4 Continued

| Moves  | Paragraphs | Opening Phrase/Clause   |
|--------|------------|---|
|        |            | <i>essential features of . . .</i>  |
| Move 4 | 12         | <i>Due to these folk beliefs, Arrieta stated that . . .</i>   |
|        | 13         | <i>Cosme's study is a comprehensive description and analysis of . .</i>   |
| Move 5 | 14         | <i>The study, therefore, offered not only . . . but it also hoped to serve as a guide to . . .</i>                      |
| Move 2 | 15         | <i>The question of a minority group adopting the majority group's lifeways and . . . are issues existing . . .</i>      |
| Move 4 | 16         | <i>A study of an Indian tribe by . . . shows . . .</i>  |
| Move 6 | 17         | <i>All the studies presented and reviewed in this chapter have a common methodology . . .</i>                           |
| Move 7 | 18         | <i>. . . All the researchers cited above recognize the responsibility one has to assume in studying a tribal group.</i> |

As can be seen in the outline structure, RRL 4 consisted of six moves, namely Move 2 (Gap); Move 3 (Reason for the RRL); Move 4 (Summary of Previous Studies); Move 5 (Contribution); Move 6 (Evaluation); and Move 7 (Conclusion). One feature of the pattern was the merging of Moves 2 and 3 in paragraph 1. As noted, the writer commenced her RRL with a statement of gap in tribal research as indicated by the negative statement . . . *had never been a subject of a comprehensive study*. Perceiving the need, she then expressed her intention to fill in the research space by doing a survey of research that would substantiate her projected study. Notice too that the move sequence was cyclical considering that there was a recurrence of moves. Specifically, there were two instances of Moves 2, 5, and 6; and four instances for Move 4 throughout the RRL section. Consequently, this led to the reversed sequence of moves. At first glance, the RRL appeared to be a typical linear pattern because



the first four moves and the last two moves were conventionally arranged; however, a closer reading revealed that the middle paragraphs were interspersed with various moves. Since RRL is basically a summary and evaluation of previous works, their textual space should have been balanced; however, the examination revealed that more space was allocated for Move 4 (with 12 paragraphs) and only two for Move 6. A similar observation was made regarding the treatment of Move 6 – most theses writers thought of RRL as more of a summary than an evaluative subgenre of theses writing. Little attention had been paid to this essential or even an obligatory move in RRL.

RRL 5

| Move   | Paragraph | Opening Phrase/Clause   |
|--------|-----------|---|
| Move 3 | 1         | <i>This chapter presents the review of related literature. The review follows the following order . . .</i> |
| Move 4 | 2         | <i>David (2002) opined that . . .</i>   |
|        | 3         | <i>Freiberg and Driscoll (1996) related the findings of earlier research that . . .</i>                     |
|        | 4-14      | <i>Here are some teaching strategies found to be effective in the teaching of mathematics:</i>              |
|        | 15-17     | <i>According to Slavin (1995) . . .</i>   |
|        | 18        | <i>Cabaya’s research (2000) conformed . . .</i>   |
|        | 19-20     | <i>Eby and Kujawa (1994) further attested that . . .</i>  |
|        | 21-22     | <i>Sharen and Sharma (2006) believed that . . .</i>   |
|        | 23-24     | <i>The end goal of Mathematics is to solve problem . . . Paculdo (2004) observed that . . .</i>             |
| Move 5 | 25        | <i>In the study of Lobitos (2004) he found that . . .</i>   |
|        | 26-78     | <i>(so many studies mentioned). . .</i>   |
|        | 79        | <i>From the readings, the researcher learned a lot of things. First . .</i>                                 |
|        | 80        | <i>In addition . . .</i>  |

The outline structure of RRL 5 exemplifies a three-move combination of Sequence-Summary-Contribution following a linear arrangement. There was no move reversal nor move blending. In the main, RRL 5 was a summary type because the main textual space was chiefly allocated for Move 4.

## RRL 6

| Moves  | Paragraphs  | Opening Phrase/ Clause  |
|--------|---|---|
| Move 5 | 1   | <i>The following studies provided the researcher some insights on . .</i>                       |
| Move 6 | 2   | <i>These studies are related either in methodology or findings to the present study . . .</i>   |
| Move 4 | 3   | <i>Slater (1996) studied . . .</i>  |
|        | 4   | <i>Another study by Rios-Pardo (1995) stated that . . .</i>                                     |
|        | 5   | <i>Hembree (1994) studied about . . .</i>   |
|        | 6   | <i>Another study by Mullen (1994) was conducted to examine . . .</i>                            |
|        | 7   | <i>Durkins (1982) found that . . .</i>  |
|        | 8   | <i>Dillon (1982) found that . . .</i>   |
|        | 9   | <i>Ryder (1991) found that . . .</i>  |
|        | 10  | <i>Stalling and kaskowitz (1974) found that . . .</i>   |
|        | 11  | <i>Rowe (1974) in her research indicated that . . .</i>   |
|        | 12  | <i>Koh leang (1993) investigated . . .</i>  |
|        | 13  | <i>The study of Yap Beng Huat (1980) found that . . .</i>                                       |
|        | 14  | <i>The studies of Sibayan (1992); Santos (1984); and Gonzales (1985) have highlighted . . .</i> |
|        | 15  | <i>Valdez (1993) based from her findings concluded that . . .</i>                               |
|        | 16  | <i>Moreover, Julmahid's (1992) study concluded that . . .</i>                                   |
|        | 17  | <i>Villero's (1990) study on . . . showed that . . .</i>  |
| 18     | <i>The studies mentioned here bear similarities with the present study.</i> |   |
| Move 1 | 18  | <i>The focus of the present study is teachers' questioning strategies.</i>                      |

As illustrated in the outline structure, RRL 6 involved a configuration of four moves, namely, Contribution-Evaluation-Summary-Identification. Unlike RRL 5, this followed a move reversal with Move 5 at the initial position and Move 1 at the final position of RRL. Notice too that there was only one bounded evaluative paragraph while the rest of the space was largely provided for Move 4. It is evident that the writer tended to focus on the summary of previous works rather than on evaluation. Although there were occasional use of evaluative expressions within Move 4, no definite space was allotted for the review per se.

In the main, the rhetorical move sequences employed in RRL writing were divergent. Although almost all the moves in the proposed model of Torres (2005) were incorporated, their progressions did not necessarily follow the linear type. Characteristically, the move sequences were dominantly cyclical because of the persistent repetition and interspersion of moves. Consequently, this also led to the reversed sequence of moves. Moreover, several of the moves were observed to be merged into one paragraph. This suggests that there was no definite boundary between moves.

### **Evaluative Language in RRL**

Considering that the Review of Related Literature is essentially an evaluative sub-genre of thesis writing, there is a need to examine the researcher's stance towards the previous works. To successfully make a review, research writers use evaluative comments to characterize the strong and weak points of the study. These can either be evaluative adjectives, verbs, adverbs and nouns. Findings showed that although there were only few instances of definitely bounded evaluation paragraphs, most of the positive and negative comments were interspersed across the rhetorical moves.

The following extracts show how the researchers judged the previous works they cited:

*RRL 1*

*The review of related literature provided **essential information** on how each childrearing style is practiced by the parents. . .*

*RRL 2*

*Heath (1983) as cited by Nunan (1992) is perhaps the **most cited and the most influential** study on ethnographic inquiry*

*The study of Balmocena (1993) is perhaps one of the **most relevant studies**.*

*Troike's (1986) study gave the researcher the **most significant insights**.*

*RRL 3*

*From other sources, the researcher was able to review some studies which have provided the researcher **valuable ideas and insights** on the concept of the study.*

***Valuable ideas** from literature and studies cited provided the researcher with insights that helped in conceptualizing and formulating the framework and design of the study.*

*The diagnosis of Coronel has shown a **new perspective** to the formidable factors that breed and compound communist insurgency.*

*RRL 4*

*The researcher shares the desire of . . . who was the first to investigate and make **detailed record** of the culture of the Central Mindanao Manobos.*

*Arrieta's study is a **detailed description and analysis** of the essential features of batak culture.*

*Cosme's study is a **comprehensive description and analysis** of . . .*

The extracts indicate the writers' reliance on evaluative adjectives in pointing out the positive aspects of individual studies or the reviewed literature in general. Analysis revealed that writers' attitude or stance was chiefly expressed through evaluative adjectives like the ones highlighted in the box. Nonetheless, it was noted that the RRLs employed only as minimal proportion

of adjectives. Typically, they were limited to single statements. This suggests that the writing culture perceived the review of related literature as merely a summary of research works. This finding necessitates the re-orientation of graduate students regarding the writing of a review. Academic writing instructors must emphasize that there are certain moves in RRL that are obligatory, i.e. summary and evaluation; and those that are optional. This section must live up to the essence of a review which is not only an enumeration of cited works but an assessment of the key aspects of these works in comparison with each other and/or the present study.

Aside from evaluative adjectives which describe the speaker's judgment toward and opinion about others' works, writers also used evaluative adverbs and verbs such as the ones on the next page.

*His study is **closely related** to the present study since both aimed at analyzing the causes or nature of insurgency.*

*This study **guided** the researcher in the design and plan of the current study.  
The study of Tanael et al **helped** the researcher in formulating the questionnaire.  
Written accounts by . . . **have shed light** on the origins of the Bukidnon people.  
The unpublished manuscript of . . . **helped** the researcher in identifying the basic aspects of Bukidnon culture.  
The study **offered** not only . . . but also **hoped to serve** as a guide to . . .  
All the researchers cited above **recognize** the responsibility one has to assume in studying tribal group.  
From the readings, the researcher **learned** a lot of things.*

The evaluative adverb and verbs identified indicated the researchers' opinion regarding the cited works. While the foregoing evaluative words were affirmative, negative expressions were also found as exemplified by the following:

*It could be noted that Studies and researches related to this topic were **not very extensive**.*

*The Dibaloyons **have never been** the subject of a comprehensive study, a fact which makes it difficult to collect related literature concerning the group.*

As noted, the writers barely indicated negative comments in the RRL; and when they do, they mainly used negative quantifiers such as **not** and **never**. This demonstrates that these writers in the identified institutional writing context relied more on positive criticism rather than on the negative one. On the other hand, this may indicate the inability of writers to find points to criticize and use appropriate critique expressions.

Whether a review is constructive or negative, the point of the matter is graduate students are obliged to critique research works when writing theses. According to Swales and Feak (2004) evaluative writing develops habits of analytical reading; trains graduate students to integrate previous studies with the projected studies they would like to undertake; and give them a better sense of the scholarly expectations in their chosen field.

## CONCLUSIONS

The literature review is a dynamic genre because its move types and sequence vary across disciplines influenced by the academic discipline, expectations of the audience, and the researchers' writing style. However, it would be argued that since RRL belongs to a more formalized genre, there are obligatory genre-specific moves for an acceptable literature review that graduate students must be familiar of. The LR sections show a divergence of move progressions. Although almost all the moves in the model of Torres (2005) are incorporated, the pattern does not necessarily follow the linear type. Characteristically, the move

sequences are dominantly cyclical because of the persistent repetition and interspersed moves. Consequently, this leads to the reversed sequence of moves. Moreover, several of the moves are merged into one paragraph suggesting that there is no definite boundary between moves. The variation in the move patterns may be attributed to the writing culture of students in their respective fields. Equally indispensable to literature review is the evaluation or criticism of these writers towards the research works of previous researchers. The stance in this section is chiefly expressed through evaluative adjectives, adverbs and verbs albeit minimal. This suggests that the writing culture in the University perceives the review of literature as merely a summary of research works. This necessitates the reorientation of graduate students regarding the writing of a review; that it is not merely a summary but an evaluation of the strong and weak points of the study in comparison with other studies or with the current study. They should be taught how to express their stance towards, their opinion about, or their judgment on research works. In terms of its implication to future research in academic writing, it is recommended that more comprehensive studies of textual genre analysis of rhetorical moves in literature review must be undertaken using a larger corpus. This is to substantiate the initial findings of this small-scale study. Investigation of the evaluative genre expectations must also be pursued specifically by determining reader expectations and the conventions that literature review needs to follow in order to be successfully accepted by its readership in a particular cultural context. With the advent of genre theory to writing, researchers should study writer-reader relationship with more emphasis on the readers' expectations, communicative purposes, writing conventions of various discourse communities in organizing a literature review. In writing instruction, instructors need to initiate graduate students into the academic and professional discourse community, and teach them discourse conventions academic genres such as literature review as a tool for empowering students with rhetorical and linguistic resources. To close, the emergence of genre-specific writing stems from the students' academic and professional goals. For this reason, writing instruction must be geared towards helping the students become successful writers of



academic papers; and help them understand the communicative purposes of genres and the contexts in which these genres are used.

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