



The Linguistic Features in Egyptian-Authored English Research Article Literature Reviews in Linguistics

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ABSTRACT

The current study aims at investigating and comparing the linguistic features of lexical items, tense usage, and voice choice in a sample of ten Egyptian-authored linguistics research article (RA) literature reviews (LRs) in local and international English-medium journals between 2013 and 2019. The paper followed a combination of genre-based and corpus-driven approaches, analyzing the data qualitatively and quantitatively. It adopted the state-of-the-art #LancsBox. The analysis revealed interesting differences between both sub-corpora in the use of lexis, especially in Moves 2 and 3. It was found that lexis varied to reflect the different rhetorical functions of the LR. They also differed in the use of the past simple tense. However, both sub-corpora agreed on using the present simple tense and active voice the most. This paper contributes to the literature by providing a helpful guide for Egyptian and novice researchers to use the linguistic features more appropriately in their LRs. It has pedagogical implications for designing EAP and ESP courses. Further studies on larger corpora are needed to analyze the linguistic features and highlight variations across genres, disciplines, and languages.

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1. Introduction

There is a rising interest in investigating RAs; they are "the most thoroughly researched expert genre" (Charles & Pecorari, 2016, p. 176) because they are considered as a means of circulating academic knowledge (Nhat, 2019; peacock, 2002; Swales, 1990) and an indicator of research production (Charles & Pecorari, 2016). Although the LR is one of the most complex sections to be written (Fazel, 2019; Hsiao & Yu, 2012; Kwan, Chan, & Lam, 2012), it was overlooked and most studies focused on RA other sections.

Little research has been conducted to analyze the LR section/chapter (Chen, 2008, as cited in Jian, 2010; Hsiao & Yu, 2012; Jian, 2010; Kwan, 2006). However, these studies had their limitations. They focused on investigating the generic structure of the LR without touching on the linguistic features. Taking this limitation into consideration with the fact that there is no study—to the researchers' best knowledge—has investigated the linguistic features of RA LRs from a genre-based perspective and that there is no study that has compared the LRs written by Egyptian researchers in local and international English-medium journals, the present study bridges these gaps and contributes to the literature by identifying the linguistic challenges faced by the Egyptian researchers in producing well-written LRs and comparing the linguistic features in a sample of Egyptian-authored RA LRs in local and international journals, adopting a mixture of genre-based and corpus-driven approaches.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The research article

Due to its significance, the RA has been identified by many linguists. For instance, it was defined by Swales (1990) as an academic written genre of a limited length published in a journal or an edited book to discuss an

issue, establishing a link with the literature and interpreting its findings in the light of it. It may be theoretical or empirical. It is written by both experts and novices (Bunton, 2002). Publishing an RA has become a prerequisite for researchers to graduate or get an academic promotion (Flowerdew & Wang, 2016; Habibie, 2019; Nhat, 2019; Woodrow, 2014). In addition, publication enables researchers to become part of their academic communities (Normore, 2011). These benefits, according to Rocco (2011, p. 4), represent researchers' professional and personal motives for publication, implying "money, power, and joy."

2.2. *The literature review*

Several researchers underestimate the value of the LR, viewing it as a superficial survey of previous studies; however, this survey is not a summary of these studies but a means to evaluate them by discussing their methods and findings, shedding light on their weaknesses and strengths, and clarifying how they contribute to the field of knowledge by filling the gaps within the literature (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012; Murray & Hughes, 2008). The LR is certainly one of the most important sections to be written in an RA and academic writing in general (Boote & Beile, 2005; Feak & Swales, 2009). It is considered as the brain of the RA upon which the whole research is built. An LR means tracing what has been written on a specific issue, reflecting on the gap within the previous research, highlighting the significance of the issue under investigation, and addressing a number of research questions. These questions are the starting point from which the researcher selects the appropriate methodology to answer them.

Besides, writing high-quality literature reviews paves the way for writing high-quality research (Boote & Beile, 2005). This will help researchers to publish in high-ranking international journals. Given the significance of the LR, many textbooks have discussed it to help students write their LRs and research in general (Feak & Swales, 2009; Fink, 2014; Jesson, Matheson, & Lacey, 2011). However, most of these manuals have provided brief general advice on writing an LR without delving into the detailed analysis of its rhetorical structure to provide students with the conventions necessary to master it or stating how to apply these guidelines (Hsiao & Yu, 2012, 2015; Kwan et al., 2012; Onwuegbuzie, Leech, & Collins, 2012). Agreeing with Martín (2003, p. 26), "very few of these describe satisfactorily the textual organization and linguistic features of scientific genres."

2.3. *The Linguistic Features*

2.3.1. *Key Lexical Items*

Lexical knowledge is as important as rhetorical knowledge in academic research writing (Biber, Connor, & Upton, 2007; Hyland, 2008). Both lexical items and rhetorical moves were referred to as "building blocks" in writing different genres (Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, & Finegan, 1999, p. 55; Biber et al., 2007, p.9; Cortes, 2013, p. 36). Lexical items are used to reflect different rhetorical functions (Cortes, 2013); however, using them appropriately is challenging for non-native researchers (Güngör & Uysal, 2016). Providing non-native and novice writers with examples of the key lexical items in a particular field enriches their lexicon and make them more competent and confident. Connecting these key lexical items to the different rhetorical functions enables writers to reflect these functions more appropriately and thus produce more effective writings. Investigating the linguistic features associated with different moves/steps has become an easier task due to the emergence of the concordance programs, especially #LancsBox since it analyzes parts of speech, tenses, and voice.

2.3.2. *Tense Usage*

Succeeding in academic writing requires mastering its conventions and one of its conventions is to select the tense forms that suit different rhetorical functions (Chen, 2009; Maroko & Kiai, 2014). However, it is confusing for novice and non-native writers to use tenses appropriately (Hinkel, 2004a, 2004b; Maroko & Kiai, 2014). In addition, incorrect use of tenses is considered as one of the most serious problems in L2 academic writing since it can distort the intended meaning (Hinkel, 2004a) and thus "interfere with communication" (Reid, 2000). Despite the considerable importance of tense in academic writing, textbooks do not provide clear guidelines with respect to its proper usage (Hinkel, 2004b; Maroko & Kiai, 2014).

Tenses vary in RA writing according to the rhetorical functions they serve within one section and across sections. The past simple, the present simple, and the present perfect are the most common tenses in academic writing (Chen, 2009; Li & Ge, 2009; Maroko & Kiai, 2014; Reeves, 2009; Swales, 1990). Generally, the past simple is used to describe particular past events/actions (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999; Hinkel, 2004a, 2004b). It is used in RA introduction and LR sections to refer to the methods and findings of individual past studies (Chen, 2009; Feak & Swales, 2009; Swales, 1990), in method sections to describe the procedures of data collection and analysis (Dastjerdi, Tan, & Abdullah, 2017; Swales, 1990),

and in results, sections to describe the findings reached. However, any interpretations of the findings or commentary on them are expressed in the present simple (Swales, 1990). The present simple tense is also used to express generalizations (Chen 2009; Hinkel, 2004b; Swales, 1990). It is used to report previous findings on the basis that they have been construed as part of the community knowledge (Chen, 2009; Dastjerdi et al., 2017; Feak & Swales, 2009).

In addition to the former tenses, the present perfect tense is also common in introductions (Maroko & Kiai, 2014; Swales, 1990) and LRs (Chen, 2009; Feak & Swales, 2009; Hinkel, 2004b). When it is used in both sections, it refers to the research conducted in general pertinent to (a) particular aspect(s) (Chen, 2009; Feak & Swales, 2009). The present perfect connects present and past since it is used to describe a complete or incomplete action that started prior to the present moment; however, this prior time is indefinite (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, & Svartvik, 1985) and the action is relevant in some way to the present moment. This relation may be its effect or its completion.

According to Chen (2009), the present simple is the most common tense in the LR. In light of Webster and Watson's (2002, p. xviii) guidance on writing an effective LR, they recommend using present rather than past in discussing the literature when either tense is applicable. They ascribed this preference to a number of reasons: a) the present simple provides the reader with a "sense of immediacy", b) it is more rational when expressing concepts and definitions, and c) it is more easily to be realized by the reader due to its simple and concise construction. Similarly, statements being proposed in the present simple are perceived as true, unarguable, and thus more persuasive to the reader (Ivanič & Camps, 2001).

2.3.3. *Voice Choice*

The passive voice was associated with the formal academic writing style (Biber & Gray, 2010; Hinkel, 2004b). It was preferred due to its objective impersonal flavor. However, there is a tendency toward using more active than passive voice in recent years, especially in scientific RAs (Banks, 2017; Leong, Toh, & Chin, 2018; Seone, 2013). There is a lack of research on investigating voice in linguistics RA LR, so the current study seeks to cover this gap.

2.4. *The Current Study*

Given that the linguistic features are both essential and challenging for non-native writers in writing their RAs, that the LR has been paid scant attention, and that no study has investigated the linguistic features used in linguistics RA LR; the present paper bridges these gaps by answering the following research question:

- a) How do the linguistic features of key lexical items, tense usage, and voice choice in the LR of Egyptian-authored ILrMRD (Introduction-Literature review-Method-Results-Discussion) linguistics RAs differ in locally published English-medium journals compared to those published in international English-medium journals?

To answer this question, the present study adopts both genre-based and corpus-driven approaches. From a genre-based perspective, any text (spoken or written) is composed of moves and steps (a sentence or a cluster of sentences) and each move/step serves a communicative function. Genre analysis starts with developing a framework for the communicative functions that the moves can serve in a particular text, then demarcating the text into moves that reflect these functions (Biber et al., 2007). For the genre-based approach, the current study adopted a data-driven model for analyzing RA LR, based on Kwan's (2006) model. This genre-based approach is complemented by a corpus-driven approach which uses the state-of-the-art #LancsBox (Brezina, Weill-Tessier, & McEnery, 2020) was used to identify the linguistic features associated with each move/step and compare them across both sub-corpora.

The results of this study are intended to make the Egyptian researchers more aware of the linguistic knowledge of RA LR in the field of linguistics, make them master the linguistic features necessary to write more effective RA LR, and thus enable them to publish their RAs in more prestigious international journals.

3. Method

3.1. *The Corpus*

A small specialized corpus of ten Egyptian-authored linguistics RA LR published in five top-rated local and five high-impact international English-medium journals between 2013 and 2019 was collected, comprising a total of 16,326 words (see the Appendix for the list of the RAs from which the LR were taken). Specialized—unlike general—corpora can provide reliable results regardless of their size (Koester, 2010), and they are more appropriate for investigating particular genres (Hunston, 2002), especially academic ones (Flowerdew, 2004).

3.2. Analytical Framework

3.2.1. Genre Analysis

The rhetorical functions of the LR texts were identified according to a data-driven model (see Table 1) developed by the researchers based on Kwan's (2006) model. The data-driven model involved Kwan's three moves (i.e., establishing the territory of one's research, creating a research niche, and occupying the research niche). The new model efficiently reflects the rhetorical structure of the Egyptian-authored RA LRs in linguistics.

A rhetorical function can range from one clause to a cluster of sentences, while a sentence can express more than one rhetorical function. This implies that the basic unit of identifying moves and steps is the segment and that the moves/steps are not subject to the grammatical boundaries of sentences and paragraphs (Lewin, Fine, & Young, 2001).

Table 1, A Data-driven Model of Moves and Steps in Egyptian-authored Linguistics RA LRs

Move 1	Establishing one part of the territory of one's research by
Step 1.2	Claiming centrality
Step 1.3	Approaching a different (sub)theme and summarizing a group of relevant previous studies
Step 1.4	Surveying the research-related phenomena
Step 1.5	Evaluating previous studies
Step 1.6	Outlining the structure of the LR
Move 2	Creating a research niche (in response to Move 1) by
Sub-step 2.1A	Providing negative justification
Sub-step 2.1B	Providing positive Justification
Step 2.2	Asserting the relevancy of the surveyed claims to one's research
Step 2.3	Abstracting or synthesizing knowledge claims to establish a theoretical position or a theoretical framework
Move 3	Occupying the research niche by
Step 3.2	Posting theoretical positions/theoretical frameworks
Step 3.3	Presenting research design/processes
Step 3.4	Evaluating the present research
Step 3.5	Providing interpretations of the terminology used in the current research

3.2.2. The Linguistic Analysis

The key lexical items were searched for by using #LancsBox. As for tense analysis, not all the verbs were included. Following Arsyad, Zaim, and Susyla (2018), only the verbs of the main clauses were identified and analyzed. In addition, the verb tenses were classified according to Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman's (1999) tense/aspect system.

3.3. Procedure

Once the RAs were compiled, they were converted from PDF files into plain text files by AntFileConverter (Anthony, 2017), a freeware tool. Then, only the LR sections were extracted and coded as Loc1-Loc5 for the local sub-corpus and Int1-Int5 for the international sub-corpus. Any tables or figures were removed. The linguistic features of the LRs were analyzed and compared across both sub-corpora. The analysis was conducted in two stages. The first stage involved using a genre-based approach. The LR texts were manually coded to different steps, adopting the abovementioned data-driven model. In the second stage, the segments expressing each step across each sub-corpus were compiled in a separate file via NotePad++ (Ho, 2020), so the 10 plain text files became 150 files. Then the files representing each (sub)step were uploaded into #LancsBox v. 5 to identify all key lexical items, tenses, and voice. Finally, both sub-corpora were compared with regard to the most common lexical items, the verb tenses, and voice associated with each (sub)step.

Because the process of identifying and coding moves/steps is subjective, a sample of four texts was randomly selected and double coded by an external rater to ensure reliability. Both ratings were compared and any disagreements were discussed till reaching reconciliation. Finally, the rest of the texts (six LRs) were coded by the current researchers.

4. Results and Discussion

This section compares the distribution of the linguistic features in RA LRs as a whole, within the three moves, and within each move step.

4.1. The linguistic features in RA LRs as a whole

Table 2, The Distribution of the Linguistic Features in the LRs as a Whole across both Sub-corpora

The linguistic features	Local LRs	(%)	International LRs	(%)
Key lexical items	519		1036	
Tense				
Present simple	183	72.62	244	44.44
Present perfect	17	6.75	33	6.01
Past Simple	40	15.87	227	41.35
Present continuous	2	00.79	-	00
Future	-	00	3	00.55
Modals	10	3.97	42	7.65
Voice				
Active	195	77.38	428	77.96
Passive	57	22.62	121	22.04

Table 2 shows that the frequency of the lexical items used in the international sub-corpus was twice their frequency occurrence in the local sub-corpus. As for tense usage, the present simple was the most common tense (72.62%), followed by the past simple (15.87%) in the local LRs. However, both tenses were used almost equally in the international LRs (present simple: 44.44% vs. past simple: 41.35%). The present perfect, the present continuous, and the future simple were rarely used in both sub-corpora. Unlike the stereotypical notion, the active voice was used four times as the passive voice in both sub-corpora (local: 77.38% vs. 22.62% & international: 77.96% vs. 22.04%).

4.2. The linguistic features within the three moves in RA LRs

Table 3, The Linguistic features within the Three Moves of LRs across both Sub-corpora.

Moves	The linguistic features	Local LRs	Intern. LRs
Move 1 <i>Establishing one part of the territory of one's research</i>	Key lexical items	452 (87.09%)	717 (69.21%)
	Tense		
	Present simple	165 (71.74%)	157 (41.21%)
	Present perfect	14 (6.09%)	20 (5.25%)
	Past simple	39 (16.96%)	174 (45.67%)
	Present continuous	2 (00.87%)	-
	Future	-	1 (00.26%)
	Modals	10 (4.34%)	29 (7.61%)
	Voice		
	Active	179 (77.83%)	282 (74.02%)
	Passive	51 (22.17%)	99 (25.98%)
Move 2 <i>Creating a research niche</i>	Key lexical items	30 (5.78%)	183 (17.66%)
	Tense		
	Present simple	13 (76.47%)	63 (51.64%)
	Present perfect	3 (17.65%)	13 (10.65%)
	Past simple	1 (5.88%)	34 (27.87%)
	Future	0 (00%)	1 (00.82%)
	Modals	-	11 (9.02%)
	Voice		
	Active	12 (70.59%)	106 (86.89%)
	Passive	5 (29.41%)	16 (13.11%)

Move 3 <i>Occupying the research niche</i>	Key lexical items		37 (7.13%)	136 (13.13%)
	Tense	Present simple	5 (100%)	24 (52.17%)
		Past simple	-	19 (41.31%)
		Future	-	1 (2.17%)
		Modals	-	2 (4.35%)
	Voice	Active	4 (80%)	40 (86.96%)
		Passive	1 (20%)	6 (13.04%)

As can be noticed from Table 3, the lexical items associated with Move 1 (Establishing one part of the territory of one's research) were of the highest frequency occurrence compared to their percentages in the other moves (local: 87.09% vs. international: 69.21%). The lexical items in both Move 2 (Creating a research niche) and Move 3 (Occupying the research niche) were of similar frequency occurrence (local: 5.78%, 7.13% vs. international: 17.66%, 13.13%). Although the lexical items used in both moves were fewer than those used in Move 1, the lexical items in the international LR were as four times as those in the local LR. This denotes that both moves were paid more attention in the international LR than in the local ones.

Concerning tense usage, tenses varied between both sub-corpora across the three moves; however, both groups preferred the active to the passive voice within the three moves. While the international writers used the past simple more than the present simple in Move 1 (45.67% vs. 41.21%), their local counterparts surprisingly used the present simple considerably more than the past simple (71.74% vs. 16.96%). The present perfect was rarely used in both sub-corpora. In Move 2, the present simple was the most common tense in both sub-corpora (local: 76.47% vs. international: 51.64%). More past simple forms were used in the international than in the local LR, where more present perfect forms were used. In Move 3, the present simple was the only tense used in the local LR, while both the present simple and the past simple were used almost equally in the international LR (52.17% vs. 41.31%). While the future simply disappeared from the local LR, it was rarely used within the three moves in the international dataset. Similarly, modals occurred in Move 1 only in the local LR (4.34%), but they occurred in the three moves in the international LR with the highest frequency in Move 2 (9.02%) and the least in Move 3 (4.35%). As for the voice choice, it was found that the active voice was used prominently more than the passive voice; its percentage reached more than 70% within the three moves across both sub-corpora.

4.3. The linguistic features in the steps of the RA LR move.

4.3.1. The Key Lexical Items

4.3.1.1. The distribution of the key lexical items in move 1 steps

Table 4, The Distribution of the Key Lexical Items in Move 1 Steps across both Sub-corpora.

Move 1 steps	Key lexical items in both sub-corpora	Local LR	Intern. LR
Step 1.1	N.: definition, features, knowledge, meaning V.: define, describe, explain, identify, refer to, show Adj.: basic, certain, common, different, same, main,	257 (56.86%)	123 (17.2%)
Step 1.2	N.: interest, popularity, research, studies, years V.: attract, examine, investigate, focus, witness Adj.: central, crucial, essential, rising, popular, several, new Adv.: more, much, now, recently	42 (9.29%)	29 (4.06%)
Step 1.3	N.: research, studies V.: conduct, find, investigate Adj.: extensive, many, several, most	7 (1.55%)	17 (2.38%)
Step 1.4	N.: analysis, research, researchers, findings, data, groups, methods, strategies, tasks, theories, interviews V.: explain, illustrate, adopt, analyze, argue, conclude, conduct, examine, find, report, reveal Adj.: qualitative, reliable, significant Adv.: significantly, similarly	122 (26.99%)	508 (71.05%)

Step 1.5	N.: <i>accuracy, comprehensiveness, tool, work</i> V.: <i>restrict</i> Adj.: <i>appropriate, important, interesting, limited, useful, state-of-the-art</i> Adv.: <i>not, very</i>	2 (0.44%)	23 (3.21%)
Step 1.6	N.: <i>remainder, review, section(s), topics</i> V.: <i>address, discuss, explain, present</i> Adj.: <i>above, brief, following</i>	22 (4.87%)	15 (2.1%)
Total		452	715

As can be seen in Table 4, more lexical items were used in the international LRs than in the local ones (715 vs. 452). The analysis reveals that the lexical items reflect the steps' rhetorical functions. For example, the rhetorical function of Step 1.1 is to discuss the concepts and theories relevant to the issue under investigation, so the lexical items associated with this step were definition, features, define, and identify. Similarly, the rhetorical function of Step 1.4 is to review the models/methods/findings of previous individual studies, so the lexical items were relevant to methods and findings. It also involved many instances of comparatives such as longer, lower, more, fewer, and higher because it involves comparing two groups. It was found that the lexical items in Step 1.1 were of the highest frequency occurring in the local LR (56.86%), while the lexical items in Step 1.4 were of the highest frequency occurring in the international LR (71.05%). In addition, the lexical items in Steps 1.3, 1.5, and 1.6 were of the lowest frequency occurrences in both sub-corpora

4.3.1.2. The distribution of the key lexical items in move 2 steps

Table 5 involves the frequency occurrence and examples of the lexical items that reflect the rhetorical functions of Move 2 steps.

Table 5, The Distribution of the Key Lexical Items in Move 2 Steps across both Sub-corpora.

Move 2 (Sub)Steps	Key lexical items in both sub-corpora	Local LRs	Intern. LRs
Sub-step 2.1A	Mainly adversative adverbs and conjunctions: (<i>however, not, but, neither ... nor, yet, although, unlike, whereas, while, no</i>) N.: <i>Limitations, need</i> V.: <i>argue, criticize, suffer, need</i> Adj.: <i>additional, few, limited, under-researched</i> Adv.: <i>only, rarely, very</i>	7 (23.33%)	94 (49.74%)
Sub-step 2.1B	N.: <i>Attention, advantage</i> V.: <i>argue, apply, gain, overcome</i> Adj.: <i>appropriate, effective, main, robust, useful</i>	18 (60%)	45 (23.81%)
Step 2.2	N.: <i>comparison, research, review, studies</i> V.: <i>based on</i> Adj.: <i>current, present, relevant</i> Adv.: <i>closely</i> Possessive pronouns: <i>our</i>	-	22 (11.64%)
Step 2.3	N.: <i>findings, research, view, summary</i> V.: <i>indicate, recommend, suggest</i> Adv.: <i>generally</i>	5 (16.67%)	28 (14.81%)
Total		30	189

Table 5 shows that extensively high frequent lexical items were used in the international LR compared to the ones used in the local LR (189 vs. 30). However, the frequency occurrences of the lexical items in Move 2 steps were very lower than the frequency occurrences of their equivalents in Move 1 steps. This indicates that Move 2 was used less than Move 1 in both sub-corpora, especially in the local sub-corpus. Table 5 shows that the lexical items in both sub-corpora reflect the rhetorical functions of Move 2 (Creating a research niche) which changes the focus and moves gradually toward one's research. It serves the communicative functions of justifying one's research (positive and negative lexical items), relating it to the

literature (relate, present/current study/research), and reframing the literature in an innovative way that addresses one's argument (advocate, recommend, suggest). Step 2.1A, for instance, is replete with adversative conjunctions and negative lexical items. It was found that the lexical items used in Sub-steps 2.1A and 2.1B and Step 2.3 were of the highest frequency occurrences in both sub-corpora, while the lexical items used in Step 2.2 were of the least frequency occurrence in both sub-corpora (local: 00% vs. international: 11.64%).

4.3.1.3. The distribution of the key lexical items in move 3 steps

Table 6 involves the frequency occurrence and examples of the lexical items that reflect the rhetorical functions of Move 3 steps.

Table 6, The Distribution of the Key Lexical Items in Move 3 Steps across both Sub-corpora.

Move 3 steps	Key lexical items in both sub-corpora	Local LRs	Intern. LRs
Step 3.1	N.: <i>analysis, attempt, contribution, gap, implications, research questions, paper</i> V.: <i>address, aim, attempt, analyze, fill in, contribute, examine</i> Adj.: <i>current, previous, following</i> Adv.: <i>also, what, how</i> Determiner: <i>this</i>	33 (89.19%)	78 (57.35%)
Step 3.2	N.: <i>approach, framework, research</i> V.: <i>adopt, take, build on</i> Adj.: <i>present</i> Adv.: <i>closely</i>	4 (10.81%)	10 (7.35%)
Step 3.3	N.: <i>criteria, diagnosis, groups, method, selection, task</i> V.: <i>elicit, scrutinize, test, use</i> Adj.: <i>available, easy, main</i>	-	36 (26.47%)
Step 3.4	N.: <i>diagnosis, system</i> V.: <i>handle, restrict</i> Adj.: <i>proposed</i> Adv.: <i>successfully</i>	-	9 (6.62%)
Step 3.5	N.: <i>terms</i> V.: <i>use, refer to</i>	-	3 (2.21%)
Total		37	136

Table 6 shows that more frequent lexical items were used in the international LRs than in the local LRs (136 vs. 37) and that the frequency occurrences of the lexical items were similar in Moves 2 and 3. In addition, it was found that the lexical items of Step 3.1 were of the highest frequency occurrence across both sub-corpora (local: 89.19% vs. international: 57.35%), indicating that Step 3.1 was the most preferred step within Move 3 by the writers across both sub-corpora.

4.3.2. Tense and Voice

4.3.2.1. The distribution of tense and voice in move 1 steps

Table 7, The Distribution of Tense and Voice in Move 1 Steps across both Sub-corpora.

Move 1 steps	Tense & voice	Local LRs	Intern. LRs
Step 1.1	Tense {	Present simple	125 (86.8%)
		Present perfect	103 (79.84%)
		Past simple	2 (1.39%)
		Modals	3 (2.33%)
	Voice {	Active	9 (6.25%)
		Passive	4 (3.1%)
		19 (14.73%)	79 (61.24%)
		108 (75%)	50 (38.76%)
		36 (25%)	

<i>Step 1.2</i>	Tense - Present simple - Present perfect - Past simple - Present continuous - Modals Voice - Active - Passive	7 (35%) 8 (40%) 1 (5%) 2 (10%) 2 (10%) 16 (80%) 4 (20%)	7 (53.85%) 5 (38.46%) - - 1 (7.69%) 9 (69.23%) 4 (30.77%)
<i>Step 1.3</i>	Tense - Present perfect - Past simple Voice - Active - Passive	1 (50%) 1 (50%) 1 (50%) 1 (50%)	7 (100%) - 7 (100%) -
<i>Step 1.4</i>	Tense - Present simple - Present perfect - Past simple - Modals Voice - Active - Passive	24 (43.64%) 3 (5.45%) 28 (50.91%) - 48 (87.27%) 7 (12.73%)	32 (16.16%) 4 (2.02%) 160 (80.81%) 2 (1.01%) 161 (81.31%) 37 (18.69%)
<i>Step 1.5</i>	Tense - Present simple - Present perfect - Past simple - Modals Voice - Active - Passive	3 (100%) - - - 2 (66.67%) 1 (33.33%)	12 (41.38%) 1 (3.45%) 10 (34.48%) 6 (20.69%) 22 (75.86%) 7 (24.14%)
<i>Step 1.6</i>	Tense - Present simple - Future - Modals Voice - Active - Passive Tense	6 (100%) - - 4 (77.78%) 2 (22.22%)	3 (60%) 1 (20%) 1 (20%) 4 (80%) 1 (20%)

Table 7 shows that the present simple was the predominant tense in almost all Move 1 steps in both sub-corpora. It highly occurred in Step 1.1 because this step logically discusses definitions and concepts. However, the past simple was the most used tense in Step 1.4 in both sub-corpora (local: 50.91% vs. international: 80.81%). Using the past simple in Step 1.4 is the most appropriate tense because this step is concerned with reporting previous methodological procedures and findings. It was found that the past simple was used in the international LRs more than in the local LRs, where a similar percentage of the present simple was used (43.64%). This indicates that the writers in the internationally published LRs were able to select the tense that appropriately reflects the rhetorical function of Step 1.4. As for the present perfect, it was the third used tense in all Move 1 steps except for in Steps 1.2 and 1.3 in both sub-corpora, where it was given more preference compared to its occurrence in the other steps. As for voice, it was found that the active voice was used more than the passive voice in all Move 1 steps across both sub-corpora except for Step 1.3, where both voices were used equally in the local LRs.

4.3.2.2. The distribution of tense and voice in move 2 steps

Table 8, The Frequency Occurrence of Tense and Voice in Move 2 Steps across both Sub-corpora.

Move 2 steps	Tense & voice	Local LRs	Intern. LRs
<i>Sub-step 2.1A</i>	Tense - Present simple - Present perfect - Past simple - Modals Voice - Active - Passive	6 (66.67%) 2 (22.22%) 1 (11.11%) - 4 (44.44%) 5 (55.56%)	29 (45.31%) 8 (12.5%) 21 (32.81%) 6 (9.38%) 54 (84.38%) 10 (15.62%)
<i>Sub-step 2.1B</i>	Tense - Present simple - Present perfect - Past simple - Modals Voice - Active - Passive	5 (83.33%) 1 (16.67%) - - 6 (100%) -	17 (60.72%) 3 (10.71%) 7 (25%) 1 (3.57%) 27 (96.43%) 1 (3.57%)
<i>Step 2.2</i>	Tense - Present simple - Present perfect - Past simple - Future - Modals Voice - Active - Passive	- - - - - - -	5 (50%) 1 (10%) 1 (10%) 1 (10%) 2 (20%) 9 (90%) 1 (10%)
<i>Step 2.3</i>	Tense - Present simple - Present perfect - Past simple - Modals Voice - Active - Passive	2 (100%) - - - 2 (100%) -	12 (60%) 1 (5%) 5 (25%) 2 (10%) 16 (80%) 4 (20%)

As can be seen from Table 8, there is a sharp decline in the use of verbs in Move 2 compared to Move 1. This indicates that Move 1 was more favored than Move 2 by the writers across both sub-corpora. In addition, the present simple was the most used tense in all Move 2 steps in both sub-corpora, but it was used in the international LRs more than in the local ones.

While the past simple was the least used tense in the local LRs in Sub-step 2.1A (11.11%), the present perfect was the least used tense in the international LRs (12.5%). In Sub-step 2.1B, the past simple disappeared from the local LRs and the present perfect was the least used tense in the international subset (10.71%).

Step 2.2 disappeared from the local LRs, indicating that the international LRs conformed to Kwan's model more than the local LRs. The three tenses of the present perfect, the past simple, and the future simple were rarely used in the international sub-corpus in this step. Although the present simple was the only used tense in the local LRs in Step 2.3, there were some instances of the past simple in the international LRs (25%) and one instance of the present perfect (5%).

Modals were used only in the international LRs, while they disappeared from the local subset. The active voice was used more than the passive voice in all Move 2 steps across both sub-corpora except for Step 2.1A, where the passive voice was used slightly more than the active voice in the local LRs (passive: 55.56% vs. active: 44.44%).

4.3.2.3. The distribution of tense and voice in move 3 steps

Table 9, The Frequency Occurrence of Tense and Voice in Move 3 Steps across both Sub-corpora.

Move 3 steps	Tense & voice	Local LRs	Intern. LRs
<i>Step 3.1</i>	Tense { Present simple Past simple Modals Voice { Active Passive	4 (100%) - - 4 (100%) -	11 (50%) 10 (45.45%) 1 (4.55%) 20 (90.91%) 2 (9.09%)
<i>Step 3.2</i>	Tense { Present simple Past simple Future Modals Voice { Active Passive	1 (100%) - - - 1 (100%) -	2 (40%) 1 (20%) 1 (20%) 1 (20%) 4 (80%) 1 (20%)
<i>Step 3.3</i>	Tense { Present simple Past simple Voice { Active Passive	- - - -	4 (33.33%) 8 (66.67%) 9 (75%) 3 (25%)
<i>Step 3.4</i>	Tense { Present simple Voice { Active Passive	- - -	6 (100%) 6 (100%) -
<i>Step 3.5</i>	Tense { Present simple Voice { Active Passive	- - -	1 (100%) 1 (100%) -

Table 9 shows that the present simple was the most used tense in almost all Move 3 steps in the international LRs and the only tense in the local ones because this move discusses one's present research. Both present and past simple tenses were used almost equally in Step 3.1 in the international LRs (present simple: 50% vs. past simple: 45.45%). In Step 3.2, the instances of the present simple were equal to those of the past simple and the future simple in the international LRs (present simple: 40%, past simple: 20%, & future simple: 20%).

Conversely, the past simple was used twice more than the present simple in Step 3.3 in the international LRs (66.67% vs. 33.33%). Similar to its function in Step 1.4, the past simple was used in Step 3.3 to describe the methods applied to conduct research. Finally, the present simple was the only used tense in Steps 3.4 and 3.5. The three latter steps did not show up in the local sub-corpus.

Only two modals were used in all Move 3 steps, while they disappeared from the local LRs. The active voice was used more than the passive voice in all Move 3 steps in the international LRs and Step 3.1 in the local LRs. However, the passive voice was used once in Step 3.2 in Loc2.

4.4. Discussion

This paper aimed at investigating and comparing the linguistic features in a sample of Egyptian-authored linguistics RA LRs in local and international journals, adopting genre-based and corpus-driven approaches. The linguistic analysis reflects the rhetorical functions of the moves/steps, implying that the micro-level analysis supports the macro-level analysis.

4.4.1. *The Lexical Items*

In general, it was found that the frequency occurrence of the lexical items used in the international LRs was twice its frequency occurrence in the local LRs (local: 519 vs. international: 1036). Move 1 involved the highest percentage of the lexical items in both sub-corpora (local: 87.09% vs. international: 69.21%) and similar percentages were found in Moves 2 and 3 (local: 5.78% & 7.13% vs. international: 17.66% & 13.13%). Some lexical items were common among many steps, while others were restricted to particular steps. For example, the words of research, conduct, examine, investigate, findings, find are common among many steps across the three moves. In contrast, some words are restricted to only one or two steps. For example, the words define, identify, refer to, a definition is associated with Steps 1.1 and 3.5 because both steps involve defining concepts and terms. The words of popularity, interest, attract, essential, popular, rising to occur mainly in Step 1.2 to highlight the significance of the study under investigation. Comparatives are more expected to be used in Step 1.4 since its main rhetorical function is to report the previous findings which mostly compare two groups. Finally, adversative conjunctions are heavily used in Sub-step 2.1A to denote the gaps within the literature.

4.4.2. *Tense Usage*

Not only do tenses vary at the move level, but also at the step level. For instance, the past simple was used in Step 1.4 to refer to particular previous findings of individual studies (Chen 2009; Feak & Swales, 2009; Swales, 1990), but commenting on these studies requires the use of the present simple (Swales, 1990). Using more than one tense in one step denotes the flexibility of tenses according to the purposes they express. It also implies that the macro analysis should be complemented by a microanalysis to provide a more competent detailed model that in turn will lead to a better understanding of the LR section and help writers produce more effective ones.

Although the tenses vary within individual steps, one tense is always more associated with each step. This harmonious association results from the fact that the tense reflects the step's rhetorical function and that the step's rhetorical function echoes the tense's meaning. For instance, the present simple is usually used to express generalizations (Chen 2009; Hinkel, 2004b; Hunston, 2002; Swales, 1990) and previous findings to add a sense of generality to the findings being proposed (Chen, 2009; Dastjerdi et al., 2017; Feak & Swales, 2009). That is why the present simple dominantly occurs in Step 1.1, whose rhetorical function is to express definitions and common-sense knowledge. The past simple describes past actions (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999; Hinkel, 2004a, 2004b), so it is closely related to Step 1.4, where the writer reports previous theories/methods/findings (Chen, 2009; Feak & Swales, 2009; Swales, 1990). However, the writers of the local LRs improperly used the present simple in Step 1.4. They undoubtedly realize the difference between the present and the past simple tenses, but their improper use of the present simple reflects their unawareness of genre knowledge.

The current study revealed that the present simple and the past simple had the highest frequency occurrences across both sub-corpora. These findings are in line with the previous findings that both tenses are preferred in both L1 (Hinkel, 2004b) and L2 writing (Dastjerdi et al., 2017; Hinkel, 2004b; Maroko & Kiai, 2014). This may be attributed to the fact that they are simple tenses and most novice and non-native writers are more likely to avoid producing complex verb constructions, resorting to using simpler forms even if they are incorrect (Hinkel, 2004b).

As for the present perfect, it refers to the studies conducted on a particular aspect or relation among different variables (Chen, 2009; Feak & Swales, 2009). It is prevalent in Steps 1.2 and 1.3. Both steps introduce general findings from a group of studies on the issue under investigation. Agreeing with the literature that it is also common in the LR (Chen, 2009; Hinkel, 2004b; Maroko & Kiai, 2014), the present findings reveal that despite its low percentage, the present perfect is the third common tense in both sub-corpora (local: 6.75% vs. international: 6.01%).

In line with the literature, the findings revealed that the present simple, the past simple, and the present perfect are the most common tenses in the LR (Chen, 2009; Feak & Swales, 2009; Li & Ge, 2009; Maroko & Kiai, 2014; Reeves, 2009), but the present simple was the most prevalent tense in both sub-corpora (Chen, 2009). Finally, the rare use of the future simple and the present continuous in both sub-corpora echoes

previous findings that future (Hinkel, 2004a, 2004b) and progressive tenses (Hinkel, 2004a, 2004b; Hunston, 2002; Swales, 1990) are the least occurring tenses in academic writing.

4.4.3. Voice Choice

Contradicting the stereotypical notion that the passive voice is more associated with the formal academic writing style (Hinkel, 2004b; Biber & Gray, 2010), the findings of the current study support the findings of most studies conducted on scientific writing that there is a decline in using the passive voice and tendency toward using more active voice (Banks, 2017; Leong et al., 2018; Seone, 2013).

5. Conclusion

The main purpose of the current study was to investigate the linguistic features of lexical items, tense usage, and voice choice in a sample of Egyptian-authored linguistics RA LRs. It adopted genre-based and corpus-driven approaches. The findings showed that the linguistic preferences varied according to the communicative function of each move step. However, more lexical items and more appropriate tenses were used in the internationally published LRs than in the locally published ones. The present simple was the most preferable tense and the present perfect was the least common tense in both sub-corpora. Both groups used the active voice extensively more than the passive voice. The study highlights these differences and thus contributes to a better understanding of the linguistic features necessary to writing more effective LRs. It also assists Egyptian and novice researchers to use the linguistic features more appropriately to reflect the different rhetorical functions of linguistics RA LRs. The findings of the current study can be taught to Egyptian and apprentice researchers in EAP and ESP courses to master the LR writing conventions, producing well-written linguistics RA LRs and publishing their RAs in reputable international journals. These writing guidelines can also be used to teach M.A. and Ph.D. candidates to write more efficient LR chapters.

The study was limited to investigating only Egyptian-authored RAs, only one section (LR), and only one discipline (linguistics) in a small corpus. More studies on larger corpora are needed to provide more generalizable findings. Future studies comparing the linguistic features in complete RAs may reveal additional interesting differences. Other linguistic features such as lexical bundles and syntactic complexity can be added for investigation. Academic wordlists can be extracted in different disciplines, making use of different tools for automatic extraction. Future studies analyzing the linguistic features in other genres such as M.A./Ph.D. proposals and dissertations can reveal similarities/differences across genres. Further studies can investigate the linguistic features in scientific disciplines to highlight variations across disciplines. Finally, a third sub-corpus of Egyptian-authored Arabic linguistics RAs can be added to compare the linguistic features in both English and Arabic, investigating variations across languages.

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Woodrow, L. (2014). *Writing about quantitative research in applied linguistics*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Appendix

List of Research Articles in the Local and International Sub-corpora

(Loc1)

Emara, I. (2017). [*Gender identity construction in facebook statuses of Egyptian young adults*](#). Cairo Studies in English, 2017(1). 86-111.

(Loc2)

Badr, N. O. A. (2016). *A linguistic study of humor in Bassem Youssef's "Al Bernameg" and Jon Stewart's "The Daily Show": A multi-modal integrated approach*. Journal of Scientific Research in Arts, 2(17-3), 1-42.

(Loc3)

Gad, R. F. (2018). [*An eco-linguistic account of press real estate advertisements in Egypt*](#). Bulletin of the Faculty of Languages & Translation, 15(Foreign Section), 239-298.

(Loc4)

El Attar, A. (2017). *Metaphoric Blends in Online Cartoons on Egypt's Education System*. Philology, 34(68), 61-96.

(Loc5)

Bekheet, M. M. S. (2019). *Muslim Representation in Post 9/11 Hollywood: A Semio-Pragmatic Analysis*. Journal of the Faculty of Arts & Humanities, Suez Canal University, 2(29), 216-253.

(Int1)

Azaz, M. (2019). *L1 transfer effects in the production of generic plurals in L2 Arabic*. The Modern Language Journal, 103(1), 275-290.

(Int2)

Mohamed, A. A. (2018). *Exposure frequency in L2 reading: An eye-movement perspective of incidental vocabulary learning*. Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 40(2), 269-293.

(Int3)

Ibrahim, K. (2019). *Foreign language practice in simulation video games: An analysis of game-based FL use dynamics*. Foreign Language Annals, 52(2), 335-357.

(Int4)

Morkus, N. (2014). *Refusals in Egyptian Arabic and American English*. Journal of Pragmatics, 70, 86-107.

(Int5)

Shalan, K, Magdy, M., & Fahmy, A. (2013). *Analysis and feedback of erroneous Arabic verbs*. Natural Language Engineering, 21(2), 271-323.

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