CONCLUSIONS AS COMPONENTS OF RESEARCH ARTICLES ACROSS PORTUGUESE AS A NATIVE LANGUAGE, ENGLISH AS A NATIVE LANGUAGE AND ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: A CONTRASTIVE GENRE STUDY
Conclusões como um Componente dos Artigos Acadêmicos Escritos em Português como Língua Nativa, em Inglês como Língua Nativa e em Inglês como língua Estrangeira: Um estudo Contrastivo de Gênero

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Abstract

The present study is a contrastive investigation of conclusions of research articles (RAs) written in Portuguese as a native language, English as a native language and English as a foreign language. The analysis was carried out according to the principles of genre studies as proposed by Swales (1990). The corpus is composed of 36 conclusions of RAs in the field of applied linguistics. The findings reveal no constant pattern of rhetorical organization and no obligatory moves or steps. However, the results indicate the occurrence of a complex array of moves and steps which exhibits a cyclical structure but with differences in the three languages investigated. Furthermore, the samples investigated permitted the elaboration of a proposal of a model for this component of RAs. The study, therefore, contributes to a richer understanding of the nature of conclusions of RAs and, as such, of academic writing.

Key-words: *Genre; conclusions of RAs; rhetorical organization; contrastive.*

Resumo

O presente estudo é uma investigação contrastiva de conclusões de artigos acadêmicos (AAs) escritos em português como língua nativa, em inglês como língua nativa e em inglês como língua estrangeira. A análise foi realizada a partir dos princípios dos estudos de gênero pro-

postos por Swales (1990). O corpus foi composto por 36 conclusões de AAs na área de lingüística aplicada. Os resultados não revelaram um padrão constante de organização e de ocorrência de movimentos e passos. Entretanto, foi possível detectar a ocorrência de uma varieda-de complexa de passos e movimentos, com uma estrutura cíclica sem apresentar diferenças nas três línguas investigadas. Além disso, a in-vestigação permitiu a elaboração de uma proposta de modelo para essa seção de AAs. O estudo contribui então, para um melhor entendi-mento acerca da natureza das conclusões de AAs, e conseqüentemente, da redação acadêmica.

Palavras-chave: *gênero; conclusões de AAs; organização retórica; contrastivo.*

1.   Introduction

The research article has received extensive attention in genre analysis studies (for instance Bazerman, 1988; Holmes, 1997; Swales, 1990; Yang & Allison, 2003). One line of research prevailing in the last 25 years has concentrated on the study of rhetorical patterns of organization of RAs due to the recognition of the need for awareness of those patterns in this genre.

This line of investigation generated several important studies that have helped scholars have a better understanding of the rhetorical organization of research articles, with its roots in the influential work of Swales (1981, 1990), who follows the ESP[1] (English for Specific Purposes) approach to genre studies. In this seminal study, the author analyzed the structural organization of introductions of RAs, thus establishing the pioneering CARS (Create a Research Space) model, which comprises three obligatory moves or rhetorical functions: i) Establishing a territory, ii) Establishing a niche and iii) Occupying the niche.

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[1] ESP is an instruction-based approach which places great importance upon meeting the specific needs of the learners (for more detail, check Grabe & Kaplan, 1996 and Swales, 1994).

Another early, well-respected and also influential study, among many others, developed in the area is that of Hill, Soppelsa and West (1982). In their study, they came to categorize the divisions of the RA as being composed of Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion (IMRD).

To date, there is substantial literature on the structural organization of different sections of research articles, including all the aforementioned components, such as Swales' (1981, 1990, 2004), Ozturk's (2007), Meurer's (1997) works on introductions; Swales and Feak's (1994) study on methods; Posteguillo's (1999), Nwogu's (1997) and Brett's (1994) researches on results; and Yang & Allison's (2003), Holmes' (1997) and Hopkins and Dudley-Evans' (1988) investigations on discussions.

The literature so far mentioned has given little attention to the existence of a conclusion section within RAs. In fact, more generally in the IMRD framework, the conclusion section is conflated with the discussion section within a single heading. However, according to Yang and Allison (2003, 2004), many research articles devote a separate section for a conclusion. These authors analyzed 20 RAs in the field of applied linguistics, out of which 13 had separate conclusion sections. The macro-structure of those 13 articles was found to be composed of three moves and five steps. Their configuration includes: Move 1 - summarizing the study; Move 2 - evaluating the study, realized by three steps, namely i) indicating significance/advantage, ii) indicating limitations, iii) evaluating methodology; and Move 3 - deductions from the research, realized by i) recommending further research, ii) drawing pedagogic implications. Summarizing the study was found to be the most frequent move, although it is not obligatory. The findings also indicated a linear structure, with episodic occasions of cycling structure, i.e., recurrence of the same move and/or step does not often occur.

Yet, despite Yang and Allison's (2003) study, the conclusions sections of RAs in the field of applied linguistics, to our knowledge, remain under-explored. As such, we were led into the investigation of how conclusions of RAs in this field are rhetorically organized.

Due to some previous research findings in contrastive rhetoric that claim that the first language and culture are likely to influence one's writing in a second language (Connor, 1996; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996; Oliveira, 1997; Rezende & Hemais, 2004), a further aspect we considered relevant to investigate was how different/similar macro structures would be across different language versions, which, in fact, configures another gap in the literature, as studies of academic genres which account for this important dimension are rather sparse, especially regarding RAs.

Summing up, this study comprises genre analysis, and contrastive studies so as to investigate how conclusions of RAs produced in Brazilian Portuguese as a native language (henceforth PL1), English as a native language (henceforth EL1) and English as a foreign/second language (henceforth EL2) are structurally organized at the macro level with respect to moves and steps.

2.   Methods

Data for the research consists of 36 sampled conclusions of research articles explicitly labeled as such – 12 in Portuguese L1, 12 in English L1, and 12 in English L2 – from five established journals, 2 Anglo-American[2] (*Applied Linguistics (AL)* and *English Language Teaching Journal (ELT))* and 3 published in Brazil *(Linguagem e Ensino (LE)*, *The ESPecialist (The ESP.)*, and *Documentação de Estudos em Lingüística Teórica e Aplicada (DELTA))*. The corpus was circumscribed to the field of applied linguistics, a restriction partly motivated by the lack of research and partly by the widely-recognized fact that different disciplines have different preferences with regard to textual organization (Bunton, 2005; Thompson, 2001; Holmes, 1997).

Data analysis comprised two steps. In order to investigate the macro-structure, we started the analysis of the rhetorical organization

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[2] British and American texts are grouped together, because the focus here is on different languages rather than language variety.

of the conclusions in reference to Yang and Allison's (2003) framework of genre analysis as extensions of Swales' (1981, 1990, 2004) CARS model (Creating a Research Space) for article introductions. Since this move-analytical model did not account for all the purposes we found in our investigation, we further included Bunton's (2005) model for conclusions of PhD dissertations in the field of Humanities and Social Sciences, whose framework includes five moves, namely introductory restatement, consolidation of research space, practical implications and recommendations, future research and concluding restatement, out of which the two first ones were found to be obligatory. As such, these two models were taken as the starting point for analysis, but new moves or steps were proposed whenever a given part of the text appeared to contain a purpose different from those already classified in the literature.

The basic unit of analysis was the sentence. However, aware of the fact that a single sentence may, sometimes, present two functions, i.e., two moves, when this situation occurred, the analysts focused on the most salient purpose (Bunton, 2005; Yang & Allison, 2003). In order to check the validity and reliability of the research carried out, an external rater was invited to read the analysis and discuss possible disagreements. The rate of disagreements in the judgments was 4,9%.

In the last step, a contrastive analysis between texts written in PL1, EL1 and EL2 was conducted, which concentrated on potential differences/similarities concerning the rhetorical structure. The contrastive analysis verified whether writers writing in English as a foreign/second language (L2) tended to adopt the linguistic and rhetorical manifestations of Brazilian Portuguese, their native language, or whether they tended to follow the rhetorical strategies of writers of English (L1). The texts written in English (L2) were then compared to the ones written in English (L1) and in Brazilian Portuguese (L1).

3.   Results and discussion

The overall length of the conclusions ranged from 86 to 542 words, an average of 294.5, distributed in 2 to 23 sentences, which, in turn, were distributed in 1 to 9 moves, a feature that characterizes

conclusions as having recurring moves. This cyclical structure is also found in most of the studies carried out in RAs, regardless of section, thus corroborating the prevailing literature in the area. As for conclusions though, Yang and Allison's (2003) study reveals a more linear structure than the one found in the present research.

The analysis reveals a considerable rhetorical variation. This complex array of moves and steps may have arisen from the amount of freedom that writers have when elaborating their conclusions probably due to the fact that conclusions as separate sections have not been researched in depth. As such, little has been said concerning this component of RAs' text features, which, therefore, lack explicit guidelines for its construction.

The structural results of the 36 conclusions of RAs have also revealed no patterns constantly present in the corpus and the absence of an obligatory move or step, i.e., a move that is present in all the conclusions analysed. Therefore, the sequence of the overall model resulting from this investigation (see Figure 1 that follows) does not represent the order in which the moves and/or steps appear in all the texts under analysis. Rather, the sequence of moves mirrors a personal recommendation of how the moves encountered should be more logically organized. As for the steps, the sequence proposed in this article includes the most frequent ones found along the texts.

Apart from this hybrid arrangement of moves and steps, a quasi-obligatory[3] move was encountered, as is the case of Move 6, present in 94.4% of the conclusions, with 70 occurrences, a finding that signals this move as recurring in several texts. In line with Yang and Allison's (2003) results as well as with Bunton's (2005), the findings of this study also reveal this move to be usually placed at the very end of the conclusions, thus configuring the last purpose of the writer.

On the basis of the results as a whole, the following figure captures the rhetorical structure of conclusions. Along with this figure, the frequency of occurrences of moves is provided.

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[3] A move is considered quasi-obligatory when it occurs in, at least, 90% of the corpus.

MOVE 1 – RESTATING THE INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT		**14**
STEP A	Stating the purpose, research question or hypothesis	
STEP B	Establishing a territory/niche	
STEP C	Making reference to previous research	
MOVE 2 – CONSOLIDATING THE RESEARCH SPACE		**32**
STEP A	Summarizing findings/results	
STEP B	Stating method	
STEP C	Making reference to previous research	
STEP D	Suggesting future research	
STEP E	Raising questions	
MOVE 3 – SUMMARIZING THE STUDY		**10**
MOVE 4 – COMMENTING ON RESULTS		**19**
STEP A	Interpreting results	
STEP B	Comparing results with literature	
STEP C	Raising questions	
MOVE 5 – EVALUATING THE STUDY		**27**
STEP A	Indicating limitations	
STEP B	Indicating significance	
STEP C	Evaluating methodology	
STEP D	Suggesting future research	
MOVE 6 – MAKING DEDUCTIONS FROM THE RESEARCH		**70**
STEP A	Drawing implications/applications	
STEP B	Recommending/suggesting	
STEP C	Making reference to previous research	
STEP D	Suggesting future research	
STEP E	Making overall claim	

Figure 1: Rhetorical organizational pattern of conclusions of RAs as proposed in this study

Move 6 – *Making deductions from the research* – probably stands out in the corpus due to its purpose of going beyond the results of the research being reported on by suggesting personal positions, attitudes and behaviors to solve the problems identified by the research, and as linking it to the wider world of practical and pedagogic implications/ applications as well as to future research. An example of a recommendation/suggestion (step B) follows:

> Ex.1: *This conception of task process may also serve to acknowledge teachers' sensitivity to students' needs – situations in which teachers do not intervene to 'repair' a task but instead allow the task to develop through enactment.* (EL1-T9[4]).

The second most frequently found move along the corpus is Move 2 – *Consolidating the research space*. The nomenclature of this important move is borrowed from Swales and Feak (1994) and Bunton (2005). Overall, the conclusions in Move 2, as observed in Figure 1, display 5 steps: *summarizing findings/results, stating method, making reference to previous research, suggesting future research and raising question*; step A being the most frequent one, appearing in 81.2% of the texts in which Move 2 occurs. An example of this step is provided below.

> Ex.2: *Em síntese, a análise do corpus revela que a escolha léxi-co-gramatical disponível para o falante do português entre VPA e VPS apresenta-se como alternativa para realização de dife-rentes significados no nível da metafunção textual.* (PL1-T1).- (Translation[5]: *In sum, the analysis of the corpus reveals that the lexicogrammatical choice available for the Portuguese speaker between VPA and VPS is presented as an alternative for the realization of different meanings at the level of the textual metafunction.*)

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[4] The convention established for the texts are language oriented. Thus, EL1-T9 refers to the ninth text of English as a first language, whose reference is placed in the appendix.
[5] The original examples in PL1 have been translated by the authors.

The results reveal Move 5 – *Evaluating the study* – as the third most favored move. Its nomenclature is also based on Yang and Allison's (2003) model of Conclusion sections. This other move that emerged from the analysis functions to evaluate the overall study by *identifying the limitations, evaluating the methodology, commenting on the significance of the study* and/or *giving suggestions for future research.* The limitations step, as in *Cumpre ressalvar, finalmente, que o corpus examinado foi limitado no que diz respeito aos gêneros textuais incluídos.* (PL1-T1) – (Translation: *It is important to highlight, finally, that the corpus examined was limited to the included textual genres*), is the most frequent step in this move, adding up to 15 occurrences (55.5%).

Move 4, whose main purpose is to *comment on results* so as to validate the significance of the research results in relation to the field of study, follows Move 5 with a total of 19 occurrences in 15 texts. This move presents three steps that realize its function, namely, i) *interpreting results*, ii) *comparing results with literature* and iii) *raising questions*; step A, of which an example follows, found to be the most frequent one.

> Ex.3: *Concerning the relationship between the range of strategy use across skills as well as actual strategy use as identified through verbal protocols and ratings of task performance on writing tasks, learning outcomes do not seem to be closely and/ or only associated with high rating scores.* (EL2-T5).

Finally, moves 1 and 3 are the least favored moves encountered in the corpus. Move 1 – *Restating the introductory statement*, which usually appears at the beginning of the conclusion sections, aims at reiterating the general topic being researched, being articulated by three steps which account for purpose, research question or hypothesis, *territory/niche*, and *reference to previous research*. Stating the purpose, as in *O objetivo principal deste trabalho é apresentar uma breve descrição da variante étnica falada pelos parkatêjê.* (PL1-T4) – (Translation: *The main objective of this study is to present a brief description of the ethnic variant spoken by the parkatêjê.*) is the most frequent step in this move.

Move 3, the least frequently used by writers, provides readers with a succinct picture of the main points from the viewpoint of the overall study, such as in *O presente trabalho permitiu-nos discutir como as concepções de avaliação e de ensino-aprendizagem da leitura se interrelacionam no universo da sala de aula.* (PL1-T11). – (Translation: *The present study allowed us to discuss how the conceptions of evaluation and the teaching-learning of reading interrelate in the universe of the classroom.*). This move does not have any step, thus corroborating Yang and Allison's model. As these authors state, this move captures and realizes the purpose of the writers without the appearance of steps to account for any further realization of the move.

Through Table 1, which shows the number of occurrences of each move as well as the number of conclusions in which each move occurs along the corpus, it can be readily noticed that the number of conclusions in which the moves occur is always minor than the number of occurrences of the move along the corpus, which reinforces the cyclical structure of moves previously discussed.

Move	Number of occurrences	Number of conclusions in which the move appears and respective percentage
Move 6	70	34 = 94.4%
Move 2	32	23 = 63.8%
Move 5	27	18 = 50%
Move 4	19	15 = 41.6%
Move 1	14	11 = 30.5%
Move 3	10	10 = 27.7%

Table 1: Frequency of moves in conclusions

Moreover, the model proposed has three steps recurring in different moves, namely *suggesting future research, making reference to previous research* and *raising questions*, which has happened due to the different role they play at these different moments, which has also

occurred in Bunton's (2005) model. If we think of future research, for example, this was realized in three different moves – *consolidating research space, evaluating the study* and *making deductions from the research* – and, as such, for three different purposes. This step recurs across moves due to its difference more on emphasis than on kind.

With regard to ESP approaches to the teaching of writing, these complex results at the macro-level structure of conclusions appear to signal that it is extremely important that writing from a genre perspective is continually investigated so that student writers start viewing writing as a mode of purposeful communication. Consequently, it is likely that the organization of thought and knowledge into written language gets improved, resulting in text fluidity.

4.   Contrastive findings

Analysis of the macro level of rhetorical organizations of conclusions have revealed parallels and differences in the outcomes of the first and second language writers analyzed in this study.

As seen previously, 12 conclusions were analyzed in each language version. Overall, the number of words in these texts ranged from 86 to 542, with an average number of 294.55 words per text, while sentences ranged from 2 to 23, corresponding to an average number of 10.33 sentences per text. In *PL1* texts, word variation ranged from 157 to 542, coming to an average number of 318. Sentences varied from 2 to 18, with an average number of 10.66. *EL1* conclusions ranged from 86 to 454, averaging 244.75 words. Sentences varied from 3 to 23 with an average 10.41. In *EL2*, writers used an average number of 320.91 words, distributed in texts whose length ranged from 158 to 523. Sentences varied from 3 to 19, an average 9.91.

Language version	Average number of words	Average number of sentences
PL1	318	10.66
EL1	244.75	10.41
EL2	320.91	9.91
Average	294.55	10.33

Table 2: Word and sentence variation across language version

As can be noticed from Table 2, word variation between PL1 and EL1 conclusions appears to be substantial, each consecutively with a rate of 318 and 244.75 words per sentence. Sentences, nonetheless, do not seem to present any sharp difference in these two groups; PL1 texts present an average number of 10.66 sentences per text and EL1 an average 10.41. However, an examination of the intra-relation of these averages (number of words divided by number of sentences) demonstrates that in PL1, there are 29.83 words per sentence, while in EL1 there are 23.51. These results seem to conform to the inclinations expressed by previous research in contrastive rhetoric (Oliveira, 1997) as Brazilian writers tend to elaborate more on their pieces of writing as compared to their native English-speaking counterparts, a tendency that can be extended to Latin writers, who, according to Lux and Grabe (1991), present a larger number of arguments in subordinate structures as opposed to US American students, whose writing focuses more on independent structures, leading to a more reduced sentence style.

Language version	Average of words per sentence
PL1	29.83
EL1	23.51
EL2	32.38

Table 3: Average number of words per sentence across language version

In reference to the material collected from Brazilian writers of English L2, results, as indicated in Table 3, present an average number

of 32.38 words per sentence, a tendency more closely related to PL1 than to EL1, a result that appears to indicate that Brazilian writers are more influenced by their own rhetorical style than by the style of their English-speaking counterparts. Again, this finding corroborates the literature of contrastive rhetoric (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996; Connor, 1996) which asserts that linguistic and rhetorical conventions of the first language interfere with the writing of the second language.

As a whole, the corpus presents a total of 6 moves. Nevertheless, their patterns of distribution are not the same. <u>Move 1</u> – *Restating the introductory statement* – appearing in the corpus 14 times, occurs in *PL1* texts 3 times, representing a percentage of 21.42% of the total, i.e. this percentage refers to the total number of occurrences of Move 1 throughout the whole corpus; in *EL1*, 6 times, corresponding to a percentage of 42.85%; and in *EL2*, 5 times, representing 35.71% of the occurrences, as can be noticed in Table 4 that follows. This counting appears to signal that it is more frequent to provide the purpose of a work in the introductory restatement of conclusions of RAs in English L1 than in Portuguese L1. Interestingly, contrary to the findings in relation to the length of texts (considering number of words per sentences), Brazilian writers, writing in the second/foreign language, tend to follow the EL1 convention.

Moves	Occurrence(s)				Percentage			
Language version	PL1	EL1	EL2	Total	PL1	EL1	EL2	Total
Move 1: Restating the introductory statement	3	6	5	14	21.42	42.85	35.71	99.98
Move 2: Consolidating the research space	15	6	11	32	46.87	18.75	34.37	99.99
Move 3: Summarizing the study	5	3	2	10	50	30	20	100
Move 4: Commenting on results	5	9	5	19	26.31	47.36	26.31	99.98
Move 5: Evaluating the study	10	5	12	27	37.03	18.51	44.44	99.98
Move 6: Making deductions from the research	23	22	25	70	32.85	31.42	35.71	99.98

Table 4: Frequency of moves across language versions as compared to the whole corpus (percentages here refer to the total number of occurrences within the move being discussed)

Move 2 – *Consolidating the research space* – in *PL1* texts, as seen in Table 4, represents a percentage of 46.87% with 15 of the total of 32 occurrences, while in *EL1*, this percentage falls to 18.75% with a number of 6 realizations. In *EL2*, this percentage is in between the two previous ones, coming to a total of 34.37% with 11 occurrences. In this move, the writing of EL2 composers appears to be influenced at times by the conventions of their own language, and at other times, by the conventions of the second/foreign language.

Move 3 – *Summarizing the study* – accounts, in *PL1* texts, for 50% of the 10 occurrences within the corpus, representing a total of 5 occurrences. In *EL1*, it occurs 3 times (30%) and in *EL2*, twice (20%). The move of summarizing the study, according to the results here obtained, seems to be more frequent in Brazilian Portuguese than in English. Again, in EL2 writing, conventions of the second/foreign language appear to have echoed more strongly than those of PL1.

Move 4 – *Commenting on results* – which appears in the whole corpus 19 times, is present in *PL1* Conclusions 5 times, accounting for 26.31% of the total number of occurrences. This same move appears in *EL1* texts with a higher frequency (47.36% = 9 occurrences) and in *EL2*, like in PL1, it has 5 realizations, representing a percentage of 26.31%. As noted, *commenting on results* is more recurrent in EL1 texts than in PL1 or EL2, these two latter presenting exactly the same occurrence, now signaling a larger proximity between them.

Move 5 – *Evaluating the study* – with a total of 27 occurrences, is present 10 times throughout the *PL1* Conclusions, representing a to-tal of 37.03%. In *EL1*, there are half of these occurrences (5), accounting for 18.51%. It is interesting to notice that texts produced in *EL2* approximate PL1 – even outnumbering scores – more than EL1. There are as many as 12 occurrences of move 5, corresponding to a percentage of 44.44%. Like Move 4, this move presents a closer relation between PL1 and EL2 as opposed to EL1 and EL2.

Finally, Move 6 – *Making deductions from the research* – is more evenly balanced among language versions. Conclusions written

in *PL1* are responsible for 23 out of the 70 occurrences, representing 32.85%; in *EL1* for 22, corresponding to 31.42%; and in *EL2* for 25, accounting for 35.71% of the total occurrences.

In general terms, according to the inter-relation between the language-oriented texts within the whole corpus, the rhetorical organization of conclusions of RAs in terms of their move-analytical structure indicates an unbalanced pattern of distribution, which appears to signal that Brazilian writers are at times more influenced by the rhetorical pattern of their own language, and at others by the rhetorical conventions of the second/foreign language.

Analysis of the rhetorical organization did not reveal any significant differences among the three language versions. The analysis appears to demonstrate that the EL2 writers investigated in this research are in parallel to their PL1 and EL1 counterparts regarding the feature of cyclicity of moves and steps and the frequent inclusion of Move 6 – Making deductions from the research – which is a quasi-obligatory move in the conclusions of all three language versions. As for the other moves analyzed under the macro-structural perspective, EL2 writing sometimes parallels PL1 and sometimes EL1 rhetoric.

In view of these results, it seems licit to say that L2 writing teachers must cope with the discoursal demands of their student writers so that their pieces of writing gain adequacy, intelligibility and thus credibility, features likely to end up contributing not only for their academic purposes, but also for any other kind of written communication.

In general, the results also seem to corroborate findings in the field of contrastive rhetoric as EL2 writers are portrayed as more influenced by their own linguistic and rhetorical background when favoring a more elaborate style of writing. Furthermore, they are also pictured as following certain "universal" social conventions in the organization of their messages, whose purposes are recognized as fitting the genre of RAs, otherwise their papers would certainly not have been published.

5.   Conclusion

The main purpose of the present study is to delineate the rhetorical organization of conclusions of research articles. In order to fulfill this purpose, we focused on the investigation of the macro structure of this component. For the analysis of the macro-structure of the conclusions, we verified their rhetorical organization, following the principles of genre studies as proposed by Swales (1990). The analysis extends the purposes already identified in investigating conclusions produced in Portuguese L1, English L1 and English L2, thus accounting for a contrastive trait.

The overall picture that emerges from the findings of this study reveals the rhetorical structure of the conclusions of RAs as presenting a complex array of moves and steps, writers exhibiting differences in elaborating their concluding sections, thus suggesting that this is a component of the genre 'research article', which still needs to be investigated and attention should be focused on the processes and practices of academic writing.

As a work informed by genre studies within the ESP tradition, and thus guided by students' needs, this study contributes both to writing instructors whose purpose is to have their students succeed in using this component of genre and to writing students who are willing to take part in distinct discourse communities.

As for the specificity of writing in a second language, today, Brazilian universities increasingly expect their faculty to publish in English language journals. The research we have presented should provide some concluding section for authors attempting to publish in the language sciences. In particular, the present study outlines the range of options available with their approximate frequencies of uptake. Needless to say, further research is necessary in order to find out the situation of concluding sections in research articles in other fields and areas.

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Appendix

Articles in corpus
Portuguese L1 conclusions (PL1)
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