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Phraseological patterns supporting effective academic writing rhetoric: The case of pedagogy research paper introductions

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Abstract

The present paper presents pilot investigation of the role of phraseological patterns in conceptualizing rhetorical moves and their steps in pedagogy research paper introductions. It addresses a gap regarding utilizing these patterns and their rhetorical function within the knowledge transfer in pedagogy. The study aims to identify recurring phraseological patterns, delineate their functions in expressing rhetorical moves, and demonstrate how they contribute to the overall coherence and effectiveness of the text. The main research question explores how phraseological patterns contribute to the presentation of rhetorical moves and steps in pedagogy research paper introductions. Employing a corpus-based approach, the paper analyzes ten research papers from the Journal of Pedagogical Research published in 2023. The methodology involves identifying phraseological patterns, analyzing their rhetorical functions, examining their discourse functions, and characterizing their structural nature. The present study identifies phraseological patterns as recurring in pedagogy research papers while acknowledging their non-exclusivity to the field. Research findings reveal four key moves: establishing a thematic territory, surveying previous research, creating a research niche, and occupying the research niche. Each move utilizes specific phraseological patterns to achieve distinct rhetorical purposes. The study highlights the distribution of contiguous and non-contiguous patterns and their multifunctional nature in conveying complex research-related ideas and issues. It uncovers how these patterns interact with rhetorical moves to create cohesive and persuasive introductions. This pilot investigation lays the groundwork for future research on phraseological patterns in scholarly papers, offering insights into the intricate relationship between language patterns and rhetorical structure in academic writing.

Keywords: *academic writing rhetoric, phraseological patterns, discourse functions, research paper introductions, pedagogy, rhetorical moves and steps*


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Фразеологический паттерн как средство эффективной риторики академического письма: на примере научной статьи по педагогике

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Аннотация

В данной статье представлено пилотное исследование роли фразеологических паттернов в концептуализации риторических ходов, выполненное на материале текстов введения к научной статье по педагогике. Оно заполняет существующий пробел, связанный с риторической функцией этих паттернов и их использованием в процессе передачи знаний по педагогике. Цель исследования – выявить повторяющиеся фразеологические паттерны, определить их функции в выражении риторических ходов и продемонстрировать, как они способствуют общей связности и эффективности текста. Используя корпусный подход, автор анализирует десять научных статей из журнала «Journal of Pedagogical Research», опубликованных в 2023 г. Методология исследования включает выявление фразеологических паттернов, анализ их риторических и дискурсивных функций и характеристику их структурной природы. В ходе исследования выделены фразеологические паттерны, повторяющиеся в научных работах по педагогике, однако признается возможность их использования и в других областях. Выявлены четыре ключевых хода: установление тематической территории, обзор предыдущих исследований, создание исследовательской ниши и занятие исследовательской ниши. Каждый ход использует особые фразеологические паттерны для достижения определенных риторических целей. Обращается внимание на распределение смежных и несмежных паттернов, подчеркивается их многофункциональная природа в представлении сложных идей и исследовательских вопросов. Показано, как эти паттерны взаимодействуют с риторическими ходами для создания связных и убедительных текстов. Полученные результаты закладывают основу для будущих исследований фразеологических паттернов в научных статьях, демонстрируя сложную взаимосвязь между языковыми паттернами и риторической структурой в академическом письме.

Ключевые слова: *риторика академического письма, фразеологические паттерны, функции дискурса, вступление к научной статье, педагогика, риторические ходы и шаги*

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1. Introduction

Phraseology in academic writing has become a focal point of scholarly interest in recent years, reflecting its crucial role in effective knowledge transfer and

successful academic communication. As academic writing evolves, understanding the linguistic devices and phraseological patterns (PPs) used by scholars has become increasingly crucial to effective knowledge transfer. Phraseology plays a vital role in successful academic communication and contributes substantially to the overall quality and coherence of research papers (e.g. Dinca & Chitez 2021).

In academic writing, phraseology helps establish a writer's credibility and familiarity with the conventions of their discipline. Defined as the characteristic ways of expressing ideas and concepts within specific disciplines, it encompasses various aspects, such as specialized vocabulary, terminology, formulaic expressions, discipline-specific language patterns and conventional sentence structures employed by scholars in their written discourse (cf. Biber & Gray 2010, Vincent 2013, Davis & Morley 2018, Hyland & Jiang 2019, Kačmárová 2019, Oakey 2020, Dinca & Chitez 2021, Boginskaya 2022, Lu et al. 2021, Jacob 2024). In academic writing, besides the other aspects of phraseology listed above, routine discipline-specific language patterns and conventional sentence structures merit particular attention for their role in enhancing the cohesion and effectiveness of the text. For the purposes of this study, the term phraseological pattern refers to conventional and routine prefabricated patterns and sentence structures employed by scholars in their research papers. Existing research indicates that PPs contribute significantly to effectively communicating academic content (cf. López Arroyo & Méndez-Cendón 2007, Khamkhien & Wharton 2020, Leng Hong 2024).

Despite notable advances in the exploration of rhetorical techniques and their articulation in research paper introductions (cf. Del Saz Rubio 2011, Sutrisno & Ramadhanty 2022), a significant knowledge gap persists regarding the specific utilization of PPs in research paper introductions, particularly across disciplines. For instance, a study by Leng Hong (2024) focuses on the structural nature of PPs in the discussion section of microeconomics research papers. However, this study is limited to the discussion section and four-word phraseological units, potentially overlooking longer PPs that could provide deeper insights into academic writing rhetoric (see also Richter, Gaskaree & Mirzai 2022). To date, little attention has been paid to the specific use of PPs in research paper introductions in pedagogy or their contribution to the overall structure and coherence of the text. This calls for an examination of the role of PPs in presenting moves and steps in research paper introductions in pedagogy and an assessment of their contribution to the overall coherence and effectiveness of the text. The present paper aims to address this knowledge gap by examining the use of PPs in research paper introductions in pedagogy and their impact on the presentation of moves and steps of academic writing rhetoric, as proposed by Jian (2010) in his *Schematic Structure of Literature Review in Research Articles of Applied Linguistics* (Jian 2010).

This pilot study employs a corpus-based approach to identify and analyze recurring PPs, thereby establishing the rhetorical strategies employed in research paper introductions in pedagogy. The research objectives include uncovering recurring PPs, delineating their function in expressing individual rhetorical moves

and steps, determining their discourse functions, characterizing their contiguous or non-contiguous nature, and demonstrating how these patterns align with and support the established structure of research paper introductions. This pilot study lays the groundwork for future research on the role of phraseological patterns in pedagogy research papers, thus potentially facilitating more effective knowledge transfer in the field.

2. Literature review

To fully recognize the importance of PPs in academic writing, it is essential to have a comprehensive understanding of the academic writing conventions. Fang (2021) asserts that academic rhetoric encompasses a range of strategies and devices employed by scholars to present their work in an effective and persuasive manner. He (ibid.) defines academic rhetoric as a functional linguistic approach that goes beyond ensuring grammatical correctness in knowledge transfer. This perspective views academic writing as a process of constructing meaning, with language choices at its core. Furthermore, academic writing rhetoric can be understood as a means of conveying information, constructing arguments, incorporating viewpoints, engaging readers, and organizing text across different genres and disciplines (cf. Alharbi 2021, Golebiowski 2018). Yuvayapan and Yakut (2023) contend that rhetorical patterns in academic writing are critical in structuring texts, facilitating author-reader interactions, and establishing an authorial stance within disciplinary norms. Research paper manuscripts are expected to present information in compliance with specific rhetorical patterns (Adnan 2008, Suryani et al. 2014). Failure to comply with these standards may result either in unfavourable reviews or even rejection of research papers. The quality of research papers can be adversely affected by an imbalance in rhetorical patterns due to various factors, including insufficient attention paid to language and style.

As the utilization of PPs in research paper introductions in pedagogy is yet to be delineated, it is essential to situate the moves and steps employed in the introduction within the broader structure of the research paper. López Arroyo and Méndez-Cendón (2007) provide an overview of the rhetorical structure in their paper *Describing Phraseological Devices in Medical Abstracts: An English/Spanish Contrastive Analysis*. The authors present the rhetorical distribution of the moves and steps of the rhetorical sections of the research paper as follows (Table 1).

The academic rhetoric of the research paper introduction has been the subject of several studies that have identified a recurring pattern of rhetorical moves and steps (e.g. Swales 2004, Jian 2010, Del Saz Rubio 2011, Golebiowski 2018, Alharbi 2021, Sutrisno & Ramadhanty 2022, Richter, Gaskaree & Mirzai 2022, Yuvayapan & Yakut 2023). The rhetoric in research paper introductions typically follows a structured pattern designed to establish the significance of research and persuade readers of its importance. According to the *Create a Research Space (CARS) model* proposed by Swales (2004), research paper introductions generally employ specific

rhetorical moves and steps. The CARS model (Swales 2004: 6 – 8) consists of three main moves and several steps within each move for structuring research paper introductions:

Table1. Academic rhetoric organization

Academic rhetoric organization		
Introduction	Moves	Steps
	1. Background information (References to)	Established knowledge in the field
		Main research problems
	2. Reviewing related research (References to)	Previous research
		Limitations of previous research
	3. New research	Research purpose
		Main research procedure
Materials and methods	4. Data collection procedure	Source of data
		Data size
		Criteria for data collection
	5. Experimental procedure	Research apparatus
		Experimental process
		Criteria for success
	6. Data-analysis procedure	Terminologies
		Data classification
		Analytical instrument/procedure
		Modification to instrument/procedure
Results (Indicate, Highlight, Report, Present)	7. Consistent observation	Overall observation
		Specific observation
		Accounting of observation made
	8. Non-consistent observation	Negative results
Discussion (Explain, Highlight, State, Interpret)	9. Overall research outcome	
	10. Specific research outcome	State
		Indicate significance
		Interpret
		Contrast present and previous
		Limitations
	11. Research conclusions	Implications
		Further research

Source: López Arroyo and Méndez-Cendón 2007: 509–511.

Move 1: Establishing a territory – This move provides the foundation for the research by presenting context about the research topic. It may include one or more of the following steps:

Step 1: Claiming centrality – The author uses this step in order to convince the scholarly community that their research contributes to a particular field of study. This approach is particularly common in the humanities and the social sciences.

Step 2: Making topic generalizations – The scholar offers insights into the current knowledge, practices, or phenomena related to the research topic.

Step 3: Reviewing previous items of research – The author utilizes this step to present a critical evaluation of existing resources and findings relevant to the research topic.

Move 2: Establishing a niche – The second move in academic writing involves identifying areas for further investigation within the existing body of knowledge. The scholar employs several strategies to achieve this:

Step 1A: Counter-claiming – The scholar presents claims that compromise or contradict already existing research findings.

Step 1B: Indicating a gap – The author draws attention to specific areas where existing studies have not adequately addressed the issues under consideration.

Step 1C: Question-raising – The researcher formulates inquiries about current research, suggesting that additional exploration is necessary to advance understanding.

Step 1D: Continuing tradition – The scholar frames their study as a continuation or extension of existing research traditions.

Move 3: Occupying the niche – The author transitions from identifying the research gap to presenting their contribution. This section demonstrates how the author will address the previously established niche in the field. The author achieves this through the following steps:

Step 1A: Outlining purposes – The author presents the primary objectives of their research.

Step 1B: Announcing present research and... – The author describes in detail the research conducted in the present study.

Step 2: ...announcing principal findings – The author presents the main conclusions drawn from their research.

Step 3: Indicating RA structure – The author previews the structure of the paper.

In critically reevaluating this structure, Jian (2010) modified the proposed sequence of moves and steps. These modifications included the addition of new steps and the reordering of the existing steps. Motlagh and Pourchangi (2019) provide an overview of the similarities and differences between the two models in a summary table as follows (Table 2).

Rhetorical patterns, moves and steps in academic discourse are produced through the strategic use of linguistic devices. These devices typically manifest themselves as habitual word combinations or prefabricated phraseological patterns that scholars across disciplines use to communicate knowledge and engage with their readership effectively. The structural properties and discursive functions of PPs have been key areas within the development of individual moves and steps in academic writing rhetoric.

From a structural standpoint, Leng Hong (2024) identifies two categories of PPs: i.e. contiguous and non-contiguous expressions. Adjacent phraseological structures are contiguous expressions, such as “...argue that...” or “...findings provide new and promising insights into....”. Non-contiguous expressions are

separated phraseological structures, such as “After reviewing..., we focus on...”, “The importance of... has been recognized...” or “The significance of... has been acknowledged...”.

Table 2. Structures of the rhetoric of academic writing according to Swales (2004) and Jian (2010)

Jian’s move model (2010)		Swales’s CARS model (1990)	
Move 1	Establishing a thematic territory	Move 1	Establishing a territory
S. 1A	Making topic generalizations	Step 1	Claiming centrality and/or
S. 1B	Claiming centrality	Step 2	Making topic generalization(s) and/or
T. 1C	Giving background information	Step 3	Reviewing items of previous research
Move 2	Surveying and summarizing previous research		
S. 2A	Constructing reference to the published work		
S. 2B	Making positive/negative evaluation		
S. 2C	Making general/summary statement		
Move 3	Creating a research niche	Move 2	Establishing a niche
S. 3A	Counter-claiming	Step 1A	Counter-claiming or
S. 3B	Gap-indicating	Step 1B	Indicating a gap or
S. 3C	Question-raising	Step 1C	Question-raising or
S. 3D	Asserting the relevancy	Step 1D	Continuing a tradition
S. 3E	Establishing theoretical framework or position	Move 3	Occupying the niche
Move 4	Occupying the research niche	Step 1A	Outlining purposes or
S. 4A	Announcing aims/research questions	Step 1B	Announcing present research and...
S. 4B	Announcing theoretical framework or position	Step 2	...announcing principal findings
S. 4C	Indicating RA structure	Step 3	Indicating RA structure

Source: Motlagh and Pourchangi 2019: 72.

In terms of discourse functions, PPs fall into three main categories as defined by Simpson-Vlach and Ellis (2010). The categories of PPs include referential expressions, which provide specific information, describe entities, or define concepts within the text; stance expressions, which convey the author’s attitudes, judgments, or evaluations regarding the research topic; and discourse organizing expressions, which facilitate text structure. These patterns enhance the overall coherence and effectiveness of academic writing.

Available sources emphasize the critical role of PPs in structuring research paper introductions across various disciplines. However, the utilization of these

patterns within research papers in pedagogy remains relatively under-researched. This research gap calls for a comprehensive examination of how PPs contribute to presenting rhetorical moves and steps in research paper introductions in pedagogy, guiding the present paper's methodological approach.

3. Methodology

The present research paper represents a pilot investigation since, to the best of my knowledge, there has not been comprehensive research on academic writing rhetoric in either research papers in pedagogy or their introductions.

The aim of the present paper is to identify the role of phraseological patterns in presenting moves and steps in research paper introductions in pedagogy and to demonstrate how these patterns improve the overall coherence and effectiveness of the text. To achieve this research aim, the present study addresses the following partial objectives:

Objective 1: Identify recurring phraseological patterns in research paper introductions in pedagogy.

Objective 2: Establish the function of the identified phraseological patterns in expressing rhetorical moves and steps.

Objective 3: Determine the discourse functions (referential, stance, or discourse-organizing) of the identified phraseological patterns.

Objective 4: Characterize the contiguous or non-contiguous nature of the identified phraseological patterns and quantify their frequency.

Objective 5: Demonstrate how the analyzed phraseological patterns comply with and contribute to the established structure of research paper introductions in pedagogy.

The following research questions were formulated to address the main research aim and objectives:

1. How do phraseological patterns contribute to the presentation of rhetorical moves and steps in research paper introductions in pedagogy?

2. What is the distribution of contiguous and non-contiguous phraseological patterns across different moves in research paper introductions in pedagogy, and how does this distribution impact the coherence and effectiveness of the research paper?

3. How do the discourse functions (referential, stance, and discourse-organizing) of phraseological patterns interact and combine to enhance the overall rhetorical structure of research paper introductions in pedagogy?

4. To what extent do the phraseological patterns identified comply with the established structure of research paper introductions in pedagogy?

5. How do phraseological patterns facilitate the transition between different moves and steps in research paper introductions in pedagogy?

6. What role do multifunctional phraseological patterns play in conveying comprehensive research-related ideas and relationships between concepts in research paper introductions in pedagogy?

To achieve the main research aim and objectives, and to answer the research questions, the following steps were taken using these methods:

1. Corpus compilation: A suitable journal was selected based on pragmatic criteria, including representativeness, popularity, accessibility, and availability of an electronic format (cf. Méndez-Cendón 2007). The criteria of representativeness, popularity, and accessibility imply that the journals be in English as a *lingua academica* (on the term cf. Kačmárová, Bilá & Vaňková 2023). A specific journal was chosen based on its impact factor and Q2 quartile ranking for 2023.

2. Research paper selection: Ten papers published in 2023 were extracted from the Journal of Pedagogical Research. The selection process for papers no longer distinguishes between native and non-native speakers, owing to the availability of journal metrics data. This approach is justified by the fact that journal rankings and the pragmatic criteria employed in selecting journal ensure that all authors adhere to the conventions of English as a *lingua academica*. This applies regardless of whether the authors are native or non-native speakers of English in academic writing.

3. Text extraction: Introductions from selected papers were isolated for analysis.

4. Phraseological pattern identification: In identifying phraseological patterns, Méndez-Cendón's (2007) definition of phraseological units and patterns was adopted and adapted. Since the term 'phraseological unit' encompasses various linguistic elements such as collocations, irreversible couplets, idioms, routine formulae, and combinatorial patterns, the present study specifically examines commonly occurring routine word formulae or phraseological prefabricated patterns in academic writing. As a result, the term 'phraseological pattern' is deemed more appropriate for the present study. Phraseological patterns were identified based on their recurrence in pedagogy research paper introductions. However, this does not imply that they are used exclusively in academic discourse in pedagogy. Therefore, their exclusive association with the field of pedagogy is not substantiated.

5. Rhetorical moves and steps analysis: The function of identified phraseological patterns in expressing rhetorical moves and steps was analyzed using Jian's moves model (2010).

6. Discourse function examination: Phraseological patterns were categorized as referential, stance, or discourse-organizing, and combinations of discourse functions were identified. The term 'discourse' in the context of the discourse-organizing function refers not only to the text of the research paper but also to the wider discourse of the research project on which the paper reports. Therefore, the phraseological pattern employed in the examined paper can be considered a discourse-organizing pattern since it verbalizes the procedure and organization of the paper and the process of research presented in this paper.

7. Structural analysis: The contiguous or non-contiguous nature of phraseological patterns was examined.

8. Frequency calculation: The occurrence of contiguous and non-contiguous phraseological patterns was quantified.

9. Comparative analysis: The findings were compared with the framework of research paper introductions as defined by López Arroyo and Méndez-Cendón (2007).

10. Interpretation: A corpus-based approach was employed to examine the role of phraseological patterns in conceptualizing rhetorical moves and steps in pedagogy research paper introductions.

This pilot study aims to provide initial insights into academic writing rhetoric in pedagogy research paper introductions, facilitating more comprehensive research in the field.

4. Research findings

This study identified four key moves in research paper introductions, each serving a unique purpose in establishing the research context and objectives. The analysis of PPs in research paper introductions yielded both contiguous and non-contiguous structures that serve various discourse functions.

Move 1, Establishing the territory, encompasses several steps and associated PPs that authors use to introduce their research topic and context.

Table 3. Phraseological patterns employed to verbalize Move 1 – Establishing the territory. Structural nature and discourse function(s) of PPs in Move 1
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Move 1 Establishing the territory			
Step	Phraseological pattern	Discourse function	Contiguous/ Non-contiguous PP
S.1A Making topic generalizations	"On a daily basis, people must..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"[Topic] is increasingly included within [field/context]..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	"The prevalence of... is growing..."	Referential	Non-contiguous
	"... has generally been described as..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"[Topics] require..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"We have been witnessing..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"...has the potential to enhance..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"As we move further into..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	"...is a pedagogical a roach for..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"There has been a worldwide shift towards..."	Referential	Contiguous

Move 1 Establishing the territory			
Step	Phraseological pattern	Discourse function	Contiguous/ Non-contiguous PP
S.1B Claiming centrality	"...is a key factor in ... and is widely recognized as..."	Referential	Non-contiguous
	"It is important to investigate [aspect] to sort [outcome]..."	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"...is an inherently transdisciplinary view of ... that centers on..."	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"[Topic] provides challenges and goals, involving users in the [field]."	Referential	Contiguous
	"Not much is known about..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"At the core, many argue that..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	"... are being asked to include..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	"The issue of... is of growing importance..."	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"The examined issue is of paramount importance in..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	"The importance of... has been recognized..."	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"More recently, this recognition has materialized in..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
S.1C Giving background information	"Organizations such as ... believe that..."	Referential	Non-contiguous
	"[Location/Context] has a history of [relevant information]..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"The integration of... is on the rise in..."	Referential	Non-contiguous
	"...plays essential roles in..."	Referential	Contiguous
	"There has been long-standing and recent sound research that..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	"The term... has been adopted and adapted across..."	Referential	Non-contiguous
	"Its genesis in ... was..."	Referential	Non-contiguous
	"More recently, this recognition has materialized in..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous

Resource: The author's research output.

Move 1, establishing the territory, plays a key role in situating research in its broader context. Step S.1A, making topic generalizations, involves introducing the research topic by highlighting its relevance and importance in the field. This step is intended to attract the reader's attention by presenting the research topic relevance. Examples include prefabricated word combinations such as "On a daily basis, people must..." or "The prevalence of... is increasing...". These generalizations

facilitate the establishment of a common understanding with the target readership and provide a comprehensive framework for the subsequent presentation of the specific research.

Step S. 1 B, claiming centrality, emphasizes the critical role of the research topic within its field. This strategy is particularly useful when research deals with a critical issue or contributes to a discussion of paramount importance in the field. Examples of claiming centrality include phraseological patterns such as ‘...is a key factor in ... and is widely recognized as...’ or ‘It is important to investigate [aspect] to support [finding]...’. By employing this step, the authors showcase the significance and relevance of their work in furthering knowledge and understanding within their field, thereby supporting the rationale behind their research.

The third step, S.1C, provides background information and offers a historical context or relevant facts about the research topic. This strategy helps readers understand the broader context of the research. Examples include statements such as “organizations such as ... believe that...” or “[Location/Context] has a history of [relevant information]...”. By offering this background, the authors can demonstrate the evolution of ideas or practices related to their research topic, highlight gaps in the current understanding, and show how their research builds upon existing knowledge.

The analysis of Move 1 revealed 29 identified PPs, with 20 (68.97%) contiguous and 10 (31.03%) non-contiguous. Regarding the manifestation of each step in the research papers under examination, it is noteworthy that steps S.1A (making topic generalizations) and S.1B (claiming centrality) were evidenced in all 10 research papers examined. Conversely, step S.1C (giving background information) did not emerge in the introductions of the 2 research papers in pedagogy.

From the perspective of their discourse functions, the selected PPs can be grouped into three main categories: referential, stance, and discourse-organizing PPs. Referential PPs are used in S.1A to introduce the research topic and highlight its relevance, in Step S.1B to characterize entities and elucidate key concepts, and in Step S.1C to incorporate citations of specific studies and scholars. Stance PPs were used in Step S.1A to highlight the importance of the research area through the use of evaluative language, in Step S.1B to express opinions on the current state of knowledge, and in Step S.1C to convey agreement, disagreement, or the relative significance of the referenced works. Discourse-organizing PPs serve to structure the text, guide readers through a logical flow, indicate progression between steps, organize information presentation, and connect the establishment of territory with subsequent moves in the introduction. Multifunctional PPs combine referential and stance functions to provide specific information while conveying the author’s evaluation and integrating referential and discourse-organizing functions to offer factual content while structuring logical progression. The effective use of these expression types across Move 1 enables the establishment of the research territory, establishes the study’s centrality, and provides necessary background information.

Table 4. Phraseological patterns employed to verbalize Move 2 – Surveying and summarizing previous research. Structural nature and discourse function(s) of PPs in Move 2

Move 2 Surveying and summarizing previous research			
Step	Phraseological pattern	Discourse function	Contiguous/ Non-contiguous PP
Constructing S.2A Constructing reference to the published work	“According to research by...”	Referential	Contiguous
	“Recent studies have demonstrated that ...”	Referential	Contiguous
	“Both national and international researchers..., scientists..., and theorists... argue that...”	Referential	Contiguous
	“According to Author (year)...”	Referential	Contiguous
	“Recent studies have extended...”	Referential	Contiguous
	“This research dates back to...”	Referential	Contiguous
	“[Author] describes... as...”	Referential	Non-contiguous
	“Author A (year), Author B (year) maintain that”	Referential	Contiguous
	“[Authors] report that...”	Referential	Contiguous
S.2B Making positive/ negative evaluation	“[Authors] suggest that a significant portion of literature has focused on...”	Referential	Contiguous
	“However, ... often do not include ... or, if ... do include ..., it is not...”	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	“The results of the study found [negative aspect], including [specific details]...”	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	“X is positively related to Y [Author year]”	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	“These results provide new and promising insights into...”	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	“Nevertheless, ... still remains not straightforward and generates many practical challenges”	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	“Unlike [Author A], [Author B] provides positive account of”	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	“... seem to act as a catalyst...”	Referential and stance	Contiguous
S.2C Making general/ summary statement	“What is promising is that...”	Stance	Contiguous
	“Gamification in [the field] requires careful planning and...”	Referential	Non-contiguous
	“Taken together, the results show that...”	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	“These diverse approaches ... point to different understandings of...”	Referential and discourse-organizing	Non-contiguous
	“... may integrate but is distinct from...”	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	“In sum, literature on... is emerging, with...”	Referential and discourse-organizing	Non-contiguous

Resource: The author’s research output.

While Move 1 focuses on establishing a broader context, Move 2 narrows the focus to specific previous research by utilizing distinct PPs to achieve this shift.

Move 2 (Surveying and summarizing previous research) consists of three main steps: constructing reference to published work, making positive/negative evaluations, and making general/summary statements. Each step employs specific PPs to communicate ideas effectively and engage with existing relevant sources.

In step S.2A, the authors referenced published sources using standardized phraseological prefabricated patterns such as “According to research conducted by...” and “Recent studies have demonstrated that [finding] (Author, Year; Author, Year)...”. These PPs enable efficient integration of citations while maintaining a smooth flow of ideas.

Step S.2B involves making positive or negative evaluations of the previous research and highlighting its strengths and limitations. Examples include “The study’s findings revealed a negative aspect, including specific details...” and “A critical analysis of the methodology employed by Researcher et al. (Year) reveals potential limitations in...” These PPs allow authors to engage with existing literature critically and position their research.

In step S.2C, authors make general or summary statements using common word combinations, such as ‘A comprehensive review of the literature reveals a consensus among researchers that...’, ‘The body of evidence accumulated over the past decade suggests that...’, and ‘An analysis of the existing research landscape reveals a growing trend towards...’.

The analysis of PPs yielded 23 distinct patterns. The results showed that 65.22% of the patterns were classified as contiguous, while 34.78% were identified as non-contiguous. This distribution reflects the relative occurrence of adjacent and separated phraseological patterns within the analyzed corpus. In examining the manifestation of each step in the analyzed research papers, it is notable that step S.2A (Constructing reference to published work) was evident in all 10 research papers, while step S.2B (Making positive or negative evaluation) was present in 8 papers. Step S.2C (Making general/summary statement) was not included in the introductions of the five research papers in the field of pedagogy.

In Move 2, PPs serve three principal discourse functions: referential, stance, and discourse-organizing. Referential PPs provide the basis for a literature review and introduce relevant studies and researchers. Stance PPs allow authors to evaluate and interpret the cited research critically. While not specifically exemplified, discourse-organizing PPs typically serve to summarize, compare, or transition between ideas, thereby ensuring coherence and structure within the text. Some PPs in Move 2 serve multiple functions. For instance, PPs that integrate referential and stance functions provide specific information on a study and highlight its significance. Similarly, PPs that introduce research while organizing the flow of information serve both referential and discourse-organizing functions. The effective use of these PPs enables the author to create a dynamic and engaging

literature review. This is achieved by summarizing and evaluating previous research while positioning the current study within the existing body of knowledge.

The transition from surveying previous research to creating a research niche is supported by PPs highlighting gaps or raising questions in existing literature.

Table 5. Phraseological patterns employed to verbalize Move 3 – Creating a research niche. Structural nature and discourse function(s) of PPs in Move 3

Move 3 Creating a research niche			
Step	Phraseological pattern	Discourse function	Contiguous/ Non-contiguous PP
S.3A Counter-claiming	"However, many of the early studies focused on..."	Referential	Contiguous
S.3B Gap-indicating	"Though much has been studied about..., there are few clear answers about..."	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"No articles discussed [specific combination of topics], which provided certainty that [study contribution]..."	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"While most of the research on... targets..., this study explores..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Non-contiguous
	"Author et al. (year) concluded, therefore, that there is a need for..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	"Although the magnitude of ... seems to have grown manifold..., not much is known about..."	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"With the continuing increase of..., more research is needed to..."	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"Relatively little is understood about..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	"This may be attributed to gaps in..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	"However, little is known about..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
S.3C Question-raising	"The question of ... is thus not an easy one."	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"The challenge this presented was..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	"In this paper we address the question of..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
S.3D Asserting the relevancy	"Such information is important because..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	"With... appearing, issues related to... are particularly urgent"	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	"... also remains a valuable tool for..."	Referential and stance	Contiguous

Move 3 Creating a research niche			
Step	Phraseological pattern	Discourse function	Contiguous/ Non-contiguous PP
S.3E Establishing theoretical framework or position	"The aim of this paper is to address the identified research need through..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	"This study used ... as a lens through which to..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Non-contiguous
	"For the purposes of this study, [number] theoretical frameworks that [relevance] will be discussed. These being [list of frameworks]..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Non-contiguous
	"We framed this study in..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	"The theoretical base for this study is..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	"This paper draws on several theoretical perspectives including..."	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous

Resource: The author's research output.

Move 3, creating a research niche, is divided into five steps. Each step employs a specific habitual formula to justify the need for further research within the existing body of knowledge. These steps include counter-claiming, gap-indicating, question-raising, asserting relevancy, and establishing a theoretical framework or position.

Counter-claiming challenges existing research. This is illustrated by PPs, such as "However, many of the early studies focused on..." Gap-indicating identifies gaps in current research, using expressions such as "Though much has been studied about ..., there are few clear answers about..." or "No articles discussed [specific combination of topics], which provided certainty that [study contribution]...". Question-raising poses questions or highlights areas that require further investigation. In this step, habitual word combinations, such as "However, little is known about..." or "Understanding [specific aspect] is particularly important in [context]..." are employed. Asserting relevancy emphasizes the importance of the research, using phraseological prefabricated patterns such as "Such information is important because..." or "The aim of this paper is to address the identified research need through..." Finally, establishing a theoretical framework or position defines the study's theoretical approach. This is illustrated by examples such as "This study used ... as a lens through which to..." or "For the purposes of this study, [number] theoretical frameworks that [relevance] will be discussed."

The study revealed 22 PPs, comprising 13 (59.09%) contiguous and 9 (40.91%) non-contiguous patterns. This finding indicates a slight inclination towards contiguous structures. In terms of the occurrence of each step in the ten research papers that were subject to scrutiny, it is worth noting that step S.3B (gap-indicating) was present in all of them. Notably, step S.3A (counter-claiming) was absent from 9 research paper introductions. Furthermore, only 6 papers

included S.3C (question-raising), five included S.3D (asserting the relevancy), and 5 included S.3E (establishing a theoretical framework or position) within the field of pedagogy.

The PPs under Move 3 serve various discourse functions, including referential, stance, and discourse-organizing. PPs with dual functions are instrumental in verbalizing Move 3, establishing a research niche, and delineating its constituent steps. These patterns effectively combine the presentation of specific information with the author's perspective or text organization, thereby enhancing the overall impact of establishing a research niche. In counter-claiming (S.3A), patterns like "However, many of the early studies focused on..." serve a referential function by pointing to previous research while simultaneously expressing a stance that implies a limitation in existing studies. Patterns such as "Though much has been studied about ..., there are few clear answers about..." and "While most of the research on... targets..., this study explores..." effectively indicate gaps in existing research. They combine referential information about existing research with a stance highlighting knowledge gaps. The latter example also serves the function of organizing discourse by transitioning to the focus of this study. Question-raising patterns (S.3C) such as "The question of ... is thus not an easy one" combine information about a specific research question with a suggestion from the author that it is complex. "In this paper we address the question of..." serves both referential and discourse-organizing functions by introducing the research question and outlining the paper's structure. When asserting relevancy (S.3D), patterns such as "Such information is important because..." and "With... appearing, issues related to... are particularly urgent" combine referential information about the research topic with a stance emphasizing its significance or urgency. To establish a theoretical framework or position (S.3E), patterns such as "The aim of this paper is to address the identified research need through..." and "This study used... as a lens through which to..." combine referential information about the study's approach with the discourse-organizing functions that structure the paper's argument.

These dual-function patterns effectively communicate the research niche. This is arrived at by providing context (referential function), expressing the author's evaluation of existing research or the importance of their study (stance function), and guiding the reader through the logical progression of the argument (discourse-organizing function). Such a combination allows authors to create a compelling narrative that justifies their research and positions it within broader academic discourse.

As the authors progress from creating a research niche to occupying it, they employ PPs that clearly articulate the aims and theoretical framework of their study.

The interplay of various patterns in Move 4, occupying the research niche and its associated steps, is vital in scholarly writing. These patterns enable researchers to communicate their study objectives, conceptual frameworks and paper structure effectively. By employing these patterns, authors can effectively and accurately present their research as a valuable insight within the academic discourse.

Table 6. Phraseological patterns employed to verbalize Move 4 – Occupying the research niche. Structural nature and discourse function(s) of PPs in Move 4

Move 4 Occupying the research niche			
Step	Phraseological pattern	Discourse function	Contiguous/ Non-contiguous PP
S.4A Announcing aims/research questions	“To contribute to this emerging area, we report on...”	Referential	Contiguous
	“This... enables the exploration of how...”	Referential	Non-contiguous
	“We pursue... research questions related to...”	Referential and stance	Non-contiguous
	“This ... focuses on ... and aims at providing...”	Referential and discourse-organizing	Non-contiguous
	“In this study, we have designed...”	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	“The purpose of this study was to...”	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	“This study sought to establish [research objective]...”	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	“The research question asked is: What is the result of...”	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	“To address this purpose, we posed the following research questions:”	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
S.4B Announcing theoretical framework or position	“Given the meaning of the theory and the roots it has in ..., it was appropriate to view ... through this lens because...”	Referential, stance and discourse-organizing	Non-contiguous
	“For the examined theory I have to a large extent relied on...”	Referential and stance	Contiguous
	“The... provide evidence of an approach”	Referential, stance and discourse-organizing	Non-contiguous
S.4C Indicating research paper structure	“To analyze the data, we began with...”	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	“First, you will be presented with...”	Referential and discourse-organizing	Contiguous
	“Of the numerous proposals received, ... papers are included... These papers focus mainly on...”	Referential and discourse-organizing	Non-contiguous
	“This paper presents...”	Referential	Contiguous
	“This paper will briefly discuss...”	Discourse-organizing and referential	Contiguous
	“After reviewing..., we describe... We then present...”	Discourse-organizing and referential	Non-contiguous

Resource: The author’s research output.

For step S. 4A, announcing aims/research questions, the examined papers offer various PPs. Authors frequently employ introductory habitual formulas such as “To contribute to this emerging area, we report on...” or “This study focuses on... and aims at providing...”. They clearly state their research objectives using these formulas. These formulations establish the study’s focus and situate it within the broader context of the field. Similarly, expressions like “The purpose of this study was to...” or “This study sought to establish...” directly communicate the research goals, while phrases such as “We pursue... research questions related to...” or “To address this purpose, we posed the following research questions:” introduce specific research questions guiding the research paper.

Step S.4B, announcing the theoretical framework or position, is represented by fewer but equally important PPs. Authors use phrases like “Given the meaning of the theory and its roots in..., it was appropriate to view... through this lens because...” to justify their theoretical approach. Other expressions, such as “For the examined theory, I have to a large extent relied on...” or “The... provide evidence of an approach,” help establish the theoretical foundation of the research while explaining the chosen perspective and its relevance to the present research.

Finally, Step S.4C, indicating the research paper structure, is well represented by various PPs that guide readers through the content and methodology of the research paper. Habitual word strings like “To analyze the data, we began with...” or “First, you will be presented with...” provide a clear roadmap of the paper structure. Other phraseological patterns, such as “This paper presents...” or “This paper will briefly discuss...” offer an overview of the content, while “After reviewing..., we” signal transitions between different sections of a research paper.

In examining the manifestation of each step in the analyzed research papers, it is notable that step S.4A (Announcing aims/research questions) was evident in 9 research papers, while step S.4B (Announcing theoretical framework or position) merely in 3 papers. Step S.4C (Indicating research paper structure) was included in the introductions of the 6 research papers in the field of pedagogy. These PPs provide scholars with a valuable toolkit, enabling them to effectively communicate their research goals, theoretical foundations and paper structure. Using these PPs enables authors to enhance the clarity and coherence of their academic writing, thus facilitating better understanding and engagement with their work.

The study identified 18 PPs, with 11 (61.01%) contiguous and 7 (38.99%) non-contiguous. This distribution demonstrates a clear predominance of contiguous patterns, which may enhance the clarity and coherence of written content. However, the notable presence of non-contiguous patterns (nearly 39%) indicates that writers also employ more elaborate and flexible structures in their compositions. The combination of contiguous and non-contiguous patterns in academic writing likely provides clarity and complexity, contributing to effective scholarly discourse.

The PPs under Move 4 (occupying the research niche) serve multiple discourse functions, including referential, stance, and discourse-organizing functions. Most

patterns contain referential elements and provide specific research information. For example, “To contribute to this emerging area, we report on...” refers to the research area and the study’s contribution. Several patterns express the author’s stance, such as “We pursue... research questions related to...,” which indicates the author’s active engagement in the research procedure. Many patterns also help structure the text, guiding the reader through the article structure, as seen in “First, you will be presented with...”.

Interestingly, many patterns simultaneously fulfil multiple functions. Some combine referential and stance functions, like “This study sought to establish [research objective]...” which provides information about the research while conveying the author’s active role. Others integrate referential and discourse-organizing functions, such as “This paper presents...” which refers to the paper itself while indicating its structure. Some patterns even combine all three functions, as exemplified by “Given the meaning of the theory and the roots it has in..., it was appropriate to view... through this lens because...” This pattern refers to theory, expresses the author’s judgment, and organizes the discourse.

5. Discussion

PPs are essential in the presentation of Moves 1–4 and their steps in pedagogy research paper introductions. They provide authors with standardized language structures or prefabricated patterns to communicate their ideas. This contributes to the overall coherence and effectiveness of the academic writing.

In Move 1 (establishing the territory), PPs are employed to establish the research topic. Furthermore, they are of key importance in making generalizations about a topic, asserting its centrality, and providing background information. Such patterns facilitate the introduction of the research topic, highlight its relevance, and contextualize it within a wider field of study.

Move 2 (surveying and summarizing previous research) involves using PPs to construct references to published research. In addition, they are utilized to make evaluations and present summary statements. These prefabricated patterns provide authors with an effective means of engaging with existing literature and positioning their research within the current body of knowledge.

In Move 3 (creating a research niche), PPs are used for various purposes, including counter-claiming, indicating gaps, raising questions, asserting relevancy, and establishing theoretical frameworks. The aforementioned patterns assist the authors in clearly articulating the necessity for further research within the existing body of knowledge.

Move 4 (occupying the research niche) employs PPs to communicate the research objectives, present the theoretical frameworks, and provide an overview of the structure of the research paper. These patterns allow researchers to clearly and concisely present their research aims and objectives while providing readers guidance through content.

The discourse functions of PPs in Moves 1–4 play a significant role in establishing academic writing rhetoric in research paper introductions. These functions can be classified into three main categories: referential, stance, and discourse-organizing. Referential phraseological patterns provide particulars on research topics and existing studies. Stance phraseological patterns express the author's perspective on the research topic and any evaluations they have made. Discourse-organizing phraseological patterns assist in structuring a text and guiding readers through the logical flow of ideas.

The present research demonstrates that numerous PPs serve multiple functions concurrently. For instance, some patterns combine referential and stance functions, providing specific information while conveying the author's perspective. Others combine referential and discourse-organizing functions, providing factual content while structuring the logical progression of the research discourse. This multifunctionality reinforces the overall coherence and effectiveness of the research paper introduction.

The contiguous and non-contiguous nature of PPs has implications for their use and effectiveness. Contiguous patterns form most of all four moves and provide clear and concise expressions that enhance readability and comprehension. While less common, non-contiguous patterns offer greater flexibility and complexity in expression, thus enabling authors to convey more subtle nuances and relationships between concepts.

The present research findings demonstrate a clear alignment with the structure of research paper introductions, as outlined by López Arroyo and Méndez-Cendón (2007) within the framework of academic rhetoric organization. The identified PPs support the presentation of established knowledge in the field (Move 1), main research problems (Move 3), previous research (Move 2), limitations of previous research (Move 2 and 3), research purpose (Move 4), and the main research procedure (Move 4). This alignment demonstrates how PPs contribute to the effective organization and presentation of information in research paper introductions, thereby enhancing their overall coherence and impact.

6. Conclusion

The present paper, which serves as a pilot investigation, offers insights into the role of phraseological patterns in academic writing rhetoric, specifically in pedagogy research paper introductions. The findings identify four key moves in the research paper introduction, each serving a specific purpose. These include establishing the research topic and aim, the research context and research gap, and other key components instrumental in establishing the research.

The research demonstrates how phraseological patterns align with and enhance the established structure of research paper introductions in pedagogy. Furthermore, it demonstrates their role in facilitating transitions between different moves and their steps, particularly in establishing a research territory, surveying and summarizing previous research, creating a research niche, and occupying that niche.

The present study also underscores the importance of multifunctional phraseological patterns in conveying comprehensive ideas and relationships between research-related concepts.

The present findings provide useful insights into the rhetorical aspects of academic writing and offer practical recommendations for developing more effective academic writing. Scholars in pedagogy can enhance the clarity and impact of their introductions by using standardized phraseological prefabricated patterns to clearly state their research aim, objectives, research questions, and research paper structure. This strategy also involves balancing contiguous and non-contiguous patterns and employing multifunctional patterns for information presentation, stance expression, and discourse organization.

This pilot study lays a solid foundation for future research by providing a methodological framework for analyzing phraseological patterns in academic writing. It identifies areas for further investigation, such as the relationship between phraseological patterns and specific rhetorical moves and their steps across various disciplines. The findings can inspire future research on the role of phraseology in academic discourse, potentially leading to more effective and coherent knowledge transfer and scholarly communication.

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