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**GENRE-RELATED DIMENSIONS IN
MASTER DISSERTATIONS.
AN INTERDISCIPLINARY ENGLISH-MEDIUM TEACHER
DEVELOPMENT MASTER PROGRAMME IN ROMANIA
- A CASE IN POINT -**

**DIMENSIUNI SPECIFICE DE GEN
IN DISERTATII DE MASTERAT.
STUDIU DE CAZ: UN PROGRAM INTERDISCIPLINAR
IN LIMBA ENGLEZA, DESTINAT PROFESORILOR,
IN ROMANIA.**

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THESIS SUMMARY

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University teachers try to continuously develop professionally for themselves, but also for the students they teach, guide, monitor and eventually test. In a Romanian context, teachers, members of the academic community who fail or refuse to develop, cannot advance on the professional ladder. Using the genre-based approach, this study has explored how English language teaching / learning, combined with integrative approaches to research and education can generate beneficial effects at several levels of professional growth.

The context was given by an interdisciplinary Teacher Development master programme at the Bucharest University of Economic Studies, mainly dedicated to its academic staff as one of the main tools that the university offered its economics researchers, and not only, to help with familiarizing themselves with internationally-accepted research practices and to develop their writing expertise. The reason for choosing this particular theme Genre-related dimensions in Master Dissertations is because we wanted to explore the concept of moves and steps in Academic Writing which is crucial to developing genre-based patterns that follow the Anglophone standard and then can be spread, distributed and generalized across sub-disciplines of economics. The study intended to demonstrate how written communication is impaired at lower language levels and how it prevents the author to make use of the knowledge he could have otherwise much easier demonstrated in order to achieve international recognition. An analysis of the degree of tolerance per level was also intended.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the initial considerations of our study and also provides the argument for analyzing genre-related dimensions in master dissertations which is related to explaining what motivates university teachers, professors, in general, to develop on an on-going basis throughout their career.

The context for the analysis is being explained in the next part of the study. Initiated in 2006 the Master Programme *Research and Teacher Education for Business and Economics (EDU-RES)* “is the first of its kind in the Romanian academic context and has been awarded the European Language Label 2011 for innovation and creativity in education”. Looking at its mission, which says the programme “is designed to facilitate personal professional improvement, while contributing to institutional developments and quality assurance, integrating the research and educational dimensions, in accordance with the latest international practice in higher education”.

Through this study we will be able to explore if and how the various features of the dissertations analysed reflect the above-mentioned programme objectives. Since the programme has brought together professionals with an interest in improving their English language level and communication skills, their teaching, research methodology and publication skills, the 25 dissertations that constitute the corpus of this current research cover various specializations, e.g. business management, micro-economics, marketing, agri-business, finance, accounting, cybernetics, but also law, engineering, mathematics, economic geography, history, etc.

A genre and corpus-based analysis of the *Discussion* and *Conclusions* sections of 25 representative dissertations will allow us to look into various linguistic, thematic and attitudinal aspects, which can be considered relevant for the transfer of expertise from English Language

Teaching (ELT) to other professional domains. The study will also include potential cascading processes as reflected by the academics'/master students' perspective. Each participant in the M.A. programme (most of them being university tutors, lecturers and associate professors) has worked towards the same goals by using the same measures. Once they achieved them, they may have wanted to pass them on to their students and department colleagues.

Why the *Discussions* and *Conclusions* sections? According to Dudley-Evans (1994), students have always experienced the greatest difficulty writing the discussion section and we dare add the conclusions as well. These are reasons why it is important to perform genre analysis on the *discussions and conclusions* features of these dissertation papers that belong to experienced members of academia. The study will first identify the structural units and then will attempt to model the organisational patterns as cognitive structures.

Overall purpose

At the fundamental research level, the **main aim** of this study is to:

- explore genre characteristics of master dissertations in English in a specific Romanian academic context
- find out the genre expectations of this professional domain

Specific aims include:

- Identifying genre features shared by all (or most) of the dissertations
- Highlighting the differences depending on the students' levels
- Determining how written communication is being altered?
- Analyzing the degree of tolerance per level

- Providing a measure of the dichotomy convention/variation in master dissertations.

At the applied level, our aim is to offer a theoretical grounding for attaining a higher level of efficiency in teaching/training participants in the master, in their double role, as master students and programme academics to develop appropriate skills for excellent dissertation writing and obtaining very good results in the cascading process, while transferring their know-how to their own students or peer-teachers.

Research Questions

1. Which are the genre characteristics particularly present in master dissertations at various CEFR levels of proficiency?
2. Is there any inter-relatedness between the author's proficiency level and generic features?
3. How is the pragmatic component of communication integrated in master dissertations?
4. Are there any ripple effects noticeable as a result of the contact between two academic cultures?
5. Do the content and approaches opted for in dissertations reflect preoccupations for initiating an educational cascading process?

Assumptions, starting hypothesis

This study aims to validate the salient characteristics of the above mentioned text types and capitalize on them in order to identify a series of exponents for language content that can help researchers to improve their writing skills for their future publications, but also to help future students of this programme to understand genre expectations of this professional domain. By providing them with such guidelines for raising the quality of their research articles,

hopefully expanding on the *Discussion & Conclusion* sections will be a more straightforward process.

Based on the findings of my research, I would also like to identify if there is inter-relatedness between the author's proficiency level and the generic features of their writing. The study will try to demonstrate how written communication is impaired at lower language levels and how it prevents the author to make use of the knowledge he could have otherwise much easier demonstrated in order to achieve international recognition. An analysis of the degree of tolerance per level is also intended.

CHAPTER II: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In recent years, researchers have become increasingly interested in analyzing the different genres that appeared or started developing since students are being asked to produce different types of texts, but also people in the academia need to write other different types of texts to comply with different regulations applicable in their field of expertise.

A central issue in higher education is master dissertation papers. There are studies which focused on writing for specific disciplines and analysed their characteristics, but above all, a thesis or an MA dissertation are the bottom line to all these other types of texts since every student graduates after having finalized such a text respecting some attributes of *Academic Writing* (AW) that remain constant across disciplines, or vary in order to meet standards and expectations of specific fields.

Academic writing (AW) remains a prominent issue for students and professors in Romania at tertiary levels mostly because at previous levels of education teaching English is mostly done for general purposes, and few contexts, such as the MA program this study focuses upon, approach writing for academic purposes and provide learners with generic features for

writing the sections in a research article / thesis and, more importantly, the linguistic resources needed for writing academic papers appropriately. Therefore, this analysis will be using two methods, genre and corpus analysis that are explained below in the *Methodological Considerations section*.

The term genre is being used to describe categories of written texts that have recognizable patterns, syntax, techniques, and/or conventions. It has been continuously addressed in disciplines, paradigms or contexts looking into the processes involved in everyday trivial or professional, oral or written interactions which are the outcomes of it. This is a very intricate concept, therefore intriguing with many needs that it tries to cover. The term itself (from French *genre* and Latin *genus*) basically means *kind* or *sort* and it somehow covers all categorising needs.

The literature referring to the determination of the linguistic characteristics of texts provides useful concepts/ instruments for this research. I would like to review ideas starting from the concepts of *register* as used by Halliday and of *genre* as introduced by Swales, including Bhatia's three levels of linguistic analysis and Kress' distinction between *discourse* and *genre*.

The concept of *genre* is valuable as it stresses the role of the social aim in determining linguistic variation in particular social communication events whose features, as well as the goals of the participants in the event, influence the kind of texts that are produced - particular types of texts.

Methodological Considerations

This study used a cross-sectional analysis of a number of 25 dissertations in a specific and special academic context in order to see which are its particular genre characteristics. The

two methods used here are the *Genre Analysis method* (Swales & Feek, 2011) and the *Corpus Based method*.

As the concept of *genre* stresses the role of the social aim in determining linguistic variation in particular social communication events whose features, as well as the goals of the participants in the event, influence the kind of texts that are produced, the first questions the present research has intended to answer are by and large related to the academic aim the texts observed are supposed to fulfil and the role this identified aim plays in structuring the respective social communication events in our particular context. This involves establishing the features of such events and the goal of the participants, the way they are reflected in the linguistic features under study.

The communicative function of a text can be recognised by the community within which it operates, so a standardisation of an event is ensured by regulations of the professional community in terms of options and constraints imposed by socio-cultural conventions, the study looks at the common public goals, communication mechanisms and discourse expectations as to the types of texts shared within the professional community hosting the communicative events under analysis. Based on the answers obtained to the above issues, the dissertations written in a special context are identified as genres, instruments are then found to help provide a sound basis for the classification of sub-genres from genres and criteria are identified for measuring the extent of the dichotomy convention/variation in such genres.

CHAPTER III: CORPUS DESCRIPTION

The Romanian Case-Study

This study will explore how English language teaching / learning, combined with integrative approaches to research and education can generate beneficial effects at several

levels of professional growth. The context: an interdisciplinary Teacher Development master programme (“EDU-RES”) at the Bucharest University of Economic Studies. A genre- and corpus-based analysis of the *Discussion* and *Conclusions* sections of 25 representative dissertations will allow us to look into various linguistic, thematic and attitudinal aspects, which can be considered relevant for the transfer of expertise from ELT to other professional domains. The study will also include potential cascading processes, as reflected by the academics'/master students' perspective. The study will first identify the structural units and then will model the organisational patterns as cognitive structures. This would give the researcher the possibility to go beyond the structure of formal text organisation to its very substance.

It is a corpus of approximately 50,000 words, 25 dissertations from 5 years and 5 different cohorts and I have selected parts that somehow have a distinct discussions part (not all dissertations have it as a distinctive section), thus I selected the end of Findings which included some Discussions and the Conclusions section. One possibility is to process Concordance lines for the identification of patterns that will allow us to explore possible associations among these and the specific rhetorical structure for discussion/conclusions sections.

Composition and compilation of the READ Corpus

As mentioned in the Introduction, the context for this analysis has been given by an interdisciplinary Teacher Development master programme *Research and Teacher Education for Business & Economics (EDU-RES)* at the Bucharest University of Economic Studies, mainly dedicated to its academic staff, but not only. Initiated in 2006, the programme is the first of its kind in the Romanian academic context and has been awarded the European Language Label 2011 for innovation and creativity in education. Looking at its mission, which

says the programme “is designed to facilitate personal professional improvement, while contributing to institutional developments and quality assurance, integrating the research and educational dimensions, in accordance with the latest international practice in higher education”.

In order to analyze the corpus, all the Discussions and Conclusion sections were transformed into separate text documents, each one with a specific code, according to a system specifically designated to this purpose. The acronym used was READ standing for the *Romanian-English Academic Dissertations*. For example, the first dissertation was assigned the code READ01. All text documents were then processed and analyzed with the help of AntConc version 3.4.7 for Windows.

The discussions & conclusion sections of all 25 dissertations were extracted from the dissertations and they constituted a corpus of almost 50,000 words, with 49,211 word tokens and 4,376 word types. The texts were anonymised and details of the study I have presented in Appendix 2 which is an Excel document with a list of the dissertations file codes, with year, dissertation field, dissertation title, and the number of words per file which is only containing the *Discussions* and *Conclusions* sections. As in my study I am interested in the genuine language the writer/ researcher produces in order to express their findings and the usefulness of their work, from all the sections above, that is the reason why I chose the *Discussions* & *Conclusion* sections wherever possible, with some exceptions that are addressed in the chapter on Findings.

CHAPTER IV FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

***IMRD* Introduction–Methods–Results–Discussion**

This analysis presents a discussion of the characteristics of master dissertation papers in English in a specific Romanian context that is defined by the fact that its participants are experienced academics in a university of economic studies. The study is looking at their dissertations developments in the process of writing. This includes a discussion of genre characteristics, critical perspectives, and academic literacies perspectives on using second language writing for their own theses, but also how they personally would be coordinating their students in economics to further write in a second language. The underlying philosophies of each of these approaches as well as implications for the classroom are discussed. A proposal for slightly changing the teaching writing process is then presented, building on some of these perspectives.

Second language students are almost always confronted with difficulties in order to meet expectations of thesis and dissertation (Paltridge, 2012). It is even more difficult for students who do not have an English-speaking background as they lack familiarity with the conventions and expectations of thesis and dissertation writing in English.

The structure of a dissertation is a complex matter that needs to be decided. It may differ depending on the field, subfield, methodology, choice of theory and also other factors which influence what the dissertation might look like (Johns & Swales, 2002). There is not a unique way of writing a dissertation that is acceptable in every area of study. In spite of all these, there are certain conventions that dissertations are expected to follow. These are, however, often not clearly stated and may be quite different from the conventions and expectations governing how this kind of text might be written in the student's first language and culture.

We have applied these principles in our research study and we have come to the conclusion that every single dissertation follows this pattern, even though the chapter titles do not share the same convention as far as the title is concerned.

Writing Assessment - CEFR, Core Inventory, ELP Checklists

Why would I need to determine the proficiency language level of a participant in a Master Programme? Why would a professional in any field of activity need to know how well they master a language, any language they know? Firstly, a main reason is given by the increasingly global economy when foreign language skills are not only an incredible advantage in obtaining a job, but may even be a prerequisite in certain fields. Certain languages are valuable because they are more difficult to learn and the scarcity of confident secondary speakers makes them particularly valuable. Other languages are propelled by a strong connection to a certain industry or field that seems to be developing tremendously in a very short period of time. However, others are simply widely spoken making them the most widely spoken language across the world. English carries weight since it is the most widely used international language in academia, tourism, business in the larger sense thus being essential in connecting many areas of expertise across the globe.

The graduate students whose dissertations I have analysed, the participants in the MA Teacher Development Programme, are members of the Romanian academic community and they are expected to speak English, as this is the medium of instruction in the programme, at level B2-C1.

I have used a process of triangulation in order to look at the language level of our participants in the MA programme: the above mentioned CEFR, the Core Inventory and the ELP Checklists.

One of the most reliable and professional scales that is being used in Europe and is becoming more popular all around the world is the *Common European Framework of*

*Reference (CEFR)*¹ created as a way to measure and assess language ability in order to aid in teaching.

I used the CEFR and Core Inventory as the scales and descriptors to determine what language levels and most importantly, what specific language elements they have and whether they allow them to operate successfully in academic contexts, more specifically in dissertation writing, and overall in academic writing.

ELP Checklists - Most educated people, in fact, not only, may have had the chance to learn a foreign language in a formal context or just pick up a little in some other contexts and, at some point, they may have to ask themselves about how good their skills are in order to meet some objectives. The answer may come straightforward saying that it varies from simply being able to greet to total fluency. However a wide grey middle ground is left in between.

MACRO-Level Analysis

In this part of our analysis I shall look at the organizational structuring of the *Discussion* and *Conclusions* sections in the corpora, trying to identify the move-patterns and see whether the texts belonging to the same genre have shared features at macro-level. This analysis will allow us to draw some conclusions regarding move-patterns and their role in determining the genre characteristics in this specific Romanian academic context.

One of our hypotheses says that it is the existence of the *Discussion* and *Conclusions* sections and their specific moves that show us the dichotomy convention/ variation in master dissertations. To verify the hypothesis, we shall look at the macro-patterns of all 25 chapters *Discussion* and *Conclusions of the dissertations* which are referred to as READ01, READ02 etc. (see complete list of codes and titles in Appendix 2).

¹ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/>

I would briefly like to bring into discussion the role of the dissertation counselor in order to consolidate the idea that assessment takes place at different levels and it is being performed by different professionals depending on the focus of the respective assessment. In our context as mentioned above language level is being assessed at the beginning of the journey to make sure students can cope with the challenges of an English-medium instruction at university level, whereas at the end of the journey, the future graduate needs to submit the dissertation for assessment. Therefore different professionals assessing in different context, all performing an analysis carried out according to well-defined criteria. Below we can find the specific guidelines for the undergraduate and graduate students in the programme we have analysed in the current research.

Relevance of the current sub-section

The main aim of the current study is *to identify recurrent patterns* and preferences for certain moves in master dissertations *Results & Discussion and Conclusions* in subfields of business and economics research. Another aim might be that of identifying *directions for further research* in order to draw conclusions meant to help with the ongoing process of refining the EDU-RES course-design.

In an Anglophone academic environment, the first model that Swales promoted in 1981 had a great influence on EAP writing. His pattern of the moves and steps looked like this: Move 1 consists of occupying the niche, followed by an option of two steps, either outlining the purposes or announcing the current research. Then he places two compulsory steps, one is dedicated to announcing the principal findings, while the other is indicating the research article structure. This model seems to reflect a reality in the way writers approach their research, becoming material that can teach writers how to organise their writing and what relevant language forms to use.

In our corpus we have some dissertations which are more theoretically driven, but most of them are a combination of theoretical and empirical which means that most have a practical component trying to draw attention to particular outcomes that are either just one aspect of the dissertation or may be more fundamental, reflecting the way the study was designed. If we take the example of READ07 we have the **area of interest** which lies in environmental aspects, the **focus** that is on reporting, but apparently we have no mention about the **outcomes**. Maybe if the author had added the word *lessons*, with an overall title like *Lessons on Environmental Reporting in Romania*, then the empirical aspect of the research would have been very clear. Nevertheless, by saying in Romania, the reader implicitly deduces the research draws lessons from the particular context.

Looking at the subheadings we see many of them written as noun phrases, this is the traditional way, a number of words clustered around one important key *noun*. In READ17 this can be very well exemplified in subheadings, because, after all, these techniques may be implemented either way. Thus, *labour force perceptions, education system performances* seem to be very effective, brief and informative. On the other hand, if we look at these subheadings in corpus READ14 *Questionnaire analysis – section A, Questionnaire analysis – section B, Questionnaire analysis – section C*, they leave us with an unanswered question: what kind of questionnaires? The words are very general in meaning, used repeatedly, giving no real impetus to the reader to pursue the reading. The reader would need more explicit information, and maybe they would need a subject and a verb to well understand the results of the chapter.

Preliminary Conclusion

One of the research questions in the current study is this: *Which are the genre characteristics particularly present in master dissertations at various CEFR levels of proficiency?* Based on the discussion above where we talked about the minimal language level that grants access to an MA program with an English-medium of instruction, I have analysed

the corpus on the whole, but I have also focused on a number of four papers whose authors have high language levels C1+/C2 (READ09, READ14, READ19 and READ25) in order to determine if and/or how proficiency language levels influence the macro-structure of the dissertation, making it of a higher quality and what is the pattern of the move/step model? On the other hand, we shall conduct some more in-depth analysis on papers whose authors were known from the very beginning to have lower language proficiency (READ05, READ08, READ18 and READ021) but very good academic literacy, thus the question we will try to find an answer to is whether a higher level of academic literacy overcomes the proficiency language level.

By the fact that some small linguistic elements do not exist as given by the literature, to allow the checkmark of specific moves and steps, the moves are therefore changing dramatically and sometimes they do not even seem to exist, although they are implied. This process seems to give the reader the impression of long, interminable generalisations until we reach Move 2 Step 3 that is introduced with the personal pronoun “I” with an unambiguous reference to the author.

MICRO-Level Analysis

One of the aims of the current chapter of my study is to explore if there are noticeable correlations between the authors' English language proficiency and organisational and interactional aspects (as Mauranen, 2012). It is known that lexical knowledge is an indispensable aspect of language proficiency, as different models of language ability indicate. Explaining categories of lexis at different proficiency levels is a challenge for any professional who is supposed to assess language in general or lexis in particular, in either of the productive skills. As far as I know this is work in progress in various projects in our field, especially with

Cambridge ESOL divisions. Another source is *The English Vocabulary Profile*² “which offers reliable information about which words (and importantly, which meanings of those words) and phrases are known and used by learners at each level (A1 to C2) of the [Common European Framework \(CEF\)](#)”.

Over the years, a number of **wordlists** have been developed to provide guidance on the range of vocabulary at different proficiency levels. Some of these lists, however, have tended not to account for the functions to which these words are related, which are an important consideration within a communicative approach to language ability (Khalifa & Weir 2009).

However, one obvious challenge is determining which lexical items to identify at different proficiency levels (Weir 2005). Sometimes having the help of these tools would not make it easier, it is still difficult to assess vocabulary since these lists cannot be used in real time when performing oral or written assessment, so it is after all the experience of the assessor that matters most. A drawback of these lists is that they do not account for how well words are used; while a minimum of vocabulary is certainly required, quality of lexical use, which is the appropriacy element, in fact, is as important as the variety of lexis used. In fact, it is appropriacy of lexical use which typically distinguishes people as higher-level language users: B2, C1, and C2.

For this reason, it is invaluable to have frameworks such as the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (Council of Europe, 2001), because all involved stakeholders: language learners, teachers, assessors can have a common set of broad proficiency levels to refer to and direct their efforts toward. Over time, each level can become better defined.

The *Core Inventory for General English* (British Council & EAQUALS, 2010) has been a British Council and EAQUALS project, intended to design a basic and most important core

² <http://www.englishprofile.org/wordlists>

“*curriculum inventory*” for English. It is based on the *CEFR*, including also research, such as surveys among teachers regarding their selection of language structures and vocabulary in relation to levels, as well as an analysis of well-known UK published textbooks. The *Core Inventory*, thus, comprises core language elements per level (from A1 to C1), including: functional language items, discourse markers, grammar and vocabulary. The Core Inventory raises awareness towards the fact that language/ lexis in particular is not only about knowledge and structure, it is also about context, through the pragmatic dimensions of language use.

Conclusion Our MA course might benefit from a slight improvement in the sense that it might place a focus on the use of pronouns when designing the syllabus. In economics, people have a more pragmatic approach because they pursue business in order to whose main purpose is to get benefits, therefore, the language needs to sound real, confident, and attractive.

Elements of Novelty

Although appreciable research has presented genre characteristics of master dissertation papers, no studies have investigated the generic features of dissertation papers that have been written by teaching staff of European universities specialised in economics and having the following aspects in common:

- writing for publication in their mother tongue or/and English:
 - dissertation papers
 - PhD theses
 - research articles
- teaching experience in academic context
- teaching in English as a medium of instruction, not all but most
- coordinating master and dissertation theses themselves
- possessing good oral communication skills

In higher education, one needs to have the ability to write critically. Besides giving the facts, you have to be able to make use of these facts to come to conclusions which need to be documented with evidence. You should also be aware of other points of view that are out there and you need to have the ability to deal with them.

Accuracy, Coherence and Cohesion

- Writers need to produce sentences that flow by varying the lengths and structures, with the use of correct punctuation, and broadening their word choices
- Use simple transitions, such as “in addition, additionally, furthermore, therefore, thus, on the contrary, by the same token, at the same time, in other words, etc.”
- Repeat keywords but at the same time be careful of excessive repetition
- Ensure thematic consistency **or thematic progression**, good balance between old themes and newly progressively introduced themes
- Start every sentence or paragraph with information that hints at the content of the next sentence

In our corpus, writers have employed all three of the techniques, apparently each person choosing their technique according to how they wanted to maintain or shift the focus. Most of the texts that resulted are very tightly argued. Generally, the reader is not confused about the relationship of one piece of information to another because the Theme choices make this clear. I have noticed that all writers used Theme choices not only to carry ideas across sentences but also to carry them across from one paragraph to the next, frequently promoting information that is New at the end of one paragraph to Theme at the start of the next.

- e.g. extensively researched, technologically developed

- e.g. extensively researched book, technologically developed world

One main strength of the READ Corpus is the good level of **lexical chains** or, in other words, the high level of specialist vocabulary for each of the sub-fields of economics that our dissertations revolve around. Unlike most graduate students, ours have the great advantage of having had the chance to read a lot of bibliography in their field of expertise and have already acquired the specialist vocabulary they need to deal very well with the task. Therefore, how could this edge over regular MA students benefit any other student? One conclusion of the current research might be that at some point at the beginning of their studies to teach these students how to build a corpus of their own based on what they read to consolidate their expertise and gradually to use the corpus to create their own practical sheets that would turn the vocabulary that is passive at that point into an active one.

Triangulation – Giving a voice to Teachers and Alumni

What teachers were asked was whether in the course of time, they introduced any changes to the syllabus, as a result of needs identified. If the answer was positive, they were then asked to share some examples of how they have adapted the syllabus and/or activities in one or several of your courses, in response to student needs and/or expectations.

Here is a summary of what the Respondent Teachers (RT1) said. The module Critical Reading of Research Articles (EDURES) evolved in response to student needs. It was designed so as to increase student awareness of generic conventions in a way which connects several levels of analysis - text structure, rhetorical (communicative) functions and prevailing language structures. They mentioned that the approach is underpinned by the belief that students need to understand writing conventions before they can become creative and challenge some of those conventions or develop their own personal style of writing.

They say they analysed samples of published articles and identified the overriding features of each major section. RT 1 tried to highlight the way authors obey established conventions as well as ways in which they depart from those conventions. The idea was and still is to present generic conventions not as a straightjacket but as a space where authors can become creative provided they do communicate some of the functions that have to be expressed.

In the analysis of published articles they tried to highlight the way authors communicate the value of their work and they also tried to show how the use of specific language is connected with these communicative functions. This connection among the levels of content, rhetoric and language needs to be emphasised and they were constantly trying to work on that by finding more examples.

Students need to understand that the choice of language is not arbitrary and it is not enough to form grammatically accurate sentences. For example, the use of passives is linked to the need to focus on the process rather than on the actor and for this reason it is more common in the methodology sections. In brief, I am trying to highlight the link between communicative functions and choice of language structures.

In the Writing for Publication module they tried to help students write more critically rather than descriptively and justify their research decisions, develop a coherent argument and connect ideas. They designed language practice activities based on published articles and getting students to rearrange sentences, develop paragraphs, discuss the connection between structures and meaning.

Teachers said they recently identified three new directions in the students need analysis::

- need to engage students,
- need to encourage students to build different perspectives, and

- need to deliver powerful, effective presentations to the students.

Then they say these have been addressed by means of carefully selected TED talks that the Edu-Res sophisticated participants watched for content, key presentation language and also skills for engaging the audience, and then teachers injected a '*for and against*' approach to encourage multiple perspectives. The challenging tasks that commonly require the participants to watch closely were usually used, played twice. This also provided massive real-life listening opportunity.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The element of novelty as far as this study is concerned is given by the academic context itself: the authors of the dissertation papers that constitute the corpus for the study are educators themselves, being educated in a Master Programme designed especially to meet the expectations of students with a background in academia.

With this study I wanted to see whether and how the structure criteria of dissertation papers validated in the Anglo-Saxon environment are also valid in the Romanian academic context.

There are two more novel aspects: the language proficiency and the academic literacy - the ability to draft and manage the academic discourse. In other words, the study has been trying to merge what happens at the context organization level - ideas and moves, the macro structure - with the linguistic realisation at micro-level using the concordancing software.

Bringing together the methodological approaches and the corpus linguistic approaches to look at high level academic writing is new. As far as the corpus linguistics method is concerned, it was novel complementing it with interviews of the programme teachers and alumni. The text-based analysis combined with interviewing was indeed performed before by Swales and Muresan and Bardi, but the focus was on research articles, similar analyses

conducted on a corpus comprised of dissertation papers had never been done. Interestingly, the dissertation authors are members of the Romanian academia.

This study is not a study about linguistic analysis of texts produced by native speakers versus non-native speakers. This paper analysed to what degree the mentioned aspects within the special context are being reflected at a micro and macro level. The results clearly indicate the existence of a deeply rooted cascading process demonstrated in the triangulation process, with the programme teachers and alumni who were given a voice.

I first connected to the text and then I started reflected in the teaching process of both parties, thus making the decision to conduct the questionnaires. In this way I introduced several dimensions I have built on, bringing them to the same paradigm. In fact, I myself am familiar with this paradigm at first as an insider since I am one of the 2007 class, the first in fact. Then I became involved in some of the programme assessment aspects, having access to the curriculum and staying in touch, working and networking with some of the alumni and teachers obviously. That is the rationale why I have brought into our discussion the teachers' perspective, try to see whether what the alumni acquired could put the basis or could raise awareness towards another academic structure. The findings support the idea that the academic literacy of the dissertation authors has enabled them to communicate with a whole academic community of practice and in the Romanian context, the Anglophone standard is more and more accepted as a standard. In certain cultures – German, French – they have certain expectations, but the trend seems to be moving towards what is the standard in an English speaking context. My paper used European instruments for language proficiency: CEFR, Core Inventory, ELP to analyse the elements at a micro level.

We believe the data reported in this study have shown clearly that at a macro level , as far genre is concerned, there is variation from one sub-discipline to another even when the common denominator is economics, but a feature that is expected of the professional domain

we analysed is familiarity with the moves/ steps concept. The concept of moves and steps in Academic Writing is crucial to developing genre-based patterns that follow the Anglophone standard and then can be spread, distributed, generalized across sub-disciplines of economics. Generalized at institutional level they can give students the opportunity to become very familiar with international standards and most importantly, give a chance to programme graduates, the teachers, to explore genre theory, genre analysis and genre instruction for successful teaching and publishing the will help the institution get the international visibility it is looking for.