Knowledge Presentation in Thesis Writing—
Examining Move Use in Reviewing Literature

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Abstract
Reviewing literature for a research study is a highly complicated reading and writing process, which is assumed a rather formidable task for many graduate students. However, the concept of the “literature review” (LR) as a distinct type of genre has been constantly overlooked and the move structure of literature reviews unexplored. In addition, past studies mainly focused on the expert writing in journal articles rather than L2 students’ thesis writing. A gap between expert writing and graduate students’ thesis writing has not been explored. Therefore, we chose to study the move structure of LRs in master theses written by Taiwanese TEFL program graduates. This study included two research questions: (1) What is the move structure of the LR chapters in master theses in TEFL programs? (2) How are moves (or submoves) distributed in the collected LRs? Thirty theses were chosen using a stratified random method. A move structure with four major moves was formulated for this study to code the selected data. The statistical results showed that “conceptualizing themes in a field (Move 1)” makes the largest proportion, 56.96%, of the total occurrences, followed by “integrating previous works on the themes (Move 2),” 22.39%, “relating previous works to the current study (Move 3),” 11.74%, and “advancing to one’s own study (Move 4),” 8.91%. It is concluded that LRs composed by these graduates fundamentally serve to present relevant field knowledge. Classifying past literature on a given topic, critiquing, and announcing one’s own research are the moves (submoves) that most of the L2 graduate students lack in their LR writing.

Key Words: literature review, move structure, academic writing
INTRODUCTION

Reviewing literature for a research study is a highly complicated reading and writing process, which is a rather formidable task for many graduate students. It is quite difficult for most novice graduate students, not to mention nonnative writers who are just beginning to familiarize themselves with the academic discourse at the graduate level (Johns & Swales, 2002). One of the difficulties that nonnative students experience in academic writing is insufficient knowledge of text conventions. This is often seen as one of the major reasons why nonnative students do not perform well in academic writing (Hyland, 2004).

Since Swales launched a seminal study on move analysis in “introductions” in 1990 to examine their recurrent patterns, a wide range of move structures in research genres has been explored. The genres explored include abstracts, introductions, methods, results, discussions, conclusions, and acknowledgments (Brett, 1994; Bunton, 1999, 2005; Dudley-Evans, 1986; Gledhill, 2000; Hewings, 1993; Hopkins & Dudley-Evans, 1988; Lau, 2000; Lim, 2006; Lores, 2004; Nwogu, 1997; Posteguillo, 1999; Ruiying & Allison, 2003; Samraj, 2002; Swales & Najjar, 1987; Yang & Allison, 2003). Though the results of the research have made great contributions to the field of genre analysis, literature review as a distinct genre has only been slightly touched upon by researchers.

Though the functions of the literature review (hereafter LR) have been explicated in many research writing guides for graduate students (Borg & Gall, 1989; Swales & Feak, 2000; Weissberg & Buker, 1990), the move structure of the LR has been under-
investigated. Research methodology textbooks (Borg & Gall, 1989; Mackey & Gass, 2005) only briefly mention the general functions and importance across research papers. The basic principles in writing up LRs can be summarized as follows: an LR should differentiate what has been done from what needs to be done, discover important issues relevant to the topic, gain a new perspective from synthesis, establish the context of the topic or the problem, identify the main methodologies and research techniques, and place the research in a historical context to show familiarity with recent developments (Hart, 1998).

Some teaching guides at graduate level, on the other hand, present the linguistic elements of LRs, such as citations and the use of tenses (Swales & Feak, 2000; Weissburg & Buker, 1990). For example, Weissburg and Buker (1990, p. 43) presented the concept of citation focus: i.e., “author prominent citation” and “information prominent citation.” Swales (1990) also found that the citation focus reflects the attitudes of the authors, which determines the use of verb tenses in the LRs.

However, the insights gained from writing guides and research methodology textbooks do not offer much help in leading novice writers into mastery of the LR genre knowledge. As indicated by Shaw (1995), LR within the broader genre of academic writing remains problematic. Investigation into the nature of the LR writing is such a complicated task that it has been left literally unheeded. Swales and Feak (2000) also claimed that it was hard to identify the moves of the LR because of its thorny nature.

Further, LR has been under-investigated because it is not regarded as a distinct genre. In Swales’ CARS (Creating a Research
Space) model (Swales, 1990), reviewing literature is categorized as one of the components in “Introduction.” The function of literature review is to serve a submove under Move 1 “establishing a territory” (Swales, 1990, p. 141). LR, instead of being regarded as a distinct genre, has been treated mostly as part of the introduction in the schematic patterns.

In attempting to address this particular lack in the literature, some studies have taken refuge in citation analysis (Petric, 2007; Swales, 1990; Thompson, 2005; Thompson & Tribble, 2001). In this line of investigation, Swales made a contribution by making the distinction between integral and non-integral citations. The functions of the two forms of citation have been further explored by Thompson and Tribble (2001), Thompson (2005) and Petric (2007). Petric (2007) further developed more classifications among the functions of citations: attribution, exemplification, further reference, statement of use, application, evaluation, establishing links between sources, and comparison of one’s own work with that of other authors.

The research insufficiency has not been called into attention until recently when Kwan (2006) pointed it out. She did a pilot study and revised part of Swales’ CARS model to examine the schematic structure of LRs in 26 applied linguistics doctoral dissertations written by native speakers of English in Hong Kong. This model is pioneering in that the schematic structure of LRs is identified. However, the move structure proposed by Kwan (2006) may have variations of structure because there are some unidentified functions.

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1 There are three moves in the introduction proposed by Swales (1990): Move 1, establishing a territory; Move 2 establishing a niche; Move 3 occupying the niche. In each move, there are certain steps, either obligatory or optional.
Further, her move analysis of the LR has not been further tested with other groups of thesis/dissertation writers. Although Liu (2007) adopted Kwan’s model examining the composing process of the LR chapter formation in a nonnative speaker’s thesis, she did not test the usefulness of the Kwan’s model, and the number of participants chosen for the study was limited to one, which makes the results hardly generalizable.

To date, related studies on LR do not form a complete picture of the schematic organization of the literature review chapter in theses/dissertations. Relatively few investigations exist at present that show the appropriate schematic and rhetorical structure of LRs at graduate levels in Teaching English as a Foreign Language Programs (hereafter TEFL) in Taiwan. The data source in Kwan’s study was collected from English native speakers’ doctoral dissertations. Since the present study aimed to identify the LR move structure in MA theses in Taiwan, variations in LR move structure may be found because the focal L2 writers might have developed their own discoursal plans in their LR writing rather than using those found in Kwan’s study.

With the assumption that L2 thesis writers in Taiwan use a particular move structure to achieve their respective communicative purposes, this study, therefore, attempts to describe these target student writers’ move use. The move structure considers information content and rhetorical functions of LRs in master’s theses written by Taiwanese graduates in TEFL. Therefore, this study investigated the following research questions:

1. What is the move structure of the LR chapters in TEFL master’s theses?
2. How are moves (or submoves) distributed in the collected LRs?

**Significance of the Study**

This study provides insights to identify the generic patterns from the description of move use in the LR chapters of master’s theses written by Taiwanese graduates in TEFL. The results can be used as a reference for thesis writing teachers and LR writers to identify LR discourse patterns. The results also serve as a basis for novice LR writers developing academic discourse and can equip them with appropriate LR genre knowledge. Given the generic insights gleaned from this study, novice writers will become more aware of genre knowledge and contextual constraints required in academic writing. In addition, thesis writing instructors might find the suggestions generated from this study useful as they design genre-based instruction.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

More recently, there has emerged some research with a focus on descriptions of features typical of particular contexts. Genre analysis seeks to explain why certain features are used in certain contexts (Bhatia, 1993; Kuo, 1999, 2001, 2002; Lackstrom, Selinker, & Trimble, 1973; Lau, 2000; Selinker, Todd-Trimble, & Trimble, 1976, 1978; Tarone, Dwyer, Gillette, & Icke, 1981; Trimble, 1985). Instead of counting linguistic features, the researchers offered explanations why particular features were used in discourse and the way they were affected by communicative contexts (Belcher, 2004;
Swales’ text-based theory of moves has been central to ESP in the field of genre analysis since the early 90s. Swales’ research, focusing on how specific rhetorical structures are used in a specific text or genre, resulted in discovering the relationship among form, function and genre. His canonical work, genre analysis, particularly the move analysis for the introduction in research papers, has inspired subsequent research in this field and his concept of genre has exerted much influence on how genres are perceived nowadays (Bhatia, 1993; Flowerdew, 2000; Hyland, 2004; Johns, 2003).

**Definition of Move**

Move, a functional term, is a basic unit in conducting genre analysis and many scholars (Lores, 2004; Nwogu, 1997; Santos, 1996; Swales, 1990; Swales & Feak, 2000) have contributed to the definition of move. Moves are considered to be composed of segments of texts with communicative intents and are realized either through the lexico-grammatical or semantic features. Santos (1996, p. 485) defines “move” as a purposeful and staged activity. As Lores (2004) further adds, move categories are mutually exclusive and the definitions of categories should be as narrow as possible.

**Swales’ CARS Model of Introductions in Research Articles**

Many scholars have devoted their studies to certain types of genre analysis, particularly research genres (Cheng, 2007). The best known is Swales’ CARS Model (Creating-A-Research-Space Model) (1990), which is to offer a generic view on how research article (RA)
introductions are textually constructed. RA introductions start with a move that establishes thematic areas of study. RA authors, subsequently, create a niche using a number of options as indicated in steps. Last, authors occupy the niche by reporting their particular concerns for proposed studies.

There are two main features of the CARS models of RA introductions. First, the three rhetorical movements are obligatory because they establish shared contexts to create a niche for a proposed study. The second feature of this model is that there are repeated occurrences in many textual analyses (Crookes, 1986). Generally, the move cycle occurs between “reviewing items of previous research” (Step 3 under Move 1) and “indicating a gap” (Step 2 under Move 2) (Swales, 1990, pp. 158-159).

**Literature Review as a Research Genre**

Generally, a research paper is organized into five parts: introduction, methodology, results, discussion and conclusion. These research genres have been found to be distinct in various disciplinary discourse communities and this line of research has obtained many research results. Under this organization, however, the concept of “literature review” as a distinct type of genre has been constantly overlooked.

In Swales’ CARS model, reviewing literature has been categorized as one of the components in “Introduction” whose function is to serve as a step under Move 1 “establishing a territory” (Swales, 1990, pp. 141). In other words, the legitimacy of the LR as

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2 There are three major moves in the Introduction: establishing the territory, establishing a niche, occupying the niche. In each, several steps are used to realize
a research genre has not been acknowledged, and there has been no analysis of the move structure of this particular genre. Literature reviews have not attracted attention until Kwan (2006) pointed out the lack of research into this area. Kwan’s framework is presented in the following section.

**Kwan’s Framework**

Kwan’s model (2006) drew insights from Swales’ (1981, 1990) genre-analysis model which was basically developed for the moves on the chapters of the introduction in research articles. Despite less attention having been paid to the LR, Kwan (2006) attempted to adapt part of Swales’ CARS model and to identify the move structure of LRs among 20 doctoral dissertations in applied linguistics.

In Kwan’s framework, three moves are identified: (1) establishing a thematic territory, (2) evaluating the state of the field, and (3) announcing one’s own research. In the first move, there are three optional strategies: (1) “surveying the existing state of knowledge and non-research practices,” (2) “claiming the centrality of the theme reviewed,” and (3) “surveying research activities.” For the second move “evaluating the state of the field,” there are negational strategies and affirmative strategies. Negational strategies include counter-claiming and gap-indicating moves while affirmative strategies involve confirmative claims, relevancy claims, and synthesizing the theoretical framework/position. In the last move “announcing one’s own research,” strategies include aim of the major move. There are 3 steps under Move 1 “Establishing the territory:” “claiming centrality,” “making topic generalizations,” and “reviewing items of previous research.”
research, announcing the author’s theoretical position or theoretical framework, announcing the research design or the research process and announcing the adoption of terms or definitions of terms.

However, the moves and strategies used in Kwan’s framework are presented in a general way, which is subject to more flexible interpretation. In particular, strategies such as “claiming the centrality of the theme reviewed” and “making confirmative claims” may have different operational definitions. Therefore, this study hopes to describe the move use in a more specific way and thus to derive operational definitions for the LR moves identified from the students’ LR writing.

**Evaluation of Literature Reviews**

With these evaluative studies (Boote & Beile, 2005; Granello, 2001; Kwan, 2006; Moravcsik & Murugesan, 1975), there are many aspects in the examination of literature reviews. Boote and Beile (2005) present what should be included in the reviews: level of relevancy, synthesis, method, and rhetorical uniformity. Granello (2001) categorizes the cognitive levels that LRs present: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Moravcsik and Murugesan (1975) summarize the nature of literature reviews. However, how to apply these principles in writing up LRs becomes another challenge for researchers in establishing the move structures of literature reviews. Kwan (2006) takes confirmation/negation classification as two contrasting strategies in the second move of “Evaluating the state of the field.” But she fails to take Granello’s cognitive levels into consideration, for synthesis and evaluation are two distinct levels of cognition.
Also, some authors have acknowledged the importance of the literature review and set criteria for quality LRs (Lather, 1999; Strike & Posner, 1983). Lather (1999) argues that a critical role should be providing a synthetic review in order to produce a new productive work, rather than merely mirroring researching in a field. Strike and Posner (1983) further suggest that there are three elements in a good synthetic review: presenting the problems encountered in a field, clarifying and resolving the problems, and offering a new perspective with a more “explanatory and predictive power.” In light of these criteria, the communicative moves that involve in the LR move structure must incorporate the above-mentioned elements in setting the rhetorical agenda in reviewing literature.

**Difficulties in Writing up Literature Reviews**

Many studies report that the difficulties that L2 graduate students encounter in reviewing literature often result from a lack of genre knowledge (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995; Bitchener & Basturkmen, 2006; Cheng, 2007; Dong, 1998; Hills, Soppelsa, & West, 1982; Swales & Feak, 2000). Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) attributed the difficulties to be the unfamiliarity with disciplinary knowledge instead of cultural differences. In addition to genre knowledge, quality literature review is related to the disciplinary knowledge (Dong, 1998; Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007; Johns, 1991; Shaw, 1995). The difficulties of writing up the literature review may result from having little knowledge of creating a research space over an extended discourse with thorough coverage and balance (Bitchener & Basturkmen, 2006; Cooley & Lewkowicz, 1995; Dong, 1998; Jenkins, Jordan, & Weiland, 1993; McNabb, 2001). Some researchers
also pinpoint that the LRs written by graduate students are simply a summary of articles sequentially, instead of integrating the findings and evaluating articles (Boote & Beile, 2005; Froese, Gantz, & Henry, 1998; Swales & Feak, 2000).

**METHOD**

This study used a data-driven approach to frame the move structure of the LR chapter of MA theses in Taiwan. Two major phases were involved: the pilot study and the formal study. The pilot study was launched in order to form a coding scheme used in the study. Figure 1 presents the procedures followed in the present study.

**Pilot Study**

The initial coding scheme was divided into three parts: “Move 1,” “Move 2,” and “Move 3,” which were created based on Kwan’s framework (2006). The three major moves were Move 1 (Establishing a thematic territory), Move 2 (Evaluating the state of the field) and Move 3 (Occupying the niche). Though the major moves of Kwan’s framework were adopted for the pilot study, the submoves under each major move were determined using an open coding procedure (Mackey & Gass, 2005) in order to faithfully reflect the LR moves of the data. Data for open coding were selected from twelve LRs of master’s theses written by Taiwanese TEFL graduates from higher ranked universities. The submoves in the initial coding were derived as these submoves appeared in the selected LR texts. The texts were thus marked and coded according to their functions.
The modification of the move structure was based on the results from coding procedure described in the previous section. The revised
move structure of the LR was then divided into four major moves: Move 1 “Conceptualizing themes in a field,” Move 2 “Integrating previous works on the themes,” Move 3 “Relating the previous works to the current study,” and Move 4 “Advancing to one’s own research.”

**Data Collection**

Thirty theses were selected using a stratified random sample, designed to ensure that the findings of the study are relevant not only to the research population, but also to a larger population of language learners (Mackey & Gass, 2005). In addition, after receiving permission from the writers, the electronic files of the theses were obtained from the libraries or relevant departments at the universities where the students studied.

The criteria used to select the sample were topics, institutions, regions and year. To avoid concentrating on limited topics in this field, the selection covered a wide range of topics in TEFL including language skills, applied linguistics, language elements, learning and teaching. Two or three theses were selected for each topic. The regional factor involved selections of theses from graduate programs of institutions located in northern, central and southern Taiwan. Institutions included TEFL MA programs from various levels/types of institutions. For year, theses selected to be included in the data were completed and submitted to their respective graduate schools within the five years between 2004-2008 in order to reflect the rapid change within the discipline.
Data Analysis

The researchers used frequency, percentage and mean to derive the move occurrence, and the number of each submove used in an LR in the study in order to establish the writers’ preference for move use.

In this study, as the data were selected, they were assigned and distributed to two coders to code the moves in LR texts. As indicated by many researchers (Crookes, 1986; Lores, 2004), lacking uniform standards in move identification is a major flaw of genre analysis and causes a validation problem (Martin, 1992; Paltridge, 1994; Swales, 1981). The researchers followed the steps suggested by Crookes in the coding procedure: selection of coders, coding training sessions, and calculation of inter-coder reliability (Crookes, 1986). Two coders were selected in order to ensure the reliability of the coding results. The two coders, currently PhD students in two different TEFL programs, were required to attend coding training sessions prior to formal coding. After the coding was completed, Cohen Kappa coefficient ($\kappa$) (Scott, 1955; Sim & Wright, 2005) was used to measure categorical items. However, the discrepancies were discussed until substantial agreement was reached. The result of the Cohen Kappa coefficient was 85.8% for inter-coder reliability, which was considered substantial agreement.

RESULTS

In response to the first question, four major moves in the move structure were identified. In each major move, there were several submoves, whose distributions were also calculated to address the second research question.
Move Structure

The four major moves identified are Move 1 “Conceptualizing theme in a field,” Move 2 “Integrating previous works on the themes,” Move 3 “Relating the previous works to the current study,” and Move 4 “Advancing to one’s own research” (see Table 1).

Move 1 is “Conceptualizing themes in a field.” It is placed at the level of analysis in which writers recognize patterns or categorize themes in the articles reviewed. Move 2 is “Integrating previous works on the themes,” in which there are two levels. One level is “synthesis” and the other “evaluation.” Based on Granello’s (2001) cognitive hierarchy, synthesis is defined as “grouping and drawing ideas from source articles to gain a new perspective” while evaluation is “critiquing the quality of the research discussed.” The definition of the first submove is the process where “the combination of ideas from various sources that support a theme is brought together, compared and contrasted” while the meaning of the second submove is to point out weaknesses, strengths, and limitations, and/or a misplaced concept underlying the research and/or unresolved conflicts among the authors of previous studies concerning a research topic.

Move 3 is “Relating the previous works to the current study.” After the previous studies have been synthesized and/or critiqued, establishing a relationship between the synthesis and the proposed study is called for at this stage. The function of this major move can be realized by the two following submoves: (1) claiming relevancy to the current study and (2) indicating a gap.

Move 4 is “Advancing to one’s own research.” Move 4 is especially important not only because this move functions as a transition from the literature review chapter to the methodology
chapter but also a niche has been created in the previous three moves. Therefore, Move 4 also provides an outline of the proposed study.

Table 1
Move Structure of the Literature Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Move 1 Conceptualizing themes in a field</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1A Presenting field knowledge/theory/belief/practices related to the current study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1B Identifying subfields in the major field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1C Organizing major theme(s) to be reviewed for the current study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1D Surveying research activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Move 2 Integrating previous works on the themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2A Grouping and drawing ideas from source materials to gain a new perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ideas from various sources that support a theme are brought together, compared and contrasted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2B Critiquing the quality of the research discussed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(weaknesses, strengths and limitations) and/or a misplaced concept underlying the research and/or unresolved conflicts among the authors of previous studies concerning a research topic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Move 3 Relating previous works to the current study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3A Claiming relevancy to the current study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3B Indicating a gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a variable or factor or a research area which has been overlooked in past literature)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Move 4 Advancing to one’s own research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4A Announcing the aim of the research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4B Announcing the research design or the research process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4C Announcing the theoretical position or the theoretical framework</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Move Distribution

To answer the second question, the researchers calculated the frequency of the four major moves and the frequency of submoves to determine the percentages and means of major moves and submoves. The mean and the frequency order are also specified.
Table 2 shows that Move 1 make up the largest portion of the total 460 occurrences, Move 2 ranked second with 103 occurrences, Move 3 came in third with 54 occurrences, and Move 4 occurred least with 41 occurrences. Move 1 occurred twice as frequently as Move 2 while the occurrences of Move 2 were almost twice those of Move 3. The occurrences of Move 3 and Move 4 differ only slightly.

**Table 2**

**Frequency of Four Major Moves**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Move</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>56.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>22.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>11.74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>8.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The percentage is derived by using the occurrence of each major move divided by the total number of occurrences. The percentages for the four major moves are 56.96%, 22.39%, 11.74% and 8.91% respectively. These figures show that Move 1 (56.96%) is used most frequently, and makes up more than half of the occurrences in the collected LRs. Move 2 (22.39%) occurs considerably less frequently than Move 1. There is also a sharp decline in frequency from Move 2 to Move 3. The occurrence of Move 3 (11.74%) is half of that of Move 2 and Move 4 is used least among the four major moves. It accounts for 8.91% of the total occurrences.

To sum up, Table 2 reveals that LRs mainly serve the function of “conceptualizing themes in a field” in the data. The LR writers also “integrate previous works on the themes” but not as much as they do...
for the theme conceptualization of the field. Some writers would move on to Move 3 to “relate the previous works to the current study” in the LRs but only very few writers would use LR to “advance to their own research.”

**DISCUSSION**

In this section, we discuss the characteristics of the four major moves based on the findings. First of all, the shape of the LR move structure is outlined in contrast with other sections of research articles. Next, we discuss several features in the selected students’ LRs. The outline of the shape of LR Move Structure is drawn out and we find that there are more description and less critical evaluation in students’ LRs. Also, students seldom occupy a niche in their LRs.

**Outlining the Shape of LR Move Structure**

The result of this section takes the move structure of LR chapters written by TEFL graduates into an upside-down ladder shape (\(\bigtriangledown\)), with the largest proportion of Move 1 on the top and with a small proportion of Move 4 at the bottom (see Table 2 for the distribution of the four major moves).

In Weissberg and Buker’s (1990) *Writing up Research*, the authors compare the experimental research article to a funnel shape, diagramed as shown in Figure 2.

Each section in a research article has its distinct function, which in turn shapes its move structure. In Figure 2, the shape of the “abstract” is a flat oblong, representing the complete embodiment of a research article. The “Introduction,” as Peacock (2002) observes,
starts with the function of generalization. Research writers generally talk about the field as a whole, then progressively narrow the scope to talk only about the current investigation. Therefore, the “Introduction” takes the form of an inverted ladder, characterized by moving “from outside in.” The widest part represents the topic that a study centers on, which gradually narrows down to the current study by reviewing literature and establishing a niche. “Method” and “Result” are generally straightforward and present the data collection, procedures, unit of analysis, and findings. Oblongs represent both sections. Next, the “Discussion,” unlike the “Introduction,” is typically a statement of principal findings followed by showing how results respond to the larger issue(s) stated in the introduction. In the discussion, the focus is placed on making generalizations and the relationship between the new findings and the body of knowledge previously accepted by fellow specialists (Peacock, 2002).

Comparing the order of the LR move structure, as shown in the major move distribution in Table 2, with that of the introduction
based on Swales’ CARS model, we find that the LR discourse structure proceeds in a similar manner as that of an introduction. The move structure of the LR sections is shaped like an inverted ladder. LRs talk about the field as a whole in the beginning and subsequently divide various themes or issues into parts, gradually tapering off to the current investigation.

There are some similarities between the first move and the last move. Equivalent to “occupy the territory” in the introduction, the first move of the LR provides readers with a detailed picture of the state of the field. Also, the last move in LRs, “advancing to one’s own research,” is comparable to “occupying the niche” in the introduction. In both sections, they pave the way for the methodology of the current investigation.

Despite the similarities, one difference exists between the LR and the “introduction:” the second move in the LR genre narrows its scope by synthesizing the related studies to form a new perspective, which finds no counterpart in the introduction. In comparison to the “introduction,” the discourse in the “literature review” allows larger and legitimate capacity for reestablishing the territory. By reestablishing the territory, we mean that the arguments need to be made specifically and evidentially from the past literature. Move 2 in the LR move structure is unique to the LR genre. Move 2, termed as “integration,” can direct a more precise perspective on organized themes. Unlike the limited capacity in introductions of master theses, LRs provide room for researchers to gain more rhetorical power to explain why the topic is worthy of research.
More Description than Classification in Theme Conceptualization

Based on the findings, the larger proportion of submoves in Move 1 involves knowledge description rather than literature classification. The move distribution in Table 3 offers a more comprehensive picture of the LR move structure. The move structure reveals that LRs mainly serve the function of “Conceptualizing Themes in a Field” in the data. Table 3 shows the frequency, percentage, and mean of each submove. There are four codes for the four submoves. A code is composed of a number and a letter. Letters stand for the submoves under one major move. It should be noted that the sequence of submoves does not guarantee any fixed order.

Table 3
Frequency, Percentage, Mean of Submoves under Move 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Submoves</th>
<th>Frequency (N = 30)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1A (knowledge presentation)</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>35.22%</td>
<td>5.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1B (subfield identification)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.09%</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1C (theme organizer)</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>11.30%</td>
<td>1.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1D (research activities survey)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>9.35%</td>
<td>1.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>262</strong></td>
<td><strong>56.96%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Description” and “Classification” are used as criteria to rate Move 1 because they are the two functions found in Move 1. Within the four major submoves, 1A and 1D are categorized as the description of existing knowledge. By description, it is meant that the knowledge is presented in the same manner in the source articles and no author perspective is involved. One can trace the exact information described in source articles. 1B serves the function of classification.
1B is the division of the major field into subfields, which requires researchers’ ability to make the classification.

“Knowledge presentation (1A)” and “research activities survey (1D)” are two of the top three submoves that are used frequently in Move 1. Their mean values are above 1, meaning that 1A appears almost 5 times and 1D 1.43 times higher than the average per LR. The submove 1B only occupies a small portion of Move 1. Combining the percentages of 1A and 1D, we found that they make up 44.57% [(162 + 43) / 460] of the total occurrences whereas 1B only takes up 1.09% (5/460), which contrasts greatly. In light of this statistical result, these LR writers arrange their LRs mainly on description of existing knowledge rather than classification. In the following sections, examples are taken from the data to show the submoves and their features.

**Description of previous literature.** Based on these findings, LR writers mainly focus on the description of the learned knowledge (1A, 1D) rather than classification of past literature. The example below is an excerpt from 1A, which entails the display of field knowledge, theory, hypothesis, or non-research practices in areas of studies or fields.

(Excerpt 1)

Hayes & Flower’s (1981) Writing Model

¹Actually, the cognitive model of writing proposed by Flower and Hayes (1981) has been widely accepted as advancing the understanding of what the writing process entails in general. ²Divergent from tradition stage models of writing as reflecting the growth of a writing product, the cognitive process is mainly characterized as a recursive process of discovering meaning
(Berninger, Whitaker, Feng, & Swanson, 1996; Cho, 2003; Fayol, 1991; Raimes, 1987; Zamel, 1983).

3In Flower and Hayes (1981) writing model of writing involves the three major elements as shown in Figure 2.1—task environment, the writer’s long-term memory, and writing process. 4Specifically, the task environment proceeded by the writer so far and the rhetorical problems such as the topic and the audience that the writer appeal to. 5The writer’s long-term memory, which can be extracted useful information to meet the demands of rhetorical problem as composing, includes the knowledge about the topic, the audience and genre. 6The final component, writing process, is clarified as the constant interaction of three sub-processes: planning, translating, and reviewing .... (LR 15)

As far as the displayed field knowledge is concerned, it is generally perceived as received knowledge by the members of the discourse community. In presenting field knowledge, writers’ own perspectives are not shown. The above excerpt presents Hayes and Flowers’ writing model, which is known as a cognitive model in writing theory. In the first and second sentences (S1, S2), the author shows that the focus of the cognitive model is on the process of writers’ discovery of meaning. Further, in S3 to S6, he/she specifies that task environment, the writer’s long-term memory, and the writing process are defined as the three major elements in this cognitive model.

To show the differences between “description and classification,” we introduce two terms: “integral citation” and “non-integral citation.” Integral citation is a feature of the description of knowledge. Integral citation means that the name of the researcher
occurs as part of the sentence (Swales, 1990). The integral citations in this example are highlighted. Judging from the discourse features, the author uses integral citations to account for the established knowledge in two paragraphs. The first paragraph is devoted to introducing Hayes and Flower’s Writing Model from the cognitive perspective, by which process writing can be made clearer. The second paragraph describes the three factors involved in this writing model.

Integral citation is likewise used in 1E. An example of “Surveying research activities” (1D) is shown below:

(Excerpt 2)

1Gledhill (2000) investigated the discourse function of introductions in research articles using a computer-based methodology. 2By analyzing the Introduction sections of 150 cancer research article .... 3The author narrowed down the focus from a vast amount of data to verbs (has, have, been, is) and prepositions (of, to) for further discussion .... 4The use of the word “to be” had different functions in different sections of the research articles .... 5“Of” also appeared in research-oriented phrases (the aim/purpose of this study), used as “support” (in a variety of), and used to the creation of complex nominals (the mechanism of action of human tumor model ....) (LR 7)

“Surveying research activities (1D)” refers to surveying research information. This submove presents the research activity components- aims, participants, methods, and results. This submove covers detailed reports about a study, which are generally lengthy. The discoursal evidence in Excerpt 2 shows that surveying research activities is similar to an abstract of a study. However, the
presentation of all the components of a study seems to be irrelevant for a literature review. For example, S1 shows that the author is reporting a study done by Gledhill in 2001 on the discourse function of phraseology in introductions of research articles. S2 refers to the data source from 150 research articles on cancer. S3 states the research aim and the results are revealed in S4 and S5. Gledhill’s study (2000), introduced in a single integral citation, is exhaustive and is two pages long.

**Classification of past literature.** “Identifying the subfield in the major field (1B)” occurs relatively infrequently with a lower mean value of less than 1. It involves the writers’ ability to classify and assign features to a subfield. Non-integral citations are replete in this submove. Non-integral citations refer to a reference where the researcher is mentioned either in parentheses or elsewhere by a number or via some other device. 1B is used to survey the studies and classify them into subfields. In the following paragraphs, each submove is given its definition and the excerpt provided.

(Excerpt 3)

Previous studies have shown pragmatic transfer in refusals (e.g., Al-Issa, 2003; Beebe, Takahashi, & Uliss-WTEFLz, 1990; Chang, 2001; Felix-Brasdefer, 2003, 2004; Lin, 2006a, 2006b; Kwon, 2004), request (e.g., Blum-Kulka, 1991; Byon, 2004; Chang, 2001; Chung, 2005; H. Chen, 2006; Hassall, 2003; Lin & Chen, 2006; Marti, 2006; Trosborg, 1995; Yu, 1999) …, correction (e.g., Takahashi & Beebe, 1993), evidential markers (e.g., Ishida, 2006), … backchannel behaviors (e.g., Neinz, 2003) and other speech acts. (LR 5)
The feature of this submove (1B) is the appearance of a listing of subfields within a major field with authors’ last names and years of publication attached in the parentheses. Usually, the aim of identifying subfields in the major field is to situate the current study in a major field. In Excerpt 3, S1 reveals that the current study centers on the field of interlanguage pragmatics. Many areas of studies in this field, such as refusals, requests, apology, correction, evidential markers, and backchannel behaviors and others, are classified. In each area of study, the LR writer provides readers with the reference(s) to study (ies) in chosen areas by showing the author’s last name and year of publication in parentheses for retrieval. All references to the literature are shown as non-integral citations.

In Excerpts 1 and 2, 1A and 1D function to introduce the main points of a single paper or book. Authors are prominent in the citations presenting the field knowledge, while information is prominent in the classification of literature. As shown in the statistical results, the student writers devote a major proportion of their LRs to describing the existing knowledge; however, they seldom use the strategy to classify the literature and to help the readers conceptualize the field knowledge.

Less Critical Evaluation in Integration

The LR writers also “integrate previous work on the themes” but not as much as they do for the theme conceptualization of the field. Move 2 “Integrating Previous Work on the Themes” takes up the secondary share of the total occurrence as shown in Table 4. In this major move, two levels are involved: one level is synthesis, which is defined as an ability to make a new whole from the source articles,
and the other is evaluation. Based on the cognitive hierarchy, two submoves are included: (1) grouping and drawing ideas from source articles to gain a new perspective (2A); (2) critiquing the quality of the research discussed (2B). The first submove is ideas from various sources that support a theme are brought together, compared and contrasted while the meaning of the second move is to point out weaknesses, strengths, and limitations, and/or a misplaced concept underlying the research and/or unresolved conflicts among the authors of previous studies concerning a research topic. There are 103 occurrences for Move 2 of which 84 involve 2A and 19 involve 2B. Further, we examined the means, which were found to be 2.8 (2A) and 0.63 (2B).

Table 4
Frequency, Percentage, Mean of Submoves in Move 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Submove</th>
<th>Frequency (N = 30)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2A (synthesis)</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>18.26%</td>
<td>2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2B (critiquing)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4.13%</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>22.39%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Submove (2A) is understood as summarizing ideas from past literature and presenting them from a particular perspective. This submove has also been described as a “confirmational citation,” a term coined by Moravcsik and Murugesan (1975, p. 88) or “affirmative strategies” (Kwan, 2006, p. 45). These terms provide two explanations for this submove: confirmation citation deals with the correctness of references whereas affirmative strategies are used to
support the author’s research stance. The former refers to a summarization of past studies while the latter emphasizes the purpose of using this submove. These two above-mentioned viewpoints are incorporated in this newly created submove used in this study. The textual features with the submove are that a point is summarized from past studies and usually placed in the beginning of the focal paragraph(s). Also, multiple authors and years of publication in the parentheses are attached to the focal sentences to provide the source articles. In the example below, S1 summarizes the theoretical camp CAH and explains it to be a source of difficulty in L2 learning. The parentheses in S2 show the researchers whose studies are based on CAH.

(Excerpt 4)

2.2.1.2 Previous Empirical Studies on L1 Interference

1The CAH [Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis] claims that the principal barrier to second language acquisition comes from interference of an L2 learner’s mother tongue … predict or explain difficulties an L2 learner will encounter (Ellis, 1996: 23-27; Brown, 2000: 207-210). 2Emanating from such a theoretical backdrop, many researchers (e.g., Schachter, 1974; Schachter et al., 1976; Bley-Vroman & Houng, 1988 … Wei, 1997; Gisborne, 2000; Yin, 2001; Chan, 2004a, b) have strongly asserted that L1 transfer is the overriding and sole factor that determines the success of RC acquisition by ESL/EFL learners …. (LR 1)

Whereas 2A “synthesis” is regarded as a confirmation of past studies in which a summary is made from source articles; 2B, on the other hand, is viewed as a negative submove, serving as a critique of
the past studies. Critiquing includes finding faults in previous studies, either methodological problems or conceptual mishaps. In the example below, the author points out a potential problem with the conceptual mishaps on teacher feedback analysis. S1 states that teacher feedback has been undifferentiated in the past studies. Subsequently, S2 suggests that two categories such as content and grammar can be created as categories for teacher feedback analysis to examine their effects on student writings.

(Excerpt 5)

… 1a shared feature of such studies on the effects of feedback is that they seem to regard various types of feedback as having equal influence on the same aspect of learners’ revision … 2the feedback is regarded as undifferentiated category, which compares effects on students writing among groups with or without teacher feedback. 3Such research seems to offer no comparisons of various forms, or contents, of grammatical feedback.

(LR20)

The mean for 2A is four times higher than for 2B, which indicates that these LR writers mainly synthesize the past studies rather than critiquing them in their LRs. In the integration of past studies, these LR writers tend to group the studies they are reviewing into types and summarize them. They seldom critique the quality of the research discussed.

**Gap Indication Dominant in Relevancy Claiming**

After the previous studies have been synthesized and/or critiqued, a relationship between integration and the proposed study is
called for. “Relating previous works to the current study (Move 3)” entails making a connection between the literature and the current study. The function of this major move can be realized by the two following submoves: (1) “claiming relevancy to the current study (3A)” and (2) “indicating a gap (3B)” (see the frequency, percentages and mean of the submoves of Move 3 in Table 5).

### Table 5

**Frequency, Percentage, Mean of Submoves under Move 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Submove</th>
<th>Frequency (N = 30)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3A (relevancy claiming)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4.35%</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3B (gap indication)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>7.39%</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>11.74%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 4, the submoves in Move 3 are used much less frequently than those in Move 1 and Move 2. The frequencies show that there are only 20 occurrences (3A) and 34 occurrences (3B). Comparatively speaking, 3B is used at least once per LR chapter, a strategy preferred by these writers for Move 3. For this submove, a gap in the literature is indicated. Thus, it is generally used by writers who think that a study will be conducted to make up for the missing link. In Excerpt 6, a gap is indicated that the relationship between task types and interlocutors’ familiarity has not been explored in the previous studies.
(Excerpt 6)

In addition, the interrelation between task types and interlocutors’ familiarity has also received little attention. (LR 4)

**Niche is Seldom Occupied in Student Writers’ LRs**

From the collected data, only very few writers used their LRs to “advance to their own research (Move 4).” “Advancing to one’s own research” is presented as the last move in the move structure. Move 4 is especially important not only because this move serves as a transition from the literature review chapter to the methodology chapter but also because a niche has been created in the previous three moves. Therefore, Move 4 outlines a preliminary proposal of a new study for readers to understand the significance of the current study.

It was found that Move 4 consists of three submoves. However, none of them were used frequently in the MA students’ LR chapters. Among the three submoves, their respective percentages are relatively low. Their mean values are less than one occurrence in each LR (see Table 6).

**Table 6**

**Frequency, Percentage, Mean of Submoves under Move 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Submove</th>
<th>Frequency (N = 30)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4A (aim announcement)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>6.09%</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4B (research process announcement)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.39%</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4C (theory announcement)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.43%</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>41</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.91%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Take 4A as an example. In this submove, the aim of the proposed study is made known, including the topic or the factors involved. This submove is usually shown at the end of the LR texts. In Excerpt 7, the writer claims the importance of referentials in reading comprehension in S1. Therefore, the writer will explore the relationship between referential devices and reading comprehension in his/her own study.

(Excerpt 7)

1It [referential devices] should play a vital role in the academic reading process among EFL college readers. 2Hence, it is worth to conduct the current study to explore how EFL college students with different language proficiency figure out the referential relationship while reading how referential devices influence and facilitate their reading comprehension ….

(LR 19)

As evidenced, most of the LR writers are not able to use their LRs as a transition to the methodology chapter because all the submoves under Move 4 are used rarely, as evidenced by with their respective lower mean values. It is evident that these thesis writers do not make use of the LRs to advance to their own studies. Rather than integrating critiques of the literature under review, most of the LR writers seem to be knowledge recipients, who set out to write down what they read from the past literature and report the contents accordingly.
CONCLUSION

This study argued for “literature review” (LR) as a distinct type of genre and formulated the Move Structure of LR chapters in MA theses in TEFL. Therefore, thirty LRs, written by Taiwanese TEFL graduates, were collected and were selected by stratified sampling. Two raters were recruited to judge the LR qualities. A new move structure with four major moves was created in this study: “Conceputalizing themes in a field (Move 1),” “Integrating previous works on the themes (Move 2),” “Relating previous works to the current study (Move 3),” “Advancing to one’s own research (Move 4).” In this framework, Move 2 and Move 3 are added as the new major moves: Move 2 consists of two submoves “synthesis” and “critiquing” and Move 3 includes “claiming relevancy to the current study” and “indicating a gap.”

The second research question is answered by the move distribution. The statistical results show that the overall move structure is shaped like an upside-down ladder. “Theme conceptualization (Move 1)” makes up the largest proportion of the total occurrences, followed by “integration of past studies (Move 2),” “relating to current study (Move 3),” and “announcement of one’s study (Move 4).” These results suggest that the LRs composed by these TEFL graduates fundamentally serve to present relevant field knowledge. Only very limited sections of the LRs are devoted to the integration of past studies, the establishment of links between past studies and future research, and an introduction to the present study. A major flaw with these LRs is that they simply present existing
knowledge. Writers are not consciously aware of the full role of the LR in a thesis.

As Bazerman (1988) comments, the integration of the current investigation within the relevant field of study is of great importance and is considered to be a general trend in RA. However, this is not an easy and effortless task for novice graduate students to accomplish because their knowledge of the literature is not as extensive as that of experienced writers. From the statistical results, a feature that can be observed in the LRs of novice writers is that knowledge presentation plays the major role in LRs. There is seldom evidence of critiquing. The statistical evidence also reveals that most of the writers stick to the fact that the sole purpose of the LR is to present a theory or theories related to the topic; however, they are not able to find links among variables and place their research in a historical context to show familiarity with updated developments. Therefore, their display of knowledge seems to be an imitation of the original works. Hart (1998) also notes that an essential role of the literature review is to establish the researchability of the topic. It is likely that these writers are not able to identify the importance of their study in the field by properly reviewing past literature. As a result, the proposed topic may be considered too broad or inadequate; it may not be progressively narrowed down into a researchable and practical study without a critical evaluation of previous studies (Hart, 1998).

Since the relationship between the introduction and the LR can be further clarified, the LR as a distinct subgenre is more recognizable. New moves and submoves have been identified in this study. These include the first major move “conceptualizing and analyzing themes in a field” and the second major move “integrating past studies on a
theme.” These two moves, unlike the more general claim made in the introduction, make the field knowledge more specific, being organized into themes for reviews. Therefore, the LR genre appears sophisticated with multifaceted integration, which is a particularly unique feature.

As we explore factors that affect L2 graduate students’ writing performance other than their language backgrounds, the results of this study indicate that genre knowledge is of vital importance in achieving academic success. The move structure of the LR tests out how graduate students in the TEFL field present their views of this genre through textual realizations. Their levels of understanding of this particular genre would determine whether they meet academic expectations and find success in achieving the communicative purpose in this research genre.

**Pedagogical Implications**

Since the move structure of LR chapters in the TEFL field have been framed and some weaknesses have been identified from the move distribution in students’ LRs, there are two pedagogical implications: bring LR move structure to learners’ conscious level and design training courses to address the weaknesses found in this study.

To start with, the researchers urge that the LR move structure be explicitly taught in thesis writing classes. However, the researchers do not advocate a static and decontextualized pedagogy. The researchers suggest that novice theses writers be guided in the following ways: first of all, learners can be guided to identify the LR move structures using “identification tasks.” Instructors can explain
the description of each major move and submoves of the major move structure. They can then demonstrate and explain the moves using sample LR texts. Further, instructors may discuss with learners the concepts of each submove under the four major moves in the LR texts. Finally, learners are guided to practice identifying the moves structures of some selected LR texts. By doing this, they can be more familiar with the move use in LR texts.

The current study also showed that most of the student writers in this study use more of description of past studies than classification to conceptualize themes for readers. Therefore, “classification tasks” can be designed to help learners become get familiar with finding similar and/or different features on given topics from authentic materials, such as journal articles, theses, dissertations, books and technical reports, and assign proper names to the features found. This is not an easy task because students need to closely read a large numbers of academic papers on a given topic and tacitly make classifications based on certain points.

Last, the results also revealed that critical perspectives are lacking in integrating past studies. Instructors may hold seminars for graduate students to critique some selected academic papers for the methodological inappropriateness or conceptual mishaps. Then, students can prepare a writing critique based on the discussion to sharpen their writing skills as well as their critical insights.

**Limitations of This Study and Suggestions for Future Research**

In this study, the data was collected from master’s theses in graduate TEFL programs in Taiwan. This means that disciplinary variations in LR move structure are still unknown. Hence, the results
of the study can only be applicable to the LR chapters of MA theses in TEFL for L2 writers. Based on the above limitation, the researchers suggest that more disciplinary variations in LR move structures can be studied to verify the suitability and applicability of the current LR move structure for novice writers.

Some related studies into research genres can be conducted on LRs from various perspectives: (1) the LR writing performance of high-rated and low-rated theses, and (2) the move combination or configuration in various sections. For the first suggestion, since this study only examines L2 learners’ move structure, LR texts should be analyzed further so that examples can be given for novice writers to identify. With more studies of LR writing performance, thesis instructors and researchers will have a better understanding of how they can better provide effective instruction suited to learners’ needs. Second, the ways in which themes or subtopics are developed in various sections need to be further analyzed. In other words, how moves are combined and configured has been under-researched. Nor do we know what kinds of combinations or configurations occur most frequently. These directions for future research can provide a more complete picture of LR writing.

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碩士論文寫作中知識呈現：
檢視文獻回顧章節之語步使用

摘要
文獻回顧章節是學術論文寫作中讀寫過程困難度較高的一章節，因此研究生普遍視為畏途。文獻回顧的語步分析在過去文獻中尚未受到重視。此外，過去文獻多著重於英文期刊論文的探討分析而對研究生論文寫作分析較少。因此研究生的論文寫作特色及應給予的指導所知有限。本論文旨在分析臺灣英語教學碩士研究生所撰寫的碩士論文中文獻回顧章節之語步結構。本論文提出兩個研究問題：(1) 臺灣英語教學碩士論文文獻回顧章節之語步結構為何？(2) 主要語步與次要語步出現的頻率為何？本論文選出 30 篇臺灣英語教學碩士論文中文獻回顧章節做語步分析。本研究發現文獻回顧章節有四個主要語步。這四個主要語步分別為：(1) 領域知識觀念介紹，(2) 用主題方式整合過去之文獻，(3) 聯結過去文獻與將進行之研究之關係，及 (4) 宣布將進行研究。每個主要語步下有數個次要語步。本論文顯示第一語步使用的最為廣泛占 56.96%，第二語步佔 22.39%，第三語步與第四語步各為 11.74% 與 8.91%。結果發現語步的使用多是在呈現領域的既有知識，而整合知識，批判及明確指出該研究重要性相對較少。本論文之研究結果可提供台灣英語教學碩士論文寫作教師與研究生做為碩士論文文獻回顧章節之語步結構，並可提供論文指導者應加強
碩士生之文獻分類、文獻批判及指出未來要做研究重要性這三個語步。

關鍵詞：文獻回顧 語步結構 學術論文寫作