



Research article

The very first sentence in research article introductions: A rhetoric comparative approach

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ABSTRACT

The current study explores the rhetoric and stylistic properties of the very first sentence that scholars generate in their research article introductions. The study draws upon a corpus of 502 sentences written in the fields of linguistics and translation, half of which are collected from national low-impact journals affiliated with Gulf universities in the Middle East while the other half are elicited from international high-impact journals. The study shows that half of the authors in high-impact journals as opposed to a quarter of the authors in low-impact journals provide citations to their very first sentence. These preferences are accounted for by the distinction drawn by Swales (1990) between centrality claims and topic generalizations under Move 1. Contra the predictions made by Create A Research Space Model proposed by Swales (1990, 2004), the results show that the authors of high-impact journals are more liberal in starting their introduction with a sentence of Move 2 or 3 type. In contrast, the authors of low-impact journals prefer to begin with a sentence of Move 1 type that is shorter in word count, more metaphorical, less academic as well as full of typos and grammatical errors.

1. Introduction

The rhetoric, stylistic and textual properties of research articles (RAs) written in different languages have been the focus of many studies across the world (e.g. Swales 1990, 2004 for English; Najjar 1990 for Arabic; Mauranen 1993 for Finnish; Fredrickson and Swales 1994 for Swedish; Ahmad 1997 for Malay; Duszak 1997 for Polish, Mur-Dueñas 2010 for Spanish among others)¹. In these works, every section of RAs is independently explored: introductions (e.g. Samraj 2002; Ozturk, 2007), methodology (e.g. Lim, 2006), results (e.g. Brett, 1994; Lim, 2010), discussion (e.g. Yang and Allison, 2003; Lewin et al., 2005; Moreno 2021) and conclusions (e.g. Visser 2014; Stamatović and Vesna 2015).

These studies show that the RA represents an academic genre that follows conventional regulations and rules. For instance, it is now widely accepted that authors write their RA introductions under the view of Create A Research Space (CARS) model proposed by Swales (1990, 2004). According to CARS model (for more discussion, see Section 3), authors develop their introductions following three moves: Move 1, 2, 3. When an author begins writing their introductions, they start with Move 1, in which they write sentences that declare the topic of their paper and review the

past literature relevant to it. The author then takes Move 2 and draft sentences that indicate the gaps and the limitations in the previous works. The last part of the introduction is finally composed following Move 3, in which the author generates sentences that express the purpose of the study, raise the research questions, or outline the structure of the whole paper, among many others. These three moves have been found prototypical of many RA introductions in various disciplines such as EFL (Chu 1966), computer sciences (Anthony 1999), social sciences (Lewin et al., 2005) physical sciences (Gross et al., 2002) and biology (Samraj 2002).

Given that all the early rhetoric works have investigated the paragraphs in each section in the RA (i.e. introduction, methodology, results, conclusions etc), the current study aims to take a micro view and examine only the very first sentence (VFS) that comes to the author's mind when they start composing their introductions. In other words, the present study does not explore all the paragraphs that constitute the introduction section and see how the author moves in their writing progression. It rather examines the rhetoric and stylistic properties of the opening sentence that the author produces when they scratch their heads and put their pen to paper or when they revise their manuscript and add their final touches to the introduction. Given that the first impression lasts, we

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E-mail addresses: msalanzi@imamu.edu.sa (M. Alanazi), moteebalqarni@kku.edu.sa (M. Alqarni).¹ The abbreviations used in this article are as follows: GJ(s) = Gulf Journal(s); IJ(s) = International Journal(s); RA(s) = Research Article(s); WOS = Web of Science; VFS(s) = Very First Sentence(s).

assume that the initial sentence is the best drafted statement that the author generates, revealing the whole story about the quality, publishability, and prospects of their paper. It is also very likely that editor-in-chiefs and reviewers reach general expectations regarding submitted manuscripts based on this very introductory sentence. If the VFS is full of typos, grammatical errors and some other stylistic issues, the remaining ones are more likely to be worse in content and structure.

Given that no work has assigned attention to the VFS, we argue that this study will not only provide us with insight into the stylistics of the VFS, but it will also teach us how we should craft our opening sentence. This is an important exploration because “nearly all academic writers admit to having more difficulty with getting started on a piece of academic writing than they have with its continuation” (Swales, 1990: 137). It has been reported that the American fiction novelist Stephen King was taking months to produce an opening sentence that engages the readership from the start (Fassler 2013). As put by Pinker (2014), “Good writing starts strong. Not with a cliché (‘Since the dawn of time’), not with a banality (‘Recently, scholars have been increasingly concerned with the question of ...’), but with a contentful observation that provokes curiosity” (Pinker, 2014: 15).

The current study will also override the limitations in previous works. One major limitation in the academic rhetoric studies follows from the fact that they discuss all the paragraphs that represent the RA sections without giving a special attention to the VFS. Such a holistic view makes the analytical landscape much more complex given that scholars are faced with a tedious task that requires a full investigation into all the paragraphs of a given section. These requirements make scholars draw upon small corpora in their analyses. For instance, only 48 English introductions from different fields are rhetorically analyzed by Swales (1981), 48 and 28 Arabic introductions from agriculture and social sciences by Najjar (1990) and Fakhri (2004) respectively, 40 German introductions from Linguistics journals by Gntuzmann and Oldenburg (1991), 31 Chinese introductions from hard science journals by Taylor and Chen (1991), and 40 Thai RA introductions in education and medicine by Jogthong (2001). Some of these analyses are fleshed out in a book-sized manuscript such as Swales (1981) or a dissertation as is the case with Najjar (1990) and Jogthong (2001).

Given the smallness of the VFS, the present study could draw upon a larger corpus consisting of 502 VFSs that appear in introductions written in the field of linguistics and translation. Half of these VFSs (i.e. 251) are drawn from international high-impact journals indexed in Web of Science (WOS). The other half (i.e. 251) are gleaned from national low-impact journals affiliated with universities located in the Arabian Gulf Region. The purpose of the study is therefore descriptive and pedagogical. We will first explore the rhetoric and stylistic features of the VFS in each half and see whether the difference between the two sets is marked. We will then address how these findings can help low-impact journal authors from a pedagogical perspective to improve their writing of the introductory sentence.

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows. Section (2) addresses the data collection stages and makes some clarifications about the definition of what is called a ‘VFS’. Section (3) lays out the CARS model within which the analysis of the VFS is couched. The findings are presented in Section (4) and the closing remarks are given in Section (5).

2. Methodology

To the ends of the current study, we downloaded 502 RAs written in English and published between 2000 and 2020 on the topics of Linguistics as well as Translation. Half of these RAs (i.e. 251) are published in 23 national low-impact journals affiliated with 21 Arabic Gulf Universities located in Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain. The other half (i.e. 251) are published in 16 international high-impact journals indexed in WOS database. For space limitations, we will call the first group ‘Gulf Journals’ (GJs) and the second ones ‘International Journals’ (IJs).

Because GJs publish both Arabic as well as English manuscripts, the number of their English publications is not high. Thus, the number of RAs we drew from each of these GJs varied. We sometimes found only one English-written RA in one single GJ, and at other times, we had access to more than 30 RAs only from a single GJ. At any case, the total of the collected RA reached up to 251 with no potential for an increase. We collected 141 RAs from 16 journals affiliated with Saudi Arabian universities, 41 RAs from 3 journals linked to two UAE universities, 34 from one journal under University of Kuwait, 26 from *Journal of Arts and Social Sciences* published by Sultan Qabus University of Oman, and 9 from the *Journal of Human Sciences* based in Bahrain University. All these GJs are not indexed in WOS, neither are they listed in Scopus, with the exception of the Saudi journal *King Faisal University Journal for Humanities and Administration* which is a Scopus-indexed journal. For more info on the titles of these GJs and the number of RAs elicited from each of them, see the Appendix (Part A).

It should be noted that we chose GJs to be university-affiliated rather than independent ones, because university-affiliated journals are more likely to be serious in the review processes and the publication decisions. In other words, RAs in GJs are expected to be of high quality in comparison to those published in independent, perhaps predatory and profitable, journals. Furthermore, most of the scholars who publish in GJs are faculty members based in the Arab universities. That is, the writers in GJs are Arabic-speaking PhD holders who have read many English scientific articles during their high studies and were exposed to the conventions of English academic writing. As far as the field in which these RA are published, we chose the linguistics and translation fields because “writings in the humanities and social sciences evidence more prominent variation. In these research fields, communication styles respond most strongly to language- and culture-bound discursual preferences and constraints” (Duszak 1997: 11).

Regarding the 16 IJs, they publish all their RAs in English and accept submissions from all the scholars across the world. In other words, the writers in IJs are not necessarily English native speakers, but they are more likely to be such, given the notable research activities of American and British researchers in the world (Pickard 2014). Regardless of the nationality of the IJ scholars, we assume that they are very professional in academic writing. Given the high number of English publications from IJs, there was no difficulty in collecting RAs from them. However, and to reduce bias to the minimum, we chose to select random RAs from different journals varying in their WOS rankings and high-impact factors. Put differently, we selected some RAs from the top 10 WOS-indexed journals, some from the bottom list, and the others from the middle. We also considered the variations in the publishing companies of these IJs, selecting RAs from Wiley (4 journals), SAGE (3), Elsevier (2), John Benjamins (2), Cambridge University Press (1), Taylor and Francis Ltd (1), De Gruyter (1), Routledge (1) and Springer (1). The country of publication was also taken into consideration, selecting RAs from 6 journals published in the UK, 5 from the USA, 4 from the Netherlands, and one from Poland. For more info on the titles of these IJs, their 2021 impact factors, and the number of RAs elicited from each of them, see the Appendix (Part B).

To collect the VFS from each RA published in these journals, we restricted ourselves to the definition of the term ‘sentence’ given by www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com below.

A sentence is a set of words expressing a statement, a question or an order, usually containing a subject and a verb. In written English, sentences begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop/period (.), a question mark (?) or an exclamation mark (!).

Put differently, we define the VFS in any RA introduction as the series of words (i) that end in a full stop, a question mark and/or an exclamation mark and (ii) that appear right below the heading ‘introduction’. Because some introductions start with a subheading, we regard the sentence that appears below the subheading as the first sentence. According to this strict definition, we considered any set of clauses separated by semicolons (;) as a single sentence regardless of their length. Given that

some full stops are not the intended full stops that appear at the end of original sentences, we also surpassed them during the copying stage. For instance, we ignored the full stops that appear in some references as is the case with the et al. (cf. et alia) as well as the full stops that appear within abbreviations (e.g. B.B.C).

3. CARS model

Swales (1990, 2004) proposes an influential model known as *Create A Research Space* (CARS) aiming to capture the key patterns featuring in the development of RA introductions. CARS Model argues that the development of RA introductions take three moves: (i) *Establishing a territory* (Move 1), (ii) *Establishing a niche* (Move 2) and (iii) *Occupying the niche* (Move 3). *Establishing a territory* (Move 1) means that the authors begin their introductions by indicating the significance and centrality of their article and this move can be represented by three steps: (i) *claiming centrality* by showing the importance of the topic as in (1), (ii) *making a topic generalization* as in (2) or *reviewing the previous literature* as in (3).

1. Recently, there has been a growing interest in... (Claiming centrality)
2. Learning a foreign language is required in most countries (Topic generalization)
3. Previous research has shown that ... (Brie, 1988) (Literature review)

Regarding *Establishing a niche* (Move 2), Swales (1990) argues that the authors move in developing their introductions by showing how their current research will resume the previous efforts. This move can be represented by four steps: by (i) *counter-claiming* (i.e. showing the limitations of the early research) as in (4) (ii) *identifying the gap* that the previous studies have neglected as in (5), (iii) *raising questions* as in (6) or (iii) *continuing a tradition* (i.e. re-examining or replicating previous studies) as in (7).

4. However, these methods suffer from some limitations (Counter-claiming)
5. There is little research on ... (Gap indication)
6. A question remains whether (Question raising)
7. Consequently, these results need to be re-examined ... (Continuing a tradition)

Under Move 3 (i.e. *Occupying the niche*), Swales (1990) claims that the authors follow three steps: (i) *outlining purposes* or *describing present research* as in (8) and (9) respectively, (ii) *announcing principal findings* as in (10) and finally (iii) *laying out RA structure* as in (11).

8. The main purpose of this article is to explore ... (Purpose of the study)
9. The present study investigates/explores ... (Description of the study)
10. The current article shows that ... (Presenting findings)
11. The paper is divided into five sections. Section I... (Structure of the paper)

After a decade and a half, Swales (2004) revisits his three-move model, claiming that it “has apparently been quite successful, in both descriptive and pedagogical terms.” (p. 226). However, he proposes refinements to the content of his three moves, elaborating on the steps within them. Although he does not address issues related to Move 1 in detail, he indirectly points out (see p. 230, Figure 7.4) that Move 1 should include only one single step called *Topic generalizations of increasing specificity* rather than the previous three steps: (i) *claiming centrality*, (ii) *making a topic generalization*, and (iii) *reviewing the past literature*. He attributes this refinement to the recurring “problems in operationalizing the 1990 distinction between Move 1-Step 1 (*claiming centrality*) and Move 1-Step 2 (*making topic generalizations*)” (Swales 2004: 227). In other words, researchers find it difficult to separate *claim centrality* from *making topic generalization*.

As far as step 3 *reviewing the past literature* under Move 1 is concerned, Swales (2004) seems to replace it, as shown in his illustrated Figure 7.4 (p. 230), with the general term ‘citations’. Rather than restricting citations only to Move 1 (as a review of literature), Swales (2004) argues that Move 1 (*Establishing a Territory*) requires obligatory citations, whereas Move 2 (*Establishing a niche*) and Move 3 (*Occupying the niche*) ‘may or may not’ contain citations. By this modification, citations (i.e. reviewing past literature) can now appear under Move 2 and 3 rather than being confined to Move 1 only.

Regarding Move 2, Swales (2004) removes the step known as ‘continuing a tradition’ saying “that ‘continuing a tradition’ seems a rather odd choice of nomenclature. Continuing a tradition of what?” (Swales, 2004: 229–230, parentheses in original). He also argues that ‘counterclaiming’ and ‘question-raising’ are not functionally very different from ‘gap-indication’. Thus, he proposes that Move 2 should be represented by two steps: (i) *indicating the gap* as in (12) and (ii) *presenting a positive justification* as in (13). He borrowed the second step *presenting positive justification* from Samraj (2002: 15) who found that authors justify their approaches immediately after gap indication.

12. There is little research on ... (Gap indication)
13. One reason to take such an approach is that (Presenting positive justification)

As for Move 3, Swales (2004) adds new steps to the previous ones proposed in his model (1990). He argues that the only obligatory step in Move 3 is *announcing present research descriptively and/or purposively* as in (14a) and (14b) respectively. This obligatory step can be followed by three optional steps that may appear in a random order: (i) *presenting research questions or hypotheses* as in (15), (ii) *definitional clarifications* as in (16) and (iii) *summarizing methods* as in (17). Following these steps come three more steps which probably appear in some fields but not in others: *announcing principal outcomes* as in (18), *stating the value of the present research* as in (19) and *outlining the structure of the paper* as in (20).

14.
 - a. The purpose of the study is to ... (Purpose)
 - b. The current study investigates/explores... (Description)
15. The research questions in this study are three: ... (Research questions)
16. The term ‘controller’ can be defined as (Definition)
17. In sum, these three methods require ... (Summary of methods)
18. Our findings will contradict ... (Presenting findings)
19. The research can be of importance to ... (Value of the research)
20. The paper is structured as follows. Section I ... (Structure of the paper)

Before we apply Swales' tripartite model to our corpus which consists of only single sentences, we should point out that Swales' model examines how sentences move in steps to constitute paragraphs that in turn constitute introduction sections. He assumes that an author may first take a move (i.e. Move 1) and make a general topic statement by a single sentence or several sentences (i.e. a whole paragraph). Put differently, Swales (2004: 228) regards the term ‘Move’ as a unit that can be aligned with a single clause, a sentence or even a paragraph. In other words, Move is “a functional, not a formal unit” (Swales, 2004: 229).

However, and based on Swales' illustrations of the practicality of his three-part model, we notice that many of his illustrated moves are represented by single sentences or two at most. Thus, given that we examine only the VFS and because this VFS appears in the very beginning of introductions, we hypothesize that this sentence will represent Move 1 (*Establishing a territory*) with the step: *Topic generalizations of increasing specificity* (obligatory citations). In other words, it is less likely or very early that this VFS will constitute Move 2 and 3. In fact, Swales (1990) points out that, if the introduction starts with a Move 3 sentence immediately, a number of intriguing questions should be raised about the writer's qualifications or interests:

Can [starting with a Move 3-type sentence] be associated with less experienced writers, or with those who feel, for whatever reason less need to establish a territory? Are they more likely to occur in situations where the RA is a result of a research grant, given the widespread expectation in research grant applications that there should be *early* indications of what will be done? And? if so, are they consequently on the increase (Swales, 1990: 165, *italics* in original)?

In light of these questions, we expect that less experienced writers of GJs are the ones who start with a sentence of Move 2 or 3 type. If this is the case, we will explore whether this VFS is related to grants or it follows a different pattern.

4. Findings and discussion

In this section, we will discuss the content of the VFS in both IJs and GJs. We will first explore the rhetorical properties of these VFS in Section (4.1) focusing on the type of their moves under Swales's CARS model (1990, 2004). In Section (4.2), we will explore further stylistic and textual features that draw a defining line between the content of the IJ VFSs and that of the GJ ones, covering differences related to word count, frequency of lexical and functional categories, use of metaphors and passive, spelling and grammatical errors among many others.

4.1. Rhetorical properties of VFSs in IJs and GJs

Given that Swales (2004) argues that citations are obligatory in Move 1 and optional under Move 2 and 3, let us start with exploring the number of citations in the VFS in both groups. Because the VFS is more likely to be relevant to Move 1, more citations are expected. According to our datasets, we find that almost a half (127, 50%) of the 251 VFSs in the IJ database contains citations as exemplified by (21). In contrast, only a quarter (64, 25%) of the 251 VFSs in the GJs is cited as shown in (22).

21. IJ: Recent years have seen a growing interest in the ditransitive construction, which is reflected not only in the study of English ditransitives (e.g. Bresnan, 2007; Bresnan et al., 2007; Bresnan and Nikitina, 2009; Bruening, 2010; Rappaport Hovav and Levin, 2008) but also in crosslinguistic studies of the construction (e.g. Haspelmath, 2005a, 2005b, 2007; Heine and König, 2010; Levin, 2008; Malchukov et al., 2010; Primus, 1998).
22. GJ: It is fairly common in linguistics to propose a concept and then apply it repeatedly (Dixon, 1997).

In other words, the first marked difference between the VFSs in IJs and GJs is that IJ authors support their introductory sentence with more references than their GJ counterparts do. Moreover, if we consider the number of references cited in these VFSs, we find another distinction between the two groups: 53 (i.e. 42%) of the IJ citation-including VFSs include one reference, 45 (i.e. 35%) contain 2 or 3 references and 29 (i.e. 23%) involve 4 or more references. Put differently, 74 (i.e. 58%) of the IJ reference-including VFSs have 2 or more references as in (21) above. In contrast, 32 (i.e. 50%) of the 64 GJ OSs contain only a single reference as shown in (22) above, whereas 13 (i.e. 20%) consist of 2 or 3 references and 19 (30%) involve 4 or more citations. In sum, even the density of these citations separates the two groups: two thirds of IJ authors add more than 2 references to their VFS whereas half of the GJ ones restrict themselves to a single reference at most. This difference may propose that GJ authors do not explore the literature as much as their IJ fellows.

Given that all the selected RAs are published between 2000 and 2001, we decide to explore whether these cited references are new (from 2000 above) or old (from 1999 below). We find 353 references in the whole IJ corpus: 118 (i.e. 33%) are old references whereas 235 (i.e. 67%) are new ones. It should be also noted that, out of these 235 new references, 101 (i.e. 43%) are from 2010 and above, as shown in (23) below. In contrast, the total of references in the whole GJ corpus is 161: 68 (42%) are old

whereas 93 (i.e. 58%) are new. Only 41 (i.e. 44%) of the 93 new references are from 2010 and above as in (24) below.

23. IJ: Research suggests that feedback, which is defined as information given to learners regarding their performance, facilitates second language (L2) learning (e.g., Lee, 2013; Li, 2010; Lyster, Saito and Sato, 2013).
24. GJ: Linguistic competence spans a broad spectrum of cultural awareness skills, knowledge of self and knowledge of others both in interpersonal and intersocietal interactions (Byram and Wagner, 2017; Holliday, 2011; Kramsch, 2013; May 2014; Wagner et al., 2017).

These results suggest that IJ authors tend to add more new references to their VFS than their GJ counterparts. However, in terms of new references, both groups of authors in IJs and GJs are alike in selecting very recent citations: from 2010 and above.

Again, it should be noted that the high number of references in IJ VFSs does not indicate that the VFS with citations is of the Move 1-type. As Swales (2004) suggests, citations may also appear in sentences of the Move 2 and 3, because citations are optional under those moves. Also, it should be noted that Move can be represented by a single clause, not even a sentence (see Section 3). For this reason, Bhatia (1993) argues that one sentence may consist of all the three moves at once. In fact, we find such of these cases in our data. Consider the following examples from the IJ corpus:

25. IJ: The ability to read in a foreign language (FL; language not spoken in a learner's environment) is increasingly important (= MOVE1) in the modern globalised world, yet little is known (= MOVE2) about how (= MOVE3) the ability to read in an FL develops, what (= MOVE3) might underlie weaknesses in FL reading, and how (= MOVE3) to diagnose such weaknesses.
26. IJ: Our study was inspired (= MOVE3) by the need for translation students in Chinese universities to use online resources to facilitate their translation work and the lack of research (= MOVE2) regarding how (= MOVE3) they actually use and evaluate such resources.

In (25), the author represents all the three moves in their VFS. Move 1 (*Topic generalizations of increasing specificity*) manifests itself in the phrase '*is increasingly important*', Move 2 (*gap indication*) in '*little is known*' whereas Move 3 (step 4: *raising research questions*) in the questions '*how the ability ..., what might ..., and how to diagnose...*'. The same applies to (26) where the author uses two moves. Move 3 (*description of the study and presenting research questions*) features twice in the phrases '*Our study is inspired*' and '*how they actually*' respectively, as well as Move 2 (*gap indication*) in the phrase '*the lack of research*'. Taking this into consideration, it should be noted that we calculate the same sentence twice or thrice when it represents different Moves. We do so to give an accurate calculation of the occurrences of Move 1, 2, 3 in the two corpora.

4.1.1. Move 1 in VFSs in IJs and GJs

In fact, and as expected by Swales (1990), most of the VFSs in our two datasets represent Move 1. However, it appears that GJ authors write their VFS following Move 1 relatively more than their IJ fellows do: 207 (82%) from the 251 GJ VFSs as in (27) in comparison to 180 (72%) from the 251 IJ VFSs as in (28).

27. GJ: There has been growing evidence in the literature that knowledge of more than one language gives individuals more abilities to learn additional languages (Dewaele, Petrides and Furnham, 2008).
28. IJ: The role of corrective feedback in second language acquisition has generated considerable research, as evidenced by several recent meta-analyses (Li, 2010; Lyster and Saito, 2010; Mackey and Goo, 2007; Russell and Spada, 2006).

Although Swales (2004) argues that Move 1 follows only one step ‘*Topic generalizations of increasing specificity*’, our results show that the distinction that Swales (1990) made for Move 1 is not only warranted, but it also accounts for the high and low number of references in both IJ and GJ VFSs discussed earlier. To illustrate this, let us first clarify the differences between *claim centrality* and *making a topic generalization*. Swales (1990) argues that *centrality claims* refer to claims that make the discourse community “accept that the research about to be reported is part of a lively, significant or well-established research area” (p. 144). Put differently, Swales refers to the sentences that show the arena of the previous studies where the newly reported research will be situated. Thus, among the examples that he provides to illustrate *claim centrality* are the ones in (29) and (30) (cf. Swales, 1990: 144).

29. In recent years, applied researchers have become increasingly interested in ...
 30. Many investigators have recently turned to, . . .

Note that the examples above require obligatory citations because it is hardly acceptable that the author writes that many researchers have investigated a topic, without mentioning at least one reference as evidence for this claim. As for step 2 ‘*making a topic generalization*’, Swales (1990) argues that step 2 “represents a more neutral kind of general statement than Step 1” (p. 146). In other words, under step 2, the author introduces their topic with a very general statement as shown the examples below (cf. Swales 1990: 146).

31. English is rich in related words exhibiting stress shifts.
 32. There are many situations where examination scripts are marked and then re-marked by another examiner.

Note that the above examples are so general that they are less likely to be augmented with references. It is, in fact, unacceptable to say that a particular scholar is the one who claims that ‘English is rich in related words exhibiting stress shifts’ or that ‘there are many situations where examination scripts are marked and then re-marked by another examiner’. Sentences (31) and (32) are general statements that everyone can report and take credit for. In light of this discussion, *centrality claims* seem to require citations whereas *topic generalizations* do not.

Under this distinction, we can now account for the low references in the GJ VFSs. We can argue that 135 (65%) of the GJ 207 Move-1 sentences are not cited because they represent step 2 ‘*topic generalizations*’, see e.g. (33) and (34) below. In contrast, only 72 (35%) of the GJ 207 Move-1 sentences are *centrality claim* as in (35) and (36). Given that most of the GJ VFSs are *topic generalizations* and these *topic generalizations* do not require references, a larger number of the GJ VFS do not include citations.

33. GJ: Many students do not pass the test or get low marks although they have studied hard.
 34. GJ: First errors of learning are usually gigantic.
 35. GJ: The role of age in second language (L2) nativelikeness has been the central focus of numerous researchers over the last 50 years (Slabakova, 2016).
 36. GJ: There is a consensus among many researchers that affective factors play an important role in second or foreign language learning (e.g., Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986; MacIntyre and Gardner, 1989).

As for the IJ authors, the case is reverse: 98 (54%) of the IJ 180 Move 1-sentences are *centrality claims* that necessitate citations as in (37) throughout (38), whereas 82 (44%) are *topic generalizations* that do not require references as in (39) and (40). These differences account for the rise in the number of references in IJ database.

37. IJ: Research has widely reported that literacy development begins to evolve when the child is very young through the process of

sharing and interacting with family members (Baker, 2000; Cohen and Cowen, 2011).

38. IJ: Second language (L2) learning contexts have been the subject of much attention in recent years in the field of second language acquisition (Lianes, 2011).
 39. IJ: Education in America is changing.
 40. IJ: Germanic languages such as English, German and Dutch have modal auxiliaries.

One more remark should be added to further explain the diverse number of references across the two groups. Although GJ authors produce 72 (35%) of their 207 Move-1 sentences as *centrality claims* and these centrality claim require citations, they do not add any reference to them as in (41) and (42).

41. GJ: The literature available on language learning assessment strongly indicates that this process of evaluation is central to educational practice.
 42. GJ: Loanword Phonology has attracted a considerable amount of research in the previous decades.

Note from (41) and (42) above that the two GJ authors claim that there is a considerable volume of research about their topic, but they do not provide even a single reference to support these claims. This tendency constitutes 32 (44%) of their 72 *centrality claims* that they provide, and this can explain the sharp declining number of their cited VFSs.

In contrast, and although topic generalizations require no citations in the first place, IJ authors still strive to cite these pieces of general information as in (43) and (44). They reference 18 (22%) out of their 82 *topic generalizations*, explaining the growing number of their cited VFSs.

43. IJ: Sweden is considered to be one nation-state among many where English, rather than the national language, holds a position as the language of science (see Ammon, 2001).
 44. IJ: In many polities across the world, there exists an unwritten law that recognizes only a single official language in education (Dooly, Vallejo and Unamuno, 2009).

Before closing this section, it should be noted that the above tendencies are not always the norm. In other words, we sometimes find unpredictable behaviors across the groups. We find that some IJ ‘professional authors’ do not cite their *centrality claims* although these claims require obligatory references as manifested in the examples in (45) and (46) below. This however appears in 19 (19%) of their 98 *centrality claims*. At other times, we find that GJ authors are aware of the importance of reference inclusion, thus adding references to support even their *topic generalizations* as shown in (47) and (48). However, these cases appear only 12 times (9%) out of their 135 *topic generalizations*.

45. IJ: Collocations have been addressed in translation studies as potential problems for translators.
 46. IJ: Over the past six decades, sociolinguistic research has correlated linguistic variation with many aspects of social behavior: characteristics of the speakers, of interaction with the listeners, and with the speech situation more generally.
 47. GJ: For several reasons, English has now become a part of workplace literacy programs in many organizations (Birjandi and Marzieh, 2010; Sadeghi et al., 2011).
 48. GJ: Throughout human history, translation has always facilitated and made interlinguistic communication among and between nations possible (Ordudari, 2008).

Although it may be surprising that professional IJ authors do not cite their *centrality claims*, it should be remembered that we only discuss the VFS, and the authors may have supported their claims with citations in the following sentences that we do not explore. At any case, and given

that our interest revolves around the VFS, we find that half of the VFSs in IJs are referenced because most of them are *centrality claims*, whereas a quarter of the VFSs in GJs are not referenced because most of them are *topic generalizations*.

4.1.2. Move 2 & 3 in VFSs in IJs and GJs

In this section, we will show that a minority of the VFSs in both groups still represents Move 2 and 3, contra Swales' (1990, 2004) model predictions. Recall from Section (3) that Move 2 refers to the sentence(s) that indicate(s) the research gap and 'may' include citations. Our data shows that Move 2 appears in 9 (4%) of the IJ 251 VFSs as in (49) and (50) but only in 5 (2%) of the GJ dataset as in (51) and (52).

49. IJ: Spolsky (2009, 234) observes that 'there has been surprisingly little study of the history and characteristics of the national language academies'.
50. IJ, M2 (gap): Studies on reduplication usually focus on productive reduplication, whereas patterns of reduplicative structures in the lexicon are widely ignored, or at best noted as exceptional word forms that are not amenable for any systematic analysis.
51. GJ: Gulf Pidgin Arabic (GPA) as used by the non-native labor force in the Gulf, including Saudi Arabia as one of the Gulf States, has never been documented in Hejaz before.
52. GJ, M2 (gap): Adverbs and adverbials have not been given much attention in the field of linguistics in Arabic compared to the quite rich literature in other languages such as Germanic and Romance.

In other words, Move 2 is presented in the IJ corpus relatively more than in the GJ ones. As for Move 3, it also appears in the VFSs of the two corpora representing the four steps: *the purpose or description of the study* (step 1), *raising research questions* (step 2), *definitional clarifications* (step 3) and *outlining the structure of the paper* (step 4). Given that the first step under Move 2 is either (i) to indicate the purpose of the study or (ii) to describe the study generally, both manifestations of this step appear in our dataset. In the IJ database, the purpose of the study is mentioned 8 times (3%) in the VFSs as in (53) and (54), while the description of the study is declared in 20 times (i.e. 8%) as in (55) and (56).

53. IJ: The overall aim of this study is to investigate the metaphorical aspects of Polish conversational style by analyzing conversations on learning-related topics conducted by Polish native speakers aged largely 20e25.
54. IJ: This study has both theoretical and investigative aims, with the theme of this Special Issue providing an impetus to pause and rethink its potential contribution to knowledge.
55. IJ: The paper proposes an analysis of what has previously been described as subject marking in Ika (ISO 639-3: arh; Arwako-Chibchan, Colombia) in terms of a typologically unusual pattern called conjunct/disjunct.1
56. IJ: This study illustrates ways in which Cameroonian adolescent learners in a new linguistic space use linguistic resources to position themselves and others to build, sustain and negotiate identities; and to assert or negate identifications.

The same step with its two manifestations also occurs in the GJ dataset but with fairly low occurrences: the purpose of the study is announced 6 times (2%) as in (57) and (58) whereas the description of the study is stated 15 times (6%) as in (59) and (60).

57. GJ: The main purpose of this paper is to make a systematic investigation of some aspect of prosodic phonology among which are a primary and secondary stress, a vowel's manner and quality, a voiced versus a voiceless versus a voiceless phoneme, etc., to manifest the contribution of such prosodic usage in the text.
58. GJ: The primary objective of this paper is twofold: the first is to examine, illustrate and evaluate the adequacy of the major

procedures proposed for the translation of CSWs in the literature and, secondly, to critically assess the application of these procedures in two Arabic-English dictionaries and try to determine whether the lexicographers concerned have succeeded in creating accurate and clear interlingual equivalents for this category of words.

59. GJ: The present research is a pragmatic study of speech acts in religious discourse in Standard Arabic.
60. GJ: This study examines Kuwait University students' mobile phone use patterns.

The third step of Move 3 (i.e. *raising research questions*) is also recorded in the two corpora. Although this step is raised only once (0.4%) in the GJ data as in the direct question in (61) which is the first line that the author starts with under the heading 'introduction', it appears in the IJ corpus 15 times as shown in (62) and (63).

61. GJ: How and why is the political communication discourse designed?
62. IJ: Adopting the perspective that children's second language (L2) acquisition is situated within the social events and interactional practices of a classroom community (Duff, 2014), the present study examines how child language novices develop interactional competences and broaden their interactional repertoires in a Swedish as a second language classroom.
63. IJ: The proper understanding of ditransitivity is based on the resolution of several interrelated issues concerning the semantics and morpho-syntactic encoding of the indirect object, in particular (I) what semantic roles the indirect object realizes (II) how it is syntactically ordered with respect to the direct object realizing the theme argument; and (III) how the first two issues are related to the morphological encoding of the indirect object, as a PP or as a morphologically case-marked DP.

As far as the fourth step under Move 3 (i.e. *definitional clarifications*) is concerned, it manifests itself the most in the two corpora. This step is represented by phrases such as '*... is defined as...*', '*the definition of ... is*', '*... refers to ...*' and '*... is/are ...*' among others. This step appears 24 times (10%) of the IJ corpus as in (64) and (65) but only 21 times (8%) in the GJ one as in (66) and (67).

64. IJ: In sociolinguistic research, the variable has been traditionally defined as 'two ways of saying the same thing' (Labov, 1972: 272), severing the linguistic content from the social correlates of the expression.
65. IJ: Collocation refers to the tendency of lexical items to habitually co-occur in their immediate environment.
66. GJ: Lenition (weakening), according to Trask (2000) and Lewis (2001), is any phonological change in which a strong segment becomes less consonant-like.
67. GJ: The definition of MSA, in our views, coincides with that of Cown's in which it stands for the form of language which, through the Arab world from Iraq to Morocco, is found in the prose of books, newspapers, periodicals, and letters.

The last step under Move 3 (i.e. *Structuring the paper*) only occurs once (i.e. 0.4%) in the GJ database as in (68).

68. GJ: This paper is divided into three parts.

In sum, Move 2 and 3 are still manifested in the VFSs in both groups, contra the predications made by CARS model that the initial positions of the RA introductions should be reserved for Move 1. In total, Move 2 and 3 appear in 76 IJ VFSs (i.e. 30%) but only in 47 GJ VFSs (i.e. 19%). These results also contradict Swales' (1990) prediction discussed above that the authors who begin their introduction with Move 3 may be 'less

experienced'. In fact, IJ 'supposedly professional' authors are the ones who tend to use Move 2 or 3. They seem to be more liberal in ignoring Move 1. These findings indicate that the more the author moves away from Move 1, the more they are professional and the more likely they publish in WOS-indexed journals. In contrast, the more the author sticks to the regulations and conventions of RA introductions, the more they are conservative and non-innovative in their academic writing. Although Swales (1990) points out that the appearance of Move 3 may be attributed to the content of the paper which might be grant-related, we do not find any grant associations unless in one case illustrated in (96).

69. IJ: This paper is the fourth part of the self-funded project "The Integration of Socio-expressive Meaning Into Verb Structures" conducted by the author at the University of Cologne, Germany.

The other Move 2/3 cases have no certain patterns; they may relate to the author's preferences. In the next section, we will explore further differences between the VFSs in IJ and GJ datasets.

4.2. Stylistic and textual properties of VFSs

In this section, we will draw a comparison between the VFSs appearing in the two corpora: GJs and IJs. We will address these differences in terms of (i) the length of the VFS (Section 4.2.1), (ii) the frequency of lexical and functional categories (Section 4.2.2), (iii) the use of metaphors (Section 4.2.3), (iv) the use of passive (Section 4.2.4), (v) the frequency of spelling and grammatical errors and (vi) the sentence-paragraph distinction (Section 4.2.6).

4.2.1. Length of VFSs

Counting all the words of the VFSs in both GJ and IJ datasets, our findings show that the IJ authors produce longer VFSs (total: 8077 words) than GJ ones (total: 6309). The mean of the word count in IJ VFSs is 32 words (with std deviation: 14.30162) compared to 25 words (with std deviation: 12.45081) in VFSs in GJs. The longest VFS in IJs consists of 135 words as opposed to only 71 words found in the longest VFS in GJs. Consider the longest sentence in both databases in (70) from an IJ author.

70. IJ: The importance of television news as a factor in general elections is widely acknowledged, as can be attested by the regular appearance in political science and media journals of articles that focus, for example, on the representation of public opinion in this kind of news (Brookes, Lewis & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2004); on how candidates are treated in different European countries and in the United States of America (US) in terms primarily of the length of the 'sound bites' they are afforded (Esser, 2008); on the presentation of election campaign news in state-controlled and commercial television channels in emerging democracies such as Russia (Oates & Roselle); and on how hierarchies of political dominance, even in established democracies such as the United Kingdom (UK), work to the advantage of power elites during election coverage (Wayne and Murray, 2009).

4.2.2. Frequency of lexical and functional categories

Using the website (<https://parts-of-speech.info/>) for word categorization and the website (http://www.writewords.org.uk/word_count.asp) for word frequency, we find that the parts of speech used in VFSs in both corpora are not quite different. Consider Table 1 below where the percentages are calculated from the total of words in each dataset.

It is apparent that GJ authors use more verbs, determiners and prepositions than their IJ counterparts, whereas IJ writers use more conjunctions and numbers (i.e. citations) than their fellow GJ ones. Also, we find a difference in the frequency of the most common key research words occurring in the two dataset. Given that IJ authors add references to their VFS and report the previous literature (i.e. *centrality claims*), we find them producing words such as *research(er)* (IJ: 49 times

vs. GJ: 17 times), *studies* (IJ: 11, GJ: 7), *investigate* (IJ: 12, GJ: 4), *recent(ly)* (IJ: 19, GJ: 9), *decades* (IJ: 13, GJ: 7), *common(ly)* (IJ: 16, GJ: 6). By contrast, GJ authors seem to select very promotional words to market their research such as: *first* (GJ: 13, IJ: 7), *major* (GJ: 10, IJ: 2), *different* (GJ: 13, IJ: 7), *main* (GJ: 6, IJ: 1), *central* (GJ: 7, IJ: 3), *important(ance)* (GJ: 30, IJ: 15), *interesting* (GJ: 3, IJ: 0), *problem* (GJ: 6, IJ: 2), *always* (GJ: 8, IJ: 1), *now* (GJ: 7, IJ: 2), *every(when/day)* (GJ: 7, IJ: 2) among many others.

One key characteristic of GJ authors is that they use synonymous words in a redundant way, perhaps in attempt to lengthen their VFSs. This tendency is attested 8 times (3.1%) only in the GJ dataset.

71. GJ: Vocabulary acquisition is regarded as the central, primary, foremost and important basis for the instruction of English as a foreign language (Jia, Chen, and Ding, 2012; Laufer, 2009; Mehta, 2009; Chen and Chung, 2008; Taylor, 2004; Amer, 2002; Rodriguez and Sadoski, 2000; Zimmerman, 1997).
72. GJ: Writing is one of the four language skills which requires a good mastery of it to enable language students to communicate their ideas and express their thoughts effectively.

In two cases (1%) of the GJ dataset, GJ authors repeat the same words as in the examples below. This behavior is not attested in the IJ data either.

73. This study is a comparative ecological linguistic study, at the phonological level, of the plains and mountainous areas in the Republic of Yemen.
74. This paper presents the issue of acquisition of syntax as viewed from a nativist perspective and a cognitivist perspective.

In sum, and in comparison to IJ authors, GJ authors make more use of synonyms and repeat words in their VFSs. There are no cases of these behaviors in the IJ VFSs.

4.2.3. Use of metaphors

In his analysis of 28 Arabic-written introductions, Fakhri (2004) notes that Arab scholars who publish their RAs in Arabic use more metaphors and prefer "a flowery, high-flown, ornamented language" (p. 1132). Given that the GJ authors are faculty members based in Gulf universities and they have an Arabic background, we expect their English writing to include more of such a language. In fact, these types of expressions appear six times (2.7%) in GJ dataset as in (75) throughout (77) in comparison to only one mention (0.3%) in the IJ data as in (78).

75. GJ: It is said that language is the blood and flesh of concepts and ideas which are actually expressed by words.
76. GJ: Phonology and phonetics are two homogeneous rivers that pour in to one side of the sea.
77. GJ: First errors of learning are usually gigantic.

Table 1. Frequency of Parts of Speech in GJ and IJ datasets.

	GJs (6309 WORDS)	IJs (8077 WORDS)
Verbs	929 (15%)	1051 (13%)
Nouns	2120 (34%)	2754 (34%)
Adjectives	700 (11%)	944 (12%)
Adverbs	219 (3%)	302 (4%)
Preposition	857 (14%)	1085 (13%)
Conjunctions	280 (4%)	372 (5%)
Determiners	687 (11%)	741 (9%)
Pronouns	109 (2%)	126 (2%)
Numbers	231 (3%)	500 (6%)

78. IJ: The global era we live in opens a borderland of experience that has a subversive potential which shows and exposes asymmetries between cultures.

In sum, Arab scholars who write in English are still inclined to use a metaphorical language in their VFSs.

4.2.4. Use of passive forms

Given that the literature shows that Arabic-speaking writers use more active verbs than their English-speaking counterparts in their general texts (see e.g. Hameed 2016 for a detailed discussion), we expect that GJ authors, coming from an Arabic linguistic background, have this tendency in their VFSs. In fact, the IJ authors use more passive forms (244 passive forms of the total of 8077 words: 3%) than GJ authors (149 cases out of the total of 6309 words: 2.3%). Consider the following examples for illustration:

79. GJ: Displacement is a common property of human language where a phrase is displaced from one position to another.
80. IJ: Linguistic diversity was utilised for political and social separation throughout the history of South Africa.

In sum, IJ authors use more passive forms than their GJ counterparts.

4.2.5. Spelling and grammatical errors

Because GJs are low-impact, we expect that we find some typos, grammatical errors, or at least a misuse of non-academic style. This has appeared to be true. Unlike the IJ VFSs which are all grammatically correct, we find four cases of grammatical errors (1.5%) in the GJ data as shown in (81) throughout (83).

81. GJ: Over the past few years, educational researchers have been investigated factors thought to be important in cognitive processing of language learning.
82. GJ: Besides the main stylistic parameters (structure and sense) of the utterance, there is another important thing that should be taken onto consideration.
83. GJ: Many of us are taught by professors in higher education but students always be affected by certain professor without the others because he is different from the rest.

In two other cases (0.7), we find that GJ authors use contractions and informal verbs as in (84) and (85) respectively.

84. GJ: There have been so many acts of terrorism connected to radical Muslims that it's why, it is not surprising Islam has a public relations problem.
85. GJ: Many students do not pass the test or get low marks although they have studied hard.

Although phrasal verbs are not part of the academic writing norms (Swales and Feak, 2004; Liao and Fukuya 2004), GJ authors still use them as in the two cases (0.7%) to follow:

86. GJ: Many attempts in the field of Translation Studies have been made to touch on the style for some time now (see for example Nida, 1964; Lotman, 1970; Venuti, 2000; Zyngier, 2001; Ghazala, 1996, 2011; Bassnett, 2002; Huang, 2011; Makokhaet al 2012; Almanna, 2013).
87. GJ: In a school setting there is always a curriculum plan for carrying on the education of students.

As a summary, unlike IJ scholars, GJ writers produce around 8 cases (3%) that demonstrate their weakness in English language and their low awareness of academic writing conventions.

4.2.6. Sentence-paragraph distinction

As a final remark, we find that GJ authors do not differentiate between sentences and paragraphs. Although a paragraph is a block of text (i) that contains a set of sentences and (ii) that is separate from other blocks by a line space, we find two GJ authors producing their VFS as full paragraphs and starting other paragraphs below them in a separate line. Consider the two cases below.

88. GJ: Contrastive linguistics (a.k.a. contrastive analysis) may roughly be defined as “a sub discipline of linguistics concerned with the comparison of two or more languages or subsystems of language” in order to provide descriptions of both the differences and the similarities between them aiming explicitly at the principles and implicitly at the uses of these descriptions (Ali, 2013:21; Cook, 1998:85; Khansir, 2012:1027).
89. GJ: It is important to point out that this study is confined to the fifteen verses selected (containing collocations involving nineteen body-part idioms), and accordingly the results are confined to the selected set of body-part idioms and can be used, hopefully, as guidelines by translators when rendering the other ones into English.

This peculiar behavior is not attested in the corpus of IJs. Because the sentences above are long, GJ authors may have found them representative enough as paragraphs. In sum, GJ scholars do not distinguish sentences from paragraphs, giving a very bad impression over their entire works from the start.

5. Conclusion

The current study provides pedagogical directions to the authors who aim to publish in a high-impact WOS-indexed journal. The article shows differences between the VFSs of two groups of scholars, the first of whom are professional and the other are presumably less experienced. If we take the VFS of the IJ authors as a representative, our findings show that all scholars should make their VFS as long as possible, i.e. the expected mean of the word count of the VFS in the IJ corpus is 35 words. The VFS should also be a *centrality claim* referring to the past literature using key words such as *in the past decades*, *recent(ly)*, *research(ers)* among many others. It should also include at least one reference, although more than two citations are the most common, emphasizing the author's knowledge of the previous works. Consider our VFS in this present study following the afore-mentioned remarks.

Although IJ authors start with Move 2 and 3-type sentences, we do not find it as an adequate indication that all other scholars should violate the norm by not starting with Move 1 sentences. The majority of the VFSs in our two corpora are still Move 1-type sentences, and only a minority represents Move 2 and 3. We assume that beginning with Move 2/3 sentences requires the authors to believe that their whole paper is generally strong and worth publishing, regardless of the Move of their VFS.

The VFS should also be less redundant, i.e. the author should not use repetitive words or synonyms in their first statement. The avoidance of metaphors is also favorable, perhaps leaving this ornamented language for works in other disciplines such as religion and literature. Although scholars are aware of the dominance of passive voice in academic writings, they should still pay attention to the style and grammar of their VFS. They should clear their VFS of typos, grammatical errors, contractions, phrasal verbs and informal words which violate academic writing conventions.

Although these pieces of advice might direct the beginners to the craft of VFSs, it does not guarantee that the following sentences will be as perfect as their VFS. However, we assume that starting with a strong VFS will facilitate the author's progression in the academic prose, and give editor-in-chiefs and reviewers of WOS-indexed journals an impression that the paper is worth being read, at least until the end of the first paragraph.

Declarations

Author contribution statement

Mohammad Alanazi and Muteb Alqarni: Conceived and designed the experiments; Performed the experiments; Analyzed and interpreted the data; Contributed reagents, materials, analysis tools or data; Wrote the paper.

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Appendix

Part A: Gulf Journal Titles, Number of Research Articles, Country of the Journal.

Gulf Journal Titles	# of RAs	Countries
Arab Journal for the Humanities – Kuwait University	34	Kuwait
Jouranl of Arts and Social Sciences – University of Sultan Qabus	26	Oman
University of Sharjah Journal for Humanities & Social Sciences	24	UAE
King Saud University Journal of Arts	21	Saudi Arabia
King Khalid University Journal for Humanities	20	Saudi Arabia
Journal of King Abdulaziz University for Arts and Humanities	19	Saudi Arabia
King Faisal University Journal for Humanities and Administration (SCOPUS)	19	Saudi Arabia
Ummu Alqura University Journal of Linguistics and Literature	13	Saudi Arabia
Emirates College of Education Sciences Journal of Arts, literature, humanities and social sciences	13	UAE
Journal of Human Sciences - Bahrain University	9	Bahrain
Albaha University Journal for Humanities	8	Saudi Arabia
Qassim University Journal of Arabic and Human Sciences	7	Saudi Arabia
Taiba University Journal for Humanities	6	Saudi Arabia
King Saud University Journal of Research in Language & Translation	5	Saudi Arabia
Almajma University Journal of Human and Administrative Sciences	5	Saudi Arabia
University of Tabuk Journal for Humanities and Social Sciences	5	Saudi Arabia
Northern Border University Journal for Humanities	4	Saudi Arabia
College of Emirates Journal of Educational and Human Sciences	4	UAE
Jouf University Humanities Journal	3	Saudi Arabia
Journal of Jazan University Human Sciences Branch	3	Saudi Arabia
University of Bisha Journal for Humanities and Education	2	Saudi Arabia
Taif University Journal for Arts and Education	1	Saudi Arabia
Total: 23	251	5 Countries

Part B: International WOS Journal Titles, Number of Research Articles, Country of the Journal and Impact Factor (2020).

International WOS Titles	# of RAs	Countries	Impact Factor
Journal of Sociolinguistics - Wiley	17	UK	1.340
Journal of Pragmatics - Elsevier	17	Netherlands	1.476
Language Testing - SAGE	17	USA	3.551
Journal of Language Identity and Education - Routledge	17	UK	1.370
Poznan Journal of Contemporary Linguistics - De Gruyter Mouton	17	Poland	0.386
The Modern Language Journal – Wiley	17	USA	4.759
Language Teaching Research - SAGE	17	USA	2.647
Annual Review of Applied Linguistics – Cambridge University Press	17	UK	3.758
Second Language Research - SAGE	17	USA	2.178
Natural Language and Linguistic Theory - Springer	17	Netherlands	1.761
Translation and Interpreting Studies - John Benjamins Publishing	17	Netherlands	0.596
Language Matters – Taylor and Francis Ltd.	17	UK	0.605
Studies in Language - John Benjamins Publishing	13	Netherlands	0.434
Language Learning – Wiley	13	UK	4.667
Foreign Languages Annals – Wiley	13	USA	2.067

(continued on next column)

(continued)

International WOS Titles	# of RAs	Countries	Impact Factor
Language and Communication - Elsevier	8	UK	1.765
Total: 16	251	5 Countries	–

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