

# The Processes Behind RA Introduction Writing Among Turkish Arts and Science Scholars

Demet Yaylı and A. Suresh Canagarajah

**Abstract** With this small-scale qualitative investigation, we aimed to capture the views of a group of Turkish arts and science scholars' construction of their RA introductions in their field-specific academic writings. Through our readings of the literature, we identified four main concerns for the semi-structured face-to-face interviews: (1) these writers' construction process of RA introductions, (2) their descriptions of a specific single-authored RA introduction; (3) how they revised these introductions and the challenges/problems they experienced while revising and (4) while reviewing others' introductions, what expectations they had and what problems they observed. The semi-structured face-to-face interviews enabled us to see how commonly the CARS model is followed by these authors. Other than the prototypicality of this three-part model, their statements stressed an awareness of the differences in academic conventions in national and international journals as a crucial concern to be considered while shaping the content of their writing.

**Keywords** RA (research article) · genre · ESP (English for specific purposes) · CARS model (Create-A-Research-Space)

## 1 Introduction

Despite perceived cross-cultural differences in academic writing, international reporting of knowledge holds an important place in scholars' lives. The power of the written medium to transmit information to the global community draws attention and comes together with certain awareness and challenges (Canagarajah 2002).

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D. Yaylı (✉)

Department of Foreign Languages Education, Pamukkale University, Denizli, Turkey  
e-mail: [demety@pau.edu.tr](mailto:demety@pau.edu.tr)

A.S. Canagarajah

Department of Applied Linguistics and English, Pennsylvania State University,  
University Park, PA, USA  
e-mail: [asc16@psu.edu](mailto:asc16@psu.edu)

Many researchers in different fields make attempts to actively participate in the English-language-dominated scientific community and search for assistance and support especially in their early attempts. Other than books devoted to help non-native speaker (NNS) writers to write research papers for publication in English (Glasman-Deal 2010; Swales 1990, 2004), several studies were also conducted on academic discourse taking different aspects as their foci such as providing comparisons between texts written by skilled and less skilled writers (Krapels 1990; Ventola and Mauranen 1991) analyzing research articles (RAs) written in two languages by the same scholar for different audiences (Canagarajah 2006); and also analyzing NNS novice writers' research writing practices (Cheung 2010; Gosden 1995, 1996). To our best knowledge, only in Gosden's (1996) and Cheung's studies (Cheung 2010), is there an interview with Japanese novice writers and doctoral students in Hong Kong respectively on their writing practices with their preparation of their first academic paper for publication. Other than this, many other studies in the field formed a corpus of RAs and took different sections of these RAs as their focus of analysis. In the present study, however we decided to ask a group of expert scholars to describe the construction processes of their academic texts. Since "the main concerns of ESP have always been, and remain, with needs analysis, text analysis, and preparing learners to communicate effectively in the tasks prescribed by their study or work situation" (Dudley-Evans and St John 1998: 1) and since the ESP teacher needs to exploit relevant discourses, communication skills, topics and underlying methodology of a target discipline, we believe that how expert scholars have achieved success in their academic writings has a lot to say to ESP teachers and novice scholars on their ways of professional development. Before the presentation of a detailed analysis of the processes behind research article (RA) introduction writing among Turkish arts and science scholars, we will first briefly outline the theories in which this study of academic writing was grounded.

## 2 Theoretical Background

### 2.1 *Shift Toward Genre Pedagogies in Writing*

Today, the concept of genre is a highly influential one in language education, and it signifies a major paradigm shift in writing instruction (Johns 2002). Several L2 writing approaches have developed around genre and related concepts like purposes for writing, reader expectations and contextual features. Genre-based writing focuses on communicative activity, purposes for communication, targeted readers, their expectations and contextual constraints. Hyland (1996: 18) states that writing teachers "who take a genre orientation to writing instruction look beyond subject content, composing processes and textual forms to see writing as an attempt to communicate with readers." This potential of genre-based orientations (e.g., trying to communicate with targeted readers, knowing how to design a text and to negotiate)

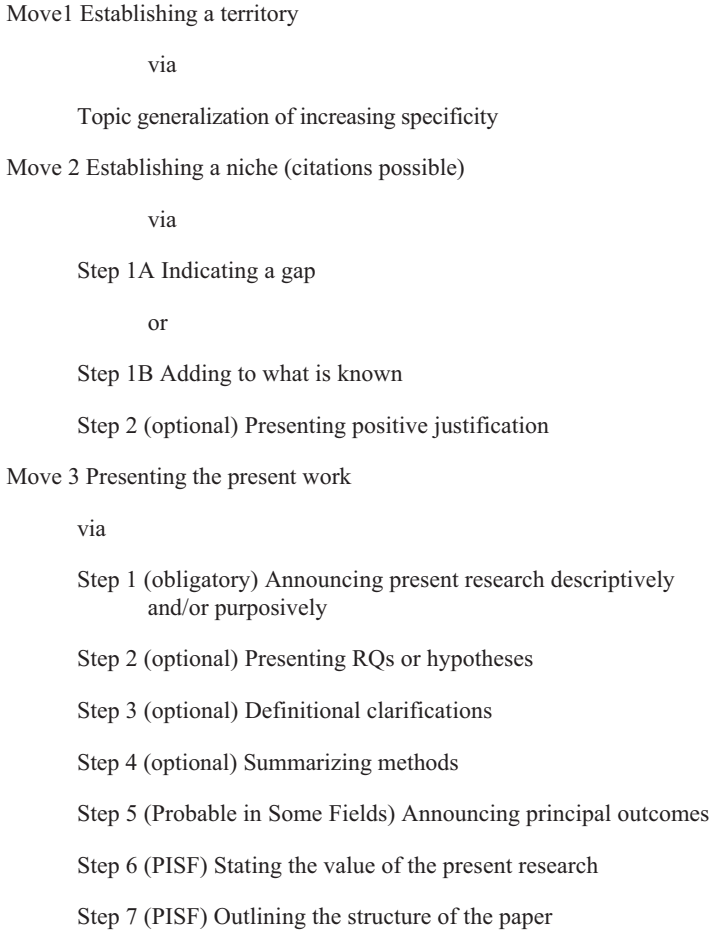
facilitates an understanding of how texts should be shaped to meet writers' goals in particular contexts. Put succinctly, this contributes to the empowerment of especially NNS writers who may need more initiation for the effective use of RA genre and the necessary meaning-makings attached to it which are valued in English-speaking communities.

## 2.2 *Research Article (RA) as A Genre*

The doyen of ESP genre studies, Swales has contributed to the field with his seminal works on the linguistic-rhetorical features of academic genres (Swales 1990; Swales 2004). ESP theorists see genre as a class of structured communicative events employed by specific discourse communities whose members share broad social purposes (Swales 1990). By stating that “[t]he standard RA is, of course, in its final form a *product*, but that product is patently the outcome of a complex *process*” (Swales 2004: 218, italics original), Swales highlights the fact that a manuscript undergoes several drafts and receives several inputs from colleagues, editors and reviewers. The whole process of RA writing from early notes to the final draft is a highly complex dynamic and with the help of their shared experiences in our face-to-face interviews in this study, we aimed at capturing these dynamics of RA introduction writing by a group of expert Turkish arts and science scholars.

## 2.3 *Research Article (RA) Introductions*

The most commonly studied section of the RA seems to be the introduction. It is probably because of Swales' (1981) study which was followed by his famous Create-A-Research-Space (CARS) model (Swales 1990) and the importance given to the move structure of RA introductions in several studies. Genre analysis in ESP is basically associated with the move-step analysis introduced by Swales (1990) who presented a seminal description of RA introductions with a three-part model. The CARS model presents a tool for identifying the series of moves in a text. Each move is a communicative act designed to achieve one communicative goal. Although a move “has sometimes been aligned with a grammatical unit such as a sentence, utterance, or a paragraph,... it is better seen as flexible in terms of its linguistic realization” (Swales 2004: 228–229). In other words, a move can be realized with a clause at a place in a text but with several sentences at another place. Both moves and steps may be optional, embedded or repeated. After several studies (Anthony 1999; Lewin et al. 2001; Samraj 2002) on RA introduction analysis in different fields with the CARS model (Swales 1990) several difficulties were observed in Moves 1, 2 and 3, and Swales (2004) presented a revised CARS model for Move 1, Move 2 and Move 3 structures (see Fig. 1).



**Fig. 1** A revised version of the CARS model (Swales 2004)

In existing literature, many researchers attempted to analyze textual and rhetorical organization of RA introductions (Anthony 1999; Cheng 2007; Gupta 1995; Lewin et al. 2001; Öztürk 2007; Samraj 2002, 2005; Upton and Connor 2001; Yaylı and Canagarajah 2014). It is also a fact that “[i]ntroductions are known to be troublesome, and 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). Many decisions have to be made about the type of background, about authoritative versus sincere stance, “about the winsomeness of the appeal to the readership; and decisions have to be made about the directness of the approach” (Swales 1990: 137–138). These difficulties attached to the construction of RA introductions, the assumption that first impression matters, and the availability of textual analysis with models have increased the interest in the introductory parts of RAs.

Motivated by a parallel interest in the construction of introductions but not adopting the usual way of analyzing a corpus of RA introductions by expert scholars, we decided to speak directly with the authors to capture their own descriptions of RA introduction writing in the fields of arts and science. With this purpose, we gathered verbal data from a group of scholars (L1 Turkish) who agreed to share their views and experiences related to the construction and development of their RA introductions in a publication process. We chose the scholars among the ones who have been and are actively engaged in publishing in mainstream journals. We gathered the verbal data from face-to-face in-depth interviews (See [Appendix](#) for the interview questions) and in these interviews the questions were focused on both their views about the construction of RA introductions in their field, and their experiences with the construction of a RA introduction in a specific manuscript development. After discussing the challenges they experienced in the revision process of the introduction of a specific manuscript, they were also asked to comment on the problems they observed while reviewing the introductions written by other scholars in their fields. In sum, we aimed to provide insights under four main headings: (1) these writers' construction processes of RA introductions in English and Turkish, the similarities and differences between writing in these languages, the influences on their introduction writing, their awareness of the demands of an English-speaking and information-seeking audience, and the difficulty of writing an introduction (research questions 1 through 7 aimed to licit data for this heading); (2) their descriptions of how they constructed the first draft of the introduction in a specific single-authored manuscript published in a mainstream journal earlier (research question 8); (3) how they revised these introductions and the challenges/problems they experienced while revising (research questions 9 and 10); and (4) while reviewing others' introductions, what expectations they had and what problems they observed (research questions 11 and 12). We base the discussion of the verbal data according to these four main concerns of the study.

### **3 Methods**

#### ***3.1 Participants***

Purposeful sampling was used in this study as we aimed to investigate the RA introduction writing processes by expert Turkish scholars in arts and science. These scholars, all were NNS of English, were among the successful ones in their acts of publishing in mainstream journals. As Gosden (1995: 37–38) reminds us, the concept of success here “is judged from the processes of peer review, negotiation, revision, and eventual acceptance for publication of research articles (RAs) in international English language scientific journals.” These successful authors' composing of RA introductions and their interactions with external factors such as reviewers and editors are flexible and interdependent. In other words, drafting,

**Table 1** Participants of study

The pseudonyms of the scholars	The university they were employed at	Their field of study	The institutions they received their graduate-level education from
Art1	Boğaziçi University	Foreign language education, and second language acquisition	Durham University, the UK, Second language education
Art2	Dokuz Eylül University	Teacher education and educational administration and supervision	İnönü University, Turkey
Sci1	Pamukkale University	Constructional engineering	Newcastle Upon Tyne, the UK
Sci2	Pamukkale University	Medicine, ear, nose and throat	İzmir Atatürk Education and Research Hospital

composing and development of RA introductions are shaped and affected by external and text-internal factors, which are ongoing until the final draft appears in print. In the present study, with a case-study approach, we aim to qualitatively document how these successful NNS scholars construct their RA introductions in arts and science, how they respond to external and text-internal factors while shaping their writing, and what problems they observe in their reviews of others' RA introductions.

### 3.2 Data Collection

To collect the verbal data, the first author arranged meetings with these four scholars in their convenience. The face-to-face interviews were audiotaped with the consent of the scholars who were employed in three state universities in Turkey. One of the interviews was done completely in English as the scholar was in the field of second language acquisition and actively used English in classes; and the rest was conducted in Turkish, but at some points there was a mixture of two languages. After the transcription, the first author translated the Turkish data into English. While two of the participants (i.e., Sci1 and Art1) were trained in the UK, the other two (i.e., Sci2 and Art2) received their graduate level education in home institutions (Table 1).

### 3.3 Data Analysis

The analysis of the verbal data was qualitative content analysis. We followed the linear and hierarchical approach of qualitative data analysis suggested by Creswell (2009) who outlined steps like: (1) organize and prepare the data for analysis, (2) read through all the data, (3) begin the detailed analysis with coding, (4) use the coding process to generate a description of the setting or people as well as categories and themes, (5) discussion of the categories and themes, and (6) an interpretation of

the data. As we know, “[c]oding is the process of organizing the material into chunks or segments of text before bringing meaning to information” (Rossman and Rallis 1998: 171). Unlike axial or selective coding, the coding of the present data was basically open coding which is “the process of breaking down the data for the purpose of categorizing, conceptualizing and comparing” (Richards 2003: 276). For the responses gathered on the construction of RA introductions, we used Swales’ recent CARS model (Swales 2004) as a starting point, but most of our interpretations depended on the themes emerged in the verbal reports of the L2 research-writing practices of this group of NNS expert researchers. For the interpretive validity purposes (i.e., making sure our reading was in line with the way things were) and for the reliability purposes (i.e., our representations of the themes were consistent in readings), we asked a colleague who is also an expert scholar in terms of his publications in language education to judge whether our interpretations of the participants’ statements were adequately grounded, and a definitive agreement was achieved.

## 4 Results and Discussion

### 4.1 *Expert Writers’ Construction of RA Introductions*

The first three questions of our interviews asked the participating scholars to describe how they construct the introduction of their RAs in English and in Turkish and the similarities and differences between writings in these two languages. In terms of the construction of introductions, all the participants unanimously stated nearly the same style of organization which is based on several steps: (1) a brief reflection of the phenomenon or topic that has received attention in their field with the help of a careful and thorough reading of existing theories and literature, (2) identifying a missing part or gap in the existing literature and (3) a description of the purpose of their study. Only Art1 stated that after highlighting the significance of the study, she gives also a synopsis of the possible findings briefly and then the organization of the manuscript in the coming parts. These steps are greatly in line with the three moves of the CARS model (Swales 1990) (i.e., Move1-establishing a territory; Move2-establishing a niche via Step1A-indicating a gap; and Move3-presenting the present work via Step1- announcing present research descriptively and/or purposively). The following excerpts taken from the taped utterances of the participants exemplify the stages they follow:

First I do a careful and thorough literature review about my topic of interest. After reading the related literature, I identify the missing part, a gap in the field and I present this gap in my research questions. Then I describe the purpose of my study, the methodology and ways of solving the problem. (Sci1)

First of all, I begin with the particular phenomena that I will be focusing on in a particular study. For instance, if there is a well-debated question which has been pervasive in the field in child or adult second language acquisition, I start with a reflection of it. ... Then I try to highlight why the kind of research that I will be reporting on in any particular paper is

important. ... So in that sense I begin with a little bit of background in first language acquisition then adult second language acquisition including the theoretical assumptions and hypotheses discussed in the field, then I try to highlight the significance of the kind of the research that I will be reporting on in that particular paper. It must contribute to the field both in methodological terms and in terms of research questions. ...After highlighting the significance of the study, I give very briefly a kind of synopsis of the possible findings but very briefly. Very briefly I give what I have found. Then I give the organization of the paper, I say this paper has been organized as follows...(Art1)

I start with the purpose, what is my purpose in this study? What is my hypothesis? I need to be clear on these and this purpose statement is one or two sentences long. Then I describe how I ended up in this purpose in paragraphs step by step, so my purpose is the last paragraph of my introduction but I start with it. (Sci2)

It must be an introduction that has a philosophical base with different perspectives and must move from general toward more specific. What is the concept I am dealing with? What is its connection to education and how is it related to my problem? These are the key questions I have while designing the introduction. (R: How do you construct the introduction step by step?) First I focus on the concept that I am targeting. For instance if I study happiness, I define what happiness is, or how happiness is defined from different perspectives. I mean I try to include critical perspectives as well as mainstream ones. Then I check if this concept, for instance happiness, has been studied in different fields of study. I mean I inspect how sociologists study happiness and how medical doctors study it...Later I analyze the connection between this concept and education. I give examples from important studies and then present its connection to my field, educational administration. And then I highlight why this concept is important in our field and present the problem of my study...I like finding gaps. I try to find original ideas that have not been studied before. (Art2)

Since Sci1 and Art1 have done their graduate studies in the UK, while Art2 has studied in a language program for his BA in English and Sci2 has a good command of English, they find writing in English easy and fun. Either through their education abroad and/or through their readings on their field in English, they have achieved competency in academic writing. They are scholars who find writing their academic papers in English a lot easier than writing them in Turkish. Unlike the Japanese novice writers in Gosden's study (1996), who most of the time preferred translating from L1 to L2 in their academic writing due to the prevailing emphasis on grammar-translation in their foreign language education, the expert Turkish scholars who receive a similar foreign language education do not prefer translating. Being able to express their thoughts successfully in English without translating from L1 can be seen as a sign of expertise in academic writing.

In terms of the similarities and differences they observed in their introductions in English and Turkish languages, they unanimously emphasized that they follow the same organizational patterns in two languages. Not surprisingly, these statements oppose the contrastive rhetoric orientation which was a ruling paradigm in 1970s and 1980s and supported the view that linguistic and rhetorical conventions of the first language interferes with second language writing as first language patterns are transferred to second language writing. Traditional contrastive rhetoric was severely criticized for being stereotypical and abandoned in emerging writing traditions (Raimes 1991). The participants' statements here prove that especially expert writers who are fully aware that different languages provide different resources for organizing texts, are also well aware that a certain genre requires a certain text logic. We can say that



while following the same organizational pattern (i.e., designing the introductions according to the three moves in the CARS model) in two languages, these scholars emphasize the idea that RA introductions are basically problem-solution texts, which are not influenced directly by the choice of languages. Besides, the fact that RA introduction writing in Turkish does not have standards but is specified according to the journal expectations may in this sense empower these scholars who do not mix L1 and L2 writing traditions for the given genre:

While writing an RA in English, I always use English, I mean I do not translate from Turkish. Also, the standards are clear for RAs in English. There is an introduction, problem, purpose, methods and conclusion and it is a system but we do not have standardized norms for articles in Turkish. That is why I use the same format while writing RAs in Turkish or mentoring dissertations of my students in Turkish. (Sci1)

Similarly, while responding to the fifth research question (i.e., Could you describe the demands of an English-speaking and information-seeking audience from RA introductions in your field? How do these demands influence your writing?), they stated that they did not identify any specific demands of English-speaking audience in international journals from their RA introductions. They claimed that they had never thought of the expectations of Turkish-speaking or English-speaking readers when they wrote their introductions. Especially science scholars (Sci1 and Sci2) opposed the idea of designing a paper paying attention to readers' expectations, which they found more like "a customer-oriented attitude" (Sci2, transcriptions, p. 15). The only demands the arts scholars identified were that international reviewers are more demanding (Art1), and that international readers want to be convinced as they want you to strongly establish the connection between your problem and the concept you are working with (Art2).

Although the participants all agreed on the fact that they construct their introductions in the same way in both languages, and they do not feel any influence of their readers on their writing, they also stressed some related issues of importance. While remembering some earlier publication experiences with national journals in Turkish, for instance, Art2 complained of the rigidity of reviewers' expectations. He severely criticized the research paradigm and academic writing conventions in national journals stating that he feels restricted and not free at all while writing RAs in Turkish:

(R: Could you describe how you construct the introductory part of RAs in your field in Turkish language?) I follow the same way but I must admit that while addressing international readers, I write by paying attention to journal expectations. I mean after specifying a journal I know that I have write in a more convincing way in introduction and other parts to get admission for my paper. In national journals, this motivation gets lower. (R: What different points do you pay attention while writing RA introductions in Turkish?) I feel more restricted while writing in Turkish. (R: Why?) There are a lot of restrictions in academic writing in Turkish. For instance, many national journals do not accept the agency of authors, they oppose the use of pronoun I, for instance. They are conservative. (R: They expect passive structure.) That is right. We use passive structure and pretend not to exist in writing. This does not sound sincere to me so I do not feel happy while writing in Turkish. Writing in English however is more fun. I can use I. In Turkish, I need to follow the rigid academic writing structure stating my paradigm and research questions one by one but in English authors are allowed to create their own way of writing so it is a more free and more fun kind

of writing. Reviewers are more flexible. I include jazz, cinema and culture in my English writing but the same cannot be accepted in Turkish writing as reviewers are conservative. (R: What could be the reason?) There is a conventional format expected of authors in our national journals and they do not want to stretch it or to be stretched by authors.

While following the CARS model in their RA introductions in two languages, this arts scholar does not see a possibility for voice or for sincere versus authoritative stance. This mostly stems from the differences in academic traditions in national and international journal. In Turkey, like many other Asian countries, signs of agency with the use of “I,” creativity with the use of new ways or to create authorial voice are not encouraged. Modesty and being humble are expected of authors, and they should not go beyond the limits of appropriate academic writing whose lines are not clearly visible but dependent on reviewers’ openness for change and creativity. Similarly, although science scholars opposed the idea of designing a paper taking reader expectations into account, they at the same time mentioned their dissatisfactions with Turkish-speaking reviewers and expressed a strong preference for publication in international journals:

There is a huge gap between English-speaking and Turkish-speaking reviewers. Once you send a paper to a journal abroad, English-speaking reviewers see it as effort and hard work but unfortunately, some Turkish-speaking reviewers do not appreciate hard work and focus only on the weak sides. They try hard to find ways to reject the paper. That is why I published most of my RAs in English. (Sci1)

This line of thinking corroborates with the finding that the doctoral students in Cheung’s study (Cheung 2010) found editors and reviewers in English language journals sympathetic toward nonnative English speaking writers’ contributions. Such negative experiences with their research communication with home journals stated above shows how the acts of participating in the established mechanisms of communication of particular discourse communities are important (Gosden 1996) and can be disheartening. Similarly, while answering the fifth research question on the demands of an English-speaking audience from their RA introductions, Sci1 stressed the differences between readers/scholars who know English and are capable of following publications in English and the ones who cannot in his field, constructional engineering:

Here I think we need to distinguish readers here. In Turkey, there are readers who do not know English and read only the RAs in Turkish within my field. Since they do not know the standards of an RA introduction writing, I believe that they do not read the introductions. (R: Why do you think they do not read the introductions?) They do not give importance to the introduction, they just read the methodology and the conclusion. But the readers in the USA, Europe or Asia read the introductions in great detail to see whether the problem was identified successfully. This is how I feel because this is something cultural. I was provided with this culture I mean this way of RA writing abroad. Unfortunately, I cannot see this format in the academic writings of my colleagues who have not received education abroad. When I read the dissertations of students advised by such colleagues, I read 30 or 40 pages but I cannot see the problem or the purpose. In fact these should be clearly stated right away. (Sci1)

Such comments indicate that these expert scholars have developed an insight of two standardized conventions of academic writing; one in English used in international

journals and the other one in Turkish in home journals. While Cars model provided a basis, the way of achieving these moves and steps are done differently according to the writing contexts. An equally important issue is how these scholars have learnt/acquired the necessary skills to be successful in academic writing. The fourth interview question focused on the participants' views on the influences on their construction of introductions. The most commonly stated influences were their readings in the field (Sci1, Sci2, Art1 and Art2), their first paper for an international conference (Art1), their RA publication experiences in national journals (Sci2) or in international journals (Art2), their education abroad and their advisors (Sci1 and Art1), and some more experienced research assistants they were working together with (Sci2). They all put emphasis on doing repeated and careful readings not only to be competent with field knowledge but also to discover the skills attached to academic writing. However, as a scholar in educational administration, Art2 stressed the necessity of doing readings in other fields as well to cultivate a more sophisticated vision and to create a unique voice in writing:

As I said before I am a disciplined reader in my field but at the same time I like working on different areas and reading in different fields. I like jazz and cinema. Mythology influences me a lot. I like integrating all the things I learn from these sources in my academic writing. Such attempts of mine satisfy my needs to be different from others or to be unique in writing. These different sources feed me in many different and useful ways.... Having read mythological texts is a blessing in my opinion. Since my BA, I am interested in cinema. I watch a lot of films and feel that this influences my story-telling in my writing. (Art2)

When asked to describe how they wrote the RA introductions with the sixth interview question (i.e., Could you describe the process of writing the RA intro—do you compose it after writing the whole article? Do you tend to revise this more than the other sections?), all the participants unanimously stated that they wrote the introduction first but after writing the whole manuscript, they check the wholeness and consistency of the introduction and/or discussion. Introductions are also revised several times according to some text-internal or text-external factors:

Initially I write the introduction but that introduction gets modified a lot of course. Not only because of the reviews that I receive but also during my internal process of writing even at the beginning of the writing process, I go back and see what I wrote. I go back and forth. (Art1)

In sum, both arts and science scholars mentioned similar line of introduction construction, favored indicating a gap (i.e., establishing a niche through indicating a gap, Move2 Step 1A in the revised CARS model) and did not feel pressurized with reader expectations but they differed in terms of their views on the difficulty of composing this section of RAs in their field. While responding to the seventh question in the interviews (i.e., Can you compare the difficulty of composing this section to the other sections in a RA?), all the participants emphasized the need for a good and powerful introduction. Sci1, Art1 and Art2 in the fields of constructional engineering, second language acquisition and educational administration respectively found introduction the most important, the most frequently revised, and the most difficult section to compose in a manuscript.

It is the most difficult part to compose because you have to read thousands of pages long literature to summarize the necessary parts for your study. And it is not an easy task to understand what someone has done in his study and has not done, I mean finding an important gap is not easy at all. (Sci1)

I rewrite and rewrite the introduction maybe several times just before submitting because this is challenging. You have to say the very crucial aspects of your paper in the introduction section, your theoretical assumptions, your phenomena that you deal with, a little bit of background information about the phenomenon and the significance of your study. In that sense, it has challenges of course.... It has to address the audience in a such a way that they should actually get interested in the rest. (Art1)

This is the part I spend most of my time and I definitely revise the introduction more than the other parts. Also it is the most entertaining part to me where I can show my creativity. Methods and results are more like a technical report which has a more structured nature. There is interpretation in the results but still I find introduction more challenging and entertaining. (Art2)

Sci2, who is a medical doctor, however stated that introductions should be short and simple with two or three paragraphs of one or two sentences. He found introduction, method and conclusion parts highly objective and easy to write but to him discussion is the part that requires good knowledge of the field. Following what he said in our interviews, since introductions in RAs in medicine have to be kept short and simple, we can say that this section does not cause a big difficulty for or require a meticulous work by these scholars unlike the ones in other fields:

I think the most difficult part to compose is the discussion. Introduction, method and conclusion parts are highly objective and are easily written. When it comes to discussion, it is easy for authors to divert to irrelevant points or they suffer from a vicious circle by stating what others have said. Discussion is the part that requires good knowledge of the field, expertise. (Sci2)

#### ***4.2 How These Scholars Constructed the First Draft of Their Introductions in A Specific Single-Authored Manuscript***

With the help of the eighth question in the interview, we aimed to capture how the participating scholars constructed the first draft of a specific single-author RA introduction. The participating scholars shared one of their early publications and analyzed the structure of their RA introductions through identifying the communicative purposes served together with the first author in the interviews. As said earlier, both arts and science scholars' descriptions of their composing of introductions were in harmony with Swales' CARS model (Swales 2004), which has received acceptance and popularity in diverse fields. In line with this, their descriptions of their own texts were also observed to follow the outline suggested in this model as evident in the excerpt below with a move-step analysis:

This first paragraph is a brief introduction to the topic, traffic control I provide some definitions for instance. I reflect the main studies in this field (Move1). Then there is a literature review and I use literature to state why there is a need for this study, this is about the problem

(Move2-Step1A). The last three paragraphs are about the purpose of this study (Move3-Step1) and the difference of this study from the previous ones (Move3-Step6). (Sci1)

### ***4.3 How They Revised These Introductions and the Challenges/Problems They Experienced While Revising***

After the participants expressed how they designed the first draft of a specific single-author manuscript, they were asked to comment on how they revised the first draft under the light of the reviewers' comments. For science scholars, the common point was that they received criticism on their language. Sci2 mentioned that one of the reviewers changed his statement of purpose and he felt that the reviewer aimed to make it sound more academic. Other than the language issue, he said he did not receive much criticism. Similarly, although Sci1 was trained in the UK, some of his statements needed to be revised to reflect more proper English. Also, he was asked to emphasize the difference of his study from the previous ones and to rearrange some paragraphs to better reflect the methods to be used in his study. This reminds us of the top-to-down approach used by the more-skilled writers who delay the consideration of lexical and grammatical problems until the final stages of writing (Zamel 1983). However, we should also keep in mind the warning by Gosden (1996: 121) to NNS novice writers that "'rough' writing practices are simply 'poor' practices."

For the arts scholars' first drafts, the common problem identified by the reviewers was the need for further details of the phenomenon or background of the study. While Art1 was asked to include more background on first language acquisition, Art2 was asked to address some other necessary and important studies on ethical use of computers, which were missing. Art1 added a new paragraph and a footnote to deal with it while Art 2 followed the advice of the reviewer to read further. Art2 also received a comment on the methodology of his study and carried out focal group interviews to make it a mixed method one. He found himself lucky to hear from the reviewers soon so that he conducted the interviews with his participants before they graduated.

When asked if such comments were typical in their fields, Sci1 said that papers are typically criticized for their language use and paragraphs are asked to be rearranged to reflect the purposes better in engineering. For medicine, Sci2 stated that they do not receive a lot of comments on introductions which they have to keep short, simple and concise. As the biggest problem, reviewers may find introductions too long with unnecessary information. As for the arts scholars, who were both in the field of education broadly, it was hard to describe some typical reviewers' comments in their fields. The comments were mostly manuscript-dependent but the most commonly received ones were the need to expand the background, or the need to expand the significance of the study in its context. What Art2 repeatedly

emphasized was that the reviewers in international journals seek to be persuaded of the significance of a study; therefore, success mostly depends on how persuasive you can be in the introduction.

In terms of the challenges they experienced with the revision of these RA introductions, science scholars said that they did not have any challenges while responding to reviewers' comments. Although arts scholars also did not find the comments they received on the introductions at hand challenging, they considered them more expressive and suggestive. They shared some crucial points related to their interactions with reviewers' comments. Art1, for instance, stressed the power of editors and the importance of a healthy communication between writers and reviewers without leaving any comments untouched, which reminds us of the crucial importance of negotiation process which precedes publication (Knorr-Cetina 1981):

(R: What were the challenges you experienced during these revisions?) There were not challenges. Writing such academic papers, authors must know that editors are very powerful. They should clarify why they do X but not Y, but at the same time they should find a way to address the comments and suggestions. As a writer and a researcher what I feel is that I cannot for instance disregard any of the comments or issues raised by the reviewers. Even if I cannot satisfy their expectations, I should highlight why I cannot do this to that extent. I do not have the luxury of leaving or ignoring a reviewer's comment or suggestion. This is what I tell my graduate students.

As another point, after also stating that he did not have any special challenges in the revision process of that specific introduction, Art2 reflected a problem which he experienced some other time. Here this scholar felt constrained with a comment he found unacceptable and decided to reject this comment although he was well aware of the fact that he had to satisfy the reviewers in the revision process. He touched upon the dilemma scholars sometimes experience and this dilemma probably stems from the fact that sometimes reviewers cannot support their criticism with sound reasons.

(R: What were the challenges you experienced during these revisions?) I did not have any challenges in the revisions for this manuscript but sometimes I have challenges. For instance some reviewers make some suggestions which I cannot accept. I can say I do not accept this suggestion but this comes together with a risk of being rejected. This is something I avoid as scholars in Turkey we need to publish to get promoted. But I sometimes reject reviewers' comments, I take this risk if the comment is not acceptable at all.

#### ***4.4 What Expectations These Scholars Have and What Problems They Observe While Reviewing Others' Introductions***

The last two questions of the interviews emerged naturally as a part of sharing ideas with the scholars, who are experts in their fields and receive offers of revisions from both national and international journals. In terms of their expectations, they unanimously claimed that they expected to see a similar line of the qualities they were concerned with while designing their own introductions. In Art2's terms, "authors

should pay attention to...the general outline of an academic paper introduction” (transcriptions p. 9). Broadly, authors in both arts and science are expected to follow the CARS model with good background knowledge, a clear statement of the urge for the study (Sci1), a clear purpose of the study so that the readers can see what has brought the author to this point (Sci2), a strong theoretical basis (Art1) and a convincing tone (Art2). As a reviewer, Art2 states that he must be convinced of the need or the rationale of the study. Also, a long list of reference items is seen as a crucial element showing the strength of a background and/or literature. In sum, the quality of an introduction depends on a powerful background “which becomes visible in the reference list” (Art2, transcriptions, p. 12).

In terms of the problems they observed in the introduction of the manuscripts they reviewed, the most common ones were the lack of a clear problem or purpose (Sci1, Sci2, Art2) and missing references due to a lack of adequate knowledge of the field (Art1 and Art 2). Such introductions were criticized and even rejected because of “the lack of a good mechanism leading the researchers to a purpose or the problem of the study (Sci2, transcriptions, p. 16). Besides this, art scholars also emphasized a long list of references as a sign of quality which means knowledge of all the necessary works within a field of study.

## 5 Conclusion

Unlike the many studies conducted on the textual analysis of RAs published, with a qualitative analysis of four expert scholars’ verbally reported views on their RA introduction constructions, we aimed to understand their composing processes. While the CARS model proved its proto-typicality, as all scholars were concerned with a good background followed with a clear purpose to complete a gap in their fields, the ways of tailoring the content of their writing came together with an awareness of the differences in academic traditions in national and international journals. Stretching the limits in writing, agency, creativity, and voice were emphasized by an arts scholar who complained of the rigid writing traditions within home journals. Science scholars also showed a preference for publishing their manuscripts in international journals because of their dissatisfaction with the academic writings of their monolingual and/or less informed colleagues who are reviewers in home journals.

As a response to the valid criticism that “ESP had concentrated too much on the end product ...and too little on the learning skills needed to enable students to reach the desired end behaviours” (Dudley-Evans and St John 1998: 26), we must admit that both ESP teachers and learners need to pay more attention not only to work out the meaning of a text but also to the meaning creation stories of expert writers. Therefore, we believe that several comments provided by these scholars upon their construction processes, their challenges with journal expectations, the problems they observe in others’ writings, or the differences they expressed about the academic traditions in different journals have the potential of creating an insight “to support the initiation of NNS novices into the international research community”



(Gosden 1995: 37). To put it succinctly, in line with the major paradigm shift in composition theory from product to process and from process to genre, and the research-based language education in the ESP view of genre, we should not only examine the written texts of expert scholars but devote time and effort to listen to their construction stories. This allows for an analysis of texts as goal-oriented, staged, and social interactional, which may also help scaffold the harsh realities experienced by novice scholars on their way of becoming well accepted members of a particular discourse community. As the last point, we cannot tell to what extent our findings as generalizable with the participation of a small number of scholars but we can at the same time claim that their statements have specific relevance in their fields within arts and science.

Finally, in terms of raising the profile of ESP in the academy, personality and experience are crucial for success as emphasized by Stewart (See chapter “[Expanding Possibilities for ESP Practitioners Through Interdisciplinary Team Teaching](#)” in this volume). Therefore, it is of great importance to hear practitioner research stories (See chapter “[Practitioner Research as a Way of Understanding My Work: Making Sense of Graduates’ Language Use](#)”) and ESP students’, teachers’ and graduates’ views regarding the specific language courses designed for their academic and professional needs (See chapter “[Perceptions of Students, Teachers and Graduates About Civil Aviation Cabin Services ESP Program: An Exploratory Study in Turkey](#)”). Taking note of these experiences shared facilitates and contributes to our design of both ESP courses and of our research engagement as teachers within our local ESP contexts; and thus, the final products’ (i.e., our RAs’) chances of acceptance for publication might greatly increase.

## **Appendix: Interview Questions**

1. Could you describe how you construct the introductory part of RAs in your field in English language?
2. Could you describe how you construct the introductory part of RAs in your field in Turkish language?
3. What are the similarities and differences?
4. What influences you to structure the RA introduction this way in English language – advice from a mentor or colleagues, other RA’s, reviewers’ comments, literacy brokers such as friends or copyeditors from outside academia?
5. Could you describe the demands of an English-speaking and information-seeking audience from RA introductions in your field? How do these demands influence your writing?
6. Could you describe the process of writing the RA intro—do you compose it after writing the whole article? Do you tend to revise this more than the other sections?
7. Can you compare the difficulty of composing this section to the other sections in a RA?



8. Specially in the first draft of this RA, how did you construct the introductory part?
9. How was the introductory part shaped and reshaped during revisions in response to comments by reviewers and editors in the following drafts? I mean what changes did you make and what was the reason of these changes?
10. What were the challenges you experienced during these revisions?
11. When you are a reviewer for mainstream journals, what are your expectations in RA introductions in your field?
12. What problems do you observe in RA introduction writing of others?

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