

**IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION:  
THE COMPLEXITY OF EFL ACADEMIC WRITING IN  
CONCLUSIONS AS GENRE**

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*To my beloved parents  
and brothers,*

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS USED

<b>ADA</b>	Applied Discourse Analysis
<b>AL</b>	Applied Linguistics
<b>BA</b>	Bachelor of Arts or undergraduate level
<b>CC</b>	Communicative Competence
<b>CDA</b>	Critical Discourse Analysis
<b>EAP</b>	English for Academic Purposes
<b>EFL</b>	English as a Foreign Language
<b>ELT</b>	English Language Teaching
<b>ESL</b>	English as a Second Language
<b>ESP</b>	English for Specific Purposes
<b>FL</b>	Foreign Language
<b>FUTC</b>	Framework for Undergraduate Thesis Conclusions
<b>L1</b>	Native language or First Language
<b>L2</b>	Second Language
<b>LD</b>	Lexical Density
<b>MA</b>	Master's of Arts or graduate level
<b>MDA</b>	Mediated Discourse Analysis
<b>MT</b>	Mother Tongue
<b>PhD</b>	Doctor of Philosophy
<b>SOR</b>	Statement Of Results
<b>TESOL</b>	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
<b>TL</b>	Target Language
<b>WAC</b>	Writing Across the Curriculum

## **ABSTRACT**

The conclusions section of a thesis is the last chapter people read and usually the section that leaves the lasting impression. This thesis presents a framework for the analysis of thesis conclusions at an undergraduate level in the field of humanities, which as literature reveals, lacks an agenda for its analysis at the undergraduate level. A seven-move generic organization is proposed as a Framework for Undergraduate Thesis Conclusions (FUTC). This framework sheds a light on the complex construction of the thesis conclusions chapter towards its analysis. Moreover, the FUTC shows potentiality for further research, pedagogic implications and applications for genre and writing studies. Studies on genre, discourse and writing have mingled into one area regarding the study of writer's identity by means of voice. By developing studies on voice, the way the writer socializes with the community can be analyzed. This thesis also aims to analyze the writer's voice expression in four undergraduate case studies in a public university in central Mexico. The analysis includes the writer's voice as self as author and discorsal voice. From these analyses, this thesis concludes that there is such a phenomenon like voice that just cannot be separated from writing, which although follows discorsive and genre conventions, it is socially constructed and unique of every person.

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Studying of the self in social and academic contexts is a current issue in studies on identity. Who am I when writing this thesis, how do I identify myself in this process? I certainly have different roles, different identities; I am a MA student, a university professor, a researcher, a writer, a linguist, a bilingual professor/person, a daughter, a sister, a woman in her late twenties, among many other roles that I surely own too. However, how would you see me as the author of this thesis? Which of these identities will be part of this work? How do I want you to perceive me as you read this thesis? What identity do I need to take while I write this thesis? Can I choose one particular identity or are they all mingled conflated as part of me as a whole? Due to all these different identities, I consider myself a person with multiple social identities who determines which identity emphasizes the most into the different situations and contexts.

Hence, defining the identity I want you to perceive from me I first, clearly need to ask, why am I doing this? And, for whom I am writing this? The answer to the first question may be simply answered by claiming that writing this thesis responds to the requirement in order to get my master degree, but it is not actually my ultimate purpose. I am indeed doing this thesis because I have a professional and personal interest in writing which to me is one of the greatest tools of expression of the self. I believe that the *persona* is reflected in their writing, and one's identities are expressed and exposed in one's writing (Clark and Ivanic, 1997). Analyzing writer's identities is not an exploited research topic (Ivanic, 1994; Atkinson, 2001), and it is challenging due to the subjectivity of the nature of the data (Ivanic and Camps, 2001). Identities are unique (Ivanic, 1994) and may also be perceived differently by others about oneself. Having these points in mind explains the subjectivity and challenge of the issue.

Knowing the persona by means of their writing can be beneficial in many aspects (Clark and Ivanic, 1991). It could help to recognize and analyze writer's internal dimensions: strengths and/or weaknesses and raise consciousness about them in order to help them in their writing process and they gain control over it; explore writer's beliefs and values to be a more critical and autonomous writer; analyze the process and/or strategies writers use to express their identity and analyze how people socialize and identify themselves into given social contexts. All this is important and contributes to different areas such as literacy studies (Ivanic and Simpson, 1992; Ivanic and Roach, 1990, cited in Ivanic, 1994), discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1991), psycholinguistics, and sociolinguistics (Nystrand, 1990, cited in Ivanic, 1994), as well as to the understanding of one-self (Clark and Ivanic, 1991; Ivanic, 1994) by tracing one's own writing development and awareness of it. As seen, the topic is interdisciplinary; and it will depend on the writer and/or reader and the purpose they have when approaching it.

I have pointed out some possible reasons for a person to explore the area, and as a potential writer and researcher that I would like to be seen, I turn to consider the people who are reading or will be interested in reading these lines. This thesis is then primarily addressed to all professionals who have an interest in writing. It includes linguists, language teachers, students who are engaged in the area of writing, discourse analysis and related areas, researchers who are doing research on writing, genre and/or discourse analysis. Secondly, it is also of interest for people who work in writing centers and in university writing departments since advice and shared experience may be found. This thesis is also addressed for researchers who are interested in developing a framework for studying and analyzing thesis conclusions (a detailed explanation of this will follow). These possible readers could be people in contexts of

English as Foreign Language (EFL), as well as readers of other speaking foreign (FL) or second languages (L2). These readers with similar interests and/or constraints can benefit from this thesis and find it useful in their own situations and purposes.

For a clear understanding of the situation and purposes of the present study, this introductory chapter is divided in five sections. The first section presents the general and specific areas of research as well as the research problem. Secondly, it describes the purpose of research which is followed by the research questions. The research questions detail the research concerns that I address and discuss along the thesis. Afterwards, this chapter presents a section on the assumptions made in the research. A section on the significance of the study follows the assumptions, and finally, a section of the general organization of the thesis closes this chapter.

### **1.1 Introduction to the Problem**

A piece of discourse, written or spoken, implies the conception of self representation. Ivanic and Camps (2001, p. 5) argue that “lexical, syntactic, semantic and even the visual and material aspects of writing construct identity just as much as do the phonetic and prosodic aspects of speech”. Self representation is actually an integrative element in every human since everything we do, say or think we incorporate our world view, culture and personality; it is part of our identity. The study of identity can be approached by analyzing *voice* and *gender* as expressions of self representation in the production of language (Ivanic, 1998) and which are defined and discussed in section 2.5. The main interest of this thesis is to analyze the students’ identity by means voice in academic written production.



Academic writing is a complex cognitive process (Troyka, 1990; Raimes, 1983; White and Arndt, 1991; Trzeciak and Mackay, 1994). In the writing of a foreign language, the cognitive and critical process of writing is even harder than writing in the mother tongue since the writer deals with other language systems different from their own language (Schoonen, van Gelderen, de Glopper, Hulstijn, Simis, Snellings and Stevenson, 2003). When someone writes in a foreign language, the goal is to achieve communication in another language, so the adoption of a new language system as their own takes place (Kroll, 1990). Owning this system will permit the writer's ideas flow easily and in this way they will produce coherent, logical, and smooth writing.

Academic writing in English as Foreign Language (EFL) involves far more than students producing appropriate and grammatically accurate language and mastering composition skills (Kroll, 1990; Trzeciak and Mackay, 1994). Writers need to develop their EFL communicative competence (CC) in written discourse. That is, they need to express themselves in terms of grammar, discourse, strategies, and society which are the CC components (Canale and Swain, 1980). These CC components or sub-competences are individually constructed based on the person's cognitive schemas (Smith, 2004) and their social relation within the context in which they interact (Gilyard, 1991). Since every person builds their own CC, its development is to a certain extent an individual process in which the person expresses him/herself and thus, constructs their own identities. Identities understood as the "people's sense[s] of who they are" (Ivanic, 1994, p. 4) can be studied by analyzing writer's voice (Ivanic, 1998) which differs from person to person (Pennycook, 2001). In the search of one's voice expression, a whole process is involved. Writers need to master literacy and academic skills as well as academic

writing and institutional conventions of the genre to write since the writing takes place in an academic context (Clark and Ivanic, 1997).

Constructing writer's identity and expressing voice in a FL context is a challenging task. As pointed out by Schoonen et al. (2003) and Kroll (1990), writing academically in a FL is a complex process due to the CC of the second language needs to be mastered and writing conventions need to be respected. In addition, Ivanic (1998) claims that every writing piece contains voice, in which the writer's identity is reflected. Considering this view, Canagarajah (1999) maintains that writers need to show their identity and find their own 'voice' in the target language (TL). Voice in writing permits the writer to express themselves in the text, socialize and find a place in the academic community (Ivanic and Simpson, 1992). This identity construction is, however, a difficulty for EFL writers since they are dealing with other language system different from their mother tongue, and L1 rhetorical conventions interfere with L2 writing (Kaplan, 1966). This has been indeed an issue pointed out by Kaplan and largely discussed since then. Taking into account these points, this research analyzes students' EFL academic writing voice. Since thesis writing is seen as one of the most challenging tasks which integrate content knowledge, academic writing, researching skills, and the arguments of the writer to express their posture (Bunton, 2005; Bitchener and Basturkmen, 2006), it is an ideal writing piece to analyze the expression of the student's identity. Hence, this research analyzes voice in the thesis writing at an undergraduate level.

Studies in identity have also researched differences on identity according to gender (Bucholtz and Hall, 2004). In fact, gender is another marked feature to express one's voice (Ivanic, 1998), and it is also part of the analysis of this study. Addressing this issue, this thesis covers the comparison of the analyses on voice in two male and two female case studies. This

study takes place in a BA program in a prestigious public University in a central State of the Mexican Republic. It is specifically carried out in its Modern Languages BA program which has existed for over 25 years.

## **1.2 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this research is threefold. It first proposes a framework for developing research on genre-discourse analysis on conclusions of BA thesis. This study is done by analyzing the conclusions of four BA theses, and looking for common elements among them and their particular genre communicative purpose(s). The framework will contribute to the analysis of such genre and suggest some research as well as teaching implications. Secondly, this thesis seeks to analyze writer's identity by analyzing their EFL academic writing voice. This inquiry is done by analyzing the writing of the participants' BA thesis conclusions. Finally, the research seeks to identify and describe gender features in written voice expression comparing two female and two male writers as these finish their BA thesis and present their professional examination. This analysis is done by interviewing the participants and analyzing their written thesis chapters.

## **1.3 Research Questions**

This thesis addresses the following research questions:

### **1. What elements should be included in a framework to analyze BA thesis conclusions?**

This first research question seeks to analyze the general characteristics of the functional elements considered in an undergraduate thesis conclusion in the humanities field which will permit to suggest a framework for conclusions genre analysis. The data for this

question is obtained from the collection of the thesis conclusions of four case studies. Thus, the conclusions will be analyzed, and generic elements included in the four conclusions will be considered and with help of theorists and writing researchers, a framework will be designed. This framework will benefit discourse analysts as well as teachers and writers searching for a tool to analyze, write and evaluate an effective conclusion at a BA level.

## **2. What are the features that writers use the most to express their voice in academic writing, in thesis conclusions in particular?**

This second research question gathers relevant information regarding identity and voice expression in an academic paper, and if the identity is or not actually reflected on the students' writing. Thus, the frequency, or lack of voice features, and loss of identity in order to socialize academically could be observed and analyzed. Data collection will also consider data from the same students' thesis conclusions as mentioned in the first question. The results are complemented with the students' actual opinion about their voice reflection in their EFL academic writing. Interviews gather this type of information which helps in the analysis of the identity development a conscious process in the writers' academic life.

## **3. Is there any difference between genders' voice expression? If so, what are the factors?**

Another important and necessary question for the research lies on the premise on gender differences at the level of voice expression. Studies on gender have shown that there are differences in language use among males and females (Bucholtz and Hall, 2004). This also deals with their identities and how they perceive and socialize themselves in different social groups. Hence, since the area where this study is developed considers an academic environment where males and females are active participants, I intend to compare those, voice

features characteristics of each gender. Thus, I can compare and contrast cases of more identity expression, or repression and see if this deals with gender differences. For this point, I will consider my participants to be two male and two female writers.

#### **1.4 Assumptions**

Research on studies in discourse and writing suggests that the writer's identity is reflected in their writing (Ivanic, 1998; Ivanic and Camps, 2001, Norton, 1997). Yet, little is known about the development and limits of expression of their identity in academic writing tasks (Atkinson, 2001). Voice and gender are some aspects to analyze when considering identity (Ivanic, 1998; Fairclough, 1995; Pavlenko and Lantolf, 2000; Pennycook, 2001; Bucholtz and Hall, 2004). Considering these two identity components, this research analyzes the features writers use more to express their voice in an academic situation. In an attempt to answer this, I assume that the most common features that students use to express their voice in an academic context could relate to issues of generic referent in writing: *impersonal*, or *personal* the use of *I, we, or he, she, they* (Stapleton, 2002; Ivanic and Simpson, 1992; Ivanic, 1994).

Another assumption regarding writing features to express voice is related to writer's grammatical choice, whether they write in active or passive voice, and tense usage, which permits the analysis of how they place themselves in the text as outsiders or insiders (Ivanic, 1998; Ivanic and Camps, 2001). In addition, I assume that by analyzing the conclusions and the data obtained from the interview I can analyze the extent voice is controlled or influenced externally by the thesis advisor, the writing task-content, and/or internally by the writers

themselves in terms of what they want to or think they should do (Ivanic, 1998; Bitchener and Basturkmen, 2006).

One more assumption is that my research participants may not be aware of their identity as writers. However, I expect that when the interviews are applied, they could probably notice and comment on the way they perceive themselves as writer and how their thesis writing helps to identify themselves with the academic community.

Regarding the concern of a framework for analyzing conclusions, it is done based on the assumption that it is in conclusions where students express their view, and conclude with what they think after doing the complete research and writing the rest of the research parts (McKinlay, 1984, Peng, 1987, Dudley-Evans, 1986, all cited in Paltridge, 1997). Thus, it is assumed to find not only voice and gender features, but also similarities in their conclusions format as an academic genre.

Concerning the conclusion genre analysis, as the existing agendas (Bunton, 2005; Hopkins and Dudley-Evans, 1988; Bitchener and Basturkmen, 2006) focus on master thesis and doctoral dissertations, I assume their framework is different from a BA thesis. Then, it is necessary to develop a framework exclusively for undergraduate thesis conclusions analysis. Thus, I assume that the framework I am proposing will serve for the analysis and development of BA thesis conclusions.

Since the samples of thesis to be taken are from two females and two males, a gender study on voice expression is done. The assumption here as pointed out in the writing features is to find out differences in writing voice expression. These differences relate to generic referents, the way to write things, complexity of structure, being direct or using wordiness, the

types of arguments presented to let the writer's voice be listened (Talbot, 1992). These are the general assumptions influencing the arguments made in the thesis.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The proposed framework in this thesis is expected to serve both writers who face the situation of writing a conclusion at this level, and those who write any conclusion for a research article so they achieve a clear idea of the genre to write and its function. The framework will be beneficial for writing instructors and thesis advisors at the moment of explaining such task. Besides, I believe, such framework will contribute to genre studies and trigger research on that direction. It is then a significant theoretical contribution to genre analysis as well as to literacy practices and writing instruction.

I am also studying students' identity development by means of voice and gender analyses in their EFL academic writing because I want to find out what the characteristics of written identity in an academic community are and how they differ when considering gender. I am doing this in order to analyze whether students express their voice or not and how the academic environment influences this and/or shapes their academic written identity. This benefits writers in their academic life as current students, as well as in their professional development if they want to continue studying a higher degree or publishing a research article. The study also helps the students in their jobs once they graduate as well as to other writers who are in the search of becoming more critical and independent writers in any writing task after school. Writers may need to write a paper to be accepted in a job, or actually write a paper required in their jobs. Therefore, with the results obtained from the thesis, suggestions

on building up identity and voice expression in students' academic writing can be given and shared to contexts where English, or any other language, is taught as a foreign language.

## **1.6 Organization of the Thesis**

After introducing the topic and laying out the problem, Chapter Two of this thesis presents a theoretical discussion on how the general and specific areas underlying this research relate to each other. In it, I first discuss the theoretical approaches to writing and identity by reviewing key concepts such as discourse, literacy and their relation with identity. I later discuss some issues of identity in academic writing in order to provide a solid base to build on the present research.

In Chapter Three, the methodology chapter, I describe the researcher's philosophy, the data collection as well as the frameworks for analysis, participants and instruments that delineate the research. I also describe the procedure followed and include a section on limitations.

In Chapter Four, I analyze the data gathered with the instruments and discuss the results obtained from that. I organize it by responding to each research question, and by each case study of the four participants considered.

The main findings and conclusions of the research are presented in Chapter Five. This chapter also discusses the implications for the field of Applied Linguistics (AL) and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). Finally, I suggest some directions for further research and keep exploring this area of discourse and academic writing.

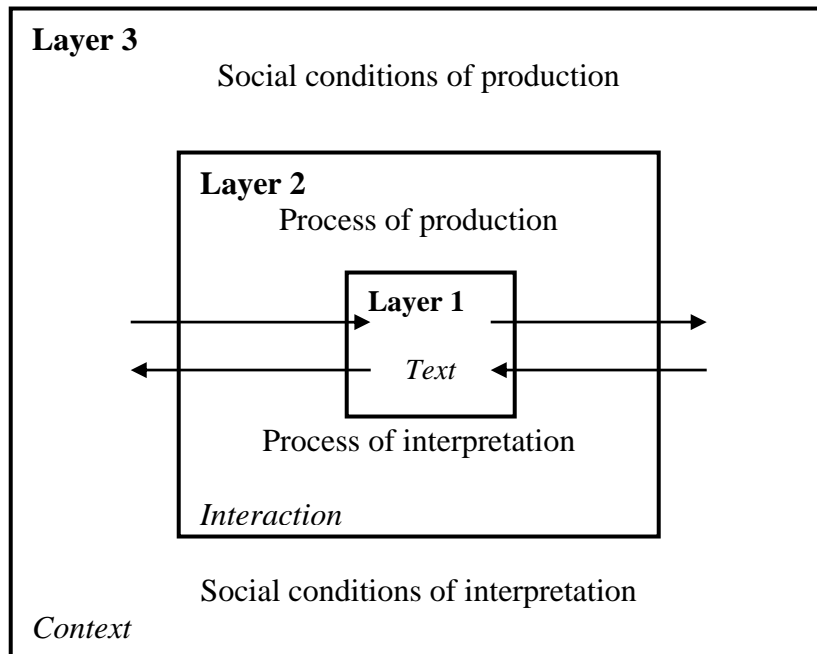


## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I present the theoretical framework underlying this research in order to provide a solid understanding of the theories behind this project and settle the theoretical bases upon which the research is built. I first discuss the main concepts: *literacy* and *identity*, and the relationship between these two. Secondly, I present the approaches to writing. In sections 2.4 and 2.5, I include a considerable account of *identity* construction in written discourse. Section 2.5 also includes a discussion of *conclusions* as the *genre* under analysis. Afterwards, section 2.6 presents a discussion on *intertextuality* and *voice* and *gender*, as identity features. Finally, I close this theoretical review by summarizing the theories and approaches used in the research.

### 2.1 Literacy and Identity

Recently, linguists, sociologists and humanistic researchers have turned their attention to develop studies on identity, its social construction and the power relations around it (Gumperz, 1982; Fairclough, 1995; Norton, 1997). My particular interest for this thesis is to analyze the relation between writing and identity construction as a social act in an academic context. For this, it is first convenient to define *literacy* and *identity*, two essential concepts involved in this research. Bazerman, Little, Bethel, Chavkin, Fouquette and Garufis (2005, p. 7) claim that literacy is the ability to read and write, and they “never occur separately, but are always part of a shared field of activity”. Ivanic (1998) agrees with this view and adds that literacy also refers to the ways of how written language is used. The ways of using written language are determined by the social context in which the writer is involved. Hence, Ivanic (1998, p. 41) adapts Fairclough’s (1989) diagrammatic framework of a social view of language to show how the text is socially produced. The diagram is shown in Figure 1.




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**Figure 1: Discourse as Text, Interaction and Context (Ivanic, 1998, p. 41)**

This diagram shows three layers to understand discourse, the text itself, as an interaction between writer and reader and as part of the context, the social function the text plays in a given context. Ivanic (1998) highlights that literacy studies are incorporated in the middle layer since process of production (*writing*) and process of interpretation (*reading*) are included, and both occur inside a social context. Adopting this view I conceptualize literacy as being embedded within a social context.

The present study examines literacy in a university as an academic social context. The social aspect under analysis is the interaction of the individual with the academic community and the students' written construction of this relation and their membership in that particular social group. For this, Ivanic (1998) claims: becoming part of an academic community requires the construction of an identity which identifies the person as a member of that

particular group. Individual identity refers to self categorization owning specific cultural patterns, and social identity deals with the group characteristics whose boundaries mark it as distinct from other social groups (Baker, 1996). Identity deals with those particular features that distinguish persons or groups from one to another. Baker (*ibid.* p. 367) affirms that “owning specific cultural patterns, of which language may be the strongest example, is a characteristic of identity”. Hence, the study of identity in written language becomes relevant to analyze the self (Ivanic, 1998; Prior, 2001).

## **2.2 The Nature and Purpose of Writing**

Understanding the notion of *writing* is crucial in the development of this investigation. Some authors such as Bloomfield (cited in Richards, 1990) observe writing as simple printed signs for recording language. In fact, Richards, Platt, and Platt (1992, p. 409) define writing as “a system of written symbols which represent sounds, syllables, or words of a language”. However, many other linguists have not accepted this simplistic view of writing. Bell and Burnaby (1984, cited in Nunan, 1989, p. 36) argue that writing is “an extremely complex activity” that requires the simultaneous work of the cognitive skills in order to produce a piece of writing. The notion of cognitive skills implies a thinking-reasoning process, which is another way of defining writing (Troyka, 1990; Raimes, 1983; White and Arndt, 1991; Prior, 1998). Woolever (1991) also agrees with this definition, and adds that thoughts need to be properly and coherently organized in order to communicate and achieve a purpose.

This communicative perspective implies a view of writing as a process as well as a product. Smith (1994, p. 19) supports this idea by explaining that writing can be referred as “an act–process, and as a noun–product”. Moreover, Berlin (1988, cited in Kroll, 1990, p. 25)

states that writing is “a creative act in which the process is as important as the product”. Therefore, writing, when conceptualized holistically, is both a process and a product. In general, writing is more than transcribing language into symbols; it is a whole process–product skill that requires instruction, organization, and coherence for the development of cognitive skills, knowledge, experience, feelings, and purposes in order to communicate. To respond to the different purposes and social situations that a writer can face, there are different types of writing.

*Academic writing*, which is the writing type under analysis in this study, requires the integration of many skills to master all language areas in a coherent way (Kroll, 1990). This means the unity of the skills needs to be smoothly written to have a logical understanding of the text. Criollo (2003) affirms that academic writing is one of the most demanding tasks in higher education. As seen, the complexity of writing is in its own nature, and this task is even more complex and demanding when the writing is in another language different from the native or mother tongue (Schoonen et al., 2003). In the writing of a foreign language (FL), which is the writing I am analyzing in this research, the cognitive and critical process of writing is even harder than writing in the mother tongue. The writer faces other grammatical and syntactical language systems different from their own language. Thus, the writer deals with the complexity of writing per se and with the new writing patterns that the FL demands in order to achieve communication and socialize in the context where it takes place.

As seen, defining writing depends on the nature of why and for what purposes it is done. This section then explains the nature and purposes of writing. White (1981, cited in Nunan, 1989) claims that the nature of writing is to be displaced in time and space. That is, that is any piece of writing transients throughout time and space. In a different view, Brookes and Grundy

(1998) suggest that the nature of writing is to put spoken language into form. Fawcett and Sandberg (1992, p.1) agree with this view by claiming that writing is the “production of graphic symbols that have to be arranged according to certain conventions”. One more perspective of the nature of writing emphasizes it as a human way to express and communicate in different situations and purposes (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996). As it is observable in these approaches to the nature of language, writing is the representation of language into signs with form and organization according to language conventions, situations, and purposes. Bell and Burnaby (1984, cited in Nunan, 1989, p. 36) consider this view and state that writing is “an extremely complex cognitive activity”, which implies the control of writing sub–skills and features. Furthermore, as this is a complex cognitive activity, it requires instruction and guidance to be developed. White (1981, cited in Nunan, 1989, p. 36) emphasizes this view and comments that “writing is not a natural activity [...] all people have to be taught how to write”. Hence, as writing is a cognitive skill that implies language competence (in the language it is produced, first language (L1), second language (L2) or (FL), knowledge, organization and language conventions to produce it, its nature is that requires instruction to do it properly and convey communication in the context where it is developed.

When considering the *nature of writing*, one must consider the purposes that the written text is meant to fulfill. Troyka (1990, p. 3) points out that the *purpose of writing* refers to “what the writing seeks to achieve”; it deals with goals or aims of writing or writing intentions. Kinneavy (1980, cited in Troyka, 1990, p. 4) agrees with this idea by adding that the “aim of a discourse determines everything else in the process of writing”. Then, Grabe and Kaplan (1996) say the purpose of writing depends on the context, task, and audience. At the same time, Troyka (1990) suggests that the purposes of writing are to express, inform,

persuade, or create literary work. In sum, the purpose of writing deals with the aims or reasons of writing; thus, the context, task, and audience play a crucial role in the writing purpose.

The nature and purpose of the written texts under analysis in this study is EFL writing, which was developed in a particular academic setting. These characteristics require high cognitive development from part of the writers since they are writing in a different language system from their mother tongue (MT). Conform to the conventions that the task of writing a thesis which is the genre I am analyzing. This task is further complicated by the fact that the EFL writers are following the conventions of writing a thesis conclusion, which is the genre under investigation. These two main issues might have an influence on the way people write and convey meaning. In addition, it is relevant to mention that at this point writers have to assume their academic and professional roles, so they fulfill the communicative purpose of writing a thesis. Thus, the identity (see section 2.4) shown to the audience might be influenced by such roles and how they want to be seen. It then becomes worthy to consider these aspects when analyzing writing and identity in their conclusions.

### **2.3 Approaches to Writing**

Once the definition of writing, its nature and purpose have been explained, discussed and related to the topic under investigation, it is important to consider the different approaches to writing since they provide the basis to support its study and permit the analysis of theories on the analysis of writing. In a general view, Brown (1994, p. 48) defines to approach as the “assumptions dealing with the nature of language learning and teaching”. In other words, an approach is concerned with the different theories about the nature of language and the nature of language learning (Richards and Rogers, 1986). Thus, regarding writing, approaching to

writing refers to the different theories to understand the nature of writing teaching and learning. As it has discussed in the previous section, linguists define writing in different ways. In the next section of the literature review I discuss the different approaches to Second Language Writing. The term of second language writing encloses writing in a language different than the mother tongue (MT); it could be L2 or FL (Raimes, 1983). Thus, no strict distinction is drawn between L2 and FL within this study, and both terms are used interchangeably.

### **2.3.1 Controlled to Free Writing Approach**

In this approach, writing is seen as a controlled pattern process in which students acquire the skill in a behavioral/imitative way. The principles of this approach range from very controlled to relatively free writing approaches. Controlled writing focuses on the form, while free writing focuses on the content. A controlled approach views writing as a language practice that utilizes language skills in an original and organized way, in which learning is a habit-formation process (Kroll, 1990). Raimes (1983) claims that when copying paragraphs, students analyze the form of the model, to later on imitate them. This imitation reinforces grammatical structures, idioms and vocabulary. While these language features are reinforced, writing is developed, which is why it can be said that writing is reinforced by the learning process. In this approach, students are habituated to proper structures by practicing them over time, and later, they will produce their own writing (Dykstra, 1977, Ross, 1968, cited in Reid, 1993). Scott (1996, p. 146) supports this idea adding that this kind of writing instruction “involves the analysis and imitation of model texts and stresses organization above all (...) to develop an awareness of the [...] features of writing”. She refers to these principles as the

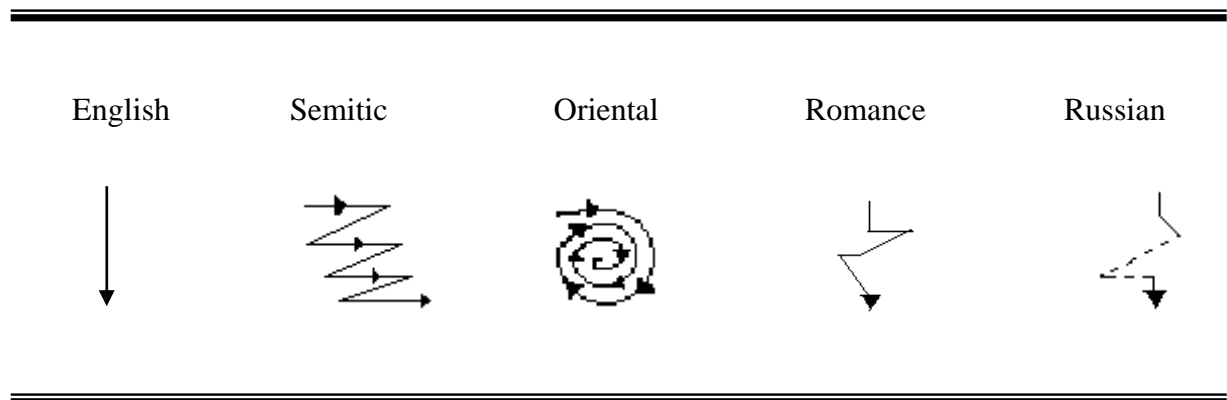
pattern paragraph approach because the approach demands the students of focus their attention on models and structures in paragraphs that serve to develop writing. In fact, this is a stage between controlled and free writing approaches since it provides a model just to guide writing. The transition from controlled writing to free writing is clearly observed in the approaches aims, one focusing on the product whereas the other on the process (for a more detailed explanation of the transition from one to another see Scott (1996), Kroll (1990) and Raimes (1983). In my view these approaches may benefit beginner writers since they are exposed to models, and they are in the constant look of how to write; however, more mature writers know that these models are not precisely the way the writing must be, but the function the genre (see section 2.5.2.1.2) conveys in the particular situation. Writers can even develop their own style within the same genre and respect its conventions.

### **2.3.2 Current Traditional Rhetoric**

This L2 writing approach is based on the principles of the current traditional paradigm and Kaplan's theory of *contrastive rhetoric* (Connor, 1996; Panetta, 2001). To understand this theory it is first essential define *rhetoric*. Oliver (1965, cited in Kaplan, 1966, p. 1) defines it as "a mode of thinking or a mode of finding all available means for the achievement of a designated end [...] it concerns itself basically with what goes on in the mind [...] with factors of analysis, data gathering, interpretation and synthesis". In other words, rhetoric deals with the mental processes that are required to accomplish a task or goal. Kaplan (1966, p.2) claims that "rhetoric varies from culture to culture and even from time to time within a given culture". According to these views, rhetoric involves cognition and thought, and it is said it is unique of each culture. Regarding culture, Connor (1996) adds that language and writing are



cultural phenomena. Thus, considering Kaplan’s perspective on rhetoric, she agrees that each language has its unique rhetorical conventions. Panetta (2001) adds that “writing strategies are culturally formed” (p.5). Thus, Kaplan (1966, p.14) declares that “different languages and their cultures have different patterns of written discourse”, in other words, each language has its unique rhetorical conventions. From this view, and based on different writings, Kaplan develops his contrastive rhetoric theory and affirms that the effect of native culture is reflected in the L2 writing. Kaplan’s studies about this theory are presented in Figure 2 where the cultural differences in writing are made evident.



**Figure 2: Patterns of Written Discourse (Kaplan, 1966, p. 15)**

The diagrams presented in the figure represent different discourse structures based on the written paragraphs of non-native English speakers. That is, the paragraphs analyzed were written in English as L2 by people from distinct cultures. Kaplan then, analyzed an explanatory paragraph of a native speaker of each language, and he concluded with his diagram. For instance, English is represented with a straight line which means writing follows a straight and forward structure. Kaplan (1966, p. 4) explains this by claiming that “the paragraph usually begins with a topic, and then by a series of subdivisions of that topic statement, each supported by example and illustrations, proceeds to develop that central idea”,

which is a “flow of ideas which occurs in a straight line from the opening sentence to the last sentence (*ibid*, p. 6). Conversely to English, Kaplan presents a more elaborated writing organization in the *oriental* written discourse. This diagram shows a spiral starting from the outside to the inside. This follows according to Kaplan an *indirection* [indirect] *approach*. That is, the topic of the paragraph is never stated directly; the development of it turns and turns “in a widening gyre” (*ibid*, p.10) leading the topic to a wider view and farther from that which was written in the first sentence. It is a never ending discussion since there is no main point in deep discussion, but many in the same paragraph.

His theory has been controversial since he published his study (Connor, 1996; Panetta, 2001; Cahill, 2003). Connor (1996) comments on how this theory can be literally and simplistic interpreted if read by an inexperienced reader. Novices “reading the article assume that all writers of a particular language compose all their writings in the organizational pattern described by Kaplan [and even mean that] a writing reflects a thinking pattern. In other words, the Chinese write in circles; therefore, they must think in circles” (*ibid*, p. 31). This is an unfortunate interpretation of Kaplan’s (1966) theory since he meant that the structure that an explanatory paragraph usually follows is represented by the diagrams he suggests (Figure 2), but that does not imply that such diagrams represent the thinking of the writer. Connor and McCagg (1983, p. 259) suggest that “thought patterns specific to the learner's native language or culture may be evident in the organizational patterns of information found in samples of ESL [...] writing”. The emphasis is then given to the organization of the information, how it is structured and represented in language.

Another criticism to Kaplan is that he drew his conclusions about language structure based on some style manuals rather than data from actual writing (Brown, 1994; Leki, 1991) and

some from translations (Kaplan, 1966) in the languages he studied; this fact makes his theory reductive to particular language genres and not real language use. In addition, it is important to mention that he worked at the paragraph level considering only the expository style; thus, generalizations cannot be made about writing patterns in the diverse cultures. Read Connor (1996) and Panetta (2001) for a more complete discussion on the arguments for and against Kaplan's theory.

Based on Kaplan's (1966) ideas, contrastive rhetoric is an approach to writing. According to Kroll (1990) in this approach writing is concerned with the logical construction and arrangement of discourse forms, paying attention to paragraphs and essays not only on their structure and elements, but also on their purposes. In fact, Kroll keeps claiming that writing is basically "a matter of arrangement, of fitting sentences and paragraphs into prescribed patterns" (p.13). People construct and organize their communication in different ways according to their cultures; this is why writing in a L2 becomes a critical process that focuses on forms. However, the logical construction of writing goes beyond that of a given model because students have to reflect about its construction, form and content. Thus, Leki (1991) suggests that the students' native language needs to be related to rhetorical traditions, so students understand the construction and rhetorical conventions of the L2. Therefore, in this guidance process, students will develop their knowledge, criticism, and appreciation for writing in a new language focusing on the form as well as on the purpose and content, and with these, construct their own writing identity.

Based on Kaplan's theory these are the possible assumptions regarding the contrastive rhetoric as an approach to writing. For further understanding on this theory and its application and implications to writing, see Leki (1991), Bojana (2005), Connor (1996; 2005), Kubota and Lehner (2004) and Connor and McCagg (1983).

### 2.3.3 Communicative Approach

Since the focus of this approach is essentially to communicate, it implies an interaction between the reader and the writer; that is why it is also known as the interactive approach. John (1990, cited in Reid, 1993, p. 261) claims that “the writer is involved in a dialogue with an audience in order to produce coherent communication; it is a transaction between the audience and the writer”. Due to its communicative character, this approach is usually guided to real-life tasks (Scott, 1996). Hence, the purpose and the audience are the main concerns in order to achieve communication between the reader and the writer. Raimes (1983, p. 8) supports this view by saying that “the communicative approach stresses the purpose of a piece of writing and the audience for it, by responding to the questions *why am I writing this?* And *who will read it?*” In sum, according to the cultural differences in writing conventions (a discussion on conventions and academic writing is on sections 2.3.5, 2.3.6 and 2.4.3) this approach focuses on forms following the writing purpose and audience to achieve communication.

When explaining the communicative model, Chapelle, Grabe, and Berns (1993, cited in Grabe and Kaplan, 1996) consider the context, situation, participants, setting, language performance, knowledge, and experience as crucial features to communicate properly and accurately. All these features are elements of the communicative competence which includes grammatical competence, discourse competence, strategic competence and sociolinguistic competence (Canale and Swain, 1980). Thus, this model includes the communicative competence elements which need to be taught to L2 writers to socialize and convey meaning through their writing.

### **2.3.4 Process Approach**

This is one of the approaches largely discussed by many linguists. Brown (1994, p. 320) introduces it by explaining that process is “the means to the end, the way to achieve something”. From this perspective, Zamel (1983, cited in Kroll, 1990, p. 15) states that writers use their own ways to compose, so this is a “non- linear, exploratory, and generative process”. It is the writer who creates their own strategies and develops their writing individually. Kroll (1990, p. 15) supports this view by claiming that students develop their own writing strategies with ample time and “according to the type of task, situation, discourse community, and socio-cultural setting in which they are involved”. Thus, students’ writing is a process which is developed considering the communicative functions of the writing piece. This does not mean that in this approach or the communicative one, writers are explicitly taught the elements of communicative competence, yet they consider the communicative function of the paper to write and based on that, they develop particular strategies. From this, Richards (1990, p. 104) maintains that in the process approach, “students have control of how they write”. This individual and gradual writing strategies development is indeed what differentiates the process and the communicative approaches’ goals.

Since the development of writing strategies is individual, some linguists agree with this approach as a creative, individual, independent, original, genuine discovery process in which students develop their writing (Kroll, 1990; Johns, 1990, cited in Tribble, 1996; Raimes, 1983). Raimes (1983) also adds that students need guidance and feedback on the writing content so that they can improve it. In fact, Williams (1998, p. 45) points out the idea that “students improve writing by being helped to master a range of behaviors associated with effective composition”. This guidance and feedback stage is included in the whole writing

process. Actually, this is one of the stages of the writing process model. The main idea of this perspective is that writing is developed by students' own creation, development, and discovery of strategies by several non-linear stages.

In fact, Williams (1998, p. 54) points out that “the process model proposes that a finished paper is the result of the complex interaction of activities that include several stages of development: prewriting, drafting, pausing, reading, revising, editing, and publishing”. While the author above proposes seven stages, Murray (1980, cited in Richards, 1990) distinguishes only three main stages in writing: rehearsing (finding a topic), drafting (getting ideas), and revising (evaluating). The number of stages is optional, it varies according to what linguists consider essential. However, most authors share the three main stages: pre-writing, drafting and revising. Raimes (1985, cited in Tribble, 1996, p. 39) then summarizes these three stages and presents a model for the process of writing. This model is seen in Figure 3.



**Figure 3: Raimes' Writing Process Model (1985, cited in Tribble, 1996, p. 39)**

As the figure shows, the text always has the possibility of moving forward and backward in the process. The stages considered can occur any time, and as many times as needed. In fact,

Raimes (1985, cited in Tribble 1996) emphasizes that “writing does not follow a neat sequence of planning, organizing, writing and then revising (...) it is recursive”. Thus, the process of writing is carried out in many stages which respond to the writers’ needs. Hence, writing is considered a recursive process of several necessary stages.

### **2.3.5 Product Approach/Genre Approach**

Genres are “ways in which people ‘get things done’ through their use of language in particular contexts” (Paltridge, as cited in Johns, Bawarshi, Hyland, Paltridge, Reiff, and Tardy, 2006, p. 1). Genres are socially approved according to the context where they are developed and sensitive to the purpose and the relationship between the writer and the audience. Since a genre responds to particular communicative purposes, Swales (1981, 1985, 1990, cited in Bathia, 1993, p. 13) defines genre as a “recognizable communicative event characterized by a set of communicative purposes”. In other words, genre is a text type which fulfills particular purposes according to the context in which they are developed. It can be observed that this approach focuses not only on the reader and the purpose of writing in order to communicate, but also on the type of text to write and convey communication within a certain context. Because of the focus on the text type, the genre approach is also known as the product approach.

Contrary to the process approach, some linguists argue that the final product is the important aspect in writing. Nunan (1991, p. 86) affirms that the focus of this approach is “on the end result of the learning process”. Similarly, Richards (1990) and Williams (1998) express the students’ final products as more important than the process. Richards (1990) adds that the product will be achieved through the practicing of structures of pre-established

patterns. Brown (1994, p. 320) also holds this view that “composition meets certain standards [...], reflects accurate grammar, and is organized in conformity with what the audience would consider to be conventional”. Furthermore, Reid (1993, p. 20) proposes that the concepts of “thesis statement, topic sentence, paragraph unity, and development of paragraphs by patterns or models” are important in evaluating the final product. Actually, Williams (1998, p. 47) supports this perspective and points out that “teaching writing is teaching mechanics, punctuation, subject-verb agreement, spelling, and correct usage”. Thus, this approach considers writing as a pattern-guided process.

It is important to notice that Brown’s (1994) previous idea underlines the relationship of language conventions and what the audience expects to read. He takes into account these two elements as decisive in the final product. It is the same case with Tribble (1996, p. 46), who points out that this approach focuses “on the reader, and emphasizes the constraints of form and content to match a social purpose”. In sum, the considerations of the content, style, language conventions, and audience are crucial in the development of guided-pattern products. This approach is of great importance for the theoretical basis to develop the analysis of conclusions which is our genre under study. Section 2.4.3 presents the approaches to develop genre analysis and I will be referring back to this section.

### **2.3.6 English for Specific Purposes (ESP)/English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and Writing Across the Curriculum Approaches (WAC)**

Another perspective of writing approaches it as a social-academic process. The *EAP* and *WAC* approach and model are also considered because writing a thesis, which is the genre under analysis, is a way of socializing with an academic community. Kroll (1990, p. 17)



claims that academic writing is “the production of prose that will be acceptable at an American academic institution and learning to write, is part of becoming socialized to the academic community”. Hence, writing is studied as a process of academic socialization. John (1990, cited in Reid 1993, p. 21) maintains the same view that “writing is a social act in a specific context”. For this reason, Silva and Leki (1990, cited in Scott, 1996, p. 146) claim that the writing tasks designed in the EAP approach are specific to “teach students to write prose that will be acceptable in the American academic setting”. In fact, Brown (1994, p. 127) adds that “students are taught to deal with academic related language and subject matter”. In sum, academic writing purposes are the main concern of this approach in order to socialize with the institution and the writing patterns and/or behaviors it demands.

The WAC is the model which puts in a nutshell the principles stated in the EAP approach which comprises ESP (Dudley-Evans and Saint-John, 1998). The main concern of this model is to relate the content of the class with writing instruction in order to convey meaning (Young, 1993, Spack, 1988, cited in Grabe and Kaplan, 1996). Hence, Faigley and Hansen (1985, cited in Swales, 1990, p. 369) point out the “negotiation of meaning among writers, readers and subject matters” as the main focus to develop writing in the disciplines. In sum, this model remarks the necessity of writing instruction in the disciplines taking into consideration the content, the audience, and the writer to achieve a meaningful communication.

As previously discussed, there are different perspectives to approach writing. All the above mentioned approaches deal to a certain extent with some of the characteristics that a writer should consider, the purpose for why they write, and the type of the text they write. In the context of this research, writing is seen in an academic context as a way for the writer to

socialize with the academic community. Considering the approaches to writing, this thesis bases its analysis mainly on the *genre* approach since the focus is on the analysis of BA thesis conclusions which is the genre of my research interest. In fact, this ESP approach is also an approach to analyze genre. A discussion of this is presented in section 2.4.3.

## **2.4 Identity and Writing**

In the first section of this chapter, I made reference to the relation of literacy and identity. In this particular section I discuss *identity* and *writing*. I focus on writing since reading, the other literacy skill, is a complementary and receptive part of the process. Ivanic (1998, p. 16) points out that “the writer’s life experience, their sense of self and the reality” contribute to self identity. These features are constructed in their writing when socializing with the academic institution. This socialization process and identity construction is detailed in the following section.

### **2.4.1 Written Language and the Construction of Identity**

“Academic language socialization is the process by which individuals learn to enter into the discussions and gain access to the resources of academic disciplines through learning specialized language use and participating in academic activity settings” (Bazerman, et al. 2005, p. 8). Thus, academic socialization is carried out by means of language which can be written. This writing has to incorporate specialized language appropriate to the genre. This is because every genre has its own parameters and requirements not only in format, but also in language use according to the field, so socialization in that area is conveyed at the same time. In this socialization process, the person constructs their identity by means of productive

literacy skills. Ivanic (1998, p.16) asserts that “writing makes a particularly tangible contribution to the reflexive [projection] of the self”. Thus, the identity of the author is constructed simultaneously as they develop a piece of writing, and can consequently be analyzed within that text. This writing can be the reflection of what they read and how they read in relation to their background personal, cultural and academic schemata. Furthermore, academic life experience also plays an important role since it shapes identity. Furthermore, this is a critical process which requires cognition and mental processes as a person constantly constructs and reconstructs their identity.

#### **2.4.2 Issues of Identity in Academic Writing**

Analyzing identity is not an easy task. In the academic disciplines students are exposed to constant reading and writing tasks. “They write about and use what they read. [In turn], their writing conforms to the reading of their teachers, colleagues, and students” (Bazerman, et al., 2005, p. 7). This re-construction of the identity is constant since they are immersed in the academic situation. Besides this identity construction, students are expected to satisfy the academic conventions established in the institution. This according to Bazerman et al. (2005, p. 8) involves “language conventions, academic literacy, a much wider range of practices, skills, and interactions that bring students into intellectual engagement with knowledge, thought, and the work of professions”.

In order to approach the complexity of analyzing identity and make it easier in analysis, researchers and linguists have developed different approaches and frameworks to study writing and/ or identity. The study of writing has indeed been sectioned into different branches for its study. Because my project focuses on conclusions in students' academic

writings, I concentrate on genre studies. Thus, I detail some critical approaches to analyze genre below.

### **2.4.3 Critical Approaches to Academic Discourse: Genre in Applied Linguistics**

Since the research area I am developing this study in is AL and TESOL, this section discusses the three main approaches to the study of genre: *Systemic Functional Linguistics*, *English for Specific Purposes (ESP)* and *Genre as Social Interaction*.

According to Paltridge (1997), *Systemic Functional Linguistics* follows the framework proposed by Halliday (1994), Halliday and Hasan (1989, cited in Paltridge, 1997) and Martin (1989, cited in Paltridge, 1997). The systemic theory according to Halliday (1994, p. xiv), is “a theory of meaning as choice, by which a language, or any other semiotic system, is interpreted as networks of interlocking options”. In other words, this theory supports that general features of language are used in discourse according the user’s choice and the meaning they want to convey. For this, he claims that language has three main functions: *ideational*, *interpersonal* and *textual* (Connor, 1996) which are discussed in relation to studies on voice in section 3.3.1.1.

This theory has also other contributions, Halliday and colleagues influenced by Malinowsky’s insistence on meaning based on context of culture (genre) and context of situation, *register* (defined in section 2.5.2.1.1); follow the genre writing analysis considering three main components: *field*, *tenor* and *mode*. *Field* refers to the experiential content and nature of the social activity (management of ideas); *tenor* describes the status and role relationship between participants in the activity (management of personal relations), and *mode* deals with the role of language in the communication and the medium and channel of communication (management of discourse itself). These three “act collectively as

determinants of the text through their specification of the register” (Halliday, 1978, cited in Swales, 1990, p. 40). For instance, the participants of this research wrote a BA thesis in which the *field* is *English Language Teaching (ELT)* and *Applied Linguistics (AL)* whose contents have the format of the university requirements for a BA thesis; the *tenor* can best be described as BA students and candidates to graduate; the status they are writing is asymmetrical since they are writing for an academic audience who have a position of power over them, have more experience and hold a higher degree, that is, for their thesis advisor and committee members, yet they are probably also writing for themselves since writing a thesis is a highly personal endeavor, and in here the relationship is with the writers themselves and their identity as writers; the *mode* is then academic writing.

When doing discourse analysis, this theory contributes in two ways: the *understanding* of the text and the *evaluation* of the text. The first one deals with the linguistic analysis that explains how and why the text means what it does whereas the second one, analyses the text as effective or not for its purpose(s) and context (context of situation and context of culture) (Halliday, 1994). The systemic approach is then useful for my particular study in the two proposed ways. As a first instance, the *understanding* of the text since dealing with linguistic multiple meanings is necessary for the explanation and understanding of the features of voice (Ivanic, 1998), and when developing the conclusions genre analysis, the *evaluation* analysis considering the BA conclusions is used. Hence, the systemic functional approach is relevant for developing the text analysis that this project underlines.

A second approach to genre studies in AL is the one proposed by Swales (1990) in the *English for Specific Purposes (ESP) moves* studies. In this type of framework, he proposes rhetorical moves to analyze particular genres. A genre (defined below) is characterized by a set of communicative purposes according to the particularities of why it is written and its

context, and a move is a segment of the text which fulfills a communicative intention within the particular genre (Swales, 1990). That is, every genre has a particular structure which permits it to convey meaning and fulfill the communicative function of the genre. Since this approach is known as *ESP*, the areas of study have been in English in academic and professional settings (Paltridge, 1997). Swales mainly focuses his studies on introductions to research articles. However, this was the trigger to develop studies in different genres such as abstracts (Graetz, 1985; Salager-Meyer, 1992, cited in Paltridge, 1997), job applications, sales promotions letters, and legislative documents (Bathia, 1993), the graduate seminar (Weissberg, 1993, cited in Paltridge, 1997), results sections of research articles (McKinlay, 1984 and Peng, 1987, cited in Paltridge, 1997; Hopkins and Dudley-Evans, 1988; Brett, 1994), and the introduction and discussion sections of dissertations (Dudley-Evans, 1986, 1989, cited in Paltridge, 1997). As previously stated, the study or framework of conclusions as genre has not been explored or fully developed and published.

The third approach to genre studies focuses mainly on written communication (in composition studies and professional communication) in which the genre is considered to be a social action. Because of these characteristics, I will refer to this approach as *Genre social interaction*. Paltridge (1997), cites Bazerman (1988), Bizzell (1992), Benkenkotter and Huckin (1995), and Miller (1984) as the principle researchers who have developed or influenced this approach, which explores the interaction between the writer and the social group in which he or she is involved. Some elements of this approach are incorporated into my analytical framework because it is useful in analyzing how writers interact with readers as they place their voice within the academic field. Here, I must mention that these are frameworks for genre studies, yet as I am also analyzing voice as an expression of identity within the text, I

will definitely combine these approaches in order to construct a framework appropriate for my study.

## **2.5 Discourse and Identity**

As I mentioned in the previous section, a substantial amount of work has been done on genre studies (Swales, 1990), yet it is challenging to do a genre study considering identity features in writing since not only the surface organization and text structure are considered, but also internal factors that reflect writer's identity are included for analysis. Indeed, some of genre analysis approaches deal with discourse and identity. For instance, Halliday's (1994) functional grammar, and Fairclough's (1989) language as social representation combine elements of discourse, written or spoken, and identity. However, before going into the details of these frameworks which share discourse and identity element, it is first necessary to define discourse and identity.

### **2.5.1 Defining Discourse and Identity**

The term *discourse* refers to the modes of using language; it could be oral, written and multimodal –a combination of elements of spoken and written texts. Hall (2005) affirms that discourse includes not only syntactic or literal semantics of language, but also the interlocutors' intentions, context of use and the organization of the text as a whole. Hence, discourse is the study of the text as a whole piece of language. To complement this view, Fairclough (1995, p.73) defines discourse as “the dialectical relation of structure/ event, which is shaped by structures, but also contributes to shaping and reshaping them, to reproducing and transforming them”. I believe that Ivanic (1998, p. 37) eloquently sums up these definitions when she says that “language and discourse refer to language in-its-social-context”. That is,

discourse seen as a mode of language needs to be analyzed considering the social context in which it takes place.

Taking into account this social view of discourse and its study, it is important to consider the individual. Each person has their own way to use discourse; they construct strategies to express what they want according to the rules of the discourse community. In this sense, I can say that the person constructs their own identity which makes them members of that community. In fact, West (1992, cited in Norton, 1997, p. 410) relates *identity* to “the desire for recognition, the desire for affiliation, and the desire for security and safety”. In other words, identity is what people construct socially according to the way they want to be seen and accepted in different contexts. To this, Norton (1997, p. 410) adds that identity refers to “how people understand their relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how people understand their possibilities for the future”. In my view, identity is the expression of the self in interpersonal relations as well as in the discourse type and in the social context. This is actually what linguists call the interpersonal, textual and ideational language functions (Scollon and Wong Scollon, 1999; Ivanic, 1998; Halliday, 1994). Hence, I can assume that discourse encapsulates the expression of the self considering these three language functions. The study of discourse and the elements of discourse are broadly and specialized studied in the area of discourse analysis which I address below.

### **2.5.2 Overview of Discourse Analysis**

*Discourse analysis* is “the sub-discipline of linguistics which studies the discourse level of language and its relation with socio-cultural contexts, language users’ roles and intentions, and ideological aspects of language use in different domains” (Hall, 2005, p.316). In other words, discourse analysis is interested in the function and purpose of a discourse



piece. Because of the different functions and purposes of discourse, this linguistic area has been subdivided into branches according to the purpose of study: Applied Discourse Analysis, (ADA), Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), and Mediated Discourse Analysis (MDA). For this particular research, I will approach the study of discourse from the view of ADA.

### **2.5.2.1 Applied Discourse Analysis**

Applied discourse analysis as its name suggests is applied to particular settings. They could be academic, educational, legal, and medical among many others as long as these comprise a social area or problem. Gunnarsson (1997, p. 285) points out that the focus of ADA is “on language and communication in real life situations, and the goal is to analyze, understand or solve problems relating to practical action in real life contexts”. That is, ADA studies language used in real and authentic contexts. Since Applied Linguistics is “the study of language and linguistics in relation to practical problems” (Richards et al., 1992, p. 19), AL and ADA have been integrated in studies (Gunnarsson, 1997). This is indeed the case of my study in which both AL and ADA are involved and complement each other to the understanding and development of the research. I am analyzing then, written discourse in use at an academic level based on the works of Fairclough (1989), Halliday (1994), Swales (1990), Ivanic and Camps (2001).

#### **2.5.2.1.1 Register**

Having pointed out the areas to approach this study, it is convenient to define *register* and settle the type of register to analyze in this study. Register refers to “a contextual category correlating groupings of linguistic features with recurrent situational features” (Gregory and Carroll, cited in Swales, 1990, p. 40). In other words, register deals with language variation

according to the functions it serves. It is commonly seen as the variations, styles, of writing according to the context. Connor (1996, p. 127) agrees with this view and defines register as the “overall correlation of linguistic features with appropriate contextual and situational features, usually on a continuum of stylistic formality-informality”. Thus, register relates to the linguistic features (e.g. lexis and grammar) used according to the context and situation in which writing takes place. The register that this study works on is thesis academic writing in AL areas at a university level. Register is indeed an essential element in studies of genre, yet it is usually confused with the concept of genre itself; thus, genre is defined below and a general distinction between genre and register is then established. For deeper discussion on the distinction of genre and register, see Ventola (1984).

#### **2.5.2.1.2 Genre**

*Genre* understood as “the use of language associated with a particular social act” (Titscher, Meyer, Wodak and Vetter, 2000, p. 148) is usually studied in written discourse. A genre fulfills a communicative social purpose. Swales (cited in Bathia, 1993, p. 13), the main contributor to genre studies, defines genre as “a recognizable communicative event characterized by a set of communicative purpose(s) identified and mutually understood by members of the professional or academic community in which it regularly occurs”. In other words, *genre* relates to the schematic structure of a given text (Connor, 1996) to satisfy a particular social purpose considering the context of culture. Since genres satisfy social purposes, they are dynamic and negotiated social texts (Connor, 1996; Johns, 2008a) which are constantly evolving to satisfy current needs in the particular community.

In an attempt to make a clear distinction between *genre* and *register*, Connor (1996, p. 127) refers to Swales’ genre definition and claims that it differs from register in the sense that

genre “sets structural conditions on the different parts of a text, such as its beginning, body and ending”, conversely, register focuses on the situational context at the linguistic level. For example, “the language of a scientific reporting often (but not always) represents a different register from a newspaper columnist, but the two genres employ quite different schematic structures imposed by the expert members of their discourse communities” (*ibid*, p. 127).

As previously discussed, a text has “an ideational function through its representation of experience and representation of the world. Text produces social interaction between participants in discourse and therefore it displays an interpersonal function” (Titscher et al., 2000, p. 148). These functions, ideational and interpersonal functions relate each other in terms of language organization according to the register of the text, which is at the same time part of the genre. Genre goes beyond the meta-functions of language. It comprises the context of culture in which the discourse is developed. In this study I analyze how the interpersonal, ideational, and textual functions are expressed in the particular genre of the conclusions chapter of the BA thesis. The text mode to analyze is going to be written in an academic context, and the register is then academic writing. For a better understanding of the genre under study, conclusions, the following section discusses the main characteristics and studies behind conclusions’ analysis.

#### **2.5.2.1.2.1 The Conclusions Genre**

As mentioned in section 2.4.3, Swales was the initiator of the frameworks to genre studies and his focus was on introductions, from this, many other focuses on genre took place (Paltridge, 1997), yet the *conclusion* section has not received that attention (Peacock, 2002; Brett, 1994). This is because the framework for introductions, which has been largely adopted and adapted in many introductions studies, does not apply for conclusions, whose framework

is still in construction, since both sections' communicative functions are different (Hopkins and Dudley-Evans, 1988). In addition, Peacock (2002), Bunton (2005) and Yang and Allison (2003) noted that the conclusion section is normally addressed as *discussion*, *results* or *conclusions*, and sometimes a paper may have two of them, discussion or results and conclusion (Yang and Allison, 2003). Due to these characteristics of this genre type, there have not been definite standards for a framework for analyzing conclusions (Peacock, 2002; Swales, 1990). Thus, it is of utmost importance for this thesis to define how we refer to conclusions along the research.

As already mentioned in the previous section, *genre* is “a class of texts characterized by specific communicative function that tends to produce distinctive structural patterns” (Holmes, 1997, p. 322), the communicative function of conclusions as genre is to close a paper; it is a form of closure (Yang and Allison, 2003). Brett (1994) points out that the conclusions section is where the findings are interpreted and commented upon, yet Yang and Allison (2003) suggest that further research is necessary in order to refer to discussion and conclusion as equivalent, and therefore, establish whether or not their functions are similar or different. In addition, for some researchers, conclusions are just a mirror image of the introduction (Swales, 1990; West, 1982, cited in Yang and Allison, 2003). That is, if the introduction's function is to open a paper, conclusions have the opposite function, to close, and this last one follows the reverse order of introductions. Taking into account the unclear nature of conclusion as a genre (Prior, 2001, Atkinson, 2001, Bitchener and Basturkmen, 2006; Yang and Allison, 2003), in this particular research the notion of conclusion is worked as the closure section of a paper. However, it is also relevant to point out that the framework for the conclusions of a paper is different according to the genre under analysis. For instance, a research article has a different communicative purpose than a sales promotion letter. The

genres are different, and therefore, their concluding sections are different. Bhatia (1993) suggests conclusions to be a subgenre since the main genre is the thesis, yet I am only using the general genre to refer to conclusions for practicality of terminology.

## **2.6 Intertextuality and Identity**

The term *intertextuality* suggested first by Kristeva (1980, cited in Paltridge, 1997, p. 58) refers to “all texts as being constituted out of, and understood in relation to, other texts in the same social formation”. In other words, intertextuality relates to how a text takes meaning in relation to other texts of the same kind. This is indeed supported by Lemke’s (cited in Paltridge, 1997, p. 58) words about intertextuality: “we make sense of every word, every utterance, or act against the background of (some) other words, utterances, acts of a similar kind”. This suggests the analysis of a given text in relation to other texts of the same genre. Kristeva’s ideas on intertextuality take its roots from Volosinov’s (1986, cited in Bazerman, et al. 2005, p. 96) ideas who argues that “language exists only in individual utterances located in particular moments, histories, and relations; one cannot properly understand language apart from its instances of use, embedded within many surrounding utterances” To prove his view, he does a technical text analysis considering linguistic systems and direct and indirect quotations with diverse same type texts; and he found that “relation among texts is in large part organized by genre within activity systems (Volosinov, 1986, cited in Bazerman, p. 96). From this, I can say that intertextuality then refers to the study of how a text is constructed and structured in relation to other texts within the same genre. The texts considered in a genre need to share similar characteristics, and it is there when intertextuality occurs. Fairclough (1992, cited in Ivanic, 1998, p. 47), agrees with this view and refers to intertextuality as “all the ways in which specific text relates to other texts in any way”. There is however, still much more to

say about intertextuality in writing, for further discussion of this see Porter (1986) and Selzer (1993). In this particular research, we are talking about intertextuality, where the text and the context are analyzed in terms of other texts of the same type within a specific genre. Thus, intertextuality is relevant for the study of thesis conclusions as (sub) genre since this thesis seeks the analysis of similar characteristics of conclusions genre which will permit the construction of such framework.

Having defined the general concept of intertextuality and how it is going to be used in this study, it is now important to turn towards the relation of intertextuality and identity. For this, Fairclough (1992, cited in Ivanic, 1998) distinguishes between two types of intertextuality: *manifest intertextuality* and *interdiscursivity*. The first one relates to discourse representation by means of quotations, paraphrasing, copying, irony and presupposition whereas interdiscursivity deals with “intertextual relations to conventions” (p. 48). That is, the first one deals with existing texts, and the second one refers to a new type of text where writers construct their own discourse but following the conventions of the genre. *Interdiscursivity* is then a central concept to understand the relationship between intertextuality and identity. At this point, Faigley (1986, cited in Ivanic, 1998, p. 84) affirms: “a social view of writing moves beyond the expressivist contention that the individual discovers the self through language and beyond the cognitivist position that an individual constructs reality through language. In a social view, any effort to write about the self or reality always comes in relation to previous texts”. This quote relates to the definition of intertextuality to how writing as a social act also implies the construction of the self in texts of the same genre. That is, writers construct their identity within a particular genre in the way they develop interdiscursivity and interact with the discourse in construction. The construction of interdiscursivity permits then the writers to construct their own identity into that discourse.

### 2.6.1 Identity Features

I have been discussing along this chapter the concept of identity in relation to the productive literacy skill since the main focus of this research lies on the analysis of identity features reflected in students' academic writing. In order to develop the study, it is then crucial to set the features to be analyzed, and define how their concept is going to be understood and used in this particular research.

Identity, as defined in section 2.5.1 is the expression of the self in interpersonal relations as well as in the discourse type and in the social context. Along this chapter, we have also pointed out that the discourse type that this research works on is written academic discourse, and the social context is a public university where students major in the area of ELT. We have two main concepts, yet in order to analyze identity it is now necessary to define the *self*. The self as claimed by Matsuda (2001) has been a largely debated issue. He actually shares how it has been a struggle for himself when referring: “being *myself* does not seem to me to mean representing the *self* that I construct when I talk to [...] friends or the one I construct when I am with my teachers [...] I constructed and represented my *self* in various ways because of the socially sanctioned values and codes of behavior” (Matsuda, 2001, pp. 38-39). As seen the *self* incorporates several aspects of identity, yet I must focus them in our area of study: academic writing. For which, Ivanic (1997, cited in Matsuda, 2001, p. 41) recognizes four main aspects of writer's identity: “autobiographical self, discorsal self, self as author, and possibilities for self-hood”.

As seen, writer's identity has several aspects to study, yet to achieve the purpose stated for this research it is necessary to limit such identity features to analyze in writing. Voice (defined below) analysis is underlined as one of the main purposes since it is one of the major components of identity and all writing contains voice (Ivanic and Camps, 2001; Prior, 2001).

Therefore, identity is going to be analyzed by means of analyzing voice. In fact, two of the aspects to analyze the *self* (discoursal self and self as author) proposed by Ivanic and Camps (2001) correspond to the notion of voice, which is discussed below.

### **2.6.1.1 Voice**

The notion of *voice* in relation to academic writing has been a largely, yet relatively newly discussed issue (Matsuda and Tardy, 2007; Prior, 2001; Matsuda, 2001; Hirvela and Belcher, 2001; Ramanathan and Kaplan, 1996). Prior's (2001) study presents a detailed account of the socio-historic account of voice; I do not intend to summarize his exhaustive work (see Prior, 2001 for details), yet I constantly refer to his work while explaining the concept of *voice* and how it has evolved. Voice has been approached from three main perspectives: voice as a personal and *individualistic discourse system*, as a *social discourse system* and as a *personal social discourse system*.

As pointed out, voice is a significant component of identity, and as identity refers to the expression of the self, voice is then unique to the individual (Atkinson, 2001). This fact can not be denied if viewed from the assumption of individuality as the fundamental and main characteristic of the self since every human being is different to others. Thus, voice is considered as personal and proper of each individual. However, if we consider that human beings are social by nature, and belong to different social groups, we will be referring to diverse identities corresponding to those different social groups an individual belongs to such as family, friends, teachers, colleagues, co-workers in their respective context: home, school, neighborhood, political party, and considering status, age, gender among others. These are cultural characteristics that are reflected in our several voices (Harris, 1992, cited in Prior,



2001), and these give voice a social purposed characteristic mingled with the individual's unique features (Matsuda, 2001; Atkinson, 2001; Stapleton, 2002).

This social view of voice is indeed the second main approach to voice. Approaching voice from this perspective, Prior (2001, p. 60) comments that voice as social notion is “performed in practice when people speak as members of some group –projecting what they hope will be recognizable voice of an ethnic or regional group, of a male or female, of a child or old person, of people who are well educated or not, of people who have some specialized knowledge”. His words actually support what has already been stated by Harris (1997, cited in Prior, 2001). In this sense we are talking about collective voices which imply the complex identities, social groups, topics, discourse type and related features (Prior, 2001). Thus, since a collective voice implies the setting where the discourse takes place, we can analyze voice in the different forms of intertextuality. Hence, Bazerman (1994, cited in Prior, 2001, p. 61) claims that voice “may stretch across genres, genre systems”. It is in here where the relevance of voice analysis considering intertextuality, serves my research purpose of analyzing voice in the BA thesis conclusions genre (the *discoursal self* as named by Ivanic and Camps, 2001), yet as our purpose is also to analyze the features each individual uses to construct their writer identity in the academic community (the *self as author*) I approach voice from the *individual-social discourse system* approach.

This approach to voice is actually the one that Prior (2001) proposes and discusses within his article. He argues “voice is simultaneously personal and social because discourse is understood as fundamentally historical, situated, and indexical” (Prior, 2001, p. 55). That is, voice is constructed by the individual considering their background and experiences according to the context and discourse type within the social situation where they are involved. The process of constructing voice is both, individual and social. Matsuda (2001, p. 39) shares this

view and actually explains the way he found *his voice*: “I came to understand that *finding my own voice* was not the process of discovering the *true self* that was within myself [...]; it was the process of negotiating my socially and discursively constructed identity with the expectation of the reader as I perceived it” (emphasis in original). These lines are clear enough in the attempt to explain voice as individual-social discourse system. Thus, Matsuda (2001, p. 40) defines voice as “the amalgamative effect of the use of discursive and non-discursive features that language users choose, deliberately or otherwise, from socially available yet ever-changing repertoires”. In other words, voice as part of the individual identity is present in the production of language considering the context where it takes place.

As seen, defining voice has been an issue, and researchers refer to it in relation to writing. For exemplifying this relation of voice and academic writing, Matsuda and Tardy (2007, p. 235) developed a study examining the construction of an author’s discursive identity in the field of rhetoric and composition. They actually found that voice plays a role in academic writing. This is indeed supported to what Ivanic and Camps (2001) and Prior (2001) already pointed out, there are no voiceless writing. Therefore, the analysis of voice in regards to the participant’s academic writing in the particular BA conclusion genre supports to the study of this writing and identity feature and at the same time provides a contribution to studies on voice.

### **2.6.1.2 Gender**

The previous section discussed the concept of voice in regards to academic writing and as a main component of identity. Along this account, it was noticed that identity as well as voice consider other features such as gender. Gender is also included in this thesis’ analysis, since language features are more observable between males and females. However, it is

important to mention that I do not intend to develop a whole analysis on gender, but just point out the differences of voice expression between males and females. Thus, the gender study is limited to comparative analysis based on voice features.

*Gender* refers to socially marked sexual variation (Spolsky, 1998). That is, when the word gender is heard, the sexual difference between men and women is what is usually thought of, especially those differences in the physical aspect. However, gender goes beyond that; it is not just the physical characteristics that distinguish them. In fact, Coulmas (1997, p.128) argues that gender concerns “the psychological, social and cultural differences between males and females”. Supporting this view, Shepard (1996, p.315) says that gender refers to “the expectations and behavior associated with a sex category within a society”. This means that gender is what differentiates women and men in their way of thinking, acting and their roles on society. Considering this view, studies on gender and discourse have found that there are differences in the way women and men use language (West, Lazar, and Kramarae, 1997; Cameron, 2004). They concluded that the use of language is then socially constructed and depends on the situation where discourse takes place. Since the situations can be diverse and the discourse has different modality (written, oral and multimodal), the study of gender has also taken place in particular genres, where the situation as well as the discourse modality are specified (Herring and Paolillo, 2006).

## **2.7 The Theoretical bases for this Study**

Main approaches and theories to discourse and academic writing as well as genre studies have been discussed. Yet, I now sum up the ones that I am using for achieving the purpose of this research. Regarding the approaches and models to academic writing, the WAC model and *ESP/EAP* approaches are used since the writing to be analyzed is specific of an

academic context, and it implies socialization with the university; however, the study also implies some considerations of the *genre* approach as I focus on a particular genre analysis, conclusions.

From the *approaches to genre analysis*, this thesis uses the model proposed by Halliday (1994) and his *functional grammar* applied to studies on *voice* in academic writing developed by Ivanic (1998), Ivanic and Camps (2001), Prior (2001), and Matsuda (2001) as well as the one on *ESP/genre* moves worked by Swales (1990). This last one is needed to explain the conclusions as genre being studied (Hopkins and Dudley-Evans, 1988). The genre analysis also covers some elements of the theory proposed in Bazerman's (1988, cited in Paltridge, 1997) *genre as social interaction approach* since this research focuses in the way the writer interacts and expresses their identity on the academic field.

Regarding the analysis of *conclusions*, the frameworks proposed by Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988), Bunton (2005) and Holmes (1997) are of great help since my focus is on analyzing BA thesis conclusions and their analyses are on conclusions of M.A thesis and/or PhD dissertations. However, as there is no research (at least non-published yet) in the analysis of BA conclusions, their frameworks support the one I am developing. Finally, features of *identity* regarding *voice* are approached in terms of the presence of *intertextuality* (referring to Fairclough's, (1992) distinction) and the *individual-social discourse system* approach in which we already placed Ivanic's (1997, cited in Matsuda, 2001, p. 41) distinction of the two aspects of writer's identity (in section 2.5.1.1) to analyze voice (discoursal self and self as author). Considering *gender*, the general understanding of gender perceptions on voice are considered since no analysis on gender per se is carried out; the study is limited to gender distinction regarding voice expression.

### **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

This research is guided by a qualitative tradition. It is a descriptive inquiry based on four case studies regarding writers' identity by means of voice analysis and gender differences on voice expression in written discourse. Case studies, as mentioned by Yin (1994, cited in Barone, 2004), gather different source of evidence such as papers, interviews and recordings to develop the analysis. Indeed, this research encloses the analysis of students' academic writing of the conclusions of their BA thesis as well as interviews to the participants after their thesis defense, and a video recording of their professional exam. The purpose of these instruments is for analyzing identity features and they are detailed in section 3.2 of this chapter.

Since this thesis purpose is threefold, it also considers a discourse analysis methodology for the analysis of the writings. Goldman and Wiley (2004, p. 64) claim that this is "a method for describing the ideas and the relations among the ideas that are present in a text". That is, this methodology permits an analysis of the structure of the texts, and as the authors keep saying, such structure depends on the genre in analysis. The particular genre of this research is the concluding chapter of undergraduate theses. A detailed explanation is on Sections 2.5.2.1.2.1 and 3.2.1. One of the reasons I chose BA thesis conclusions chapter as focus is that there is no framework, and almost null research on conclusions analysis (Paltridge, 1997; Hopkins and Dudley-Evans, 1988; Bunton, 2005). Thus, in order to propose a framework for analyzing conclusions, I consider the work from previous genre analysis frameworks on M.A thesis' and PhD dissertations' conclusions (Hopkins and Dudley-Evans, 1988; Bunton, 2005). Section 3.3.1 of this chapter presents a discussion on the considerations to the proposed framework.

For a better understanding of the methodology applied into this particular context, this chapter contains, in section 3.1, a description of the writers who participated in this research. Then, a description of the materials and instruments used to collect the data for the study is included in section 3.2. Afterwards, an account on explaining and analyzing voice features in writing is presented in section 3.3, as well as a discussion on the adapted framework for analyzing conclusions. In section 3.4, I list the procedures followed to carry out the data collection and analysis. Finally, I include in this chapter a 3.5 section that provides the limitations faced during the research.

### **3.1 Participants**

This is a case study research where two male and two female cases were analyzed. The participants were chosen considering that they had finished their English written BA thesis in TESOL and AL studies and they were about to present their thesis defense. This selection was done on purpose since the participants are much involved in the process of writing a thesis and defending it. The period for choosing the participants considered those students who presented the thesis defense between August 2007 and February 2008. The selection of the participants also considered the fact of having me as the thesis director of two of the research participants, and since I am also the researcher of this thesis, my analysis could have been subjectively seen. This last claim follows the assumption that a thesis director influences the work of their students, so the other two participants had a different advisor than me. Two male and two female participants were chosen so a comparison on gender voice expression could be made, since the gender study is merely comparative and based on voice features.

The ages of the participants range between 24 and 29 years old, and they studied the BA in EFL and TESOL/AL at a public University in the center of the Mexican Republic. The specific characteristics of each participant are included in the results section (particularly section 4.2 when explaining voice of each case study) for a better understanding of the case and identity expression.

### **3.2 Materials and Instruments**

The materials used in this research are the four students' BA thesis conclusions section, and the instruments are transcripts of interviews, and recordings of each thesis defense. These materials and instruments are detailed below.

#### **3.2.1 BA Thesis Conclusions**

The conclusions sections of the four participants' BA thesis are the materials to analyze voice expression of each writer, and to develop the framework. Conclusions are chosen for this analysis since this is the section where the writer posts their reflections, point of view and assessment of the research (McKinlay, 1984, Peng, 1987, Dudley-Evans, 1986, cited in Paltridge, 1997; see section 2.4.2.1.2.1), and therefore, the writer's voice as author (the *self* as author) as well as their voice in the text (*discoursal self*) could be analyzed (Ivanic, 1998; see section 2.6.1.1). The conclusions are obtained directly from the original sources, that is, from the thesis with the students' consent.

#### **3.2.2 Interviews**

As a first instrument, surveys took place. It was face-to face interview with a semi-structured format. That is, I interviewed the participants personally and face to face following

questions previously written, and considering new ones if the data gathered was relevant for the research (Leavitt, 2001). Surveys were chosen to analyze writers' perceptions of their academic identity, how they manage to express their voice in the academic situation of writing a thesis and how the academic environment influences this and/or shapes the expression of their identity in writing. I first designed this instrument, and it was checked by my thesis advisor for validity and reliability. Then, it was piloted with one student interviewed three days after presenting her thesis defense. The instrument was finally validated and finalized. The instrument consists of two sections: section one gathers general information from all participants regarding voice in writing, and section two is more specific on particular and individualized questions to each participant according to their topics. Section one consists of 12 questions and Section two varies between one or two questions per participant. This different number of questions was based on the type of research they did. The interview questions are presented in Appendix A. Each interview was administered once the students had presented their thesis defense, since it is a retrospection exercise. They were applied within the space of one week after their professional exam due to the experience being still fresh. The appointments for the interviews were scheduled before each student's professional exam with their previous consent. The data gathered from these interviews is presented in quotes of each participant's answer in the corresponded section of Chapter Four.

An interview was also administered to the other thesis director in order to compare his view in the students writing of thesis with that of the students'. This interview consisted of 13 questions relating to students writing and their main constraints when writing the thesis, the participants' investment in their project, his tutoring and requirements for the students to write the thesis. The questions of this interview are shown in Appendix B. Extracts from the



interviews are presented in Chapter Four to contribute and support the point in discussion. The conventions to present such extracts follow Ivanic's (1998, pp. 120-121) conventions.

### **3.2.3 Video-Recordings of the Professional Exam**

The information gathered from the interviews was also complemented by recording the students' professional exams, with their permission previously given. The recordings covered the student's thesis presentation as well as the defense of the same; that is, the presentation of their topic as well as the committee questioning and student's answers. This was done to analyze the similarities of their answers in the defense stage with the ones obtained in the interview. As a member of the committee, I actually asked questions regarding their own identity as writers in the development of the thesis. Besides, the examination was recorded since other members of the jury might ask questions relevant to identity and voice in regards to professionalization. I, as a participant observer, took some notes to complement the recording, and I included them in the analysis whenever I considered them worthy and pertinent to mention.

### **3.3 Data Analysis**

The data gathered was analyzed according to my main research purposes: analysis of conclusions' framework, voice analysis, and gender differences in voice expression. For a better understanding of each analysis, this section explains how and why such analyses were developed in that way.

### 3.3.1 The Conclusions Framework

One of the purposes of this research is to propose a framework for developing further research on genre-discourse analysis on BA thesis conclusions. Thus, this section discusses the most relevant works and contributions for setting the bases for developing such framework. As mentioned in section 2.5.2.1.2.1, the conclusions genre has had only recent focus on its study and therefore no framework has been established for its analysis. Indeed, most of the studies that work conclusions address the genre of *research articles' conclusions* section (Peacock, 2002; Holmes, 1997; Yang and Allison, 2003), yet the conclusions I analyzed in my study belong to the *thesis genre*. Bunton (2005, p. 207) points out that in “thesis the *Conclusion* [...] has the status of a separate chapter” which is not the case of the conclusions in a research article. Therefore, the frameworks developed for analyzing conclusions of research articles (Peacock, 2002; Holmes, 1997; Yang and Allison, 2003) are not used in my research, yet as Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988) and Bunton (2005) analyze the structure of MA and PhD thesis (see discussion further in this section), I use their studies as a basis for developing and proposing a framework for the analysis of BA thesis conclusions.

Writing a thesis is a genre that is usually seen as complex (Bitchener and Basturkmen, 2006), and writing the conclusion is the “section students have the greatest difficulty with” (Peacock, 2002, p. 483). This difficulty to write conclusions chapter responds to the uncertainty of what to include and the lack of awareness of such genre (Bitchener and Basturkmen, 2006). The lack of awareness of the conclusion genre relates them as part of the thesis as main genre, yet as Bathia (1993) says, conclusions chapter are the subgenre (see section 2.5.2.1.2.1). In fact, Thesis as genre and particularly conclusions are not frequently researched due to this lack of awareness of the genre. The genre analysis as explained in section 2.5.2.1.2 makes use of moves to explain the text functions. A move is “a segment of

text that is shaped and constrained by a specific communicative purpose” (Holmes, 1997, p.325). That is, a move fulfills a communicative intention within the particular genre. Because genres are usually analyzed in terms of moves and with a considerable amount of texts of the same genre type, the analysis turns to fit the quantitative research tradition. Thus, studies such as Peacock’s (2002) and Holmes’ (1997) draw conclusions regarding the number of moves, their order, and some interdisciplinary variations proper of their research. This type of research was done with the purpose to find out if the text in analysis followed or not the characteristics and conventions established for the genre and how the text differs in the different disciplines. However, my concern was not such, but rather to propose a descriptive framework for analyzing the BA thesis conclusions’ organization. I, similarly to Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988, p.114), approach this analysis with a more “fairly delicate and comprehensible approach in terms of its functional utility”. At this point it is worthy to mention that genre can be approached from both traditions. In my particular study I analyzed a text type that includes categories which although can be counted, were just analyzed for the communicative purpose and function they fulfill. In this analysis, features of intertextuality can be found, and this makes my study bias to a more qualitative view.

For a better understanding of the analysis, I turn now to discuss Bunton’s (2005) and Hopkins and Dudley-Evans’ (1988) studies which were the ones which served as a basis to develop my framework. As already said, studies on genre type consider moves in their analysis. Bunton’s (2005) research makes reference to Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988) moves or cycles (as they call it). He actually adapts their framework for developing his analysis. He claims that a conclusion must contain “summary of main results, summary of main claims, and recommendations of future work” (Bunton, 2005, p. 208). These are necessary moves in a conclusion, yet in his study, he concludes that conclusions generic

structure varies on the discipline of study. That is, a conclusion of a thesis in humanities and social sciences is different from a conclusion of a thesis in science and technology. This is indeed true, if I consider Fairclough's (1992, cited in Ivanic, 1998) view on language analysis. The social context is different, yet if I consider that the genre under study is conclusions of thesis, I can say that the communicative function is for both areas, the same: to close the paper.

Closing a paper requires of many functions, and at this point Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988) recall the *interactional*, *transactional* (Halliday, 1994) and logical perspectives. They developed a study in order to propose a descriptive framework for analyzing conclusions as well, yet their focus was on articles and dissertations conclusions. The framework they propose is in Table 1 (Hopkins and Dudley-Evans, 1988, p. 118, italics in original).

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1. *Background information*
  2. *Statement of Results (SOR)*
  3. *(Un) expected Outcome*, in which the writer comments on whether the result is expected or not.
  4. *Reference to Previous Research* (comparison), in which the author compares his or her result with those reported in the literature.
  5. *Explanation of Unsatisfactory Result*, in which the writer suggests reasons for a surprising result, or one different from those in the literature.
  6. *Exemplification*, in which the writer gives an example to support his or her explanation.
  7. *Deduction*, in which the writer makes a claim about the generalizability of the particular results.
  8. *Hypothesis*, in which the writer makes a more general claim arising from his experimental results.
  9. *Reference to Previous Research* (support), in which the writer quotes previous work to support his or her deduction or hypothesis.
  10. *Recommendation*, in which the writer makes suggestions for future work.
  11. *Justification*, in which the writer justifies the need for the future work recommended.
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**Table 1: Hopkins and Dudley-Evans Conclusions Analysis Framework (1988, p. 118)**

To clearly understand what the moves refer to, I provide an explanation of each of them. The first move, *background information*, analyzes the function of summarizing the research purpose and methodology in order to recall the audience what it is being done. The second move, *Statement of Results (SOR)* is where the writer actually discusses the main findings and claims their conclusions. This is, according to the authors, the only one obligatory move in all conclusions, and thus, it is the most important when analyzing the conclusions genre. Move three, *(Un) expected Outcome*, is a move in which the writers had the outcome as something they expected or not, and so they decide to comment on. Move four, *Reference to Previous Research* (comparison) and move nine *Reference to previous research* (support), serve the writers to compare or support, respectively, their results with the ones they discussed in the literature. I assume that in this part it is more likely to find features of intertextuality in the conclusions section and how the author makes reference to them. Move five, *Explanation of Unsatisfactory Result* functions as a way to explain why the results were different to what was expected or to what is stated in the literature. Move six, *Exemplification*, has the function to illustrate and support the writer's findings. Move seven, *deduction*, as it is suggested by the authors, is where the author makes claims about the generalizability of results. Move eight, *hypothesis*, has as a function to do a general claim about results. These last two moves support that the authors refer to a more quantitative research tradition, which is not the case of my study; yet genre analysis is evolving and claiming a need to develop studies with a qualitative view. Thus, my research contributes with this qualitative view to analyze conclusions. In move ten, *Recommendation*, the writer suggests ideas for further research in the same line of investigation and/ or to continue with the present research. Finally, move eleven, *justification*, serves the author to explain why it is important to do the further recommended work.

The order in which the moves are presented responds to the order Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988) presented in their framework, yet as they discussed in their article, the order varies in three main cycles; a cycle is “the main unit of organization in long informing sections, it is made up of obligatory and optional moves” (Hopkins and Dudley-Evans, 1988, p. 8). Thus, the order of moves is not the obligatory order follow. At this point it is relevant mentioning that the framework they proposed followed a quantitative tradition (which was the stronger research tradition during 1990’s), and therefore, the order was important to consider three main cycles and draw more generalizable results. However, due to the qualitative nature of my research, I expect to find differences in move presence and organization. From this, I am proposing a framework for analyzing BA thesis conclusions which I expect will constitute significant contributions to studies on genre. In my particular analysis I followed these steps:

- 1) I analyzed the BA thesis conclusions in terms of Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988) framework in order to:
  - i. Analyze if the eleven moves they propose for dissertations and research articles conclusions are present in the BA conclusions.
  - ii. Analyze the order these moves follow and why they follow such order.
- 2) Consider other aspects not included in Hopkins’ and Dudley-Evans’ (1988) framework.
- 3) Compare and contrast the moves I found, and suggest a more suitable framework for the analysis of BA conclusions.

For this analysis, I used the four conclusions already described in section 3.2.1. Because of the size of the conclusions chapters, I only considered extracts<sup>1</sup> to exemplify the

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<sup>1</sup> The complete chapters are available upon request.

moves. The suggested framework is presented, discussed and explained in detail in Chapter Four, since it is actually one of the outcomes this research has as purpose.

### **3.3.2 Voice Analysis**

As pointed out by Atkinson (2001) in his article: *Reflections and refractions on the JSLW special issue on voice*, the study of voice has come to be one of the most complex and subjective issues for analysis. In his account, he discusses the main issues of the articles presented in that special number on voice (Ivanic and Camps, 2001; Prior, 2001; Matsuda, 2001, Hirvela and Belcher, 2001). Such articles, as well as Matsuda and Tardy's (2007) and Stapleton's (2002) contribute to the study and analysis of voice from different angles. Based on this special issue, I will now describe the framework that I used for the analysis of voice.

As justified in Chapter Two, I am analyzing voice from the study of the *self as author* and from the *discoursal self* (Ivanic, 1998). For analyzing *self as author*, I refer to Ivanic and Camps' (2001) analytical framework to study self representation in L2 writing. In addition, I am working with this framework due to it also considers the Halliday's (1994) systemic functional analysis and it is the Hallidayan approach the one that guides this research in regards to voice expression in writing. It is, however, worth mentioning that although Ivanic and Camps' (2001) framework has been criticized and questioned in its outcomes as an individualistic view of voice, it is the only one which provides us with "a theoretical basis and some practical tools for doing [...] discourse analysis related to voice and self representation on student texts, and it is notable as the only sustained empirical analysis of students' texts" (Atkinson, 2001, p. 116). In addition, the critics to Ivanic and Camps' framework are contradictory to their theoretical discussion on voice as socially constructed (discussed in Section 2.6.1.1); this fact diminishes the critics made to their framework (for a deeper

discussion on the questionability of the framework see Stapleton (2002) and Atkinson (2001). Hence, I am using Ivanic and Camps' (2001) framework as a foundation. Yet trying to address some of the limitations for which it has been criticized, I am incorporating other ideas from Stapleton (2002) when analyzing generic reference.

### 3.3.2.1 Self as Author

As mentioned, the analysis of self as author was based on Ivanic and Camps (2001, p. 11). I turn now to the explanation of the framework I adapted from them. This framework is summarized in Table 2 for an easy interpretation and practicality in the study.

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<b>TYPES OF POSITIONING</b>	<b>IN RELATION TO</b>	<b>LINGUISTIC REALIZATIONS</b>
<b>Ideational positioning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different interests, objects of study, methodologies;</li> <li>• Different views of knowledge-making.</li> </ul>	(i) Lexical choice in noun phrases  (i) Verb tense, (ii) Verb type, (iii) First person reference.
<b>Interpersonal positioning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different degrees of self-assurance and certainty;</li> <li>• Different power relationships between the writer and the reader.</li> </ul>	(ii) Evaluation, (iii)Modality, (iv) First person reference.  (ii) Mood, (ii) First person reference.
<b>Textual positioning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different views of how a written text should be constructed.</li> </ul>	(i) Noun phrase length, (ii) Clauses structure (iii) Linking devices.

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**Table 2: Three Simultaneous Types of Subject-Positioning (Adapted from Ivanic and Camps, 2001, p. 11).**



As shown in the figure, this framework corresponds to the three language functions proposed by Halliday (1994), *ideational*, *interpersonal* and *textual* (discussed in section 2.4.3). Ivanic and Camps (2001) illustrate these three functions into linguistic realizations for the analysis of a text, and they consider as well Halliday's systemic functional approach. Because I assume the reader is familiar with Halliday's terminology and approach, I only comment briefly of these and exemplify these realizations.

Since my purpose for this section is to describe the data analysis I followed to study voice, I present an extract in which I exemplify the realizations of the three voice positioning and an explanation and interpretation of them is in order. The extract is taken from Ivanic and Camps's (2001, p. 12) study samples, and it is following presented.

*Extract:*

Transient and permanent entities are distinguished by the symbol ("X"), it maps into a Terminate Action, i.e., the object will be destroyed. Additional information, such as the maximum number of instances of an object and the frequency distribution, mean and standard deviation, should be stated clearly as comments in the diagram.

### **3.3.2.1.1 Ideational Positioning**

Ivanic and Camps (2001, p. 12) use *ideational positioning* to refer to "the way in which the selection of voice types positions the writer as having particular ideas, particular views of the world". This, as Table 2 suggests, considers (i) interests, objects of study and methodologies, and (ii) knowledge making which can be analyzed by the (i) grammatical-lexical choice, and (ii) verbs (process type: action, mental, existential), tense and first person

reference. I following present an example of analysis of ideational positioning and its interpretation.

Regarding the (i) lexical choice to analyze interest, objects of study and methodologies, the extract uses particular words (noun phrases) that place the writer as a member of a specific discourse community. Examples of these noun phrases in the extract are: *Transient and permanent entities, the symbol (x), frequency distribution, mean and standard deviation, the diagram, a terminate action*. With this type of noun phrases, it can be assumed that the writer probably belongs to a business discourse community and that is why he uses such lexis.

The other realization of ideational positioning, (ii) different views of knowledge making, is relevant for this study since it places the writer in relation to the topic to write (Ivanic and Camps, 2001). I then develop this analysis considering verb tense (*absolute tense* which locates a process in time relative to here and now point of view, present, past and future; and *relative tense* which further locates the process relatively to the absolute tense –see Halliday (1994) for a deeper explanation, verb type (process type), and first person reference (personal and impersonal usage). In the extract, it is seen that the verb tenses enclose: one present tense in passive, one present tense in active, one future in passive voice, and one modal (which is considered in the interpersonal positioning realization and that is the reason why it is later explained). Regarding the process type, the first one, second and third ones are action processes, and the last one is a verbal process. Thus, the verbs system is summarized in Table 3.

<b>Verb</b>	<b>Tense</b>	<b>Process Type</b>
<i>are distinguished</i>	Present –passive	Action
<i>maps</i>	Present –active	Action
<i>will be destroyed</i>	Future –passive	Action
<i>be stated</i>	Modality –to be analyzed in interpersonal positioning	Verbal

**Table 3: Summary of Verb System Sample Analysis**

The writer uses is mostly present and future absolute tenses with verbs that express action. He uses present tense to refer to facts, and future tense to exemplify the cause of one of those facts. All these are action verbs since they imply something that can be physically and/or observably done. The verbal process occurs as a mental realization that can be expressed and the writer considers worthy to claim it for the suggestion he is making in the extract. From this, it is seen that the way the writer makes knowledge is based mostly on facts and from them proposing what should be done.

To close the last aspect of ideational positioning, I explain the specific and first person reference (personal and impersonal). As mentioned in Chapter One, writing in impersonal or personal has been a largely discussed issue (Stapleton, 2002; Ivanic, 1998, Ivanic and Camps, 2001). According to Stapleton (2002), the use of “I” is actually a discursive feature associated with voice, and since my study seeks to analyze voice I consider this discursive feature. Tang and John (1999, cited in Stapleton, 2002, p. 185) propose six categories for the explanation of the first person. These entities are: “*representative* –‘In English, *we* have words such as...’; *guide* –‘So far, *we* have said nothing about...’; *architect* –‘In *my* essay, *I* will examine...’; *recounter* of the research process –‘All of the papers *I* read were...’; *opinion-holder* –‘*I* would

like to show that...'; and *originator* –‘My ideas rest on the assumption that...’. In an attempt to analyze this feature I decided to quote the authors’ examples since in the extract I am using as model, there is no use of first person which suggest two things: the writer did not consider appropriate to use personal for his purpose (Tang and John, 1999, cited in Stapleton, 2002) or “the writer is withdrawing from all responsibility from an academic [paper]” (Ivanic, 1998, p. 306). Thus, I used Tang’s and John’s (1999, cited in Stapleton, 2002) categorization for explaining the use of first person in my data when explained in the results.

#### **3.3.2.1.2 Interpersonal Positioning**

It is time now to turn into the *interpersonal positioning* analysis. The two aspects to analyze in this section deal with (i) the degrees of self-assurance and certainty and (ii) different power relations between the writer and the reader. The first point is analyzed considering modality (the likeliness of things to happen), first person reference and evaluation as linguistic realizations. As mentioned in the ideational positioning, there is a case of modality in the extract. This modality is considered as mid level since the writer is using *should* which implies a suggestion. The analysis of first person reference is performed as suggested by Tang and John (1999, cited in Stapleton, 2002), and by this, I can observe how the writer positions himself in the text. The evaluation is analyzed by certain words that express self-assurance. In the extract the word ‘*clearly*’ is an example of the writer’s conviction regarding the suggestion previously expressed.

This section also makes use of the discourse analysis approach in the analysis of (ii) power relationships between writer and reader by analyzing the *mood* (indicative, imperative and subjunctive) of the sentences in the text and the first person reference. In the extract, it is observed that the mood is indicative since the writer is declaring facts, and his attitude towards

the message is then factual. His position is neutral since he expresses himself with facts; he does not take any position, and this is certainly assured with the non-use of first person.

### 3.3.2.1.3 Textual Positioning

Finally, the *textual positioning* considers how the written text is constructed. Its analysis considers the length of noun phrases and linking devices. The extract I am using as a sample analysis has only 2 sentences (numbered) with a total of 51 words, and 12 **noun phrases (bolded)**. The second sentence, longer than the first one, contains extremely long noun phrases which suggest that the writer elaborates his constructions.

*Extract:*

1) **Transient and permanent entities** are distinguished by **the symbol (“X”)**, it maps into a **Terminate Action**, i.e., **the object** will be destroyed. 2) **Additional information**, such as **the maximum number of instances of an object** and **the frequency distribution, mean and standard deviation**, should be stated clearly as **comments in the diagram**.

The writer’s noun phrases elaboration suggests complex clause structure. A clause structure is actually determined by lexical density. This involves “counting (a) the number of lexical words in an extract, and (b) the number of clauses in it, then dividing (a) by (b)” (Ivanic, 1998, p. 260). The (a) lexical items are in *italics* in the text and the (b) clauses are underlined and numbered.

*Extract*

1) Transient and permanent entities are distinguished by the symbol (“X”), 2) it maps into a Terminate Action, 3) i.e., the object will be destroyed. 4) Additional information, such as the maximum number of instances of an object and the frequency distribution, mean and standard deviation, should be stated clearly as comments in the diagram.

The analysis of the extract in discussion regarding lexical density is shown in Table 4.

<b>Lexical items (a)</b>	<b>No. of clauses (b)</b>	<b>Lexical density (a)/ (b)</b>
31	4	7.75

**Table 4: Lexical Density Sample Analysis**

In Ivanic’s (1998) study of lexical density, she claims that having an indicator of 5 or more as average implies high lexical density, and having 2 or less means low lexical density. Therefore, as noticed in the long noun phrases, the writer has an elaborated way to construct his sentences. Ivanic (1998, p.260) points out “language varies in the way clauses are structured”, so the contribution of lexical density in studies of voice is a way to “probing the fine detail of discorsal heterogeneity” (*ibid.* p. 261). In other words, lexical density and structure elaboration permits to analyze how the writers construct their written identity and positions themselves in the particular discourse community following the genre conventions. If high level of lexical density is obtained, the writers show a high complex construction in their writing, and their identity constructed is seen as elaborated. In the particular context of this thesis which analyses the writing in a foreign language, this complexity or simple

language structures may be influenced by the participants' first language, yet this is only a hypothesis.

To develop the analysis of *self as author*, I considered pertinent to choose an extract from the *Statement of Results (SOR)* section from the BA thesis conclusions since it is in this section where the writer discusses the main claims and concludes with the research (see section 3.3.3 for a discussion on this). Halliday (1989) and Ure (1971) cited in Ivanic (1998), propose the length of the extract of at least 100 words because it is a way of making comparisons. Thus, the length of the extracts considered in this study is of 100 words approximately. This number ranges actually from the 15% to 20% of the students chapters. I do not consider the absolute 15% nor the 20% of the texts since the length of the conclusions considerably differs from each participant. In addition, the extracts are not taken from the same part of the participants' conclusions since the *SOR* is a move whose place is not established yet. The discussion of this is presented in section 3.3.1. Therefore, the extracts are of approximately 100 words, and they are taken from the section in which the participants discuss the main claims.

### **3.3.2.2 Discoursal Self**

Analyzing the *discoursal self* implies the consideration of language conventions within the genre in analysis. As discussed in section 2.6, the concept of intertextuality then takes place in this analysis. Therefore, the model proposed by Fairclough (1992, cited in Ivanic, 1998) is used. This analysis considers: *manifest intertextuality* and *interdiscursivity*. In the first one, the analysis of quotations, paraphrasing, copying, irony and presupposition are considered in the text analysis and how the writer makes use of them. In this regard the, the information presented in Figure 1 turns to be of great importance since Fairclough describes

the interaction of the text itself, the interaction between writer and reader, and the interaction of the text with the social context. Therefore, my analysis considered the way the writers used and constructed their writing, how the authors addressed their audience, and if their academic writing in BA thesis conclusions section followed the conventions for that specific context in AL/TESOL.

When analyzing these languages conventions within that specific genre, interdiscursivity analysis takes place since it refers to “intertextual relations to conventions” (Fairclough, 1992, cited in Ivanic, 1998, p. 48). In other words, the particular way the writer socializes with the academic context was considered. For the sample analysis of the *discoursal self*, I took the same extract as for the *self as author*. As mentioned, each extract is of approximate 100 words (this number may vary since I want to include complete sentences, so it may be nearly to that number with some more or some less words), included in the *SOR* move (an explanation of this is in section 3.3.1) of each conclusion under analysis.

### **3.3.3 Gender Voice Analysis**

This analysis only summarizes the analysis of voice in the four case studies, and makes a comparison of the most distinctive features of each one. This analysis was done with the purpose of finding out if there were differences of voice expression between genders, and what those differences were, if any. With this analysis I covered the second part of the purpose regarding voice analysis and differences in gender voice expression.

### **3.4 Procedure**

The procedure to develop this research required a series of careful steps. First of all, it was important to select the participants of the study in regards if they fulfilled the



requirements (previously described in section 3.1). Secondly, it was important to tell them about the research that I was carrying out and have their consent for participating in lending their conclusions for analysis, being recorded in their thesis defense and interviewed after the defense. Once the participants agreed, the data collection and analysis processes were carried out. As a requirement of the institution, the theses are given to the committee at least within a week before the professional examination takes place. The analysis of the *self as author* and *discoursal self* were carried out with this data. Recording the thesis defense and analyzing it also supported some of the analysis done in the conclusions analysis. The recording of the exams as mentioned was done with the consent of the participants, and in some cases the data obtained from it was irrelevant for the analysis, and therefore was not used. The interviews were a complement in the analysis of identity, voice expression, gender distinction and general academic writing perceptions in regards to thesis conclusions. Quotations from the interviews were considered to reinforce the conclusions analysis; only relevant and pertinent fragments were included<sup>2</sup>. The data gathered in the interviews was classified according to the section in analysis. Therefore, section on voice analysis considered questions 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and b (in the personalized-individual questions) from the interview (see Appendix A). Gender distinction considered questions 3, 4, 5, and 8 as well as (a) and (b) of the individualized questions (Appendix A); and the analysis of conclusions considered some questions in the supervisor's interview (Appendix B). Finally, the analysis of the conclusions was conducted and thus, the framework proposed.

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<sup>2</sup> Complete interview transcripts (loose format) are available upon request.

### **3.5 Limitations**

As every research and human activity face limitations, this research is not the exception. Thus, for the sake of the project, foster further research in the area and/or do a replica of it, I consider it necessary to point out the main concerns that probably impede or affect the results obtained. As a first constraint, I point out the ungeneralizable aspect of the research. It is a case study research whose results are true only for the participants under study. I cannot call out to make generalizations on voice analysis or gender distinction on voice expression since only four cases were considered. Although the number of participants is considerable, it is recommended to include more in the study, and in this way propose more valid implications for the L2 teaching of writing.

Another concern of this project deals with the analysis of voice. As pointed out I am considering extracts of only 100 words which is a small sample of written discourse to analyze voice and with it determine a person's identity. The use of interviews, though is of help in analyzing voice, could have been richer in the sense that more information regarding the difficulty of writing conclusions could have been collected. Data about this concern is not considered from part of the students since one interview took place in August 2007, and it was at the beginning stage of this project. I had to use this information as the data collection depended a great part on when the students presented their professional exam (this is described in section 3.2.3). I could not change the interview format later on for validity and reliability issues. The interview has to be equal with all participants. Thus, the interview misses information regarding participants view on conclusions. Regarding the framework of analyzing conclusions, as discussed in the literature, thesis conclusions is a genre which needs more work, the framework proposed is an encouragement to further conduct similar studies.

Finally, another limitation lies on theoretical issues. I present a review on the main theories behind this study, yet there are still some theoretical problems in the analysis of voice (which is a current and very subjective topic). This need of wider theoretical review responds also to the amplitude of the areas in which this research is based on and the necessity to limit the area of study. This issue is, however, beyond the scope of my study.

For the particular interest of my research, the theories and methodologies discussed are considered suitable to develop my study and achieve its purpose. I turn to apply them to the data gathered and obtain the results. These are presented and discussed in Chapter Four.

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS & DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the results of the data obtained of conclusions and voice analysis are presented and discussed. For better understanding, the results are organized as follows. The chapter is divided into three main sections: the conclusions framework, voice analysis and gender differences in voice expression which respond to my three research purposes. I first present the conclusions analysis based on the actual four participants data, considering the literature reviewed in Chapter Two to propose a framework for undergraduate thesis genre studies. This analysis permitted to identify the *SOR* conclusions' section (see Section 3.3.1) in which the writers express more their voice and positions themselves in the text. This is indeed the section from which I extract the text where I develop my second analysis. *Voice* expression of *self as author* and the *discoursal self* are presented and discussed in the second part. Finally, last third analysis concerns the comparison of gender voice expression. Text extracts for each analysis and for each case study are provided for illustrating the point in analysis, and for their interpretation I follow the procedure for data analysis proposed in Section 3.3.

### 4.1 Conclusions Analysis

In this section I discuss the moves considered in the four BA thesis' conclusions and propose a framework for their analysis. In Section 3.3.1, I presented the steps I followed to create and propose such a framework. I first analyzed the BA thesis conclusions of the four participants, and compared them with Hopkins and Dudley-Evans' (1988) framework in order to see if the moves they propose are also present in BA thesis conclusions, and in what order. Secondly, I analyze the BA thesis conclusions features not included in Hopkins' and Dudley-Evans' (1988) framework. Finally, comparing these two analyses I propose a suitable Framework for Undergraduate Thesis Conclusions (FUTC).

Following the first step, I analyzed the participants' conclusions in terms of Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988) framework. The participants' real names were changed for ethical reasons. I reviewed each conclusion considering the 11 moves whether they were included or not. I summarize the information provided in such analysis in Table 5, and then provide a discussion.

<b>Moves (Hopkins' and Dudley-Evans', 1988, framework)</b>	<b>Janis' Conclusion</b>	<b>Billy's Conclusion</b>	<b>Celine's Conclusion</b>	<b>Rod's Conclusion</b>
<i>1) Background information</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>2) Statement of Results (S.O.R)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>3) (Un) expected Outcome</i>	No	Yes	No	Yes
<i>4) Reference to Previous Research (comparison)</i>	No	No	No	No
<i>5) Explanation of Unsatisfactory Result</i>	No	No	No	No
<i>6) Exemplification</i>	Yes	Yes	No	No
<i>7) Deduction</i>	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
<i>8) Hypothesis</i>	No	No	No	No
<i>9) Reference to Previous Research (support)</i>	No	Yes	No	No
<i>10) Recommendation</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>11) Justification</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

**Table 5: Summary of Moves Analysis of my Four Case Studies' Theses**

As can be seen in the table, none of the conclusions contained all the moves proposed in Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988) framework. Billy's was the one that contained more elements whereas Celine's was the one that had fewer moves. What can be noticed is that there are generic moves present in the four cases as well as there are ones not present in any of

the conclusions. The moves presented in all four conclusions are *background information*, *SOR*, *recommendation* and *justification*. Conversely, none of the conclusions have *references to previous research (comparison)*, *explanation of unsatisfactory results* and *hypothesis*.

There seem to be obligatory moves since the participants not only fulfilled the purpose of those moves, but also included similar elements. For instance, for the *background information move*, all the participants recalled the research purpose, the context where they applied the research; the methodology used as well as their research participants and procedures they followed. The four cases included these elements in that move, and it is actually the first move they refer to, to start their conclusion. The *SOR* is also an essential move as Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988) and Bunton (2005) claim; it is the only one obligatory move for any conclusion since it is there where the writers state their main claim in discussion to the main findings and what they conclude. This is the second move followed in the four conclusions. The *recommendation and justification moves* are similarly presented in the last section of the four conclusions. In these moves the writers listed some suggestions for further research and explained why it is important to continue with it. These two moves were presented in the last section of the participants' conclusions.

On the other hand, it was noticed that it was not relevant for participants to *compare their results with those from the literature* or refer to *unsatisfactory outcomes* if any, and to include *hypothesis*. These functions were not included in any of the thesis. The reason for not including hypothesis could probably be because of the type of research participants do. I assume that not including unsatisfactory outcomes might have occurred because there was probably no unsatisfactory outcome, or perhaps the writers at this level are simply not experienced enough in academic writing. The lack of references to literature to compare their work is probably because it was not necessary for them to do any comparison, and/or lack of

awareness of this function in the writing of the conclusions chapter, and/or the advisor's influence. During the interview with the research advisor, he commented that *"the problem with chapter five is that sometimes we do not pay attention to the importance it has, so in general terms is easy to write for students, but I can say that it's one of the chapters that I am the least satisfied with, usually chapter five is written over night nor the teacher or the student pay much attention to what is in there (...) usually chapter five is something that is there and nobody cares if it is well written or not. That's the way it usually is"*. Thus, as reviewed in the literature (section 2.5.2.1.2.1), not being aware of the structure of a thesis genre (Bitchener and Basturkmen, 2006), in this case its conclusion structure, and the lack of attention from both, the advisor and writer, have implications in the writing and development of such conclusions. This issue also explains why some of the other moves from Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988) framework are included only by some of the participants. Writers would probably have to realize what elements to include. Certainly, the advisors point out the elements, yet not the functions to include in the conclusions. That is, at the moment of writing, the advisor asks to *"include the most important findings, general results addressing the ones they were looking for, the crucial results"* and include them in the *summary of conclusions*, plus a section on *implications* of the study, *limitations*, and *directions for further research*. Thus, the advisor is influential in what to include in the conclusion; however, he is not the responsible for the final choice of the writer. Having Billy's conclusion as the one with more functions deals also with his awareness of the conclusions as genre, and his joy for critical reading and supporting what he writes. It is part of his writer identity (a detailed description of Billy is in section 4.2.2). Contrary, Celine, who was supervised by Billy's advisor, is the one who included fewest functions in her conclusion. This also responds to her lack of experience with the genre,

choice and identity as writer (section 4.2.3). As observed, these cases present generic moves which some are obligatory while others are optional.

The order in which the moves are organized follow similar yet not identical order in the four participants' conclusions. All the conclusions start with the *background information* move in order to recall the main purpose and research design. Then, the *SOR move* follows in the all the conclusions, yet there are some other moves such as *referring to previous research as support*, *expected outcome(s)*, *exemplification*, *deduction(s)* which are integrated along the *SOR* move. The integration of these differs from participant to participant. Finally, the *recommendation* and *justification for further work* moves are the ones which close the conclusions chapter. This, as mentioned, responds to the advisor's requirements for this chapter.

Hence, I can conclude that the moves included in the conclusions and the order they follow seem to be influenced by the research advisor, yet they also respond to the researcher's writing identity and the flexibility of the genre in the sense that writers decided to include or not certain functions such as unsatisfactory results, move five. For this, Johns (2008b) claims that genres are negotiated according to social, cultural, individual differences; the importance is they fulfill their function. This is indeed observed in the organization of the moves. The moves are included; their order depends on the writer's choice.

Considering the last point of the writer's choice, it is now relevant to turn to my second step for the construction of my framework and consider the extra elements included in the participants' conclusions and are not considered in Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988). The first element included in the conclusions was to *introduce the chapter* by presenting the purpose of the chapter and its organization. All the conclusions chapters start with this introductory paragraph. Perhaps the writers include this move because it gives cohesion to the



whole chapter, and prepares the reader for what is coming. This first move is actually one of the generic characteristics set in a thesis conclusion. As discussed in section 2.5.2.1.2.1, a thesis is the main genre and the conclusion is a subgenre. This subgenre is actually a chapter in the thesis, and a characteristic of chapters is that they require introductions of what is coming to be read. Thus, this introductory move is essential in the framework for analyzing thesis conclusions chapters.

A second optional element deals with the background information. As mentioned in previous lines, all the participants included not only a general background of the research, but also *a detailed description of their research design and purpose*. The participants probably consider necessary to summarize the research design that has delineated their work and finally give the chapter a coherent closure.

Another element included in the conclusions chapters was the section where the writer includes the *implications of the study*. This move is important as a conclusive move since it discusses the theory and the main findings applied to a real context. The interviewee research adviser describes this section as *“kind of critical discussion in terms of how important the research is in the light of theory (...) main conclusions based on that discussion”*. This is for him, *“the hardest thing because of the interpretation relating theory and results (...), it implies to go beyond”*. I agree with his point, since it is really hard to achieve at a BA level that critical interpretation, yet I consider this move important in the conclusions. Indeed, the participants also considered implications as important since during the interviews they commented on writing the practicality of their study, so readers can see the actual practical contribution. Participants, however, may have included this move because of the advisor’s influence.

Finally, one more element shown in the participants' conclusions is *the limitations of the study*. All the conclusions contain this element. The information in this move relates to the weak points of the research, the reasons why the project does not get the expected results, and flaws in the methodology. According to the thesis advisor, it refers to "*the aspects, all those things in which the writer considers the research is not that reliable or accurate and complete as they wanted*". This is for him, an important move to include in the conclusions chapter. Thus, I assume that the participants include it because of the research advisor's influence and because it is certainly an institutional requirement. Including this move in the methodology or the conclusions chapter also responds to the flexibility of the genre and Fairclough's (1989) discourse considerations when explaining the text and interactions layers.

As seen, there are some extra elements from those proposed by Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988) included in the BA thesis conclusions. I now discuss both and suggest a suitable Framework for Undergraduate Thesis Conclusions (FUTC) in the Humanities.

Considering the similarity of elements found in the BA conclusions and Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988) framework, the moves: *background information*, *SOR*, *deductions*, *recommendations* and *justification* become obligatory moves in a conclusion.

The *Background information* move is significant to include since its function is to summarize the main purpose of the research, and the research design to place the audience in a short way in the research context. This is, without doubt, important to include before the actual statement of the closure since it facilitates *SOR* easier comprehension. The *SOR* move is included since it is indispensable to discuss and summarize the main findings and make main claims. It is actually where the writer says something from their own, and let their voice be heard. All the theses have this *SOR* move, and this is actually the section from where I take an extract to develop writer's voice analysis (section 4.2). Being this section where the authors

express themselves, deductions take place. Therefore, based on the data obtained, it was important for the writers to include the move of *deductions* in the discussion they make in the final discussion. These deductions can be inserted in the *SOR* section or place somewhere else as long as the writer includes them. *Recommendations* and *justification* are also indispensable moves in the chapter. The data actually evidences that recommending something implies giving reasons and supporting why it is recommended. Thus, the data analyzed points out the consideration of a *recommendations* move. The recommendations address *directions for further research* whose main purpose is to suggest ways of how the research can be continued and provide guidance for it.

Considering the extra elements not included in Hopkins and Dudley (1988) framework, but present in the data, the *implications* move is indispensable. As supported by the research supervisor, its function is to relate theory and results in the context the research was developed. This section's function is to show the applicability of the thesis. In addition, the *reference to previous research* move is also present since the writer relates theory to support and/or compare their results. Therefore, the data analyzed shows that the moves of *referring to previous research* and *implications* can be integrated in the *SOR* move or put them in a separate section. However, these two moves are optional since they were not evidenced in the four conclusions.

The *limitation* section, as the second extra element, points out to limitations regarding the research design and possible flaws. Due to this function, this section can be moved to other places in a thesis such as in the methodology chapter; thus, I consider it as an optional element to include or not in the conclusions chapter. It depends on the writers' choice and research design they follow. This function is not then included in my framework, yet it is an optional

element that can be part of it and be inserted as a section before the *directions for further research* section.

Finally, the importance of *exemplifying* and *explaining* things whenever is necessary to clarify a point are considered moves. It is important to close a paper with all things clear, with no points or issues left up to readers' interpretation. Thus, exemplifying and explaining is sometimes necessary to include in a conclusions. These moves, although present in some participants' conclusions, were absent in others; therefore, this move, is not seen as an obligatory one, but as a recurrent move which can or not be present in a conclusion.

As analyzed in the conclusions, the order in which moves are presented does not follow a linear description. Thus, the Framework for Undergraduate Thesis Conclusions (FUTC) proposes these moves; the order of move 1, 2 3, 6 and 7 need to be present in that order so the communicative purpose is fulfilled, conversely, move 4 and 5 order depends on the writer's choice to organize and or integrate them in the previous moves and in the conclusions chapter sections. I now summarize the moves, and present the FUTC.

- 1) Introductory move to the chapter
- 2) Background information
- 3) SOR (related to context)
- 4) {Reference to previous research (support, compare and/ or contrast)}
- 5) {Exemplification/explanation}
- 6) Implications
- 7) Recommendations for further research

Move 1 is the chapter's *introduction* addressing the audience and preparing it to the chapter. It is the first move that permits both the reader and writer know the purpose and organization of the chapter. Following this order, the next move is to present the *background information* to recall the main research design and purpose and so facilitate and conduct to a more understandable reading of claims. After this, the *SOR* is necessary. In here, the writers claim of their main findings related to the research context. In this move, functions such as *referring to previous research* (move 4) and *exemplifying, explaining* (move 5), moves which I both put between curly brackets to mark them as optional elements, can be integrated because it is when they contribute to the theory by using different functions. Move 4 permits the support of the writer's claims by providing evidence, comparing, and/or contrasting with something previously done in the area. The exemplification can also be integrated if there is an issue that is still moving or that is open to interpretation, so the writer clarifies, explains and or exemplifies it focusing it in the research context. Move 6, *implications* of the research, analyzes the way the writer interprets their results and integrates that knowledge into its applicability and practicality to the context. Since this is a framework for a BA level, I do not expect to find deep inferences, yet an applicability of results is expected. Finally, the *recommendations for further research* include the suggestions to further develop and/or continue with the research. In here, the writer lists and justifies what and why further work is needed.

To close my first section of the research, I propose my FUTC for analyzing BA thesis conclusions in the area o humanities. These are the moves I point out necessary for the analysis of a thesis conclusion at this level. This framework might have some implications which are pointed out in Section 5.3.

## 4.2 Voice analysis

In this section, I consider first necessary to introduce in detail each of my participants. As mentioned in section 3.1, four people participated in my study: two males and two females who studied the BA in EFL and TESOL/AL at a public university in the center of the Mexican Republic. Participants defended their thesis projects in the period of August 2007 and February 2008. Participants who presented their thesis are chosen since they have experienced the difficulty of an academic writing task such a thesis, a challenging genre since it determines whether the student is given or not a degree. Each participant has different background and interest in their thesis. Table 6 summarizes participants' individual characteristics.

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Janis</b>	<b>Billy</b>	<b>Celine</b>	<b>Rod</b>
<b>Gender</b>	F	M	F	M
<b>Age</b>	28	24	25	27
<b>Social status</b>	Single	Single	Single	Single
<b>Rural/ urban areas</b>	Urban	Rural	Urban	Urban
<b>Thesis topic</b>	<i>Causes and problems to comprehend English literature</i>	<i>Impact of parent's immigration in the SLA of English</i>	<i>Games as a tool to catch Hyperactive Children attention</i>	<i>The use of music as a tool to improve listening in ELT</i>
<b>GPA</b>	9	9.3	8.7	8.6
<b>Generation<sup>1</sup></b>	First generation	First generation	Second generation	First generation
<b>Need to defend the thesis<sup>2</sup></b>	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Writing experience</b>	BA courses' assignments & thesis	BA courses' assignments, thesis & newspaper comments.	BA courses' assignments, personal diary & thesis	BA courses' assignments & thesis

**Table 6: Background Information of the Four Participants**

<sup>1</sup> This means whether the participant is the first in the family of obtaining a professional degree.

<sup>2</sup> Students with a GPA of 8.5 or above and having not failed nor re-taken any subject can graduate with only writing, but not defending a thesis; if one of these two requirements is not fulfilled, the student must write and defend the thesis.

Table 6 above summarizes the participants' background information. In a first view, it is observed that participants share the same writing experience, yet there are other features that make each one unique. Since this is a case study, I discuss each participant's characteristics integrating them to the voice analysis. The framework for developing such analysis was discussed in section 3.3.2, where the a) *self as author*, which includes the three positioning: ideational, interpersonal and textual, and the b) *discoursal self*, intertextuality features, are analyzed. Thus, I follow this order presenting results and discussing them in each case. I start with Janis, my first participant.

#### **4.2.1 Case 1: Janis**

Janis is a 28 year woman who lives in a large city. She has lived all her life in Central Mexico, and she is the first in her family who gets a BA degree. This probably makes her feel satisfied personally since this is a big achievement for Mexican families. As seen in Table 4, she got a GPA of 9.0, yet she needs to defend her thesis project. That suggests that she probably failed or retook a course during her BA studies. Her social status belongs to middle-low social class, so she enrolled herself into a public school. She studied her BA in ELT since she says she always wanted to be a teacher, so I assume it was her choice to study this career. Her academic writing experience does not go further than to the one developed along her studies when she had to turn in a paper and in her thesis writing. However, the instruction and experiences on these were crucial in her way of perceiving writing and express her voice. She comments that in her academic writing class, she could not include all her perceptions while respecting the academic writing conventions of the genre to write. She says:

*“I always wanted to say more, but I couldn’t do it because the teacher corrected me. I wanted to relate my writing to my own experience, but I didn’t do it because of the different parts of the paper”*

From this quote, I can perceive that Janis felt she was limited to express her own *voice* in her academic writing, to which she actually further comments that at the moment of writing her thesis, it was hard to integrate her ideas into the academic discourse, and she points the writing, mainly in the literature review, as a challenging process. She claims:

*“I was afraid of writing cause it involves reading, researching in a coherent way. It is difficult to connect authors’ and other people ideas [...] understand what you write, you need to be conscious of what you write, and what you want to say. So I am very careful, specific”.*

In this quote from her interview, Janis expresses her concern for writing academically and always linking it to her own voice expression. It was a big concern for her to say what she thought about her academic topic. She always tries to relate her research topic with her life experiences. In fact, when she was asked about why she chose her research thesis topic and how she was personally invested in it; she affirms that she was interested in reading since she was in secondary school. This is due to she faced the experience of enjoying reading, but her friends had frequent problems on developing such skill. Thus, years after she had the opportunity of doing a research she focused her study (thesis) on *Causes and problems to comprehend English literature*. It is from this piece of work where I take the extract to analyze linguistically the way she expresses her voice.



*Janis's extract:*

It was found that literature teachers and students stated that there are problems when reading literary texts. This is possible due to the lack of vocabulary, difficulty to interpret the text, problems to understand figurative language, old English, unattractive content and a bad habit to read in the target language. These are some factors that interfere with an efficient literature comprehension. Thus, it is important to say these weaknesses were found in the study. On the other hand, it was also obtained that students are exposed to read all kinds of literary texts during the course.

Following the framework described in section 3.3.2, I analyzed voice into the *self as author* and *discoursal self*.

#### **4.2.1.1 Janis's Voice of Self as Author**

Regarding this point, I analyze Janis' three types of positioning: *ideational*, *interpersonal* and *textual*. First, in *ideational positioning*, Janis' lexical choice places her interests and objects of study into the field of teaching literature in an EFL. This is confirmed by the use of literature particular lexical items (noun phrases) such as *literature teachers*, *students*, *problems*, *reading literary texts*, *lack of vocabulary*, *difficulty*, *problems*, *figurative language*, *old English*, *unattractive content*, *bad habit*, *target language*, *factors*, *literature comprehension*, *weaknesses*, *kinds of literary texts*, and *course*.

Another aspect to analyze and understand Janis' *ideational positioning* deals with the knowledge she makes reference to. This is also observed in her use of verbs regarding process

type and tense, and her use of first person reference. I summarized her verb system (tenses and process type following Halliday's (1994) framework in Table 7a.

<b>Verb</b>	<b>Tense</b>	<b>Process Type</b>
<i>was found</i>	Simple past –passive voice	Action
<i>stated</i>	Simple past –active	Verbal
<i>are</i>	Simple present –active	Existential
<i>is</i>	Simple present –active	Existential
<i>to interpret</i>	Infinitive	Mental
<i>to understand</i>	Infinitive	Mental
<i>to read (x2)</i>	Infinitive	Mental
<i>interfere</i>	Present –active	Mental
<i>to say</i>	Infinitive	Verbal
<i>were found</i>	Simple past –passive	Action
<i>was obtained</i>	Simple past –passive	Action
<i>are exposed</i>	Simple present –passive	Action

**Table 7a: Janis' Extract Analysis on Verb System**

As seen in the table, Janis uses past, present and infinitive. She has four verbs for each tense in past and present, and five in infinitive; four of them are expressed in active and the other four in passive voice. The use of past tense is due to she is reporting the things she found in her study and three of these past tenses are in passive. This passive selection might be a conscious option due to she wants to emphasize the findings, put the results (objects) as main

subject of the sentence. She uses the present tense mostly with existential and verbal processes in active voice. Just one present tense is in passive. The existential processes are in present due to they express a status of being. Finally, she has five infinitives with four mental processes and one verbal process. The use of infinitives is to point out things that are, should or must be done in the process of reading e.g. *to understand, to interpret, to read, to say*. From this, it is seen that Janis makes knowledge when presenting conclusions based mostly on reporting events (past), expressing something that explains a cause (present) and proposing what are, and/or should be done (infinitives). The use of first person is not present in this extract even though Janis considers it desirable. For this, she gave a reason during the interview.

*“It was a struggle for me. When I write in personal style, I express myself, well, and clear, but when I write academically I feel I have to use special words, connectors, verbs and follow what it is said to be right and correct. I wish I could have used ‘I’, but I could not”*

From this, I can say that Janis really wanted to express herself and follow her own style, yet she feels limited for the conventions of academic writing. This fact suggests that there were some constrains that did not let her to express her ideas in a more fluent and personal style. Such constrains as she comments could have been the conventions of academic writing and/or the influence of her research advisor. She believes that writing in first person is not academic and therefore, she did not do it.

Secondly, Janis’ *interpersonal positioning* is analyzed in linguistics realizations of modality, mood, first person and evaluation in order to analyze the degrees of self-assurance and certainty and her power relations between her and her readers. About modality, which can be expressed by modals, modal adjuncts, attributive clauses, and mental processes (Halliday, 1994), it is seen that she actually expresses that in her mental processes use (discussed in ideational position). Janis’ *modality* expression can be considered as mid level (see Halliday,

1994, modality levels) since she is proposing what reading literature implies, and should be done to improve its reading. In addition, she uses *possible* which is a modal adjunct of mid level certainty. Regarding Janis' writing *mood*, it is declarative; she is reporting what is done, proposing and expressing causes. The non-use of impersonal (commented in ideational positioning) points out to a feeling of repression to express herself properly in the writing conventions of writing academically. This suggests that she is positioning herself in a lower level in relation to her audience, and not taking responsibility of what she arguments. Finally, for evaluation she uses the word *possible*, a modal adjunct of uncertainty, and placing herself in a neutral position, she lets the reader make their judgment. However, as an evaluative item, she uses the word *important*, in which she lets the reader know her judgment.

Analyzing the *textual positioning* is the last point to refer to self as author. In this the linguistic realizations to analyze are noun phrase length, clause structure and linking devices. Janis' extract has 5 sentences. The extract has a total of 96 words, 25 noun phrases (**bolded**), and 9 clauses (numbered).

*Janis extract:*

1) **It** was found 2) that **literature teachers and students** stated 3) that **there** are **problems** when **reading literary texts**. 4) **This** is possible due to **the lack of vocabulary, difficulty** to interpret **the text, problems** to understand **figurative language, old English, unattractive content** and **a bad habit** to read in **the target language**. 5) **These** are **some factors** that interfere with **an efficient literature comprehension**. Thus, 6) **it** is important to say 7) **these weaknesses** were found in **the study**. On the other hand, 8) **it** was also obtained 9) that **students** are exposed to read **all kinds of literary texts** during **the course**.

Taking a look at the noun phrases, it is observed that Janis has complex noun phrases and complex construction in some clauses. Indeed in the first sentence Janis has 5 noun phrases and 3 clauses (1 independent and 2 embedded clauses). The second sentence is a simple sentence with 10 noun phrases. Sentence 3 is also a simple sentence with 3 noun phrases; the fourth sentence contains 3 noun phrases and sentence 5, has 4 noun phrases. For a more accurate result on her complex construction, it is important to make use of the lexical density. This is shown in Table 7b.

<b>Lexical items (a)</b>	<b>No. of clauses (b)</b>	<b>Lexical density (a)/ (b)</b>
63	9	7

**Table 7b: Janis' Extract Lexical Density**

Considering the criteria of Ivanic's (1998) study on lexical density (LD), an indicator of 7 of lexical density reflects a complex construction. As I pointed out, she has very complex structure in sentence 1; and complex noun phrases in all sentences, especially sentence 2. Taking a closer look at the sentences, she has mostly complex sentences in which the use of *'that'* as a conjunction for embedded clauses is frequently used. She uses this linking word to join clauses, and she uses some connectors such as *'thus'*, and *'on the other hand'* to link ideas. The use of complex conjunctions and embedded clauses makes evident the complexity of her identity as a writer. Janis actually said that using connectors is what makes her writing complex. From this, I can say that her awareness of the special language devices and conventions for this particular genre unfortunately refrain her voice expression in regards to her textual positioning.

#### 4.2.1.2 Janis's Voice of Discoursal Self

Being aware of the conventions of the genre to write and actually the way to manage them to express one's own voice is part of the voice's analysis in the discoursal self. As pointed out, Janis, as her thesis advisor, were aware of the conventions of academic writing in her thesis. I have discussed the linguistic realizations (self as author analysis), yet in discourse I make reference to intertextuality (*manifest intertextuality* and *interdiscursivity*) as Fairclough (1992, cited in Ivanic, 1998) suggests: *intertextuality* occurs by manifest expressions such as referring to authors' ideas (citing), presuppositions and/or *intediscursivity*, which explains the way she socializes with the academic community. In the extract I am analyzing, no manifest intertextuality is present. Nevertheless, there is *interdiscursivity* in the sense Janis considers the genre conventions, she addresses her audience integrating in the writing her interpretation of what she researches, so she socializes with the audience, and she also considers that writing a thesis takes place in that particular context in which she can get or not a degree. I infer this interdiscursivity expression along the analysis done and when she says:

*“Even though I was so afraid of writing a thesis because I don't consider myself as a great writer and because I know it involves reading, researching in a coherent way, connect authors' ideas, understand what you write, be coherent, academic, respect rules, and be accepted by my thesis director and readers, I feel now satisfied. I passed, and I am happy with my work. I think I did what I was expected and talking on something that I like”.*

With this quote, and the analysis previously done on linguistic features, I can say that Janis is conscious about the text she had to write, the way to address her audience and the academic context she was in. Despite she repetitively said she was afraid and she felt no freedom to express herself, she does have a discoursal voice which makes her part of the academic community of TESOL and AL. Conversely, those fears and feelings of repression to

express her own personal voice in academic writing make Janis' self as author's voice more conventionalized and not personalized. If she continues writing academically as she expressed in her professional exam "*I want to continue writing academically because I develop critical skills, and I consider myself as a more critical person and writer*", she will probably find her own way to develop and express her voice as *self as author*.

#### **4.2.2 Case 2: Billy**

Billy is 24 years old male coming from a rural area from the South of Puebla State. He moved to the city just for developing his BA studies, so he has been living in a city environment for 5 years at the moment of defending his thesis. He is a first generation male to complete a BA degree, which certainly makes him feel proud and very happy as well as to his family. This pride is also bigger as he is a student whose GPA was 9.3 and he did not have to defend his thesis project. The thesis defence was actually something he wanted to do. He says "*I wouldn't feel I studied a career without presenting my thesis. Since I entered to the career I was expecting the moment of writing and defending my thesis*". Thus, his quote affirms that Billy was intrinsically and extrinsically motivated to defend his research project. Besides he demonstrated to be a strong student in his BA studies.

Billy, coming from a middle-low social class enrolled into a major in ELT due to he wanted to learn English and be able to teach it. It is a personal inquietude he had since he was in secondary school when he realized that most of the male people in his community migrated to the United States in search of the American Dream. He noticed people went to the US without speaking English, and they had problems to get a job mainly because of not knowing the language. He wonders and questioned the education in secondary school where students are introduced to English. These were the reasons why he mainly enrolled into this

TESOL/AL BA program, yet these same reasons gave him his thesis research topic: *Impact of parent's immigration in the SLA of English*.

Besides his academic writing experience during his BA courses and thesis, Billy worked for a newspaper company where he wrote notes and brief commentaries about migration. This writing was done in Spanish, his mother tongue, yet his writing skills were developed. However, he recognizes that writing a thesis made him aware of many issues in academic writing. He actually makes reference to the writing of his literature review chapter:

*“Writing down chapter 2 was kind of hard for me because sometimes I did not respect the rules when writing down different paragraphs and I have to include the different ideas (...), it was hard not to manage my ideas. Writing a thesis means to write in an academic way, using for example APA style, it was hard for me, after doing my thesis I now know how to write”*

Billy's words suggests that writing academically implies complex issues such as following the academic conventions of APA (American Psychological Association) and organizing ideas in a coherent way. These strategies and conventions seem to be hard and challenging characteristics for Billy to develop academic writing. Besides, he adds that he did not feel really free to write what he wanted because he had to follow some rules. He claims: *“I'm restricted to write down what I feel because I have to take into account rules, include the authors' ideas, but I do consider those ideas with my life experiences”*. This quote supports that Billy did not feel freedom to write academically due to its conventions. However, it is noticed that he adds his point of view integrated to what authors do. Recalling the context of intertextuality, what Billy does is a strategic way to express one's voice integrated to the text for that particular academic context. This is actually observed during his writing. Now, after writing his thesis, Billy claims *“I wouldn't hesitate to write down academically because now I*



*know how to do it because I have some knowledge about to write academically*". Using this quote and support and considering Billy's enthusiasm during the interview, I perceive that he is happy with his project and with his academic writing.

Following the same procedure as I did with Janis, I first present Billy's extract from his conclusion's *SOR* section, and secondly the analysis of voice regarding *self as author* and *discoursal self*.

*Billy's extract:*

Finally, according to the results, the majority of parents and students think there is good English teaching in high schools in Mexico. On the one hand, students would like to learn English in a proper way, academically speaking, and not precisely in a foreign country but in this country. On the other hand, parents help students in their education and motivate them to study English. This last point alludes that English is still, without any doubt, an important language to learn as a Foreign Language. The points above are, in sum, the conclusions of this project of investigation.

#### **4.2.2.1 Billy's Voice of Self as Author**

The study of *voice as author* starts with the *ideational position* of Billy's writing. According to the extract, it is noticed that Billy's interest focuses on a particular area of study: SLA of English in Mexico. His use of lexis allows the reader to infer he is doing studies in such area. The lexical choice includes the following noun phrases: *the results, the majority of parents and students, good English teaching, high schools in Mexico, students, English, a proper way, a foreign country, this country, parents, education, important language,*

*conclusions, project, investigation.* Secondly, the way Billy positions this area knowledge is analyzed with the verb system. Billy’s verb system is summarized in Table 8a.

<b>Verb</b>	<b>Tense</b>	<b>Process Type</b>
<i>think</i>	Simple present –active	Mental
<i>is</i>	Simple present –active	Existential
<i>would like to learn</i>	Modality –to be analyzed in interpersonal positioning	Mental
<i>help</i>	Simple present –active	Action
<i>motivate</i>	Simple present –active	Mental –action
<i>to study</i>	Infinitive	Action –mental
<i>alludes</i>	Simple present –active	Relational
<i>is</i>	Simple present –active	Existential
<i>to learn</i>	Infinitive	Mental
<i>are</i>	Simple present –active	Existential

**Table 8a: Billy’s Extract Verb System**

Contrary to Janis’s use of tenses, Billy uses only present absolute tenses and a couple of infinitives. All of these are conjugated in active voice. This use of present may be because he is probably reporting his results to locate them in here and now, and in this way could make them more relevant to a nowadays updated point of view. In addition, he is also presenting some facts of the things being done and demonstrating what is done. He mostly uses mental and relational processes due to these are actions that are mentally and existentially realized. This is also because of the type of research he did. He worked with a survey methodology in which he analyzed perceptions, and now he is just reporting such. He actually turns into definite claims such as *without doubt* to point out what he says; he uses these mental and

relational processes (this is actually part of the analysis of the *interpersonal positioning* regarding *modality*) due to his positioning himself as an intermediary of what was found. The use of first person in Billy's writing is not present. This is according to him as something we do not do in academic writing. He actually says

*"I thought using 'I' was correct and there was no problem, but then, I learnt that everything should be correct, parallelism and impersonal, so if I start in impersonal I have to finish like that. I do include my point of view, but not using I, not in an academic paper"*

Billy's words suggest some beliefs of what should or should not be done in academic writing. He emphasizes that the use of 'I' must not happen in an academic paper, yet he refers also to the importance of expressing his view on the topic to write. This suggests that he uses other linguistic realizations to express his own voice such as making use of evidence and presenting his evaluative words very determinate towards a main claim.

Billy's *intertextual positioning* regarding assurance and certainty includes the evaluation, modality and first person reference. These last two points have been analyzed in the ideational positioning section; there is no use of personal voice though he expresses his point of view by the use of adverbs and strong evaluative words such as *in a proper way* and *academically speaking*. In the evaluation, he supports and strengthens his posture by using the expression "*without any doubt*", which makes a direct and strong assertion. Billy's writing *mood* is evaluative-declarative, just summarizing and evaluating what was done.

In *textual positioning*, the last position for analyzing *self as author*, the linguistic realizations are noun phrase length, clause structure and linking devices. Billy's extract contains 5 sentences. The extract has 98 words in total, 27 noun phrases, and 7 clauses.

*Billy's Extract*

1) Finally, according to **the results, the majority** of **parents and students** think 2) **there is good English teaching in high schools** in **Mexico**. 3) On the one hand, **students** would like to learn **English** in **a proper way**, academically speaking, and not precisely in **a foreign country** but in **this country**. 4) On the other hand, **parents** help **students** in **their education** and motivate **them** to study **English**. 5) This **last point** alludes 6) that **English** is still, without any **doubt, an important language** to learn as a **Foreign Language**. 7) **The points** above are, in **sum, the conclusions** of **this project of investigation**.

Billy uses simple noun phrases most of the time, yet he does have some complex subjects such as in clause 1: *the majority of parents and students*, and objects such as the one in clause 7: *the conclusions of this project of investigation*. The complexity of his construction is quantitatively obtained by the lexical density, which is in Table 8b.

<b>Lexical items (a)</b>	<b>No. of clauses (b)</b>	<b>Lexical density (a)/ (b)</b>
62	7	8.8

**Table 8b: Billy's Extract Lexical Density**

Billy's lexical density reflects complex structure. That is, he elaborates his constructions. Regarding sentence type, Billy uses simple sentences most of the time (five sentences). He just uses two complex sentences. Thus, at the sentence level I can say he has a simple construction, yet the phrases within the sentences are complex. It is observed that the minimum number of noun phrases in a sentence is 4 even though it is a simple sentence. This

is indeed something he commented on during the interview when talking about weaknesses.

He says:

*“My weakness is to write freely. I mean not to control myself when I write in an academic way because I start writing down and my ideas start flowing. I just write and write and write; I can’t control it. I know English has some rules and a way to write and be direct, but it is difficult for me to control it and keep my ideas straight”.*

Billy’s quote is rich in information for writing studies. He makes reference to Kaplan’s (1966) contrastive rhetoric, writing in English requires of a direct way to say things, organize the paragraph straight to the point. This was a difficulty for him since he was just having his ideas flowing because he knew his topic, he could not stop writing about, and he wrote about it as he experienced it. Regarding linking words, the extract has some connector words such as *finally, on the other hand(x2), this last point, in sum*. The use of this linking expression and connectors give cohesion to the extract, yet considering that it has only seven sentences, these connective words are over-used. According current studies by Johns (2008b), romance languages generally overuse connective words. Billy knows his wordiness and elaborated construction had to change for a more direct and straight format to be successful when writing in English, yet his complex structure construction is still characteristic of his writing and since this is his voice in writing, this complexity is indeed part of his identity.

#### **4.2.2.2 Billy’s Voice of Discoursal Self**

Along the explanation of self as author, I noticed that Billy is aware of the academic writing discourse conventions. These conventions were at first an impediment or *restriction* as he calls it to express himself freely; however, after writing his thesis project he considers *“writing academically is a way to contribute to the theory and disciplines; it is just a matter of*

*knowing and managing the rules putting something from yourself*'. As seen, Billy is conscious of the academic conventions for writing and for developing a thesis project. He knows that in academic writing the use of other author's view to support his view is important as a way of integrating his discourse into the discipline and for which he has to follow the genre conventions. In the extract in analysis no *manifest intertextuality* is observed, yet there is *interdiscursivity*. Billy socializes with his academic audience in the way he integrates his thoughts in writing. He relates his results with the actual context where his research context e.g. *in high schools in Mexico*, and using academic language. His written text follows the academic writing conventions, addresses the readers in his research area which is education and SLA of English, and he also considers the genre he is writing, and the section where the extract was taken from. That is, Billy knows the communicative function of a conclusion in a thesis. He makes uses referring to results, and closes his *SOR* section with the following sentence: *The points above are, in sum, the conclusions of this project of investigation.*

#### **4.2.3 Case 3: Celine**

Celine is 25 years old. She has lived all her life in the suburbs of the city. She is a second generation female to graduate with a BA; her parents have a BA in education as well. She is a student with a GPA of 8.7. Celine's social status is middle social class. All her studies before the major were done in local public schools, that is, schools placed in the outer rural areas of the city. Her first four semesters of her BA in languages were done in a private school incorporated to the state's main public university. This happened because Celine's score in the exam for entering to the University was below the standards of acceptance. Two years later she repeated the admission exam, and she was accepted revalidating her four semesters. She then continued and finished her studies in the public university.

Celine decided to study languages due to her consideration that English is an important and necessary language to learn. Besides, speaking English is important for her parents and relatives. Regarding writing, she comments that she loves writing. She actually has kept a personal diary since she was in secondary school. Her academic writing experience though, only goes to her assignments written during her major and her thesis, as the main academic task. She actually comments that during her four semesters she studied in an incorporated institution she was not frequently exposed to writing tasks. It was until her fifth semester when she started to develop her writing. She considers that the writing during her career was “*awful, I didn't feel motivation to write, especially when the topic was not interesting*”. She adds that most of her writing activities were *boring and did not include any challenge or motivation to do it*. However, when it was moment to write her thesis, Celine was one of the students who had already thought in the topic she would research and write about: *Games implemented in an EFL classroom to catch hyperactive children attention*. This decision was done because of two main reasons: she was working in a school which deals only with this type of learners, and she had a brother who had learning and school problems because hyperactivity. Thus, Celine was looking for a way to teach this type of learners. She considered games as a good and effective way to work with, so she decided to do an ethnographic research in her job context and propose games as a suitable activity. As seen, she has personal and professional reasons to work with this topic, she indeed affirms that she “*had many problems to teach hyperactive children, writing about this topic was a challenge for me (...) because of my brother and my job*”.

She is now happy because she showed that games are indeed effective when teaching hyperactive children. Her whole family and relatives were present in the professional exam. They were really emotionally moved by Celine's achievement. From these experiences, I infer

that Celine was totally invested in her research and she felt identified with the topic. During the interview she pointed out that she “*couldn’t write of anything else, but teaching hyperactive children because she was motivated to do so*”.

Following the previous case study formats, I present Celine’s analysis on voice. The extract to analyze is as follows, and the *self as author* and *discoursal* self are in order.

*Celine’s extract:*

Also, they like being in constant movement and they do not feel ashamed at the time to participate. Then, it is recommendable to use games as an excellent way to do interesting, fun and dynamic classes. It covers all the children’s needs, expectations, and they develop the four skills. All children are motivated if teachers give rewards to the winners using TPR during the game; they like competition because they like to feel recognized in front of their classmates. Furthermore hyperactive children spend a lot of energy, especially with games of movement or when many games are included in larger classes with students from different ages mixed in the same classroom.

#### **4.2.3.1 Celine’s Voice of Self as Author**

The *ideational positioning* regarding the extract points out to an interest in ELT and hyperactive children. This is noticed by analyzing the noun phrases such as: *games, fun and dynamic classes, children’s needs, expectations, four skills, children, teachers, rewards, winners, TPR, competition, classmates, hyperactive children, energy, larger classes, ages, classroom*. As observed in these noun phrases, the nouns she uses in her writing place the reader in her research area which is teaching English to hyperactive children. Also, Celine



builds her knowledge in this specific research field by using action and mental processes and present tenses. A summary of the verb processes and tense system is presented in Table 9a.

<b>Verb</b>	<b>Tense</b>	<b>Process Type</b>
<i>like (3x)</i>	Simple Present –active	Mental
<i>do not feel</i>	Simple Present –active	Mental
<i>to participate</i>	Infinitive	Verbal
<i>is</i>	Simple Present –active	Existential
<i>to use</i>	Infinitive	Action
<i>to do</i>	Infinitive	Action
<i>covers</i>	Simple Present –active	Action
<i>develop</i>	Simple Present –active	Action
<i>are</i>	Simple Present –active	Existential
<i>give</i>	Simple Present –active	Action
<i>to feel</i>	Infinitive	Mental
<i>spend</i>	Simple Present –active	Action
<i>are included</i>	Simple Present –passive	Action

**Table 9a: Celine’s Extract Verb System**

As seen, the majority of the tense in the verbs system is simple present with action and mental processes. This is because Celine summarizes her results as if she were presenting facts, and with the use of infinitives she makes suggestions of the things that can be done based on her findings. Her verbs system indicates that she constructs knowledge in the here and now. In this way she places her writing *ideational positioning* as a timeless event and in this way she highlights the relevance of her study.

One more aspect to analyze in the *ideational position* is the first person use. Similarly to the previous participants, Celine does not use first person in her writing. Using *I*, according to

her, is not correct in academic writing. She says “*I have to follow the rules (...) and writing in ‘I’ is not correct*” she further comments that it was something her research advisor told her; thus, writing in impersonal was an advisor influence on her, and it seems she considers the use of ‘I’ negative to develop in academic writing. In fact, she claims that writing in impersonal was “*a challenge and something good since I learnt to respect rules of academic writing. I now follow the rules and it is easy for me to write*”. Despite the non-use of ‘I’ as person reference, she claims that she always included her point of view, emphasizing this in chapter 4 and 5 because she explains her conclusions and interprets results, so she has to give more information from her own.

Celine’s *interpersonal positioning* is analyzed in terms of *modality, evaluation, mood* and *first person reference*. Celine uses only one attributive clause: ‘*it’s recommendable*’ to express modality. She suggests and places her relation as a writer with her audience as a mid level; it is just a recommendation which it is up to the audience whether to do it or not. In the evaluation, Celine’s assertiveness expressed by her use of present tenses in active and action processes positions her as knower of her area. The mood of the extract is in declarative; she just presents findings and suggestions. Regarding the first person usage, as discussed in the ideational positioning is because of her advisor’s influence though she affirms she included her point of view of everything what she wrote. Her perspective and interpersonal position can be then observed in expressions such as *not ashamed, excellent, interesting, fun, and dynamic* in which she expresses her strong belief in implementing games in the EFL classroom.

Finally, analyzing Celine’s *textual positioning* permits to study how she constructs her voice in the genre of that particular text. This analysis considers the length of noun phrases and linking devices. The extract has 111 words in total, 5 sentences, 32 noun phrases and 11 clauses.

*Celine's Extract:*

1) Also, **they** like **being in constant movement** and 2) **they** do not feel ashamed at **the time** to participate. 3) Then, **it** is recommendable to use **games** as **an excellent way** to do **interesting, fun and dynamic classes**. 4) **It** covers **all the children's needs, expectations**, and 5) **they** develop **the four skills**. 6) **All children** are motivated 7) if **teachers** give **rewards** to **the winners** using **TPR** during **the game**; 8) **they** like **competition** 9) because **they** like to feel recognized in front of **their classmates**. 10) Furthermore, **hyperactive children** spend a lot of **energy**, especially with **games of movement** or 11) when **many games** are included in **larger classes** with **students** from **different ages** mixed in **the same classroom**.

Celine's extracts shows the use of complex noun phrases. She has many prepositional phrases as part of the noun ones, e.g. "*in larger classes with students from different ages mixed in the classroom*". This high complexity suggests that her writing is highly elaborated, yet to determine Celine's writing elaboration, I analyze the lexical density in Table 9b.

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Lexical items (a)	No. of clauses (b)	Lexical density (a)/ (b)
79	11	7.1

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**Table 9b: Celine's Extract Lexical Density**

The lexical density is high which confirms what I pointed out in the complexity of noun phrases. Celine elaborates her writing. The types of sentences and clauses she actually uses in her extract support her elaboration as well. Celine extract has compound, complex and simple sentences with complex noun phrases. She actually uses subordinating conjunctions e.g. *if, because, when*, to link her clauses, and this is also a distinctive feature of her textual

positioning. She seems to be aware of the academic writing conventions and she uses connectors such as: *also, then, furthermore* to link sentences and conjunctions such as *and, when, if, because* to link clauses. These last three types of conjunctions are subordinated conjunctions and they are characteristic of complex sentences. However, she claims that “*using connectors, punctuation was difficult because I have to organize my ideas, and look for the good way to say it (...) now I know how to make it, but with lots of practice*”. Thus, using complex linking devices such as the subordinating conjunctions has helped her to express her ideas in a logical order following the academic writing conventions. It is, however, worth mentioning that the function of these conjunctions is to join complex sentences, which is her way to express the complexity of her identity.

#### **4.2.3.2 Celine’s Voice of Discoursal Self**

As mentioned in the previous section, Celine’s extract shows that she is aware of the academic writing discourse conventions. It is now turn to analyze how she constructs her voice in the discourse community of a BA thesis in TESOL/AL. Similarly to previous participants she does not use manifest intertextuality; no use of citing or presuppositions is present in the extract. What I can say at this respect is that she commented in her interview that it was “*difficult to write the literature review because [she] had to integrate author’s ideas, contrast them with what [she] think[s]*”. She recognizes her difficulty to integrate author’s ideas in her writing, and this was mostly what she had to do in the literature review chapter; however, in there is no evidence of manifest intertextuality in her extract. Conversely, her interdiscursivity although addressed to her audience, she just makes general claims of the findings and strong assertions of what to be done which are probably based on her beliefs and experience in teaching hyperactive children. This assumption suggests that she indeed

integrates her voice (as author), but she does not supports nor discusses her claims within the discourse community (discoursal voice).

#### **4.2.4 Case 4: Rod**

Rod is a Mexican male who has spent his whole life living in a city. He is 27 years old. He is a first generation professional. Although his GPA of 8.6 suggests he is an average student, he had to present his thesis due to he repeating a subject during his BA studies. Rod majored in ELT due to his like for music. He actually says “*I learnt English because of music. I love to listen to music in English and watch TV programs in English*”. As seen music and understanding what singers and actors say was his motivation to study English, and then the conviction of other people would probably share his same motive to learn English. He decided to become an English teacher and relate music to ELT as a means to learn the language. Indeed, he affirms that he learnt English by using music and he would have enjoyed having classes using music and songs. For this reason, he decided to do his thesis addressing this issue: *The use of music as a tool to improve listening in ELT*.

Rod’s writing experience relates only to the papers written in his subjects during the major and his thesis. At this regard, he expresses that writing is his weakest skill. He says that during his thesis, the action of writing was difficult because of idea connection and formal language use. He affirms he improved his writing skills in the sense he learnt to quote, paraphrase and link ideas, but he says he is too simple and direct when writing his claims. His weaknesses were mainly according to him that he does very direct and strong assertions; he does not use hedging to reduce the strength of what he claims. He actually comments when writing his conclusions chapter:

*“I was so simple in my writing. I needed to give more discussion and support, summarize the points and relate them to my purpose, but it was difficult for me to give formal points of view on a topic that is so common and familiar for me. I learnt English with music, and those were my conclusions in my thesis and life experiences, so how I could write more on something that is true for me. I tried to give conclusions using my own words. I used simple words, concrete ideas, and short direct sentences”*

During the interview, Rod emphasized his direct way to say things. He is a very direct person going to the point. This, I can say, is true because from the four interviews, his was the shortest in time and simple answers. Considering that English is a language which according to Kaplan (1966) follows a simple construction in paragraphs his writing fits the language conventions, yet considering the conventions of academic writing he considers needs to be careful incorporating what authors say, what he wants to say and how he says it. Rod claims that he always includes his point of view, his own voice when writing. Thus, it is time to analyze the linguistic realizations he uses to do so. I first present the extract for analysis.

*Rod's extract*

However, some disadvantages were that activities with songs are time consuming; the level of vocabulary, idioms and old songs may be difficult or boring for students. Finally, teachers used activities with music and song lyrics activities. These activities allowed students to understand the language by listening to songs. In addition, students learn grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation through activities in which music is included. This research also found that the use of music and songs are an important tool for teachers to teach and develop the listening skill in students. Besides, teachers involved students in learning a second language in an inductive way.

#### 4.2.4.1 Rod's Voice of Self as Author

For this section I analyze the linguistic realizations Rod uses to express his *ideational*, *interpersonal* and *textual positioning*. In ideational positioning it is observed that Rod uses lexis of his particular research area, music in ELT. This is observed in the noun phrases he uses: *disadvantages, activities, songs, time consuming, level of vocabulary, idioms, old songs, students, teachers, activities, music, song lyrics activities, the language, listening songs, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation, research, the use of music, an important tool for teachers, learning a second language, and inductive way*. These nouns phrases place his text in the area of study, showing his interests. The way he presents his ideas and incorporates these nouns phrases deal with the analysis of the verb system. I summarize this in Table 10a.

<b>Verb</b>	<b>Tense</b>	<b>Process Type</b>
<i>were</i>	<i>Simple past –active</i>	<i>Existential</i>
<i>are (x2)</i>	<i>Simple present –active</i>	<i>Existential</i>
<i>may be</i>	<i>Modality –to be analyzed in interpersonal positioning</i>	<i>Existential</i>
<i>used</i>	<i>Simple past –active</i>	<i>Action</i>
<i>allow</i>	<i>Simple present –active</i>	<i>Mental</i>
<i>to understand</i>	<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Mental</i>
<i>learn</i>	<i>Simple present –active</i>	<i>Mental</i>
<i>is included</i>	<i>Simple present –passive</i>	<i>Action</i>
<i>found</i>	<i>Simple past –active</i>	<i>Mental</i>
<i>to teach</i>	<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Action</i>
<i>to develop</i>	<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Action</i>
<i>involved</i>	<i>Simple past –active</i>	<i>Action -mental</i>

**Table 10a: Rod's Extract Verb System**

As seen, Rod uses present and past tenses to present his conclusions. His extract has 5 present tenses from which 2 of them are existential, 2 are mental and one is action process. This suggests that the processes he refers to the more imply cognitive activities from part of the students, and the use of present tense is because the actions are expressed as facts and others as suggestions he makes based on his findings. Rod uses past tense to report his findings, and some infinitives to propose things to be done. Interestingly, the use of active voice is the dominant in the extract. This is indeed related to what he says of being direct in his writing and personality itself; he puts the subjects as the active doers of the actions. This last situation is also observed in Billy's and Celine's cases, yet they did not mention nor consider themselves as people who say things directly. The use of mental and existential processes as mentioned refer to cognitive activities, and taking a close look at the action verbs, they also imply an action close linked to a mental process. This responds to the nature of Rod's writer identity of being direct.

A last point to analyze in the *ideational positioning* is the use of first person reference. Similarly to the previous cases, Rod does not use the 'I' person when writing. He says it was "*an unconscious decision; just wrote and did not think whether it was personal or impersonal*". However, as mentioned in the literature review, a common characteristic of *identity* is that it is dynamic in constant flux and tension as it is negotiated between differing social contexts (Ivanic and Simpson, 1992). In this case, Rod opted to do it in impersonal although he further affirms that "*writing in impersonal is very difficult and it caused me problems and time to write*". During the professional examination, his research advisor asked him about the difficulties in writing the thesis, and Rod's answer was that "*writing academically is hard in the way of expressing myself, my ideas, to link and be coherent with what I want to say, because of reading and critical skills and we don't have to write in*



*impersonal*". This quote shows that writing in impersonal was according to him, his decision, but it is also noticed that he considers it as something not to necessarily done in academic written discourse.

His feelings and emotions towards the use of music in the English language classroom were emphasized, in the interview, during the exam and in the thesis. He used other features rather than the use of first person referent to express his point of view, and this is actually what all the participants did in their writing.

I now analyze Rod's *interpersonal positioning*, self-assurance, certainty and different power relations between the writer and the reader. Certainty is expressed by a mid level of modality. Rod used only one modal of medium degree of likeliness e.g. *may be*. He does not make use of any other feature to express modality. He is not giving possibility of things to happen, he just claims directly and to the point which makes the text an assertive text. This assertiveness is also shown in the text mood. All of its sentences are declarative and show neutrality letting the reader know the advantages and disadvantages. This is a way to appeal to the audience decision and judgment. Thus, the power relations Rod establishes with his audience, is just informing and reporting what he did in an assertive-declarative manner.

Finally, the analysis of noun phrases, clause structure and linking devices permits the analysis of Rod's *textual positioning*. For this, I present the complete abstract which has a total of 103 words, 6 sentences, 23 noun phrases and 11 clauses.

Rod's extract:

1) However, some **disadvantages** were that 3) **activities with songs** are **time consuming**; 4) **the level of vocabulary, idioms and old songs** may be difficult or boring for **students**. 5) Finally, **teachers** used **activities with music** and **song lyrics activities**. 6) These **activities** allowed to **students** to understand **the language** by **listening to songs**. 7) In addition, **students** learn **grammar, vocabulary** and **pronunciation** through **activities** 8) in which **music** is included. 9) This **research** also found that 10) **the use of music and songs** are **an important tool** for **teachers** to teach and develop **the listening skill in students**. 11) Besides, **teachers** involved **students in learning a second language in an inductive way**.

Rod's noun phrases elaboration is complex. He usually has prepositional phrases as part of the noun phrase, e.g. *activities with songs, the use of music and songs, the listening skill in students*. In fact, there are 4 noun phrases at least in each sentence. This complex elaboration is clearly seen at the noun phrases, but in order to generalize about the complexity in his language elaboration, it is first necessary to analyze the clause structure. At first sight, Rod mostly uses simple sentences; he has though one compound-complex sentence and one complex sentence. This points out to a complex elaboration in his language structure in academic written discourse. To support this finding, I calculated his extract's lexical density which is shown in Table 10b

<b>Lexical items (a)</b>	<b>No. of clauses (b)</b>	<b>Lexical density (a)/ (b)</b>
67	11	6

**Table 10b: Rod's Extract Lexical Density**

The number of lexical density evidences that Rod's construction is elaborated. As previously noted in the types of sentences he uses, he has complex sentences in which he uses some embedded clauses. This shows that he has indeed discursual heterogeneity, that is, he constructs his knowledge with different types of structures and with a high level of complexity. This actually supports what discussed in the *ideational positioning* analysis when he refers himself as direct, straight-forward in his writing.

Rod's complexity of written discourse as well as in the other participants, is observed in the use of connectors and linking devices. Rod regularly uses connectors e.g. *however*, *finally*, *in addition* and *besides*; as well deictic words such as *this* and *these* to link sentences. These linking words are characteristic of academic writing, and Rod seems to be aware of that. Thus, this is the way in which he uses linguistic realizations to express himself as author in the community of TESOL at a BA level.

#### **4.2.4.2 Rod's Voice of Discursal Self**

This section discusses Rod's *discursal voice* in his thesis' writing. As mentioned in the discussion of Rod as *self as author*, I pointed out that due to the lexis, linking devices, variability in structure, and other linguistic features, he seems to be aware of the conventions of academic writing. Rod follows these conventions fulfilling the communicative purposes of the thesis conclusions as the genre he writes, and he has a voice as author. However, it is now time to analyze the way he constructs his voice and socializes in the discourse community. This is done by analyzing intertextuality. Rod's extract does not present *manifest intertextuality*, and his *interdiscursivity* seems to be poorly constructed. Rod socializes with the academic community by the use of linguistic features such as activities with *songs*, *lyrics*, *level of vocabulary*, and *idioms*. His research focused on music as a tool to teach English

mainly listening skill is developed in a university context and addressed to a particular audience. Conversely, he never makes reference to his research context, at least not in the extract I am analyzing. Something more applicable and characteristic of his research context could help in the discourse voice construction.

Another important point relates to genre. This extract is not that genre specific; there is not a clear move characteristic of a conclusion. The extract could be placed in the results section since it just points out findings. Hence, these characteristics make Rod's discorsal self weakly constructed at the interaction and contextual level.

### **4.3 Gender Comparison on Voice Expression**

This section presents a comparison of voice expression in the four case studies. Previous section analyzed individual instances explaining and discussing participants' voice characteristics and linguistic realizations of each case, thus, here I refer to them summarizing the main points for just comparative gender reasons. This analysis fulfills the third purpose of my research, and closes the results chapter.

After going through each participant's voice expression *as self author* and *discorsal self*, I assume my audience familiarity with the framework I adapted from Ivanic's and Camps' (2001). Thus, I summarize each participant's voice expression as *self author* in Table 11 considering the three types of positioning, adding a fourth category for the *discorsal self*.

SELF AS AUTHOR			DISCOURSAL SELF
Ideational positioning	Interpersonal positioning	Textual positioning	Intertextuality/ interdiscursivity
<b>-Janis-</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NP</b> - characteristic &amp; distinctive of her discipline</li> <li>• <b>Tense(s)</b>: present, past, infinitives/active (50%) &amp; passive (50 %)</li> <li>• <b>Process (es)</b>: Mental (6), action (4), Existential (2).</li> <li>• <b>No first person reference</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Evaluative devices</b>: “<i>possible</i>”, neutral position, lets the reader chose</li> <li>• <b>Modality</b>: mid level e.g. <i>possible</i></li> <li>• <b>No First person reference</b></li> <li>• <b>Mood</b>: Declarative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NP length</b>: complex</li> <li>• <b>Lexical Density</b>: 7</li> <li>• <b>Clauses structure</b>: mostly subordinated clauses</li> <li>• <b>Linking devices</b>: connectors, conjunctions &amp; deictic expressions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* <b>No Manifest intertextuality</b></li> <li>* <b>Interdiscursivity</b>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• address her <b>audience</b></li> <li>• <b>academic writing</b> conventions in her own voice addressed in the context of TESOL</li> <li>• <b>fulfills</b> the communicative purpose of a <b>conclusion as genre</b> integrating her own voice</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>-Billy-</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NP - characteristic &amp; distinctive of his discipline</li> <li>• <b>Tense(s)</b>: present &amp; infinitives (2); active (100%)</li> <li>• <b>Process(es)</b>: Mental (4) Existential(4), action(2)</li> <li>• <b>No first person reference</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Evaluative devices</b>: <i>assertive, strong firm position e.g. “without any doubt”</i></li> <li>• <b>Modality</b>: mid level e.g. “<i>would like to...</i>”, <i>mental processes, attributive clauses</i></li> <li>• <b>No First person reference</b></li> <li>• <b>Mood</b>: Declarative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NP length</b>: simple, yet complex subjects</li> <li>• <b>Lexical Density</b>: 8.8</li> <li>• <b>Clauses structure</b>: embedded clauses; simple sentences</li> <li>• <b>Linking devices</b>: connectors, conjunction, deictic expressions &amp; phrases.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* <b>No Manifest intertextuality</b></li> <li>* <b>Interdiscursivity</b>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• address his <b>audience</b></li> <li>• <b>academic writing</b> conventions in his own voice addressed in the context of ELT</li> <li>• <b>fulfills</b> the communicative purpose of a <b>conclusion as genre</b> integrating his own voice &amp; contributing to the discourse</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

SELF AS AUTHOR			DISCOURSAL SELF
Ideational positioning	Interpersonal positioning	Textual positioning	Intertextuality/ interdiscursivity
<b>-Celine-</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NP - characteristic &amp; distinctive of her discipline</li> <li>• <b>Tense(s):</b> present, infinitives (2) active (100%)</li> <li>• <b>Process(es):</b> Action (7) Mental (4), Existential (2).</li> <li>• <b><u>No</u> first person reference</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Evaluative devices:</b> assertive by the use of present tense</li> <li>• <b>Modality:</b> mid level e.g. “<i>it is recommendable</i>”</li> <li>• <b><u>No</u> First person reference</b></li> <li>• <b>Mood:</b> Declarative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NP length:</b> complex</li> <li>• <b>Lexical Density:</b> 7.1</li> <li>• <b>Clauses structure:</b> main &amp; subordinated clauses</li> <li>• <b>Linking devices:</b> connectors &amp; conjunctions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* <b><u>No</u> Manifest intertextuality</b></li> <li>* <b>Interdiscursivity:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• address her <b>audience</b></li> <li>• <b>academic writing</b> conventions, but she does not integrates her own voice nor her research context with of TESOL</li> <li>• <b>does not</b> fulfill the communicative purpose of a <b>conclusion as genre</b> per se, nor integrates her voice</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>-Rod-</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NP - characteristic &amp; distinctive of his discipline</li> <li>• <b>Tense(s):</b> present, past, infinitives/active (87.5%) &amp; passive (12.5%)</li> <li>• <b>Process (es):</b> Mental (5), action (5), Existential (4).</li> <li>• <b><u>No</u> first person reference</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Evaluative devices:</b> “<i>assertive</i>” shown in the tense and processes used</li> <li>• <b>Modality:</b> mid level e.g. <i>may be</i></li> <li>• <b><u>No</u> First person reference</b></li> <li>• <b>Mood:</b> Declarative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NP length:</b> complex</li> <li>• <b>Lexical Density:</b> 6</li> <li>• <b>Clauses structure:</b> subordinated clauses, simple sentences</li> <li>• <b>Linking devices:</b> connectors, conjunctions &amp; deictic expressions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* <b><u>No</u> Manifest intertextuality</b></li> <li>* <b>Interdiscursivity:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• address his <b>audience</b></li> <li>• interdiscursivity poorly constructed</li> <li>• <b>academic writing</b> conventions, yet stronger links and connections to the area</li> <li>• does not fulfill the communicative purpose of a conclusion as genre integrating his own voice</li> <li>• does not contribute to the discourse</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Table 11: Summary of the Four Participant’s Voice Expression**

The table presents the linguistic realizations the four cases use to express their *voice as author*, and the considerations of audience, writing conventions and conclusions as genre as means to analyze interdiscursivity since its construction permits the writer to construct their own *voice* into that *discourse* piece.

The *ideational positioning* in *self as author* shows similarity in the four cases regarding the noun phrases, the use of the three different verb processes (mental, existential and relational) although with different percentages, and the non-use of first person reference. Hence, females and males place the reader in their discipline by using specific lexis distinctive of their area. Participants' different interests and methodologies are then evident for each case. In the same way, the four cases make knowledge within their discipline by using the three different verb processes. The tendencies to use more one process than the other differ from participant to participant. However, both women tend to use more mental and action processes whereas men use more mental processes followed by action in one case, and the other by relational. This suggests that in this study men do not have a pattern as women seem to do regarding the use of processes. This difference (males) and similarity (females) certainly suggest that there are different ways to construct knowledge within the disciplines; it depends on the choice the writers make and how they want to be seen. Thus, the difference relates not only gender, but also personality.

This is seen in the selection of tenses to work. As seen in the table, Janis and Rod use present, past and infinitives with both active and passive voice. Conversely, Celine and Billy only use present and infinitives with active voice. This is then a personal, more than a gender choice. However, I noticed that Janis and Rod were advised by the same tutor in their research projects, who is different from Billy's and Celine's advisor. This probably points out to a possible influence of the advisor. As reviewed in the literature and confirmed in the interview

with the other thesis director students usually tend to follow a pattern, and if they see their advisor does something, they will probably try to follow it. This also seems to be the case with the non-use of the first person reference. None of the participants uses 'I' in their writing. The four interviews point out that it is because they were told the academic writing should follow conventions and among them, the use of impersonal is an important one.

Conversely to the ideational positioning, the *interpersonal positioning* presents more similarities in the four cases. The way the participants express certainty and self assurance by means of modality is being assertive. They interact with the audience placing themselves as the knower of their research, and thus, asserting with the use of the declarative mood. Most of the participants place their modality in a mid level trying to protect themselves from absolute statements, and better let the reader takes the choice.

*Textual positioning* shows no difference among genders. It actually points out to an elaborated construction from the four participants. The four cases show a complex use of noun phrases, as well as a high lexical density. Rod is the one who shows the lower level of lexical density, but it is still high. As Ivanic (1998) suggests, an indicator of lexical density of or above 5 portrays a complex construction. Regarding the use of clauses, the four cases make use of dependent and independent clauses, yet what it is noted is that the two males usually use more simple sentences than women. This, as Rod claims, might deal with the directness to say things, "*men are simple to express, and when we want to say something, we just say it*". This may sound a mere manhood view, yet it in the writings both men mainly use simple sentences. I can argue this view by noting that both have complex noun phrases and their lexical density is still high; actually Billy got the highest average for lexical density. The writing of the four participants is then complex and highly elaborated in construction. Regarding the linking expressions participants use are mainly connectors, conjunctions and



some deictic expressions. The use of these linking devices shows that the writers awareness of the academic writing conventions regarding cohesive devices. The participants' textual positioning points out to a consciousness of the different types of construct a text of in the academic context in the particular genre of a thesis. There are not main differences regarding genders, in how they construct their texts and express voice as author.

The analysis of the *discoursal self* also evidences similarities in the no expression of *manifest intertextuality*. This seems to be, however, as discussed in the conclusions analysis (section 4.1) that thesis advisors do not emphasize on the move of referring to previous research (support nor comparison) as something that is part of the conclusions.

About the expression of *interdiscursivity*, the four participants address their audience, yet they differ in the way of integrating their voice to the discourse. Janis and Billy follow the writing conventions of the BA thesis conclusions section and integrate their research with the TESOL/AL discipline and own voice. That is, they incorporate their view based on what they researched and following the conventions of a thesis conclusion of the TESOL/AL disciplines. In this way, Janis and Billy fulfill the communicative purpose of the conclusions particularly of the *SOR* section from which the extract was taken. Billy and Janis then express their voice and represent themselves in the *discoursal self*; actually, Billy goes further and contributes more specifically to the discourse addressing his research context in the light of the theory (see section 5.1). Conversely, Celine and Rod, although follow the academic writing conventions, their text is not genre specific, the extracts could be also part of the results section since they are merely summarizing and/or reporting results. In Celine's extract there are no devices which make it particular of a conclusions genre.

As a final note, I summarize the self as author and discoursal voices of the four participants relating them to gender differences. Along this section, I pointed out that although

there are differences in representing one's own voice *as author* and into the *discourse*, these are not gender differences but rather personal choices and other identity and gender features, and in some cases the result of an influence from the research advisor. I noticed that there is no problem in developing voice as self as author, everybody has an author voice, yet it is hard to develop one's own voice and integrate it into the discourse. This requires as pointed out by Faigley (1986, cited in Ivanic, 1998), the integration of the self into the text of the same genre, which implies the consideration of academic writing conventions, genre conventions, the discipline, and one's voice.

The results discussed in this chapter bring important implications for my study. I therefore, proceed to make my claims about the main findings and the implications my study has in studies of genre and voice. I present this in my Conclusions Chapter, which follows.

## CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter I present the main conclusions on the Framework for Undergraduate Thesis Conclusions (FUTC), voice analysis and gender distinction on voice expression in order to highlight the main findings, and conclude with my claims regarding my three main purposes. Thus, the first section will briefly review the FUTC including an example to show how it works and provide a comprehensive and more unified approach to data analysis of undergraduate thesis conclusions. The second section summarizes my main claims regarding voice expression and how it contributes to studies in the field. In the third section, I include an account on the implications from this research; these are suggestions for teaching to express *voice* in academic writing and to write conclusions that fulfill the requirement of the genre and the institution conventions. Finally, I close my chapter and research by suggesting a follow up and further studies. These are suggestions that consider how my research could be continued at a PhD level, and recommendations for areas discussed in the research yet not considered due to the focus of the study was specific and limited to studies on conclusions as genre and voice studies.

### 5.1 The Framework for Undergraduate Thesis Conclusions (FUTC)

My first aim was to propose a framework for the analysis of BA thesis conclusions and thus, have it as a basis to foster continuity in research in the area of genre studies. The FUTC is shown in Table 12 and reviewed, and an exemplified for a comprehensible application follows.

- 
- 
- 1) Introductory move to the chapter
  - 2) Background information
  - 3) SOR (related to context)
  - 4) {Reference to previous research (support, compare and/or contrast)}
  - 5) {Exemplification/explanation}
  - 6) Implications
  - 7) Recommendations for further research
- 
- 

**Table 12: The Framework for Undergraduate Thesis Conclusions (FUTC)**

As detailed in section 4.1, the framework starts with 1) an *introductory move* to the chapter that presents the reader the organization that the conclusions chapter follows; it is followed by the 2) *background information move* which summarizes the main research considerations, methodology used, research purpose(s), research questions and/or hypothesis in order to provide the reader a recount of the research context and prepare him/her a better understanding of the claims that are about to be made. Move 3) *SOR* is an obligatory move since it is where the writer does their main claims based on the research they did. I specified in parentheses *related to context* since the writer builds their conclusions on the theory reviewed but applied to the context of their research. Consequently, move 4) *reference to previous research (support, compare and/or contrast)*, and move 5) *exemplification/explanation* are elective to the writer and the nature of their research. That is, the writer chooses based on their research type whether they consider pertinent or not to refer to literature and include examples of the findings. These two moves do not follow an order in presentation; they can be

integrated in the *SOR* and *implications* moves. Move 6), *implications* of the research is an obligatory move in which the writer gives suggestions based on their research of what can be done in the area, and finally, in move 7, the writer includes an account on possible *follow up* of their research. This is an obligatory move.

In conclusion, the FUTC aims to serve as a template to analyze BA thesis conclusions. The advantage for using this FUTC is twofold. It first serves as a tool for researchers and any other potential individual interested in genre studies to analyze conclusions at a bachelor level in the humanity sciences. Researchers can use this framework as a basis to develop further studies, in a larger scale and in this way; they can consolidate the FUTC. However, researchers can also refer to my framework with other different objectives relating to the study of genre.

Secondly, since the FUTC includes a clear and detailed explanation of each of its components (section 4.1); it is helpful for teachers and students when writing a thesis conclusion. This scaffold provides students with a clear explanation of the main function of a thesis conclusion and the moves it includes. In this way, as Bitchener and Basturkmen (2006) suggest that if writers are aware of what they are writing, it is easier for them to carry out the task. Knowing the function and purpose of the genre, writers only need to adapt their own writing to socialize with the academic community in which this type of discourse takes place. Hence, the FUTC is helpful to achieve these goals. It is then useful for researchers, linguists, teachers, students as well as for people interested in genre studies and academic writing.

In order to show how the FUTC can be applied for the analysis of conclusions, I provide an example of analysis of the moves included in one of the conclusions of my four case studies. I am including just fragments of Billy's conclusion to exemplify the moves, yet the whole conclusion is shown in Appendix C. I also consider pertinent to include only the

example and the explanation of why it is part of such move, yet I will detain myself from a repeating a whole explanation of the move since it was just reviewed in previous lines, and detailed in section 4.1. Thus, the analysis is in order.

According to the FUTC, the conclusions chapter of a BA thesis should start with an introductory move. In Billy's conclusion, this 1) *introductory move* is:

In this section, final conclusions of the paper are presented. This chapter shows the research results obtained from the adapted instruments administered to some high school students and their parents. Moreover, implications, limitations of the study, and some suggestions for further research that can be practical for future research are also provided.

This move is present in the first paragraph of Billy's conclusions chapter. It presents the reader the organization and the contents of his chapter, and it does fulfill the communicative purpose of such move. The second move 2) *background information* is present in Billy's second paragraph:

The aim of this present study was to find and determine if migration of parents who have gone to a foreign country plays an important role in their children education to learn English.[...] For this reason, this process was carried out using survey research, [...] The core for the questionnaires examination was the answers given by high school students and their parents. It is worth mentioning that reliable data was obtained since the questions were made in Spanish. Those responses then were analyzed and displayed by using graphs and tables with their respective explanations.

As seen, Billy summarizes the main purpose highlighted in his research, the methodology he used and comments on participants and data collection and analysis. Therefore, it can be said that the communicative purpose of this move is achieved by Billy's conclusion. The SOR is also present in the following paragraphs of his conclusion.

[...] It was found that parents play an important role in their children education. That is, high school students are motivated by their parents to learn English. Their parents help them in several good manners, especially in a financial way. This suggests that parents worry about their children education, and in a general way, they worry about their children's future. For those parents who have gone to a foreign country, the results show that they are also concerned on their sons and daughters education, and motivate them to learn English. This also can imply that these parents have a good view about education and believe that this issue is a good way to help their children to have better expectations in life.

In this extract of the *SOR* move (move 3), it is seen how Billy presents his main claims. He first refers to a general statement in this case, relevance of parents, migrants or not, in children education (blue); then, he explains (green) and/or supports (black) that statement with results probably detail discussed in the results section, and he finally does his claims (red). Billy's conclusion has three main paragraphs. In which the SOR is concentrated, and he follows similar constructions to do his claims. It is also seen that Billy relates his conclusions to the context of his research when building his claims (blue, black, and green), and finally stating them (red) considering his research purpose. Regarding move 4 (reference to previous

research, orange), Billy includes some reference to previous research to support his choice in limiting his research to particular contexts:

This study was limited to three towns in the Mixteca Poblana (Tlancualpicán, Huehuetlán el Chico, and Chiautla de Tapia), where according to López (cited in Binford and D'Aubeterre, 2000) there is a high number of people who migrate to the USA.[...]

There is no exemplification (move 5) which according to the FUTC it is open to the writer. Move 6 (implications) has a whole section in Billy's conclusion which is actually called *implications*. In this section, it is observed how Billy gives suggestions to the teaching field since his research topic brings direct implications to this area.

[...] Taking into account this point, it would be good for English teachers in high school to improve their English classes, taking as a basis that students are interested in learning English and they are supported and motivated by their parents. On the other hand, students must participate more actively in English classes so that they can get more knowledge of this language. [...] In addition, teachers of English should be prepared for giving classes [...]

Finally, Billy also includes a section where he gives directions to continue research in the area, and with this he is fulfilling move 7 (recommendations for further research). An extract of this section is in order.



[...] For further researches in these issues there are some important suggestions. [...] A replica of this study is also suggested with a larger sample, in different school levels such as junior high school, in technical schools, or college. [...] a different context such as a city or even to focus the study in more than three towns could give different data. This study was based on a survey research, a different suggestion for a further research is to carry out this research using a descriptive research [...].

As noticed, Billy provides some ways to follow up his research, in some of them he advises and some others he suggests how to continue it. He then includes the last move I am proposing in the FUTC.

In sum, Billy's conclusion sample analysis presents how the FUTC can be used and hopefully the examples have illustrated and clarified how a BA thesis conclusion analysis can be carried out using the FUTC.

## **5.2 Voice Expression**

My second main research purpose sought for the voice expression of my four participants in order to analyze how they socialize in the academic community and express and represent themselves in academic writing. This purpose was achieved by adapting the framework proposed by Ivanic and Camps (2001) and following some principles of voice analysis suggested by Ivanic (1998) which I discussed in section 3.3.2. In addition, I am considering the analysis of *self as author*, and *discoursal self* since these are the ones which permit the analysis of voice and they both allow me to achieve my purpose of writer's own voice and how they place themselves into the academic discourse. This voice analysis was

developed taken an extract from the *SOR* conclusions section of each participant's thesis. The process of selecting and analyzing data is detailed in section 3.3. Later in Chapter 4, I discussed in detail the theory and methodology in the light of my participants' data, so I could analyze their *authorial* and *discoursal* voices.

After developing the self as author voice analysis, I noticed that all the participants used similar linguistic realizations to express themselves into the three meta-functions of language: ideational, interpersonal and textual. The analyses of their writing show a high complexity in structures. This suggests that students elaborate their writing and such complexity was noticed by the high lexical density average of the 4 participants' extracts, the NP length and the clause structure (see Table 11 in section 4.3). Besides, most of the students use connectors, conjunctions and deictic expressions to link ideas. In some cases an overuse of these was noticed. Considering Kaplan's (1966) study, this complexity and overuse of connectors are common features of Romance languages, and these are noticeable when writing in a foreign language which is the case of my participants writing (EFL with Spanish as their mother tongue). Taking into account this view and relating it to studies on identity I can say that students reflect their identity in their writing, and this is then part of their authorial voice.

Another characteristic of my participants' voice as authors is pointed out in the way all of them placed the reader in the research field and used the declarative mood along their writing. This, as commented in section 2.6.1.1 is a feature of self as author voice expression, and it indicates the writer's wants to socialize with the academic community. Similarly, the strategies the writers used to express modality and evaluative devices are in mid level which possibly points out to a careful integration of their authorship into the whole academic discourse. In addition, the participants' extracts have different tenses and process types in the *SOR* section; this places them as knowers of the academic writing conventions at the grammar

level and therefore shows variety in their use. As seen, writers represent their *authorial voice* by making use of these features. Conversely, no single participant used 'I' to express their view, which according to Ivanic (1994, 1998) and Stapleton (2002), is a representative writing feature to the expression of *self as author*. It is worthy, however, to consider Bitchener and Basturkmen (2006), who claim that thesis writers are influenced by their supervisors.

In sum, my participants' expression of *self as author* in the *ideational positioning* places the reader in the research context, follows a variety of tenses and verb processes among the extracts, and has no 'I' use for taking fully responsibility and expression of the self. Regarding the *interpersonal positioning*, it was noticed that all of the extracts use declarative mood to make the final claims, mid modality to give suggestions and mid level devices to evaluate the outcomes. Finally, in the *textual positioning*, the complexity of my participants' writing was common in all the extracts and this probably suggests individual writing patterns reflecting their identity in the text.

Regarding the *discoursal self* voice analysis, I consider intertextuality and the way Fairclough (1992, cited in Ivanic, 1998) conceptualizes and classifies it into *manifest intertextuality* and *interdiscursivity*. Considering the same extracts as for the self as author, it was found that none of the participants developed *manifest intertextuality*. In my view, this is probably because of the difficulty to integrate the writers' own voice, the authors', the findings and main claims into the whole discourse and genre type, for which I point out some implications in the following section. This difficulty is also noticed in the *interdiscursivity* expression shown in the extracts. As summarized in Table 9, two of the participants fulfill the communicative purpose of a conclusion and only one contributes to the discourse in his ELT research context. The discoursal voice is indeed challenging to develop due to the aforementioned reasons. In sum, I would recommend teachers and writers to work more on the

development of the discorsal self and in this way integrate their voice as authors into the whole academic discourse community.

Finally, my last research purpose deals with a gender comparison on voice expression. After analyzing, comparing and contrasting each case I found that participants have indeed a voice as author, yet it is very hard and uncommon to evidence the discorsal self. These findings were present in my writers extracts, but there seems not to be apparent gender distinction among them. I was expecting though to find gender differences, but after doing my research I would actually suggest other identity features stronger than gender to evidence voice difference. I would say that voice expression depends on individual characteristics such as age, cultural background, area of study, and life experiences, among other features. Yet, I also want to emphasize that, as discussed all along my thesis, voice is an identity feature and therefore unique of every person.

### **5.3 Implications of the Study**

Along my research I have been developing the claim of the need of having a framework for the analysis of thesis conclusions at the bachelor level. In the first chapter of my thesis I discussed the importance of having such framework and this was later supported in the theoretical review in chapter 2. Later, in Chapter 3, I reviewed the agendas for the study of conclusions, and as I pointed out, it is a genre mostly developed in research articles and MA and PhD dissertations; thus, in chapter 4, I constructed and justified the Framework for Undergraduate Thesis Conclusions (FUTC) specifically in the area of humanities. The FUTC was then just presented in previous section (5.1) as a response to my research purpose. This was indeed one of my main research purposes and it carries important implications in genre

analysis and ESP as an approach to writing research fields, and to the teaching and learning of these.

The FUTC will serve teachers to make students conscious of the functions of a conclusion. It will clarify the purpose of a conclusion and the functions of its different parts, making writers integrate and socialize with their writing into the academic community. It is now the turn of the teachers to expose students to such framework and the analysis of thesis conclusions previously done in order to criticize them and analyze if those fulfill or not the function of a conclusion. This activity will help students to be more critical of the components of a conclusion, evaluate the pertinence of having such structure, facilitate the writing of their BA thesis conclusion and make the writing practice of this genre as an acknowledgeable chapter to close students' main professional research project.

Analyzing conclusions also has some implications for the academic institution. With such analysis, the institution can evaluate how academic writing conventions regarding thesis as genre in the humanities field have been made and analyze if their communicative purposes correspond to those proposed in the larger community of conclusions as genre.

Along this research I have also placed identity as an important and essential aspect of writing that needs to be considered for the teaching and development of writing. My claim is supported by Ivanic's (1998, p.327) assertion "the writer's identity is an important and under-theorized dimension of the act of writing". The main findings regarding voice analyses were summarized in section 5.1, and it is now convenient to draw attention to the implications of this research at this regards.

A typical view of institutions of higher education on student academic writing problems is that of blaming student's literacy deficit (Ivanic, 1998). However, as I have been claiming along this research, writing is a social act that fulfills the particular purpose of the

community where it is developed and considers then the genre conventions as well as writer's voice. Thus, the improvement of writing (teaching and learning) requires the work of all the academic community. To achieve this, teachers and/or writing tutors can first provide students with tools for developing critical evaluation of the genre to write and the context they are in. In this way students will develop understanding on what to write and express easily their voice. That is, if teachers expose students with samples and analyses of the genre to write, students will be aware of how conventions work within that genre and it will be easy for them to write for real communicative purposes (Ivanic, 1998; Johns, 2008b). In other words, the text should be socially situated, with practical social-academic purposes such as writing a report, a summary, an abstract, a thesis, and other genres; teachers and students need to be aware of what they are writing, why and for whom they write. In this way they will have a feeling of belonging and empowering their writing, and thus develop their self as author voices and contribute to the academic community in which they develop their discursal voice.

Another important implication for tutors and/or teachers of writing is that they should view student's writing as the product of students' experience, the way the writer identifies or chooses to be identified as a member of the academic community, and how they place themselves in that community. I refer to the way the writer chooses his identity including naïve as well as experienced writers. Thus, teachers and/or tutors should develop an understanding of the individual process of writing, and if the writer needs help in developing awareness of the genre and writing process, teachers and tutors should guide students in understanding such process.

Regarding the implications for the academic institution, it is necessary to consider the conventions of the genre per se, and the institutions requirements and expectations. At this point I want to highlight what was noticed in chapter 4, in the thesis supervisor interview "we

*as tutors influence in one way or another, the students' writing, we make them to include or not what we think should be or not included".* Indeed, Ivanic (1998, p. 344) affirms "the values and practices which need to be demonstrated in academic writing differ from department to department, even from tutor to tutor". The implication of this is then to consider writing from an identity perspective and not merely as a literacy matter. Thus, the institution expectations should consider the individual identity in the process and products of the students' writing. However, to fulfill the requirements of the genres and the institutions, the academic community should integrate the development of intellectual critical abilities across the curriculum within the writers' values, beliefs and practices of the students. For these last points I suggest that students do their own introspection as writers and write their own autobiography as writers in which they include who they were as writers, how they have developed/grown as writers, and how they consider themselves now as writers. This task will help students to be aware of who they are and find themselves in the community. As seen, these are implications for the academic institution, for the teachers and/or writing tutors as well as for the students. I did my study at a bachelor level, yet these implications cover all levels of education whose concern is also in promoting writing as a social academic view.

Personally, I also consider other implications in the relationship of writing and identity for one self as a writer and literate person. In my own experience and development as a writer I have seen different stages that have contribute to the refinement of my writing. Diverse experiences, exposure to different genres, readings, personal relations the academic community, success and failures have made me identify myself into the academic community as somebody who can contribute to the area and now, with my research I feel the need to contribute with my findings and support that writing, as part of our being, defines ourselves in society (Ivanic, 1998). Identity on writing is then essential for a social view of writing.

#### 5.4 Directions for Further Research

As was previously stated, this research is a first step which provides the basis of a larger project on genre analysis focusing on BA thesis conclusions and fosters the need to study voice as a writer's expression to socialize with the academic community as an implication in teaching and researching. However, further work is necessary that could be continued at a doctoral level. First of all, a wider analysis on BA thesis conclusions is needed to consolidate the FUTC that I propose. That is, it would be essential to use this framework and analyze the conclusions of theses in previous years in the university where my participants studied. This analysis will allow a comparison with the present research, and make further conclusions about the considerations in this context for writing a BA thesis conclusion. However, it will also serve to do a more quantitative study were the numbers of moves and their order are included or not, and thus, do generalizations about thesis conclusions considering if the genre has changed or not according to the social moments the institution has faced and the academic demands. This research could be also complemented by interviewing all the thesis directors. In this way, their views will be considered when guiding students in the process of writing the conclusions chapter.

Regarding further study on voice expression, a similar analysis performed with a larger sample of participants' writings will probably contribute with much more information to make generalizations about voice. For instance, a study on identity including its four ways to analyze it: *autobiographical self*, *discoursal self*, *self as author*, and *possibilities for self-hood* (Ivanic, 1997, cited in Matsuda, 2001) could be developed to analyze the four ways to approach the writer's identity. In addition, the analysis as self author could take place and analyze the strengths/weaknesses students have to express their voice in their writings and



propose with this, writing techniques and activities that allow students to develop strategies to develop voice. This research will also serve to do a deeper study only on authorial identity analysis, that is, the use of 'I' in the academic tasks that students do (Ivanic, 1994) and the functions it serves. This last study will allow exploring how students place themselves in the text, and take responsibility when contributing to the paper. Besides, a study on intertextuality will help to analyze how students socialize with the academic context, if so, and if does not, propose strategies to develop voice as discorsal self. These analyses will allow a comparison with the present research, and make further conclusions about voice expression on writing.

An ethnographic and longitudinal study will also contribute significantly to the development of writer's voice. Tracing the development of voice in students' papers from basic to advanced level will be a relevant study which permits the analysis of how the growing and socializing process of individuals writing was done. This research can be done on one side, by collecting previous papers from the research participants and applying the same framework analysis; and secondly interviewing them regarding their own perception as writers and the development they have gone through. The study can be actually complemented by a study on the students' writing in the mother tongue, and see if their written voice expression is similar/different to the one in the foreign language, in this case English. This will contribute to the area of contrastive rhetoric, as mentioned by Kaplan (1966) different languages follow different written patterns.

Another interesting research related to this area could be worked in a study on a cultural reading-writing task in the mother tongue. As it was discussed, reading and writing play an important role for writing development of intertextuality to integrate author's and writer's into the discourse, but as it was also observed, students' writing showed a poor

development of the discorsal self. Thus, this would be a very much needed research that will probably permit a deeper analysis of why it is difficult for students to integrate their own voice into the written discourse in academic writing tasks.

The results obtained from these future studies, will provide the solidification of the FUTC to analyze and write BA thesis conclusions and, I hope, this serves not only in my research context of TESOL, but also in international contexts considering other languages and areas in humanities. Future studies will also contribute with a more comprehensible understanding of writer's identity regarding both *authorial* and *discursive* voice expression, as well as on the *autobiographical self* and *self-hood* as writer's identity components (see Ivanic's 1998 study). The tracing of the writer's identity can actually contribute to voice and writing studies. Institutions, researchers, social scientists, writing teachers and tutors, students and writers in general can analyze themselves and others' voice and development as writers. Although writing follows discursive and genre conventions, it is socially constructed and unique of every individual. As Ivanic claims (1998, p. 345) "writing goes tight to the heart of our being, defining our social selves".

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## Appendix A: Students' Interview

The purpose of this interview is to gather information about the participants' perceptions regarding their identity perception in their academic writing in order to analyze whether they express their voice or not, and how the academic environment influences this and/or shapes the expression of their identity in writing.

### I. General Questions.

1. Why did you choose this thesis Topic?
2. Do you think you are personally invested to your research area/ topic? If so, how or in what way?
3. What was the most difficult challenge that you faced when writing your thesis? Why?
4. Do you think writing your thesis project helped you to develop your academic writing? Why? How?
5. Do you think writing made you grow professionally? Why?
6. Do you think your thesis reflects a part of yourself? How? Why do you think so?
7. Do you use any strategy to express your own personality in your academic writing?
8. Do you always include your point of view in your academic writing? If so, how? If not, why not?
9. Did you feel any limitation to express yourself in your academic writing? Which one? Why?
10. During your studies did you ever feel you couldn't include your perceptions while respecting academic writing rules? If so, do you remember when it happened? Why did you decide to do?

Questions regarding writing perceptions:

- a) What do you consider are your weaknesses/strengths in writing? Why?
- b) In your writing, did you write in impersonal/first person/ third person –they-, why did you do so? Were you aware of?
- c) Your thesis is written in impersonal, is there any special reason for doing so? How did you feel with it? Are you happy with that kind of writing? Why?

## II. Particular questions to participants:

### Janis

- a) Your research focuses on literature about the causes that *Originate Problems to Comprehend English Literature*, and you found out that motivation and culture play an important role when teaching literature. You also mentioned that females tend to read more literature pieces. Why do you think so? Does this make the topic particular/guided to females? Why?

### Billy

- a) Your thesis discusses a controversial topic, migration and its impact in EFL learning process in rural communities. Do you think that being male helped you to develop this particular topic? How? Why?
- b) Coming from a rural area, and possibly some years having the same thinking as the participants in your research, do you think you have changed your perception of yourself? Why? What factors made you change? Did you express that in your writing?

### Celine

- a) Your thesis is written in impersonal, is there any special reason for doing so? How did you feel with it? Are you happy with that kind of writing? Why?
- b) Do you think that being a female helped you to develop this particular research, I mean the methodology you use (ethnographic), the topic (hyperactive children/ humanistic teaching)? Working with children? Do you think similar results could have been obtained if a male could have done the same study? Why? How?

### Rod

- a) Your thesis is about having music as a tool in the EFL classroom; do you have any especial reason writing about that topic?
- b) Do you think that being male helped you to develop this particular topic? How? Why?

## Appendix B: Thesis Advisor's Interview

My name is X and I study a MA in the American University/Department of Applied Linguistics. In this interview I would like to ask some questions about your L2 BA students' writing of theses. I would like to ask you questions about your experiences of supervising such students. I am particularly interested in any difficulties you perceive in the conclusion section of L2 BA students writing a thesis.

First of all, can you tell me about how many L2 BA students you have supervised in the last two years (2005–2007)?

How many do you currently supervise?

Next I would like to ask you some general questions:

- 1) What is for you the hardest part of a thesis for your students to write? Why?
- 2) Do you have any requirement or a standard to follow when writing the conclusions chapter?
- 3) When your students write their chapter on conclusions, what do you ask them to include?
- 4) Can you tell me about any difficulties you have noticed in these students' (the students' you currently supervise) draft versions of their conclusion?
- 5) Do you see such difficulties in most or some of your L2 BA students' conclusions?
- 6) Now I am going to ask you about some specific types of possible difficulties:
  - Have you noticed difficulties in:
    - understanding the functions of the conclusions?
    - selecting content?
    - organisation of content?
    - showing appropriate stance (how writers position themselves)?
    - grammar? (Can you give an example or two?)
    - what do you think of the use of personal voice in writing?
- 7) We have discussed a number of problem areas. Which do you see as the most significant areas (and why)?
- 8) In your opinion, why do these problems occur?

Finally I have some other general questions.

- 9) Do you think your students are personally invested in their projects? Why? How so?
- 10) Do you think they are influenced in a way by your comments?
- 11) Do you think writing a thesis project helped your students to develop their academic writing? Why? How?
- 12) Do you think writing made your students grow professionally? Why?

Thank you for your help. Do you have questions you would like to ask me about this study?

## **Appendix C: Billy's Conclusions Chapter**

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### **CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS**

In this section, final conclusions of the paper are presented. This chapter shows the research results obtained from the adapted instruments administered to some high school students and their parents. Moreover, implications, limitations of the study, and some suggestions for further research that can be practical for future research are also provided.

#### **5.1 Conclusions**

The aim of this present study was to find and determine if migration of parents who have gone to a foreign country plays an important role in their children education to learn English. In addition, to get information and conclude if high school students are motivated by their parents to learn English, and find to what extent perceptions about English teaching-learning differ from parents who have been in a foreign country to those who have not been outside the country, was part of the purpose. To accomplish the purpose of this investigation, it was necessary to gather enough information. For this reason, this process was carried out using survey research, which involved the collection of data through two main instruments administrated to some parents and their children who study high school. The core for the questionnaires examination was the answers given by high school students and their parents. It is worth mentioning that reliable data was obtained since the questions were made in Spanish. Those responses then were analyzed and displayed by using graphs and tables with their respective explanations.

While the questionnaires used for this result were analyzed taking into the answers, important and quite interesting results showed up. It was found that parents play an important role in their children education. That is, high school students are motivated by their parents to learn English. Their parents help them in several good manners, especially in a financial way. This suggests that parents worry about their children education, and in a general way, they worry about their children's future. For those parents who have gone to a foreign country, the results show that they are also concerned on their sons and daughters education, and motivate them to learn English. This also can imply that these parents have a good view about education and believe that this issue is a good way to help their children to have better expectations in life. Furthermore, there is not a huge distinction between parents' perceptions towards English teaching learning, from those who have gone to a foreign country and those who have not gone out of the Mexico.

In addition, the results show interesting information about migration. It was found that the majority of high school students' parents have been in a foreign country. In this study it can be confirmed that the highest percent of flows of migration is to the United States and is done because of financial problems in Mexico. It can be figured out that owing to this migration phenomenon young people would like to go to the States; however, the results give evidence that most of the students consider that education is really important, so most of them also want to finish the high school and continue studying college. To go beyond the line proving this point, there are more results in which can be realized that the majority of young people in high schools are really unsure of going to a foreign country and living there. Actually, they also think that there is a better life in Mexico than in a foreign country.

Finally, according to the results, the majority of parents and students think there is good English teaching in high schools in Mexico. On the one hand, students would like to

learn English in a proper way, academically speaking, and not precisely in a foreign country but in this country. On the other hand, parents help students in their education and motivate them to study English. This last point alludes that English is still, without any doubt, an important language to learn as a Foreign Language. The points above are, in sum, the conclusions of this project of investigation. There are also some implications for this line of investigation: migration and learning-teaching English as a Foreign Language. Those implications are stated in the following point.

## **5.2 Implications**

This research was addressed to the English learning-teaching process in high school. It was done by taking other features into consideration migrant and non-migrant parents. In a general way, through this study it can be seen that not only students but also their parents agree that education is important. It is essential to establish that students' opinion about English teaching in their high schools is a "good" one, but not an excellent one. Taking into account this point, it would be good for English teachers in high school to improve their English classes, taking as a basis that students are interested in learning English and they are supported and motivated by their parents. On the other hand, students must participate more actively in English classes so that they can get more knowledge of this language. The teaching-learning process then must be mutual. In addition, teachers of English should be prepared for giving classes; because it seems English language will be in its very peak in the future more than nowadays. Considering the conclusions of this research, the teaching-learning process must be improved.

In view of students' future for not going to a foreign country but staying in Mexico for finishing high school and continuing studying a BA degree, teachers, schools, and even

government educational department must be ready to improve such teaching-learning process by modifying curricula, plans, available places to study, teaching training and improvement, development strategies, and other similar things. In the same way, taking into consideration that the majority of parents have been in a foreign country due to economic problems in Mexico, government should take actions to stop migration. Therefore, the conclusions then can be useful for teachers and researchers in the area of English teaching-learning area and migration.

### **5.3 Limitations of the Study**

It seems this research has been developed in a very good way. However, there were some problems or limitations that need to be pointed out. This study was limited to three towns in the Mixteca Poblana (Tlancualpicán, Huehuetlán el Chico, and Chiautla de Tapia), where according to López (cited in Binford and D'Aubeterre, 2000) there is a high number of people who migrate to the USA. This research tried to find out the perceptions of immigrant and non immigrant parents towards English teaching-learning, and see if students were motivated by their parents to learn English. For this reason, as it was mentioned before, a survey research method was used. Moreover, two questionnaires were applied to get quantitative and qualitative data. Nonetheless, there was a limitation which was found when analyzing data: lack of information. There were in several questionnaires items, that were addressed to get some of them quantitative and some other qualitative data, were not answered, this could change the results. In addition, when administered questionnaires to high school students, it was asked to them to take a parents' questionnaire home. These questionnaires were going to be answered by the parents. The researcher of this investigation had to go back to school to pick up the parents' questionnaires the following day. However,

only a half of one hundred questionnaires were given back to the researcher. This also could change the results, considering that there was one more time, a lack of answers, that is, information.

To go from the place where this research was worked to the place where the questionnaires were administered (in some areas of the south of Puebla State), brought with it, spend of money, and making photocopies of the questionnaires as well. To go to a high school twice, and not to be able to administer the questionnaires was a limitation, since one day in this high school students did not have classes and another day students had activities outside the classroom. Finally, a lack of information in library about migration books was a limitation when writing Chapter Two

#### **5.4 Directions for Further Research**

This research can be useful for people who are interested, as mentioned before, in the area of English teaching-learning, and those who want to have some statistics about migration. For further researches in these issues there are some important suggestions. When there are questionnaires that need to be answered outside the school where they are administered; it is useful to ask teachers for their help, so that they can ask students to bring the questionnaires back to the researcher. In this way, students can feel a little obligated to do it. A little punishment in grade could help. Also, when students answer the questionnaire and it is handed in, to make sure that all questions were answered is another suggestion as well. In this way, more data could be gathered and questionnaires will be completed, as a result your results will not suffer reliability. Finally, when going to schools to get data, to make sure that the day the questionnaires will be administered the school is not closed and students are able to answer the questionnaires. An appointment is a good idea. A replica of this study is also suggested with a



larger sample, in different school levels such as junior high school, in technical schools, or college. As mentioned before this study was carried out in rural areas, so a different context such as a city or even to focus the study in more than three towns could give different data. This study was based on a survey research, a different suggestion for a further research is to carry out this research using a descriptive research, and investigating if students whose parents have been and have not been in a foreign country have the same perception about migration and learning English, or if young people who study high schools and those who do not study high school but work, have the same perception towards learning English. Those kinds of researchers can provide more deep and interesting information.