



Moves and Linguistic Analysis of Introductions of First-Year University Students' Composition: The Case of Selected Students from the University of Cape Coast, Ghana

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ABSTRACT

This study uses Swales's Revised version of the create-a-research- space move analysis model and Wiredu's concepts of structural types of sentences to identify the Moves and linguistic structures used by freshmen and women to realise communicative purposes in their introductory essays. The qualitative research design was used. A total of 150 end-of-semester examination scripts written in 2021 were purposively sampled from a pool of 5000 examination scripts at the University of Cape Coast, Ghana. The selection of the scripts was put into three main groups: business, medicine and general. The purpose of the groupings was to aid in making a comparative analysis. Three key findings were made. First, it was found that freshmen and women use 3 Moves in developing their introductory essays. All three groups use 3 Moves in realising their communicative purposes. Few of the medical groups use 4 Moves whereas few of the business groups use 1 Move. The second major finding which showed interest in how the Moves are sequenced also indicates a 3-Move sequence in all three groups. This was followed by a two- Move sequence. The least Move sequence was a 4-Move sequence used by the medical group. The last key finding is in relation to the structural types of sentences. The study found that freshmen and women have kin interest in the use of complex sentences and simple sentences in their introductory essays regardless of the type of group. The study has both pedagogical and theoretical implications for course tutors and future research.

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INTRODUCTION

In the past two decades, several linguistic scholars have shown considerable interest in undergraduate University students' writing. This interest ranges from studies on error analysis of undergraduate

essays¹ to needs analysis,² among others, using different theoretical models in analysing school genres also known as non-professional genres.³ Different results were found in each case which indicated that undergraduate students' performance in the second language is weak and needed remediation. One observation that is made from these studies is that Appiah who showed interest in developing a paragraph taking into consideration the components of the paragraph; did not pay attention to the Moves used by undergraduate students in their introductory paragraph.⁴ Afful who worked on introductions of students in two disciplines focused only on second-year undergraduate students.⁵ He did not show interest in first-year undergraduate students' essays written in Communicative Skills, CMS 108. Available literature shows there seems to be no study that has shown interest in the application of the CARS model to analysing the introduction of first-year undergraduate students of the University of Cape Coast. The current study hopes to add to the knowledge in the existing literature on generic analysis studies. This study is conducted at a Ghanaian university- the University of Cape Coast, which has recently been ranked as the first University in West Africa, the fifth among the top five Universities in Africa.⁶

The current study hopes to identify the generic moves used by first-year university students in their introductory paragraphs. It also hopes to find out how the moves used in the introductory paragraphs are sequenced. The study will again identify the various structural types of sentences used in communicating their purposes to their readers. The current study will help to provide responses to the following research questions.

1. What are the moves used in the introductory essays of first-year university students?
2. What structural types of sentences are used by the three selected first-year undergraduate students?

LITERATURE REVIEW

A sentence has been explained from different angles. This study uses the definition given by Halliday.⁷ A sentence has a subject and a verb component. The subject is placed before the verb in most cases. There are different types of structural sentences. These according to Quirk et al are the simple sentence, the complex sentence, the compound sentence and the compound complex sentences.⁸ Each of these sentences according to Wiredu, express a communicative function.⁹ Knowing the predominant structures used by first-year university students will be significant.

Developing an introduction in composition writing is something difficult for many second-language writers. It has been observed in many studies that the introduction is not an easy thing to do. There are a number of times tertiary students find it difficult to write introductions. This observation

¹ Kofi E Yankson, "Better English through Concord for West African Students," *Revised Edition*. (Accra: Commercial Associations, 1994); K. Dako and E. B. Forson, "The Ghanaian University Students' Knowledge of Grammar," in *English in Ghana*, ed. M. E. Kropp Dakubu (Accra: University of Ghana Press, 1997); Gordon Senanu Kwame Adika, "A Theme-Structure Approach to Evaluating Aspects of University Students' Expository Texts," *Legon Journal of the Humanities* 14 (2003): 55–78; F B Appiah, "A Study of Paragraph Development in First Year University Students' Communicative Skills' Essays," *Unpublished MPhil Thesis, Ghana: University of Cape Coast*, 2002.

² Philip Arthur Gborsong et al., "A Needs Analysis of Undergraduate Students of Communicative Skills: The Case of Tertiary Institutions in Ghana," *Open Journal of Modern Linguistics* 05, no. 05 (2015): 413–24, <https://doi.org/10.4236/ojml.2015.55037>; W Gyasi Kodom, T A Nartety, and W Coker, "So, Is This Why We Fail? An Analysis of Communicative Skills Students' Knowledge of Parts of Speech" (Faculty of Arts Lecture Series, Ghana: University of Cape Coast, 2011).

³ John M Swales, *Research Genres: Explorations and Applications* (Cambridge University Press, 2004).

⁴ Appiah, "A Study of Paragraph Development in First Year University Students' Communicative Skills' Essays."

⁵ Joseph Benjamin Archibald Afful, "Introductions in Examination Essays: The Case of Two Undergraduate Courses," *Across the Disciplines* 3 (2006): 1–15.

⁶ Times Higher Education (THE), "World University Rankings 2023," 2023, https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2023/world-ranking#!/length/25/locations/GHA/sort_by/rank/sort_order/asc/cols/stats.

⁷ M. A. K. Halliday, *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. 2nd edn, (London: Edward Arnold, 1994).

⁸ Randolph Quirk et al., *A Comprehensive English Grammar*. (London and New York: Longman, 1985).

⁹ John Franklin Wiredu, "A Grammar of Newspaper Editorial Language: The Complex Sentence," *Legon Journal of the Humanities* 23 (2012): 75–124.

has been made by a number of scholars¹⁰ According to Swales & Feak, writing introductions is slow, difficult and troublesome for both native and non-native speakers of English. Plato, the Greek Philosopher, once said that the beginning is half the whole. This statement is indeed true because it is always a difficult thing to know how to start an introduction. That is more reason why Swales developed the create-a-research-space model to identify how expert writers develop their introductions.¹¹ Consequently, several studies have been conducted on the introduction of expert writing to the negligence of novice writers who also can be made to contribute significantly to the production of knowledge in the academic community.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The CARS model

Hyon identifies three main traditions in contemporary genre studies.¹² These traditions according to Swales are complementary, rather than competing approaches.¹³ The traditions are the North American School of New Rhetoric (sometimes referred to as the New Rhetoric or New Rhetoricians, Australian/Sydney School, which is strongly influenced by Hallidayan Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) School. Each of these schools has its peculiar ways of analysing text. The ESP, for example, has a leading scholar, John Swales. He proposed the Create-a-research (CARS) model which has become groundbreaking in the history of analysing genre text.

In his pioneer study, Swales identified a-four-Move structure in research article introductions:

1. Establishing the research field
2. Reporting previous research
3. Preparing for present research and
4. Introducing present research.¹⁴

Later after the model was formulated, many scholars levelled criticisms against the model based on its inability to fit perfectly into analysing the research article introductions. Swales revised it into a three-move structure. It is this three-Move structure that is known as the revised or modified version of the CARS model. This revised model is adopted in the current study. The main concern of Swales' genre-based rhetorical approach to the description of a text is to identify the rhetorical structure of a genre and relate it to its communicative purpose while recognising the social context in which it occurs.

The essential concept that underlies Swales' rhetorical analysis is the concept of Moves and Steps. A Move has been defined by Swales as "a discoursal or rhetorical unit that performs a coherent communicative function in written or spoken discourse."¹⁵ According to Crookes in Swales, a Move has sometimes been aligned with a grammatical unit such as a sentence, utterance, or paragraph.¹⁶ But Swales points out that a Move is better seen as flexible in terms of its linguistic realization.¹⁷ Thus, a Move can, at one extreme, be realised by a clause and at other times, by several sentences. It is a functional, not a formal, unit. Connor also notes that a Move can vary in size but must contain at least, one proposition that is, a statement.¹⁸ In the current study, the concept of a Move is a sentence or number of sentences that constitute a proposition.

¹⁰ John M Swales and Christine B Feak, *Academic Writing for Graduate Students: Essential Tasks and Skills*, vol. 1 (University of Michigan Press Ann Arbor, MI, 2004); Afful, "Introductions in Examination Essays," 1–15.

¹¹ Swales, *Research Genres: Explorations and Applications*.

¹² Sunny Hyon, "Genre in Three Traditions: Implications for ESL," *TESOL Quarterly* 30, no. 4 (1996): 693–722.

¹³ Swales, *Research Genres: Explorations and Applications*.

¹⁴ John M Swales, *Aspects of Article Introductions* (University of Michigan Press, 1981).

¹⁵ Swales, *Research Genres: Explorations and Applications*, 229.

¹⁶ Swales, *Research Genres: Explorations and Applications*, 229.

¹⁷ Swales, *Research Genres: Explorations and Applications*, 229.

¹⁸ Ulla Connor, "Variation in Rhetorical Moves in Grant Proposals of US Humanists and Scientists," *Text & Talk* 20, no. 1 (2000): 1–28.

Steps, on the other hand, are the constituents of a Move which, together, or in some combinations, contribute to the function of the Move. For a text to be accepted as an instantiation of a genre, these Moves ought to be *obligatory*.¹⁹ An *obligatory* Move is a functional defining stage which is necessary for a text to be identified as an example of a genre.²⁰ According to Afful, Moves often have rhetorical and lexico-grammatical features which permit both the speaker/writer and listener/reader to negotiate the meaning of a text.²¹

Table 1: Swales' Revised Version of the CARS Model

MOVE 1	ESTABLISHING A TERRITORY
Step 1	Claiming centrality and/or
Step 2	Making topic generalization(s) and/or
Step 3	Reviewing items of previous research
MOVE 2	ESTABLISHING A NICHE
Step 1A	Counter-claiming or
Step 1B	Indicating a gap or
Step 1C	Question-raising or
Step 1D	Continuing a tradition
MOVE 3	OCCUPYING THE NICHE
Step 1A	Outlining purposes or
Step 1B	Announcing present research
Step 2	Announcing principal findings
Step 3	Indicating RA structure

Source: Swales, 1990: 141

Just as each genre has a communicative purpose, each Move also serves a specific communicative intention which is always subservient to the overall communicative purpose of the genre.²² Each of the Moves as found in the Table has a number of steps which are either optional or obligatory.

Swales' modified version of the CARS model has been adapted in many studies. It has been used to identify Moves in multi-sections of the Research Article in different disciplines such as the

¹⁹ John M Swales and John Swales, *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings* (Cambridge university press, 1990).

²⁰ Ian Bruce, *Academic Writing and Genre: A Systematic Analysis* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2008).

²¹ Joseph Benjamin Archibald Afful, "A Rhetorical Analysis of Examination Essays in Three Disciplines: The Case of Ghanaian Undergraduate Students" (National University of Singapore, 2006).

²² V.K. Bhatia, "Analyzing Genre: Language Use in Professional Setting" (London: Longman, 1993): 30.

Abstract;²³ the method sections Lim,²⁴ the literature review sections;²⁵ the discussions sections;²⁶ discussions and result sections;²⁷ the conclusion section Yang & Allison and the overall sections of the research article and the overall sections of research proposal of MPhil students in three disciplines.²⁸

Apart from the multi-sections of the research article studied, the grant research proposal has also drawn considerable attention from linguistic scholars. Prominent among them are Myers, 1990; Connor & Mauren, 1990; Connor & Wagner, 1999. One revealing result of their studies is that they identified a ten-move sequence in grant research proposals. They did not show interest in the various steps that constitute the Move. It is on this same ground that the current study analyses data based on Moves in introductory essays. Afful also adapted the Revised Version of the Swalesian model to study the rhetorical moves in introductions of undergraduate students from two departments: English and sociology.²⁹ Indeed, the study showed interest in identifying Moves, not steps, in each of the disciplines. In the current study, the focus is limited specifically to identifying the Moves the undergraduate students in three different disciplines use in realising their communicative purpose in introductory essays.

The current study is uniquely adding to the existing literature to the extent that it is interested in how first-year undergraduate students who take Communicative skills as a university-wide program use rhetorical Moves in realising their communicative purposes. Again, the current study hopes to find the syntactic properties in terms of which structural type of sentence is predominantly and least used to evaluate their knowledge of structural types of sentences.

In genre analysis just like register analysis, the analyst, having identified the schematic structure of the genre text can study the specific features of language that are predominantly used by studying the frequency of syntactic properties in the given text. The most important reason according to Bhatia is to provide empirical evidence to confirm or disprove some of the intuitive and impressionistic statements we all tend to make about the high or low incidence of certain lexicogrammatical features of various genres.³⁰

To build on this argument, the current study showed interest in identifying the structural types of sentences the first-year undergraduate students used in realising their communicative purposes in

²³ Mauro Bittencourt Dos Santos, "The Textual Organization of Research Paper Abstracts in Applied Linguistics," *Text & Talk* 16, no. 4 (1996): 481–500; Ken Hyland, "Disciplinary Discourses. Social Interactions in Academic Writing. Michigan Classics Edition," *Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press*, 2004.

²⁴ Jason Miin Hwa Lim, "Method Sections of Management Research Articles: A Pedagogically Motivated Qualitative Study," *English for Specific Purposes* 25, no. 3 (2006): 282–309.

²⁵ Hu Jian, "The Schematic Structure of Literature Review in Research Articles of Applied Linguistics.," *Chinese Journal of Applied Linguistics (Foreign Language Teaching & Research Press)* 33, no. 5 (2010); Shameem Rafik-Galea, Geraldine de Mello, and Nalini Arumugam, "Genre Analysis of the Literature Review Section in Hospitality and Management Research Articles.," *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities* 21, no. 2 (2013); Ian Bruce, "Expressing Criticality in the Literature Review in Research Article Introductions in Applied Linguistics and Psychology," *English for Specific Purposes* 36 (2014): 85–96; Josephine Brew Daniels and Richard T Torto, "A Schematic and Linguistic Analysis of the Literature Review Section of MPhil Research Proposals in English," n.d.

²⁶ Paul Brett, "A Genre Analysis of the Results Section of Sociology Articles," *English for Specific Purposes* 13, no. 1 (1994): 47–59; Ian A Williams, "Results Sections of Medical Research Articles: Analysis of Rhetorical Categories for Pedagogical Purposes," *English for Specific Purposes* 18, no. 4 (1999): 347–66; Ian Bruce, "Results Sections in Sociology and Organic Chemistry Articles: A Genre Analysis," *English for Specific Purposes* 28, no. 2 (2009): 105–24; Jason Miin-Hwa Lim, "Commenting on Research Results in Applied Linguistics and Education: A Comparative Genre-Based Investigation," *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* 9, no. 4 (2010): 280–94.

²⁷ Darunee Dujsik, "A Genre Analysis of Research Article Discussions in Applied Linguistics," *Language Research* 49, no. 2 (2013): 453–77.

²⁸ Yang Ruiying and Desmond Allison, "Research Articles in Applied Linguistics: Moving from Results to Conclusions," *English for Specific Purposes* 22, no. 4 (2003): 365–85; Kevin Ngozi Nwogu, "The Medical Research Paper: Structure and Functions," *English for Specific Purposes* 16, no. 2 (1997): 119–38; J B Daniels, "Generic Moves in Selected M. Phil. Research Proposals from a Public University in Ghana," *Unpublished PhD Thesis. University of Ghana, Legon*, 2017.

²⁹ Afful, "Introductions in Examination Essays"; Swales and Swales, *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings*.

³⁰ Bhatia, "Analyzing Genre: Language Use in Professional Setting."

the introductory essays. As was hinted earlier, this study has a hidden purpose of evaluating the course contents of the Department of Communication Studies of the University of Cape Coast that are used to teach Communicative Skills (CMS 108) as a compulsory course for first-year undergraduate students. CMS 108 is the course code for the Communicative Skills Course, a university-wide program taken in the second semester by all first-year University students. The Communicative Skills course is organised by the Department of Communication Studies for one year (two semesters). CMS 107 is offered in the first semester and it takes first-year undergraduate students through the micro-skills of the English language focusing on developing their functional skills in the use of the language. The course helps first-year undergraduate students to develop their basic language skills: speaking, listening, reading, writing and study skills. The second-semester course CMS 108, is a sequel to the first-semester course. It is hoped that as students are taken through the first-semester course, they polish their language skills and learn to sharpen their writing skills. They are finally taught how to compose an academic essay. The first-year undergraduate students are taught the structural types of sentences in addition to other communicative purposes of the sentence as well as the functional types of the sentence. In this study, the types of sentences used by Wiredu are also applied.³¹

METHODOLOGY

Data and Data Collection Procedures

This study is based on the analysis of introductory essays of first-year University students who offer the Communicative Skills course as a university-wide program-University of Cape Coast, one of the public universities in Ghana. The data excluded other components of the essay such as body paragraphs and concluding paragraphs. The simple reason is that the study showed more interest in the introductory paragraph as it is a paragraph that serves a significant purpose in academic writing. A random selection of 150 introductory essays from a pool of 5000 introductory essays written in 2021 and submitted to the Department of Communication Studies was done. A purposive sampling technique was also used to select 50 introductory essays from three different sets of groups: data were gathered from one of the general groups, the School of Medical Sciences and the School of Business. The reason behind this blend of selection was to identify both similarities and differences used by the selected disciplines as this will bring to bear specific features that may be tagged with the disciplines.

Data Analysis

The data was analysed based on the research questions. The data was coded to distinguish them. Data gathered from the General Group were given the pseudonym (GG 1 to GG 50), those from the Medical Sciences were tagged (SM 1 to SM 50) whereas those from the School of Business were also tagged (BS 1 to BS 50). The pseudonyms helped to ensure anonymity and avoid unethical issues in connection with research. The quantitative procedures were descriptive statistics and Swales' Revised version of the Create-A-Research-Space (CARS) model was used to identify the various Moves and how they are sequenced in the introductory paragraph.³² Again, Wiredu's concept on the use of the structural types of sentences to indicate the structural types of sentences used by the respondents to realise their communicative purpose was also employed.³³

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Using Swales' modified version of the CARS model, the researcher identified a three-move in the data. These moves are:

Move 1: Recounting the history surrounding the topic for discussions / Explaining key terms in the topic/ Using rhetorical questions/ Using statistical details/ Factual statement/
Providing illustrations/ Creation of short story/anecdote/ Making a general statement.

³¹ Wiredu, "A Grammar of Newspaper Editorial Language: The Complex Sentence."

³² Swales and Swales, *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings*.

³³ Wiredu, "A Grammar of Newspaper Editorial Language: The Complex Sentence."

Move 2: Explaining or defining key terms in the question/ Asking rhetorical questions/
Using factual statements / Using an illustration

Move 3: Stating the thesis statement of the essay

Research Question 1 - What moves are used in the introductions of undergraduate students?

The data shows clearly that the majority of the students apply a three-move sequence in realising their communicative purpose in their introductory paragraphs. Since the researcher used three different disciplines and the study is interested in identifying the specific moves used by each of the disciplines, the table below indicates the moves used by the disciplines.

Table 2: Frequency of occurrence of Moves used by the three disciplines

Moves	NO OF SMs WITH MOVES	NO OF BSs WITH MOVES	NO OF GGs WITH MOVES	TOTAL=150 Frequency %
Move 1	50	48	50	92%
Move 2	17	32	14	42%
Move 3	26	16	36	78%
Move 4	07	00	00	14%

From the Table 2 above, it was found in the data that first-year undergraduate students use one to three moves in their introductory essays. One obligatory Move that was found in all three disciplines is Move 1, Providing a History/ Explanation of Key Points in the ascribed topic and the others. In the case of the SM discipline, it was found that all 50 (100%) undergraduate students use Move 1. This Move is also found to be used by BS data. Move 1 helps the undergraduate student to provide a history of the current state of issues raised on the topic. By using this Move, they are able to describe the current situation to link it with the previous situation. Other undergraduate students use Move 1 to explain key issues in the topic of the essay. The Move is equally used to create a short story imaginatively. The story created by the undergraduate students fits the topic for discussion. Using a short story was found basically used by undergraduate students of GG; whereas the SMs are fond of using rhetorical questions in their Move 1. This trend alludes to the fact that indeed there are discipline specifics and the differences are demonstrated in different areas.

In the case of the BS undergraduate, it was found that 48 (96%) undergraduate students use Move 1. 2(4%) of the BS undergraduate students did not use Move 1 and that is so surprising as they started their introductory essay with Move three. This is an indication that such undergraduate students did not attend lectures and do not participate in class assignments. It is so surprising to find BS undergraduate students providing just a single Move in an essay topic which restricted them to write not more than a hundred words essay.

All the GG undergraduate students on the other hand, also use Move 1. Indeed, the question demands the use of Move 1 and so, as a core Move in the Introductory essay, it becomes unsurprising to find undergraduate students in all three selected disciplines using the Move to draw the attention of their audience and also to make the essay interesting. Move 1 scored 92% of the entire data. This is the highest percentage among the four Moves used by the three disciplines.

The undergraduate students in the three disciplines also use a two-Move sequence in their introductory essay. A total of 17 undergraduate students of SM used a two-Move sequence, whereas 32 of the BS undergraduate students used a two-Move sequence in their introductory essays. A total of 14 of the GG undergraduate students used a two-move sequence in their introductions. 42% of the undergraduate students in the three disciplines used a two-Move sequence in their introductory essays.

The Move sequence which scored the highest is the three-Move sequence which registered 78% of the data. There was also the use of a four-Move sequence by 7(14%) of SM undergraduate students. This Move pattern is not found in the two other disciplines. This makes the Move pattern an optional Move. A simple interpretation of the use of an optional Move is a matter of choice. The SM

students hope to clearly explain their topic for discussion in a more detailed way and so they add a Move 4.

Move 2 is the reverse of Move 1. This means that the same items selected for Move 1 can also be used for Move 2. In cases where an undergraduate student selects an Explanation of key points for Move 1, Move 2 will be selected as Recounting of History. The reverse equally holds. Move 2 is an obligatory Move used in the introductory essay. This Move also helps the undergraduate students to explain further the point selected for discussion. Indeed, the use of this Move depicts that the first-year undergraduate students are transitioned from the way they wrote in senior high school to a higher educational level. This brings a clear distinction between essays provided in senior high to the tertiary level.

Move 3, Stating the thesis statement is the Move that explains the components of the entire essay. This Move plays a significant role in the introductory essay. It helps both the writers and the readers. In the case of the writers, it restricts them from going overboard or swerving from the given topic. It is the Move that clearly directs readers of the essay to identify the points to be discussed in the essay. Move 3 directs both readers and writers in the essay and so, it must be stated in clear language instead of a general sentence. Academic writing has its own peculiar rules to be observed and it is expected that first-year undergraduate students learn some of these norms and apply them in their write-ups.

Move 3 is expected to be placed in the last portion of the introductory essay. Move 3 can sometimes swap positions with Move 4. In cases where additional sentences are provided before Move 3, those sentences will replace Move 3 and so, Move 3 will take the position of Move 4.

Table 3: The Sequence of Moves Used by First-year Undergraduate Students

Move Count	SM	SB	GG	Count T	Percentage
1-Move sequence	00	02	00	2	8%
2-Move Sequence 1>2	17	32	14	63	42%
3-Move sequence 1>2>3	26	16	36	78	52%
4-Move sequence 1>2>3>4	07	00	00	07	4.6%

From Table 3 above, it can be observed that per Research Question 2, first-year undergraduate students of the three disciplines use a maximum of three Moves in their introductory essays. This is because a total of 78 (52%) used a three-Move sequence to realise their communicative purposes. Taking a closer look at the table above, it can be found that the discipline which scored the highest use of the three-Move sequence is the GG because 36 (72%) out of 50 (100%) of them used the three-Move sequence to achieve their communicative purposes. The next first-year undergraduate student who used the three-Move sequence is the SM in which case, 26(52%) out of the 50(100%) used the three-Move sequence. The BS discipline is the least to use the three-Move sequence as they show more interest in the use of a two-Move sequence. The most probable reason for the use of a three-Move sequence is that the selected Moves help them to express their views to an appreciable level before they develop the full essay. This action of the first-year undergraduate students of the GG discipline will help them create interest in their readers and motivate them to read the full essay. The three-Move sequence serves as a starter course for the reading of the essay. The following are examples of the three-move sequence used by the three selected disciplines.

Example 1

In recent times, various organizations and associations involved with the public sector have resulted to strike as the primary action to take in order for the government to respond to their working needs. Both associations involved in education services see strikes as the necessary evil to resolve their needs. The University Teachers Association of Ghana also known as UTAG, embarked on a three-week strike not long ago. To them, going on strike was the only means for the government to attend to their complaints, since all attempts to reach a peaceful negotiation with the government through the National Labour Commission (NLC) had been futile.

Move 1(Making Factual statement) *On August 02,2021, the president of UTAG, Mr. Anthony Simmons, issued a letter ordering all party members of the association to withhold all forms of teaching activities from the student populace. Thus, all public universities that were members of the association brought all teaching activities to a halt. These universities include the University of Cape Coast(UCC); Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST); University of Ghana, Legon; University of Development Studies (UDS) among others. Though embarking on a strike is a right of any association and no one has the power to infringe on such rights, a strike also tends to have impacts on consumers who patronize the services of the associations. In this case, it was the students.*

Move 2(Recounting history) This essay, therefore, seeks to discuss three effects of the university teachers' strike on students' academic work. These are: pressure on students to complete the semester's curriculum within the limited number of weeks, disruption of the normal study patterns in the academic calendar and delay in approval and supervision of project works of the final year students.

SM47 Move 3 (Providing a thesis statement)

Example 2

A strike is an action seen by many citizens in the country as one of the ways for their petitions to improve their standards of living which have been sent to the public affairs or government through the formal procedure and have not been addressed or yet to be considered and addressed. A strike is also a right of every worker in the country.

Move 1(Explanation of Key terms in topic) *Just recently, a strike was called by Dr. Anthony Simmons, the president of the University Teachers Association of Ghana and this lasted for about three weeks. This strike which just ended had many effects on students' academic work.*

Move 2(Recounting History) This essay will discuss three effects of the university teacher's strike on students' academic work. These effects are low performance on the side of the students because students were unable to finish most of their academic work and most students also became lazy towards their academic work.

SM50 Move 3(Providing a thesis statement)

Example 3

It is undoubtful that the growth of every country's economy is determined by the hard work of its labor force.

Move 1 (Making factual statement) *Around March, the UTAG embarked on a strike which accumulated after the government introduced a new pay structure. The new pay structure started working in January 2010 but the government did not pay lecturers. UTAG embarked on a strike on Monday, August 2, 2021, to demand better conditions of service. UTAG was demanding the implementation of a 2012 single spine package that put entry-level lecturers on a wage of \$2,084.*

Move 2 (Recounting history) Nevertheless, this essay is to elaborate on three effects of the university teachers' strike on students' academic work. A few of the effects are enumerated below; pressure on students, truncation of the academic calendar and poor performance.

SB 42 Move 3(Providing a thesis statement)

Example 4

I came all the way from Kumasi to Cape Coast for a program and to visit my friend as well. I decided to pass by the University of Cape Coast to visit my friend. I realised campus had become quiet and people were carrying some luggage home. As a visitor, not knowing what had happened I patiently walked into my friend's room. Surprisingly when I got there most of her roommates were not around. During our conversation, she told me about this university teachers' strike. I then realised why some students were going home and why most of her roommates were not around. **Move 1(Using short story)** *The strike commenced on the 2nd of August, 2021 (Monday) and was in progress for about three (3) weeks.* **Move 2 (Recounting History)** This essay emphasizes the three effects of the University teachers' strike on students' academic work and they include: it affected our academic calendar,

slowed down teaching and learning, and also students became over-relaxed. **SB34 Move 3 (Providing a thesis statement)**

Example 5

The beginning of this 2020/2021 academic year hasn't been easy for students at all since the pandemic (Covid 19) which occurred caused a lot of damage to the educational system. But the occurrence of the recently ended strike by the University Teachers Association of Ghana (UTAG) greatly affected the academic work of students. (Making Factual Statement). *The occurrence of this strike action by (UTAG) which commenced on the 2nd August 2021 was as a result of them not reaching an agreement with the government to restore the former or past agreement they had with the government in 2012 which they say is far better than the current agreement they find themselves in. As a way of getting the government's full attention to their grievances, came in this strike action which led to the laying down of all teaching and learning tools by the university teachers which caused a lot of effect on the academic work of students. (Recounting History)* This essay elaborates on the three effects of the strike on students' academic work which include high pressure on students, delay in the graduation of the final years and cutting of the semester short. GP43 (Providing a thesis statement).

Example 6

A strike is a situation by which a group of people or workers decide to stay off their position of going to work on normal or usual days. A strike may come for a number of reasons. Some will embark on strike due to financial crises among others. (Explaining key term) *Recently, the University teachers embarked on a serious strike due to some problems between the teachers and the government. (Recounting history)* This essay seeks to discuss three effects of university teachers' strikes on students' academic performance. These include, lectures being unable to finish some courses, pressure on students during quizzes, and the inability for lecturers to finish marking quizzes scripts. GG30 (Stating a thesis statement)

The use of a two-Move sequence featured as the second prominent choice for the disciplines championed by the BS. A total of 32(64%) BS undergraduate students used a two -Move sequence in their introductory essays. The use of the two-Move sequence is not so much cherished by GG students as only 14(28%) of the 50(100%) students used the two-Move sequence in their introductory essays. In the case of SM students, a total of 17(34%) students used the two-Move sequence. This preference by the SM students is more than those used by the SB students. The use of a two-Move sequence, though cherished by the two disciplines: first, the BS and next, the SM, seems not to be the best choice for developing a good introductory essay as this Move sequence tends to be very brief and may not help to digest the content of the issue meant for discussions very well. Even though the first-year students were limited to the use of few words, the three-Move sequence introductory essay has more substance than the two-Move sequence. The following are samples of the two-move sequence used by the three disciplines to realise their communicative purposes.

Example 1

Have you ever thought of going to class and there will be no lecturer present? Have you ever thought of working very hard and in the end you are not paid for your services or are given a non-satisfying salary? How are you going to feel? If a lecturer does not come to class because the primary motivation to keep him/her What actions will he/she take and what will be the resulting effect on the students? I am convinced that we are thinking about strike actions. Yes, "strike!" (Using an anecdote) *This essay will be focusing on three effects of strikes on students' academic work and they are: reduction in academic performance, the student becoming lazy and lastly, tertiary truancy.* SM11(Providing a thesis statement)

Example 2

The University Teacher's Association of Ghana declared a strike on Monday, 3rd August 2021 in order to appeal to the government of Ghana to stop the ill-treatment of the University lecturers and also

ensure that their conditions of service were improved. This strike continued till 23rd August, 2021 when the association and the government met to reach a consensus which included lecturers returning to their classes to teach students, the government ensuring that the Ministry of Labour stopped maltreating lecturers and that during the one-month period, the two groups sat down to discuss the terms of conditions of service. Coming down to the effects of the strike on students, even though the strike was a break for the students in order for them to have some rest, one can tell that it is an infallible fact that the strike did more harm than good. (Recounting history) *This write-up seeks to expatiate three of these negative effects which include; the pile up of academic work on students, delay in completion of the final year students and most importantly, mental stress. SM31 (Providing a thesis statement).*

Example 3

My dad was very upset when my younger brother came back from school after spending just a few days on campus. He asked “Why are you back so early” My brother responded, “Oh dad have you forgotten I told you that we are now on the double-track system?” “Why,” my dad asked again. My brother replied, “I don’t know but it has something to do with the free SHS.” “So when is he supposed to go back?” my dad asked me, I replied “I don’t know” and walked away fast. On his face, I could tell he was really upset. There are many challenges facing the double-track system for senior high school level, not even to mention the political challenges from the opposition party. (Using an anecdote)*This essay will only address three challenges facing the double-track system of education at our senior high school level which are: insufficient learning for the student, more pressure on the teachers and the uneven class duration for each student. GG1 (Providing a thesis statement).*

Example 4

The University Teachers Association of Ghana (UTAG) decided to go on strike on the 18th of July, 2021. Their reason for making this decision was because of the refusal of the government to pay their salaries since 2016. This call became a huge topic for discussion across the whole country. Since the issue was sent to court and to sort matters out, the impact of the strike did not only affect university teachers but affected tertiary students as well. (Recounting history) *In this essay, I would like to examine three effects of the UTAG strike on students’ academic work. First, I would like to talk about how it has made students lazy, then how it has slowed down teaching and learning and finally how it has affected the academic calendar. SB29 (Providing a thesis statement)*

Example 5

A strike is a situation where workers in an institution with the concept of stopping or denying to return to work. In such a strike, the teachers raise their voices for increasing payment, better working conditions, increasing allowances and add-on benefits. (Explaining key terms) *This essay seeks to examine three effects of the University teachers’ strike on students’ academic work. These effects are: the poor performance of students, making some students abandon their academic programme and putting much pressure on students. SB11 (Providing a thesis statement).* One interesting observation made is that there was also the use of a four-Move sequence by 7 (14%) SM students. It was found that the use of the four-Move sequence made the introductory essay quite lengthier and that makes the introductory essay more than the required number of words. The following are examples of a four-move sequence.

Example 1

Strikes as we can all attest to, are very common nowadays. One may ask, what is a strike? A strike from my own point of view is when an organized group of people specifically workers in an institution or organization, decide to take a leave or stop work since the government has not provided them with tools and materials for the job or mainly due to the lack of the government not paying to them the salary they equally deserve. (Explanation of key terms) *Recently, just about a month ago to be precise, the University Teachers Association of Ghana, shortened as UTAG went on strike around the middle of August 2021 and resumed three weeks later in September 2021. This means that for all three weeks*

of the strike, all academic activities were put on hold; no lecturing whatsoever as any lecturer who went against the association to educate his/her students would be sanctioned accordingly. (Recounting of history) Access to education is fundamental to all Ghanaians. It is through education that the nation was able to gain independence. It is through education that the nation has reached where it is today. Imagine how our country would have been if teachers and lecturers then were always on strike. How will the student feel? How will the students' academics be after the strike? (Asking rhetorical questions) This essay is on three effects the university teachers' strike had on students' academic work. **SM3** (Providing a thesis statement).

Example 2

University students in Ghana anticipated a smooth academic year after the subsidence of the coronavirus pandemic which had a huge negative impact on their education. However, it has not been so. (Making a factual statement) *Just recently, Ghanaian universities were struck by a fierce strike action undertaken by the University Teachers Association of Ghana (UTAG) which lasted for three weeks and is currently under suspension. (Recounting history)* According to the Ghanaian Times, the last time Ghanaian University lecturers went on such a fierce strike was in 1995 when the strike lasted for nine months. A typical victim of that incident is my uncle who by then was reading his biochemistry programme at the University of Cape Coast (UCC). There is a local adage that says "when two elephants fight, it is the ground that suffers the most." Here in this situation, the students are the ones who are really feeling the impact. (Providing illustration) In the following paragraphs, I will be elaborating on three effects of this university teachers' strike on students' academic work. They include: academic pressure, delayed academic work and poor performance of students. **SB44** (Providing a thesis statement).

Example 3

Over the years, our country Ghana has recorded several strike actions from the various working unions. However, the University Teachers' Strike poses the most threat to the nation, due to its numerous negative and irreversible effects on the students' academic work. (Making a factual statement) *A University Teacher's strike is when the teaching staff or lecturers of various universities lay down their tools and stay away from teaching, due to various unsettled disputes with the government. (Explaining Key term)* This is clearly unfair since the disputes between the government and the teachers of the university end up negatively affecting the academic work of innocent students of the university. (Expressing an opinion) This essay will be discussing three effects of the university teacher's strike on students' academic work. The university teacher's strike leads to the poor academic performance of university students, the university teachers' strike disrupts or interferes with the academic calendar and the university teachers' strike mounts unnecessary pressure on the students to complete their academic work under abnormal conditions. These are the three effects of the university teachers' strike that will be discussed in this essay. **GG29** (Providing a thesis statement)

The Moves are orderly and sequenced. There is always a first Move (Move 1), followed by a second Move (Move 2), a third Move (Move 3) and a fourth Move (Move 4). Only 2 of the BS students used a one-Move sequence in their introductory essay and in that instance, they use just the third Move (Providing a thesis statement). This type of introductory essay seems like a lazy man's approach to writing a good introductory essay.

Research Question 2 - What structural types of sentences are used by the three selected first-year undergraduate students?

The study showed interest in finding out the structural types of sentences used by first-year undergraduate students in realising the communicative purpose of the introductory paragraph. The four structural types of sentences are simple and non-simple: complex, compound and compound-complex sentences. It was found that undergraduate students have a high preference for the use of the complex

sentence. All three different disciplines selected showed a high interest in the use of the complex sentence. The complex sentence according to Wiredu and Daniels is selected for a purpose.³⁴

Table 4: Structural Types of Sentences used by the three undergraduate students

Types	No of Sentences in SM		%	No of Sentences in GG %		No of sentences in BS %	
Simple	134	38.4%		107	37.2%	116	40.1%
Complex	178	51%		160	55.6%	143	49.5%
Compound	21	6%		16	5.6%	27	9.3%
Comp. complex	16	4.6%		05	1.7%	03	1.03%
TOTAL	349	100%		288	100	289	100%

The table above shows that undergraduate students in the three disciplines show more preference for the use of complex sentences and follow it with simple sentences. In the case of the SM first-year undergraduate students, a total of 178 (51%) sentences are complex sentences used to realise their communicative purposes in the introductory essay. The second choice of structural type of sentence used by the SM undergraduate students is the simple sentence 134 (38.4%). The GG undergraduate students, on the other hand, used 107(37.2%) complex sentences to realise the communicative purpose of the introductory essay. BS undergraduate students also have a high preference for the use of complex sentences 143 (49.5%). From the table, it can be found that even though the three different disciplines have a high preference for the use of both complex and simple sentences, each discipline's preference is different. The GG undergraduate students, for example, use more complex sentences than the SM and BS undergraduate students.

The dominant use of the complex sentence is significant in the study. By implication, the choice of a complex sentence according to Wiredu, allows for a pile of information.³⁵ This means that the complex sentence enables undergraduate students in the three disciplines to add more information than a simple sentence will allow. The complex sentence also allows for information ranking. This simply means that ideas in the information are arranged in such a way that while some ideas are found to be most important others support the main idea.

The following are some examples of the complex sentences used by first-year undergraduate students:

Example 1

The reason behind this was to fight for an increment in their welfare premium since efforts made to increase the welfare conditions of teachers proved futile over the years. **SM9**

Example 2

Around mid-July, 2021, the UTAG issued a communique threatening strike action if the government doesn't address their concerns since this is constitutional for an employee to issue a two-week prior notice before it can embark on such an action. **SM 34**

Example 3

Research has shown that there are numerous reasons why Ghanaian workers embark on strike action: one of which is perceived unfairness and lack of equity in determining working conditions. **GG 10**

The examples of the complex sentence show that indeed, undergraduate students are able to provide a pile of ideas in each complex sentence. In Example 1, you can find that the sentence could have ended just after “to fight for an increment in their working conditions”, but it did not end there. There is an extension of the idea as in “since efforts made to increase the welfare conditions of teachers

³⁴ Wiredu, “A Grammar of Newspaper Editorial Language: The Complex Sentence”; Daniels, “Generic Moves in Selected M. Phil. Research Proposals from a Public University in Ghana.”

³⁵ Wiredu, “A Grammar of Newspaper Editorial Language: The Complex Sentence.”

proved futile over the years.” In Example 3 too, the sentence could have ended at “there are numerous reasons why Ghanaian workers go on strike”, but there is an extension of an idea in the second part of the sentence and in that case, one of the numerous reasons is provided. This confirms Wiredu and Daniels' observation that most writers prefer such a structural type of sentence to allow them to express more than an idea in a sentence.³⁶

To indicate that the undergraduate students have been taught the different structural types of sentences, they write their introductory essays by making use of simple sentences. This type of sentence is the second type of sentence used. There are instances the undergraduate students used simple sentences in varied situations. Several examples are given below.

Example 4

Pressure on students to finish course outlines, ample time to go through and understand things thought in class and conduction of multiple quizzes are some effects of the strike action. SM22

Example 5

I will be elaborating on three effects of this university teachers' strike. SB44

Example 6

Students faced more harm than good during the strike. GG 13

The simple sentences as noted in the above three examples have no compilation of ideas as found in the complex sentences. Knowing more than simple sentences, the undergraduate students also made use of the other structural types of sentences. The following are also examples of compound sentences.

Example 7

Fortunately, or unfortunately, the flagbearer of the New Patriotic Party was voted into power and he had to commence the policy on the double-track system at the senior high level. SM6

Example 8

The UTAG strike affected academic work negatively and some of these include a congested academic calendar, financial difficulties and inability of final years to complete their programs of study. SB 38

Example 9

Due to this strike of university teachers, there have been some effects on the students' academic work and these effects are a decrease in the performance of students in their academic work, the laziness of students towards their academic work and students pressured to write quizzes and exams within a short period. GG 22

These are also a few examples of compound sentences used to capture two independent ideas in a sentence. The undergraduate students also made the least use of compound-complex sentences in their introductory essays. The following are a few examples.

Example 10

Teachers always wish to be in school and teach students in order for them to achieve their aims but with no option, they have to go on strike to tell the government how serious they are. GG23

Example 11

This phenomenon makes it difficult for most students to participate in active studies after a prolonged period of strike action and hence, most tend to absent themselves from classes. SB 5

³⁶ Daniels, “Generic Moves in Selected M. Phil. Research Proposals from a Public University in Ghana”; Wiredu, “A Grammar of Newspaper Editorial Language: The Complex Sentence.”

Example 12

The university is the highest education institute in every country and it is the place where most students from the basic education levels dream to be. SM37

It can be observed from the preceding analysis that though the first-year undergraduate students from the three selected disciplines show a high preference for the use of complex sentences and follow it with the simple sentence, they, to some appreciable level, blend the two types with the compound and the compound-complex to indicate their knowledge in all the four structural types of sentences.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that since there are more than three disciplines in the University, a similar study can be conducted on the other disciplines to find out more about the concepts of Move-Analysis in introductory, body and concluding essays of undergraduate students. There could also be studies that will find out how metadiscourse features that are used in introductory essays to guide readers to make meaning out of the essay. In terms of theoretical implications, the study recommends that other means of generic analysis for example, the Systemic Functional Approach to genre analysis can also be used instead of the English for Specific Purpose Approach. In doing so, knowledge in this area will be expanded and added to the creation of knowledge to sustain the academic community; as contribution to knowledge production is the lifeblood of the academic community.³⁷

CONCLUSION

This study uses Swales's Revised version of the create-a-research- space move analysis model and Wiredu's concepts of structural types of sentences to identify the Moves and linguistic structures used by freshmen and women to realise communicative purposes in their introductory essays. The study has revealed how the concepts of writing an introduction essay are understood and applied by first-year undergraduate students in the three selected disciplines. Thus, the freshmen have used the Moves as they are taught in the introductory essays and have blended the structural types of sentences to communicate their opinions on the given essay. They also have kin interest in the use of complex sentences and simple sentences in their introductory essays regardless of the type of group. The study has both pedagogical and theoretical implications for course tutors and future research in academia

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³⁷ Abu Shardow Abarry, "Effective Research Thesis and Dissertation Writing," *Philadelphia: Institute of African-American Affairs, Department of African American Studies, Temple University*, 1990.

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