Writing Research Article Introduction in Italian

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Abstract
Academic communication currently represents an independent area addressed by both research and teaching. The internationalization of universities accompanied by the high mobility of students and researchers working in multilingual environments increases the pressure on them to publish not only in English but also in other working languages. This study addresses written academic communication, specifically research article introductions written by Italian linguists and literary scholars on which rhetorical and linguistic features will be demonstrated. The methodology used draws from the genre analysis.

Key words: Academic writing, Genre analysis, Research article introduction, Italian, English

Introduction
Academic and scientific communication has become an independent field of research from the perspective of view of linguistics, sociology of science, discourse analysis as well as foreign language teaching (FLT). This article aims to address FLT, mainly in the context of the changes in university education and harmonization of the educational systems as a part of the wider integration processes across Europe. The common denominator for these processes is the internationalization of universities that require foreign language competences. Although it can be argued that the lingua franca of scientific and academic communication is English, there is an effort to preserve language diversity as an important factor in contributing to creativity at many European universities (see e.g. Alcon – Michavila, 2012).

In general, the preparation of specialized and academic texts should be an integral part of university studies and especially in the humanities; the student should acquire skills in oral and written presentation of various types of texts (students’ scientific activity, Bachelor and Master theses, dissertations). However, not enough attention is paid to the teaching of such activities. Courses of academic communication and writing in particular, tend to focus on English due to its privileged status as well as the fact that Anglo-American culture considers writing as a skill that can be improved. This is a major difference when compared to continental Europe: besides the fact that Europe is a multilingual area, writing is also perceived here as more of an individual talent. This difference can also be seen in the Slovak context: students of secondary schools are taught to write mainly literary and journalistic texts. After enrolling at university, it becomes apparent that they a lack proper theoretical background when having to present specialized and academic texts in Slovak, English or other foreign languages (see, e.g. Daniskova, 2014).

This paper deals with this topic in the context of teaching Slovak students the appropriate Italian language and culture for the writing of specialized and academic texts in Italian. During its development as the language of a great culture, Italian has created its own tradition of scientific prose. The relationship with the English language in this area is evaluated as a “bilingualism with diglossia”, i.e., functionally differentiated use of two language codes: English as a “higher” code in communication used by the professionals, and Italian as a lower level...
the development towards global standards drawing mainly from the North American tradition of academic writing, English was selected as tertium comparationis. This study deals with a single genre – the genre of academic discourse, namely the research article introduction (RAI). This genre was selected because the introduction belongs to the most elaborated text genres, it is relatively short and therefore convenient for analysis, and it is an integral part of any qualification work. Given its initial position in the work where the reader is probably the most attentive, immediately after the title and the abstract, the introduction is often the most difficult part to write. American linguist, Swales who introduced one of the most widely known models of introduction analysis, the so called Create A Research Space model (CARS) suggested that “the typical introduction is a crafted rhetorical artifact” (Swales, 1990: 157). Proper knowledge of these discourse practices is therefore important not only for students and postgraduates, but also for university teachers and researchers, since the increasing pressure to publish in internationally results in higher requirements for quality.

This paper describes the rhetorical organization and essential linguistic features of this type of text as written by Italian authors. In comparison to research in other languages, it seems that in Italian the topic has not yet been paid enough attention.

2. Methodology

Our starting point was genre analysis (Swales, 1990; 2004), which is based on the studies of representative corpus of texts and on the identification of the rhetorical strategies typical for each genre. In the 1980s, referential models were developed for

language code used in teaching and for the popularization of science (Carli, 2006: 125). While the use of English became almost exclusive in the so-called “hard” and certain social sciences (economics), and is also more preferred as the language of higher education, in the field of humanities the situation is different. The humanities are more closely linked with the local cultural context with the national language of a larger representation (cf. e.g. Villa, 2013). Thus, they become an interesting area of research of national communicative specifics.

The term scientific article generally refers to a text published in a scholarly journal or conference proceedings. It is considered a key genre of scientific and academic communication, even though its position within individual fields may vary. The term research article is often used in the hard sciences for its analytical and experimental nature; in the field of humanities the term essay is usually used (it. ‘saggio’) for its rhetorical or even essayistic nature; for the subcategorization see Swales (2004: 213). In this paper the term scientific article will be used as a generic term.

For scientific works in other languages see the note n. 7. In Italian, a number of works deal with the status of Italian as the language of science (e.g., Calaresu – Guidiano – Holker, 2006; Villa, 2013); only a few partial studies discussing language and the rhetorical specifics of Italian are available, e.g., Diani (2014), Molino (2010, 2011), Mur-Duenas – Sinkuniene (2016). Didactic works focus on the formal aspects of writing and only a few of them also highlight the communicative effectiveness, e.g., Cerruti – Cini (2007), Desideri – Tessuto (2011).

Genre analysis has been the dominant paradigm of analysis of professional discourse in the recent years and a large amount of attention is given to it also in the field of FLT. However, the three main approaches: (i) English for Specific/Academic Purposes (ESP/EAP) (Swales, Bhatia, Hyland); (II) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) (Halliday, Martin), (III) New Rhetoric (Bazerman, Berkenkotter, Huckin) differ in their views on the text as well as in the application of genre analysis in teaching. While the New Rhetoric negates the possibility of the teaching of text genres due to their high dependency on the context and variability, the ESP and SFL (even though describing genre in different ways) stress the need to provide the learner with explicit methods of structuring text and its possible variations (cf. e.g., Hyland, 2007).

In the field of academic communication (as opposed to the older perception of the language of science as a method for objective and neutral communication of knowledge), a greater emphasis is put on an interactive view of scientific communication. Professional discourse is more
different genres of academic writing for the purpose of a specific academic practice (the effectiveness of academic writing with special regard to the number of non-native speakers of English).

The introduction is defined as a part of a scientific work in which the author creates their own space for research specifying the topic, giving reasons for its choice and, positioning the research in a wider context in order to gain credibility in the eyes of the respective discourse community or reviewers (see e.g. Mesko – Katuscak – Findra, 2004: 177). It is understood as a macro genre that can be further classified. The deviations in the rhetorical organization and in the choice of lexical and linguistic units result mainly from: (a) disciplinary differences, e.g. humanities, natural or technical sciences; (b) slightly different functions: introductions in scientific journals, introductions in conference proceedings; introductions to articles of theoretical/experimental nature; (c) sociocultural differences, arising mainly from the author’s affiliation to a particular national scientific community.

The rhetorical structure of introductions is reflected in the so-called CARS model (Swales 1990). It was developed for the analysis of empirical RAIs in English with a relatively stable structure of constitutive parts (see the IMRD model: Introduction – Method – Results – Discussion). It highlights the presence of a high degree of competitiveness in the Anglo-American context. Considering the conclusions of many studies that responded to this model, Swales introduced two revised versions; one addresses disciplinary differences (Swales 2004: 228-233), whilst the other addresses interlingual research in non-Anglophone cultures (Swales 2004: 243-246). The latter takes into account the lesser degree of competitiveness in the less numerous discourse communities and the peculiarities of the so-called soft sciences, known as the Open a Research Option Model (OARO). The essence of those models lies in the segmentation of text into rhetorical units called moves, each of which contains several obligatory and optional steps. The individual schemes are listed in the following tables:

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rhetorical – loses its impartiality, objectivity, and reflects an effort to express personal attitude and responsibility for the problem (cf. Kraus, 1998: 12).

27For studies dealing with the generic structures of RAIs across disciplines, see e.g.: Anthony (1999) for software engineering; Posteguillo (1999) for computer sciences; Samraj (2002) for wildlife behaviour and conservation biology; Oztruk (2007) for applied linguistics, Yayli – Canagarajah (2014) for composition.

28Apart from English, there are a number of studies of rhetorical strategies dealing with other languages, see e.g., Fredrickson – Swales (1994) for Swedish, Hutz (1997) for German, Golebiowski (1999) for Polish, Burgess (2002) e Mur Duenas (2010) for Spanish, Arvay – Tanko (2004) for Hungarian, Hirano (2009) for Brazilian Portuguese. However, contrastive studies of texts have a much longer history compared to the genre analysis. The tradition of contrastive rhetoric dates to the second half of the 1960s, mainly since the publishing of Kaplan’s ground-breaking work (1966). Based on Sapir and Whorf’s hypothesis of language relativism, Kaplan describes language as a cultural phenomenon with its own rhetorical characteristics. The interest in contrastive rhetoric was re-established in the 1980s, which also brought forward a hypothesis of culturally specific models of writing (see e.g., Maurenan, 1993; Duszak, 1994, 1997; Cmejrikova, 1994).
### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CARS model (Swales 1990: 137-166)</th>
<th>CARS model (Swales 2004: 228-233)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Move 1 Establishing a territory</strong></td>
<td><strong>Move 1 Establishing a territory</strong> (citations required) via</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step 1 Claiming centrality and/or</td>
<td>Topic generalizations of increasing specificity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step 2 Making topic generalization(s) and/or</td>
<td><strong>Move 2 Establishing a niche</strong> (citations possible) via</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3 Reviewing items of previous research</td>
<td>Step 1A Indicating a gap or</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Move 2 Establishing a niche</strong></td>
<td>Step 1B Adding to what is known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1A Counter-claiming or</td>
<td>Step 2 (optional) Presenting positive justification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1B Indicating a gap or</td>
<td><strong>Move 3 Presenting the Present Work</strong> (citations possible)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1C Question-raising or</td>
<td>Step 1 (obligatory) Announcing present research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1D Continuing a tradition</td>
<td>Step 2 (optional) Presenting RQs or hypotheses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Move 3 Occupying the niche</strong></td>
<td>Step 3 (optional) Definitional clarification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1A Outlining purposes or</td>
<td>Step 4 (optional) Summarizing methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1B Announcing present research</td>
<td>Step 5 (Probable in Some Fields) Announcing principal outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2 Announcing principal findings</td>
<td>Step 6 (PISF) Stating the value of the present research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3 Indicating RA structure</td>
<td>Step 7 (PISF) Outlining the structure of the paper</td>
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### Table 2

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>OARO model (Swales 2004: 243-246)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>0 (Attracting the Readership)</strong> Optional opening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Fredrickson &amp; Swales, 1994)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 Establishing Credibility</strong>    (one or more of the following four)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Sharing background knowledge   (Golebiowski 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Justifying need for research   per se (Ahmad 1997)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Presenting interesting thoughts (Clyne 1985)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Introducing general goal       (Golebiowski 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 Offering a Line of Inquiry</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Discussing current problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Expressing interest in an emerging topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3 Introducing the Topic</strong></td>
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</table>
The original CARS model (1990) consists of three moves: *Establishing a territory* – general consideration with regard to the topic (M1), followed by *Establishing a niche* – indication of less clarified or missing aspects of the research (M2) and, *Occupying the niche*, that lays out the proposition of a method of filling in the empty space of the research (M3). Besides the basic sequence, the author also presupposes an omission of one of the moves or, on the other hand, their repetition, mainly in the case of longer RAIs. Moves are realized by individual obligatory and facultative steps.

The goal of our analysis was to verify the possibility of application of these models to the RAIs by Italian linguists and literary scholars published in conference proceedings and to formulate potential common characteristics. We proceed from the assumption that the texts included in the corpus will show several deviations, mainly due to their theoretical nature, affiliation with the humanities, and authors’ affiliation with culturally different discourse communities. The assumptions for the interlingual comparison were: (a) Bhatia’s consideration regarding the genre (2006: 88): “(...) *It is not static, fixed, or prescribed, but is often flexible, negotiated or sometimes contested.*” In this sense, characteristics of a genre may differ from both the disciplinary and cultural viewpoints, however, the genre does not change its basic characteristics; (b) the conviction that even in spite of the divergent opinions on the exact definition of moves, the position of steps, their sequence, and obligatory or facultative nature, the structure of the model as a whole is suitable for the analysis of the author’s communicative intent.

3. Corpus

The corpus used for the purpose of the present study includes 30 RAIs published between 2001–2012 in conference proceedings. The mother tongue of the authors is Italian; many of them are distinguished representatives of the Italian academic community. The articles deal with the relationship of language and culture, standard language and dialects, language and the media, historical linguistics and language teaching. The corpus includes only articles with a formally delimited introduction; the greatest homogeneity possible was aimed for when assessing significance of the conference proceedings (the prestige of the conference, the importance of the publishing house, etc.).

4. Results and discussion

The RAI is marked 0 or 1; it is marked as *premessa* (in 8 cases) *introduzione* (in 5 cases) or *preambolo* (in 1 case), or has its own title (in 16 cases). The majority of RAIs consists of one part without any other segmentation; a more detailed segmentation was found in 2 cases (DA2, LM3). The total length of the RAIs is variable. It ranges from 103 to 1,026 words (compare e.g. the length of RAIs in English: from 140 to 1,277 words, and in Brazilian Portuguese: from 149 to 928 words; see Hirano 2009).

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29The corpus includes studies from the following conference proceedings: *Lingue e cultura fra identita e potere* (seven studies, abbr. LC 1-7); *Formare nei paesi d’origine per integrare in Italia. Le nuove sfide della Dante Alighieri* (six studies, abbr. DA 1-6); *La sintassi dell’italiano antico* (five studies, abbr. ItalAnt 1-5), *L’identità linguistica e culturale degli stranieri in Italia: insegnamento e acquisizione dell’italiano* (two studies, abbr. ItalAnt 1-2), *Lingua e linguaggio dei media* (four studies, abbr. LM 1-4); *Coesistenze linguistiche nell’Italia pre- e postunitaria* (six studies, SLI 1-6).

30Since these phenomena were not defined in any version of the CARS model, they were not included in the corpus, see Yayli – Canagarajah (2014: 98).
As for their rhetorical structure, the majority of RAIs shows deviations from the CARS model. Individual *moves* can be identified, but the types of interconnection are very diverse. All three *moves* include 13 RAIs (M1 – M2 – M3 order was identified in 7 cases and the reverse structure M3 – M2 – M1 was identified in one case). At least one of the *moves* was missing in 17 RAIs. The most frequently used ones were M1 (25 RAIs) and M3 (21 RAIs); the one most frequently omitted was M2 (17 RAIs). One of the RAIs consisted of repeated M1 and M2, (ItalAnt4), or it consisted of repeated M1 and M3 (SLI1). Due to the great variability of RAIs, the study focuses more on the qualitative rather than quantitative aspect.

### 4.1. Move 1

The main goal of this *move* is to inform on the general topic or area of investigation by stressing its importance, the interest in it, either for its novelty or, on the contrary, because the object of research is already established in the field of research. Here, the author also positions their article in a wider context of previous research. Swales (1990) speaks of its possible realization through three *steps*, later on, he simplifies them into one – *topic generalizations of increasing specificity* (Swales 2004). The realization of this move was identified in 83% of cases (25 RAIs).

In *step 1* the author explicitly stresses the importance of the topic; it was identified in 11 cases (36%). The absence of such statements in some of the articles could be explained by the fact that these articles were published in conference proceedings and the topic of the event and its importance were clear. Therefore the authors did not stress the topic again, but rather provided more detailed information about the particular issue they addressed.

One RAI (LM3) focused mainly on claiming the centrality of its topic. In this case, the author kept pointing out the importance of Internet communication and SMS backing it with statistical data, and used corresponding adjectives, e.g. *la tecnologia di trasmissione dati più diffusa nel pianta, impressionante progressione*.

Two RAIs (LC2, LM2) emphasized the topic of the conference (see ex. 1):

1. (...) *mi pare che questa esigenza emerga dalla maggior parte degli interventi che mi hanno preceduta e continuero su questa linea già tracciata.* (LC2)

   Examples of other linguistic realizations of this *step* are: *non c’è libro che si occupi dell’analisi (...) che non testimoni la necessità continua di.....* (LC6); *non c’è grammatica o dizionario che non ambisca a ...* (ItalAnt4); quella di studiare (...) e un esigenza largamente condivisa dalla comunità dei linguisti (ItalAnt4); *la questione (...) attira studiosi di ogni genere (...) fin da* (LC3).

   Step 2 was identified in 18 cases (60%). It consists of rather neutral statements regarding the frequency, complexity, or continuity of a phenomenon (ex. 2, 3).

2. *Gli articoli, definito e indefinito, sono tra gli elementi piu frequenti dell’italiano moderno, come di molte altre lingue. L’articolo definito è, anzi, l’elemento più frequente della lingua in assoluto.* (ItalAnt5)

3. *Il plurilinguismo, come e noto, e patrimonio costitutivo stesso della storia della nostra penisola.* (DA1)

   General statements can also cover “the bald announcement of the relative absence of the phenomenon” (Swales, 1990: 146) and reasons for the situation. These should be followed by an attempt of the author to regain ground; e. g. (4) in the opening paragraph, the author states that only a single study in the area is available...
and it should probably be paid more attention since the phenomenon is rather interesting.

(4) Il volume del 2005 di Lid’O, (...), ospita un articolo di Maria Vittoria Dell’Anna, dal titolo Tra ufficialità e colloquialità. La lingua di Carlo Azeglio Ciampi. Da quel che mi risulta, è il primo articolo scientifico sulla lingua del Presidente della Repubblica. (...) In tale contributo, i discorsi di Ciampi Presidente della Repubblica sono definiti “un interessante esempio di linguaggio politico pienamente istituzionale.” (LC1)

Step 3 refers to the existing works about the given topic which can be written with various communicative intents (Bhatia, 1993). Its objective within M1 is to put the research into a wider context, which could be formally realized by either listing relevant works along with the year of their publication, or listing more detailed information on their viewpoint. While the literature review is a stable component of M1 in the hard sciences, in humanities, this step does not have such a stable position (Swales, 2004: 227). In the corpus used, this step was identified in all three moves (for M1 see ex. 4; for M2 ex. 7).

Our research showed that Italian authors often put their article in the context of their own works; e.g., secondo quanto ho gia esposto in Renzi (1998) (ItalAnt5); Continuando lungo una direzione di ricerca gia da qualche anno intrapresa (Fiorentino 2002, 2004a, 2004b, 2005a, 2005b, 2007a, 2007b, 2007d, 2008), prendero in considerazione (LM4). A specific case of an RAI was also identified in which the author began the article (ItalAnt1) by referring to her previous work and described the whole content of her previous work (introduction, corpus, conclusions).

Examples of the possible linguistic realizations are: la situazione ben descritta da De Mauro (1963); e cio che Stussi (2002) per primo ha definito; come ricorda Alfieri (1992: 835) (SLI6); secondo dati allarmanti sull’analfabetismo (vedi Muglia 2008) (LM3).

Based on our observation, it seems that Italian authors often do not provide the reader with an overall literature review and very often refer to only a few works closely related to their own work. However, an analysis of the relevant communicative intents would require a separate study.

4.2. Move 2

The goal of M2 is to create one’s research space through more or less direct critique of the existing situation in the research (by refusing existing opinions, pointing out gaps, shortcomings, imperfections etc.). In the CARS model, the M2 is an intermediate move that connects M1 to M3 (see e.g. Shehzad 2008). The possible rhetorical realization in the CARS model (Swales 1990) is indicated by 4 steps; in the OARO model (Swales 2004) it consists of three steps; for various formal realizations of M2, see also Shehzad (2008)31. The level of criticism reflects the degree of competitiveness in the relevant discourse community. As the CARS model is based on the analysis of empirical RAIs in the Anglo-American area, a strong and direct gap indication would be expected32.

31Within the markers of niche creation as defined by Swales are mentioned: adversative sentence connectors, e.g. however, but, nevertheless, unfortunately, yet or lexical negation, e.g. fail, lack, misleading, failure, limitation etc.

32Move 2 was paid attention from both interdisciplinary and interlingual points of view. The former one indicates the growing trend of its usage, see. Posteguillo (1995) reports 57%, Anthony (1999) 91.7%, Swales/Peak (2004) 94,64% – a fact that could be linked with increased competitive pressure. The latter indicates that mainly in RAIs in languages other than English,
In our corpus, Move 2 was realized with the lowest frequency (17 cases, 56%). Its realizations can be described as less explicit. A more critical approach (quite close to 1A) was identified in two RAIs (SLI5, ItalAnt5). In ex. 5 the combination of 1A with step 1C can be seen:

(5) Ma qual e il valore generale dell’articolo? (M2, S1C) Su questo tema molto e stato scritto, e non solo in sede linguistica, ma anche (...). Sono state proposte soluzioni molto diverse, qualche volta prendendo come base solo pochi usi, dimenticando l’impiego pervasivo, e, aggiungiamo, molto diversificato, dell’articolo, anzi dei due articoli, di cui abbiamo detto all’inizio. (M2, S1A) (ItalAnt5)

M2 was most commonly realized through step 1B, indicating a gap (10 cases, 33%). The authors pointed out the need for further research even suggesting a lagging behind in research when compared with foreign countries (ex. 6), or in relation to a changed situation (ex. 7):

(6) Mentre in altri paesi la ricerca in questo campo si trova già a uno stadio avanzato (...), in Italia si e scontato un certo ritardo. (...) Se, dunque, per quel che concerne la descrizione sincronica dell’italiano contemporaneo, questa impostazione sembra essersi affermata (...), e ancora tutta da realizzarsi l’opera di analisi e descrizione delle valenze dell’italiano antico .... (ItalAnt4)

(7) Alla genesi di queste costruzioni non e stata prestata particolare attenzione, forse anche a causa della loro assenza in Dante e Petrarca. Nella voce sulle perifrasi verbali nell’Enciclopedia dantesca, la Ageno nota che “mancano ancora presso D(ante) e piu in generale nel toscano antico le perifrasi che indicato il fut(uro) prossimo (...)” (ItalAnt3)

In 2 RAIs, a gap was indicated by the authors themselves expressing the need to extend their own research (ex. 8).

(8) Ho modo cosi di ampliare, riprendone qualche dato, le poche pagine che ho dedicato alla TV trattando dell’italiano contemporaneo (D’Achille 2006) (LM2)

Examples of other realizations are: e dunque indispensabile un sapere – di ordine teorico e di ordine pratico (DA3); si pone, allora, con forza la necessità di una riflessione approfondita, da parte della comunità internazionale (DA4); sarebbe utile indagare ed accertare l’esistenza di ... (DA6); oggi le cose, a proposito del plurilinguismo italiano, non sono soltanto da porre diversamente rispetto a come le vedeva Gadda ma sono di gran lunga più complicate (DA1).

In 7 RAIs M2 was realized through step 1C, in form of direct or indirect question implied by words “question” or “problem” (ex. 9).

(9) Il problema che resta aperto per politici, scienzati sociali ed umanisti e come passare dalla situazione della multiculturalità alla pratica della interculturalità. (II2)

M2 is often omitted, e. g. according to Hirano (2009), in Brazilian Portuguese, it occurs in 70% of cases.
Based on the data from the corpus, it can be stated that the authors avoided open criticism or polemic with other authors who have published works related to the given topic. The existence of possible “gaps” in research are indicated softly by pointing out the need of a more detailed analysis. If the CARS model is understood as a metaphor of competitiveness and efforts of the author to win a position and defend their research in a particular context (Swales 1990: 142), these tendencies are not evident in Italian RAIs, probably due to a lesser degree of competitiveness compared to the Anglo-American environment. It is apparent mainly in RAIs, in which the authors stated that further research could be “interesting” (LC3). These strategies correspond to move 2 in its revised version.

4.3. Move 3

The primary function of M3 is to fill in the gaps in previous research and, propose a solution for the indicated problem or question. This is possible by indicating the goals of the work (step 1A), or by announcing present research (step 1B) and announcing principal findings (step 2), and by indicating RA structure (step 3), see Swales (1990). In the OARO model (Swales 2004), move 3 is more complex (7 steps). As we already said, this move occurs in 21 cases (70%), however, its position is not stable. In 3 cases the RAIs consisted only of move 3 (ItalAnt2, II1, LM4).

Mostly, it is realized through steps 1A or 1B, e.g. questo lavoro si propone di indagare (ItalAnt1); nelle pagine che seguono cercheremo di seguire le tracce delle diverse costruzioni (ItalAnt3); in questa sede vorrei concentrarmi in particolare (LC2); in questa sede tocchero; la discussione sarà incentrata (SLI1); nel presente contributo intendo mostrare alcuni fenomeni (LC4); nel mio contributo sottoporro alla vostra attenzione alcuni spunti di riflessione (II1).

Step 2 (principal findings) was identified only in two cases, what could be explained by the theoretical nature of the article (ex. 10).

(10) L’analisi di questi documenti, che condurremo sinteticamente nelle prossime sezioni del lavoro, rivela due aspetti particolarmente interessanti e, almeno in parte, contraddittori ... (DA4).

Step 3 (indicating RA structure) was identified in three RAIs:

(11) Iniziero illustrando brevemente le ripercussioni che i cambiamenti nella popolazione scolastica della scuola d’obbligo - (...) - hanno determinato nelle richieste che si fanno oggi agli insegnanti. (....) Alla luce di tali richieste prendero in considerazione alcune modalità formative (...). Presentero poi brevemente il secondo dei due corsi, da poco conclusosi. (II1)

In several RAIs, the requirement to fill the gaps was indicated by pointing out that the problem should be approached from a different angle, e.g.: questo romanzo, se letto da una diversa angolazione, sollecita l’interesse dello studioso (LC5), abbiamo deciso di considerare i dati sotto una prospettiva diversa (SLI4); vorremmo condividere alcune considerazioni intorno alla lingua dei giovani (...) che ci porranno in una prospettiva diversa da quella che i molti studi sul tema ci hanno abituati a considerare (SLI4).

4.4. Other characteristics

One of the other characteristics not included in the Swales CARS model is the provision of theoretical information on the subject matter. This rhetorical strategy was described by other authors (so-called background knowledge/information, e.g.
Samraj, 2002). It was identified in nine cases (30%) of RAIs and placed either at the beginning of them (e.g. in LC4, LC5, LC7, ItalAnt3), or in various other positions within them (e.g. LC2, LC6, DA5, DA6, SLI5). The authors probably considered it necessary due to the specificity of the topic with which the members of their scientific community might not be fully acquainted.

(12) Il romanzo “Lo straniero” fu pubblicato a Parigi nel 1938, sulla rivista (...). Il testo portava la firma di Ivan Sergeevic Smelev, scrittore moscovita espatriato in Francia nel 1923. Al momento della pubblicazione Smelev risiedeva in Francia. (LC5)

In five RAIs, we identified information about corpus; in four cases other terminological questions (LC5, LM3, LM1) and concepts the work further deals with were clarified. Two RAIs contain tables with statistical data (LC1, DA1).

Conclusion

This study aims to explore the rhetorical structure of RAIs in Italian. It can be concluded that almost all the steps of the CARS model occur in the analysed RAIs. Their order, however, cannot be generalized into a single predictable structure. Each of the RAIs reflected the particular style of its author, who drew from a number of rhetorical strategies. These characteristics can be, to some extent, attributed to the humanities (texts are often not reducible into a single unified structure) and sociocultural specificities. Understandably, the limited corpus used only allowed us to indicate general tendencies, therefore a more extensive corpus would be necessary to confirm or refute the preliminary claims. Consequently, it would be necessary to take into account the disciplinary peculiarities of each branch of linguistics. It would be also interesting to focus on the rhetorical strategies of both renowned authors and of the younger members of the particular discourse community. It can be hypothesized that the pressure of the international environment and the status of English would result in the inclination towards the Anglo-American norms.

From the point of view of teaching, it can be claimed that thanks to the number of exchange programmes and internships, students and young researchers live in a multicultural and multilingual environment. They can greatly benefit from a knowledge of cultural and disciplinary specificities. Although the norms specific for English can appear too standardized, or even contradictory to the style and creativity of the author, they can be useful as a didactic tool in the initial phase of learning (see Vydra, 2011). Based on these norms, the student can learn how to structure a particular type of text and, consequently, the specificities of various sociocultural and disciplinary communities, which helps them understand the differences when outlining texts in both mother and foreign languages.

Appendix 1. RAIs in the corpus

(LM2) D’Achille, P. La lingua della televisione, pp. 121-46.
(LM4) Fiorentino, G. Forme di scrittura in rete: dal web 1,0 al web 2,0”, pp. 193-206.
(LC2) Caraffi, P. Christine Pizan. La politica e la guerra, pp. 101-109.

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(LC4) Marra, A. Identita e diversita nello slavo del Molise. Appunti sul sistema nominale, pp. 201-213.
(LC7) Franceschini, F. Rapporti di potere, identita, lessico nella Venezia di Livorno (percosse, sesso, gergo, imprecazioni), pp. 509-522.


(DA1) Arcangeli, M. Integrazione e formazione nell’Italia neoplurilingue, pp. 55-66.
(DA2) Morcellini, M. Mediare il culturalismo, pp. 67-84.

(DA4) Scaglione, S., Diritti umani linguistici e diritti linguistici dei migranti, pp. 103-121.
(DA5) Menzinger, C. La formazione dei docenti e la metodologia didattica, pp. 143-158.


(ItalAnt2) Lauta, G. Sui verbi introduttivi del discorso riportato nell’italiano antico, pp. 253-269.
(ItalAnt3) Palermo, M. Le perifrasi imminenziali in italiano antico, pp. 323-349.


(II1) Ciliberti, A. La professionalizzazione degli insegnanti in contesti multilingui: riflessione ed azione, pp. 91-112.
(II2) Sinopoli, F. Letteratura e migrazione in Italia, pp. 213-224.


(SLI1) Sornicola, R. Il plurilinguismo e la storia sociale e linguistica dell’Italia Meridionale, pp. 55-96.
(SLI3) Giordano, R. L’italiano e lo sviluppo delle competenze linguistiche, pp. 235-246.
(SLI5) Calami, S. – Bertinetto P. M. Per il recupero della Carta dei Dialetti Italiani, pp. 335-356.
(SLI6) Lubello, S. Plurilinguismo endogeno nell’Italia postunitaria: dialetti e varietà di lingue nell’uso scritto letterario, pp. 567-578.
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