A Cross-cultural Investigation of English and Turkish Research Article Abstracts in Educational Sciences

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Abstract. The abstracts are essential components of the research articles since scholars are highly likely to read the abstract first and decide to continue or stop reading the research article according to the content of the abstract. Therefore, writing an effective abstract is crucial in order to produce acceptable research articles in the international discourse community of specific disciplines. This study examines the rhetorical variations between Turkish and English research abstracts by adopting Swales’ framework of move analysis (Swales, 2004). The results indicate that there are similarities between Turkish and English research abstracts in terms of the employment of moves and steps though there is a significant difference in the frequency of Move 2 where writers justify their work in their research field as a way of creating a niche. The rhetorical and lexicogrammatical divergences may be explained by both the characteristics of cultures and different expectations of the scientific communities, which results from situatedness of writing, but further research is required with a larger corpus. The study has both theoretical and pedagogical implications in that knowledge of these conventions will allow language educators to identify anomalies and enable MA and PHD students to internalise the accepted styles in international academic discourse.

Key words: genre analysis, academic discourse, abstracts, lexicogrammatical features, moves and steps.