

PLAGIARISM OR PARALLELISM? A STUDY OF THE ORIGINALITY OF RESEARCH ARTICLES IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS

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ABSTRACT

The study of Applied Linguistics (AL), as "the theoretical and empirical investigation of real-world problems in which language is a central issue" (Brumfit, 1997) has been the focus of attention and interest for many years. A substantial body of research has been dedicated to the comparison of different sections of research articles (RAs) in Applied Linguistics concerning various fields of study. However, both content and structure parallelism of the main sections of research articles among main sub-disciplines of AL has infrequently gained attention. To fill this gap, the current study investigated the convergence and divergence of research articles in Applied Linguistics in Iranian context using Khany's (2011) model of content and structure parallelism. To this end, a corpus of 240 research articles written by both Iranian and foreign researchers were analyzed through a developed checklist to identify the parallelism (extraction) in different conventional sections of research articles on the basis of the model. The findings indicated that the rhetorical type, as a section of the model, had the highest percentage (88.5%) of extraction among Iranian research articles. Moreover, it was revealed that among the eight selected sub-disciplines of AL, extraction (parallelism) primarily occurred in contrastive and typological studies (75.45%). To check the normality of the gained results, Kolmogorov-Smirnov was run. The findings of the study can be used by practitioners in the field especially those involved in teaching writing to graduate/higher education students as well as scientific researchers in different subfields of Applied Linguistics.

Key Words: *Applied Linguistics (AL), Content and Structure Parallelism, Research Articles (RAs), Convergence and Divergence, Iranian Context*

INTRODUCTION

When the term applied linguistics first came into existence in the 1950s, it was virtually synonymous with language teaching (Stevens, 1992), and it was later that the term found more comprehensive meaning. A growing number of researchers have focused on the study of applied linguistics from various perspectives including *language teaching* (Apelt, 1981; Tuffs, 1995; Mangubhai *et al.*, 2004; Pishghadam, 2011; Montoneri *et al.*, 2012), *language learning* (Gee, 1994; Ball, 1995; Chater and Vitanyi, 2007; May, 2011), *language assessment and testing* (Hartmann, 1977; Bachman, 1991; Bachman and Palmer, 1996; Hamp-Lyons, 2000; Fulcher, 2000), *language policy and planning* (Crouch and Pulman, 1993; Woo *et al.*, 2006), *language pathology* (Nuessel, 1986; Cao *et al.*, 1998; Goral *et al.*, 2006; Abutalebi *et al.*, 2009), *English for specific purposes* (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987; Johns and Dudley-Evans, 1991; Dudley-Evans, 1998; Ghalandari and Talebinejad, 2012), *communication between groups* (Wierzbicka, 2004; Noens and Berckelaer-Onnes, 2005; Peltokorpi, 2010; Louhiala-Salminen and Kankaanranta, 2012), *lexicography* (Hiorth, 1955; Janca and Sartorius, 1995; Schneider, 2002), and *translation* (Inoue, 2003; Wang *et al.*, 2009; Orad *et al.*, 2008; Yusof *et al.*, 2011).

The range of the debate in much of these studies covers both ends of the spectrum of applied linguistic work, the philosophical and the practical or the pedagogical. A handful of discussions (James, 1993; Sridhar, 1993; Masny, 1996; Lightbown and Spada, 1993; Stevick, 1990) have re-opened the debate on the definition of applied linguistics. In the same line, Weideman (1994) stated that there are five generations of applied linguistic work which can be summarized as linguistic/behaviorist (the scientific approach), linguistic extended paradigm model (language is a social phenomenon), multi-disciplinary

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model (attention to learning theory and pedagogy), second language acquisition research (experimental research into how languages are learned), and constructivism (knowledge of a new language is interactively constructed). Today AL has grown to the extent that now encompasses many sub-disciplines such as language learning, language teaching, language assessment and testing, language policy and planning, language pathology, English for specific purposes (ESP), communication between groups, lexicography, and translation. There are other common subfields of applied linguistics, presented by Grabe (2002), such as second language acquisition, multilingualism, and corpus linguistics.

Still other supporting disciplines are psycholinguistics (Massaro, 1975; Mitchell, 1994; Treiman *et al.*, 2003), education (Heugh, 2000; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Short, 2002; Pishghadam and Navari, 2010), sociolinguistics (Murray, 1998; Keshavarz, 2001; Tarone, 2007), English studies (Ellis, 2003; Keshavarz and Astaneh, 2004; Sardi, 2010; Pishghadam and Norouz Kermanshahi, 2011), and discourse studies (Hyland, 1994, 2000; Gee and Green, 1998; Trujillo Saez, 2003; Jalilifar, 2007; Zarei, 2011). There are some newly introduced ones in the area of forensic linguistics (language and the law) (Momeni, 2012) and computer assisted language learning (CALL) (Warschauer, 1996, 2010; Koohang and Durante, 2003; Bordbar, 2010; Bagheri *et al.*, 2012).

A large body of research over the last few decades has kept alive the debate on the development of applied linguistics around the world in general (Widdowson, 1979; Markee, 1990; Yihong *et al.*, 2001; Ruiying and Allison, 2003; Agha, 2007; Ozturk, 2007; Kabel, 2009) and on different sub-disciplines of applied linguistics in particular (Chomsky, 1959; Vann *et al.*, 1984; Widdowson, 1990; Bachman, 1991; Crystal, 1995; Brown, 2001; Richards and Rodgers, 2001; Block *et al.*, 2002; Ehrman *et al.*, 2003; Hyland, 2004; Kumaravadivelu, 2005; Benson, 2007; Figura and Jarvis, 2007; Seale and Cooper, 2010 to mention only a few). Moreover, some studies have focused on these issues in EFL contexts such as Iran (Farhady, 2010; Ghafar Samar and Davari, 2011; Khatib and Ghamari, 2011; Momeni, 2012; Sherkatolabbasi and Mahdavi-Zafarghandi, 2012).

With all the developments made in the field, however, there is a tendency among researchers as to the exact destination of the field on one hand and the extent of novelty of studies done here or there and the amount of parallel research carried out in the world (Richards, 2003; Khany, 2010 among others). As clarified in preceding section, AL has traversed a very long road to be developed, but today, its path and aim is not much clear in some places around the world. Spending large amount of money on the same studies on one hand and too much circulation and dizziness in the works produced on the other hand seem to have no logical justification asking for an inherent evaluation of the field. In Iran as in many places elsewhere, AL suffers from ambiguity and confusion. Furthermore, whether Iranian researchers merely repeat and imitate the articles or they innovate has been questioned (Khany, 2011). By the same token and with regard to what has already been stated and based on the objectives of the study, the following research questions were sought to answer:

- 1: What is the extent of extraction (parallelism) among different sections and subsections of AL RAs in Iranian local journals?
- 2: What is the extent of convergence and divergence of Iranian local and International journals in the sub-fields of Applied Linguistics from 2002 to 2012?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

1. Method

The current study is an analysis of RAs in applied linguistics, however, for methodological ease and use of the existing findings in the literature; Khany (2011) model is drawn upon. In what follows, the model is briefly introduced. The model was primarily used for scrutiny of the research articles (RAs). The model (Table 1) includes five modes of extraction; type, extent, mode, place, and, unit. Type of extraction encompasses six main sections, namely thematic, methodological, statistical, rhetorical, content, and argumentative. Extent of extraction refers to the amount or percentage of parallelism and mode of extraction or parallelism refers to the directness or indirectness of the use of some original materials. By

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place of extraction, it means different parts of a research article, for instance, title, abstract, introduction, literature review, methodology, results, discussion, and conclusion. Unit of extraction includes theme, concept, word, phrase, sentence, paragraph, graph, table, chart, and any other expressions that may serve.

Table 1: Khany's (2011) model of content and structure parallelism

Type	Extent	Mode	Place	Unit
	Percentage	Direct/Indirect		Theme
				Concept
Thematic			Title	Word
Methodological			Abstract	Phrase
Statistical			Introduction	Sentence
Rhetorical			Methodology	Paragraph
Content			Results	Graph
Argumentative			Discussion	Table
				Chart
				Etc.

Based on the above model, extraction or parallelism can take place at thematic, methodological, statistical, rhetorical, content, or argumentative levels and accordingly at different sections of a Research Article (title, abstract, introduction, methodology, results, discussion) at various extent and applying different units (theme, concept, word, phrase, sentence, paragraph, graph, table, chart, etc.).

1.1. Corpora

The corpus comprised 240 research articles (RAs), 120 written by Iranian researchers published in both national and international journals and 120 by foreign researchers. For the selection of the articles, a number of established journals was primarily taken into account, for instance, *The Asian EFL Journal*, *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*, *Journal of English Language Teaching*, *International Journal of Language and Research*, *Iranian EFL journal*, *International Journal of Language Society and Culture*, etc. To account for the diversity of the subfields of applied linguistics, eight sub-disciplines, namely psycholinguistics, Second Language Acquisition (SLA), language teaching, language testing, sociolinguistics, translation, discourse analysis, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), and contrastive and typological studies were selected.

Table 2: Number of RAs in each sub-discipline of ILJ and IJ

	Sub-disciplines of AL	No. of RAs in ILJ	No. of RAs in IJ
Corpus	Psycholinguistics & SLA	15	15
	Language Teaching	15	15
	Language Testing	15	15
	Sociolinguistics	15	15
	Translation	15	15
	Discourse Analysis	15	15
	English for Specific Purposes	15	15
	Contrastive & Typological Studies	15	15
	Total	120	120

ILJ: Iranian Local Journal

IJ: International Journal

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All the RAs in the pertinent sub-disciplines randomly were selected from leading (Iranian and International) journals and an attempt was made to choose those that were mostly in AIMRD format. The main focus of selecting the corpus was on the articles written by Iranian researchers. Regarding the date of RA publication, all the RAs by Iranian researchers were limited to those published within the last ten years. It was assumed that time might influence the style of the writers. The quantity of the corpus seemed to be adequate for the purpose of the study. Table 2 illustrates the detailed information about the corpus.

1.2. Procedure of Data Collection and Data Analysis

It was taken about one year to conduct the research and to record the data. As mentioned earlier, eight of the most general sub-disciplines of AL were selected for the analysis. In so doing, the concentration was on the Iranian's RAs to see the type, place and extent of the extraction or contribution. In so doing, the title of the selected Iranian research articles was put to an exact scrutiny through various databases, search engines and counterpart journals. Science Direct, SAGE, and search engines such as Google were but a few search places that served the purpose of the study. After finding the desired articles, their titles were searched in the given databases and through search engines to discover the parallel ones written either as original works or preceding in time. Having collected all the research articles, they were compared and paralleled one by one; one article from the Iranian journals and writers with its international counterparts both in the same scope. The gained data were then put into some special tables previously prepared by the researchers for the main analysis. Each sub-category in the tables was divided into three parts, namely place, unit, and extent of extraction. The latter was also separated into two parts; direct and indirect that was supposed for the mode of extraction; where and how of the extraction in the articles, i.e. parts of the RAs that were paralleled. All the obtained data in the tables from the comparison and parallelism of the articles by Iranian and foreign researchers were put into statistical analysis. They were entered into SPSS and were analyzed using descriptive statistics in terms of frequency and percentage. Further, to make sure that the data was normal, one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (K-S test) was conducted. The results of the study are presented in the following section.

2. Results

The results of this study are presented in two phases. Due to what was discussed earlier, the study embarked on the investigation of the parallelism of different sections in applied linguistics research articles. In this phase and in order to investigate the first research question, convergence and divergence of Iranian local journals and International journals, the portions of parallelism of the subsections of the six sections (type) were scrutinized in details. First, the obtained results of the subsections of the first section type of the model, i.e. thematic, relating to the extent (direct and indirect), mode, place, and unit of extraction are illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3: Percentage of extent and mode of extraction in subcategories of thematic section

Thematic Section	Percentage		
	Extent & Mode of Extraction		Place & Unit of Extraction
	Direct	Indirect	
Topic	81.34	18.66	96
Title	35.7	64.3	92
Word	38.46	61.54	80
Phrase	29.77	70.23	63
Sentence	6.92	93.08	26

As Table 3 demonstrates, topic and sentence were found to possess the most and the least portions in the analyzed subsections of thematic part respectively. Interestingly, topic had 81.34 percent parallelized

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directly in this section followed by word, title, phrase, and sentence. Indirectly parallelized portion went to sentence, phrase, title, word, and topic from the highest to the lowest. Subsequently, the distribution of the subcategories of methodology section was put into analysis. Table 4 illustrates the results regarding the distribution of the subcategories of methodological section, namely participants, instrumentation, design, material, procedure, data collection, data analysis, and theoretical underpinnings in the corpus under study. Some examples:

Example 1: *Topic:* discourse markers (Fakoya, 2006)/ (Kaveifard and Allami, 2011)

Example 2: *Title (word: request):* (Lin, 2009)/ (Jalilifar, Hashemian, Tabatabaee, 2011)

Example 3: *Phrase: (EFL Learner's Beliefs):* (Yang, 1999)/ (Rahimi and Abedini, 2009)

Table 4: Percentage of extent and mode of extraction in subsections of methodological section

Methodological Section	Percentage		
	Extent & Mode of Extraction		Place & Unit of Extraction
	Direct	Indirect	
Participants	21.3	78.7	55
Instrumentation	86.16	13.48	96
Design	83.51	16.49	98
Material	79.83	20.17	91
Procedure	81.64	18.36	83
Data Collection	70.55	29.45	85
Data Analysis	48.71	51.29	80
Th. Underpinnings	53.84	46.16	79

As illustrated in Table 4, the majority of the parallelism used in the corpus under study was design (98%). The minority of the comparison belonged to participants (55%). With regard to the extent of extraction, participants (78.7%) have obviously the highest percentage to be extracted indirectly. Instrumentation (13.48%) was extracted indirectly at the lowest point. The distribution of the subcategories of statistical sections of the research articles in the corpus is reported in table 5.

Example 4: *Method:* Instrumentation [The proficiency test NELT (Nelson English Language Tests)], (Iwashita, 1997)/ (Ahangari & Abdi, 2011)

Example 5: *Instrumentation* (interview and questionnaire): (Hoekje, 2007)/ (Mazdayasna and Tahririan, 2008)

Table 5: Percentage of extent and mode of extraction in subsections of statistical section

Statistical Section	Percentage			Unit of
	Extent & Mode of Extraction		Place & Extraction	
	Direct	Indirect		
Data	7.15	92.85	10	
Table	10.2	89.8	17	
Figure	5.63	94.37	21	
Graph	8.06	91.94	15	
Statistical Results	2.31	97.69	5	

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As revealed in Table 5, figure (21%) had the highest occurrence in the corpus under study in relation to the other subcategories of the statistical section such as table (17%), graph (15%), data (10%) and statistical results (5%). Regarding the extent of extraction, figure (94.37%) had the uppermost percentage of indirect extraction. Table was 89.8% indirectly extracted to be pointed the least percentage. Then, the results from the analysis of subsections of rhetorical section were presented.

Example 6: *Table* (Types of open tables): (Ruiz, 1995)/ (Parvanehnezhad and Clarkson, 2008)

Table 6: Percentage of extent and mode of extraction in subsections of rhetorical section

Rhetorical Section	Percentage		
	Extent & Mode of Extraction		Place & Unit of Extraction
	Direct	Indirect	
Abstract	43.79	56.21	93
Introduction	20.53	79.47	86
Review of Literature	57.8	42.2	96
Methodology	24.35	75.65	89
Results	17.58	82.42	80
Discussion & Conclusion	22.08	77.92	87

As evidenced from Table 6, literature review had a considerably higher number of occurrences (96%) in comparison with the other subcategories. Concerning the extent and mode of extraction, results, as the subsection, (82.42%) had the highest rate in the case of indirectly parallelism and review of literature (42.2%) had the lowest. Afterward, the focus shifted to the distribution of the subcategories of the content section in the corpus. The proportion of these subsections on the subject of extent, mode, place, and unit of extraction was examined; the results are shown in Table 7.

Example 7: *Rhetoric*: abstract, discussion (Camiciottoli, 2003)/ (Nikou and Tabatabaie, 2011)

Example 8: *Literature review*: (Yang and Chen, 2007)/ (Amiri, 2012)

Table 7: Percentage of extent and mode of extraction in subsections of content section

Content Section	Percentage		
	Extent & Mode of Extraction		Place & Unit of Extraction
	Direct	Indirect	
Abstract	36.24	63.76	33
Introduction	40.1	59.9	34
Review of Literature	23.77	76.23	49
Methodology	52.4	47.6	41
Results	42.92	57.08	27
Discussion & Conclusion	31.57	68.43	35

As demonstrated in table 7, methodology (52.4%) had the highest rate in the case of directly parallelism and literature review (23.77%) had the lowest. Review of literature (49%) and results (27%) showed the most and the least amount of parallelism concerning the place and unit of extraction. Table 8 shows the

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percentage of the subcategories of argumentative section in relation to the extent, mode, place, and unit of extraction.

Example 9: Introduction: (Cheng, 1999)/ (Razavipour *et al.*, 2011)

Table 8: Percentage of extent and mode of extraction in subsections of argumentative section

Argumentative Section	Percentage		
	Extent & Mode of Extraction		Place & Unit of Extraction
	Direct	Indirect	
Discussion & Conclusion	25.34	74.66	60
Implication of the Study	48.07	51.93	78
Limitation of the Study	59.36	40.64	53
Suggestion(s) for further Research	61.42	38.58	56

As it is shown in Table 8, with regard to the place and unit of extraction, the most parallelism occurred in the implication of the study subsection (78%) followed by discussion and conclusion (60%), suggestion(s) for further research (56%), and limitation of the study (53%). Extent of extraction exposed that the discussion and conclusion subsection was extracted 74.66% indirectly. Implication of the Study, limitation of the Study, and suggestion(s) for further research were extracted 51.93%, 40.64%, and 38.58% correspondingly. The percentage of the results gained from the subsections of each main section, namely thematic, methodological, statistical, rhetorical, content, and argumentative were cumulated. The percentage of each main section in relation to the extent, mode, place, unit of extraction is displayed in table 9.

Table 9: Percentage of extent and mode of extraction in the main sections of the model

Main Sections	Percentage		
	Extent and Mode of Ex.		Place & Unit of Ex.
	Direct	Indirect	
Thematic	38.43	61.57	71.4
Methodological	65.69	34.31	83.3
Statistical	6.67	93.33	13.8
Rhetorical	31.02	68.98	88.5
Content	37.83	62.17	36.5
Argumentative	48.54	51.46	61.7

It can be observed that the statistical section (93.33%) was mostly extracted indirectly in comparison with the other sections of research articles. Methodological (65.69%) had the highest portion of direct extraction. Subsequently, the percentage of the subcategories concerning place and unit of extraction was cumulated. Remarkably, rhetorical section (88.5%) covered the largest portion followed by methodological (83.3%), thematic (71.4%), argumentative (61.7%), content (36.5%), and statistical (13.8%). At the end, to check the normality of the evidenced distinctions, one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was run. Table 10 indicates the verified means and relevant Kolmogorov-Smirnov results for thematic, methodological, statistical, rhetorical, content, and argumentative sections separately.

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Table 10: One-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov results for the five main sections

	Thematic	Methodological	Statistical	Rhetorical	Content	Argumentative
Mean	71.4	83.3	13.8	88.5	36.5	61.7
K-S Z	.398	.500	.571	.499	.656	.402
A. Sig.	.997*	.964*	.900*	.965*	.782*	.997*

* $p > 0.05$

As evinced from Table 10, the test distribution was normal for each section independently. The results also supported the statistical significance of all the observed percentage at $p > 0.05$. In the second phase, concerning the second research question, the extent of convergence and divergence of Iranian local journals and International journals in the sub-fields of Applied Linguistics from 2002 to 2012, table 11 divulges the obtained results from the comparison. Once more, to check the normality of the evidenced distinctions, another test of one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov was run. Table 12 indicates the verified means, and relevant Kolmogorov-Smirnov results for the pertinent sub-disciplines.

Table 11: The extent of type of extraction among the pertinent sub-fields

Sub-fields	Type of Extraction						Total
	Thematic	Methodological	Statistical	Rhetorical	Content	Argumentative	
Psychol. & SLA	61.7	79.5	8.4	85.9	21.5	52.3	51.55
Language Teaching	75.6	86.4	15.5	90.3	43.7	63.4	62.48
Language Testing	56.4	75.1	7.6	81.4	19.9	48.1	48.08
Sociolinguistics	83.7	92.2	17.9	92.3	49.6	66.2	66.98
Translation	48.1	58.3	4.8	78.2	16.1	47.2	42.11
Discourse Analysis	86.4	94.7	20.3	93.5	56.8	73.6	70.88
ESP	67.2	84.9	9.1	89.6	23.8	59.4	55.66
Cont. & Typo. Studies	92.3	95.8	27.2	96.2	57.2	84.0	75.45
<i>Total (mean)</i>	71.4	83.3	13.8	88.5	36.5	61.7	

Note: Psychol. & SLA: Psycholinguistics and Second Language Acquisition, ESP: English for Specific Purposes, Cont. & Typo. Studies: Contrastive and Typological Studies All the figures are presented in percentage

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Table 12: One-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov results for the eight sub-disciplines

	Psycholinguistics & SLA	Language Teaching	Language Testing	Sociolinguistics	Translation	Discourse Analysis	ESP	Contrastive & Typological Studies
Mean	51.55	62.48	48.08	66.98	42.11	70.88	55.66	75.45
K-S Z	.533	.563	.536	.543	.629	.567	.536	.570
A. Sig.	.939	.909	.936	.930	.824	.905	.937	.902

* $p > 0.05$

As evinced from Table 12, the test distribution was normal for each section independently. The results also supported the statistical significance of all the observed percentage at $p > 0.05$. Next, Table 13 shows the extent of mode of parallelism (extraction) in relation to the sub-fields.

Table 13: The extent of mode of extraction among the pertinent sub-fields

Sub-fields	Mode of Extraction											
	Thematic		Methodologic al		Statistical		Rhetorical		Content		Argumentati ve	
	D	In	D	In	D	In	D	In	D	In	D	In
Psychol. & SLA	6.46	7.42	7.62	4.26	1.3 4	11.8 7	3.48	8.39	4.56	8.45	6.12	8.46
Language Teaching	4.57	8.24	8.53	5.73	1.1 5	14.7 2	2.54	9.12	5.32	7.23	4.59	5.53
Language Testing	5.89	9.15	9.48	3.82	0.7 1	12.2 9	5.51	6.08	5.87	6.61	6.26	6.37
Sociolinguistics	2.91	6.86	7.36	5.37	1.0 5	9.64	4.37	9.45	6.36	9.48	5.43	7.24
Translation	4.68	7.92	8.63	4.29	0.2 5	8.98	2.34	7.82	4.02	7.59	6.83	6.16
Discourse Analysis	5.23	8.51	6.87	3.16	0.1 2	11.6 9	5.31	10.2 1	3.19	5.94	8.35	4.85
ESP	3.07	7.30	9.91	3.45	1.0 3	13.4 1	4.19	7.58	5.39	9.78	5.31	7.62
Cont. & Typo. Studies	5.62	6.17	7.39	4.23	1.2 3	10.7 3	3.28	10.3 3	3.12	7.09	5.65	5.23
Total	38.4 3	61.5 7	65.69	34.31	6.6 7	93.3 3	31.0 2	68.9 8	37.8 3	62.1 7	48.54	51.46

Note: Psychol. & SLA: Psycholinguistics and Second Language Acquisition, ESP: English for Specific Purposes, Cont. & Typo. Studies: Contrastive and Typological Studies, D: Direct, In: Indirect. All the figures are presented in percentage

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As observed, taking indirect mode of extraction into account, the majority of extraction uncovered in statistical section (93.33%). Afterward, Table 14 reveals the extent of place of extraction among the relevant sub-fields.

Table 14: The extent of place of extraction among the pertinent sub-fields

Sub-fields	Place of Extraction					
	Title	Abstract	Introduction	Methodology	Results	Discussion
Psychol. & SLA	10	9	8	11	9	9
Language Teaching	12	12	10	9	13	11
Language Testing	9	11	11	12	12	9
Sociolinguistics	13	13	10	11	8	12
Translation	9	9	9	10	7	8
Discourse Analysis	13	15	12	14	11	13
ESP	11	10	12	9	9	11
Cont. & Typo. Studies	15	14	15	13	11	14
Total	92	93	86	89	80	87

Note: Psychol. & SLA: Psycholinguistics and Second Language Acquisition, ESP: English for Specific Purposes, Cont. & Typo. Studies: Contrastive and Typological Studies. All the figures are presented in percentage

As seen in the preceding table, abstract and results sections exposed the highest and lowest percentage among other places. The extent of unit of extraction is shown in the succeeding table.

Table 15: The extent of unit of extraction among the pertinent sub-fields

Sub-fields	Unit of Extraction								
	Word	Phrase	Sentence	Table	Figure	Graph	Theme	Concept	Chart
Psychol. & SLA	75	56	23	13	18	12	49	68	49
Language Teaching	79	71	25	18	22	16	58	78	56
Language Testing	72	51	20	8	16	11	51	63	46
Sociolinguistics	87	72	29	21	25	18	69	81	58
Translation	63	41	18	10	14	9	45	61	32
Discourse Analysis	91	74	31	27	24	19	64	83	61
ESP	80	59	21	15	20	14	56	72	50
Cont. & Typo. Studies	93	80	41	24	29	21	72	83	71
Total	80	63	26	17	21	15	58	73	53

Note: Psychol. & SLA: Psycholinguistics and Second Language Acquisition, ESP: English for Specific Purposes, Cont. & Typo. Studies: Contrastive and Typological Studies all the figures are presented in percentage

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Example 10: *Concept:* Confidence, motivation, attitude (Demirezen, 1988)/ (Khalili Sabet & Sadeh, 2012)

As displayed, it can be found out that the highest and the lowest amount of extraction belonged to the word and graph (80 and 15 respectively).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3. Discussion

The main purposes of the present thesis were investigating the extent of extraction (parallelism) among different sections and subsections of AL RAs in Iranian local journals based on Khany's (2011) model as well as examining the extent of convergence and divergence of Iranian local journals and International journals in the sub-fields of Applied Linguistics from 2002 to 2012. Taking the first research question into account, 240 research articles published in national (120 RAs) and international (120 RAs) journals across eight sub-disciplines of Applied Linguistics were put into analysis. To balance the number of RAs, an attempt made to select 15 RAs from each sub-discipline. Based on Khany's (2011) model, each RA was paralleled and put into analysis considering the six main sections of type introduced in the model. The results of the analysis confirmed the distribution of parallelism (extraction) among the sections along with their subsections. The analysis of the distribution of the main categories with reference to the place and unit of extraction demonstrated that rhetorical section (88.5%) had the highest portion of extraction, followed by methodological (83.3%), thematic (71.4%), argumentative (61.7%), and content (36.5%). Statistical section, however, were shown to cover the lowest proportion (13.8%).

Concerning the extent and mode of direct extraction, methodology section (65.69%) identified to have the most portion of extraction and the statistical section (6.67%) demonstrated to have the least amount. The other sections, namely argumentative, thematic, content, and rhetorical showed 48.54%, 38.43%, 37.83%, and 31.02% respectively. The analysis of the research articles in relation with the extent and mode of indirect extension revealed that statistical section (93.33%) and methodology section (34.31%) had the highest and the lowest portion of this type of extraction. The statistical section was followed by rhetorical (68.98%), content (62.17%), thematic (61.57%), and argumentative (51.46%). Considering the subcategories of the main sections, thematic section as the first section consisted of five subsections. Each section revealed different portions of extraction. With 96 percent extraction, topic had the highest portion that 81.34% occurred directly in the current corpus. In relation to the place of extraction, topic followed by title (92%), word (80%), phrase (63%), and sentence (26%). After topic, word (38.46%), title (35.7%), phrase (29.77%), and sentence (6.92%) had the next portions of direct extraction.

Methodology, as the most parallelized section under study, encompassed eight subcategories announcing design (98%) as the most parallelized subsection to be extracted 83.51% directly. The other subsections, namely instrumentation, material, data collection, procedure, data analysis, theoretical underpinnings, and participants discovered to have the following portions respectively: 96%, 91%, 85%, 83%, 80%, 79%, and 55%. The extent and mode of extraction was mostly found to be direct. Instrumentation (86.16%), design (83.51%), procedure (81.64%), material (79.83%), data collection (70.55%), and theoretical underpinnings (53.84%) depicted more than half direct extraction and data analysis (48.71%) and participants (21.3%), represented less than half. The analysis of the third section of the model, statistical section, led to the fascinating findings, for instance, the least parallelism took place in this part, and moreover, the extraction was mostly indirect. Data, table, figure, graph, and statistical results were the subclasses of the section on the basis of Khany's (2011) model showing 10, 17, 21, 15, and 6 percent place and unit of extraction correspondingly. The analysis of the subsections in relation to the extent and mode of extraction revealed that, as aforementioned, more than 90% of extraction happened indirectly through the following portions: data (92.85%), table (89.8%), figure (94.37%), graph (91.94%), and statistical results (97.69%). Authors are responsible for preparing or obtaining reproducible versions of their figures, along with captions and source lines. Permissions documentation must also accompany the illustrations submitted with the final manuscript.

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As previously mentioned the next main section of the model, rhetorical; comprised of six subsections with various distribution. Considering the place and unit of extraction, review of literature (96%) had the highest occurrence among the other subsections. Abstract (93%), methodology (89%), discussion and conclusion (87%), introduction (86%), and results (80%) were the other amount found in this section. Taking into account the extent and mode of extraction, review of literature (57.8%) showed the uppermost portion of direct extraction followed by abstract (43.79%), methodology (24.35%), discussion and conclusion (22.08%), and introduction (20.53%). Finally, in this section, results (17.58%) indicated the least amount of direct extraction. Another section of the model, content, was ranked as the fifth mostly extracted place among the under analysis research articles (36.5%). The results showed that the extent of extraction (place and unit) through the content of RAs was as follows: review of literature (49%), methodology (41%), discussion and conclusion (35%), introduction (34%), abstract (33%), results (27%). In relation to the extent and mode of extraction, methodology (52.4%) was mostly extracted directly followed by results (42.92%), introduction (40.1%), abstract (36.24%), discussion and conclusion (31.57%), review of literature (23.77%). The most and the least amount of indirect extraction in this section belonged to the review of literature (76.23%) and methodology (47.6%). The last section of the model, argumentative, consisted of four subcategories: discussion and conclusion, implication of the study, limitation of the study, and suggestion (s) for further research. There are certain points to be mentioned. Implication of the study (78%) had the highest portion of place and unit of extraction followed by discussion and conclusion (60%), suggestion(s) for further research (56%), and limitation of the study (53%). Regarding the extent and mode of extraction, the last subsection, suggestion(s) for further research (61.42%), was mostly extracted directly. Limitation of the study (59.36%), implication of the study (48.07%), and discussion and conclusion (25.34%) were come in the following.

The second research question would be responded via analyzing the research articles in the corpus considering the extent of extraction (parallelism) among the selected sub-disciplines of AL. As explained before, for the purpose of the study, eight sub-disciplines of the applied linguistics, namely psycholinguistics, language teaching, language testing, sociolinguistics, translation, discourse analysis, ESP, and contrastive and typological studies were preferred. In what follows, the analysis of the results concerning the amount of extraction among these sub-fields is discussed. The analysis of the extraction of the relevant AL sub-fields demonstrated that contrastive and typological studies had the highest rate (75.45%), followed by discourse analysis (70.88%), sociolinguistics (66.98%), language teaching (62.48%), ESP (55.66%), psycholinguistics (51.55%), and language testing (48.08%). Translation, however, was shown to cover the lowest proportion (42.11%). In all of the sub-fields except for discourse analysis, rhetorical section of RAs had the highest percentage of extraction. Generally, for all the sub-disciplines, rhetorical section revealed 88.5% of extraction, methodological: 83.3%; thematic: 71.4%; argumentative: 61.7%; content: 36.5%; and statistical: 13.8%.

Conclusion

The current study was a preliminary attempt to explore the convergence and divergence of research articles in Applied Linguistics in Iranian context. The obtained corpora were observed to share certain similarities in different sections of research articles. However, it was shown that there were differences in the amount of extraction among different sections and subsections of RAs as well as different AL sub-fields under study. On the basis of the obtained results, it can be suggested that rhetorical section, as the most extracted section, was the main problem of Iranian researchers. And it followed by methodological, thematic, argumentative, content, and statistical. Concerning the amount of extraction among AL sub-fields, contrastive and typological studies demonstrated the highest percentage of extraction followed by discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, language teaching, ESP, psycholinguistics, language testing, and translation. This could signal a requirement for raising the awareness of Iranian RA writers of the extracted sections and sub-discipline to enhance the quality of the RAs published locally and increase the publishing opportunities for Iranian students and RA writers who intend to publish their articles in international and prestigious journals.

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The findings of this study have both theoretical and pedagogical implications for foreign or second language learning and particularly foreign/second language writing. At the theoretical level, analyzing Iranian researcher's RAs and exploring the type, extent, mode, place, and unit of parallelism can lead to developing a specific profile of some writing problems for Iranian researchers to avoid plagiarism. Concerning the pedagogical implication, given the representation of the corpus, it would be appropriate to expect the findings of this research to be generalized in different areas of language teaching, especially in teaching writing to graduate/higher education students as well as scientific researchers in different areas. The study expands the application of the results to research articles, thus adding to the ever-evolving knowledge of how writing in disciplines can be understood as having predictable structures. More specifically, the results of this research will be useful to those university instructors who want to help students/researchers with achieving an acceptable level in writing research articles in English.

No study is perfect; all research studies have their own limitations. Although the current research was an attempt to provide an almost inclusive picture of the problems Iranian researchers face in writing and publishing academic Research Articles, there are limitations to the study which should be acknowledged. First, the results of the study are only on the basis of corpus-based analysis. It is suggested that besides the corpus-based approach, other approaches such as experimental ones which benefits from human subjects be employed in order to broaden the scope of the research in this area. Second, using the larger corpus than the corpus used in this study, may reveal other percentages which were not detected in the present study. Hence, it is highly suggested that similar studies be carried out in other corpora and sub-disciplines. Third, regarding the contrastive study conducted between the two corpora, it must be borne in mind that the attempts the researchers made to explain similarities and differences may be influenced by the researcher's personal experience and beliefs and may not be considered as absolute and unquestionable. Consequently, prospect research is obviously required to corroborate the findings of the present study.

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