

A Cross-cultural Analysis of English and Arabic Blurbs: An Investigation into Generic Structure and Appraisal Markers

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Abstract

This study investigated the generic structures and linguistic features of English and Arabic academic book blurbs from different disciplines. The study also examined appraisal markers in the blurbs within the appraisal framework to identify the main attitudinal markers that book blurb writers use to construe and negotiate attitudes with their intended readers. To carry out the aims of the study, 300 English and 300 Arabic blurbs from different disciplines in social sciences were selected. The findings of the study demonstrated that the generic structure of academic blurbs in English differ from that in Arabic. As for the appraisal markers, the findings revealed that both English and Arabic blurb writers widely deploy appraisal markers. The results showed that within the attitude category, appreciation markers were widely used and highly dominant. Within the engagement system, heteroglossic resources were higher than monoglossic ones and for graduation resources, they were widely used by both English and Arabic book blurb writers.

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1. Introduction

The term blurb has been variously defined in the literature as a description of the content and positive evaluation of the intended books in order to encourage the prospective reader to pay attention to the targeted books. As a result, the readers can be enticed to read the books. Generally speaking, book blurbs are one of the most interesting genres in the recent linguistic studies (Valor, 2005, 2007).

Book blurb can be defined as publisher's short description of the contents of a book to evaluate and recommend the book by means of extracts from reviewers in which the qualities of the book and the author are praised, too. Its main aim is to entice the readers to buy books. Recently, there has been a significant concentration on analyzing different types of academic genres including book blurbs which are regarded to be partly commercial and partly academic.

A lot of studies have dealt with book blurbs analysis. These studies can be classified into two groups. The first group has focused on blurbs in one language. The second group, on the other hand, has focused on blurbs across languages. Given their informative and promotional function, book blurbs can position and market the book (Cacchiani, 2007). Cacchiani focuses on the lexical and discourse-pragmatic features of evaluative language in a corpus of around 200 book blurbs and identifies four moves: (1) Identification: this is an obligatory move which positions the book on the market; (2) Establishing credentials: this is an optional move which includes awards, listings and achievements and/or reference is made to the author's biography; (3) Highlighting parts of the book: this is an optional move with six sub-functions: (a) highlighting parts of the book; (b) introducing peculiar features of main characters(s) which may attract the reader to buy the book; (c) appraising the book; (d) highlighting style, (e) establishing credentials,

and (f) targeting the market, and (4) Appraising the book: *quotations/endorsements*.

Bhatia (2004) examined fiction and academic book blurbs in English. The study drew on more than 60 online book blurbs in English from four publishing companies such as Penguin, Ballantine, Routledge, Barnes and Nobels. He suggested a six-move schema, and pointed out that the two types of blurbs were very similar in terms of communicative purpose and lexico-grammatical realization, but there were differences in the nature of nominals, particularly adjectives. Valor (2005) proposed a three-move schema, consisting of description, evaluation and information about the author. Valor's aim of his study was to present a preliminary approach to the study of blurbs that were displayed on book covers to provide potential readers with information about the book.

In the study of best-selling English as foreign language teachers' books, Basturkmen (2009) built a small corpus comprised of the teacher's books of the seven EFL books. Drawing on Martin and White's (2005) appraisal framework, Cacchiani (2007) investigated the lexical and discourse features of evaluative language in 200 book blurbs in English, finding that positive evaluative language is vital to blurbs. Gesuato (2007) described how evaluation was presented in the back-cover blurbs of 80 English academic books from four disciplines (Biology, Engineering, Education and Linguistics), reporting that evaluation occurred in 77 (96.25%) of the blurbs.

To the best of the researchers' knowledge, however, there is little research into cross cultural differences in the book blurbs. An exception is Kathpalia's (1997) study, which examined cross-cultural variation of book blurbs in international publishers and local Singapore-based publishers, focusing more specifically on comparisons of rhetorical organization, textual patterns and lexico-grammatical realizations. On the same level of the argument, Jalilifar

and Banari's (2011) study dealt with blurbs across English and Persian languages. The aim of the study was to find out linguistic and rhetorical structures employed by the two groups of writers. The result of the study showed that the blurbs of the two disciplines are rhetorically different.

However, despite the high level of interest in the book blurb genre in the professional settings and the extremely large number of blurbs available, few empirical studies have investigated cross-cultural variations in book blurbs leaving this area of research under explored to date particularly in English and Arabic contexts. In the light of the insightful research into the promotional genre of book blurbs, this study attempts to investigate the generic structure, content, and linguistic features and it also investigates the appraisal resources of academic book blurbs to explore the way in which book blurb writers use positive evaluative resources in two different cultural contexts (i.e., English & Arabic).

2. Purpose of the Study

Despite the vital role played by the blurbs, analysis of blurbs has not received the attention it deserves. Particularly in Arabic contexts. Arabic book blurbs, as compared with English blurbs, suffer from inadequacy of attracting and persuading the reader. Arabic blurbs adopt different strategies in description of books in order to promote the reader. Arabic blurbs seem to fail to capture the readers' attention as initial analysis has indicated. One can confidently say, to this date, that no study has been conducted to analyze blurbs as a cross-cultural analysis in the Iraqi Arabic context. The current study analyzed the rhetorical structures and linguistic features of hard-copy blurbs written in both English and Arabic languages. Thus, the study can be of importance in contrastive genre studies. To this end, the following questions were raised:

1. What are the generic structures of hard-copy blurbs in English and Arabic?

2. How does the generic structure of hard-copy blurbs in English differ from that in Arabic?

3. How do book blurbs in English and Arabic promote the reader to buy the books? What are the promotional elements mostly used to fulfill promotion and to grab the reader's attention?

3. Method

3.1 Experiment I: Genre Analysis

This study takes its point of departure grounded theory to explore the main concern of the researchers working within a particular data collection. However, the aim of grounded theory is to develop, through a process of induction, a conceptually abstract theory that is grounded in the empirical data from which it was derived (Glaser, 2005; Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Consequently, this study follows the grounded theory procedures, through ample analysis of the data and a flexible approach that allows underlying generic structures to emerge from the data itself. To analyze the generic structures of the blurbs, we began our analysis with the initial qualitative coding by taking segments of data apart then naming them in concise terms, and proposing a model.

3.1.1 Pilot Study

In the analysis of the English and Arabic texts, first we examined the generic structures of book blurbs by exploring the overall textual organization of each blurb. Furthermore, the identification of moves and consequently the setting of move boundaries in book blurbs is usually accomplished through a bottom-up approach that we adopted in this study.

As a starting point, 60 academic English and Arabic book blurbs were randomly selected from the various social disciplines referred to previously, such as linguistics, literature, history, geography, literary criticism, and economy. Preliminary analysis was made on them in order to identify their

generic characteristics. The aim of this preliminary analysis was to make sure the study was feasible. The second aim of the pilot was to take care of the reliability of the analysis and to show to what extent the model followed in the analysis was reliable. Accordingly, the researchers and a coder who was familiar with the model analyzed the texts. The reliability coefficient was then calculated so as to make sure that the analysis was reliable and sound. In order to determine the reliability coefficient between first analysis and second analysis, Kappa's statistic was adopted as a measure of agreement between English and Arabic academic blurbs. The value of reliability that the researchers obtained was (.720) for the first and second analyses of English academic blurbs, whereas it was (.726) for Arabic academic blurbs. The results obtained by the rater matched to a great extent the results obtained by the present researchers (See Table 1).

Table 1

Measure of Kappa Agreement for First and Second Analyses of English Academic Book Blurbs

	Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Measure of Agreement Kappa	.720	.163	5.539	.000
N of Valid Cases	9			

The obtained results in the Table show that the agreement between the first analysis and the second analysis of English academic book blurbs is highly reliable and significant based on Kappa's measure of agreement.

Regarding Arabic academic blurbs, the analysis of the data revealed agreement of the obtained results in the first analysis and the second analysis according to the correlation coefficient as shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Kappa Agreement for First and Second Analyses of Arabic Academic Blurbs

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Measure of Agreement	Kappa	.726	.177	3.198	.001
N of Valid Cases		9			

The results of the analysis showed the feasibility of the model followed in the analysis of the data. The value obtained was more than 0.7 which was an acceptable reliability indicator. This gave the researchers the incentive to proceed with their analyses and accordingly the moves and micro-structures of blurbs were classified by the researchers.

3.1.2 Materials

A total of 300 blurbs written in English and Arabic from different disciplines in social sciences were culled from Basra university library on the basis of their availability. The selection was done on the basis of the popularity of the publishing companies. In addition, the time limit behind the choice of the books was within the period of 2000-2014. The corpus in each language included 150 blurbs. This number allowed the researchers to make generalizations about the generic organization of blurbs in the two groups under investigation in both languages. The publishing houses of the books were selected from the available books in the market and in the university location of Basra. A quick examination revealed a number of famous Arabian publishers such as Dar Al-Shu'oon Al-Thaqafiyya, Dar-Al-'Ilm, Al-u'assarra Al-Arabia, Al-Sharika Al-Masriyya li-i-Matbu'aat, and others. These Arabian publishing Houses are Iraqi, Egyptian and Lebanese. As for the English blurbs, the famous publishing Houses considered for this study were Cambridge, Longman, Prentice-Hall, Palgrave, and others.

3.2 Experiment II: Appraisal Markers

This study applies the appraisal model, a model focusing on the semantic system that expands Halliday's (2004) interpersonal metafunction by representing in greater detail the ways in which writers seek to negotiate attitudes with their readers, to explore the way in which blurbs writers use lexical items to express and negotiate attitudes with their readers. Thus, the analysis of book blurbs draws on Martin and White's (2005) *appraisal framework*. The resources of appraisal consist of three subsystems: *attitude*, *engagement* and *graduation*. Each of these sub-systems has its own set of sub-systems: (1) *Attitude* explores how feelings, judgments of people, and evaluations of things are built up in texts; (2) *Engagement* explores the "voices around opinions in discourse" (Martin & White, 2005, p.35) and how "values are sourced and readers aligned" (Martin & White, 2005, p. 16) through such moves as conceding, countering, endorsing, and entertaining other voices and perspectives; (3) *Graduation* explores how feelings and evaluations are subtly adjusted in terms of force and focus. These main systems are themselves further classified into sub-categories as shown in the Figure 1 which is adopted from Martin and White (2005).

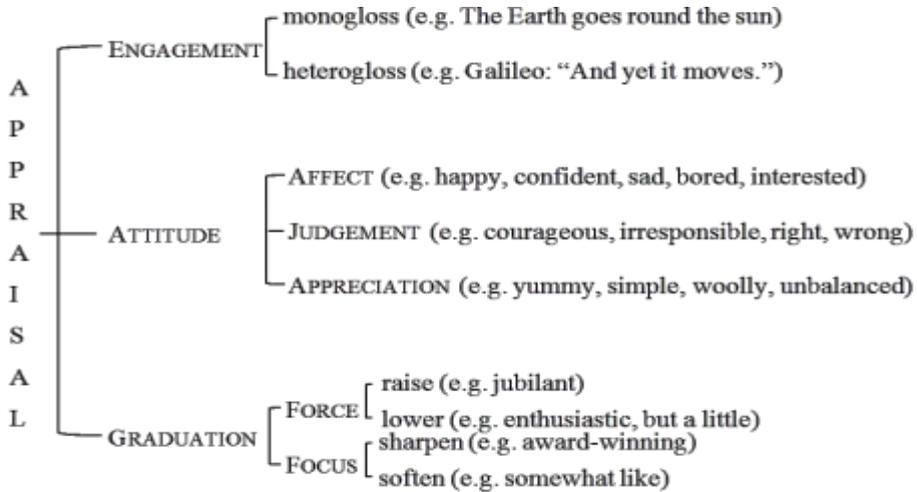


Figure 1. An overview of appraisal resources (Martin & White, 2005, p. 38)

Following a bottom-up approach to analyze the English and Arabic academic blurbs and evaluating their communicative functions, the researchers attempted to trace the appraisal elements. Martin and White's (2005) model was adopted to identify the appraisal items that express *positive and negative attitudes, judgment, appreciation, engagement and graduation*. The focus of the analysis was on the items of the appraisal categories that blurb writers used to bring the readers' attention towards the targeted books.

What is of interest here is that blurbs contain only positive evaluations because the aim is to persuade others to buy or to read the book. In addition, the majority of appraisal aspects in blurbs basically lie in *appreciation, graduation* and some *attitude* markers. This is simply because we are appraising books rather than talking about persons unless it is necessary to do so.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 General Analysis

The researchers adopted both qualitative and quantitative to arrive at the results of this study. Thus, the analysis of the data was made so as to find the

generic features of blurbs in both English and Arabic. Analysis of macro structures of blurbs in both languages showed that blurbs demonstrate similarities and differences. It was found out that academic English blurbs tend to focus on *identification, appraising the book, appraising the content of the book* and *identifying the groups moves* whereas Arabic academic blurbs emphasize *the purpose of the book* and *appraising the book and the author*.

Further, English academic blurbs, as compared with Arabic blurbs, seem to be more elaborate and systematic. English academic blurbs have six minor moves and steps including: *identifying the purpose and reason, identifying the group, process of learning, summary move, rhetorical question* and *inclusion move*. On the other hand, Arabic book blurbs include three minor moves and steps: *identifying the purpose, identifying the group, rhetorical question, complimenting the author* and *inclusion*. The following table reveals the moves and steps which constitute blurbs of academic books in both English and Arabic (Table 3).

Table 3

Moves and steps in English and Arabic Academic Books

Blurb	Introduction move					Inclusion move
	English academic books	Identifying purposes and reasons	Identifying the group	Process of learning	Summary	
Arabic academic books	Identifying the purposes and reason	Identifying the group			Rhetorical question	Inclusion

4.1.1 Analysis of academic book blurbs

English and Arabic academic blurbs have different rhetorical patterns. In the following table, these rhetorical patterns can be stated in terms of their frequency and percentage (Table 4).

Table 4
Academic Book Blurbs

Academic book blurbs in English and Arabic				
Move	English	Arabic	Chi-square	p-value
Identifying purposes and reasons	87	14	52.76238	0.01
Identifying the group	63	44	3.373832	NS
Process of learning	38	12	13.52	0.01
Summary of the book	37	6	22.34884	0.01
Inclusion move	80	56	4.235294	0.05
Biography of the author	28	89	31.80342	0.01
Rhetorical question	37	16	8.320755	0.01
Persuasive part	47	16	15.25397	0.01
Edition part	12	7	1.315789	NS

The main two moves in English and Arabic academic books are: *introduction* and *inclusion*. Introduction is an obligatory move which includes four steps. These steps are the following ones:

- a. Identifying the purpose and the reason
- b. identifying the group
- c. process of learning
- d. summary.

4.2 Micro Structures Analysis of English and Arabic Academic Blurbs

In the previous section, the macro-structures of academic blurbs were analyzed in detail to see the similarities and in difference in rhetorical patterns that blurb writers used to encourage and entice their prospect readers to buy the books. On the same level of the argument, blurbs also have linguistic features which play a vital role in constituting the linguistic framework of book blurbs. In this section, the linguistic features of blurbs will be explained in detail.

4.2.1 Phrase-oriented or sentence-oriented structures of blurbs

In order to express their ideas, writers in different languages usually use different structures to write the content of their blurbs. Writers usually use

different syntactic structures to express their ideas, viewpoints and functions. The most distinctive structures among various ones that writers use to perform this purpose are phrase structures and sentences structures.

However, these two structures are varied between English and Arabic blurb writers. In other words, Arabic statements are a free order and it can be both (V+S+O) or (S+V+O), whereas English sentences can only be (S+V+O). Another important issue is that Arabic blurb writers use phrase structures to express their ideas less than English blurb writers do. Furthermore, Arabic blurb writers apply sentence structure more than English blurb writers do. The following tables (27) and (28) display the frequencies and percentages of English and Arabic academic blurbs.

Table 5

Frequency and Percentage of Sentence-oriented Patterns in English and Arabic Blurbs

Move	Sentence-oriented			
	English	Arabic	Chi-squares	p-value
Identifying purposes and reasons	89	91	0.022222	NS
Identifying the group	77	83	0.225	NS
Process of learning	70	81	0.801325	NS
Summary of the book	61	72	0.909774	NS
Inclusion	83	87	0.094118	NS
Biography of the author	35	91	24.88889	0.01
Persuasive part	35	55	4.444444	0.05
Edition part	0	0		

Table 6
Frequency and Percentage of Phrase-oriented Patterns in English and Arabic Blurbs

Move	Phrase-oriented			
	English	Arabic	Chi-squares	p-value
Identifying purposes and reasons	0	0	0	-
Identifying the group	63	11	36.54054	0.01
Process of learning	20	0	20	0.01
Summary of the book	15	0	15	0.01
Inclusion	30	7	14.2973	0.01
Biography of the author	0	0	0	-
Persuasive part	33	27	0.6	NS
Edition part	25	13	3.789474	NS

As shown in the table above, both English and Arabic blurb writers tend to apply sentence structure to express their ideas and views. Furthermore, sentences structures in Arabic blurbs tend either to be verbal sentences or nominal sentences, whereas English sentences are frequently verbal. However, English blurb writers apply phrase structure to some extent, whereas it is hardly found in Arabic blurbs.

4.3 Appraisal Markers in English and Arabic book blurbs

The qualitative and the quantitative analyses of the generic structures of book blurbs showed that exclusively positive evaluation, as carried out via endorsement, was a defining property of blurbs and a function of their marketing and promotional purposes. On the same level of the argument, the promotional function of book blurbs shapes and constrains choices of content and style in this genre. Furthermore, their main purpose is not only to inform

the prospective reader but to draw his\her attention and keep his\her interest alive in order to promote the book from the shelves and make it attractive to buy. As a result, blurbs present selected positive features of the book in highly positive terms.

4.3.1 Analysis of attitude

4.3.1.1 Analysis of affect

Affect can be sub-divided into four categories: happiness, inclination, satisfaction and security. These categories were functionalized in both English and Arabic blurbs. Blurb writers explicitly expressed their affect to consolidate their positive evaluation of the targeted book. As stated from the analysis of book blurbs, satisfaction in both English and Arabic book blurbs seem to be higher. That means both English and Arabic academic blurb writers tend to employ much more satisfaction resources so as to incarnate their blurbs for the prospectus readers and to emphasize their choice of indicators that can bring the readers' attention. Furthermore, to show their happiness, blurb writers in English and Arabic employ a number of resources to emphasize their happiness. Regarding other categories such as inclination and security, it seems that blurb writers relatively used them compared with other categories as shown in the following examples:

1. Orwell has worked out his theme with simplicity, wit, and dryness.

2. Pym has a rare gift for exposition.

Arabic blurb writers also give priority to *satisfaction* categories more than other ones as shown in the following examples:

3. ولم يكتف المترجم بنقل الكتاب الى العربية بلغة سهلة مثيرة. وبإمانة شديدة.

4. اسلوبه سلس واضح.

4.3.1.2 Appreciation analysis

According to Martin and White (2005, p.56), appreciation is the meaning to construe evaluation of "things" (especially things we make or performance we give) as well as the worth of natural phenomena. Specifically, appreciation can be classified into three sub-categories: reaction, composition, and valuation. The first two categories, reaction and composition, can be further divided into: impact, quality, balance, and composition.

Analysis showed strong evidence for the use of appreciation, particularly the category of valuation, in all English academic blurbs as compared with valuation in Arabic in which the percentage was 85%. The results obtained from the analysis indicated that the other sub-categories of appreciation were also diversely treated by blurb writers. Note the following examples:

5.

This fully revised edition.

Comprehensive dictionary

The definitive resource for students.

البحوث الجديدة في موضوعها والقيمة في أهميتها
اساليب علمية ومنهجية سليمة

4.3.1.3 Analysis of judgment

The third category of attitude is judgment that is classified into two types: social esteem and social sanction. Social esteem can be sub-divided into three categories: normality, capacity, and tenacity; while social sanction falls into two classes: veracity and propriety.

The analysis of book blurbs displays that both English and Arabic academic blurbs employed more social esteem values than social sanction values. Furthermore, analysis of judgment sub-categories in both English and Arabic blurbs revealed that they hardly drew any attention due to their focus

on the capacity as a very important feature in demonstrating the writers' ability. Moreover, capacity constitutes a vital role in bringing the readers' attention towards the books because blurb writers try to explain to the readers their evaluation of writers' intellectual capacities. This, of course, will encourage the reader to buy the books as well as increase the proportion of selling the books. From the following examples, we can conclude that blurb writers do not focus on the ethical and legal judgment of the authors but on their capacity.

8. The authors get right to the point.7. Lindy Miller has had many years' experience teaching English to students up to postgraduate level...8. William O'Grady provides a highly readable overview...

9 . أراك متمكن من مفردات الفن. ٦. كان بوكوفسكي صوتاً عبقرياً نافذاً.

4.3.2 Analysis of engagement

According to Martin and white (2005), engagement is the way by which speakers or writers position themselves with respect to the information that they are representing, and with respect to the possible responses to those positions. It deals with sourcing attitudes and the play of voices around opinions in discourse. Moreover, engagement can be classified into two main types: monogloss and heterogloss. Monogloss refers to the writer's voice as if it were actual with no acknowledgement of any other potential opinions or voices disputing what is being reported. Heterogloss, on the other hand, refers to the other opinions or voices other than the writer. Furthermore, heterogloss can be further divided into two classes: contract and expand. For contract, it can be sub-divided into two categories: disclaim and proclaim. The former is further divided into two categories: deny and counter, while the latter has three classes: concur, pronounce, and endorse. Regarding expand, it has two groups: entertain and attribute. For entertain, it can be classified into

three types: probability, appearance and hearsay. On the other hand, attribute has two categories: acknowledge and distancing.

As shown in the following examples, the percentages of monoglossic items in academic English and Arabic were 65% and 50% respectively. On the other hand, the percentages of heteroglossic items in academic English and Arabic were 85% and 70% respectively. The findings show that the percentages of monoglossic and heteroglossic expressions in academic English, as compared with their Arabic counterpart, are higher. On the same level of the argument, heteroglossic categories in both academic English and Arabic are higher than monoglossic categories. This means that blurb writers try to incarnate their writing by other points of view in order to encourage the readers to buy the books as well as to show the prominent importance of the books for their readers.

10. This is a book which raises strong awareness of current issues.11. Sociolinguistics is the study of the interaction between language and society.

12. The descriptions of the various approaches are succinct, thoughtful, and incisive.

13. الترجمة فن مستقل بذاته يعتمد على الابداع والحس اللغوي والقدرة على تقريب الثقافات.

14. التميز بين المعنى والدلالة والصورة مهم وحاسم لفهم عمليات تشكيل الوعي ووصف مركباته.

4.3.2.1 Heteroglossic analysis

Regarding the contract analysis in both English and Arabic academic blurbs, the results of the analysis showed that the use of contract sub-categories in academic English and Arabic is different. The heteroglossic resources of disclaim (deny and counter) are favored by English and Arabic blurb writers than the heteroglossic resources of proclaim (pronounce and endorse). This indicates that blurb writers try to bring the readers' attention to the offered book by showing the most prominent resources that can entice the intended readers.

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A Cross-cultural Analysis of ...

15. William O'Grady provides a highly readable overview not only....16. ...but also to help....17. It does not shy away from discussing...

18. لا حاجة الى نظرية لسانية أخرى لاتجدد 10 ولا ترفض معنى من المعاني الممكنة في النص...
... منهج التفكير...

Regarding the heteroglossic resources of *expand*, blurb writers focus on two sub-categories: *acknowledge* and *probability*. However, *acknowledge* resources have been given more priority than the category of *probability*. Generally, findings indicate that *heteroglossic resources* of *contract* and *expand* in English and Arabic blurbs show that academic English indicators are higher than that in their Arabic counterpart. That is, English blurb writers are more elaborate in their writing blurbs in comparison with their Arabic counterparts.

19. I think that students and teachers of translation will welcome it with enthusiasm. 20. Munday explores each theory chapter by chapter.

. يعالج المؤلف موضاً 12. وهي في العمق رواية ربما هي الاولى عن الحي الشعبي في بغداد. 21.
من المواضيع الحديثة التي قل ان عالجه غير هباللغة العربية.

4.3.3 Analysis of graduation

Graduation system refers to the speaker's or writer's ability to intensify or weaken the strength of the opinions they express, has two categories (*force* and *focus*). According to Martin and White (2005, p.135), graduation "operates across two axes of scalability-that of grading according to intensity or amount (*force*), and that of grading according to prototypicality and the preciseness (*focus*) by which category boundaries are shown". Furthermore, *force* can be sub-divided into two categories: *intensification* and *quantification* while *focus* has *sharpening* and *softening* as sub-categories. English and Arabic blurbs were analyzed to see to what extent blurb writers

functionalized the categories of graduation to enhance their blurbs and to bring the intended readers' mind towards books.

The analysis of the blurbs showed that there were differences in graduation resources between English and Arabic blurbs regarding subcategories of force and focus. Regarding force, there were a high number of quantification items in English blurb than intensification. On the same level of the argument, quantification in Arabic blurbs was totally different from intensification. Thus, the percentages of quantification in both English and Arabic academic blurbs were 70% and 50% respectively, whereas for intensification the percentages were 30% in English and was 5% in Arabic blurbs.

Concerning the subcategories of focus, sharpening and softening, sharpening appeared more than softening in English blurbs. On the other hand, sharpening in Arabic academic blurb was totally different from softening. As a result, the percentages of sharpening in English and Arabic blurbs were 30% and 10% respectively. For softening, the percentage of English blurbs, unlike Arabic blurbs, was 5%. From the results of the analysis, we can conclude that quantification items were favored by both English and Arabic blurb writers more than other graduation resources. In addition, English blurb writers paid attention to the other graduation resources more than Arabic blurb writers did. On the same level of the argument, both English and Arabic blurb writers supported their writing by quantification and intensification items for enhancing their argument which would in turn bring the readers' attention as well as entice them to buy the intended books.

22. ... very creditable if we...23. The most original and valuable thing I've seen on the much-discussed topic of metaphor.24. ...The clearest and most compelling prose style this century. 25. An excellent introduction to language

study for the general reader.²⁶ The book will be valuable as a source of up-to-date...

. العديد من الامراض التي 28. ان يصيبهم من منهج البحث الادبي قليل-او قليل جداً. 27.
. اليقين التام...29تودي بحياة اعداد كبيرة من الناس سنوياً.

5. Conclusions and Implications

The purpose of this study was to examine the rhetorical structures, linguistic and non-linguistic features of blurbs, comparing both English and Arabic academic texts. As such, they serve both an informative and a promotional function. The study indicated that the generic structures of English and Arabic blurbs were widely different. The results affirmatively answer the question of the generic structure of blurbs in English and Arabic.

The first aim of the study was to analyze blurbs in English and Arabic in order to determine the generic structures, linguistic and non-linguistic features. The second aim of the present study was to investigate the appraisal markers in blurbs in order to see how appraisal resources are working together to construct blurbs and how they are employed for enticing the potential readers to read and buy the intended book. The first research question dealt with the generic structures of hard-copy blurbs in English and Arabic. The data deduced from the present study showed that the generic structures of English academic hard-copy blurbs include *identification of the purpose and reason, identifying the group, process of learning, summary of the book, rhetorical question and inclusion* whereas the structures of Arabic blurbs constitute *identifying the purpose, identifying the group, rhetorical question, complimenting the author and inclusion*. The results of the study revealed cross-cultural differences between academic blurbs in terms of generic patterning, though minor similarities could also be observed.

Another goal of this study was to find out how blurbs persuade the reader to buy the book, using the promotional elements that were mostly used to fulfill promotion and to grab the reader's attention. Both English and Arabic blurb writers used widely appraisal resources to support the content writing of the book and to bring the readers' attention towards the targeted books. The deduced results of the present study indicated that within *attitude* category, *appreciation* resources were more widely used and more dominant than affect and judgment categories in both English and academic blurbs. In other words, blurb writers aimed at making their writing for the potential readers more appreciative than focusing on personal and emotional resources. As for the affect category, English and Arabic writers explicitly express their feelings about the content of the book and position the potential readers attitudinally. In relation to the third category within attitude, *judgment*, the results of the study showed that both English and Arabic writers had a similar tendency to use *capacity* resources for demonstrating the ability of the author to create a good writing for the readers. Another important finding of the study was that within the *engagement* system, *heteroglossic resources* outran *monoglossic ones*. That means both English and Arabic blurb writers tend to make their writing more affirmative and authoritative by adopting other points of view in order to strongly incarnate their writing as well as to manifest the prominent importance of the book for the prospective readers. Finally, the results of the study showed that *graduation resources* played a pivotal role in making the book attractive for the readers to bring their attention and to effectively entice the readers towards the books.

The findings of the study emphasize the importance of the teaching of rhetorical patterns to postgraduate students to develop their knowledge of writing styles in research writing. In addition, the study can be useful for students as a guide to analyze the generic structures. Another implication of

the present study is that the findings of the study can be applied to the evaluation of translational texts. The instructor in the classroom can take two texts, the source text and the target text. Then, the instructor can evaluate the source text by identifying lexico-grammatical features, metaphorical expressions and the cultural aspects of the two texts. Moreover, translators can manipulate these generic structures as well as take into account all the elements of the source text when it is translated into another language. This study can be used in the interpretation of literary genres such as novels, plays and short stories in which the instructor can deal with a literary text to identify how the writer functionalizes the appraisal markers to express the interpersonal meaning and together to form the thematic structure of the text.

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