

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS & DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the results of the data obtained of conclusions and voice analysis are presented and discussed. For better understanding, the results are organized as follows. The chapter is divided into three main sections: the conclusions framework, voice analysis and gender differences in voice expression which respond to my three research purposes. I first present the conclusions analysis based on the actual four participants data, considering the literature reviewed in Chapter Two to propose a framework for undergraduate thesis genre studies. This analysis permitted to identify the *SOR* conclusions' section (see Section 3.3.1) in which the writers express more their voice and positions themselves in the text. This is indeed the section from which I extract the text where I develop my second analysis. *Voice* expression of *self as author* and the *discoursal self* are presented and discussed in the second part. Finally, last third analysis concerns the comparison of gender voice expression. Text extracts for each analysis and for each case study are provided for illustrating the point in analysis, and for their interpretation I follow the procedure for data analysis proposed in Section 3.3.

### 4.1 Conclusions Analysis

In this section I discuss the moves considered in the four BA thesis' conclusions and propose a framework for their analysis. In Section 3.3.1, I presented the steps I followed to create and propose such a framework. I first analyzed the BA thesis conclusions of the four participants, and compared them with Hopkins and Dudley-Evans' (1988) framework in order to see if the moves they propose are also present in BA thesis conclusions, and in what order. Secondly, I analyze the BA thesis conclusions features not included in Hopkins' and Dudley-Evans' (1988) framework. Finally, comparing these two analyses I propose a suitable Framework for Undergraduate Thesis Conclusions (FUTC).

Following the first step, I analyzed the participants' conclusions in terms of Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988) framework. The participants' real names were changed for ethical reasons. I reviewed each conclusion considering the 11 moves whether they were included or not. I summarize the information provided in such analysis in Table 5, and then provide a discussion.

<b>Moves (Hopkins' and Dudley-Evans', 1988, framework)</b>	<b>Janis' Conclusion</b>	<b>Billy's Conclusion</b>	<b>Celine's Conclusion</b>	<b>Rod's Conclusion</b>
<i>1) Background information</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>2) Statement of Results (S.O.R)</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>3) (Un) expected Outcome</i>	No	Yes	No	Yes
<i>4) Reference to Previous Research (comparison)</i>	No	No	No	No
<i>5) Explanation of Unsatisfactory Result</i>	No	No	No	No
<i>6) Exemplification</i>	Yes	Yes	No	No
<i>7) Deduction</i>	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
<i>8) Hypothesis</i>	No	No	No	No
<i>9) Reference to Previous Research (support)</i>	No	Yes	No	No
<i>10) Recommendation</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>11) Justification</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

**Table 5: Summary of Moves Analysis of my Four Case Studies' Theses**

As can be seen in the table, none of the conclusions contained all the moves proposed in Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988) framework. Billy's was the one that contained more elements whereas Celine's was the one that had fewer moves. What can be noticed is that there are generic moves present in the four cases as well as there are ones not present in any of

the conclusions. The moves presented in all four conclusions are *background information*, *SOR*, *recommendation* and *justification*. Conversely, none of the conclusions have *references to previous research (comparison)*, *explanation of unsatisfactory results* and *hypothesis*.

There seem to be obligatory moves since the participants not only fulfilled the purpose of those moves, but also included similar elements. For instance, for the *background information move*, all the participants recalled the research purpose, the context where they applied the research; the methodology used as well as their research participants and procedures they followed. The four cases included these elements in that move, and it is actually the first move they refer to, to start their conclusion. The *SOR* is also an essential move as Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988) and Bunton (2005) claim; it is the only one obligatory move for any conclusion since it is there where the writers state their main claim in discussion to the main findings and what they conclude. This is the second move followed in the four conclusions. The *recommendation and justification moves* are similarly presented in the last section of the four conclusions. In these moves the writers listed some suggestions for further research and explained why it is important to continue with it. These two moves were presented in the last section of the participants' conclusions.

On the other hand, it was noticed that it was not relevant for participants to *compare their results with those from the literature* or refer to *unsatisfactory outcomes* if any, and to include *hypothesis*. These functions were not included in any of the thesis. The reason for not including hypothesis could probably be because of the type of research participants do. I assume that not including unsatisfactory outcomes might have occurred because there was probably no unsatisfactory outcome, or perhaps the writers at this level are simply not experienced enough in academic writing. The lack of references to literature to compare their work is probably because it was not necessary for them to do any comparison, and/or lack of

awareness of this function in the writing of the conclusions chapter, and/or the advisor's influence. During the interview with the research advisor, he commented that *"the problem with chapter five is that sometimes we do not pay attention to the importance it has, so in general terms is easy to write for students, but I can say that it's one of the chapters that I am the least satisfied with, usually chapter five is written over night nor the teacher or the student pay much attention to what is in there (...) usually chapter five is something that is there and nobody cares if it is well written or not. That's the way it usually is"*. Thus, as reviewed in the literature (section 2.5.2.1.2.1), not being aware of the structure of a thesis genre (Bitchener and Basturkmen, 2006), in this case its conclusion structure, and the lack of attention from both, the advisor and writer, have implications in the writing and development of such conclusions. This issue also explains why some of the other moves from Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988) framework are included only by some of the participants. Writers would probably have to realize what elements to include. Certainly, the advisors point out the elements, yet not the functions to include in the conclusions. That is, at the moment of writing, the advisor asks to *"include the most important findings, general results addressing the ones they were looking for, the crucial results"* and include them in the *summary of conclusions*, plus a section on *implications* of the study, *limitations*, and *directions for further research*. Thus, the advisor is influential in what to include in the conclusion; however, he is not the responsible for the final choice of the writer. Having Billy's conclusion as the one with more functions deals also with his awareness of the conclusions as genre, and his joy for critical reading and supporting what he writes. It is part of his writer identity (a detailed description of Billy is in section 4.2.2). Contrary, Celine, who was supervised by Billy's advisor, is the one who included fewest functions in her conclusion. This also responds to her lack of experience with the genre,

choice and identity as writer (section 4.2.3). As observed, these cases present generic moves which some are obligatory while others are optional.

The order in which the moves are organized follow similar yet not identical order in the four participants' conclusions. All the conclusions start with the *background information* move in order to recall the main purpose and research design. Then, the *SOR move* follows in the all the conclusions, yet there are some other moves such as *referring to previous research as support*, *expected outcome(s)*, *exemplification*, *deduction(s)* which are integrated along the *SOR* move. The integration of these differs from participant to participant. Finally, the *recommendation* and *justification for further work* moves are the ones which close the conclusions chapter. This, as mentioned, responds to the advisor's requirements for this chapter.

Hence, I can conclude that the moves included in the conclusions and the order they follow seem to be influenced by the research advisor, yet they also respond to the researcher's writing identity and the flexibility of the genre in the sense that writers decided to include or not certain functions such as unsatisfactory results, move five. For this, Johns (2008b) claims that genres are negotiated according to social, cultural, individual differences; the importance is they fulfill their function. This is indeed observed in the organization of the moves. The moves are included; their order depends on the writer's choice.

Considering the last point of the writer's choice, it is now relevant to turn to my second step for the construction of my framework and consider the extra elements included in the participants' conclusions and are not considered in Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988). The first element included in the conclusions was to *introduce the chapter* by presenting the purpose of the chapter and its organization. All the conclusions chapters start with this introductory paragraph. Perhaps the writers include this move because it gives cohesion to the

whole chapter, and prepares the reader for what is coming. This first move is actually one of the generic characteristics set in a thesis conclusion. As discussed in section 2.5.2.1.2.1, a thesis is the main genre and the conclusion is a subgenre. This subgenre is actually a chapter in the thesis, and a characteristic of chapters is that they require introductions of what is coming to be read. Thus, this introductory move is essential in the framework for analyzing thesis conclusions chapters.

A second optional element deals with the background information. As mentioned in previous lines, all the participants included not only a general background of the research, but also *a detailed description of their research design and purpose*. The participants probably consider necessary to summarize the research design that has delineated their work and finally give the chapter a coherent closure.

Another element included in the conclusions chapters was the section where the writer includes the *implications of the study*. This move is important as a conclusive move since it discusses the theory and the main findings applied to a real context. The interviewee research adviser describes this section as *“kind of critical discussion in terms of how important the research is in the light of theory (...) main conclusions based on that discussion”*. This is for him, *“the hardest thing because of the interpretation relating theory and results (...), it implies to go beyond”*. I agree with his point, since it is really hard to achieve at a BA level that critical interpretation, yet I consider this move important in the conclusions. Indeed, the participants also considered implications as important since during the interviews they commented on writing the practicality of their study, so readers can see the actual practical contribution. Participants, however, may have included this move because of the advisor’s influence.

Finally, one more element shown in the participants' conclusions is *the limitations of the study*. All the conclusions contain this element. The information in this move relates to the weak points of the research, the reasons why the project does not get the expected results, and flaws in the methodology. According to the thesis advisor, it refers to "*the aspects, all those things in which the writer considers the research is not that reliable or accurate and complete as they wanted*". This is for him, an important move to include in the conclusions chapter. Thus, I assume that the participants include it because of the research advisor's influence and because it is certainly an institutional requirement. Including this move in the methodology or the conclusions chapter also responds to the flexibility of the genre and Fairclough's (1989) discourse considerations when explaining the text and interactions layers.

As seen, there are some extra elements from those proposed by Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988) included in the BA thesis conclusions. I now discuss both and suggest a suitable Framework for Undergraduate Thesis Conclusions (FUTC) in the Humanities.

Considering the similarity of elements found in the BA conclusions and Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988) framework, the moves: *background information*, *SOR*, *deductions*, *recommendations* and *justification* become obligatory moves in a conclusion.

The *Background information* move is significant to include since its function is to summarize the main purpose of the research, and the research design to place the audience in a short way in the research context. This is, without doubt, important to include before the actual statement of the closure since it facilitates *SOR* easier comprehension. The *SOR* move is included since it is indispensable to discuss and summarize the main findings and make main claims. It is actually where the writer says something from their own, and let their voice be heard. All the theses have this *SOR* move, and this is actually the section from where I take an extract to develop writer's voice analysis (section 4.2). Being this section where the authors

express themselves, deductions take place. Therefore, based on the data obtained, it was important for the writers to include the move of *deductions* in the discussion they make in the final discussion. These deductions can be inserted in the *SOR* section or place somewhere else as long as the writer includes them. *Recommendations* and *justification* are also indispensable moves in the chapter. The data actually evidences that recommending something implies giving reasons and supporting why it is recommended. Thus, the data analyzed points out the consideration of a *recommendations* move. The recommendations address *directions for further research* whose main purpose is to suggest ways of how the research can be continued and provide guidance for it.

Considering the extra elements not included in Hopkins and Dudley (1988) framework, but present in the data, the *implications* move is indispensable. As supported by the research supervisor, its function is to relate theory and results in the context the research was developed. This section's function is to show the applicability of the thesis. In addition, the *reference to previous research* move is also present since the writer relates theory to support and/or compare their results. Therefore, the data analyzed shows that the moves of *referring to previous research* and *implications* can be integrated in the *SOR* move or put them in a separate section. However, these two moves are optional since they were not evidenced in the four conclusions.

The *limitation* section, as the second extra element, points out to limitations regarding the research design and possible flaws. Due to this function, this section can be moved to other places in a thesis such as in the methodology chapter; thus, I consider it as an optional element to include or not in the conclusions chapter. It depends on the writers' choice and research design they follow. This function is not then included in my framework, yet it is an optional



element that can be part of it and be inserted as a section before the *directions for further research* section.

Finally, the importance of *exemplifying* and *explaining* things whenever is necessary to clarify a point are considered moves. It is important to close a paper with all things clear, with no points or issues left up to readers' interpretation. Thus, exemplifying and explaining is sometimes necessary to include in a conclusions. These moves, although present in some participants' conclusions, were absent in others; therefore, this move, is not seen as an obligatory one, but as a recurrent move which can or not be present in a conclusion.

As analyzed in the conclusions, the order in which moves are presented does not follow a linear description. Thus, the Framework for Undergraduate Thesis Conclusions (FUTC) proposes these moves; the order of move 1, 2 3, 6 and 7 need to be present in that order so the communicative purpose is fulfilled, conversely, move 4 and 5 order depends on the writer's choice to organize and or integrate them in the previous moves and in the conclusions chapter sections. I now summarize the moves, and present the FUTC.

- 1) Introductory move to the chapter
- 2) Background information
- 3) SOR (related to context)
- 4) {Reference to previous research (support, compare and/ or contrast)}
- 5) {Exemplification/explanation}
- 6) Implications
- 7) Recommendations for further research

Move 1 is the chapter's *introduction* addressing the audience and preparing it to the chapter. It is the first move that permits both the reader and writer know the purpose and organization of the chapter. Following this order, the next move is to present the *background information* to recall the main research design and purpose and so facilitate and conduct to a more understandable reading of claims. After this, the *SOR* is necessary. In here, the writers claim of their main findings related to the research context. In this move, functions such as *referring to previous research* (move 4) and *exemplifying, explaining* (move 5), moves which I both put between curly brackets to mark them as optional elements, can be integrated because it is when they contribute to the theory by using different functions. Move 4 permits the support of the writer's claims by providing evidence, comparing, and/or contrasting with something previously done in the area. The exemplification can also be integrated if there is an issue that is still moving or that is open to interpretation, so the writer clarifies, explains and or exemplifies it focusing it in the research context. Move 6, *implications* of the research, analyzes the way the writer interprets their results and integrates that knowledge into its applicability and practicality to the context. Since this is a framework for a BA level, I do not expect to find deep inferences, yet an applicability of results is expected. Finally, the *recommendations for further research* include the suggestions to further develop and/or continue with the research. In here, the writer lists and justifies what and why further work is needed.

To close my first section of the research, I propose my FUTC for analyzing BA thesis conclusions in the area o humanities. These are the moves I point out necessary for the analysis of a thesis conclusion at this level. This framework might have some implications which are pointed out in Section 5.3.

## 4.2 Voice analysis

In this section, I consider first necessary to introduce in detail each of my participants. As mentioned in section 3.1, four people participated in my study: two males and two females who studied the BA in EFL and TESOL/AL at a public university in the center of the Mexican Republic. Participants defended their thesis projects in the period of August 2007 and February 2008. Participants who presented their thesis are chosen since they have experienced the difficulty of an academic writing task such a thesis, a challenging genre since it determines whether the student is given or not a degree. Each participant has different background and interest in their thesis. Table 6 summarizes participants' individual characteristics.

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Janis</b>	<b>Billy</b>	<b>Celine</b>	<b>Rod</b>
<b>Gender</b>	F	M	F	M
<b>Age</b>	28	24	25	27
<b>Social status</b>	Single	Single	Single	Single
<b>Rural/ urban areas</b>	Urban	Rural	Urban	Urban
<b>Thesis topic</b>	<i>Causes and problems to comprehend English literature</i>	<i>Impact of parent's immigration in the SLA of English</i>	<i>Games as a tool to catch Hyperactive Children attention</i>	<i>The use of music as a tool to improve listening in ELT</i>
<b>GPA</b>	9	9.3	8.7	8.6
<b>Generation<sup>1</sup></b>	First generation	First generation	Second generation	First generation
<b>Need to defend the thesis<sup>2</sup></b>	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Writing experience</b>	BA courses' assignments & thesis	BA courses' assignments, thesis & newspaper comments.	BA courses' assignments, personal diary & thesis	BA courses' assignments & thesis

**Table 6: Background Information of the Four Participants**

<sup>1</sup> This means whether the participant is the first in the family of obtaining a professional degree.

<sup>2</sup> Students with a GPA of 8.5 or above and having not failed nor re-taken any subject can graduate with only writing, but not defending a thesis; if one of these two requirements is not fulfilled, the student must write and defend the thesis.

Table 6 above summarizes the participants' background information. In a first view, it is observed that participants share the same writing experience, yet there are other features that make each one unique. Since this is a case study, I discuss each participant's characteristics integrating them to the voice analysis. The framework for developing such analysis was discussed in section 3.3.2, where the a) *self as author*, which includes the three positioning: ideational, interpersonal and textual, and the b) *discoursal self*, intertextuality features, are analyzed. Thus, I follow this order presenting results and discussing them in each case. I start with Janis, my first participant.

#### **4.2.1 Case 1: Janis**

Janis is a 28 year woman who lives in a large city. She has lived all her life in Central Mexico, and she is the first in her family who gets a BA degree. This probably makes her feel satisfied personally since this is a big achievement for Mexican families. As seen in Table 4, she got a GPA of 9.0, yet she needs to defend her thesis project. That suggests that she probably failed or retook a course during her BA studies. Her social status belongs to middle-low social class, so she enrolled herself into a public school. She studied her BA in ELT since she says she always wanted to be a teacher, so I assume it was her choice to study this career. Her academic writing experience does not go further than to the one developed along her studies when she had to turn in a paper and in her thesis writing. However, the instruction and experiences on these were crucial in her way of perceiving writing and express her voice. She comments that in her academic writing class, she could not include all her perceptions while respecting the academic writing conventions of the genre to write. She says:

*“I always wanted to say more, but I couldn’t do it because the teacher corrected me. I wanted to relate my writing to my own experience, but I didn’t do it because of the different parts of the paper”*

From this quote, I can perceive that Janis felt she was limited to express her own *voice* in her academic writing, to which she actually further comments that at the moment of writing her thesis, it was hard to integrate her ideas into the academic discourse, and she points the writing, mainly in the literature review, as a challenging process. She claims:

*“I was afraid of writing cause it involves reading, researching in a coherent way. It is difficult to connect authors’ and other people ideas [...] understand what you write, you need to be conscious of what you write, and what you want to say. So I am very careful, specific”.*

In this quote from her interview, Janis expresses her concern for writing academically and always linking it to her own voice expression. It was a big concern for her to say what she thought about her academic topic. She always tries to relate her research topic with her life experiences. In fact, when she was asked about why she chose her research thesis topic and how she was personally invested in it; she affirms that she was interested in reading since she was in secondary school. This is due to she faced the experience of enjoying reading, but her friends had frequent problems on developing such skill. Thus, years after she had the opportunity of doing a research she focused her study (thesis) on *Causes and problems to comprehend English literature*. It is from this piece of work where I take the extract to analyze linguistically the way she expresses her voice.

*Janis's extract:*

It was found that literature teachers and students stated that there are problems when reading literary texts. This is possible due to the lack of vocabulary, difficulty to interpret the text, problems to understand figurative language, old English, unattractive content and a bad habit to read in the target language. These are some factors that interfere with an efficient literature comprehension. Thus, it is important to say these weaknesses were found in the study. On the other hand, it was also obtained that students are exposed to read all kinds of literary texts during the course.

Following the framework described in section 3.3.2, I analyzed voice into the *self as author* and *discoursal self*.

#### **4.2.1.1 Janis's Voice of Self as Author**

Regarding this point, I analyze Janis' three types of positioning: *ideational*, *interpersonal* and *textual*. First, in *ideational positioning*, Janis' lexical choice places her interests and objects of study into the field of teaching literature in an EFL. This is confirmed by the use of literature particular lexical items (noun phrases) such as *literature teachers*, *students*, *problems*, *reading literary texts*, *lack of vocabulary*, *difficulty*, *problems*, *figurative language*, *old English*, *unattractive content*, *bad habit*, *target language*, *factors*, *literature comprehension*, *weaknesses*, *kinds of literary texts*, and *course*.

Another aspect to analyze and understand Janis' *ideational positioning* deals with the knowledge she makes reference to. This is also observed in her use of verbs regarding process

type and tense, and her use of first person reference. I summarized her verb system (tenses and process type following Halliday's (1994) framework in Table 7a.

<b>Verb</b>	<b>Tense</b>	<b>Process Type</b>
<i>was found</i>	Simple past –passive voice	Action
<i>stated</i>	Simple past –active	Verbal
<i>are</i>	Simple present –active	Existential
<i>is</i>	Simple present –active	Existential
<i>to interpret</i>	Infinitive	Mental
<i>to understand</i>	Infinitive	Mental
<i>to read (x2)</i>	Infinitive	Mental
<i>interfere</i>	Present –active	Mental
<i>to say</i>	Infinitive	Verbal
<i>were found</i>	Simple past –passive	Action
<i>was obtained</i>	Simple past –passive	Action
<i>are exposed</i>	Simple present –passive	Action

**Table 7a: Janis' Extract Analysis on Verb System**

As seen in the table, Janis uses past, present and infinitive. She has four verbs for each tense in past and present, and five in infinitive; four of them are expressed in active and the other four in passive voice. The use of past tense is due to she is reporting the things she found in her study and three of these past tenses are in passive. This passive selection might be a conscious option due to she wants to emphasize the findings, put the results (objects) as main

subject of the sentence. She uses the present tense mostly with existential and verbal processes in active voice. Just one present tense is in passive. The existential processes are in present due to they express a status of being. Finally, she has five infinitives with four mental processes and one verbal process. The use of infinitives is to point out things that are, should or must be done in the process of reading e.g. *to understand, to interpret, to read, to say*. From this, it is seen that Janis makes knowledge when presenting conclusions based mostly on reporting events (past), expressing something that explains a cause (present) and proposing what are, and/or should be done (infinitives). The use of first person is not present in this extract even though Janis considers it desirable. For this, she gave a reason during the interview.

*“It was a struggle for me. When I write in personal style, I express myself, well, and clear, but when I write academically I feel I have to use special words, connectors, verbs and follow what it is said to be right and correct. I wish I could have used ‘I’, but I could not”*

From this, I can say that Janis really wanted to express herself and follow her own style, yet she feels limited for the conventions of academic writing. This fact suggests that there were some constrains that did not let her to express her ideas in a more fluent and personal style. Such constrains as she comments could have been the conventions of academic writing and/or the influence of her research advisor. She believes that writing in first person is not academic and therefore, she did not do it.

Secondly, Janis’ *interpersonal positioning* is analyzed in linguistics realizations of modality, mood, first person and evaluation in order to analyze the degrees of self-assurance and certainty and her power relations between her and her readers. About modality, which can be expressed by modals, modal adjuncts, attributive clauses, and mental processes (Halliday, 1994), it is seen that she actually expresses that in her mental processes use (discussed in ideational position). Janis’ *modality* expression can be considered as mid level (see Halliday,



1994, modality levels) since she is proposing what reading literature implies, and should be done to improve its reading. In addition, she uses *possible* which is a modal adjunct of mid level certainty. Regarding Janis' writing *mood*, it is declarative; she is reporting what is done, proposing and expressing causes. The non-use of impersonal (commented in ideational positioning) points out to a feeling of repression to express herself properly in the writing conventions of writing academically. This suggests that she is positioning herself in a lower level in relation to her audience, and not taking responsibility of what she arguments. Finally, for evaluation she uses the word *possible*, a modal adjunct of uncertainty, and placing herself in a neutral position, she lets the reader make their judgment. However, as an evaluative item, she uses the word *important*, in which she lets the reader know her judgment.

Analyzing the *textual positioning* is the last point to refer to self as author. In this the linguistic realizations to analyze are noun phrase length, clause structure and linking devices. Janis' extract has 5 sentences. The extract has a total of 96 words, 25 noun phrases (**bolded**), and 9 clauses (numbered).

*Janis extract:*

1) **It** was found 2) that **literature teachers and students** stated 3) that **there** are **problems** when **reading literary texts**. 4) **This** is possible due to **the lack of vocabulary, difficulty** to interpret **the text, problems** to understand **figurative language, old English, unattractive content** and **a bad habit** to read in **the target language**. 5) **These** are **some factors** that interfere with **an efficient literature comprehension**. Thus, 6) **it** is important to say 7) **these weaknesses** were found in **the study**. On the other hand, 8) **it** was also obtained 9) that **students** are exposed to read **all kinds of literary texts** during **the course**.

Taking a look at the noun phrases, it is observed that Janis has complex noun phrases and complex construction in some clauses. Indeed in the first sentence Janis has 5 noun phrases and 3 clauses (1 independent and 2 embedded clauses). The second sentence is a simple sentence with 10 noun phrases. Sentence 3 is also a simple sentence with 3 noun phrases; the fourth sentence contains 3 noun phrases and sentence 5, has 4 noun phrases. For a more accurate result on her complex construction, it is important to make use of the lexical density. This is shown in Table 7b.

Lexical items (a)	No. of clauses (b)	Lexical density (a)/ (b)
63	9	7

**Table 7b: Janis' Extract Lexical Density**

Considering the criteria of Ivanic's (1998) study on lexical density (LD), an indicator of 7 of lexical density reflects a complex construction. As I pointed out, she has very complex structure in sentence 1; and complex noun phrases in all sentences, especially sentence 2. Taking a closer look at the sentences, she has mostly complex sentences in which the use of 'that' as a conjunction for embedded clauses is frequently used. She uses this linking word to join clauses, and she uses some connectors such as 'thus', and 'on the other hand' to link ideas. The use of complex conjunctions and embedded clauses makes evident the complexity of her identity as a writer. Janis actually said that using connectors is what makes her writing complex. From this, I can say that her awareness of the special language devices and conventions for this particular genre unfortunately refrain her voice expression in regards to her textual positioning.

#### 4.2.1.2 Janis's Voice of Discoursal Self

Being aware of the conventions of the genre to write and actually the way to manage them to express one's own voice is part of the voice's analysis in the discoursal self. As pointed out, Janis, as her thesis advisor, were aware of the conventions of academic writing in her thesis. I have discussed the linguistic realizations (self as author analysis), yet in discourse I make reference to intertextuality (*manifest intertextuality* and *interdiscursivity*) as Fairclough (1992, cited in Ivanic, 1998) suggests: *intertextuality* occurs by manifest expressions such as referring to authors' ideas (citing), presuppositions and/or *intediscursivity*, which explains the way she socializes with the academic community. In the extract I am analyzing, no manifest intertextuality is present. Nevertheless, there is *interdiscursivity* in the sense Janis considers the genre conventions, she addresses her audience integrating in the writing her interpretation of what she researches, so she socializes with the audience, and she also considers that writing a thesis takes place in that particular context in which she can get or not a degree. I infer this interdiscursivity expression along the analysis done and when she says:

*“Even though I was so afraid of writing a thesis because I don't consider myself as a great writer and because I know it involves reading, researching in a coherent way, connect authors' ideas, understand what you write, be coherent, academic, respect rules, and be accepted by my thesis director and readers, I feel now satisfied. I passed, and I am happy with my work. I think I did what I was expected and talking on something that I like”.*

With this quote, and the analysis previously done on linguistic features, I can say that Janis is conscious about the text she had to write, the way to address her audience and the academic context she was in. Despite she repetitively said she was afraid and she felt no freedom to express herself, she does have a discoursal voice which makes her part of the academic community of TESOL and AL. Conversely, those fears and feelings of repression to

express her own personal voice in academic writing make Janis' self as author's voice more conventionalized and not personalized. If she continues writing academically as she expressed in her professional exam "*I want to continue writing academically because I develop critical skills, and I consider myself as a more critical person and writer*", she will probably find her own way to develop and express her voice as *self as author*.

#### **4.2.2 Case 2: Billy**

Billy is 24 years old male coming from a rural area from the South of Puebla State. He moved to the city just for developing his BA studies, so he has been living in a city environment for 5 years at the moment of defending his thesis. He is a first generation male to complete a BA degree, which certainly makes him feel proud and very happy as well as to his family. This pride is also bigger as he is a student whose GPA was 9.3 and he did not have to defend his thesis project. The thesis defence was actually something he wanted to do. He says "*I wouldn't feel I studied a career without presenting my thesis. Since I entered to the career I was expecting the moment of writing and defending my thesis*". Thus, his quote affirms that Billy was intrinsically and extrinsically motivated to defend his research project. Besides he demonstrated to be a strong student in his BA studies.

Billy, coming from a middle-low social class enrolled into a major in ELT due to he wanted to learn English and be able to teach it. It is a personal inquietude he had since he was in secondary school when he realized that most of the male people in his community migrated to the United States in search of the American Dream. He noticed people went to the US without speaking English, and they had problems to get a job mainly because of not knowing the language. He wonders and questioned the education in secondary school where students are introduced to English. These were the reasons why he mainly enrolled into this

TESOL/AL BA program, yet these same reasons gave him his thesis research topic: *Impact of parent's immigration in the SLA of English*.

Besides his academic writing experience during his BA courses and thesis, Billy worked for a newspaper company where he wrote notes and brief commentaries about migration. This writing was done in Spanish, his mother tongue, yet his writing skills were developed. However, he recognizes that writing a thesis made him aware of many issues in academic writing. He actually makes reference to the writing of his literature review chapter:

*“Writing down chapter 2 was kind of hard for me because sometimes I did not respect the rules when writing down different paragraphs and I have to include the different ideas (...), it was hard not to manage my ideas. Writing a thesis means to write in an academic way, using for example APA style, it was hard for me, after doing my thesis I now know how to write”*

Billy's words suggests that writing academically implies complex issues such as following the academic conventions of APA (American Psychological Association) and organizing ideas in a coherent way. These strategies and conventions seem to be hard and challenging characteristics for Billy to develop academic writing. Besides, he adds that he did not feel really free to write what he wanted because he had to follow some rules. He claims: *“I'm restricted to write down what I feel because I have to take into account rules, include the authors' ideas, but I do consider those ideas with my life experiences”*. This quote supports that Billy did not feel freedom to write academically due to its conventions. However, it is noticed that he adds his point of view integrated to what authors do. Recalling the context of intertextuality, what Billy does is a strategic way to express one's voice integrated to the text for that particular academic context. This is actually observed during his writing. Now, after writing his thesis, Billy claims *“I wouldn't hesitate to write down academically because now I*

*know how to do it because I have some knowledge about to write academically*". Using this quote and support and considering Billy's enthusiasm during the interview, I perceive that he is happy with his project and with his academic writing.

Following the same procedure as I did with Janis, I first present Billy's extract from his conclusion's *SOR* section, and secondly the analysis of voice regarding *self as author* and *discoursal self*.

*Billy's extract:*

Finally, according to the results, the majority of parents and students think there is good English teaching in high schools in Mexico. On the one hand, students would like to learn English in a proper way, academically speaking, and not precisely in a foreign country but in this country. On the other hand, parents help students in their education and motivate them to study English. This last point alludes that English is still, without any doubt, an important language to learn as a Foreign Language. The points above are, in sum, the conclusions of this project of investigation.

#### **4.2.2.1 Billy's Voice of Self as Author**

The study of *voice as author* starts with the *ideational position* of Billy's writing. According to the extract, it is noticed that Billy's interest focuses on a particular area of study: SLA of English in Mexico. His use of lexis allows the reader to infer he is doing studies in such area. The lexical choice includes the following noun phrases: *the results, the majority of parents and students, good English teaching, high schools in Mexico, students, English, a proper way, a foreign country, this country, parents, education, important language,*

*conclusions, project, investigation.* Secondly, the way Billy positions this area knowledge is analyzed with the verb system. Billy’s verb system is summarized in Table 8a.

<b>Verb</b>	<b>Tense</b>	<b>Process Type</b>
<i>think</i>	Simple present –active	Mental
<i>is</i>	Simple present –active	Existential
<i>would like to learn</i>	Modality –to be analyzed in interpersonal positioning	Mental
<i>help</i>	Simple present –active	Action
<i>motivate</i>	Simple present –active	Mental –action
<i>to study</i>	Infinitive	Action –mental
<i>alludes</i>	Simple present –active	Relational
<i>is</i>	Simple present –active	Existential
<i>to learn</i>	Infinitive	Mental
<i>are</i>	Simple present –active	Existential

**Table 8a: Billy’s Extract Verb System**

Contrary to Janis’s use of tenses, Billy uses only present absolute tenses and a couple of infinitives. All of these are conjugated in active voice. This use of present may be because he is probably reporting his results to locate them in here and now, and in this way could make them more relevant to a nowadays updated point of view. In addition, he is also presenting some facts of the things being done and demonstrating what is done. He mostly uses mental and relational processes due to these are actions that are mentally and existentially realized. This is also because of the type of research he did. He worked with a survey methodology in which he analyzed perceptions, and now he is just reporting such. He actually turns into definite claims such as *without doubt* to point out what he says; he uses these mental and

relational processes (this is actually part of the analysis of the *interpersonal positioning* regarding *modality*) due to his positioning himself as an intermediary of what was found. The use of first person in Billy's writing is not present. This is according to him as something we do not do in academic writing. He actually says

*"I thought using 'I' was correct and there was no problem, but then, I learnt that everything should be correct, parallelism and impersonal, so if I start in impersonal I have to finish like that. I do include my point of view, but not using I, not in an academic paper"*

Billy's words suggest some beliefs of what should or should not be done in academic writing. He emphasizes that the use of 'I' must not happen in an academic paper, yet he refers also to the importance of expressing his view on the topic to write. This suggests that he uses other linguistic realizations to express his own voice such as making use of evidence and presenting his evaluative words very determinate towards a main claim.

Billy's *intertextual positioning* regarding assurance and certainty includes the evaluation, modality and first person reference. These last two points have been analyzed in the ideational positioning section; there is no use of personal voice though he expresses his point of view by the use of adverbs and strong evaluative words such as *in a proper way* and *academically speaking*. In the evaluation, he supports and strengthens his posture by using the expression "*without any doubt*", which makes a direct and strong assertion. Billy's writing *mood* is evaluative-declarative, just summarizing and evaluating what was done.

In *textual positioning*, the last position for analyzing *self as author*, the linguistic realizations are noun phrase length, clause structure and linking devices. Billy's extract contains 5 sentences. The extract has 98 words in total, 27 noun phrases, and 7 clauses.



*Billy's Extract*

1) Finally, according to **the results, the majority** of **parents and students** think 2) **there is good English teaching in high schools** in **Mexico**. 3) On the one hand, **students** would like to learn **English** in **a proper way**, academically speaking, and not precisely in **a foreign country** but in **this country**. 4) On the other hand, **parents** help **students** in **their education** and motivate **them** to study **English**. 5) This **last point** alludes 6) that **English** is still, without any **doubt, an important language** to learn as a **Foreign Language**. 7) **The points** above are, in **sum, the conclusions** of **this project of investigation**.

Billy uses simple noun phrases most of the time, yet he does have some complex subjects such as in clause 1: *the majority of parents and students*, and objects such as the one in clause 7: *the conclusions of this project of investigation*. The complexity of his construction is quantitatively obtained by the lexical density, which is in Table 8b.

<b>Lexical items (a)</b>	<b>No. of clauses (b)</b>	<b>Lexical density (a)/ (b)</b>
62	7	8.8

**Table 8b: Billy's Extract Lexical Density**

Billy's lexical density reflects complex structure. That is, he elaborates his constructions. Regarding sentence type, Billy uses simple sentences most of the time (five sentences). He just uses two complex sentences. Thus, at the sentence level I can say he has a simple construction, yet the phrases within the sentences are complex. It is observed that the minimum number of noun phrases in a sentence is 4 even though it is a simple sentence. This

is indeed something he commented on during the interview when talking about weaknesses.

He says:

*“My weakness is to write freely. I mean not to control myself when I write in an academic way because I start writing down and my ideas start flowing. I just write and write and write; I can’t control it. I know English has some rules and a way to write and be direct, but it is difficult for me to control it and keep my ideas straight”.*

Billy’s quote is rich in information for writing studies. He makes reference to Kaplan’s (1966) contrastive rhetoric, writing in English requires of a direct way to say things, organize the paragraph straight to the point. This was a difficulty for him since he was just having his ideas flowing because he knew his topic, he could not stop writing about, and he wrote about it as he experienced it. Regarding linking words, the extract has some connector words such as *finally, on the other hand(x2), this last point, in sum*. The use of this linking expression and connectors give cohesion to the extract, yet considering that it has only seven sentences, these connective words are over-used. According current studies by Johns (2008b), romance languages generally overuse connective words. Billy knows his wordiness and elaborated construction had to change for a more direct and straight format to be successful when writing in English, yet his complex structure construction is still characteristic of his writing and since this is his voice in writing, this complexity is indeed part of his identity.

#### **4.2.2.2 Billy’s Voice of Discoursal Self**

Along the explanation of self as author, I noticed that Billy is aware of the academic writing discourse conventions. These conventions were at first an impediment or *restriction* as he calls it to express himself freely; however, after writing his thesis project he considers *“writing academically is a way to contribute to the theory and disciplines; it is just a matter of*

*knowing and managing the rules putting something from yourself*'. As seen, Billy is conscious of the academic conventions for writing and for developing a thesis project. He knows that in academic writing the use of other author's view to support his view is important as a way of integrating his discourse into the discipline and for which he has to follow the genre conventions. In the extract in analysis no *manifest intertextuality* is observed, yet there is *interdiscursivity*. Billy socializes with his academic audience in the way he integrates his thoughts in writing. He relates his results with the actual context where his research context e.g. *in high schools in Mexico*, and using academic language. His written text follows the academic writing conventions, addresses the readers in his research area which is education and SLA of English, and he also considers the genre he is writing, and the section where the extract was taken from. That is, Billy knows the communicative function of a conclusion in a thesis. He makes uses referring to results, and closes his *SOR* section with the following sentence: *The points above are, in sum, the conclusions of this project of investigation.*

#### **4.2.3 Case 3: Celine**

Celine is 25 years old. She has lived all her life in the suburbs of the city. She is a second generation female to graduate with a BA; her parents have a BA in education as well. She is a student with a GPA of 8.7. Celine's social status is middle social class. All her studies before the major were done in local public schools, that is, schools placed in the outer rural areas of the city. Her first four semesters of her BA in languages were done in a private school incorporated to the state's main public university. This happened because Celine's score in the exam for entering to the University was below the standards of acceptance. Two years later she repeated the admission exam, and she was accepted revalidating her four semesters. She then continued and finished her studies in the public university.

Celine decided to study languages due to her consideration that English is an important and necessary language to learn. Besides, speaking English is important for her parents and relatives. Regarding writing, she comments that she loves writing. She actually has kept a personal diary since she was in secondary school. Her academic writing experience though, only goes to her assignments written during her major and her thesis, as the main academic task. She actually comments that during her four semesters she studied in an incorporated institution she was not frequently exposed to writing tasks. It was until her fifth semester when she started to develop her writing. She considers that the writing during her career was “*awful, I didn’t feel motivation to write, especially when the topic was not interesting*”. She adds that most of her writing activities were *boring and did not include any challenge or motivation to do it*. However, when it was moment to write her thesis, Celine was one of the students who had already thought in the topic she would research and write about: *Games implemented in an EFL classroom to catch hyperactive children attention*. This decision was done because of two main reasons: she was working in a school which deals only with this type of learners, and she had a brother who had learning and school problems because hyperactivity. Thus, Celine was looking for a way to teach this type of learners. She considered games as a good and effective way to work with, so she decided to do an ethnographic research in her job context and propose games as a suitable activity. As seen, she has personal and professional reasons to work with this topic, she indeed affirms that she “*had many problems to teach hyperactive children, writing about this topic was a challenge for me (...) because of my brother and my job*”.

She is now happy because she showed that games are indeed effective when teaching hyperactive children. Her whole family and relatives were present in the professional exam. They were really emotionally moved by Celine’s achievement. From these experiences, I infer

that Celine was totally invested in her research and she felt identified with the topic. During the interview she pointed out that she “*couldn’t write of anything else, but teaching hyperactive children because she was motivated to do so*”.

Following the previous case study formats, I present Celine’s analysis on voice. The extract to analyze is as follows, and the *self as author* and *discoursal* self are in order.

*Celine’s extract:*

Also, they like being in constant movement and they do not feel ashamed at the time to participate. Then, it is recommendable to use games as an excellent way to do interesting, fun and dynamic classes. It covers all the children’s needs, expectations, and they develop the four skills. All children are motivated if teachers give rewards to the winners using TPR during the game; they like competition because they like to feel recognized in front of their classmates. Furthermore hyperactive children spend a lot of energy, especially with games of movement or when many games are included in larger classes with students from different ages mixed in the same classroom.

#### **4.2.3.1 Celine’s Voice of Self as Author**

The *ideational positioning* regarding the extract points out to an interest in ELT and hyperactive children. This is noticed by analyzing the noun phrases such as: *games, fun and dynamic classes, children’s needs, expectations, four skills, children, teachers, rewards, winners, TPR, competition, classmates, hyperactive children, energy, larger classes, ages, classroom*. As observed in these noun phrases, the nouns she uses in her writing place the reader in her research area which is teaching English to hyperactive children. Also, Celine

builds her knowledge in this specific research field by using action and mental processes and present tenses. A summary of the verb processes and tense system is presented in Table 9a.

<b>Verb</b>	<b>Tense</b>	<b>Process Type</b>
<i>like (3x)</i>	Simple Present –active	Mental
<i>do not feel</i>	Simple Present –active	Mental
<i>to participate</i>	Infinitive	Verbal
<i>is</i>	Simple Present –active	Existential
<i>to use</i>	Infinitive	Action
<i>to do</i>	Infinitive	Action
<i>covers</i>	Simple Present –active	Action
<i>develop</i>	Simple Present –active	Action
<i>are</i>	Simple Present –active	Existential
<i>give</i>	Simple Present –active	Action
<i>to feel</i>	Infinitive	Mental
<i>spend</i>	Simple Present –active	Action
<i>are included</i>	Simple Present –passive	Action

**Table 9a: Celine’s Extract Verb System**

As seen, the majority of the tense in the verbs system is simple present with action and mental processes. This is because Celine summarizes her results as if she were presenting facts, and with the use of infinitives she makes suggestions of the things that can be done based on her findings. Her verbs system indicates that she constructs knowledge in the here and now. In this way she places her writing *ideational positioning* as a timeless event and in this way she highlights the relevance of her study.

One more aspect to analyze in the *ideational position* is the first person use. Similarly to the previous participants, Celine does not use first person in her writing. Using *I*, according to

her, is not correct in academic writing. She says “*I have to follow the rules (...) and writing in ‘I’ is not correct*” she further comments that it was something her research advisor told her; thus, writing in impersonal was an advisor influence on her, and it seems she considers the use of ‘I’ negative to develop in academic writing. In fact, she claims that writing in impersonal was “*a challenge and something good since I learnt to respect rules of academic writing. I now follow the rules and it is easy for me to write*”. Despite the non-use of ‘I’ as person reference, she claims that she always included her point of view, emphasizing this in chapter 4 and 5 because she explains her conclusions and interprets results, so she has to give more information from her own.

Celine’s *interpersonal positioning* is analyzed in terms of *modality, evaluation, mood and first person reference*. Celine uses only one attributive clause: ‘*it’s recommendable*’ to express modality. She suggests and places her relation as a writer with her audience as a mid level; it is just a recommendation which it is up to the audience whether to do it or not. In the evaluation, Celine’s assertiveness expressed by her use of present tenses in active and action processes positions her as knower of her area. The mood of the extract is in declarative; she just presents findings and suggestions. Regarding the first person usage, as discussed in the ideational positioning is because of her advisor’s influence though she affirms she included her point of view of everything what she wrote. Her perspective and interpersonal position can be then observed in expressions such as *not ashamed, excellent, interesting, fun, and dynamic* in which she expresses her strong belief in implementing games in the EFL classroom.

Finally, analyzing Celine’s *textual positioning* permits to study how she constructs her voice in the genre of that particular text. This analysis considers the length of noun phrases and linking devices. The extract has 111 words in total, 5 sentences, 32 noun phrases and 11 clauses.

*Celine's Extract:*

1) Also, **they** like **being** in **constant movement** and 2) **they** do not feel ashamed at **the time** to participate. 3) Then, **it** is recommendable to use **games** as **an excellent way** to do **interesting, fun and dynamic classes**. 4) **It** covers **all the children's needs, expectations**, and 5) **they** develop **the four skills**. 6) **All children** are motivated 7) if **teachers** give **rewards** to **the winners** using **TPR** during **the game**; 8) **they** like **competition** 9) because **they** like to feel recognized in front of **their classmates**. 10) Furthermore, **hyperactive children** spend a lot of **energy**, especially with **games of movement** or 11) when **many games** are included in **larger classes** with **students** from **different ages** mixed in **the same classroom**.

Celine's extracts shows the use of complex noun phrases. She has many prepositional phrases as part of the noun ones, e.g. "*in larger classes with students from different ages mixed in the classroom*". This high complexity suggests that her writing is highly elaborated, yet to determine Celine's writing elaboration, I analyze the lexical density in Table 9b.

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Lexical items (a)	No. of clauses (b)	Lexical density (a)/ (b)
79	11	7.1

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**Table 9b: Celine's Extract Lexical Density**

The lexical density is high which confirms what I pointed out in the complexity of noun phrases. Celine elaborates her writing. The types of sentences and clauses she actually uses in her extract support her elaboration as well. Celine extract has compound, complex and simple sentences with complex noun phrases. She actually uses subordinating conjunctions e.g. *if, because, when*, to link her clauses, and this is also a distinctive feature of her textual



positioning. She seems to be aware of the academic writing conventions and she uses connectors such as: *also, then, furthermore* to link sentences and conjunctions such as *and, when, if, because* to link clauses. These last three types of conjunctions are subordinated conjunctions and they are characteristic of complex sentences. However, she claims that “*using connectors, punctuation was difficult because I have to organize my ideas, and look for the good way to say it (...) now I know how to make it, but with lots of practice*”. Thus, using complex linking devices such as the subordinating conjunctions has helped her to express her ideas in a logical order following the academic writing conventions. It is, however, worth mentioning that the function of these conjunctions is to join complex sentences, which is her way to express the complexity of her identity.

#### **4.2.3.2 Celine’s Voice of Discoursal Self**

As mentioned in the previous section, Celine’s extract shows that she is aware of the academic writing discourse conventions. It is now turn to analyze how she constructs her voice in the discourse community of a BA thesis in TESOL/AL. Similarly to previous participants she does not use manifest intertextuality; no use of citing or presuppositions is present in the extract. What I can say at this respect is that she commented in her interview that it was “*difficult to write the literature review because [she] had to integrate author’s ideas, contrast them with what [she] think[s]*”. She recognizes her difficulty to integrate author’s ideas in her writing, and this was mostly what she had to do in the literature review chapter; however, in there is no evidence of manifest intertextuality in her extract. Conversely, her interdiscursivity although addressed to her audience, she just makes general claims of the findings and strong assertions of what to be done which are probably based on her beliefs and experience in teaching hyperactive children. This assumption suggests that she indeed

integrates her voice (as author), but she does not supports nor discusses her claims within the discourse community (discoursal voice).

#### **4.2.4 Case 4: Rod**

Rod is a Mexican male who has spent his whole life living in a city. He is 27 years old. He is a first generation professional. Although his GPA of 8.6 suggests he is an average student, he had to present his thesis due to he repeating a subject during his BA studies. Rod majored in ELT due to his like for music. He actually says “*I learnt English because of music. I love to listen to music in English and watch TV programs in English*”. As seen music and understanding what singers and actors say was his motivation to study English, and then the conviction of other people would probably share his same motive to learn English. He decided to become an English teacher and relate music to ELT as a means to learn the language. Indeed, he affirms that he learnt English by using music and he would have enjoyed having classes using music and songs. For this reason, he decided to do his thesis addressing this issue: *The use of music as a tool to improve listening in ELT*.

Rod’s writing experience relates only to the papers written in his subjects during the major and his thesis. At this regard, he expresses that writing is his weakest skill. He says that during his thesis, the action of writing was difficult because of idea connection and formal language use. He affirms he improved his writing skills in the sense he learnt to quote, paraphrase and link ideas, but he says he is too simple and direct when writing his claims. His weaknesses were mainly according to him that he does very direct and strong assertions; he does not use hedging to reduce the strength of what he claims. He actually comments when writing his conclusions chapter:

*“I was so simple in my writing. I needed to give more discussion and support, summarize the points and relate them to my purpose, but it was difficult for me to give formal points of view on a topic that is so common and familiar for me. I learnt English with music, and those were my conclusions in my thesis and life experiences, so how I could write more on something that is true for me. I tried to give conclusions using my own words. I used simple words, concrete ideas, and short direct sentences”*

During the interview, Rod emphasized his direct way to say things. He is a very direct person going to the point. This, I can say, is true because from the four interviews, his was the shortest in time and simple answers. Considering that English is a language which according to Kaplan (1966) follows a simple construction in paragraphs his writing fits the language conventions, yet considering the conventions of academic writing he considers needs to be careful incorporating what authors say, what he wants to say and how he says it. Rod claims that he always includes his point of view, his own voice when writing. Thus, it is time to analyze the linguistic realizations he uses to do so. I first present the extract for analysis.

*Rod's extract*

However, some disadvantages were that activities with songs are time consuming; the level of vocabulary, idioms and old songs may be difficult or boring for students. Finally, teachers used activities with music and song lyrics activities. These activities allowed students to understand the language by listening to songs. In addition, students learn grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation through activities in which music is included. This research also found that the use of music and songs are an important tool for teachers to teach and develop the listening skill in students. Besides, teachers involved students in learning a second language in an inductive way.

#### 4.2.4.1 Rod's Voice of Self as Author

For this section I analyze the linguistic realizations Rod uses to express his *ideational*, *interpersonal* and *textual positioning*. In ideational positioning it is observed that Rod uses lexis of his particular research area, music in ELT. This is observed in the noun phrases he uses: *disadvantages, activities, songs, time consuming, level of vocabulary, idioms, old songs, students, teachers, activities, music, song lyrics activities, the language, listening songs, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation, research, the use of music, an important tool for teachers, learning a second language, and inductive way*. These nouns phrases place his text in the area of study, showing his interests. The way he presents his ideas and incorporates these nouns phrases deal with the analysis of the verb system. I summarize this in Table 10a.

<b>Verb</b>	<b>Tense</b>	<b>Process Type</b>
<i>were</i>	<i>Simple past –active</i>	<i>Existential</i>
<i>are (x2)</i>	<i>Simple present –active</i>	<i>Existential</i>
<i>may be</i>	<i>Modality –to be analyzed in interpersonal positioning</i>	<i>Existential</i>
<i>used</i>	<i>Simple past –active</i>	<i>Action</i>
<i>allow</i>	<i>Simple present –active</i>	<i>Mental</i>
<i>to understand</i>	<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Mental</i>
<i>learn</i>	<i>Simple present –active</i>	<i>Mental</i>
<i>is included</i>	<i>Simple present –passive</i>	<i>Action</i>
<i>found</i>	<i>Simple past –active</i>	<i>Mental</i>
<i>to teach</i>	<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Action</i>
<i>to develop</i>	<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Action</i>
<i>involved</i>	<i>Simple past –active</i>	<i>Action -mental</i>

**Table 10a: Rod's Extract Verb System**

As seen, Rod uses present and past tenses to present his conclusions. His extract has 5 present tenses from which 2 of them are existential, 2 are mental and one is action process. This suggests that the processes he refers to the more imply cognitive activities from part of the students, and the use of present tense is because the actions are expressed as facts and others as suggestions he makes based on his findings. Rod uses past tense to report his findings, and some infinitives to propose things to be done. Interestingly, the use of active voice is the dominant in the extract. This is indeed related to what he says of being direct in his writing and personality itself; he puts the subjects as the active doers of the actions. This last situation is also observed in Billy's and Celine's cases, yet they did not mention nor consider themselves as people who say things directly. The use of mental and existential processes as mentioned refer to cognitive activities, and taking a close look at the action verbs, they also imply an action close linked to a mental process. This responds to the nature of Rod's writer identity of being direct.

A last point to analyze in the *ideational positioning* is the use of first person reference. Similarly to the previous cases, Rod does not use the 'I' person when writing. He says it was "*an unconscious decision; just wrote and did not think whether it was personal or impersonal*". However, as mentioned in the literature review, a common characteristic of *identity* is that it is dynamic in constant flux and tension as it is negotiated between differing social contexts (Ivanic and Simpson, 1992). In this case, Rod opted to do it in impersonal although he further affirms that "*writing in impersonal is very difficult and it caused me problems and time to write*". During the professional examination, his research advisor asked him about the difficulties in writing the thesis, and Rod's answer was that "*writing academically is hard in the way of expressing myself, my ideas, to link and be coherent with what I want to say, because of reading and critical skills and we don't have to write in*

*impersonal*". This quote shows that writing in impersonal was according to him, his decision, but it is also noticed that he considers it as something not to necessarily done in academic written discourse.

His feelings and emotions towards the use of music in the English language classroom were emphasized, in the interview, during the exam and in the thesis. He used other features rather than the use of first person referent to express his point of view, and this is actually what all the participants did in their writing.

I now analyze Rod's *interpersonal positioning*, self-assurance, certainty and different power relations between the writer and the reader. Certainty is expressed by a mid level of modality. Rod used only one modal of medium degree of likeliness e.g. *may be*. He does not make use of any other feature to express modality. He is not giving possibility of things to happen, he just claims directly and to the point which makes the text an assertive text. This assertiveness is also shown in the text mood. All of its sentences are declarative and show neutrality letting the reader know the advantages and disadvantages. This is a way to appeal to the audience decision and judgment. Thus, the power relations Rod establishes with his audience, is just informing and reporting what he did in an assertive-declarative manner.

Finally, the analysis of noun phrases, clause structure and linking devices permits the analysis of Rod's *textual positioning*. For this, I present the complete abstract which has a total of 103 words, 6 sentences, 23 noun phrases and 11 clauses.

Rod's extract:

1) However, some **disadvantages** were that 3) **activities with songs** are **time consuming**; 4) **the level of vocabulary, idioms and old songs** may be difficult or boring for **students**. 5) Finally, **teachers** used **activities with music** and **song lyrics activities**. 6) These **activities** allowed to **students** to understand **the language** by **listening to songs**. 7) In addition, **students** learn **grammar, vocabulary** and **pronunciation** through **activities** 8) in which **music** is included. 9) This **research** also found that 10) **the use of music and songs** are **an important tool** for **teachers** to teach and develop **the listening skill in students**. 11) Besides, **teachers** involved **students in learning a second language in an inductive way**.

Rod's noun phrases elaboration is complex. He usually has prepositional phrases as part of the noun phrase, e.g. *activities with songs, the use of music and songs, the listening skill in students*. In fact, there are 4 noun phrases at least in each sentence. This complex elaboration is clearly seen at the noun phrases, but in order to generalize about the complexity in his language elaboration, it is first necessary to analyze the clause structure. At first sight, Rod mostly uses simple sentences; he has though one compound-complex sentence and one complex sentence. This points out to a complex elaboration in his language structure in academic written discourse. To support this finding, I calculated his extract's lexical density which is shown in Table 10b

<b>Lexical items (a)</b>	<b>No. of clauses (b)</b>	<b>Lexical density (a)/ (b)</b>
67	11	6

**Table 10b: Rod's Extract Lexical Density**

The number of lexical density evidences that Rod's construction is elaborated. As previously noted in the types of sentences he uses, he has complex sentences in which he uses some embedded clauses. This shows that he has indeed discursal heterogeneity, that is, he constructs his knowledge with different types of structures and with a high level of complexity. This actually supports what discussed in the *ideational positioning* analysis when he refers himself as direct, straight-forward in his writing.

Rod's complexity of written discourse as well as in the other participants, is observed in the use of connectors and linking devices. Rod regularly uses connectors e.g. *however*, *finally*, *in addition* and *besides*; as well deictic words such as *this* and *these* to link sentences. These linking words are characteristic of academic writing, and Rod seems to be aware of that. Thus, this is the way in which he uses linguistic realizations to express himself as author in the community of TESOL at a BA level.

#### **4.2.4.2 Rod's Voice of Discursal Self**

This section discusses Rod's *discursal voice* in his thesis' writing. As mentioned in the discussion of Rod as *self as author*, I pointed out that due to the lexis, linking devices, variability in structure, and other linguistic features, he seems to be aware of the conventions of academic writing. Rod follows these conventions fulfilling the communicative purposes of the thesis conclusions as the genre he writes, and he has a voice as author. However, it is now time to analyze the way he constructs his voice and socializes in the discourse community. This is done by analyzing intertextuality. Rod's extract does not present *manifest intertextuality*, and his *interdiscursivity* seems to be poorly constructed. Rod socializes with the academic community by the use of linguistic features such as activities with *songs*, *lyrics*, *level of vocabulary*, and *idioms*. His research focused on music as a tool to teach English



mainly listening skill is developed in a university context and addressed to a particular audience. Conversely, he never makes reference to his research context, at least not in the extract I am analyzing. Something more applicable and characteristic of his research context could help in the discourse voice construction.

Another important point relates to genre. This extract is not that genre specific; there is not a clear move characteristic of a conclusion. The extract could be placed in the results section since it just points out findings. Hence, these characteristics make Rod's discorsal self weakly constructed at the interaction and contextual level.

### **4.3 Gender Comparison on Voice Expression**

This section presents a comparison of voice expression in the four case studies. Previous section analyzed individual instances explaining and discussing participants' voice characteristics and linguistic realizations of each case, thus, here I refer to them summarizing the main points for just comparative gender reasons. This analysis fulfills the third purpose of my research, and closes the results chapter.

After going through each participant's voice expression *as self author* and *discorsal self*, I assume my audience familiarity with the framework I adapted from Ivanic's and Camps' (2001). Thus, I summarize each participant's voice expression as *self author* in Table 11 considering the three types of positioning, adding a fourth category for the *discorsal self*.

SELF AS AUTHOR			DISCOURSAL SELF
Ideational positioning	Interpersonal positioning	Textual positioning	Intertextuality/ interdiscursivity
<b>-Janis-</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NP</b> - characteristic &amp; distinctive of her discipline</li> <li>• <b>Tense(s)</b>: present, past, infinitives/active (50%) &amp; passive (50 %)</li> <li>• <b>Process (es)</b>: Mental (6), action (4), Existential (2).</li> <li>• <b>No first person reference</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Evaluative devices</b>: “<i>possible</i>”, neutral position, lets the reader chose</li> <li>• <b>Modality</b>: mid level e.g. <i>possible</i></li> <li>• <b>No First person reference</b></li> <li>• <b>Mood</b>: Declarative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NP length</b>: complex</li> <li>• <b>Lexical Density</b>: 7</li> <li>• <b>Clauses structure</b>: mostly subordinated clauses</li> <li>• <b>Linking devices</b>: connectors, conjunctions &amp; deictic expressions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* <b>No Manifest intertextuality</b></li> <li>* <b>Interdiscursivity</b>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• address her <b>audience</b></li> <li>• <b>academic writing</b> conventions in her own voice addressed in the context of TESOL</li> <li>• <b>fulfills</b> the communicative purpose of a <b>conclusion as genre</b> integrating her own voice</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>-Billy-</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NP - characteristic &amp; distinctive of his discipline</li> <li>• <b>Tense(s)</b>: present &amp; infinitives (2); active (100%)</li> <li>• <b>Process(es)</b>: Mental (4) Existential(4), action(2)</li> <li>• <b>No first person reference</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Evaluative devices</b>: <i>assertive, strong firm position</i> e.g. “<i>without any doubt</i>”</li> <li>• <b>Modality</b>: mid level e.g. “<i>would like to...</i>”, <i>mental processes, attributive clauses</i></li> <li>• <b>No First person reference</b></li> <li>• <b>Mood</b>: Declarative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NP length</b>: simple, yet complex subjects</li> <li>• <b>Lexical Density</b>: 8.8</li> <li>• <b>Clauses structure</b>: embedded clauses; simple sentences</li> <li>• <b>Linking devices</b>: connectors, conjunction, deictic expressions &amp; phrases.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* <b>No Manifest intertextuality</b></li> <li>* <b>Interdiscursivity</b>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• address his <b>audience</b></li> <li>• <b>academic writing</b> conventions in his own voice addressed in the context of ELT</li> <li>• <b>fulfills</b> the communicative purpose of a <b>conclusion as genre</b> integrating his own voice &amp; contributing to the discourse</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

SELF AS AUTHOR			DISCOURSAL SELF
Ideational positioning	Interpersonal positioning	Textual positioning	Intertextuality/ interdiscursivity
<b>-Celine-</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NP - characteristic &amp; distinctive of her discipline</li> <li><b>Tense(s):</b> present, infinitives (2) active (100%)</li> <li><b>Process(es):</b> Action (7) Mental (4), Existential (2).</li> <li><b>No first person reference</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Evaluative devices:</b> assertive by the use of present tense</li> <li><b>Modality:</b> mid level e.g. “<i>it is recommendable</i>”</li> <li><b>No First person reference</b></li> <li><b>Mood:</b> Declarative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>NP length:</b> complex</li> <li><b>Lexical Density:</b> 7.1</li> <li><b>Clauses structure:</b> main &amp; subordinated clauses</li> <li><b>Linking devices:</b> connectors &amp; conjunctions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* <b>No Manifest intertextuality</b></li> <li>* <b>Interdiscursivity:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>address her <b>audience</b></li> <li><b>academic writing</b> conventions, but she does not integrate her own voice nor her research context with of TESOL</li> <li><b>does not</b> fulfill the communicative purpose of a <b>conclusion as genre</b> per se, nor integrates her voice</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>-Rod-</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NP - characteristic &amp; distinctive of his discipline</li> <li><b>Tense(s):</b> present, past, infinitives/active (87.5%) &amp; passive (12.5%)</li> <li><b>Process (es):</b> Mental (5), action (5), Existential (4).</li> <li><b>No first person reference</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Evaluative devices:</b> “<i>assertive</i>” shown in the tense and processes used</li> <li><b>Modality:</b> mid level e.g. <i>may be</i></li> <li><b>No First person reference</b></li> <li><b>Mood:</b> Declarative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>NP length:</b> complex</li> <li><b>Lexical Density:</b> 6</li> <li><b>Clauses structure:</b> subordinated clauses, simple sentences</li> <li><b>Linking devices:</b> connectors, conjunctions &amp; deictic expressions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* <b>No Manifest intertextuality</b></li> <li>* <b>Interdiscursivity:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>address his <b>audience</b></li> <li>interdiscursivity poorly constructed</li> <li><b>academic writing</b> conventions, yet stronger links and connections to the area</li> <li>does not fulfill the communicative purpose of a conclusion as genre integrating his own voice</li> <li>does not contribute to the discourse</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Table 11: Summary of the Four Participant’s Voice Expression**

The table presents the linguistic realizations the four cases use to express their *voice as author*, and the considerations of audience, writing conventions and conclusions as genre as means to analyze interdiscursivity since its construction permits the writer to construct their own *voice* into that *discourse* piece.

The *ideational positioning* in *self as author* shows similarity in the four cases regarding the noun phrases, the use of the three different verb processes (mental, existential and relational) although with different percentages, and the non-use of first person reference. Hence, females and males place the reader in their discipline by using specific lexis distinctive of their area. Participants' different interests and methodologies are then evident for each case. In the same way, the four cases make knowledge within their discipline by using the three different verb processes. The tendencies to use more one process than the other differ from participant to participant. However, both women tend to use more mental and action processes whereas men use more mental processes followed by action in one case, and the other by relational. This suggests that in this study men do not have a pattern as women seem to do regarding the use of processes. This difference (males) and similarity (females) certainly suggest that there are different ways to construct knowledge within the disciplines; it depends on the choice the writers make and how they want to be seen. Thus, the difference relates not only gender, but also personality.

This is seen in the selection of tenses to work. As seen in the table, Janis and Rod use present, past and infinitives with both active and passive voice. Conversely, Celine and Billy only use present and infinitives with active voice. This is then a personal, more than a gender choice. However, I noticed that Janis and Rod were advised by the same tutor in their research projects, who is different from Billy's and Celine's advisor. This probably points out to a possible influence of the advisor. As reviewed in the literature and confirmed in the interview

with the other thesis director students usually tend to follow a pattern, and if they see their advisor does something, they will probably try to follow it. This also seems to be the case with the non-use of the first person reference. None of the participants uses 'I' in their writing. The four interviews point out that it is because they were told the academic writing should follow conventions and among them, the use of impersonal is an important one.

Conversely to the ideational positioning, the *interpersonal positioning* presents more similarities in the four cases. The way the participants express certainty and self assurance by means of modality is being assertive. They interact with the audience placing themselves as the knower of their research, and thus, asserting with the use of the declarative mood. Most of the participants place their modality in a mid level trying to protect themselves from absolute statements, and better let the reader takes the choice.

*Textual positioning* shows no difference among genders. It actually points out to an elaborated construction from the four participants. The four cases show a complex use of noun phrases, as well as a high lexical density. Rod is the one who shows the lower level of lexical density, but it is still high. As Ivanic (1998) suggests, an indicator of lexical density of or above 5 portrays a complex construction. Regarding the use of clauses, the four cases make use of dependent and independent clauses, yet what it is noted is that the two males usually use more simple sentences than women. This, as Rod claims, might deal with the directness to say things, "*men are simple to express, and when we want to say something, we just say it*". This may sound a mere manhood view, yet it in the writings both men mainly use simple sentences. I can argue this view by noting that both have complex noun phrases and their lexical density is still high; actually Billy got the highest average for lexical density. The writing of the four participants is then complex and highly elaborated in construction. Regarding the linking expressions participants use are mainly connectors, conjunctions and

some deictic expressions. The use of these linking devices shows that the writers awareness of the academic writing conventions regarding cohesive devices. The participants' textual positioning points out to a consciousness of the different types of construct a text of in the academic context in the particular genre of a thesis. There are not main differences regarding genders, in how they construct their texts and express voice as author.

The analysis of the *discoursal self* also evidences similarities in the no expression of *manifest intertextuality*. This seems to be, however, as discussed in the conclusions analysis (section 4.1) that thesis advisors do not emphasize on the move of referring to previous research (support nor comparison) as something that is part of the conclusions.

About the expression of *interdiscursivity*, the four participants address their audience, yet they differ in the way of integrating their voice to the discourse. Janis and Billy follow the writing conventions of the BA thesis conclusions section and integrate their research with the TESOL/AL discipline and own voice. That is, they incorporate their view based on what they researched and following the conventions of a thesis conclusion of the TESOL/AL disciplines. In this way, Janis and Billy fulfill the communicative purpose of the conclusions particularly of the *SOR* section from which the extract was taken. Billy and Janis then express their voice and represent themselves in the *discoursal self*; actually, Billy goes further and contributes more specifically to the discourse addressing his research context in the light of the theory (see section 5.1). Conversely, Celine and Rod, although follow the academic writing conventions, their text is not genre specific, the extracts could be also part of the results section since they are merely summarizing and/or reporting results. In Celine's extract there are no devices which make it particular of a conclusions genre.

As a final note, I summarize the self as author and discoursal voices of the four participants relating them to gender differences. Along this section, I pointed out that although

there are differences in representing one's own voice *as author* and into the *discourse*, these are not gender differences but rather personal choices and other identity and gender features, and in some cases the result of an influence from the research advisor. I noticed that there is no problem in developing voice as self as author, everybody has an author voice, yet it is hard to develop one's own voice and integrate it into the discourse. This requires as pointed out by Faigley (1986, cited in Ivanic, 1998), the integration of the self into the text of the same genre, which implies the consideration of academic writing conventions, genre conventions, the discipline, and one's voice.

The results discussed in this chapter bring important implications for my study. I therefore, proceed to make my claims about the main findings and the implications my study has in studies of genre and voice. I present this in my Conclusions Chapter, which follows.