

A SOCIO-RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF INTRODUCTIONS IN ORIGINAL ARTICLES OF THE NUTRITION AREA'S DISCIPLINARY CULTURE

UMA ANÁLISE SOCIORRETÓRICA DE INTRODUÇÕES EM ARTIGOS ORIGINAIS DA
CULTURA DISCIPLINAR DA ÁREA DE NUTRIÇÃO

UN ANÁLISIS SOCIO-RETÓRICO DE INTRODUCCIONES EN ARTÍCULOS ACADÉMICOS DE
LA CULTURA DISCIPLINARIA DEL ÁREA DE NUTRICIÓN

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ABSTRACT: This study aims to present how the Nutrition area understands and construes the Introduction section in original academic articles. In this regard, we relied on Swales' theoretical and methodological conceptions (1990) about academics genres, and on Nwogu (1997) and Costa's (2015) socio-rhetorical descriptions to the area of Medicine. Regarding the description of the disciplinary community under study, we adopted the concept of disciplinary culture postulated by Hyland (2000). Therefore, our research, defined as a study of exploratory and descriptive nature, had a *corpus* of 30 original academic articles distributed within six Nutrition and Health journals, indexed in the *WebQualis* CAPES database. According to the analysis, we realized the Introduction was presented as a concise and objective rhetoric unit; however important in the rhetorical configuration of academic articles, considering there is not a rhetorical unit devoted specifically for literature review in this area.

KEYWORDS: Socio-rhetorical analysis. Disciplinary culture. Area of Nutrition. Original academic article. Rhetorical unity of Introduction.

RESUMO: O presente trabalho tem por objetivo apresentar como a área de Nutrição constrói e entende a seção de Introdução em artigos acadêmicos originais. Para isso, apoiamos-nos nas concepções teórico-metodológicas de Swales (1990), acerca dos gêneros

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acadêmicos e nas descrições sociorretóricas de artigos experimentais realizadas por Nwogu (1997) e Costa (2015) para a área de Medicina. Em relação à descrição da comunidade disciplinar em questão, adotamos o conceito de cultura disciplinar postulado por Hyland (2000). Assim, nossa pesquisa de natureza exploratório-descritiva dispôs de um *corpus* de trinta artigos acadêmicos, distribuídos em seis periódicos da área de Nutrição e Saúde, indexados no banco de dados *WebQualis* da Capes. Conforme a análise, percebemos que a Introdução se mostrou uma seção concisa e objetiva, no entanto, relevante para a construção da configuração retórica de artigos acadêmicos originais, considerando que, nessa área, não há uma unidade retórica voltada exclusivamente para a revisão de literatura.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: análise sociorretórica; cultura disciplinar; área de Nutrição; artigo acadêmico original; unidade retórica de Introdução.

RESUMEN: Este trabajo tiene como objetivo presentar como el área de Nutrición construye e comprende la sección de Introducción en artículos académicos originales. Para ello, nos basamos en las concepciones teóricas y metodológicas de Swales (1990), acerca de los géneros académicos, y en las descripciones socio-retóricas de artículos experimentales hechas por Nwogu (1997) y Costa (2015) para el área de Medicina. En cuanto a la descripción de la comunidad disciplinar en cuestión, adoptamos el concepto de cultura disciplinaria postulada por Hyland (2000). Por lo tanto, nuestra investigación de naturaleza exploratorio-descritiva posee un *corpus* compuesto por treinta artículos académicos, distribuidos en seis publicaciones periódicas en el campo de la Nutrición y Salud, indexados en el banco de datos *WebQualis* de la Capes. De acuerdo con el análisis, nos dimos cuenta de que la Introducción se ha demostrado una sección concisa y objetiva, sin embargo, pertinente para la construcción de la configuración retórica de artículos académicos originales, en vista que, en esta área, no existe una unidad retórica dedicada exclusivamente a la revisión de literatura.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Análisis socio-retórico. Cultura disciplinaria. Área de la Nutrición. Artículo académico original. Unidad retórica de Introducción.

1 INTRODUCTION

The study of gender in an academic environment is boosted by Swales' (1990) socio-rhetorical proposal, with CARS (Create a Research Space) model. In this proposal, the author shows us a methodology for describing the rhetorical configuration of the introduction unit of academic articles. Since then, many works were based on their theoretical-methodological proposal and a development for the most diverse genres in academics and other discursive fields.

Under this socio-rhetorical perspective, there are some papers that describe certain sections of the academic article, such as the study of Silva (1999) on "Results and Discussion in the area of Chemistry"; Hedges (2001) on "Literature Review"; Dias and Bezerra (2013) on "Introductions in the Public Health Area"; and Costa (2015) on a socio-rhetorical comparison between the disciplinary cultures of Linguistics and Medicine. Internationally, we highlight Nwogu's study (1997) on the rhetorical organization of academic articles of Medicine; Amirian, Kassaian and Tavakoli's (2008) on the section of Discussion in Applied Linguistics' articles, among others. Faced with a small amount of academic studies, we verified the absence of research aimed at the rhetorical organization of Nutrition-related articles, thus becoming a fertile field for our investigation.

Studying written production in the academic field implies understanding the process of production, distribution, and consumption of genres, since texts are produced to be understood within certain cultural contexts. Often, the representations of a given disciplinary culture do not only appear on the textual surface, for example, through the specific lexicon or content addressed. A deeper dive into the culture is needed to understand how it sees and makes use of its genres (HYLAND, 2000).

In accordance to gender studies in academic settings, our purpose is to describe the rhetorical Introduction unit in an academic article, understanding its configuration through the analysis of the disciplinary culture of the Nutrition area and, thus, to understand how the values and beliefs of this disciplinary area influence the perception and construction of this genre¹.

Let us move, now, on to the theoretical assumptions underlying our research².

2 EVIDENCING THE GENDER ACADEMIC ARTICLE

To Motta-Roth and Hendges (2010), an academic article is a publication in periodicals specialized in the most diverse areas of knowledge, whose aim is to present the results of a study on a certain theme, representing, according to Hyland (1997), the requirements of the academic community, so far as it is at the service of maintaining and valuing a certain disciplinary culture.

In general, Swales' work deals with the scientific article genre, considered the most valued genre in academia. Swales (2004), revisiting his model of rhetorical units, Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion (IMRD), found out that this model tends to be more flexible, mainly in the area of Human Sciences. For him, the academic article is divided into three distinct pillars: theoretical, experimental, and review.

In relation to the theoretical article, Bernardino (2007) emphasizes that its main objective is to develop a theoretical discussion, without, necessarily, resorting to data analysis. The review article, according to Swales (2004), aims to discuss the existing literature, concluding with a global assessment. Finally, the experimental article, according to Bernardino (2007), corresponds to the analysis of data of any nature. In the disciplinary culture of Nutrition, this type of article is characterized as original, since it presents unpublished data. As we see in the guidelines of the area's periodicals, original articles are the ones that offer contributions of unpublished researches, with thematic relevance, meaning, and knowledge for the area.

Authors such as Hyland (2000) have shown that articles' analysis and description, as well as other academic genres, need to take a careful look at the relationship between disciplinary culture and the construction of these genres. Thus, in this article, our understanding of academic genres underlines the disciplinary differences that given area presents in its textual configuration. Therefore, we adopt Hyland's propositions (2000) about the disciplinary culture concept.

3 UNDERSTANDING DISCIPLINARY CULTURE

Hyland (2000) tells us that academic genres are the means by which researchers cautiously negotiate their positions and arguments with their peers. Therefore, academic writing reflects and represents recurrent discourses in its disciplinary culture. In other words, writing must be understood as the fruit of a society, and not only of an individual. It depends on the actions of the members of particular communities. Thus, for the author, understanding a discipline implies understanding its discourses. Barwarshi and Reiff (2013) add that the ideologies of a given academic culture are not interwoven only in academic genres; but beliefs and values are also revealed in other teaching activities, such as guidelines, teacher comments, and course programs.

However, this look at disciplinary variations, according to Hyland (2000), is relatively new, taking into account that the investigative enterprise was geared towards the study of gender at the expense of the discipline, substantially valuing the similarities rather than the differences. In this perspective, Motta-Roth and Hendges (2010) draw attention to the fact that a clear understanding of the genres most commonly used in a given subject area is increasingly necessary if the objective is to effectively produce academic texts.

¹ This study presents part of the results of a larger study, in which all the rhetorical units of copies of the academic article on Nutrition are described. However, due to the need for a larger space for the evaluation of these data, we limit ourselves to the Introduction section.

² Our research and the other works carried out within the scope of the Research Group on Discourse, Identity and Academic Letters (DILETA), coordinated by Professor Cibele Gadelha Bernardino, PhD, have tried to construct a methodological path that allows the analysis and description of the disciplinary cultures, since Hyland (2000), even though presenting relevant considerations on the concept of disciplinary culture, does not clearly propose a methodological path that supports us in the Description of these cultures.

According to Hyland (2000), each discipline carries a set of marks that characterizes and particularizes it compared to other areas. These characteristics are presented not only in the specific lexicon, but also in the content that is addressed, profoundly in the way of conducting, showing and conceiving knowledge. These cultures also differ in the constitution of their objectives, through the relations of power and political interests, and in the way in which they structure and base their arguments. According to the author, individuals with a given disciplinary culture must acquire specialized discursive skills to meet the expectations of the disciplinary area and, thus, be considered effective members of the community.

To Hyland (2000, p. 9), “[...] disciplines are, in short, human institutions where actions and understandings are influenced by the personal and interpersonal, as well as the institutional and sociocultural.” Corroborating to these assertions, Bhatia (2004, p. 32), when verifying differences in Economics and Social Sciences textbooks, indicates that “genres, at the same time, are sensitive to disciplinary variations.”

In short, Hyland (2000) proposes that the concept of disciplinary culture should contribute to the change in the way of understanding academic writing, no longer be restricted to the plan of ideas and abstractions, but rather to conceive it in the world of concrete practices and beliefs. Thus, let us turn to the socio-rhetorical models that underlie our analysis.

4 INTRODUCING SOCIO-RHETORICAL MODELS OF THE INTRODUCTION SECTION

Swales (1990) points out the CARS (Create a Research Space) model as a relevant methodological contribution for the analysis of genres, which allows to analyze strategies of construction of these genres through its writers and/or producers. The model allows the analyst to find a methodological path that promotes a socio-rhetorical description based on the prototypical textual composition of the genres.

In this research, we verified the rhetorical³ organization of Introductions in academic articles based on the proposals of Nwogu (1997), on the analysis of Introductions of 15 Medicine articles from international journals; and Costa (2015), in 10 Medicine articles from Brazilian periodicals, presenting rhetorical⁴ choices similar to the disciplinary culture that we proposed to investigate - Nutrition. Here are the rhetorical moves listed by Nwogu (1997) for this rhetorical unity:

Table 1: Moves and their Discursive Functions - Introduction Section

<p>Move 1 – Presenting background information</p> <p>(1) Reference to established knowledge in the field</p> <p>(2) Reference to main research problems</p> <p>Move 2 - Reviewing related research</p> <p>(1) Reference to previous research</p> <p>(2) Reference to limitations of previous research</p> <p>Move 3 – Presenting new research</p> <p>(1) Reference to research purpose</p> <p>(2) Reference to main research procedure</p>

Source: Nwogu (1997, p.135)

According to Nwogu (1997), in Move 1, *Presenting background information*, the general information is exposed, inviting the study to present itself. It presents the knowledge taken as truth for a long time, and reveals the main research problem. Nwogu (1997) does

³ We understand this concept as the distribution and organization of recurrent informational units that respond directly to the interactional purposes of social groups that use genres.

⁴ Swales and Feak (2000) define move as a functional term that refers to a defined and delimited communicative act, which is designed to achieve a communicative main goal. According to Swales (2004), moves are rhetorical units that exert a coherent communicative function, whether in an oral or written discourse. However much such rhetorical units may be aligned by grammatical traits, moves are flexible in terms of their linguistic realization.

not elaborate on the steps leading to this Move, so we resorted to the retelling of Costa (2015), in his research on experimental medical articles published in national journals.

Costa (2015) draws attention to the fact that Move 1's first step, *Reference to established knowledge in the field*, was disregarded in its *corpus*, since the second step, *Reference to limitations of previous research*, of Move 2, *Reviewing related research*, contemplates previous studies, as well as knowledge considered consolidated in the field of research. The second step, *Reference to main research problems*, of Move 1, *Presenting background information*, was not recurrent, although, in some copies, this step was constructed in a broad and detailed way, indicating research problems.

According to Nwogu (1997), Move 2, *Reviewing related research*, contributes to the development of the study, showing that the research is inserted within a context of consecrated works, but that presents certain gaps. This Move places the new research within the context of research in the field in which it is inserted, and consists of two steps: *Reference to previous research*, and *Reference to limitations of previous research*.

The first step, *Reference to previous research*, can be performed by means of the author's nominal identification, by the use of common names when they refer to the identification of researchers, and by reference to results or generalizations of previous researches. Costa (2015, p. 178) confirms this information, revealing that this step is evidenced by the direct citation of authors, as well as by the numerical citation that directs the reader to the References, or simultaneously through the two strategies. For the author, this step establishes that the research in question derives from consolidated works.

The second step, *Reference to limitations of previous research*, is carried out through a negative evaluation or a gap in previous research (NWOGU, 1997). Confirming these data, Costa (2015) shows that such a step brings to light the incipience of previous research, highlighting existing theoretical gaps.

In Move 3, *Presenting new research*, the main function is to introduce the new research, stating its purposes. This Move also presents information, indicating the primary methods of the research adopted by the study. Reference can also be made to the sample of data on which the study is based. However, its greater emphasis is set on the purpose of the research. Step 1, *Reference to research purpose*, is presented through explicit lexemes, such as "the purpose of this research [...]." (NWOGU, 1997, p. 128). The second step, *Reference to main research procedure*, was disregarded in Costa's *corpus* (2015), considering that, in the area of Medicine, there is a typical rhetorical unit to present methodological aspects.

Based on the rhetorical moves proposed by Nwogu (1997), Costa (2015) presents a model whose terminology attempts to explicitly indicate the function of moves and rhetorical steps. Let's take a look at the socio-rhetorical model proposed by Costa (2015).

Table 2: Rhetoric description of the unit of introduction of experimental articles of the disciplinary culture of Medicine

<p>Move 1 - Presenting the theme</p> <p>Step 1 - Referring to previous research and/or</p> <p>Step 3 - Indicating limitations of previous research</p> <p>Move 2 - Presenting research objectives</p>

Source: Costa (2015, p. 188)

After presenting the theoretical assumptions that guided our analysis, let us turn to the methodological course adopted in the study.

5 METHODOLOGY

Our research is defined as exploratory-descriptive, with a qualitative-quantitative data analysis, since we seek to understand the disciplinary culture of the Nutrition area with regards to the production of the academic article gender, perceiving the recurrence/prototypical moves and rhetorical steps characterizing it.

In the study, seven (7) experienced members⁵ were enrolled in two postgraduate Nutrition programs - one in the state of Ceará (CE, Brazil), and the other in São Paulo (SP, Brazil). With the participants of the first program, we conducted interviews in person, while in the second program, due to temporal, financial and geographical reasons, we used questionnaires via e-mail. The interviews and questionnaires⁶ were conducted based on a previously elaborated script about the academic production in the researched area.

The *corpus* of our research consisted of 30 copies of the original academic article of the disciplinary culture of the Nutrition area⁷, published between 2008 and 2015, in six Nutrition-and-Health-related periodicals, namely: *Revista de Nutrição*, *Nutrire*, *Alimentos e Nutrição*, *Cadernos de Saúde Pública*, *Scientia Medica*, and *the magazine Epidemiologia e Serviços de Saúde*. The stratification of these journals range from qualis B1 to B5, according to WebQualis CAPES (2015).

Hyland (2000), despite proposing consistent theoretical foundations on the concept of disciplinary culture, does not clearly present a methodological path that provides an understanding of the set of beliefs and values that pervade a given area. Considering this, our study and another research carried out within the scope of the DILETA Group, are in a process of constructing a methodological path that aims to make the investigation of disciplinary cultures feasible.

Thus, for the description of the disciplinary culture of Nutrition, as a parameter we initially researched studies that historically contextualize the area of Nutrition in Brazil, as well as works that deal with the professional profile in Nutrition, materials available in websites of associations, and regional and federal councils, among others. In a second moment of this description, we were based on CAPES⁸ reports, which regulate and evaluate the Nutrition area in relation to the Graduate Programs. The third moment was characterized by the description of the periodicals guidelines about the academic production, mainly for the original article. The last step of the description consists of appreciating the expertise look of the experienced members of the area. It is important to emphasize that the description of the journals' guidelines and the information provided by the experienced members correspond to the primordial elements in the articulation of the text linguistics analysis with the disciplinary culture of the area under study.

For the text linguistic analysis, we relied on the rhetorical models of Nwogu (1997) and Costa (2015) on Medical academic articles, since we did not have a specific reference for the area of Nutrition. Considering that our investigative proposal took into account not only the text linguistic analysis, but mainly the contextual, more ethnographic basis (ASKEHAVE; SWALES, 2009, p. 240), a path of intersections and crossings between the literature with the disciplinary culture so that we understand how the rhetorical units, as well as their moves and steps, are/were constructed to perform the communicative purposes within the disciplinary culture. To end the socio-rhetorical description of the original academic articles, we also catalogued the most representative grammatical-lexical items of each informational unit present in the Introduction rhetorical unit.

After presenting the options and the methodological approach adopted in this research, let's now turn to the appreciation of the obtained results.

6 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

⁵ Professors/researchers that compose the faculty of a post-graduation program in Nutrition, therefore, for being members of a Graduate Program, they need to present a continuous flow of publications of academic articles in journals pertinent to the field of action, which justifies, therefore, our requirement to capture the look of the experienced researcher regarding the production of academic research.

⁶ All the people involved in the study signed a Free and Informed Consent Term, guaranteeing us the legal use of the data obtained through interviews and questionnaires, according to the Research Ethics Committee - CEP of the UECE - State University of Ceará, No. 0671978/2014.

⁷ The articles of the *corpus* were labeled in AAON (Original Academic Article of Nutrition), receiving a numbering from 1 (one) to 30 (thirty).

⁸ Committee Improving Superior Level

In this rhetorical unit, we present, initially, a description of the disciplinary culture of the Nutrition area, taking into account the documents that regulate and guide the area as a Postgraduate Program, the guidelines of the journals about the academic production, as well as the look Expertise of the experienced members of the study area. After that description, we analyze sociorhetorically the section of Introduction of articles from the application area, as we interlace the data of the texts analyzed with the data described in the disciplinary culture.

6.1 DESCRIBING THE DISCIPLINARY CULTURE OF NUTRITION IN BRAZIL

According to the National Curriculum Guidelines of the Nutrition Undergraduate Course (2001), the nutritionist is a health professional with a generalist, humanist, and critical background, and is, thus, able to work in all areas of knowledge where food and nutrition are essential to the promotion, maintenance, and recovery of health, as well as to the prevention of diseases of individuals or population groups.

The Nutrition area in Brazil is relatively new, considering that the first Nutrition graduation course was created only in 1939, at the Faculty of Public Health of the University of *São Paulo*. Since then, several regulations have been sanctioned with the purpose of guiding, disciplining and supervising the professional exercise, thus impelling the creation of vacancies in higher education, and the expansion of the profession to the most diverse sectors of society (CFN, 2014).

With regards to the Graduate Nutrition Programs in Brazil, since 2011 these programs are distinct from the area of Medicine II, thus denoting that the area under study still has a strong connection with Medicine. Aiming at a better performance of the Nutrition area, the PNPG⁹ (2011-2020) sees an increase in the number of programs throughout this decade, and, for this, it has been stimulating the strengthening of existing programs and the creation of new ones (CAPES, 2013a). We believe that such a position will further solidify Nutrition programs as an independent disciplinary area.

Continuing the description of the Nutrition disciplinary culture, we adopted the guidelines of periodicals regarding the production of their works. The journals involved in our analysis are: *Revista de Nutrição*, *Nutrire*, *Alimentos e Nutrição*, *Scientia Medica*, *Cadernos de Saúde Pública*, and *Epidemiologia e Serviços de Saúde*, all national.

According to the journals' guidelines, we reveal that there is a greater interest for experimental articles, known in the area for original articles, justifying such interest due to the uniqueness of the data they present.

With regards to the guidelines for the construction of the rhetorical unit of Introduction, *Revista de Nutrição* indicates the pertinence of a literature review adequate to the presentation of the theme, nevertheless it indicates that such a unit should not be extensive, except in review articles. In line with this literature review, the journal *Alimentos e Nutrição* guides the author to show the relevance and delimitation of the subject addressed. In designing the subject under study, the author, according to the journal *Cadernos de Saúde Pública*, may still present theoretical gaps that justify the study, but should be limited to those references linked to his/her research.

For *Revista de Nutrição*, such citations should be numbered consecutively as they are mentioned in the text, thus composing a list of references at the end of the article, according to the recommendations established by the ICMJE¹⁰, known as the Vancouver style. It is important to stress that all journals follow these guidelines. According to Pereira (2014), the Vancouver norms constitute a worldwide standardization in scientific health publications, justifying the need of national journals to submit to the standards required by the international scientific community.

The journal *Scientia Medica*, according to the ICMJE, indicates that in the Introduction, the author should present the nature of the problem and its meaning. In turn, the journal *Nutrire*, in this rhetorical section, indicates that it is important to inform the initial

⁹ National Graduate Plan.

¹⁰ International Committee of Medical Journal Editors.

hypotheses, if any, and, finally, it presents the need to clarify the research objectives. The journal *Cadernos de Saúde Pública* also adds that, if possible, the use of verbs in the infinitive is relevant. Thus, the journals indicate that the rhetorical unit of Introduction must be finished with a clear presentation of the research's purposes and objectives.

The journal *Epidemiologia e Serviço de Saúde* recommends the author to present the research problem, its justification and the objective, necessarily, in that order. In general terms, the journals recommend that, in the Introduction, the authors should be brief and concise, establishing well-defined dimensions for this rhetorical unit, such as *Nutrire* and *Alimentos e Nutrição*, which are incisive in limiting the dimensions of the Introduction between 6 and 8 paragraphs.

After these guidelines, let's turn to the eyes of experienced members of the area, showing how they perceive and understand the rhetorical unity of Introduction in original articles.

Regarding the Introduction section, experienced members consider it important to make a presentation of the subject related to the work, carrying out a survey of the available literature, as well as showing some of the "state of the art" (Collaborator - C3)¹¹. For C7, the theme is intended to "bridge the author's familiarity with the subject and the reader's probable ignorance with each of the various elements that led the author to undertake the published research". In turn, C6 believes that this presentation aims to "introduce the subject related to work, showing the evidence available in the literature, and defending the importance of the current work". In accordance, C5 suggests that the author, through this thematic presentation, should "give theoretical knowledge to the understanding of the article". C3 emphasizes that the author also uses research from national and international bodies, such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Brazilian Society of Hypertension, among others.

In the theme's presentation, we must highlight the existing theoretical gaps, as well as clarify the research problem, as expressed by C1. In establishing the problematization, the author should clearly present the objectives of the study, contextualizing it within the presented theme and, thus, justify the relevance of his/her work (C3). For C4, an Introduction "cannot fail to have [...] the contextualization of the object of study and the relevance of what you are proposing". C3 says that, in this section, the author tries to persuade the reader with the idea that his/her article is important, drawing attention to the fact that the section should take precedence over brevity, not needing to extend it for more than one page, to show the objectives and the relevance of the proposed study. On the other hand, C2 indicates, in this section, that "the problematization of the theme, the gaps and its objectives" cannot be lacking.

We believe that this descriptive course of the disciplinary culture of Nutrition allows us to understand how the area understands, produces and uses the academic article genre, thus providing a better understanding of the underlying reason (SWALES, 1990) that guides the socio-rhetorical configuration of the Introduction rhetorical unit of said genre. With that, let's now analyze the rhetorical unit of Introduction of the original academic Nutrition articles.

6.2 DESCRIBING THE RHETORICAL UNIT OF INTRODUCTION IN NUTRITION ORIGINAL ARTICLES

Although the Introduction section is considered to be relevant in the construction of academic papers on Nutrition, both experienced members of the field and the journals involved in this paper find it unnecessary to extend much in this unit. The *Nutrire* and *Alimentos e Nutrição* journals limit the number of paragraphs to the Introduction, thus denoting the need for clarity and objectivity in the construction of this unit. From this, we noticed that the introductions analyzed corresponded to the expectations of the periodicals, being, in most part, concise, clear and objective.

According to the experienced members of the area and to the journals' guidelines, the Introduction unit is characterized by the presentation of the research, delimiting it and justifying its relevance. For this, the authors use a brief literature review relevant to the topic, taking into account the issues that guide the study, and sometimes use the presentation of existing theoretical gaps. This

¹¹ Refers to the collaborators involved in the research, being assigned a number that corresponds to an experienced member, going from 1 to 7. The employees from 1 to 4 responded to interviews, while the ones numbered from 5 to 7 responded to questionnaires.

theoretical path that guarantees the relevance of the study leads to a clear presentation of the objectives. On the other hand, the recommendations of the ICMJE (2014) establish that in this unit it is not possible to present data and conclusions.

In this sense, let's see how the informational¹² units were present in the Introductions of the analyzed academic articles.

Table 3: Frequency of information units in Introductions of original articles of the disciplinary culture of the Nutrition area.

Move 1 – Presenting Background Information	
(1) Reference to established knowledge in the field	0%
(2) Reference to main research problems	63.33% (19 occurrences)
Move 2 - Reviewing Related Research	
(1) Reference to previous research	100% (30 occurrences)
(2) Reference to limitations of previous research	36.66% (11 occurrences)
Move 3 – Presenting new research	
(1) Reference to research purpose	100% (30 occurrences)
(2) Reference to main research procedure	0%

Source: Based on the moves and steps proposed by Nwogu (1997, p. 135)

In the Introduction section, the model that best fits our *corpus* was the one proposed by Nwogu (1997), considering that the three moves proposed by the author occurred, although the terminological and structural redefinition of the unit proposed by Costa (2015) will also be important in the development of our model.

As Costa (2015), we consider it relevant to present a terminology that most clearly expresses the rhetorical function of the informational units. Based on Biasi-Rodrigues (1998), Bernardino (2000), Bezerra (2001), Costa (2015), among other authors, we believe that the use of verbs in the gerund construct more adequately the indication of the rhetorical action of the moves and steps. For the organization of our rhetorical configuration proposal, we take into account the most recurrent¹³ order of these moves and steps. We present below a possible standard for the Introductory section of original academic articles in the area of Nutrition.

Table 4: Rhetoric description of the unit of Introduction of original articles of the disciplinary culture of the Nutrition area.

Move 1 - Presenting the theme
Step 1 - Referring to previous research and
Step 2 - Referring to main research problems and/or
Move 2 - Presenting the research objectives

Source: of our authorship.

According to Table 4, the first move, *Presenting the theme*, was evidenced by two steps, *Referring to previous research* and *Referring to main research problems*. Although not recurring, the step *References to research limitations* (Nwogu, 1997), in some copies, became relevant in the construction of this subject presentation. The second move, *Presenting the research of objectives*, was not constituted of steps, since this informational unit is present, in great part of the analyzed articles, at the end of the introduction in a clear, succinct, and, sometimes, outstanding manner. In short, we noticed that the Introduction section usually uses a theoretical approach to the studied subject, pointing out to the problems that guide the research, which, in turn, establishes the objectives to be achieved with the current study. Let's analyze, then, how this unit presents itself through its moves and steps, according to its recurrence, as described in Table 4.

¹² Informational units are blocks of information that make up the rhetorical organization of such specimens. These units will become moves or rhetorical steps if it reaches the criterion of recurrence / prototyping.

¹³ In this work, we consider recurrent the frequency of rhetorical units, moves and steps equal to or greater than 50% in the articles analyzed.

Step 1, *Referring to previous research*, of the first move, *Presenting the theme*, is characterized by situating the research, showing a little of the “state of the art”, as well pointed out one of the experienced members of the area (C3). This step was very important in the construction of this rhetorical unit, in view of the fact that there is no specific section for the literature review in the analyzed copies. Thus, according to the *Journal of Nutrition*, we can highlight that the Nutrition area deems relevant a detailed theoretical discussion in specific articles for this purpose, review articles or meta-analysis. In this sense, we believe that this step aims to delimit previous research relevant to its study, in this case, an extensive literature review is not possible, in order to compose a brief and concise unit. In this sense, Pereira (2014)¹⁴, in his manual on the production of scientific articles in the Health area, reveals that an exhaustive presentation of references is not necessary, but rather a synthesis of studies that will support the objectives of the work.

Thus, this step was evidenced mainly by the citation of authors through superscript numerical indexes that lead to the References (examples 01 and 02)¹⁵. However, there were some occurrences whose quotations were given by the nominalization of the authors, sometimes presented in the body of the text, sometimes in parentheses (examples 03 and 04). Although in a smaller number of occurrences, it was also evident the citation, concomitantly, by means of the authors' names and by means of superscript numbering (example 05).

(1) Acute lymphoid leukemia (ALL) **is** the most common type of childhood cancer, accounting for about one-third of all childhood malignancies⁵. It **constitutes** a malignant disease that results in the uncontrolled production of blasts of lymphoid origin and in the blockade of the normal production of red, white globules and platelets⁶. [...] (AAON01)

(2) Lactose **is** a carbohydrate found exclusively in milk. It **is** synthesized in the mammary glands and hydrolyzed into glucose and galactose by the enzyme lactase, also called lactase-florizine hydrolase, in the small intestine. The presence of gastrointestinal clinical manifestations due to lactose malabsorption **is** termed lactose intolerance (IL). Several situations may cause reduction in the synthesis of lactase, with consequent malabsorption of lactose. These situations **are** classified as primary, secondary or congenital lactase deficiency.^{1,2} [...] (AAON09)

(3) According to **Abreu et al. (2009)** the main meals (lunch, dinner and supper) **should contain** 600 to 800 calories and should correspond to the range of 30% to 40% of the Total Energy Value (VET) daily, assuming an increase of 20% in relation to VET of 2 thousand calories per day. The smaller meals (breakfast and snack) should contain 300 to 400 calories and **should be** in the range of 15% to 20% of the daily VET, assuming an increase of 20% (400 calories) over the VET of 2000 calories per day. (AAON19)

(4) One of the population groups most vulnerable to nutritional anemia is pregnant women (**VASCONCELOS et al., 2008**). It **is estimated** that out of every ten pregnant women who undergo prenatal care three are anemic (**COSTA et al., 2009**). The World Health Organization (WHO) **defines** anemia in pregnancy as a hemoglobin concentration below 11g / dL and hematocrit less than 33% (**WHO, 2001**). (AAON20)

(5) **Roongpisuthipong et al.**,⁸ in their study with cirrhotic individuals at different stages of the disease and different etiologies, **found** a prevalence of DPC in liver diseases between 10% and 100%. This prevalence increases as the severity of the disease increases, in another words, DPC **is** much more prevalent in Child C patients than in Child A and B patients. [...] (AAON07)

The examples 01 to 05 confirm the considerations of Costa (2015) for this step, showing that the citation can occur in three different situations, by the nominalization of the authors, also, evident in the propositions of Nwogu (1997), by the numerical indication that directs to the References, and for the combined use of the two forms. However, we consider a prototype standard for the Nutrition and Health area to cite by means of superscript numbering, taking into account that the periodicals in the area guide the authors to follow the international norms proposed by the ICMJE.

Also, in relation to this step, we show that the authors usually use data from academic research, as well as studies from institutes, government agencies, specialized agencies, among others (examples 04, 06 and 07). C3 confirms this characteristic by revealing that

¹⁴ For the discussion of the informational units present in the analyzed articles, we also count on the considerations of Pereira (2014) on the production of scientific articles in the Health area, mainly with regards to the more prototypical information of the referred genre's rhetorical sections.

¹⁵ In the excerpts presented in this paper, we highlight, in bold, the most representative lexical-grammatical items that will be presented at the end of the description of each informational unit.

academic articles are reliable sources, given the results of academic research, as well as results from studies of national and international bodies, such as WHO, UNICEF, among others.

(6) **WHO advocates** controlling consumption of foods containing GTr in order to reduce risk and increase the effectiveness of CVD treatment, and advises that GTr intake is less than 1% of total dietary calories.⁵ (AAON06)

(7) The National Survey on Health and Nutrition (PNSN), carried out by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) in 1989, **revealed** that 7.7% of Brazilian adolescents were overweight.⁶ Other studies with adolescents in the country, carried out in the last decade, present higher prevalence.^{9,10} (AAON26)

Thus, we suggest that, for Nutrition, the research data from outside the universities are considered as theoretical sources as those coming from academia. In short, this step presents the theoretical survey that the authors consider relevant to their study, thus confirming the propositions of Swales (1990) on the informational unit, Reviewing Literature, in introductions of articles.

As far as lexicographic marks are concerned, when this step was carried out by means of a definition or conceptualization, the verb was usually used in the present indicative tense, and the verb “to be” was used with some frequency (examples 01 and 02). On the other hand, when it was done through the presentation of data of a research, the verbs were in the simple past tense (example 05). We also present the occurrence of verbs in the passive voice, both in analytic form and in synthetic form, as well as the frequency of locutions with the modal verbs “may” and “should” (example 03). In this informational unit, it was not possible to show an apparent terminological mark that contemplated its rhetorical function.

On the other hand, step 2, *Referring to main research problems*, of the first move, *Presenting the theme*, according to C1, is characterized by the clear presentation of the questions that drive the study, thus corroborating Pereira’s (2014) guidelines, who considers relevant to inform the research problem to justify the investigation. In this sense, this step served as a bridge between the theoretical foundation and the presentation of the research objectives, as we saw in examples 08 to 12.

(8) **Thus**, the assessment of the nutritional status of adolescents has been recommended, allowing the identification of the subgroups with the highest frequency of exposure to this outcome, which **may be the target of interventions** to evaluate the health levels of the young population. (AAON02)

(9) **Considering that** primary deficiency of lactase is quite common in the population, it is expected that an **important** portion of these individuals will develop IL. Being the clinical management of this eminently nutritional situation, the nutritionist becomes a fundamental professional in the treatment; Therefore, their knowledge about the possibilities of nutritional adjustments necessary in the feeding of these individuals is fundamental. (AAON09)

(10) **In this context** of prioritization of the topic in the context of public policies, the monitoring of indicators of early-life dietary practices is **fundamental**, since it **can subsidize** the development, the evaluation and the redirection of such policies³. (AAON22)

(11) **Thus**, the household approach, and particularly the biological mother-child pairing, represents a very peculiar opportunity to study, either because of the rapidity of changes in the nutritional profile, or because of the interest in understanding and acting in public policies. From a family perspective. These would be the cases of the Family Health Program (PSF) and food security of the *Bolsa Família* Program (PBF), which practically serve half of the Brazilian population^{13,14}. In this context, the health status of the family nucleus most exposed to nutritional disorders, children and mothers, can **offer important subsidies** on issues that directly concern public policies directed towards food and nutritional security. (AAON25)

(12) **Therefore**, identifying the most vulnerable families to food insecurity, and understanding their causes and their effects **is fundamental to finding** viable ways of solving the problem.^{4,6} (AAON28)

It is interesting to note that this step became prototypical in the area of Nutrition, in line with the data collected by Nwogu (1997) for the area of Medicine. On the other hand, Costa (2015) does not show a recurrence for this step. In relation to this incongruity, we must take into account that the area of Medicine is divided into three subareas of evaluation (Medicine I, Medicine II, and Medicine III)¹⁶, leading us to hypothesize about the existence of a fluctuation of information blocks of a subarea to another.

¹⁶ See CAPES document on the evaluation areas.

According to C6, the area of Nutrition is more focused on researches that emerge from the needs of society, thus evaluating the impact of certain eating habits and lifestyles of the most diverse population groups. We believe that the more applied bias of the Nutrition area leads authors to present a problematization that, in turn, supports the need for their study.

On the other hand, the authors, in constructing this step, often did not establish a precise delimitation, so that this informational block and the other, presenting the objectives of the research, were shown to be closely linked (example 13), thus presenting a dividing line between them.

(13) **Considering the importance** of obesity, its strong participation in the determination of other cardio metabolic risks and the existence of a subgroup of obese individuals that do not present other cardio metabolic risk factors, [sought to analyze the association between eating practices with greater preventive action and low cardio metabolic risk in obese women, in order to guide preventive actions of other risks to the health of the obese population]. (AAON27)

This step denotes its rhetorical function through the lexical item “important” (examples 09 and 11) and its derivations, as well as makes use of verbal forms in the infinitive (examples 10 to 13). We also point out that such an informational unit usually starts with cohesive elements (examples from 08 to 13), promoting a resumption of the most important information presented in the literature review.

The second move, *Presenting the research of objectives*, was essential to the Introduction, since it is through it that the author contextualizes his/her study within the presented theme and, at the same time, supports the necessity of his/her research. C3, for example, suggests that the author, by showing the aims of his study, tries to “sell the idea that his work is important”. This informational block was predominantly presented at the end of the Introduction section, which did not exceed the limit of a paragraph for this purpose, thus confirming the guidelines of the journals that considered it pertinent to conclude such a unit with the brief presentation of its objectives. Pereira (2014) confirms this when indicating that at the end of the Introduction the objective of the investigation must be shown.

In this sense, this move was predominantly marked by the expression “objective” and its variations (examples 14 to 16), accompanied by verbs in the infinitive, corroborating the data suggested by Costa (2015) and the guidelines of the journal *Cadernos de Saúde Pública*, that considers pertinent the presentation of the objectives through the use of verbs in the infinitive. It is important to emphasize that the use of the infinitive in the presentation of objectives does not correspond to a unique characteristic of the areas of Nutrition and Medicine, but of the academic community in general. In the construction of this move, the authors used mainly verbs indicating a past action with the aid of the verbal form in the infinitive (examples 14 and 15), except for a few examples that were shown in the present time (example 16), disagreeing with the propositions of Nwogu (1997).

(14) The present article **aimed to evaluate** the quality of feeding of preschool children benefited by the *Bolsa Família* Program (PBF), in the city of Viçosa-MG, according to the situation of (in) food safety at home. (AAON11)

(15) Therefore, the **objective** of this research **was to systematize** a course for the development of phenylalanine-reduced recipes, with nutritional and sensory quality, allowed for the treatment of phenylketonuria. (AAON12)

(16) The present study has as **objective to present** the prevalence of food insecurity in families in the city of Pelotas, Rio Grande do Sul State, as well as to describe the nutritional status of the members of these families in food insecurity. (AAON21)

In short, the second move, *Presenting the research of objectives*, clearly and succinctly indicates the purposes of the study. It is interesting to underline that such a block of information appears at the end of the Introduction unit to explicitly show the purpose of the study, considering that this information will be used in various moments in the research.

Before concluding the description of the rhetorical unit of Introduction, let us see how it presented the information unit, *Reference to limitations of previous research*, proposed by Nwogu (1997) and confirmed by Costa (2015). Although this unit was not recurrent in the *corpus*, in some copies it was substantial for the construction of the contextualization of the research, validating the need to

carry out the study. This unit was marked, for the most part, by expressions that denote the absence or insufficiency of studies in the area (examples from 17 to 19), as noted by Costa (2015).

(17) **The studies** on PNAE management, as well as on the efficiency and effectiveness of the Program **are still scarce** in Brazil³ and in Santa Catarina¹³. A research developed by the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research (INEP), with the objective of evaluating the financial decentralization process of PNAE in 1997, showed a trend towards uniformity and compliance with the quality and quantity goals of school feeding throughout Brazil, but **did not seek an association between data from the different regions of Brazil and its states**¹⁴. (AAON03)

(18) **The literature is scarce** in studies that discuss the stages of development of new recipes for these patients, despite the increasing consumer demand for special foods with nutritional and sensory quality. (AAON12)

(19) Despite the relevance of the theme, there **are still few studies** comparing the dietary pattern of children living in surrounding geographic areas with different socioeconomic and environmental characteristics^{10,11}, such as urban and rural spaces of Bahia municipalities. (AAON24)

According to examples 17 to 19, this informational unit had as its main function to insert in the contextualization of the subject the shortage of works in the literature, which, in turn, justifies the need for an in-depth study of the subject. These observations confirm Pereira's propositions (2014) that a research is also justified by the possibility of adding or amplifying a little studied subject. The presentation of these theoretical gaps was not only evidenced by the total absence of studies, but also by the urgency to seek more data about a particular variant, as in example 17, pointing out the need for a study that makes an "association between the data of the different regions of Brazil and its states".

According to our *corpus*, the articles in the area of Nutrition presented a rhetorical model closer to that found by Nwogu (1997), following, in most of the copies, a prototypical pattern, making first a review of the literature, which generates a problematization, thus directing the research objectives. Sometimes the authors resorted to the presentation of theoretical gaps, however, such a unit did not become recurrent in our copies. We suggest that, in the area of Nutrition, the Introduction is a brief, concise but highly relevant section in the construction of academic articles, considering that in this area there is no rhetorical unit highlighted for review of literature.

To conclude the Introduction unit, we present a table with the grammar lexical marks of the informational units that were present in the analyzed *corpus*.

Table 5: Presenting Grammar Lexicon items of the information rhetoric unit of Introduction.

Move 1: Presenting the theme	
Step 1 - Referencing to previous research	
Item types	Examples
Verbs in the present	It is advisable, it consults, it constitutes, it gives, it defines, it demonstrates, it emphasizes, emphasizes, emphasizes, distributes, is, Can, enable, possess, promote, recommend, refer, represent, are, have.
Verbs in the past	Pointed, pointed, presented, reached, defined, left, found, found, was, launched, improved, resulted, suffered.
Modal verbs	can present, can be found, must correspond, must be, can lead.
verbal utterances	have been described, have been pointed out, have been increasing, are becoming, have shown
passive voice	They are used, they are used, they are pointed, they are pointed, it is defined, it is marked, it is potentialized, it is known, it is constituted.
Move 1: Presenting the theme	
Step 2 - Referring to main research problems	
Item types	Examples
Denotative expression of relevance of the study	Fundamental, importance, important.
Use of Verbs and Infinitive Locutions	In order to verify, identify, can offer, can reveal, can subsidize, seeking clarify.
Cohesive terms	Thus, considering that, in that sense, thus, in view, given to in this context therefore.
Move 2: Presenting the research objective	
Item types	examples
Denotative expression of rhetorical function	Objective, aimed, objective, objective, have as aims, purpose.
Use of verbs in the past tense with/ without infinitive aid	It was: evaluate, identify, investigate, perform, systematize, verify, characterize; Aimed to explore, sought to analyze, aimed to present, aimed to compare, aimed to describe.
Move 2: Reviewing related research	
Step 2 - Reference to limitations of previous research (NWOGU, 1997)	
Item types	Examples
Denotative expression of rhetorical function	Shortage of studies, lack of studies, scarce literature, no study, few studies; There is a lack of knowledge.

Source: our authorship.

7 CONCLUSIONS

Through the dialogue with the literature, with the guidelines of the journals and with the expertise of the experienced members of the Nutrition area, we show that the Introduction shows a brief, concise and objective rhetorical unit, however, fundamental in the configuration of academic articles in the field of Nutrition, considering, also, that there is not a rhetorical unit exclusive to the literature review.

In this rhetorical unit, the theme is presented through a brief literature review, only evidencing the theoretical references that the authors consider most relevant for the construction of their study. We also note that the authors use results from studies of national and international agencies, such as WHO, UNICEF, among others, revealing that, for Nutrition, these research data that occur outside the universities are considered theoretical sources as well as those coming from the academia. From this thematic review, the issues that led to the study are revealed, thus justifying the need to develop such an investigative venture.

In view of the results, we verified that the socio-rhetorical configuration of Introductions in original academic articles of the disciplinary culture of the Nutrition area approached the descriptions of the Medicine area proposed by Nwogu (1997) and Costa (2015), leading us to infer that this standardization may be regular in the large area of Health. However, such generalization needs further studies in other areas of Health to confirm or deny this hypothesis.

We also believe that the results achieved in this study will provide subsidies to the disciplinary culture of Nutrition with regards to academic literacy, considering the descriptive design of the rhetorical unit of Introduction in original articles in the area of Nutrition and the use that their members make of the genre.

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