



How Do Art Critics Critique? A Move Analysis of Art Reviews Written by Professional Writers

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ABSTRACT

The art review is a genre that describes the artwork under discussion, educates its readers, as well as interprets and evaluates the work. It is a genre that plays a crucial role in the art community as it publicizes art, promotes artists, educates the public and enhances their appreciation of art. This study investigates this underexplored genre through the move analysis of a 67,807-word corpus of 70 art review texts collected from online art magazines and online newspapers containing an art review section. The study reveals seven moves and seven steps found in the art reviews in the corpus: heading (Move 1), describing the work (Move 2), providing external information (Move 3), providing the artist's background (Step 3.1), providing general knowledge (Step 3.2), discussing a past event that influences the work (Step 3.3), mentioning quotes (Step 3.4), mentioning other reviews (Step 3.5), interpreting the work (Move 4), judging the work (Move 5), providing evaluative comments (Step 5.1), recommending or disrecommending the work (Step 5.2), expressing general opinions and thoughts (Move 6), and sharing the writer's personal experience (Move 7). The results also show no common move patterns, indicating that the genre allows fluidity and creativity in structuring the content.

Keywords: art review, move analysis, genre analysis, art writing

Introduction

The art review as a genre entails written exploration of a particular artwork or exhibition of works. It generally provides a description of the art as well as the writer's interpretation and evaluation. Art reviews are usually written by art critics and can commonly be found in online newspapers and online art magazines as well as on art websites and blogs. As art reviews contain information about an artwork or exhibition, as well as the writer's opinion regarding it, they assist readers in forming their decision as to whether they should visit the exhibition of the work or works. In addition, art reviews play a vital role in the art community. Down (2022), for instance, states that art reviews can provide valuable feedback to the artists as well as provide expert opinions to art enthusiasts who may wish to invest in a promising artwork. Cretiu (2002) points out that the market value of the work of artists depends on them becoming known to the public and art reviews can help them achieve this.

As for those who are not experts in the field, art reviews can provide them with a base on which they can develop their understanding and appreciation of artwork (Ntone, 2019). It can be said that art reviews play a crucial part in bringing the people in the art community together and influencing the dynamic of the community.

Because of the important role art reviews play and "because there is a great deal of interest in art, especially contemporary art, the potential readership for art criticism is enormous" (Carrier, 2022, p. 11). However, writing an art review can be a challenging task especially for novice writers as it requires "masterly skills" (Cretiu, 2002). Although advice and guidelines for writing art reviews can be obtained from general how-to websites, there is no evidence of whether an established format for art reviews exists based on research-based analysis of the genre. Moreover, art reviews written by professional critics tend to be much more complex than the guidelines given on those websites.

In order to understand the art review genre in greater depth, this study conducts a move analysis of art reviews written by professional critics with an aim to identify the moves and steps commonly found in this particular genre. Furthermore, it aims to explore the common move patterns which, for this study, refer to how moves and steps are sequenced. Thus, this study addresses the two research questions, as follows:

1. What are the moves and steps commonly found in art reviews?
2. What are the common move patterns of art reviews?

The study aims to provide a number of benefits. First and foremost, it can help provide research-based guidelines to novice writers, art critics, art students and teachers in writing reviews more effectively as they understand more about the organization of the messages of this particular genre. Second, the findings can provide insights into the teaching of the art review genre. Teachers can be better able to develop more effective materials, give more insightful comments and evaluate students' work more precisely based on research-informed knowledge of the genre obtained from the study. Lastly, the study will contribute to the existing ESP literature regarding art critique by adding knowledge about this underexplored genre to the field.

Literature Review

Genre Studies and the Art Review

According to Swales (1990), "a genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes" (p. 58). Based on *Analysing Genre: Language Use in Professional Settings* by Vijay K. Bhatia (1993), the definition of genre can be explained in the following aspects.

First of all, a genre is a recognizable communicative phenomenon possessing a set of communicative purposes generally understood by the members of a certain discourse or academic community where it often occurs. The internal structure of the genre is dependent on the communicative purposes. Therefore, any significant change in the communicative purposes gives rise to a new genre.

Secondly, a genre is a highly structured and conventionalized communicative event. Those expert members of a certain discourse community have both the knowledge of the structure of the genre of the community they are in and the communicative goals of their community.

Thirdly, a genre has constraints on allowable contributions with regard to their intent, positioning, form and functional value. This means that even though there is some freedom for any professional members of a certain community to make use of any linguistic resources of their community, they need to adhere to the standard practices of the genre. This is the reason why a personal letter can be distinguished from a business letter or a news report from an art review.

Fourthly, these constraints are utilised by the experts in a certain discourse community to achieve their aims within the framework of socially recognized purposes. It is clear that the insiders of the community are likely to have greater knowledge of the structure, communicative purposes, and rules than those who are the outsiders to the community.

For the past several decades, genre studies have gained interest among language scholars and researchers. Genre-based teaching has been adopted as it has beneficial pedagogical implications such as offering students writing models (Kay & Dudley-Evans, 1998), providing teachers with resources to assist their students in writing relevant texts, and helping teachers to give more informed feedback and teach more confidently (Hyland, 2004; Hyland, 2007).

Studies involving genre analysis and move analysis have previously been conducted in a wide range of fields and disciplines such as business (e.g., Bhatia, 1993; Hiranburana, 1996), accountancy (e.g., Flowerdew & Wan, 2010), legislation (e.g., Bhatia & Han, 2012), tourism (e.g., Ahmed, 2015; Panseeta & Watson Todd, 2014), journalism (e.g., Bonyadi, 2012; Rojanaatichartasakul & Phoocharoensil, 2022), social sciences (e.g., Holmes, 1997), sociology (e.g., Brett, 1994), biochemistry (e.g., Kanoksilapatham, 2005), medicine (e.g., Jirapanakorn, 2013; Nwogu, 1997), engineering (e.g., Gao & Pramoolsook, 2023; Maswana et al., 2015) and computer science (e.g., Posteguillo, 1999).

In comparison with other disciplines, texts in the art field have been less investigated. A few studies have focused on art writings, for example, artist statements (Damrongmanee, 2016; Hocking, 2021), online painting exhibition overviews (Işık, 2023), and single image accounts (Swales, 2016). With the growth of museums, galleries and museum studies programs, texts about artworks are worthy of investigation and there is real potential for ESP development (Swales, 2016).

The art review, the focus of this study, is an important genre within the art community and has multiple communicative purposes. Barnett (2005) states that an art review should deepen and enhance the readers' understanding of art history as well as their appreciation of works of art. According to the Writing & Learning Centre, OCAD University, as stated in their Writing Art Reviews publication (n.d.), art reviews possess two primary aims. First, they provide details about the artwork or exhibition to those unfamiliar with it so that they can decide whether or not to go experience the artwork firsthand. Second, they provide a record and give criticism of the artwork exhibited.

In addition, art reviews written by critics or artists belonging to an artistic discourse community have one common goal; that is, to make artists and artworks known to the general public and other experts in the same discourse community. To make them known to the general public, reviews of art exhibitions in galleries and museums are disseminated via different channels, such as newspapers and magazines (Cretiu, 2002; IESA Arts & Culture, n.d.).

Based on the existing literature, it can be concluded that the main communicative purposes of the art review can be categorized into two main functions: to inform about the work in focus and to evaluate it.

The Components of the Art Review

A few articles on the rhetorical structures of the art review can be found in the existing literature. Cretiu (2002) proposed a generic structure of the art review consisting of four parts, namely, Introduction, Transition, Body, and Termination. The Introduction contains a short biography of the artist, some sentences describing the artist's career choice, general statements about the art of that particular artist, and facts regarding the artist's relevance to current artistic trends and school of creation. Transition contains one or two sentences describing the occasion when the art review was written and mentioning the venue, time, and the artist or artists of that exhibition. The Body deals with the 'what' and the 'how,' following the common description and interpretation pattern of art critique. Evaluation may be included in this part as well. Termination contains a final or concluding evaluation of the artist, artwork, and exhibition. In this part, some sentences mentioning future works might be present. Nevertheless, this generic structure of the discourse of the art review may be limited to the Romanian context only, as the writer herself suggests that the biography in the introduction part may take the form of an actual curriculum vitae (CV) which is the Romanian practice. Moreover, she did not provide further information on the data and research methodology involved in this academic article.

Barnet (2005) states that an art review usually consists of Description, Analysis and Evaluation, with the following organization: The Description should include what the work looks like, how big it is or how it is displayed. The Analysis explores how some aspects of the work combine to produce a particular effect. The Evaluation reveals the critic's opinion as to, for instance, whether the work has artistic merit and whether or not it is worth seeing.

Alashari and Hamzah (2022) note that "one of the very appropriate methods for the principles of art criticism at the educational and academic level" is Feldman's (1992) method of art criticism which offers a four-step framework including Description, Formal analysis, Interpretation, and Judgement. According to Feldman, the critical process begins with describing the facts about the work of art under discussion, for instance, the artist's name, the work title and the medium used. At this stage, the critic describes what is seen and must use language that is neutral and value-free. The second step, Formal analysis, involves analyzing the facts by dealing with visual evidence and studying the relation among art elements. The critic then moves on to the third step, Interpretation. Here the critic offers the subjective interpretation of the work based on the evidence gathered before progressing to Judgement, the last step, where an evaluation of the work is presented. Feldman (1994) further explained the critical process using his method in his book titled "Practical Art Criticism" where he gave more practical guidelines.

While art review components are referred to differently among Cretiu (2002), Barnet (2005), and Feldman (1992), some components, nevertheless, are similar in terms of their communicative purposes. For instance, Barnet's (2005) Evaluation is called Judgement by Feldman (1992). According to Cretiu (2002), information regarding the artist and the work title is included in the Introduction and Transition parts while Feldman put this in the Description part.

Although art criticism frameworks and guidelines are available, a thorough move analysis study that investigates how art reviews are actually written by professional art critics in the real context is still lacking. The present study, therefore, aims to identify the moves and steps commonly found in the art review genre and investigate in detail the common move patterns of the genre.

Methodology

Data Collection and the Corpus

The art reviews for this study were collected from five newspaper websites and five online art magazines. The rationale for focusing on online newspapers and online art magazines is that they are easily accessible and have potentially wider readership. Moreover, the art reviews found

in online newspapers and online art magazines are of the same genre as they share audiences and have similar communicative purposes. For example, Edward Hopper's exhibition entitled "New York" is reviewed in both online newspapers and online art magazines. Therefore, we assumed that they share common writing conventions.

The selection process of these websites began with Google searches using the terms "most read news websites," "top art magazines," and "most visited art websites" in order to identify the popular websites with a wide readership. After that, it was found that only five newspaper websites from the list contained an art review section. Therefore, all of the five were chosen from the list. Five art websites that were recommended as top art websites for art news and art reviews more than once from other websites and that had an art review section were also chosen from the list. To identify the current writing trend, the seven most recent art reviews were then collected from each of these ten websites regardless of the writer's nationality. The only condition was that they were required to be reviews of visual artworks, excluding film and architecture reviews. Visual artworks included drawings, paintings, sculptures, assemblages, collages, photographs, installations, ceramics, embroideries and prints. The writers of these art reviews were professional writers and art critics who write for the chosen art magazines and newspapers.

The 67,807-word art review corpus (hereafter referred to as the AR corpus) comprises 70 art reviews. The lengths of the compiled texts vary widely with the longest one containing 1,762 words and the shortest one 418 words, while the average length was 969 words. The pilot coding revealed that the varying lengths of the reviews did not influence their generic structures and move patterns as they all contained the same obligatory moves. In longer texts, however, moves could be recycled more. Regarding the corpus size, 70 art reviews was deemed appropriate for the scope and aim of this current project for several reasons. Firstly, small corpora offer multiple advantages as they allow the researchers to investigate the texts more thoroughly under their context and manage the findings more effectively (Vaughan & Clancy, 2013). Secondly, in comparison with previous research studies on move analysis of art texts, the corpus size is deemed appropriate. In their studies of the artist statement genre, Damrongmanee (2016) and Hocking (2021) created a corpus of 17,138 words and 32,493 words respectively. Işık (2023) investigated a 35,175-word corpus of online painting exhibition overviews.

Data Analysis

We followed the analysis steps proposed by Biber, Connor and Upton (2007, p. 34) shown in Table 1.

Table 1

General Steps Often Used to Conduct a Corpus-Based Move Analysis

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- Step 1:** Determine rhetorical purposes of the genre.
 - Step 2:** Determine rhetorical function of each text segment in its local context; identify the possible move types of the genre.
 - Step 3:** Group functional and/or semantic themes that are either in relative proximity to each other or often occur in similar locations in representative texts. These reflect the specific steps that can be used to realize a broader move.
 - Step 4:** Conduct pilot-coding to test and fine-tune definitions of move purposes.
 - Step 5:** Develop coding protocol with clear definitions and examples of move types and steps.
 - Step 6:** Code full set of texts, with inter-rater reliability check to confirm that there is clear understanding of move definitions and how moves/steps are realized in texts.
 - Step 7:** Add any additional steps and/or moves that are revealed in the full analysis.
 - Step 8:** Revise coding protocol to resolve any discrepancies revealed by the inter-rater reliability check or by newly 'discovered' moves/steps, and re-code problematic areas.
 - Step 9:** Conduct linguistic analysis of move features and/or other corpus-facilitated analyses.
 - Step 10:** Describe corpus of texts in terms of typical and alternate move structures and linguistic characteristics.
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Note. Biber, Connor and Upton, 2007, p. 34

After identifying the main communicative purposes of the genre, which were to inform and to evaluate, we adopted the Feldman's (1994) method as the initial analysis framework. In the pilot coding, ten ARs, one from each of the ten websites, were manually analyzed by the two researchers, who had more than five years of experience in teaching art writing to university students who studied fine and applied arts.

After the pilot coding, names were developed and assigned to different moves and steps. Some of the names were adjusted and changed so that they could more accurately describe each move and step. Based on Feldman's four-step approach which includes Description, Formal analysis, Interpretation, and Judgement, we added and regrouped emerging moves and steps. We decided to group Description and Formal analysis together as these two categories achieve the same communicative purpose which is to inform the writer using internal information, or information drawn from the elements seen in the work. Also, the writers tended to describe and analyze alternately. This combined move was named Describing the work. The pilot coding showed newly identified moves which were added to the codebook. These moves are: Heading, Providing external information, Expressing general opinions and thoughts, and Sharing the writer's personal experience. Within the Providing external information move, there were five steps: Providing the artist's background, Providing general knowledge, Discussing a past event that influenced the work, Mentioning quotes and Mentioning other reviews. Based on the results of the pilot study, a framework for analyzing the moves and steps of the selected art reviews was proposed for the main analysis of the present study (Table 2).

Table 2

The Move Structure of the Art Reviews Proposed by the Researchers

Move	Communicative goal	Source
Move 1: Heading	To grab attention	The pilot study
Move 2: Describing the work	To give the information about the artwork	Feldman
Move 3: Providing external information	To educate the reader	The pilot study
Step 1: Providing the artist's background	To give further information about the artist	The pilot study
Step 2: Providing general knowledge	To give general useful knowledge	The pilot study
Step 3: Discussing a past event that influences the work	To explain how the work is influenced by a certain event	The pilot study
Step 4: Mentioning quotes	To mention someone's speech to shed more light on the work or artist	The pilot study
Step 5: Mentioning other reviews	To provide other critics' opinions on the same work under review	The pilot study
Move 4: Interpreting the work	To suggest the meaning of the work	Feldman
Move 5: Judging the work	To evaluate the work	Feldman
Step 1: Providing evaluative comments	To offer judgement about the work	The pilot study
Step 2: Recommending or disrecommending the work	To recommend or disrecommending the work to the reader	The pilot study

Move 6: Expressing general opinions and thoughts	To share the writer's general opinions and thoughts with the reader	The pilot study
Move 7: Sharing the writer's personal experience	To share the writer's personal experience with the reader	The pilot study

We then drafted a codebook which detailed the definitions, purposes and examples of the moves and steps found in the pilot coding. After that the full set of 70 ARs were independently coded by the two researchers. The researchers then discussed all the moves and steps assigned to the ARs of the entire corpus and any discrepancies were resolved. All of the move assignments were finally agreed upon by the two researchers, which means the percentage of agreement is 100%. The rationale for using the percentage of agreement for move analysis is that percent agreement is a valid and appropriate measure for this type of study (Rau & Shih, 2021).

After the moves were identified, we calculated their occurrences and their percentages. We then explored the corpus to see whether there were any conventional move patterns, interesting move cycles and move co-occurrences of certain moves.

Results and Discussion

The analysis of the corpus revealed the moves and steps found in the art review genre. To answer Research Question 1, we present Table 3, which details the seven-move-seven-step framework for art reviews and the number of ARs in which each move or step occurs. In this study, we followed Kanoksilapatham's (2015) criteria to determine the status of the move and step. If a move or step occurs in 100% of the 70 ARs, it is considered obligatory. Occurrences of between 60% to 99% and less than 60% are regarded as conventional and optional, respectively.

Table 3

The Move-Step Framework and the Number of ARs in which Move or Step Occurs

Move/step	No. of ARs (AR = 70)	%	Status
1. Heading	70	100	Obligatory
2. Describing the work	70	100	Obligatory
3. Providing external information	70	100	Obligatory
3.1 Providing the artist's background	56	80	Conventional
3.2 Providing general knowledge	70	100	Obligatory
3.3 Discussing a past event that influences the work	6	8.57	Optional
3.4 Mentioning quotes	34	48.57	Optional
3.5 Mentioning other reviews	6	8.57	Optional
4. Interpreting the work	63	90	Conventional
5. Judging the work	59	84.29	Conventional
5.1 Providing evaluative comments	59	84.29	Conventional
5.2 Recommending or disrecommending the work	3	4.29	Optional
6. Expressing general opinions and thoughts	65	92.86	Conventional
7. Sharing the writer's personal experience	11	15.71	Optional

Table 4

The Move-Step Framework and the Number of ARs in which Move or Step Occurs in Descending Order

Move/step	No. of ARs (AR = 70)	%	Status
1. Heading	70	100	Obligatory
2. Describing the work	70	100	Obligatory
3. Providing external information	70	100	Obligatory
3.2 Providing general knowledge	70	100	Obligatory
6. Expressing general opinions and thoughts	65	92.86	Conventional
4. Interpreting the work	63	90	Conventional
5. Judging the work	59	84.29	Conventional
5.1 Providing evaluative comments	59	84.29	Conventional
3.1 Providing the artist's background	56	80	Conventional
3.4 Mentioning quotes	34	48.57	Optional
7. Sharing the writer's personal experience	11	15.71	Optional
3.3 Discussing a past event that influences the work	6	8.57	Optional
3.5 Mentioning other reviews	6	8.57	Optional
5.2 Recommending or disrecommending the work	3	4.29	Optional

Table 5

The Total Occurrences of All the Moves and Steps in the Corpus

Move/step	Occurrence (times)	%
1. Heading	70	3.36
2. Describing the work	520	24.96
3.1 Providing the artist's background	218	10.47
3.2 Providing general knowledge	436	20.93
3.3 Discussing a past event that influences the work	7	0.34
3.4 Mentioning quotes	84	4.03
3.5 Mentioning other reviews	6	0.29
4. Interpreting the work	212	10.18
5.1 Providing evaluative comments	164	7.87
5.2 Recommending or disrecommending the work	4	0.19
6. Expressing general opinions and thoughts	348	16.71
7. Sharing the writer's personal experience	14	0.67
Total	2083	100

Table 6*The Total Occurrences of All the Moves and Steps in the Corpus in Descending Order*

Move/step	Occurrence (times)	%
2. Describing the work	520	24.96
3.2 Providing general knowledge	436	20.93
6. Expressing general opinions and thoughts	348	16.71
3.1 Providing the artist's background	218	10.47
4. Interpreting the work	212	10.18
5.1 Providing evaluative comments	164	7.87
3.4 Mentioning quotes	84	4.03
1. Heading	70	3.36
7. Sharing the writer's personal experience	14	0.67
3.3 Discussing a past event that influences the work	7	0.34
3.5 Mentioning other reviews	6	0.29
5.2 Recommending or disrecommending the work	4	0.19
Total	2083	100

Moves and Steps of the Art Review

Move 1: Heading is an attention getter. As the title of an art review article, it usually attracts the attention of the reading audience and gives the reader a glimpse of the work and its artist. This move always appeared first and occurred in 70 out of 70 ARs in this corpus (100%) showing its obligatory status. Examples 1 (an installation review) and 2 (a sculpture review) illustrate Move 1.

- (1) Adrian Burrell Explores the Difficulty—and the Promise—of Escaping Black American History (AR3)
- (2) Jonathan Baldock Cultivates an Unearthly Garden of Delights (AR18)

Move 2: Describing the work provides the reader with information about the work being reviewed regarding the type of work (e.g. painting, sculpture, photography, installation), medium, technique, title, artist and subject matter. The descriptive information also includes the details of art elements visually present to the viewer such as line, color, shape and form. Words like *depict*, *portray*, and *feature* can help identify this move. In some instances, similes were used when the critics wanted to compare what is seen with something else. The words *like* and *as* signal this figurative speech. This move occurred in 70 ARs or 100%, indicating its obligatory status. Example 3 is an illustration of this move found in a review of an installation.

- (3) Her 1986 project *Les Aveugles* (The Blind) **features** stark black-and-white photographs of unnamed respondents to the question, many with disheveled hair, cracked lips, and closed or blankly staring eyes. (AR6)

Move 3: Providing external information educates the reader by offering information related to the work or artist as well as other knowledge. This move can be achieved through five different steps which are providing the artist's background, providing general knowledge, discussing a past event that influences the work, mentioning quotes, and mentioning other reviews. Move 3 occurred in 100 ARs or 100%, which demonstrates its obligatory status.

Step 3.1 Providing the artist's background gives further information about the artist of the work being reviewed by the writer. This information can be about the artist's childhood, personal life, education, artistic style, influences, and inspiration. The artist's background helps make the reader understand and appreciate the work more. This step occurred in 56 out of 70 ARs or 80%,

suggesting its conventional status. Example 4, which is found in a painting review, illustrates this step.

- (4) Mohammed Sami was born in Baghdad in 1984, and was co-opted by the Ba’ath party to produce murals until he managed to escape, first to Sweden and eventually Britain. (AR51)

Step 3.2 Providing general knowledge contextualizes the review and educates the reader by offering useful related information that helps enhance the reader’s understanding. The general knowledge presented in this step can be about people, society, politics, science, culture, history, as well as art history and art movements. This step occurred in all of the ARs in the corpus and, therefore, is recognized as an obligatory step. Examples 5 (from a photograph review) and 6 (from a drawing and painting review) are illustrations of this step.

- (5) The Black is Beautiful movement was simultaneously formed in a defensive posture, and a progressive one, using the language of popular culture imagery to make the case that Black people embody their own kind of allure. It has helped make African Americans generally more visible in the mainstream culture: In 1968, one of the first interracial television kisses (this one between a white man and a Black woman) took place on “Star Trek,” between Captain Kirk and Lieutenant Uhura, though the scene’s actress, Nichelle Nichols, wore her hair in a straightened style typical for the time. (AR49)
- (6) Although it is not generally remembered outside Scandinavia, what happened to Denmark in the early years of the 19th century was also traumatic. In 1807, during the Napoleonic Wars, the capital, Copenhagen, was heavily bombarded by the British for the second time (the first was in 1801). (AR57)

Step 3.3 Discussing a past event that influences the work explains how the work is influenced by a certain event. This step is usually written in the past tense and recalls past events that directly influenced the work’s creation. This step occurred in only 6 out of 70 ARs in this corpus or 8.57%, suggesting its optional status. Example 7, which is found in a photograph review, demonstrates this step.

- (7) The scans were leaked after Mahsa Amini, a young Kurdish woman who also went by the name Jina, died in Tehran in police custody in September. She had been detained on the grounds that she was not properly observing Iran’s hijab law. Her death sparked widespread protests in the country, and though pushback from government forces has been severe, with hundreds reported killed and thousands more arrested, the protests still haven’t stopped. (AR47)

Step 3.4 Mentioning quotes refers to someone’s speech to shed more light on the work or artist. This step is identified by the use of quotation marks together with the name of the speaker. The speaker may comment on the work and/or the artist, or provide general thoughts and opinions. This step occurred in 34 out of 70 ARs in the corpus (48.57%), indicating its optional status. Examples 8, which is found in a painting review, and 9, which is found in a ceramics review, are illustrations of this step.

- (8) ... Bowling wrote, “The structure of Black life has revealed, over centuries, a creative, self-perpetuating process of anarchist, pro-life zeal which a study of the fine arts and history alone, though helpful, can never fully define.” (AR4)
- (9) “In the beginning, there was clay,” intones Gates,... (AR34)

Step 3.5 Mentioning other reviews provides other critics' opinions on the same work being reviewed by the writer. Words and phrases like *reviewers*, *critic* and *what the other critics said* identify this step. Found only in 6 out of 70 ARs in the corpus or 8.57%, this step is optional. Example 10, found in an installation review, demonstrates this step.

- (10) **Reviewers** initially called The Blind poignant, even moving. (AR6)

Move 4: Interpreting the work posits the possible meaning of the work. In this step, the writer presents his or her own interpretation of the work drawing from visible evidence. As this step often deals with abstract ideas, it can be signalled by the words like *represent*, *symbolize* and *suggest*. This move occurred in 63 out of 70 ARs in the corpus or 90%, which indicates its conventional status. Examples 11, which is found in a sculpture and drawing review (the phrases in bold), and 12, which is found in a sculpture review, illustrate this step.

- (11) Jacqui Crocetta stands an ivory cloak that **embodies her White privilege** within a rock garden planted with text about racial issues. One of several artists who employ found wood, Pierre Davis tops dried branches with three yellow umbrellas **to symbolize change and growth**. Among Zofie King's offerings is "Final Thoughts," which places a glowing amber brain inside a partly cloaked cage **to represent someone whose thinking is confined by preconceptions**. (AR59)
- (12) The artist's oversized flowers at Stephen Friedman Gallery, London, **address** ideas of inheritance and nurture. (AR 18)

Move 5: Judging the work is the move in which the writer evaluates the work in terms of its effectiveness, value, aesthetics and quality. The move can be accomplished by providing evaluative comments and recommending or disrecommending the work.

Step 5.1 Providing evaluative comments is the step where the writer offers judgement about the work. This step is usually signaled by the use of superlative adjectives like *greatest*, *most compelling*, *most thorough*, *most effective*, *best*, and *most beautiful*. Sometimes, the writer makes use of comparative adjectives such as *less engaging* and *less successful*. Also prevalent is the use of evaluative adjectives like *magnificent*, *fascinating*, *fantastic*, *wonderful*, *brilliant*, *extraordinary*, *unmissable*, *gorgeous*, *masterful*, *dazzling*, *ravishing*, *spectacular*, *impressive*, *unconvincing*, *skillful* or a combination of an intensifying adverb and an adjective such as *extremely effective*, *utterly perfect*, *undeniably beautiful* and *absolutely lovely*. This step occurred in 59 out of 70 ARs in the corpus or 84.29%, which indicates its conventional status. Examples 13-16 illustrate this step found in reviews of painting, ceramics, drawing and painting, and painting, respectively.

- (13) Crosthwaite **effectively** generates a deeply empathetic body of work that kindles a faint flame of hope in a dark landscape. (AR19)
- (14) As a celebration of clay's strangeness and plasticity, the Hayward's exhibition is a **fantastic** aesthetic trip. Yet as an intervention in the ongoing broader dialogue between art and craft, what it does not do is reckon with contemporary ceramics' complex relationship to labour, luxury and commerce... (AR29)
- (15) The result is **visually striking** but also **metaphorically apt**. (AR61)
- (16) A few sculptures and installations are included, but they're **less engaging**. ... **The most effective** installation features images. (AR68)

Step 5.2 Recommending or disrecommending the work is the step in which the writer explicitly recommends or disrecommends the work to the reader. This step is generally signaled by the word *recommend* or the use of imperative, for example, *come decide for yourself*. This step is not commonly used as it occurred in only 3 out of 70 ARs or 4.29% indicating that the step is optional.

Examples 17 (a drawing and painting review) and 18 (a painting, assemblage and ceramics review) are illustrations of this move.

- (17) So I **recommend** “Beyond the Light: Identity and Place in Nineteenth-Century Danish Art.” (AR57)
- (18) Oh, God, **run, don’t walk**, to Regen Projects in Hollywood for Elliott Hundley’s latest exhibition. (AR64)

Move 6: Expressing general opinions and thoughts allows the writer to share his or her general opinions and thoughts with the reader regarding the work. In this move, the voice of the writer is heard; therefore, words and phrases such as *I*, *I think*, *I believe*, and *I feel* tend to be used to signal this move. In some occasions, the writer makes use of a rhetorical question which is signaled by the question mark. This move can also be speculative in tone and words like *may*, *perhaps*, *seem*, and *probably* can help identify this move. This move occurred in 65 out of 70 ARs in this corpus or 92.86%, indicating its conventional status. Examples 19-21 are some illustrations of this move. These examples are found in reviews of an installation and photographs, drawings and paintings and paintings, respectively.

- (19) How should we process the past? How can MoMA, the mausoleum of yesterday’s radical art, stay relevant? (AR45)
- (20) But **I think** it can be just as interesting to think about the way the pictures like his slide away from such narratives, like truant schoolchildren. (AR57)
- (21) **Perhaps** in his effort to freeze time, to hold on to an image of the city that was disappearing, he froze out the sounds, too. (AR60)

Move 7: Sharing the writer’s personal experience is the move in which the writer shares his or her personal experience with the reader. This experience can be a general experience or the experience of visiting the exhibition under review. This move is signalled by the words *I*, *my*, and *me*. This move occurred in only 11 out of 70 ARs or 15.71%, which suggests its optional status. Examples 22-24 demonstrate this move. These examples are found in reviews of paintings, drawings and paintings, and ceramics, drawings and paintings, respectively.

- (22) I went this past April to the little scuola, smushed between a canal and the Arsenale, and am happy to provide this TripAdvisor-style update: The pictures remain shadowy, but the crowds are zero! (AR46)
- (23) My Swedish grandfather used to sketch ships passing through this very strait, then send them to me in Australia. (AR57)
- (24) When I saw the show at the Met in the spring, where its thin premise was stretched interminably in room after room, my eyes soon glazed over. (AR67)

The results of the study reveal that the art reviews contained four moves previously not identified in the existing literature, namely Move 1: Heading, Move 3: Providing external information, Move 6: Expressing general opinions and thoughts, and Move 7: Sharing the writer’s personal experience. Although Cretiu (2002) proposed that an art review includes the CV of the artist and information regarding where and when the artwork is exhibited, which is similar to Move 3 of the present study, she did not cover the other elements of Move 3, including past events influencing the artwork, mentioning quotes, and mentioning other reviews. As for Feldman (1994), his art criticism model covered only the components of describing, analysing, interpreting, and judging, which are similar to Move 2, Move 4, and Move 5 of the present study, respectively. However, he did not mention Move 1, Move 3, Move 6, and Move 7 in his art criticism model.

It is interesting to note that M1: Heading is present in all the 70 ARs (100%, obligatory) although the move was never mentioned in the existing literature. This can probably be explained

by the fact that when art reviews appear in online newspapers or magazines, they are inevitably influenced by the convention of the journalistic discourse. One characteristic of the newspaper or magazine genres is that they often require writers to provide news headlines or article titles. Art review writers, therefore, need to observe the norm of the genre as well. Also, the heading can help writers attract the attention of their target audience and give their readers an idea of what the review is going to be about.

Another unexpected finding is M3, another new move found in this study. M3: Providing external information can also be considered an obligatory move since it was found in all the 70 art reviews. It occurred 751 times or 36.06% of the total occurrences of all the moves and steps in the corpus. This demonstrates that one of the goals or purposes of the art reviews is to educate the reader, which is consistent with Barnet (2005). This is probably because art review writers have as their audience the general public, who presumably do not have extensive expert knowledge in art. With that in mind, one of the writers' jobs is to provide their readers with relevant knowledge and information to contextualize the art being reviewed in order to enhance the readers' understanding. External information can be about a number of subjects, for instance, the Black is Beautiful movement (AR49), Denmark in Napoleonic Wars (AR 57) or an artist's background (AR51).

In his art criticism model, Feldman (1994) did not mention M3 as a main component of art reviews. This could possibly be attributed to the fact that he probably created his framework based on the assumption that the art review writers and readers are in the inner circle of the art community such as professional artists and art critics who have a background with extensive knowledge of art. Therefore, providing external information may not seem strictly necessary in that case.

M6: Expressing general opinions and thoughts, and M7: Sharing the writer's personal experience are the last two new moves found by this study. These two moves show that in art reviews, apart from interpreting and evaluating the artwork, writers can and often express their own voice regarding various other aspects. Through M6, writers can reveal their reflections, feelings, concerns, doubts, or speculations. Through M7, they can share their personal experience on various aspects with their readers. With the use of the first person pronoun "I", art reviews are comparable to artist statements in terms of tone as the artist statement is also characterized by their subjective tone (Damrongmanee, 2016).

The last notable finding which may be contrary to the popular understanding of art reviews is that they are generally not highly judgemental. Although M5: Judging the work was found in 59 out of 70 ARs (84.29%) making it a conventional move that should be included in an art review, in terms of number of occurrences, M5 occurred only 168 times or 8.06% of total occurrences. This number of occurrences is significantly lower than M2: Describing the work, which occurred 520 times or 24.96% and slightly less than M4: Interpreting the work, which occurred 212 times or 10.18%. Based on these findings, it can be seen that more space in the ARs was dedicated to art description and interpretation than evaluation. This finding is in agreement with Barrett (2008) who states that the art review is more descriptive and interpretive rather than judgmental in nature.

Moreover, regarding making recommendations, Move 5 Step 2: Recommending or disrecommending the work was rarely found in the current corpus. As an optional move, it is present in only 3 art reviews, or 4.29% of all the ARs (4 times or 0.19% of the occurrences of all the moves and steps in the corpus). This is also contrary to the common expectation or belief that art reviews are mainly written to convince the readers to visit or not visit a certain art exhibition.

From the finding, it can be said that art critics tend to provide details, descriptions and a great deal of external objective information to contextualize the art being reviewed rather than bombard the reader with their evaluative comments and recommendations or heavily influence the readers' decision. They provide information and offer their interpretation more often than evaluate or judge the work. The readers are mostly just invited to make their own informed decision based on the information received from the review.

Common Move Patterns of the Art Review

To answer Research Question 2, which focuses on the move patterns of the art review, the sequences of the moves in the 70 ARs were analyzed. The results revealed that no two ARs shared an identical move pattern from the first position to the last position. All the ARs in the corpus contained M1, M2, and M3, which are obligatory moves, but all of them also incorporate some conventional and optional moves and steps in no specific pattern or sequence. For example, AR23, which consists of the minimum number of moves of 10, has its moves sequenced as M1-M3-M6-M3-M2-M5-M3-M6-M5-M3. AR46, which utilizes the maximum number of moves of 50, has its move pattern of M1-M2-M3-M2-M5-M3-M6-M3-M6-M3-M6-M5-M3-M6-M5-M3-M2-M6-M3-M2-M3-M6-M3-M2-M3-M6-M5-M2-M3-M2-M5-M3-M2-M5-M3-M5-M2-M6-M2-M5-M2-M3-M7-M3-M5-M3-M6-M3-M2-M3. The average number of moves used by each AR in the corpus was 26.94 moves. The longer an art review is, the more times certain moves and steps reoccur.

Although move patterns vary considerably among the ARs, M1: Heading always comes first. M2, M3, M4, M5 and M6 can be found in different positions including the second position (after M1), in the middle, or the final position. M7, however, never appeared after M1 or at the final position. There are some preferred patterns for the first three positions of the AR corpus as shown in Table 7.

Table 7

The Move Patterns of the First Three Moves of the AR Corpus

Move patterns	No. of ARs (AR = 70)	%
M1-M2-M3	15	21.43
M1-M3-M2	10	14.29
M1-M3-M6	8	11.43
M1-M4-M3	6	8.57
M1-M2-M6	5	7.14
M1-M5-M2	3	4.29
M1-M3-M5	3	4.29
M1-M4-M2	3	4.29
M1-M4-M6	3	4.29
M1-M6-M5	3	4.29
M1-M3-M4	2	2.86
M1-M6-M2	2	2.86
M1-M6-M3	2	2.86
M1-M6-M4	1	1.43
M1-M4-M5	1	1.43
M1-M2-M4	1	1.43
M1-M5-M3	1	1.43
M1-M5-M7	1	1.43
Total	70	100.00

From Table 7, it can be seen that M1 followed by M2 and M3 is the most frequently used pattern as it was found in 15 ARs or 21.43%. The second and third most prevalent patterns are M1-M3-M2 and M1-M3-M6, which were found in 10 ARs (14.29%) and 8 ARs (11.43%) respectively. This shows that after the heading, it is very common to start a review by describing the work as well as giving extra information and expressing an opinion before moving on to interpret and evaluate the work, which usually comes later.

Another aspect worth noticing is that although the ARs follow no fixed move patterns, certain moves tend to occur together more frequently than others in the study. The same pattern of move co-occurrences often appears more than once in each AR. Table 8 shows the four most common move co-occurrence patterns found in the corpus.

Table 8

The Most Common Move Co-Occurrence Patterns in the AR Corpus

Move co-occurrence	Occurrence (times)	%	Average occurrence per AR
M2 and M3	465	26.72	6.64
M3 and M6	314	18.05	4.49
M2 and M6	239	13.74	3.41
M2 and M4	190	10.92	2.71

M2 and M3 were very often used together by the writers, probably because when the writers describe a particular artwork, oftentimes they need to provide the reader with general knowledge about the work or the artist to enhance the reader’s understanding. By doing this they can effectively contextualize the artwork and increase the reader’s appreciation of the art being described. Example 25 shows how the two moves co-occur. (M3 is italicized.)

- (25) The subject of Alice Neel’s painting *Marxist Girl* (Irene Peslikis) (1972)—*a founder of the New York Feminist Art Institute*—presides over a worn purple chair like a self-possessed sovereign of bohemia. (AR14)

As they provide general knowledge or describe art, the writers tend to express their opinions and thoughts alternately as shown by the co-occurrences of M3 and M6 as well as M2 and M6. This signals the subjective tone of art review genre where the writers conventionally express their voice. It can also highlight the writer’s individuality and unique opinions as far as describing art and providing general knowledge is concerned. Examples 26-27 illustrate co-occurrences of M3 and M6 as well as M2 and M6 respectively. (M6 is italicized.)

- (26) For all that’s been said about the American painter Edward Hopper (1882-1967), the artist still remains something of an enigma. *Perhaps it is the strangeness of his paintings*, which often focus on quiet, ephemeral moments where little is happening and yet some kind of revelation seems imminent. *Perhaps it is the inscrutability of the man himself*, whose few statements revealed little of his inner life. (AR10)
- (27) *If this world has a deity, then perhaps it’s Mother Flower*: a totemic, stuffed-fabric bloom whose pink face is tattooed with green floral motifs borrowed from European folk art. (AR18)

Regarding the co-occurrences of M2 and M4, this pattern is similar to Feldman’s approach since it starts with describing and analyzing, followed by interpreting (Feldman, 1994). Art description usually comes with interpretation, which is logical. By following this pattern, the writer

can create a smooth transition from an objective tone to a subjective tone progressing from objective observation in the describing stage to subjective interpretation. Example 28 illustrates a co-occurrence of M2 and M4. (M4 is italicized.)

- (28) Layered with indeterminate forms, faint gestures evoking spray paint, and broad strokes and dripping splatters of oil, the canvas is energetic and chaotic, *reflecting its turbulent times.* (AR4)

The findings show that the move patterns are not as straightforward as the generic structure proposed by Cretiu (2002), which consists of introduction, transition, body, and the termination, and the art criticism model by Feldman (1994), which contains description, analysis, interpretation, and judgement. One thing that can be said about the move patterns of the art review is that although there are some preferred patterns at the beginning and some preferred move co-occurrences, there is still plenty of room for writers to express their uniqueness through unique employment of moves in a variety of patterns. They can draw from different moves and steps among the moves and steps available and explore different possibilities of sequencing and combining them the way they would like. By doing so, they can show their creativity through the choice of moves used in no fixed pattern, and this is probably not beyond the reader's expectation. Compared to more highly academic genres, diverse styles and less predictable patterns appear to be more acceptable in the art review genre. The art reviews likely reflect the nature of the art critic who, as a member of the art community, may feel the need to be original, creative and expressive in the way they write as writing is, after all, art in itself. In this sense, the art review genre is comparable to the artist statement genre where writers also have great freedom to sequence moves and steps as they wish as long as they include the obligatory moves (Damrongmanee, 2016). This is not surprising because ultimately, the art community is supposed to be a community that invites creativity, welcomes originality and cherishes individuality.

Conclusion and Implications

Our findings revealed a seven-move-seven-step framework for art review writing as the answer to the first research question regarding what the moves and steps commonly found in art reviews are. Drawing on the findings of this research, when writing art reviews, the writer should do the following: begin the writing with a heading to attract attention (Move 1), describe the work (Move 2), and educate the reader (Move 3) - all of which are obligatory moves. Also, it is recommended that they offer interpretation by using Move 4, which is a conventional move. Judgement (Move 5 Step 1) can be made, but recommendations (Move 5 Step 2) are not required.

Writers should grab the reader's attention from the start by using an interesting heading before moving on to describe the artwork and add external information to contextualize the art and enhance the reader's understanding and art appreciation. This can be done by providing information about related knowledge on, for example, social issues, politics, the art movement or artist's background. After that, writers should offer their interpretation of the work as well as evaluate the work. They are encouraged to share their opinions and thoughts throughout the review since, as the finding suggests, M6 was used abundantly and in different positions across the AR corpus.

Regarding pedagogical implications, when teaching art students to write an art review, teachers can refer to the seven-move-seven-step framework of the art review proposed by this study and explain the purposes and distinctive characteristics of each move and step. Whether each move or step is obligatory, conventional or optional should also be taught to the students so that they know and can conform to the conventions of this written genre. Moreover, with the knowledge gained from this study, teachers can create better research-informed materials for their students. Also, drawing on the findings of this study, teachers will hopefully be able to teach and provide feedback more effectively and confidently.

To answer the second research question regarding the common move patterns of art reviews, our findings showed that there are no fixed move patterns in writing art reviews. Writers can have freedom to play with their choice and order of moves and steps in their writing as long as they observe the writing convention of the genre. That is, if they include obligatory moves and conventional moves in their review, they are free to demonstrate originality and creativity through their writing.

However, writing without following a fixed pattern can be challenging for low-proficiency writing students. In that case, teachers can provide them with an outline of how to structure an art review. A possible structure, for instance, can consist of the heading and three paragraphs. The first paragraph may provide an art description together with related knowledge and external information. In the second paragraph, the writer can further the description and offer an interpretation as these two moves tend to occur together based on our research. In the final paragraph, they can evaluate the work as well as express the feelings and thoughts they have about the work.

Ultimately, it is hoped that the findings of the present study can contribute new knowledge in the field of art review, particularly for the visual arts, and that students or novice art critics learning how to write effective art reviews can benefit from the research in various ways.

In order to further study the art review genre, additional research should be carried out. For the benefit of Thai students or Thai writers wanting to excel at writing effective art reviews, future research studies can be done on art reviews written in the Thailand context. Furthermore, art reviews of other types of art, such as music and performance should also be explored in additional research to extend the art review genre knowledge.

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Appendix A

The List of Ten Websites

No.	Website	Title	Length	Type of art
AR1	www.artnews.com/c/art-in-america/	Art in America	912	video and poster
AR2	www.artnews.com/c/art-in-america/	Art in America	1,156	installation
AR3	www.artnews.com/c/art-in-america/	Art in America	751	installation
AR4	www.artnews.com/c/art-in-america/	Art in America	981	painting

AR5	www.artnews.com/c/art-in-america/	Art in America	707	photograph
AR6	www.artnews.com/c/art-in-america/	Art in America	910	installation
AR7	www.artnews.com/c/art-in-america/	Art in America	853	painting
AR8	www.theartnewspaper.com	The Art Newspaper	1,303	painting
AR9	www.theartnewspaper.com	The Art Newspaper	577	installation
AR10	www.theartnewspaper.com	The Art Newspaper	1,141	painting
AR11	www.theartnewspaper.com	The Art Newspaper	1,077	painting
AR12	www.theartnewspaper.com	The Art Newspaper	761	painting and installation
AR13	www.theartnewspaper.com	The Art Newspaper	1,278	painting and photograph
AR14	www.theartnewspaper.com	The Art Newspaper	1,284	painting
AR15	www.frieze.com	Frieze	663	painting
AR16	www.frieze.com	Frieze	497	installation
AR17	www.frieze.com	Frieze	664	Installation, print and drawing
AR18	www.frieze.com	Frieze	650	sculpture
AR19	www.frieze.com	Frieze	622	painting
AR20	www.frieze.com	Frieze	657	photograph
AR21	www.frieze.com	Frieze	662	painting
AR22	www.apollo-magazine.com	Apollo	958	painting
AR23	www.apollo-magazine.com	Apollo	937	painting
AR24	www.apollo-magazine.com	Apollo	806	painting and sculpture
AR25	www.apollo-magazine.com	Apollo	875	painting
AR26	www.apollo-magazine.com	Apollo	1,012	painting and sculpture
AR27	www.apollo-magazine.com	Apollo	1,121	painting
AR28	www.apollo-magazine.com	Apollo	686	video installation
AR29	www.artreview.com	ArtReview	811	ceramics
AR30	www.artreview.com	ArtReview	428	painting
AR31	www.artreview.com	ArtReview	868	installation
AR32	www.artreview.com	ArtReview	441	embroidery
AR33	www.artreview.com	ArtReview	418	painting
AR34	www.artreview.com	ArtReview	848	ceramics
AR35	www.artreview.com	ArtReview	493	photograph
AR36	www.wsj.com	The Wall Street Journal	840	painting and drawing
AR37	www.wsj.com	The Wall Street Journal	765	photograph
AR38	www.wsj.com	The Wall Street Journal	911	painting
AR39	www.wsj.com	The Wall Street Journal	856	drawing

AR40	www.wsj.com	The Wall Street Journal	917	ceramics
AR41	www.wsj.com	The Wall Street Journal	961	painting
AR42	www.wsj.com	The Wall Street Journal	853	painting and sculpture
AR43	www.nytimes.com	The New York Times	1,682	photograph
AR44	www.nytimes.com	The New York Times	1,173	painting
AR45	www.nytimes.com	The New York Times	1,050	installation and photograph
AR46	www.nytimes.com	The New York Times	1,667	painting
AR47	www.nytimes.com	The New York Times	546	photograph
AR48	www.nytimes.com	The New York Times	686	photograph
AR49	www.nytimes.com	The New York Times	1,306	photograph
AR50	www.theguardian.com	The Guardian	919	painting
AR51	www.theguardian.com	The Guardian	1,198	painting
AR52	www.theguardian.com	The Guardian	975	painting
AR53	www.theguardian.com	The Guardian	1,050	painting and sculpture
AR54	www.theguardian.com	The Guardian	1,205	painting and sculpture
AR55	www.theguardian.com	The Guardian	804	painting
AR56	www.theguardian.com	The Guardian	928	sculpture and photograph
AR57	www.washingtonpost.com	The Washington Post	1,481	drawing and painting
AR58	www.washingtonpost.com	The Washington Post	1,042	Installation, sculpture and photograph
AR59	www.washingtonpost.com	The Washington Post	1,024	sculpture and drawing
AR60	www.washingtonpost.com	The Washington Post	1,292	painting
AR61	www.washingtonpost.com	The Washington Post	1,046	drawing and painting
AR62	www.washingtonpost.com	The Washington Post	1,762	drawing, painting and sculpture
AR63	www.washingtonpost.com	The Washington Post	1,046	drawing, painting, assemblage and print
AR64	www.latimes.com	Los Angeles Times	1,100	painting, assemblage and ceramics
AR65	www.latimes.com	Los Angeles Times	1,217	painting
AR66	www.latimes.com	Los Angeles Times	1,344	installation
AR67	www.latimes.com	Los Angeles Times	1,240	ceramics, drawing and painting
AR68	www.latimes.com	Los Angeles Times	1,278	painting
AR69	www.latimes.com	Los Angeles Times	1,650	painting, sculpture and collage
AR70	www.latimes.com	Los Angeles Times	961	painting