

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE GENERIC STRUCTURE OF
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS WRITTEN BY
POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS IN THE FACULTY OF
EDUCATION, UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA
(UITM)**

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Masters in Education in TESL

Faculty of Education

April 2011

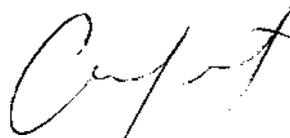
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ABSTRACT

In the field of genre studies, the acknowledgement is probably the least studied section of the research article or research report. The three main specific objectives of this study are (a) to identify the structure of acknowledgements written by postgraduate students at the Faculty of Education UiTM, (b) to identify the obligatory and optional moves that help to realize the structure of those acknowledgements, and (c) to examine gender differences in the display of gratitude in those acknowledgements. A contextual analysis that involves qualitative and quantitative approaches were used for the study that involved collection and analysis of a corpus of masters dissertation acknowledgements (MDAs) written by Malay and Bumiputera postgraduate students at the Faculty of Education, Universiti Teknologi MARA. The following models were adopted as analysis models: Al-Ali's (2006:37) modified Generic Structure of English Dissertation Acknowledgements written by non-native Arab writers which was modified from Hyland's (2004:308) Generic Structure of Dissertation Acknowledgements; and Mingwei & Yajun's (2010:103-104) analysis of linguistic features in masters and PhD acknowledgements which was adopted from Hyland & Tse (2004). The findings of the study revealed that the acknowledgement structure of MDAs at the Faculty of Education UiTM has the same structure as the model by Al-Ali (2006). While maintaining the model by Al-Ali (2006), a modified generic structure of MDAs that is representative of the discourse community of postgraduate students at the Faculty of Education, UiTM is proposed. In the case of gender differences, the results of the study indicated that there are differences across gender in terms of the presence of the moves/steps in the structure of acknowledgement and linguistics patterns in the thanking acts and authorial choice. The results of this study proves that the acknowledgement is in itself a genre with a specific communicative purpose written based on the accepted norms of the society and the academic culture of a particular discourse community; and that it is vital that students are to be made aware of the writing conventions of this genre especially non-native speakers of the language as to aid their understanding of the writing processes and the workings of academic writing. This study recommends that future works should be done with a larger national corpus with special investigations into the patterns and variations of generic structure, linguistic features and grammatical structures across academic levels, race and ethnicities, as well as gender.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim

In the name of Allah Most Gracious and Most Merciful

The journey of completing this dissertation has been a very, very long process. It was a task that didn't get the utmost attention that it should receive. Nonetheless, with the support and care from various people, I have managed to make it a reality.

First and foremost, I would like to extend my gratitude to Allah for His love. He has bestowed upon me many great things that I most of the time take for granted. Forgive me Allah for all my sins, and I pray You lead me to Your path.

The process of completing this dissertation was with the help and aid from various people. I would like to extend my utmost gratitude to my supervisor, Prof. Dr. Hazadiah Mohamad Dahan for her untiring effort and care in guiding me to the completion of this dissertation. I realize that I have not been the best of supervisee, but I owe it to her for her patience and her guidance is something that I treasure the most. I would also like to extend my sincerest gratitude to all the lecturers at the Faculty of Education, UiTM as well as all the administrative staff at the faculty.

I would also like to thank my parents, En. Razali Ali and Pn. Nasriah Yahya, and my siblings, Zainatul Afzan, Nur Syafinaz, Nur Shaheera and Azrul Hardief, for their undying support and patience throughout the process of completing this masters program. A special gratitude goes to my wife, Pn. Nor Atifah Mohamad, for all that she has done for me. To my son, Nazran Arif Rahimi, I love you so much.

I would also like to assert that any shortcomings of this dissertation are of my own and not of any one else.

Lastly, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to the loving memory of my two grandmothers, Allahyarhamah Hamidah binti Mohd Yusof and Allahyarhamah Amnah.

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INTRODUCTION

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