A GENRE ANALYSIS OF MASTERS AND DOCTORAL DISSERTATION INTRODUCTIONS IN THE SCIENCES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

By

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Introductory chapters are an integral part of dissertations. However, many postgraduates find it difficult to write them because they only implicitly understand and unconsciously follow the rules, conventions and norms placed by their respective disciplines and institutions. Therefore, comprehension of how to frame and structure the introduction is vital and is made possible by studying the generic structure of Dissertation Introductions (DIs) from various disciplines.

This study presents an analysis of 30 Masters and Doctoral DIs from the Science and Social Science disciplines written in English by Malaysian University postgraduates. The study uses a descriptive, non-experimental research that involves a purposive random sampling of 15 Masters and 15 Doctoral theses from public universities. The rhetorical characteristics and linguistic features of fifteen Masters and fifteen Doctoral theses are examined using Bunton's (2002) Modified Version of Create A Research Space (CARS) model.

The results show that the pattern of the studied DIs generally supports Bunton's macro framework but the specific steps in the introduction are less consistent with the

model. Some steps were totally absent from the DIs. Different from Bunton's samples, none of the Malaysian postgraduates set their research parameters early in the introduction and none evaluated their research products. Findings highlight the feasibility and need for merging some steps and demarcating other steps. Analyses also show that utilisation of Move 1 Step 4, that is, reviewing previous research, appears in all the three moves and is its use was not limited only to Move 1. The functions of Move 1 Step 4 vary according to its placement in a text, that is, it functions differently in different situations according to the writer's communicative purposes and needs.

Comparison of DIs in the Masters and Doctorate degrees revealed the use of similar rhetorical and linguistic strategies and similar registers were evident. However, a comparison of DIs in the Science and Social Sciences revealed that choices of steps and linguistic features are discipline dependent whereby variances such as choice of move, steps and vocabulary are attributed to disciplinary influences, conventional structure of institutional conventions, communicative needs of particular discourse communities, and discipline-dependency of Introductions.

A separate model for analysing Science DIs and Social Science DIs is therefore suggested. The results gained from this study can be used to design tasks and materials for teaching writing that focus not only on grammar but also on rhetorical structures and various genres of Introductions.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Master Sastera

ANALISIS GENRE PENDAHULUAN DISSERTASI SARJANA DAN SARJANA KEDOKTORAN DARI BIDANG SAINS DAN SAINS SOSIAL

Oleh

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Bahagian pendahaluan dissertasi merupakan satu bab yang amat penting. Namun begitu ramai Siswazah Ijazah Sarjana dan Ijazah Kedoktoran menghadapi pelbagai kekangan dalam menulis bahagian ini kerana kebanyakan mereka kurang memahami peraturan, konvensi dan norma penulisan yang ditetapkan oleh pelbagai bidang dan institusi pengajian. Oleh itu, pengetahuan tentang cara merangka dan menstruktur pendahuluan dissertasi amat penting. Pengetahuan ini dapat diperoleh dengan mengkaji struktur generik Pendahuluan Dissertasi (PD) dari pelbagai bidang pengajian.

Kajian ini melaporkan dapatan analisa PD Bahasa Inggeris yang ditulis oleh 30 orang Siswazah Ijazah Sarjana dan Ijazah Kedoktoran dari bidang Sains dan Sains Sosial beberapa universiti tempatan. Ciri-ciri retorik dan sifat-sifat linguistik PD telah dikaji berlandaskan model Bunton (2002).

Model ini merupakan versi baru Model CARs yang telah dimodifikasi oleh Bunton. Pada keseluruhannya, analisis kajian menunjukkan struktur PD yang dikaji mencerminkan secara umumnya 'framework' yang dikemukakan oleh Bunton, namun begitu ciri-ciri spesifik atau 'Steps' didapati kurang konsistent dengan 'framework' tersebut. Terdapat 'Steps' yang langsung tidak wujud dalam sampel PD yang dikaji. Sebagai contoh, tidak ada seorangpun daripada 30 Siswazah yang menyatakan ruanglingkup kajian (Research Parameters) di bahagian awal pendahuluan mereka serta tidak ada seorangpun yang menyampaikan penilaian hasil atau produk (Evaluation of Research Product) kajian mereka.

Dapatan juga menonjolkan kemungkinan dan/atau keperluan untuk mengabungjalin beberapa 'Steps'. Dalam pada itu, hasil kajian juga menunjukkan keperluan untuk mencerakinkan beberapa 'Steps' yang lain. Analisis juga menampakkan penggunaan 'Move 1 Step 4' iaitu mengulas Literatur terdahulu (Reviewing Previous Literature) tidak terhad kepada 'Move 1' sahaja, malahan kelihatan wujud di bawah ketiga-tiga 'Move'.

Tambahan pula aplikasi 'Move 1 Step 4' ini tertakluk kepada fungsi dan tujuan penggunaannya serta penempatannya dalam PD. Maksudnya, fungsi 'Step' ini berubah mengikut situasi dan penempatannya berlandaskan tujuan dan/atau keperluan komunikatif penulis dissertasi tersebut.

Perbandingan di antara dissertasi Ijazah Sarjana dan Ijazah Kedoktoran menunjukkan pengaplikasian ciri-ciri retorik dan strategi linguistik yang serupa. Namun begitu, perbandingan dissertasi di antara bidang Sains dan Sains Sosial mendedahkan bahawa

pemilihan ‘Steps’ dan ciri-ciri linguistik adalah tertakluk kepada kelaziman dan ketetapan fakulti dan institusi pengajian; pengaruh daripada kelaziman bidang pengajian dan keperluan komunikatif anggota-anggota Diskos (Discourse Communities) serta ciri semulajadi PD tersebut (discipline-dependency of Introductions).

Nahtijah, dua buah model yang berbeza untuk menganalisa dissertasi dari bidang Sains dan Sains Sosial dicadangkan. Hasil dapatan kajian ini boleh digunakan untuk menghasilkan bahan-bahan latihtubi dan pembelajaran untuk mengajar langkah-langkah penulisan yang bukan sahaja berfokus kepada aspek tatabahasa malah kepada struktur retorik pelbagai jenis genre penulisan.

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I certify that an Examination Committee has met on 4th July 2006 to conduct the final examination of Mosharakini Arulandu on her Master of Arts thesis entitled "A Genre Analysis of Masters and Doctoral Dissertation Introductions in the Sciences and Social Sciences" in accordance with Universiti Putra Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) 1981. The committee recommends that the candidate be awarded the relevant degree. Members of the Examination Committee are as follows:

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UPM or other institutions.

_____

MOSHARAKINI ARULANDU

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