UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

*COMPARATIVE GENRE ANALYSIS OF MOVE PATTERNS AND
METADISCORSAL FEATURES OF MANAGEMENT FORWARDS IN
CORPORATE ANNUAL REPORTS FROM KUWAIT AND MALAYSIA*

ATEFEH MOBASHER

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By

ATEFEH MOBASHER

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to the one who is beyond all names, whose kind hand cleared the path and let me see the sun rise.

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Chair: Afida MuhammadAli, PhD
Faculty: Modern Languages and Communication

Management foreword is an unedited qualitative section of Corporate Annual Reports (CARs). It is also considered as the most widely read section of CARs which could reveal the financial condition of the company in case their content was studied meticulously. So far, most of the studies have focused on the content of management forewords; however few studies considered its genre structure. The present study explored the genre structure of management forewords from Kuwait and Malaysia by conducting a move analysis. To that aim, the researcher proposed a move analysis model. The present model was an improvement over previous studies as the proposed moves had faithful strategies for their constituents. It consisted of six moves and was used for a comparative investigation between the genre structure of 31 samples from Kuwait and 33 samples from Malaysia. The frequency counts were done through corpus analysis software. The results of analysis showed variations in terms of the frequency of the moves, move-strategy combinations.

The analysis also comprised of an investigation and comparison of move types (obligatory and optional) of management forewords which was not considered in previous studies. Considering three cutoff points (100%, 90% & 50%), the two sets of sample did not have any variations with regard to move type at 100% and 50% cutoff points and there were minor differences between them at 90% cutoff point.

Finally, the metadiscoursal features of each move from Kuwait and Malaysia was investigated and compared following the framework proposed by Hyland and Tse (2004) which was not considered in previous studies on management forewords, either. The analysis revealed that the two sets of the samples did not reveal considerable variations with regard to the use of metadiscoursal items, yet were different in terms of the frequency of used items. The results also revealed that the frequency of metadiscourse items were low in this genre.

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Some of the contributions of the present study are in the proposing of a move analysis model specifically for management forewords with faithful constituents and in the identifying of some new strategies.

The results and findings of the present study could be useful for the ESP practitioners and material designers who provide the course material for business students to make them aware of the conventions of writing effective management forewords.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia Sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doctor Falsafah

PERBANDINGAN ANALISIS GENRE POLA PERGERAKAN DAN CIRI-CIRI METADISKURSAL KATA PENDAHULUAN PENGURUSAN DALAM LAPORAN TAHUNAN KORPORAT DARI KUWAIT DAN MALAYSIA

Oleh

ATEFEH MOBASHER

Mac 2015

Pengerusi: Afida MuhammadAli, PhD
Fakulti: Bahasa Moden dan Komunikasi

Kata pendahuluan pengurusan adalah satu bahagian tidak bersunting Laporan Tahunan Korporat (CARs). Ia dianggap sebagai bahagian Laporan tersebut yang paling sering dibaca, di mana ia boleh memaklumkan keadaan kewangan syarikat dan di mana isi kandungannya dibaca dengan teliti. Setakat ini, kebanyakan kajian memberi fokus kepada isi kandungan kata pendahuluan pengurusan; namun demikian, sedikit sahaja yang mempertimbangkan aspek struktur genrenya. Kajian semasa ini meneroka ke dalam struktur genre kata pendahuluan pengurusan dari Kuwait dan Malaysia dengan menjalankan satu analisis pergerakan. Untuk memenuhi tujuan ini, pengkaji menyarankan satu model analisis pergerakan. Model semasa ini adalah satu penambahbaikan dari kajian-kajian terdahulu, oleh kerana pergerakan yang dicadangkan mempunyai strategi-strategi yang rapat dengan konstituen mereka. Ia terdiri dari enam pergerakan dan digunakan untuk pengkajian perbandingan di antara struktur genre 31 sampel dari Kuwait dan 33 sampel dari Malaysia. Kiraan frekuensi dijalankan melalui perisian analisis korpus. Keputusan analisis menunjukkan adanya variasi dari sudut frekuensi pergerakan, kombinasi strategi-pergerakan.

Analisis juga merangkumi satu siasatan dan perbandingan jenis-jenis pergerakan (yang wajib dan yang boleh dipilih) kata pendahuluan pengurusan yang tidak diambilkira dalam kajian-kajian lepas. Dengan mengambil kira tiga mata potongan, (100%, 90% & 50%), dua set sampel tidak mempunyai sebarang variasi, iaitu berkenaan dengan jenis pergerakan pada titik potongan 100% dan 50% dan terdapat perbezaan kecil sahaja di anatranya pada titik potongan 90%.

Akhir sekali, ciri-ciri meta-diskursif setiap pergerakan dari Kuwait dan Malaysia telah dikaji dan dibandingkan mengikut satu kerangka kerja yang disarankan oleh Hyland dan Tse (2004) yang tidak ada dalam kajian-kajian kata pendahuluan pengurusan terdahulu. Analisis menunjukkan bahawa kedua-dua set sampel tidak menunjukkan

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variasi dari aspek penggunaan item meta-diskursif, namun berbeza dari aspek frekuensi item yang digunakan. Keputusan juga menunjukkan bahawa frekuensi item-item metadiskursif adalah rendah dalam genre ini.

Beberapa sumbangan dalam kajian semasa ini ialah, ia menyarankan satu model analisis pergerakan terutamanya untuk kata pendahuluan pengurusan dengan konstituen yang tetap dan ia juga mengenalpasti beberapa strategi baru.

Keputusan dan dapatan kajian semasa ini mungkin boleh memberi manfaat kepada pengamal-pengamal Bahasa Inggeris untuk Tujuan Khusus (ESP) dan pereka-pereka bahan yang menyediakan bahan kursus untuk pelajar-pelajar perniagaan, dalam usaha memberi kesedaran kepada mereka tentang konvensi-konvensi penulisan kata pendahuluan pengurusan yang efektif.

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My sincere appreciation is dedicated to my parents. My mother and father, whose guidelines have strengthened me all through life just as it has in this research, I also need to express my gratitude for their kindness and generosity in their financial support.

I need to express my gratitude towards my sisters and brother who made it their priority to cheer me up and ease the pain of separation.

This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of doctor of philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

Afida Binti Mohammad Ali, PhD
Professor
Faculty of Modern languages and Communication
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Chairman)

Cahn Mei Yuit , PhD
Professor
Faculty of Modern languages and Communication
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Member)

Faiz Sathi Abdullah, PhD
Associate Professor
Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Member)

_____

BUJANG BIN.KIM. HUAT, PhD
Professor and Dean
School of Graduate Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia   .

Date: 15 April 20

Declaration by Members of Supervisory Committee

This is to confirm that:
- the research conducted and the writing of this thesis was under our supervision;
- supervision responsibilities as stated in the Universiti Putra Malaysia (Graduate Studies) Rules 2003 (Revision 2012-2013) are adhered to.

Signature: _____
Name of
Chairman of
Supervisory
Committee: _____

Signature: _____
Name of
Member of
Supervisory
Committee: _____

Signature: _____
Name of
Member of
Supervisory
Committee: _____

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CARs	It stands for Corporate Annual Reports (Plung & Montgomery, 2004).
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
HR	Human Resources
SEC	Security and Exchange Commission
M	Move
S	Strategy
M-S	Move-Strategy Combination
M1.OPN	It refers to move 1, opening the report
M2.ECEN	It refers to move 2, reporting economic environment of the market
M3.FP	It refers to move 3, reporting company's financial performance
M4.OP	It refers to move 4, reporting company's operational performance and achievement
M5.FTR	It refers to move 5, Previewing future
M6.CLS	It refers to move 6, concluding the letter
M1.OPNS1	It refers to strategy 1 from move 1, giving face to message sender.
M1.OPNS2	It refers to strategy 2 from move 1, introducing message sender through caption.
M1.OPNS3	It refers to strategy 3 from move 1, salutation.
M1.OPNS4	It refers to strategy 4 from move 1, presenting the report.
M1.OPNS5	It refers to strategy 5 from move1, presenting topics of discussion.
M2.ECENS1	It refers to strategy 1 from move 2, describing market condition.
M2.ECENS2	It refers to strategy 2 from move 2, reporting measures taken to influence market condition.
M2.ECENS3	It refers to strategy 3 from move 2, presenting outcome of measures taken.
M2.ECENS4	It refers to strategy 4 from move 2, reporting the company condition/status with regard to market condition.
M3.FPS1	It refers to strategy 1 from move 3, taking pride about financial performance.
M3.FPS2	It refers to strategy 2 from move 3, providing details of company's financial results.
M3.FPS3	It refers to strategy 3 from move 3, reporting financial strategy or measures.
M4.OPS1	It refers to strategy 1 from move 4, informing readers of the details of company's non-financial conducts
M4.OPS2	It refers to strategy 2 from move 4, flaunting company credibility.
M5.FTRS1	It refers to strategy 1 from move 5, reporting future plans and strategies.
M5.FTRS2	It refers to strategy 2 from move 5, expressing expectations for future
M6.CLSS1	It refers to strategy 1 from move 6, expressing gratitude.
M6.CLSS2	It refers to strategy 2 from move 6, prayer to Allah.
M6.CLSS3	It refers to strategy 3 from move 6, acknowledging through polite words.
M6.CLSS4	It refers to strategy 4 from move 6, giving the name of the message sender.
M6.CLSS5	It refers to strategy 5 from move 6, stating the professional role of message sender.

M6.CLSS6   It refers to strategy 6 from move 6, providing the date of the report.
M6.CLSS7   It refers to strategy 7 from move 6, proving the signature of the message sender.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the background on management foreword as a section of corporate annual reports (CAR). It also includes a brief literature review of the language studies on management foreword. Then, the statement of the problem and research purpose is presented; finally research objectives and significance of the study are provided.

1.1 Background

Management foreword which is also called letter to shareholders is a section of corporate annual reports. It is supposedly written by the management of the company and is the most widely read and studied section of annual reports. This section is written in the format of a letter and consists of information on the company's past year performance and future plans. However, they are written in laymen's term and are not audited[1]; because there are other audited sections in annual reports which appear in other sections of annual reports (Bhatia, 2004; 2010 De Groot, 2008; Garzone, 2004; Plung & Montgomery 2004). Management forewords usually function as the introduction section of corporate annual reports (see chapter III, section 3.5). To better understand the purpose of management foreword which is a section within annual reports, we might need to go through the purpose and origin of annual reports.

Corporate Annual Reports (CARs[2]) have been around for 175 years. They are reports published annually by business companies, primarily with the purpose to inform the investors about the performance of the company. Nowadays, they are considered as a communication tool which has a specific communicative purpose through which corporations disclose the results of their past performance, health of the company (including its success and failure), current issues and plans for future corporate growth and developments. They also function as a marketing tool that highlights the firm's mission, objectives, strategies, and financial performance (Kohut & Segars, 1992; Bhatia, 2010).

Recently, some of the researchers in the field of corporate annual reports have reconsidered the actual function of writing annual reports and started to provide it to a larger range of audience[3] with the ease of access through company web pages (Jameson, 2000, p. 10). They believe that annual reports are becoming "more strategic

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[1] They do not need to be audited because they are a section in narrative portion of annual reports.

[2] It is not the same as creating a research space 'CARS by Swales (1990)' and should not be confused with it.

[3] The larger audience includes "individual and institutional investors, investment analysts, government regulators, business journalists, the financial company and general public".

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and rhetorical than informative". Besides, through the use of positive words and sugarcoating any corporate weakness, corporate writers are trying to promote their respective company and paint a bright portrait of its wellbeing (Bhatia, 2010; Conaway & Wardrope, 2010). The communicative purpose of annual reports have also been changed as a result of advancement in technology; and accessibility of annual reports to a wider range of audience means that experts as well as laymen have the same chance to read them[4]. This change in the accessibility has influenced annual reports and turned them into a hybrid[5] genre with different communicative purposes. Some of the communicative purposes are: 1) providing an account of company performance and justifying company's activities, 2) explaining that the policies enacted are the best possible ones under that circumstances, 3) getting across to (potential) investors the idea that the company's management deserves investors' confidence, 4) transmitting a positive attractive corporate image (Garzone, 2004). The communicative purpose of management forewords as a section of CARs is similar to the communicative purposes (providing a concise account of the company's performances) of CARs (Mobasher & Afida, 2015) which are studied in the present research and will be further elaborated in later sections (see chapter III, section 3.5). The communicative purposes of a text are interwoven with rhetorical structure or genre patterns of the text. Now, why do some of the companies publish their annual reports in English?

The decision to issue annual reports in English where English is not the first language (e.g. Malaysia and Kuwait) is a very important decision which needs proper justification, as it is expensive (for example the cost of translating their original report into English). According to Jeanjean, Lesage and Stolowy (2010), there are four reasons for publishing annual reports in English. The first reason comes from the process of internationalization and receiving higher international investments. Companies which have greater share of international sales are more far along in the process of internationalizations. When companies find foreign markets for their products (international sale), they are more likely to publish their annual reports in English so that more people would understand it and they get a wider range of audience in the market. Removing the language barrier and paving the way for interested international investors is the second reason. Companies which are after international sales need to communicate with a larger share of investors outside their borders. As a result, they publish their annual report in English so that it could be read and understood by more foreign investors. The ownership structure of the companies; that is governance, is another reason for publishing CARs in English. The companies which have a diffuse ownership that come from diverse nationalities are more likely to publish their reports in English so that all investors could be fairly informed about the corporate growth and development. The last reason is related to financial concerns over attracting higher foreign financial investments. Companies which plan to attract foreign investment need to communicate with foreign investors who may not know their local language. Consequently, they publish their report in English to have wider range of audience and increase their chance of receiving international investment. To sum it up, companies publish their report in English so that they could entice more

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[4] It is because most of the established companies publish annual reports on their website in pdf format.
[5] Hybrid genres are genres that consist of several subsections. Each of these subsections might have communicative purposes of its own which might be different from the communicative purpose of other sections (Bhatia, 1993).

people to read it, which might lead to increasing their chance of getting more investments.

Many companies with different nationalities publish CARs, but do the texts published follow the mutually understood conventions (i.e. moves and strategies)? Although both Malaysian and Kuwaiti companies produce English CARs the texts might have some features which are unique to them. The reason for this variation might be due to the fact that they follow two different corporate or organizational policies. Besides, every discourse member of a genre is aware of the conventions and constrains, but is also able to exploit them so that an original text is produced. Keeping these facts in mind, the present study aims to conduct a comparative genre analysis on management forewords produced in English by Malaysian and Kuwaiti companies. This type of study is considered a comparative genre study, because it focuses on the similarities and differences of the communicative conventions of two distinct cultures. Literature on comparative genre studies of business text have revealed that genres which are common to all societies like Annual Reports might be influenced by corporate policies (Garzone, 2004; Nickerson & De Groot, 2005; De Groot, 2008; Conaway & Wardrope, 2010). As such, the present study embarks on a contrastive genre analysis of the management foreword as a section of CARs from Kuwait and Malaysia to examine and compare their genre structure. The two discourses are separately examined with regard to their move structure, move type and metadiscoursal resources associating with each move, and then they are compared to find the similarities and differences.

According to Swales (1990, p. 58) "a genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purpose". There are three genre theory traditions which are new rhetoric studies, Australian genre theories and ESP which are explained in chapter II. The present study follows ESP tradition as it is the tradition which provides the theories and literature for move analysis (communicative purpose). The present study aims to find the communicative purposes of the management forewords of corporate annul reports (CARs) from Kuwait and Malaysia, through move analysis.

Here, it should be reminded that management forewords are considered to be professional genres as opposed to academic genres (Trosborg, 2000). Professional genres are genres which are used outside the academic world for practical purposes such as business reports, company brochures, and annual reports. For further details on theories of genre and move analysis please refer to chapter II.

1.2 Corporate Annual Reports (CARs) and Management Forewords

According to Plung and Montgomery (2004) Corporate Annual Reports are documents that are mostly associated with stock market and investments. They have been around for about 175 years, approximately since 1827. Nonetheless, their role and functions

were never as clear as it is today. In fact, issuing Annual Reports have been a legal requirement since 75 years ago. In their early days, these reports were simple and did not go farther than a few columns of financial data, which were reported in The New York Times or The Wall Street Journal. However, right from the beginning some of the companies started with detailed reports like Northern Pacific Rail Way Company. All of these reports were attested by 'Price, Waterhouse & Co., Auditors.' Later on the shareholders' desire for full disclosure through attested copies of report by certified auditors increased, which influenced the standardization of the accounting profession. As a result of this demand for certification, a society of accountants were formed that worked with companies who were willing to disclose their financial book to the public. In 1930 the Bureau of corporation which was a congress charted agency criticized corporations for the lack of openness and honesty with the public.

According to Plung and Montgomery (2004) the number of companies, which published attested Annual Reports increased during the first decades of twentieth century. However, interpreting the reports was difficult for investors. The reports for example, would provide charts and graphs to show their production. Nevertheless, they did not provide any clarification. They would also talk about the financial health of the company without providing any values or unites through which readers could judge the actual condition of the company. Because of their ambiguous nature, annual reports were a great context for fraud. One of the companies, which made use of this ambiguous context for fraud was the 'Match King'. What made these frauds possible was the fact that some companies did not allow their books to be audited by independent auditors. To prevent fraud, United States government enacted the Security Exchange Act of 1933 and 1934. These two laws urged companies to annually produce four consolidated reports: "1) a statement of earnings, 2) a balance sheet, 3) a statement of cash flow, and 4) a statement of stockholder's equity" (Plung & Montgomery, 2004, p. 398). Following these rules, annual reports remained unchanged for thirty years until the idea of using annual reports as the public relation tool emerged. In the 1960s, some companies started using glossy papers, color photographs, stylized graphs and fancy layouts to distinguish themselves from other companies and attract more attention. Annual reports became a five billion dollar business and all companies had to attend in the competition to receive attention and investment of the American public. The increased cost of Annual Reports was at the expense of less attention to the investors' needs, to the point that some corporation began to question the wisdom of publishing Annual Reports.

By the end of the twentieth century, an agreement between companies and Security and Exchange Committee (SEC) divided Annual Reports into two parts: 1) the 10-K document which consisted of detailed financial information and, 2) summary of annual reports (SAR) which comprised of narrative portion of the earlier version of annual reports (AR) where footnotes were moved to the body of the text, graphs were used and the narrative was written in the layman's term. Among the benefits of SARs are lower publication costs and being reader friendly. They provided the investors with a clearer perspective on earning potential and had six objectives:

1. To provide an easier text for non-professionals.

2. To provide its readers with the most relevant financial and non-financial information and not give them information that they cannot handle.
3. To make some amendment on the effectiveness of financial communication.
4. To improve their relationship with shareholders and the 'credibility' of management through having more fruitful communications.
5. To add the production cost to the message.
6. To design a document that has different purposes (Plung & Montgomery, 2004).

According to Plung and Montgomery (2004) the actual purpose of annual report has always been providing truthful information. Fulfilling such purpose requires consideration on credibility.

Credibility does not come from financial data, but from *'management foreword'* to shareholders. According to the survey conducted by Security and Exchange Commission (SEC), 'management forewords' are the most widely read section of annual reports and as a result, corporations need to be more careful about the information provided in this section. To acquire credibility, the management needs to be truthful and tell the story as it is and accept the responsibilities for losses instead of denying it or attributing it to outside factors. They also need to report major changes in the company which influences the profit making of the company like the struggle between the major shareholders. These kinds of changes will eventually be disclosed through media and will affect the shareholders' opinion of the credibility of the reports they have received.

As the purpose of the present study is to investigate the genre structure of management foreword as a section within CARs that provides the credibility of annual reports (Plung & Montgomery, 2004), in the following section we go through some language studies conducted on management forewords so far.

1.3 Studies on Management Forewords

Language studies on the genre of corporate annual reports are limited and most of them are conducted on the genre of management foreword (Mobasher, Afida, Abdullah, & Chan, 2013). The reason that this section has received more attention in comparison to other sections within CARs is that most of the audiences of CARs read this section and it is supposed to create confidence in the readers about the credibility of the company (Garzone, 2004; Plung & Montgomery, 2004). As the focus of the present study is the genre analysis of management forewords, in this section some of the previous studies on 'management foreword' are briefly reviewed, which includes genre analysis studies, content analysis studies and studies on the use of metadiscoursal resources. Further elaborations on these studies are provided in chapter 2.

Rogers (2000) focused on the spoken text of CEOs presentation at New York Society Security. The genre study was extended beyond the analysis of the spoken text of CEOs and included context analysis and audience response to CEO's presentation. The result of analysis suggested that "the presentations performed by company CEOs were highly informational while secondarily relational" (p. 449). Relational presentations are the ones which are demonstrated with openness, candidness and honesty. These qualities are in contrast with being conclusive, decisive and action oriented which are the qualities of promotional presentations like CEO's presentation. It also revealed that the content needs of the audience (genre content) were considered to some extent; however 'off-balance sheet information'[6] was not provided at all.

Another study on the genre of management foreword was conducted by Garzone (2004). The study compared CEOs' letters of Italian companies with that of other European and American companies. She was looking for word variations. The result of analysis confirmed that there existed such variations.

A study which embarked on move analysis of management foreword was conducted by Nickerson and De Groot (2005). Their analysis was focused on the comparison of British chairman and CEO's statements with Dutch CEO's statements; and they came up with five move patterns and 12 strategies. In conclusion, they stated that the communicative purpose of management forewords was to gain the confidence and trust of the readers. However, they also identified variation in these sub-genres: the British CEO's statements were informational, but the Dutch CEO's statements were both informational and relational. On the other hand, British Chairman's statements were relational and promotional. It seems that variations also appear in sub-genres. Some of the shortcomings of the study are; not providing details of move identification procedure and not providing any clear criteria for move identifications. The identified moves did not have any specific constituents; that is steps/strategies (for further details please refer to chapter 2).

One of the early studies which considered the content of management foreword (CEO's letter) was conducted by Kohut and Segars (1992). It was a comparative study between high performing and low performing companies. The results revealed six recurrent themes in both sets of data: a) environment, b) growth, c) operating philosophy, d) markets and products, e) unfavorable financial references, and f) favorable financial references (Kohut & Segars, 1992, p. 7).

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[6] 'Off-balance sheet information' which is also called off-balance risks provides the shareholders and investors with information about various risks undertaken by the company. It could include information on 'sensitivity analyses' which comes from changes of interest rates and foreign exchange rates, and also risks of derivative products (such as swaps and future contracts), and specially credit and counterparty risks.

Jameson (2000) also studied the narrative section of shareholders' report (letter to shareholders) with a content analysis approach. He also conducted a comparative study between top return and low return companies. The result of analysis revealed three common themes in both sets of samples: self-justification, blame and, adjusted perspectives.

De Groot, et al. (2006) also considered the intercultural variations of the themes in management foreword. They compared CEO's statements from Dutch companies with CEO's and chairman's statements from British companies. They identified 97 themes in these texts, 15 of which occurred in 50% or more of all three texts types. The results of their analysis revealed four significant differences: 1) theme of 'corporate strategy' appeared significantly with more detail in British CEO's statements; however the theme 'board details' occurred significantly more often in British chairman's statements. 2) CEO's statements for Dutch companies contained significantly more items of "HRM/people" and "corporate governance" themes than CEO's statement for British companies. 3) The theme 'corporate social responsibility' was significantly more frequent in the text of British chairman's statements than Dutch-English CEO's statements. 4) Statements of British CEOs included significantly more details on the theme "dividend" than the other two.

A more recent comparative theme analysis on management forewords (CEOs' letters) was conducted by Conaway and Wardrope (2010). The result of analysis and comparison revealed significant variations in the genre content of two texts. The texts were analyzed in terms of thematic structure, style (readability) and cultural differences. The results revealed that Latin American letters contained twice more topic in the content of the letters than U.S. letters and these extra topics were not related to the financial reporting.

An early study which considered the use of metadiscourse items in CEOs and directors' letters was conducted by Hyland (1998). He considered both textual and interpersonal[7] metadiscourse resources. His study revealed a significant difference in the application of metadiscourse items in these two sections that came from the same Annual Reports. This is the only study which compared two sections of the same text.

De Groot (2008) also analyzed management forewords from annual reports with regard to metadiscourse items like interactive transitions, interactive evidential, interactional boosters and interactional self-mentions. Once again, the results of analysis and comparison revealed variations, mainly in management statement. Some of the variations were over-representation of frame markers in Dutch statements, under-representation of interactional engagement markers and a large number of self-references in British statements.

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[7] Textual metadiscourse items includes logical connectors, code glosses, frame markers, sequencers, endorphic markers and interpersonal metadiscourse items includes (hedges, emphatics, attitude markers, relational markers, attributors)

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Considering the studies mentioned in this section, there are only a few studies on management foreword during the past decade. Besides, they are all conducted on management foreword produced in western countries. In other words, the management foreword produced and published in Asian countries is ignored. With regard to genre analysis, only Nickerson and De Groot (2005) and De Groot (2008) conducted a move analysis on management forewords which have many shortcomings (please refer to chapter II for more details). There is no move analysis study on the move structure of the management forewords produced and published by Asian companies. So, there is a need to conduct a move analysis study on management forewords of CARs from eastern countries; and propose a move model for this section of the CARs. Another limitation of the previous studies on management forewords is that the analysis conducted so far was done manually and no corpus tool software was not used.

To fill the gap in previous studies, this study considers the genre of management foreword of Corporate Annual Reports through move analysis. The study includes proposing a move analysis model for management, investigating move frequency, types and use of metadiscoursal resources, using a corpus tool for frequency count. For further literature studies on English Annual Reports and details on the limitation of the previous studies, please refer to chapter 2.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

Throughout the world, established companies in the stock exchange have been publishing management forewords in their Corporate Annual Reports. In fact, Annual Reports consist of two main portions: a financial sophisticated portion like auditor's report and financial statement written for financial analysts and investigators; and a narrative portion like mission statement and management foreword written in laymen's terms. Management foreword is in fact a report of the company's performance, achievements and future plans, apparently written by the management to be read by shareholders (Bhatia, 2004; De Groot, 2008; Garzone, 2004; Nickerson & De Groot 2005; Plung & Montgomery, 2004). But why is management foreword important to be studied? And why is it chosen as the subject of the present research? First, according to the past studies, management foreword is the most widely read and studied section of the annual report. Most of the readers first go through this section in search of information as it contains a report of the company's financial and non-financial accomplishments in laymen's term (Kohut & Segars, 1992; Thomas, 1997; Hyland, 1998; Crombie & Samujh, 1999; Jameson, 2000; De Groot, et al., 2006; De Groot, 2008; Conaway & Wardrope, 2010). Another source of its importance is that its author is introduced to the readers. In other words, the author of the management foreword is introduced to the readers through the title of the section, his/her picture, name and signature. So, the reader knows who is responsible for the information provided. However, that is not the case with other sections of annual reports (De Groot, 2008) (Please refer to chapter 3, section 3.5 for more details). Most importantly, management foreword appears in all instances of annual report; but that is not true about other sections of the annual reports like mission statement or profile of employees. In addition, according to theme analysis studies, it is possible to distinguish low performing companies from high performing ones through meticulous analysis of

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management foreword only (Clatworthy & Jones, 2006; Smith & Taffler, 2000). Finally, management foreword usually appears at the beginning of annual reports and functions as the introductory section of annual report. They provide a concise operational account of past results and preview future plans and strategies to the public and analysts. Besides, they try to convince the public that the company is in good condition (Kohut & Segars, 1992; Hyland, 1998; Garzone, 2005; Malavasi, 2010; Nickerson & De Groot, 2005). As a result, presenting the audience with efficient management forewords could be an opportunity for any company to communicate its performance and gain their trust (Plung & Montgomery, 2004).

Now, here we need to consider studies that have been conducted on management foreword so far. Studies conducted on management forewords could be divided into six categories: theme of good news and bad news (Kohut & Segars, 1992; Thomas, 1997; Crombie & Samujh, 1999; Jameson, 2000), information content of CEO's presentations (Rogers, 2000), discoursal features and cultural markedness (Garzone, 2004); move and strategy analysis (Nickerson & De Groot, 2005; De Groot, 2008; Skulstad, 1996), theme and content analysis (De Groot, et al., 2006; De Groot, 2008; Conaway & Wardrope, 2010) and use of metadiscourse resources (Hyland, 1998; De Groot, 2008).

Considering the literature on the study of management forewords, previous studies had the following limitations: a) they focused on management foreword from western countries (e.g. Rogers, 2000; Garzone, 2004; Rutherford, 2005; Garzone, 2004, De Groot, 2008); b) most of the studies on management forewords are content analysis studies and move analysis studies are scarce (Nickerson & De Groot, 2005; De Groot, 2008; Skulstad, 1996); c) association between the metadiscoursal resources with each move of management foreword have not been investigated; e) move type; that is optional and obligatory moves has not been investigated yet and finally, f) none of the previous studies used corpus analysis tool in their study of management forwards.

Regarding the limitations in previous studies, there seem to be a need to study management forewords in a different business context; that is Asian countries. The reason is that so far management forewords from Asian counties have not been considered with regard to their macrostructure; that is move patterns. The corpus of the present study as a section of CARs falls under the category of professional genres that are a section of CARs. These CARs belong to companies in the financial sector of the stock exchange. The present study aims to explore and conduct a comparative genre analysis study on management forewords as a section within CARs of two Asian countries where English is not the first language.

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1.5 Research Purpose

Although the sub-genre of management foreword could be considered as a common genre that exits in almost all societies, every society has its own linguistic resources, varieties and value system that might influence a common genre and create a text with unique features (Bhatia, 1993; 2010; Shaw et al. 2004). Besides, genres are considered to be 'situated social actions', occurring in a specific 'discourse community' and influenced by the 'rhetorical purpose' of these actions. It means that its purpose can constrain it and only the members of each discourse community are able to exploit it, using 'sender-specific strategies' (Bhatia, 1993; De Groot, 2008; Miller, 1984; Swales, 1990). Considering the influence of the linguistic resources, members of discourse community, varieties and value system of societies on common genre of management foreword, and its sender specific qualities, the present study aims to investigate the sub-genre of management foreword of CARs from Kuwait and Malaysia coming from a specific sector of the stock exchange; namely the financial sector. As mentioned earlier, the management foreword is a section in the annual report which is supposed to be written by those at the management level like CEOs, chairmen or directors. According to previous studies, this section is the most widely read section of annual report (De Groot, 2008; Garzone, 2004); and it is supposed to gain the confidence of the readers (Plung & Montgomery, 2004).

The present study aims to bridge the gap in previous studies by proposing a move analysis model for the management foreword of CARs[8]. Then, using the proposed model, moves and move-strategy combinations of Kuwaiti and Malaysian samples are investigated and their frequencies are obtained. Subsequently, move type and the use and frequency of metadiscoursal resources in each move are investigated. Finally, the results from Kuwait and Malaysia are compared with regard to frequencies of moves, move types and use and frequency of metadiscourse items for each move in order to find whether there is a variation between them. Counting the frequencies are conducted using a corpus analysis tool which provides higher reliability (Upton, 2001).

1.6 Research Objectives

The present study aims to address the following objectives:

1. Proposing a move analysis model including the move-strategy combinations for management forewords of Kuwait and Malaysia.
2. Examining and comparing the genre structure of the management foreword of CARs from Kuwait and Malaysia through move analysis.
3. Identifying and comparing move types that appear in the management foreword produced by Kuwait and in comparison with Malaysia.
4. Examining and comparing the metadiscourse items associated with each move in the management foreword produced by Kuwait and Malaysia.

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[8] The proposed model is based on the samples from two Asian countries: Malaysia and Kuwait. Although the researcher supports her identified moves from literature, she is not claiming that it is applicable for other management forewords without modifications.

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1.7 Research Questions

The present study aims to answer the following questions.

1A. What are the moves and move-strategy combinations applied in the management foreword section produced by Kuwaitis in comparison with Malaysians?

1.B. Is there any difference between the management foreword section originating from Kuwait and Malaysia with regard to the frequency of move and move-strategy combinations?

2A. What are the moves that can be found in the Malaysian and Kuwaiti management foreword section comparing at three cut off points (50%, 90%, 100%)?

2B. What are the similarities and differences between management forewords section originating from Kuwait and Malaysia with regard to move type (obligatory and optional)?

3A. What metadiscourse features are typical in each move of the management foreword section originating from Kuwait in comparison with Malaysia?

3B.What are the similarities and differences in frequency of metadiscourse items within the moves of management foreword section originating from Kuwait compared with Malaysia?

1.8 Significance of the Problem

The characterization of genre structure through move analysis of English management foreword produced by non-English speaking countries could be useful to different groups. One group could be the audience of these texts; because genre analysis clarifies the structure of the text by illustrating the text purpose. In other words, it helps them to figure out what pieces of information might be expected in this section (Bhatia, 1993; Henry & Roseberry, 1996; 1997; 2007; Swales, 1981, 1990). Nonetheless, the result of analysis could be mostly useful for EFL/ESP teachers who are preparing business students for their future endeavors. In fact, ESP teachers can adopt the finding of the textual analysis provided by the author of the present study as part of their research for material and syllabus design. Business students can also benefit from the findings of the study specially those who are going to be the future executives who write the management foreword for Annual Reports of their companies. They can learn about the rules and conventions of producing management foreword in their respective business culture that gets through the audience and positively influence them. To better communicate with the public, business executive and analysts need to publish management forewords which are efficient in terms of content, structure, and order of presentation, cohesion and persuasion, and use of pictures. Business analysts can also enjoy the results of the present study through learning about the conventions of management forewords in their context and providing the best suggestions for their customers. A word of caution about the application of genre analysis findings in teaching business English is that these findings are only useful for holistic teaching methodology and it should be considered as a clarificatory description and not as a prescription (Swales, 1990; Bhatia, 1993). The purpose of genre analysis is to investigate the conventions and constraints of a particular genre and provide that information to novice writers; because novelty and creativity appears in the texts produced by those writers who have proper understanding about the conventions and constraints (Bhatia, 1993).

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1.9 Definitions of Terms

Faithful strategy: it refers to strategies that appear within a specific move and are related to its communicative purpose. These strategies do not appear within more than one move.

Free Strategy: It refers to strategies that might appear anywhere in the text and might not be related to the communicative purpose of the move (coined by the researcher).

Moves: They are semantic functional units that have identifiable communicative purposes which are directly and coherently related to the communicative purpose of their genre. (Ding, 2007; Connor, Davis & De Rycker, 1995; Holmes, 1997; 2001; Nwogu, 1991; 1997; Bhatia, 1993; Bhatia, 2004; Flowerdew & Wan, 2010).

Move constituents: Moves consist of smaller units within them that are sometimes called steps or strategy. *Move constituent* is a general term which refers to both move and strategies (Bhatia, 1993; 2004; Swales 1990).

Move-Strategy Combinations: In the present study moves consist of *constituents* as strategies. The term move-strategy combination is used to emphasis that the identified strategies appear within a specific move.

Step: Steps are tactics within moves which appear in a *fixed and predictable sequence* (Swales, 1990).

Strategy: Strategies are tactics that do *not* occur in a particular sequence (Bhatia, 1993).

Unfaithful strategy: It refers to strategies that appear within more than one move with different communicative purposes (coined by the researcher).

1.10 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter introduced the study and covered the statement of the problem, research purpose, significance of the study and defined the area of the research. The next chapter

includes the theoretical framework of the study and a review of studies conducted on annual reports with focus on management forewords as the subject of the present study.

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