The Rhetorical Move Strategies of PhD Thesis Introductions

By Malaysian Writers

Submitted by

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Abstract

Scholarly study of academic research writing has been growing, but is mainly limited to articles published in academic journals. Studies on doctoral theses in particular the introductory chapter, as a genre are limited and have only focused on analysis of moves. They have not thoroughly explored the thesis writers' rhetorical strategies (moves and steps in each move) used to achieve communicative goals and the contextual influences on the writers' choice of rhetorical strategies. Furthermore, development of our understanding in this field has been limited because of inconsistent approaches to the theory and practice of coding and interpreting the writers' strategies.

This exploratory study presents an analysis of the introduction chapters of eight (8) PhD theses in Humanities and Social Sciences written in English by Malay writers. It is based on the move-step tradition initiated by Swales (1990) to develop his influential Create a Research Space (CARS) model for research article introductions, and on Bunton's (2002) revision applied to English language PhD thesis introductions. It adapts and develops several other frameworks -- especially the corpus-based approach to analysis by Biber, Connor and Upton (2007) and the semantic-functional approach to coding moves by Lewin et al. (2001), Kwan (2006) and Samraj (2002a) -- to demonstrate a more logically cohesive, systematic, and comprehensive method of analysing rhetorical strategies and structures in Malaysian thesis Introduction chapters.

Using the WordSmith Tools (Scott, 2008) software to present graphically the locations and frequency of different rhetorical strategies, I have established that these Malaysian writers' strategies are more complex than suggested by the linearity of Swales's (1990) CARS structure. A possible interpretation relates to the requirement of the genre (i.e., Social Sciences/ Humanities theses) that writers engage in extensive explanation of context and argumentation to achieve acceptance of the legitimacy of their proposed research. A combination of this more detailed corpus analysis, a synthesis of discourse functions and linguistic features for identifying moves and steps, and an analysis of contextual influences on the Malaysian writers has enabled me to provide a more comprehensive approach to the issue, (central to traditional Contrastive Rhetorical and more recent intercultural perspectives), of how text is shaped by local cultures and the different layers of academic context. I also discuss the practical implications of the research, in the form of suggestions for teaching masters and doctoral candidates about the construction and use of rhetorical strategies from Malaysian and international perspectives.

Acknowledgements

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, my husband and my three children Adam, Adi and Aireen.

Statement of Authorship

Except where reference is made in the text of the thesis, this thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text of the thesis.

The thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other tertiary education.

All research procedures reported in the thesis were approved by the Faculty of Education Human Ethics Committee, R005/09.

Siti Zaidah Zainuddin
April, 2012

Chapter One
Introduction

1.1   Introduction

Writing introductions are known to be troublesome to almost all academic writers. Swales (1990) and Burgess (2002), amongst others, suggest that it is even more difficult for non-native English speaker (NNES) writers. Noted problems include understanding the research requirement of the research genre (Bitchener & Basturkmen, 2006) and difficulties in the organisation of ideas (Cooley & Lewkowicz, 1995, 1997). Paltridge and Starfield (2007) also emphasises the rhetorical issues of developing the thesis structure and its constituent parts as a problem for NNES writing a thesis in English.

Yet Bhatia (1997a, p. 183) asserts that introductions in academic work have "a single dominating fairly general function of introducing a written or spoken academic event". A thesis introduction, according to Swales and Feak (1994), plays a key role in creating a research space for the writer and it is here that the writer makes claims for the centrality or significance of the study. Even though the language and rhetorical features of the introductory chapters written by NNES writers may differ, the sole purpose of this genre is globally similar, namely, that the introductory chapter is to introduce the study and persuade the reader to accept that the study being reported is worthy and valid. In order to achieve this goal, writers have to appropriately strategise their Introductions. They have to offer some background information on the topic, find the niche of the study within the research area and finally introduce the study undertaken (Hashim, 2008). These are all globally recognisable strategies that help to realise the ratification of knowledge (Koutsantoni, 2006).

This globally recognised purpose of the introductory chapter operates within its own peculiar, socially constructed conventions and norms. The writers must adhere to these norms and conventions set by a socio-culturally bound discourse community of which writers are a part. Taking this stand within the Malaysian context would be a fascinating investigation. Like Singapore, the English language in Malaysia is widely used as the intra and inter-ethnic communication. It is also extensively used in country's tertiary education. The exposure to English reference books, classroom teachings as well as many overseas-trained lecturers would suggest that students are proficient in the language, in particular

their writing skills. However, the first language, the cultural values and the 'politically-governed' education may have to a certain extent, influence the student writers' way of writing. Malay (one of three main ethnic of Malaysia) writers writing their thesis introductions may have their own strategies in structuring introductory chapters. These strategies, in order to achieve the global purpose of the thesis introductions, may need to be adapted and modified by their own socio-cultural and academic discourse community. This exploratory study of eight PhD theses aims to identify how Malay writers organise their theses' introductory chapters to achieve both the universal purpose of this genre and their own socio-cultural identity.

1.2   Purpose of the Study

There have been many discussions in defining the concept of genre most probably because it is considered to be a 'fuzzy concept' (Swales, 1990, p. 33). Genres have been described as 'family resemblance' or 'definitional' by contemporary theorists (Chandler, 2010, p.2). The other approach in describing genre which is employed in this study is based on the concept of 'prototypicality' (Swales, 1990, p. 51). According to this approach, some texts would be widely regarded as being more typical members of genres than others. In addition, this approach would identify 'the extent to which an exemplar is prototypical of a particular genre' (Swales, 1990, p.52). This approach to genre is used as a basic framework in exploring particular features of eight Malaysian theses Introduction and examining whether they follow the three-part model by Swales (1990) for English-language introductions that have become prototypical.

Genre study of academic research, especially of theses, has been scarce. Studies on the structure of academic writing have so far concentrated on research articles, with many carried out on research article introductions (RAIs) in various English as a Second Language (ESL) settings, for example Chinese RAIs (Loi, 2010; Zhang & Hu, 2010), Arabic RAIs (Fakhri, 2004), Thai RAIs (Jogthong, 2001; Kanoksilapatham, 2007a), Indonesian RAIs (Ahmad, 2000) and Malaysian RAIs (Ahmad, 1997). Generally, the three-move model of Swales CARS remains the established norm in the texts studied but they are varied in terms of their organisation. Because of the lack of research focus on the structure of theses, much of what we know of the structure of introductory thesis chapters is derived from the findings about RAIs.

One probable reason why studies on thesis writing have been neglected is their length. Swales (1990, p. 188) was of the opinion that the thesis genre has been largely avoided because of its daunting size. Many researchers who wanted to analyse a thesis, did so on only one or two sections of it. For example, Bunton (1998, 2002) analysed 13 PhD theses. However, he only concentrated on two sections, the Introduction and the Discussion chapter. Bunton suggested that it would be laborious to analyse a whole thesis as a corpus of 13 theses would exceed a million words. Similarly, Kwan (2005, 2006) focused on analysing the schematic structure of a single thesis chapter, i.e., the Literature Review. A number of other researchers investigated only the introductory chapter of a thesis, e.g., Arulandu (2005), Samraj (2002b, 2008) and Soler-Monreal et al. (2008, 2010). Even though studies analysing theses are attracting interest, they are still few in number. This study tries to fill this gap in knowledge, particularly regarding texts by NNES writers.

One of the key research findings of prior work which has focused on introductions relates to how texts are constructed and organised in systematic ways. Researchers analysed the organisational structure of the introductory chapter in terms of Swales's (1990) CARS "moves" and "steps" and how these two organisational elements assist in achieving the overall purpose of the genre. However, studies analysing introductions only at the move and step level only provide the macro part of thesis introductions, i.e., the structure and organisation of text. None of the move analyses of Introductions attempted to look at the moves and steps organisation through the lens of socio-cultural and academic community perspectives. This study is inspired by a number of move analyses of RAIs which have attempted to address the organisation of moves and steps through various contextual layers.

Even though most of such studies claim that their texts achieved the global communicative purpose of the genre through their similar local communicative purpose (i.e., moves), I found that there was variation in the ways in which researchers identified the moves and interpreted them. This may be the result of some methodological issues pertaining to the coding of the data, i.e., the different ways of measuring the same concepts and variables; the interpretation of analysis; and the absence of coding criteria. The present study makes an attempt to address these inconsistencies by attempting to create a coding protocol that is suitable and logical for longer texts as well as being able to reveal a specific rhetorical strategy in texts by NNES writers.

Finally, many move analyses of academic research writing were carried out through traditional text-based analysis as the key methodological steps (Arulandu, 2006; Ahmad, 2006; Samraj, 2002b, 2008; Soler-Monreal et al., 2008, 2010; Zhang & Hu, 2010). Their analyses, although inform us with some understanding- that at several points, the construction of the Introductions is complex in which cycling move sequences are possible, their analyses have not provided us with significant evidence to confirm the findings. By employing computer-assisted, corpus-based investigation, it will offer a more methodological rigor to the rhetorical move analysis. To my knowledge, only Kanoksilapatham (2007b) conducted a corpus-based approach on the rhetorical moves of biochemistry research articles. No corpus-based move analysis has been done on Master's or PhD theses. Although this study is not a corpus-based study in its entirety, it is still a worthwhile technique as it can provide a visual representation of moves which in turn can further enhance our understanding of the texts.

1.3   Research Questions

To address these objectives, the following research questions were devised:

i)   Do Malaysian theses have an overall generic potential global structure?

ii) Do Malaysian theses have a generic structure for their introductory chapter?

iii) Do Malaysian thesis introductions conform to Swales's (1990) CARS model of moves and steps?

iv) What effects do the method of coding and the computer-assisted tools have on our interpretation of the rhetorical structure of thesis introductions?

v)   Is there any distinct rhetorical strategy followed in thesis introductions that can be viewed from cultural and social perspectives? If there is any, how do cultural and social perspectives shape and influence the Malaysian thesis introductions?

1.4   Structure of the Thesis

Chapter One sets out various aspects of the research purpose of the study.

Chapter Two reviews genre theory. It specifically discusses the concept of genre as a social communicative action or event as expressed by three different schools of genre. Next, reviews of genre analysis and of corpus-based genre analysis are presented. This section is

important as it presents the general analytical approach taken in this study. Genre analysis as proposed and practised by the ESP school is presented with a focus on the discussion on Swales's moves analysis. Here, Swales's (1990) CARS model as an analytical tool is considered as well as previous related studies using the CARS model. I will also highlight the inconsistencies in coding strategies found in various studies and argue for a more rigorous and transparent coding procedure.

Chapter Three describes aspects of the general methodological design of the current study. Besides the necessary explication of the overall research design, the instruments used and the ethical issues, descriptions of the nature of context as well as the corpus selected will be presented. Next, the research procedure will be detailed step-by-step and explained. In continuing to describe the inconsistencies in the coding strategies, i.e., the various interpretations of terms in coding, this chapter ends with my revised interpretations of terms important for the validity of results.

Chapter Four presents the coding protocol and its criteria in more detail since one of the purposes of this study is to provide greater transparency.

Chapter Five discusses the macro-organisational structure of the main sections of the corpus in order to formulate a general structure of Malaysian theses. Findings from this analysis will offer some preliminary insights on the relationship between the writers' educational background and the demands of the academic community in shaping an acceptable thesis. The general features of the thesis introductory chapter are presented in order to identify its generic structure.

Chapter Six reports on the major findings regarding moves, i.e., their overall occurrences, sequences and locations. In order to identify the extent to which Swales's (1990) CARS model applies in the corpus, this chapter details the common move configurations found in thesis introductory chapters.

Chapter Seven describes in greater detail the constituent elements of moves, i.e., steps. The value of the step will be discussed so as to offer a better understanding of the writers' rhetorical strategies.

Chapter Eight discusses the various sets of findings gathered via detailed analysis of the corpus of texts, firstly, to identify the overall structure of theses and, secondly, to focus

on the rhetorical move-step strategies in the introductory thesis chapters. The results are then viewed from the perspectives of the socio-cultural and academic contexts. The two analytical procedures that facilitated the examination of data will be discussed.

Chapter Nine concludes and summarises the thesis by first iterating the major findings of this study and then presenting its theoretical, methodological and pedagogical contributions. I end this chapter by providing some suggestions for further research and personal remarks on thesis writing by NNES.

Chapter Two
Genre Analysis in Academic Writing

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the literature on strategies for analysing genre that are most relevant for my purposes of understanding how introductory chapters in theses are constructed by writers to achieve their global communicative purposes. My overall argument is that the approaches to genre analysis known as the ESP school, supplemented by aspects of the Contrastive Rhetorical/intercultural approach, provide the most useful combination of micro- and macro-level understandings of the rhetorical structures of thesis introductions. I develop this argument in several stages. I review the theoretical relevance of genre to my study, approaches to genre analysis of texts from various scholars, and the literature on move-step analysis by the most prominent scholar of the ESP school. This leads to a detailed description of the concept of "move" and the constituent "steps" in Swales's (1990) CARS (Create a Research Space) model and a review of related genre-based studies of thesis introductions which have used the CARS model. Analysing the schematic structures from previous studies helps to identify the strengths of micro-analytic approaches to genre analysis. There are, however, some issues that reflect uncertainty in our knowledge and need more attention. One is the question whether or not corpus-based approaches to genre analysis can provide us with the insights we need. Another is the lack of agreement about appropriate methodology for defining, measuring and coding the moves and steps that are the mechanics of rhetorical structure. I therefore provide an overview of methodological approaches from previous studies that have shown inconsistencies in undertaking move-step analysis, to demonstrate the need for a more comprehensive and systematic analytic framework, which will be developed in Chapter Three. Yet another question is how to examine the influence on rhetorical choices made by the authors of factors such as personal background, organisational constraints and the authors' discourse community. I will also discuss studies, particularly by those undertaking contrastive analyses of genre that examine the broader issue of how introductions enact cultural and social practices.

2.2   Theoretical and Research Perspectives

2.2.1   Genre Theory

This section presents the main theoretical perspective of the study, (i.e., genre theory). It shows how the literature on genre shapes my overall research as well as how it may contribute to the field. There are three schools of genre: New Rhetorics (NR), Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). They are similar in the way in which they view genre, i.e., that genre is dynamic and socially constructed. However, the three schools of genre differ in their analytical focus in research. Hyland (2003, p.22) reminds us that "while these approaches are united by a common attempt to describe and explain regularities of purpose, form and situated social action, they clearly differ in the emphasis they give to text or context, the research methods they employ, and the types of pedagogies they encourage". In this context the juxtaposition between form, function and context derived from these three schools provides the major theoretical framework of the current study.

The crux of genre theory as viewed by the New Rhetoricians is to understand the social functions or actions of genres and the context in which these genres are used. Genre as rhetorical situation has been discussed in Miller's (1984) paper titled "Genre as Social Action", which is a seminal paper in shaping genre theory in the New Rhetoric. According to Miller (1984):

> What we learn when we learn a genre is not just a pattern of forms or even method of achieving our own ends. We learn, more importantly, what ends we may have…; for the student, genre serves as keys to understanding how to participate in the actions of a community. (p. 165)

This approach gives weight to context more than looking at its form in isolation when describing a genre. Paltridge (1997) says that the focus of this approach is not on looking at formal texts in isolation, but on the exploration of the socio-contextual aspects of genre, the aims of a particular action to be accomplished, and the ways in which these aspects might change through time. The practitioners of this approach start by discussing the rhetorical situation rather than with a more specific analysis of lexico-grammatical elements within the text (Johns, 2002). In other words, their primary concern is not so much with text features but with how contextual elements influence a genre. In line with their

focus on the functional and contextual aspects of genres rather than forms, ethnographic methods have been used by a number of scholars.

The second perspective of genre comes from the school of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). According to Hyland (2002, p. 115), SFL stresses the importance of the social purposes of genres and of describing the schematic structures that evolve to serve these objectives. Martin (1984, p. 25), one of the pillars of SFL, in his most simple but meaningful definition of genre, defines it as a "goal-oriented, staged social process". Elaborating on this definition, Martin and Rose (2003) state:

> Social because we participate in genres with other people; goal-oriented because we use genres to get things done; staged because it usually takes a few steps to reach our goals. (p. 7)

In other words, genre emphasises the goal of a text and that this goal can be achieved through the ways in which language is systematically linked to context.

The SFL approach to genre analysis, based on Halliday's systemic functional theory, was developed in Hasan's (1977) Generic Structure Potential (GSP) and Martin's (1992) Schematic Structure (SS). According to Paltridge (1997), GSP demonstrates what elements must occur (obligatory), what elements can occur (optional), where elements must occur and how often elements can occur. To make it more suitable for a socio-analytical research, Martin's (1992) SS extended and revised Hasan's GSP approach. Martin looks at the concurrence of both lexico-grammatical features and also at socio-culture in text meaning-making. Therefore, genre studies within this approach seek to explicate "the distinctive stages, or moves, of genre together with the patterns of lexical, grammatical and cohesive choices" (Rothery, 1996, p. 93) which construct the purpose of the genre. Unlike the New Rhetoric genre-based studies which concentrated on contexts, the SFL focus on text linguistic analysis specifically concentrates on the lexico-grammatical features.

The third school of genre lies between the New Rhetoric and SFL. Genres, according to the ESP scholars, are oral and written text types defined by their formal properties as well as by their communicative purposes within social contexts. The commonly used working definition of genre in an ESP framework is from Swales (1990), based on his 1981 work:

A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of *communicative purposes*. These purposes are recognised by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the *schematic structure* of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of *content and style*. Communicative purpose is both a privileged criterion and one that operates to keep the scope of a genre as here conceived narrowly focused on comparable rhetorical action. In addition to purpose, exemplars of a genre exhibit various patterns of similarity in *terms of structure, style, content and intended audience*. If all high probability expectations are realised, the exemplar will be viewed as prototypical by the parent *discourse community*. The genre names inherited and produced by discourse communities and imported by others constitute valuable ethnographic communication, but typically need further validation. (p. 58)

Its concern with both social function and form can be seen in Swales's concept of genre. The "communicative purpose", mentioned several times already, demonstrates the significance of the purpose of the genre and its form. This communicative purpose of the genre is important because it influences the schematic structure of text. Swales suggests that communicative purpose shapes the genre and gives a text an internal structure. It determines not only its schematic structure, but also the choice of words and sentences within the text. Distinctive moves together with patterns of lexis construct the genre.

ESP practitioners, according to Cheng (2011), believe that communicative purposes are expressed in a sequenced manner, with a text being built up schematically through a series of moves and steps. The various communicative functions of a genre also exhibit conventionalised linguistic patterns, or lexico-grammatical realisations, which are again recognised as such by the discourse community. Many ESP genre researchers have striven for multi-layered genre analyses that assess rhetorical purposes, unpack information structures and reveal lexico-grammatical choices.

Following Swales, many ESP-based studies tease out how communicative purposes are conveyed in textually conventionalised ways by members of a particular discourse community who regularly participate in a given genre and who share similar communicative aims (Cheng, 2011). Bhatia (1993), who is also an influential academic in the

field of ESP, takes Swales's (1990) emphasis on how the communicative purpose shapes a genre:

> A recognizable communicative event characterised by a set of *communicative purpose(s)* identified and mutually understood by the members of the professional or academic community in which it regularly occurs. Most often it is highly structured and conventionalised with constraints on allowable contributions in terms of their intent, positioning, form and functional value. These constraints, however, are often exploited by the expert members of the discourse community to achieve private intentions within the framework of socially recognised purpose(s). (p. 13)

Another significant notion in defining genre, apart from its communicative purposes, is the notion of discourse community. The importance of discourse community in establishing the purposes of communicative events, hence the genre, is noted by Swales (1990, p. 9) when he explains that "…genre belongs to discourse communities, not to individuals, other kinds of grouping or to a wider speech community". Swales (1990, p. 24-27) lists six defining characteristics of a discourse community, which is perhaps the best known attempt in describing and pinning down the concept of a discourse community. He suggests that a discourse community:

1) has a broadly agreed set of common public goals;

2) has mechanisms of intercommunications that its members employ;

3) uses its participatory mechanisms primarily to provide information and feedback;

4) utilises and hence possesses one or more genres in the communicative furtherance of its aim;

5) has acquired some specific lexis; and

6) has a threshold level of members with a suitable degree of relevant content and discoursal expertise.

The importance of the concept of discourse community is also shared by other writers such as Johns (1997) and Barton (1994), though their notion of community somewhat differs. Johns (1997) sees common interests amongst the communities as essential rather than

Swales's common goals. Barton (1994) on the other hand depicts a very loose idea of a community:

> A discourse community is a group of people who have texts and practices in common, whether it is a group of academics, or the readers of teenage magazines. In fact, discourse community can refer to the people the text is aimed at; it can be the people who read a text; or it can refer to the people who participate in a set of discourse practices both by reading and writing. (p. 57)

The notion of a discourse community is not simple and straightforward, but rather very intricate. Swales's (1998) himself found that there are often discourse communities within discourse communities when he examined texts from different floors in a single building. He claimed that different organisations have different ways of structuring text and how they use lexico-grammatical elements. A similar situation could occur in a faculty of a university - there are many discourse communities (i.e., different departments) in a single discourse community (i.e., the faculty).

A further complex concept of discourse community is argued by Dudley-Evans and St John (2007, p. 92). They assert that even though the concept of discourse community is extremely useful in understanding a genre, it can be difficult "in practice to produce real and concrete examples of actual discourse communities". They claim that the concept of discourse community is best considered as a "virtual" concept where writer or speaker will be affected by expectations of that genre. This is because an individual can be a member of many discourse communities and because communities can be so large and formless.

For the purpose of this study, the ESP approach is adopted for a number of reasons. Firstly, because a genre is shaped by its communicative purposes and the forms of language said to be shaped by the discourse community, the communicative purpose of a thesis introduction is recognisable and shared by members of the academic community. The structures, content and style of the thesis introduction are constrained by the discourse community; in this case the people who directly and indirectly participate in the discourse. This can refer to the supervisors and examiners of the thesis.

Secondly, the textual analysis practised by ESP balances linguistic analysis and contextual examination. The linguistic analysis of this school mainly concerns the structural interpretation of a text's genre. The current study looks at the rhetorical structure and the

probable contextual influences. It aims to interpret the discourse structures of theses Introductions by looking at the context. Therefore, the outcome of the analysis is mostly rhetorical structures and the contextual explanations of the move structure. The linguistic features only act as the subsidiary analysis particularly as background for analysing text. Even though SFL also recognises that context shapes a genre, the study does not employ the SFL approach as its strong focus is on the linguistic analysis, particularly of lexico-grammatical features. Echoing Paltridge, practitioners with the ESP approach in mind start with a discussion of the rhetorical situation rather than with a more specific analysis of lexico-grammatical elements within the text (Johns, 2002) which is the crutch of SFL text analysis. The present study also cannot situate itself within the New Rhetoric approach as studies in this perspective over-emphasise the situational context.

Lastly, ESP advocates that the main intention of genre studies is to promote consciousness-raising by discussing texts and offering to the best of our abilities prototypical examples of relevant genres. These are two of the explicit important features of the present study and the reason why it situates itself within this genre school. This pedagogically-oriented school also assists in providing approaches to the teaching and learning of academic discourses (Bhatia, 1997a).

2.3   Looking for Structure through Genre Analysis

2.3.1   Concept of Genre Analysis

One of the earliest approaches to genre analysis in an ESP framework is provided by Dudley-Evans (1986, p. 126). He suggests that genre analysis looks at the operation of language within a complete text, seeing the text as a system of features and choices which are made according to the communicative purpose of the text. He continues that genre analysis can be used as a classification system revealing the essential differences between the genre studied and other genres and between the various sub-genres.

Many researchers see genre analysis as part of discourse analysis. Bhatia (1993, p. 16) looks at genre analysis as a significant development in discourse analysis because it is a multi–disciplinary activity, drawing on a variety of disciplines. He says that the primary concern of genre analysis is twofold:

...first, to characterise typical or conventional textual features of any genre-specific text in an attempt to identify pedagogically utilisable form-function correlations; and second, to explain such a characterisation in the context of the socio-cultural as well as the cognitive constraints operating in the relevant area of specialisation, whether professional or academic. (p. 16)

From the point of view of the analysis of functional variation in language, Bhatia seeks three different kinds of orientation and motivation that the genre analyst brings to the research: the linguistics orientation, the sociology orientation and the psychology orientation. Hyland (2007a, p. 195) also sees genre analysis as a branch of discourse analysis. Since it is motivated by the need to understand the communicative character of discourse, genre analysis does not only focus on text but also on how individuals use language in order to engage in a communicative situation. He concludes that the main purpose of genre analysis is to seek how texts are structured in terms of functional stages; to identify the features that characterise texts and hence help realise their communicative purposes; to examine the understandings of those who write and read the genre; to discover how the particular genre relates to users' activities; to explain language choices in terms of social, cultural and psychological context; and to provide insights for language teaching. Like Bhatia (1993), Hyland was quick to note that there are numerous ways to approach genre analysis, depending on the researcher's orientation and focus. He says some researchers may focus exclusively on text structure and some are more interested in identifying the socio-cultural factors.

From Bhatia and Hyland's description of genre analysis, it can be assumed that a researcher, undertaking genre analysis in general, aims to discover how the structure of the text is organised as well as how the linguistic and language choices of a text define its communicative purpose. A genre analyst also looks at context, that is, not only the discourse community, but also its overlapping social, cultural, psychological and probably political contexts. In addition to deciphering texts, genre analysis is a method to formulate educational practices.

Schiffrin et al. (2001), cited in Upton and Cohen (2009, p. 586), describe discourse analysis in a similar way to Hyland's description of genre analysis. They note that discourse analysis is categorised into: 1) the study of the language use – where the focus is on traditional linguistic constructs; 2) the study of linguistic structure "beyond the sentence" –

where the writer looks at how texts are constructed and organised in systematic ways; 3) the study of social practices and ideological assumptions that are associated with language and communication – where the focus is either on the actions of the participants or the general characteristics of discourse communities in relation to issues such as power. These approaches are not necessarily taken in isolation. Many researchers have carried out studies from multiple perspectives, for example, Ahmad (2000) and Jogthong (2001).

The second approach suggested by Schiffrin et al. (2001) has been taken by many researchers with an ESP perspective, focusing on the internal organisation of texts. Upton and Cohen (2009) add that studies from this perspective are usually based on a small number of texts and only focus on a single genre.

This is certainly true, particularly when analysing PhD theses. In order to fulfil the purpose of undertaking genre analysis in its true sense, undertaking both text analysis as well as investigating genre practices in PhD theses within a single doctoral study is unmanageable, mainly because of time constraints. Taking a more social-constructivist perspective of genre practices, where a researcher looks at how a writer's text achieves his or her acculturation into an accepted genre by its community or, in this case, how genre facilitates apprenticeship in a particular institutional context through interviews, diary studies or observation, requires a long period of time, which the researcher, if a PhD student, does not have. Hence, a product-based approach is more manageable, since the texts are already completed. An interview with the writers could take place later to examine in more detail their writing process. However, it should be noted that inaccurate responses from the writers might be given, due to the long time lapse between the confirmation of the writers' theses and the researcher finishing the analysis. Therefore, this study, being explorative in nature, uses product-based genre analysis.

2.3.2   Steps in Conducting Genre Analysis

In conducting genre analysis, Bhatia (1993, p. 22) suggests the following basic steps:

1) Place the text in a situational context, i.e., use our background knowledge and text clues to understand intuitively where the genre is being used, who uses it, and why it is written the way it is.

2) Search the literature or text books for ideas and insights into the working of the genre and the way it is conventionally structured and written.

3) Refine the situational analysis on the basis of this reading to more clearly identify the users' goals, who the writers and readers are, the surrounding texts, and the context in which the genre is used.

4) Compare the text with other similar texts and the contexts in which the genre is used.

5) Study the institutional context in which the genre is used (through site visits, interviews, looking at rule books, manuals, etc.) to better understand the conventions that users often follow.

6) Select one or more levels of linguistic analysis.

7) Gather information from specialist informants, if possible, to confirm your findings and insights and to add psychological reality to the analysis.

Paltridge (2007) points out that Bhatia does not argue the need to go through all the stages as well as choosing either text or context when performing a genre analysis study. Thus, a researcher may initiate the research either with the text or the context. Flowerdew (2002) also has similar view on the steps to be taken in performing genre analysis, stating that a researcher can take either a "text-first" or a "context-first" approach, depending on the focus and orientation of the study. Since the present study situates itself mainly within the ESP-type analysis, I explore the texts first and then look at the context, in order to explain the texts.

After applying the genre analysis approach to the present study, I then seek to use move analysis as an approach to investigate texts, distinguish them in terms of organisational structure and try to identify the reasons behind the choice of rhetorical and linguistic features as a means for communicating the genre's overall communicative purpose and the writer's local communicative function.

2.4   Move-step Analysis

Within the ESP school, genre analysis is "a system of analysis that is able to reveal something of the organisation of a genre and the language used to express those problems" (Swales 1981, cited in Dudley-Evans 1986, p. 1). Many, if not most, of the genre studies analysing how information is organised in the academic research writing use Swales's (1990) CARS move-step analysis.

2.4.1　Review of Swales's CARS Models

Genre analysis using rhetorical moves was originally created by Swales (1981) as an alternative to Zappen's (1983) problem-solving model. In Swales's seminal work on 48 introductions in research articles from a range of disciplines (physics, medicine and social sciences), he aimed to find common rhetorical patterns in research article introductions (RAIs) as well as identify if there were any different rhetorical patterns in RAIs in different disciplines. He found that there was a common pattern to all of the articles and across the three different fields. This led him to propose a series of moves that defined the rhetorical structure of RAIs. Figure 2.1 shows the four moves he identified:

Move 1: Establishing the field
      a) by asserting centrality
      OR
      b) by stating current knowledge
Move 2: Summarising previous research
Move 3: Preparing for present research
      a) by indicating a gap in previous research
      OR
      b) by raising a question about previous research
Move 4: Introducing the present research
      a) by stating the purpose
      OR
      b) by outlining the present research

Figure 2.1. Swales (1984) four-move model
Source: Swales, 1984, p. 80.

Swales's initial model, however, met with a few criticisms. For example, studies done by Jacoby (1987), Crookes (1986) and Bley-Vroman and Selinker (1984) found that there were some difficulties particularly in separating Move 1 (Establishing field) from Move 2 (Summarising previous research). Jacoby (1987), in Swales (1990, p. 140), suggests that the original corpus used by Swales that resulted in the four-move model, were "at odds with the increasing practice of spreading references throughout the introduction". In other words, the initial model was derived by Swales on the basis of a corpus of short RA introductions, where the rhetorical work of establishing the field of research was clearly divisible from reviewing previous research, and did not apply to longer RA introductions due to the

quantity of references. Therefore, it was assumed that the four-move model was only applicable to shorter RA introductions.

Swales's (1990) model, named Create a Research Space (CARS), was his response to comments on his previous four-move model. Table 2.1 shows Swales's reformulated three-move scheme:

Table 2.1
Swales (1990) CARS model

Move 1	**Establishing a territory**
Step 1	Claiming centrality and/ or
Step 2	Making topic generalisation(s) and/or
Step 3	Reviewing items of previous research
Move 2	**Establishing a niche**
Step 1A	Counter-Claiming or
Step 1B	Indicating a gap or
Step 1C	Question raising or
Step 1D	Continuing a tradition
Move 3	**Occupying the niche**
Step 1A	Outlining purposes or
Step 1B	Announcing present research
Step 2	Announcing principal research
Step 3	Indicating RA structure

Source: Swales, 1990, p. 141.

In essence, the CARS (1990) model begins with a move (Move 1) that establishes the general topic by demonstrating the relevance and significance of the research. In doing this, the writer may use one or more of the three steps. Then, in Move 2, the writer creates a niche for the study within the territory in four different steps. This is considered a critical move because it reveals the reasons and importance of the study. Lastly, in Move 3, the writer occupies the niche by introducing the present research by using one or more of the three steps.

In Swales' (2004) book *Research Genres*, he revisited the CARS model after reconsidered the moves and steps as well as input from research findings by several genre analysts that challenged the moves and its linearity. The revised CARS model can be seen in Figure 2.2. (overleaf).

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                    ┌──────────────────────────────────┐         │
│                    ▼                                   │         │
│  Move 1        Establishing a territory (citations required)     │
│                via                                     │         │
│            Topic generalisations of increasing specificity      │
│  Move 2        Establishing a niche (citations possible)         │
│                Via                        [Possible recycling of │
│                                            increasingly specific │
│                                               topics]   ▲        │
│            Step 1A  Indicating a gap      ⎫            │         │
│                  or                       ⎬ ──────────┘         │
│            Step 1B  Adding to what is known ⎭                    │
│            Step 2  (optional) Presenting positive justification  │
│  Move 3        Presenting the Present Work (citations possible)   │
│                Via                                               │
│            Step 1   (obligatory) Announcing present research descriptively │
│            and/or purposively                                   │
│            Step 2* (optional) Presenting RQs or hypotheses       │
│            Step 3  (optional) Definitional clarifications        │
│            Step 4   (optional) Summarising methods               │
│            Step 5  (PISF**) Announcing principal outcomes        │
│            Step 6 (PISF) Stating the value of the present research │
│            Step 7  (PISF) Outlining the structure of the paper   │
│                                                                 │
│  *Steps 2-4 are not only optional but less fixed in their order of occurrence than │
│  the others                                                     │
│  **PISF: Probable in some fields, but unlikely in others        │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Figure 2.2. The revised CARS model (2004)
Source: Swales, 2004, p.229

As mentioned previously, the revised model was the result of a number of considerations, namely the inconsistent definition of what a particular move is and the potential cycling or iteration. In the revised model as shown in Figure 2.2, the steps to realise Move 1 have been reduced to one. Swales also proposed that the four realisations of Move 2 be reduced to two. This was because Swales (2004, p. 229) pointed out that Move 2's Step 1D: Continuing a tradition to be a "rather odd choice of nomenclature." He questioned the uncertainty and clarity of what tradition does entail. The inconsistent definition of moves has also influenced Swales in considering Counterclaiming and Question-raising steps as two main realisations of Move 2. Swales (2004, p.230) suggests that Counter Claim and Question-raising which are rarer steps may not 'functionally be very different from gap-

indication.' Swales (2004) also added another feature in the revised model -- presenting positive justification. This comes from Samraj's (2002, p.15) research showing that a gap indication was immediately followed by 'presenting positive justification'. The revised model also takes into consideration the potential cycling of Moves 1 and 2 sequences. Move 3 in the revised model is more complex and elaborated. It has seven steps compared to three in CARS (1990) model. Inconsistent definition of a move also extends to Move 3. For example, Swales (2004) says that 'separating the opening step (outlining purposes/announcing present research) from later ones is not always so easy'. Sometimes, a purpose statement shows the structure of the article instead of announcing the purpose of the study.

From the above discussions, it can be seen that an attempt to provide a model showing the structure of a particular genre is complex mainly because of the instability of the coding strategy, notably the varying definitions of moves and steps as well as incoherent criteria when determining the unit of analysis. These inconsistencies of coding continue in the recent similar studies which will be presented in more detail on page 36 of this chapter.

2.4.2   Concept of Moves and Steps

Several definitions of a "move" have been proposed by ESP scholars. Moves, as Swales suggests, can be viewed as spatial matters in which ideas move from one pre-formatted section to another pre-formatted section (Swales, 1990). To Dudley-Evans and St John (2008), "moves" refers to "a unit that relates both to the writer's purpose and to the content s/he wishes to communicate". A more detailed definition of "move" is given by Nwogu (1997):

> … a text segment made up of a bundle of linguistic features (lexical meaning, propositional meanings, illocutionary forces etc.) which gives the segment a uniform orientation and signals the content of discourse in it. Each move is taken to embody a number of "Constituent Elements" or sub-moves which combine to constitute information in the move. (p. 122)

Thus, for Nwogu, a move is signalled by various linguistic features and/or by inferencing from context and these features realise the communicative purpose of the text.

He also points out that a move can have a number of constituent elements that realise a move.

In order to realise the communicative purpose of a move, the writer may employ one or more constituent elements, called "Step". A step is explicated as "a lower level unit than the move that provides a detailed perspective on the options open to the writer in setting out the moves in the introduction" (Dudley-Evans & St John, 2008, p. 89). Bhatia (1993, p. 20) categorises moves as discriminatory strategies because they tend to vary the nature of the genre considerably, by "introducing new or additional considerations in the communicative purpose of the text". Meanwhile, a step or "strategy", according to Bhatia (1993), is non-discriminative because it does not change the essential communicative purpose of the genre, even though the steps

> exploited by a particular writer are generally used in order to make the writing more effective, keeping in mind any special reader requirements, considerations arising from a different use of medium or prerequisites or constraints imposed by organisational and other factors of this kind. (p. 20)

In sum, moves can determine the nature of various genres or sub-genres by identifying new moves and are pre-determined by the communicative purpose of the particular genre, while steps do not determine a genre and are predetermined by socio-cultural context, individual strategic choices and the audience.

Upton and Cohen (2009, p. 592) in their article "An approach to corpus-based discourse analysis: the move analysis as example" suggest a protocol when undertaking a move analysis. It is referred to in the article as the Biber Connor Upton (BCU) approach, since it was first outlined by three scholars (Douglas Biber, Ulla Connor and Thomas A. Upton) in 2007. According to them, a move analysis can be done by either the top-down research approach or the bottom-up research approach. These two approaches differ primarily in the order of analytical steps in which in a top-down approach, the discourse unit types are determined before beginning the corpus analysis. This means that the researcher has to develop a coding protocol to decide the definition and examples of the moves and steps. The linguistic analysis of each move is done afterwards. Table 2.2 elaborates how a move analysis can be carried out through the top-down approach.

Table 2.2

Biber, Connor & Upton (BCU) Approach: Top-down Corpus-based, Move Analysis Approach

Required step in the corpus-based Discourse analysis	Application to move analysis
1. Communicative/ functional categories	Determine rhetorical purpose of the genre Determine rhetorical function of each text segment in its local context: • Identify the possible move types of the genre; • Group functional and/ or semantic themes that are either in relative proximity to each other or often similar locations in representative texts. These reflect the specific steps that can be used to realise a broader move; • Conduct pilot-coding to test and fine-tune definitions of move purposes; • Develop coding protocol with clear definitions and examples of move types and steps.
2. Segmentation	Segment full set of texts into moves. • Run inter-reliability check to confirm that there is clear understanding of move definitions and how moves/ steps are realised in texts; • Identify any additional steps and/moves that are revealed in the full analysis; • 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.
3. Classification	Classify all moves by move type
4. Linguistic analysis of each unit	Conduct linguistic analysis of all moves representing each move type
5. Linguistic description of discourse categories	Describe move types in terms of the linguistic features of the moves.
6. Text structure	Analyse the move structure of each text in terms of move types.
7. Discourse organisational tendencies	Describe the corpus of texts in terms of typical and alternate move structures

Source: Upton & Cohen, 2009, p. 592.

Conversely, in the bottom-up approach, the corpus analysis comes first, and the discourse unit types emerge from the corpus patterns. Table 2.3 presents the bottom-up approach for discourse organisation.

Table 2.3

Bottom-up Corpus-based, Move Analysis Approach

Required step in the analysis	Realisation in this approach
1) Segmentation	Segment each text in the corpus into discourse units, based on shifts in vocabulary or other linguistic features.
2) Linguistic analysis of each unit	Analyse the full range of lexical/grammatical characteristics of each discourse unit in each text of the corpus
3) Classification	Identify the set of discourse units types that emerge from the corpus analysis, based on linguistic criteria; that is, group all discourse units in the corpus into linguistically-defined categories or "types".
4) Linguistic description of discourse categories	Describe the typical linguistic characteristics of each discourse category. Based on analysis of all discourse unit of a particular type in the corpus.
5) Communicative/ functional categories	Describe the functional bases of each discourse category, based on post-hoc analysis of the discourse units identified as belonging to a particular type.
6) Text structure	Analyse complete texts as sequences of discourse units shifting among the different functional types.
7) Discourse organisational tendencies	Describe the general patterns of discourse organisation across all texts in the corpus.

Source: Biber, Connor and Upton, 2007, p. 14.

Biber, Connor, Upton & Kanoksilapatham (2007, p. 33) also note that there are no "strict" rules for doing a move analysis. Therefore, the frameworks above act only as guidance for researchers and it is not compulsory to carry out each of the steps. However, awareness of the two approaches above is important, even though they were the result of a corpus-based study on birthmother letters. These approaches can be applied and assisted in the present study at the operational stage, described in Chapter Three.

2.5   Genre Studies Using Swales's (1990) CARS Model

In the last three decades, academic written genres have received considerable attention and a number of studies have been conducted in this area, particularly in

discourse-analytic and rhetorical studies. Various types of academic genres, ranging from text books (Hyland, 2000) to conference papers (Rowley-Jolivet, 2002) have been discussed. Genre analyses of academic research writing that are related to the present study are those of theses and research articles (RA). Different sections of theses and RAs have been examined, including abstracts (Pho, 2008; Samraj, 2005) and discussions and conclusions (Yang & Allison, 2003). However, of the work which focuses on certain sections of texts, introductions have received the most attention.

The discourse-analytic studies of theses and RAIs utilise Swales's (1990) CARS model to examine texts from various fields, disciplines, institutions and languages. In addition, many cross-disciplinary, cross-institutional and cross-cultural studies have used Swales's (1990) CARS model as a template and analytical basis for analysing the move structure of theses as well as RAIs. It is important to note that, even though the focus of the present study is on thesis introductions, reviewing RAIs is just as important for two reasons. First, many previous studies found that thesis introductions have the same local communicative purpose and, hence, the same organisational move structure. Therefore, the influencing factors at the move and step level in RAIs are assumed to a certain extent to also affect the introduction of theses. Secondly, RAIs provide significant insights of benefit to the present study, particularly in its approach to analysis in terms of identifying the boundaries of moves.

2.5.1 Move Analysis Studies of Thesis introductions

To reiterate, the main purpose of undertaking a genre analysis study is to identify the structure of a text in terms of the moves and steps. A number of genre studies of thesis introductions, though limited, provide an overview of organisational moves and steps in different settings and languages. To my knowledge, there are five studies that have looked at thesis introductions. Table 2.4 below lists the studies on moves and steps analyses in thesis introductions.

Table 2.4
Studies of Moves and Steps Analysis in Thesis Introductions Using Swales's (1990) CARS Model

No.	Researcher/Year	Field	Language	Purpose
1.	Dudley-Evans (1986)	Mixed	English	Rhetorical structure
2.	Bunton (2002)	Mixed	English by NS and NNS	Rhetorical structure
3.	Arulandu (2005)	Social sciences	English by NNS (Malaysia)	Rhetorical structure
4.	Samraj (2008)	Biology, Philosophy & Linguistics	English	Rhetorical structure
5.	Soler -Monreal, Carbonell-Olivares & Gil-Salom (2008, 2010)	Computing	Spanish	Rhetorical structure

Note: The studies in theses/dissertations in the table are organised chronologically, from the earliest to the latest. This is important because the later studies (numbers 3-5) stem and grow from Swales's (1990) CARS model and Bunton's modified CARS model.

Two of the earliest analyses of the structure of introductions in theses/dissertations are by Dudley-Evans (1986) and Bunton (2002). These studies have become a pivotal reference, especially for novice researchers exploring the structure and organisation of the introduction chapter. Arulandu (2005) used Bunton's modified CARS version to analyse Master's and PhD theses/dissertations across disciplines by Malaysian writers. Samraj (2008) looked at PhD thesis introductions in three different fields, written by native speakers. The latest study on PhD theses, to my knowledge, was conducted by Soler - Monreal et al. (2010). Using Bunton's modified version as a template, they carried out move analysis on PhD theses in computing written in Spanish. The aim of these studies was to identify the organisational structure of the thesis introductory chapter at the move and step level. There was also some identification of the social and cultural context as influencing factors of moves and steps, but only minimally so. Therefore, the major contribution of prior genre studies of thesis introductions to the present study is chiefly one in terms of an analysis at the moves and steps level.

2.5.2 Findings of Move Analysis in Thesis introductions

The primary aim of a macro-structure analysis is to identify the presence and sequence of Swales's (1990) CARS three-move model in the introductory chapter of theses.

(i)   The presence of Swales's (1990) CARS three-move model

Studies show that the introductory chapter, in general, employed moves as suggested in the CARS model. Dudley-Evans (1986) analysed seven MSc dissertations, particularly the introduction and discussion chapters. In the introduction chapter, he identified six moves, where some had two or three possible steps within them, as shown in Figure 2.3.

Move 1: Introducing the field.
Move 2: Introducing the general topic (within the field)
Move 3: Introducing the particular topic (within the general topic)
Move 4: Defining the scope of the particular topic by
i. introducing research parameters
ii. summarising previous research

Move 5: Preparing for present research by:
i. indicating a gap in previous research
ii. indicating a possible extension of previous research

Move 6: Introducing present research by
i. stating the aim of the research
ii. describing briefly the work carried out

Figure 2.3. Dudley-Evans move structure in dissertation introductions.
Source: Dudley-Evans, 1986, p. 135.

The distinctive feature of his findings was the initial three-move progression. Dudley-Evans discovered three distinct moves: introducing the field, introducing the general topic and introducing the particular topic, similar to Swales's Move 1: Establishing the Territory. He justified these findings by pointing to the greater length of dissertations compared to RAs. Another finding from Dudley-Evans' study is his Move 5: Preparing for the present research, which is similar to Swales's Move 2: Establishing a niche. The steps in Dudley-Evans' Move 5 and Swales's Move 2, where the writers are either addressing a gap or continuing and extending the previous research, are also similar. Dudley-Evans also found that not all writers (or studies) adhere to Swales's (1990) CARS three-move model. Three shorter introductions omitted Swales's Move 1, while the remaining three reversed the order of Swales's Moves 3 and 4.

Another oft cited study in the area of thesis introductions, which has become the point of analysis of other current work, for example, Salom, Monreal, and Olivares (2008) and Arulandu (2005), is Bunton's (2002) study. Drawing on Dudley-Evans and Swales's studies and building on Bunton (1998), which analysed the overall structure of PhD and M.Phil. theses and their abstracts, Bunton extended the analysis for moves structure in PhD thesis introductions. His corpus comprised 45 Introductions, 11 by non-Chinese research students who were either native or near-native speakers of English, and 37 by non-English-speaking (Chinese speaking) students in Hong Kong. The three moves identified in Swales's (1990) CARS model were used as a starting point for the analysis but at the steps level, Bunton considered both Dudley-Evans's and Swales's models. He found that the structures of introductions in his corpus, as a whole, were consistent with the CARS model.

A more recent study of thesis introductions was carried out by Soler -Monreal et al. (2010). They analysed the introductions of 21 PhD theses in computing written in Spanish, basing their analysis on Bunton's revised CARS model for English PhD thesis introductions. Their findings, by and large, suggested the presence of the three moves. Only four thesis introductions did not occupy Move 2: Establishing the Niche.

Special attention is given to Arulandu's (2005) study as it is so far the only move analysis which attempts to analyse theses and dissertations in Malaysia. Even though her study was a cross-disciplinary one, of Science and Social Sciences, her methodology and results, especially of the Social Sciences PhD theses, are the starting point for the present study. In short, her study "Genre analysis of dissertation introduction" looked at 30 dissertation introductions written in English by Malaysian students at Malaysian universities. The moves and steps analyses were carried out using Bunton's (2002) modified version of Swales's (1990) CARS model. The results showed that the introductions' rhetorical pattern supported the general framework by Bunton, hence the CARS model.

(ii) The sequence of Swales's (1990) CARS three-move model

Do thesis introductions follow the move sequence [M1-M2-M3]? Based on the findings of the studies mentioned before, the introduction does not necessarily follow the sequence of the three-move model. Interestingly, the major move configurations in the analyses are [M1-M2] and [M1-M3], which are highly recursive and cyclical. Only a few theses' introductions consist of the prototypical sequence [M1-M2-M3] as the only sequence of moves. Bunton found three theses that did not begin with Move 1 and two theses which

began with announcing the present research (Move 3); there were also instances where the introduction began with Move 2.

Soler- Monreal et al. (2008, 2010) and Arulandu (2005) also found that their texts began with either Move 1 or Move 3. Soler- Monreal et al. (2010) discovered that 15 of 21 thesis introductions began by establishing the territory and the others started with Move 3. Arulandu also discovered that the majority of her thesis texts began with Move 1 and one with Move 3.

The studies mentioned above also provide information on the move cycles. Since the texts were longer than RAIs, most introductions analysed in the studies had many cycles of moves. Bunton's study, for instance, identified only one thesis with the sequence [M1-M2-M3] while the other introductions had [M1-M2] and [M1-M3] pairings. These moves were also highly recursive and cyclical. For instance, there were many moves with two and three cycles, with the longest containing 18 cycles. The most cyclical pattern is that of the sequence [M1-M2]. This means that most writers have Move 1 and Move 2 (1-2-1-2-1-2) cycles. Bunton suggested that this was because when writers were raising gaps or problems, they did not go on to announce their own research, something they did later.

Unlike Bunton, who only found a single text to be in the [M1-M2-M3] sequence, Soler- Monreal et al. (2010) found half of their texts followed this sequence. Similar to Bunton, they found many introductions consisted of move configuration [M1-M3] and on many occasions these appeared recursively. Alternations of Move 1 and Move 3 are found in six introductions as shown in Table 2.5 below.

Table 2.5
Spanish Thesis Introduction Move 1-Move 3 Move Configuration

Thesis	Move sequence
T1	M1[M2]-M3-M1[M2]-M3
T2	M1-M3-M1-M3-M1-M3
T3	M1[M2]-M3
T7	M1[M3][M3]-M3-M1-M3
T12	M1-M3
T20	M1-M3-M1-M3

Source: Soler-Monreal et al., 2010, p. 5.

These pairings, (i.e., [M1-M3]) also alternate with Move 2 in 11 other cases. An example of an alternate move sequence is taken from Thesis 13:

Example 2.1: Move sequence of Thesis 13 (Soler-Monreal et al., 2010)

Thesis 13: M3-M1-M3-M1-M2-M3-/M1-M3-M2-M3/-M1-M3-M1-M3-M1-M3

The move sequence above shows a number of [M1-M3] cycles. However, at the midpoint of the introduction (shown with /), the writer establishes the niche of the study.

The pairings of [M1-M2] and [M1-M3] can be considered as two major move configurations in Arulandu's (2005) study. An example of a move sequence that consists of Moves 1 and 2 is shown in Example 2.2:

Example 2.2: Move sequence [M1-M2] in Thesis 3 (Arulandu, 2005)

Thesis   3:   M1-M2-M1-M2-M1-M2-M1-M2-M1-M2-M1-M2-M1-M2-M1-M2-M1-M2-
M1-M2-M1-M2/-M1-M3-M2-M3

(iii)   The number of cycles

Many studies have also discussed their move analyses in terms of the cycle of moves. The identification of move cycles is important as this will generally inform how the writers strategised their ideas (in terms of move chunk) in order to achieve the overall communicative purpose of the particular genre. However, the discussions of cycles in previous studies bring one important implication to the current study, i.e., that their notion of cycle varies, thus making comparative evaluations difficult. The studies by Bunton (2002), Arulandu (2005) and Soler -Monreal et al. (2008, 2010) are examined to explicate my point.

Bunton's (2002) first observation on the notion of cycles was that "most moves and steps recurred in cycles". In light of this, I would consider cycles as the act of repeated events, (i.e., a move(s) or step(s) can be found repeatedly). Further on Bunton said that, "the most frequently used cycle was T-N" (i.e., Moves 1 and 2), which would suggest a different interpretation, i.e., that a single cycle consists of two moves [M1-M2] and that the move configuration [M1-M2] is considered one cycle.

Arulandu's (2005) interpretation is more complex. Initially, I concluded that her total cycles resulted from the progression of each move. An example is taken from Thesis 8 and is presented in Example 2.3:

Example 2.3: Move progression in Thesis 8 (Arulandu, 2005)

Thesis 8: 1 2 1 2 1 3 1 2 3 2 1 2 3 1 3 2 3 2 3 (18 cycles)

1 2 3

According to Arulandu, there are eighteen cycles in Thesis 8. When one move progresses to the next move, it is considered a single cycle (as the arrows in Example 2.3 show). However, this cannot be implemented with the other samples, for instance Thesis 1 and Thesis 3. When considering the notion of cycle as above, I found there are more than 21 cycles in Thesis 1 and 22 cycles in Thesis 3 as claimed by Arulandu.

Example 2.4: Move Cycles in Thesis 1 and Thesis 3 (Arulandu, 2005)

Thesis 1:   1212121212121212313121 (21 cycles)

Thesis 3:   1212121212112121212323 (22 cycles)

Her notion of cycles was made even more confusing when she noted that there were 37 cycles in a small sequence of moves in text Thesis 6 in Example 2.5 below.

Example 2.5: Move Cycles in Thesis 6 (Arulandu, 2005)

Thesis 6:   1313231212123123 23 (37 cycles)

Soler -Monreal et al.'s (2010) discussion of cycles comes under the sub-heading "Move patterns and cycling of moves". In reviewing the move cycle, they first distinguished the major move patterns. They found two major move patterns in the text samples [M1-M2-M3] and [M1-M3]. The first move pattern displays the awareness of the writers to present the theoretical issues of the topic, define the problem and then develop it. The second move pattern [M1-M3] shows the writers situate the study without developing the problem. Soler -Monreal et al. (2010) also considered that the above move patterns can be developed in more than one cycle. Their findings are summarised in Table 2.6 below:

Table 2.6

Number of cycles of move patterns [M1-M2-M3] and [M1-M3] in Spanish theses

Move pattern [1-2-3]	Move pattern [1-3]
1 cycle	1 cycle
2 cycles	2 cycles
3 cycles	3cycles
4 cycles	6 cycles
	11 cycles

Source: Soler -Monreal et al., 2010, p.5

Table 2.6 shows two major move patterns. Move pattern [M1-M2-M3] can be found in a single, two, three or four cycles. An example of this move pattern occurring in four cycles can be seen from the move sequence of Thesis 5 as presented in Example 2.6:

Example 2.6: Move Cycles in Thesis 5 (Soler -Monreal et al., 2010)

Thesis 5: 1-2-3/-1-2-3/-1-2-3/-1-2-3

    ↑   ↑   ↑   ↑
    1   2   3   4

The move sequence from Thesis 5 shows the writer strategised the introduction chapter after the discussion of an issue, problematised it and then reported the research of the study (see '/'). This linear strategy was repeated four times. In other words, the writer achieved the communicative purpose of the genre after four cycles of move pattern [M1-M2-M3].

Based on these pieces of evidence, it was clear that there was no recipe for defining and applying the notion of cycle. This does not mean that the issue of cycles is not important in this study. The discussion of cycles will improve our understanding of how writers construct an introduction chapter. I will discuss my notion of move cycle in Chapter Three.

2.5.3 Finding of Steps in Thesis Introductions

Most of the studies above found similar moves as those in Swales's CARS (1990) model. However, the steps that realise the moves differ from one study to another. When compared to Swales's (1990) and Dudley-Evans's (1986) studies, Bunton's (2002) study showed a much greater variety of steps. Although the ten steps by Dudley-Evans were identified, there were ten more steps which Bunton's found could either not fit any of the descriptions in the template's models or were considered distinctive enough to require a

more precise category. These are: defining terms in Move 1; indicating a problem or need in Move 2; and aims, method, materials or subjects, product of research, chapter structure, research hypotheses, theoretical positioning, defining terms and application of product/ evaluation of product in Move 3. A complete list of moves and steps is given in Figure 2.4.

Often present	Occasionally present
Move 1: Establishing a Territory	
STEPS	
1: Claiming centrality (importance of topic)	
2: Making topic generalisations and giving background information	Parameters of research
3: *Defining terms**	
4: Reviewing previous research	
Move 2: Establishing a Niche	
STEPS	
S1A: Indicating a gap in research	
S1B: *Indicating a problem or need*	Counter-claiming
S1C: Question-raising	
S1D: Continuing/ Extending a tradition	
Move 3: Announcing the present research	
STEPS	
1: Purposes, *aims or objectives*	*Chapter structure*
2: Work carried out	*Research questions/ Hypothesis*
3: *Method*	*Theoretical positioning*
4: *Materials or Subjects*	*Defining terms**
5: Findings or Results	Parameters of research
6: *Product of research/ model proposed*	
7: Justification/ Significance	*Application of product*
8: Thesis structure	*Evaluation of product*

Notes: * indicates one which can appear in Move 1 or Move 3
A= Arts, So= Social science, Eg= Engineering, Si= Science, M= Medicine
Newly identified steps are in italics.

Figure 2.4. Model of Bunton's PhD thesis introductions.

Source: Bunton, 2002, p. 74.

Soler -Monreal et al. (2010) found a similar three moves present of the three moves, and identified a number of steps that did not correspond to Bunton's model. They included four new step(s) in a move, hence, proposing a new model, as shown in Figure 2.5.

Move 1: Establishing a Territory

STEPS

S1: Claiming centrality (importance of topic)

S2: Making topic generalisations and giving background information

   SS2A: Indicating a problem or need

   SS2B: Indicating limitations

   SS2C: Giving examples

   SS2D: Defining terms/ classifying and commenting on terminology

   SS2E: Giving or anticipating solutions (or ways to solve problems/ to tackle needs)

S3: Defining terms/ *classifying*

S4: Reviewing previous research

S5: *Explaining the institutional/ research group context*

Move 2: Establishing a Niche

STEPS

S1A: Indicating a gap in research

S1B: Indicating a problem or need

/S1C: Question-raising

/S1D: Continuing/ Extending a tradition

Move 3: Occupying the Niche (Announcing present research)

STEPS

S1: Purposes, aims or objectives

S2: Work carried out/ Announcing research

SS2A: Work done

SS2B: Focus of research

/SS2C: Work or aspects out of scope/

/SS2D: Previous requirements/

S3: Field of research

S4: Method/Parameters of research

/S5: Materials or Subjects

S6: Findings or results (Announcing or predicting principal findings): 8 Product of research/*Model proposed/ Contributions/ Solutions

S7: Justification/ Significance

/S8: Research questions/ Hypotheses

S9: Application of product

S10: /Evaluation of product/

Notes: Newly identified steps and sub-steps are in italics
* These new independent steps in Bunton's model.
/.../ indicating a step or sub-step which is occasionally present in the analysed corpus

Figure 2.5. Moves, steps and sub-steps in Spanish PhD thesis introductions.

Source: Soler –Monreal et al., 2008, p. 90.

Soler-Monreal et al. (2010) found that Move 1 and Move 3 were extensively developed moves in the corpus. As part of Move 1, they identified new steps in describing topic generalisations and background information. Statements suggested by Swales were used but more apparently, there were many statements (18 theses) describing the needs and problems (SS2A). They also identified the statement of a problem associated with information on how the problem had been or could be solved (SS2E).

As mentioned above, my study takes its point of departure from Arulandu's work. The main aim of the present study is not only to revise but to add to the current knowledge of move analysis studies in Malaysia, specifically in moves and steps methodology. The specific steps of her corpus are largely consistent with Bunton's modified CARS model. Her model for Social Sciences dissertations introductions is shown in Figure 2.6.

Move 1: Establishing a Territory
STEPS
S1: Claiming centrality (importance of topic)
S2: Making topic generalisations and giving background information
S3: Reviewing previous research
S4: Defining terms*

Move 2: Establishing a Niche
STEPS
S1A: Indicating a gap in research
S1B: *Indicating a problem or need*
S1C: Counter-claiming
S1D: Question-raising
S1E: Continuing/ Extending a tradition

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Move 3: Announcing the present research
STEPS
S1: Purposes
S2: Aims
S3: Objectives
S4: *Method*
S5: *Materials or Subjects*
S6: *Justification/ Significance*
S7:
S8: Research questions/ Hypothesis
S9: Parameters of research
S10: *Thesis structure/ Chapter structure*
S11: Theoretical positions
S12: Defining terms*

</div>

Note: The italicised phrases are newly identified steps, demarcated steps and merged steps.

Figure 2.6. Moves and steps model of social sciences dissertation introductions by Malaysian postgraduate writers.
Source: Arulandu, 2005, p. 177.

Arulandu's study produced an interesting outcome. It is understandable that she found that the move to establish a niche is realised in a majority of the introductions via indicating problems and/or need (Step 1B), followed by Indicating a Gap as shown in many contrastive genre studies. However, she also found that the third most popular strategy was Counter-claiming, while Step1D (Continuing a Tradition) was the least preferred step by Malaysian thesis writers. This seems to suggest a disparity with other NNS writers, for example in Ahmad (1997), Jogthong (2001) and Zhang and Hu's (2010) studies where they found that Counter-claiming was the least preferred step. My study can shed light on the application of Move 2 and its steps.

As mentioned, previous studies employing move analyses of thesis introductions did not consider culture and the various layers of context as influencing factors. The literature on move analyses of RAIs by Ahmad (1997) and Jogthong (2001), for example, can assist our understanding of the implications of culture and contexts on Move 2 steps. What is the implication of lower/higher rates of counter-claiming? Does this imply the influence of culture, academic organisation, or even the background of the writers? Does it imply a perception of introduction as not the appropriate place to discuss academic controversies or the effectiveness of different approaches? Does it indicate a perception that narration is more appropriate than analysis and argumentation?

2.6   Inconsistencies of Coding Strategy

Even though methods for conducting move analyses have been discussed in many studies, they are vague and lack standardisation. This has caused problems, particularly when reviewing other studies for comparative purposes. For example, Bunton (2002) did not emphasise and account for the various frequency rate of the steps in Move 2. Kwan (2005, p. 47), when reviewing Bunton's study, was quick to note her dissatisfaction when Bunton found a low frequency rate of Counter-claiming, as opposed to Indicating a problem and need (which was rated the highest), and was subsequently followed by Question-raising and Continuing/ Extending a tradition. Counter-claiming, she argued, was supposedly a key step in Move 2. This "unusual" (Kwan, 2005, p. 47) finding could be due to the coding criteria of the step, in which some instances of Indicating a problem or need could act as Counter-claiming when carrying out an analysis of semantic attributes.

I partially agree with Kwan's two arguments above in relation to the coding strategy. She claimed that the coding criteria may have affected Bunton's result. This could be due to the example which Bunton (2002) provided, as shown below:

> To extend its application to W, the X method was combined with the Y concept. This method has been successfully applied to Vs. However, such methods are not generally applicable to all Zs. (p. 160)

Based on Swales's criteria, which were adopted by Kwan, she concluded that any claims on disagreement on the method were considered as Move 2: Counter-claiming. Therefore, the sentence above should be coded Counter-claiming and not Indicating a problem. Based on this, clearly, a step depends on the researcher's definition and coding protocols. If a researcher follows a previous writer's criteria closely, the result would have greater similarity. Bunton's results and Kwan's dissatisfaction probably stems from Bunton's lack of discussion in the coding protocols and the actual words or structures he uses as coding criteria.

Even though I agree with Kwan on the validity of the coding, hence resulting in dissimilar results, I do not think that Counter-claiming is a key step in Move 2, especially by non-native speakers. A number of move analyses, particularly of texts written by NNES (as discussed above), have shown that NNES writers seldom criticise and point out the weakness of other studies. For instance, Ahmad (1997) shows that Malay writers prefer

Continuing Tradition when establishing niche. Jogthong's (2007) study shows that Thai writers avoid Counter-claiming other well-known studies. A similar result is found in Zhang and Hu's (2010) study of Chinese writers. These studies suggest that the NNES writers may view Move 2: Counter-claiming as not a key step logically, and do not view it as a compulsory strategy in order to have a legitimate introduction.

Inconsistencies in the coding strategy also hinder the present study in comparing certain elements of the steps in Arulandu's Malaysian texts. A fascinating outcome was seen in her analysis of Reviewing Previous Research (Step 4 of Move 1). She found that the occurrence of Step 4 was very high. This may be because she generalised all citations as Step 4 which can subsequently lead to incorrect coding. Therefore, a point in question is her methodology in identifying and classifying Reviewing Previous Research.

Previous studies, for instance Kwan (2005) and Samraj (2002b), have indicated that distinguishing and classifying citations is not an easy, straightforward task, arguing that Step 4 of Move 1 can appear to have comparable functions with Move 1, Step 2: Giving background information. Categorising Step 4 solely on the basis of Swales's integral and non-integral citations is not sufficiently convincing. Swales (1990) also mentions that the writer should:

> relate what has been found (or claimed) with who has found it (or claimed it). More precisely, the author needs to provide a specification (in varying degrees of detail) of previous findings, an attribution to the research workers who published those results, and a stance towards the findings themselves. (p. 148)

Example 2.7 presents an example of Arulandu's (2005, p. 112) Step 4: Reviewing previous research statement.

Example 2.7: A Statement Coded as Reviewing Previous research (Arulandu, 2005)

> Over the space of fifteen years, a total of 193 million kilometres of fibre-optic cables has been installed worldwide [R].
> *[R] has been placed whenever reference and citation occur in the text.

One may be tempted to code the example above as Move 1, Step 4. However, when analysing it using semantic attributes (as well as Swales's critical definition of a citation), there are no lexical clues showing it is a form of a study: the researcher(s), i.e., the *study* by

[R], the research action of discovering, i.e., *subjects* and/or methods or the result of a study, i.e., *found that*, *showed that*. The sentence above is an example of a neutral sentence providing knowledge and the citation acts as an attribution. Arulandu sees the sentence as how the writer uses Step 4 to inform and/or to educate the wider readership by providing general background knowledge Step 2. Using a detailed interpretation citation form, the above extract acts more convincingly as Step 2 rather than Step 4 in Move 1.

Arulandu's work has some important implications for the present study. Like Bunton, she did not present the coding protocols as well as the coding criteria. In addition to referring to the lexical words in order to determine a move or a step, her exact coding parsing was ambiguous. The present study aims to elucidate the coding protocol, particularly in offering the coding criteria. This may result in different outcomes in terms of the frequency of steps, as well as a possible identification of new steps.

Inconsistencies during coding of move identification can be seen in some genre studies of thesis introductions and RAIs. It can be deduced that there are: (1) inconsistencies in the approach to coding; (2) an incoherent basic unit of analysis; and (3) a diversity of views on the identification of boundaries of moves and steps analysis.

There are disparities in the approaches to coding, from linguistic clues to content comprehension, across the move analyses of academic research writing. When identifying moves and steps in identifying RAIs, Nwogu (1991) depends on linguistic clues, for instance, explicit lexemes and grammatical specifiers of content relations. He also relies on text inferencing. Jogthong (2001), identifies the steps of "content comprehension" (the author's words) as well as relies on common or typical statements and linguistic signals. For instance, Move 2 statements are signalled by negative quantifiers, and negative verbs or verb phrases. Kanoksilapatham (2007a, p. 178), on the other hand, says coding "is a semantically driven characteristic of genre analysis".

When identifying the moves in a particular chapter of a thesis, the inconclusive array of moves identification continues. When analysing moves in the introductory chapter, content-comprehension, linguistic signals as well as discourse signals are used by Bunton (2002). Soler -Monreal et al. (2010) employed a functional approach as well as lexico-grammatical features when identifying a move. Kwan (2005, 2006), in her analysis of PhD Literature Reviews, conducts her coding using a functional approach as well as through the

identification of predominant semantic features of the target text segment, developed by Lewin et al. (2001). The various coding strategies are summarised in Table 2.7.

Table 2.7
Inconsistencies in Coding Strategies in RAIs and Thesis Introductions

Researcher	Texts/section	Coding strategy
Nwogu (1991)	RAI	Linguistic clues, text inferencing
Jogthong (2001)	RAI	Content comprehension, linguistic
Kanoksilapatham (2007a)	RAI	signals
Bunton (2002)	Thesis introduction	Semantic approach
		Content comprehension, linguistic
Olivare, Gil-Salom & Soler-Monreal (2010)	Thesis introduction	signals, discourse signals
		Functional approach , lexico-
Kwan (2006)	Thesis Literature	grammatical features
	Review	Functional-semantic approach

Scholars have also commented on appropriate coding strategies. Paltridge (1994) said that there are mainly two means by which one can examine the criteria employed for the identification of textual boundaries in genre studies: linguistic indicators and functional terms or content inferencing. Connor and Mauranen (1999, p. 52) pointed out that the identification of moves in a text depends on both the rhetorical purpose of the text and the division of the text into meaningful units on the basis of linguistic clues, which include discourse markers (connectors and other metatextual signals), marked theme, tense and modality of changes, and introduction of new lexical references. Explicit text divisions, namely subheadings, section boundaries and paragraph divisions are also used. A similar suggestion was made by Dudley-Evans (1994) on ways of identifying the boundaries of the communicative units, moves and steps. He suggests that decisions about the identification of moves and steps are mostly made on the basis of linguistic clues, comprehension of the text and understanding of the expectations that both the general academic community and the particular discourse community have of the text.

Johns (1994) claims there are two approaches to understanding text: text pragmatics and text semantics. Palek (1968), cited in Johns (1994), claims that text semantics is "concerned centrally with the truth and falsity of statements which can be derived, not from individual propositions in the text, but from the text as a whole, and crucially, from the cross-referential relationships set up within the text".

Approaches to the identification of moves vary in terminology as well as interpretation. In a number of previous studies, moves are identified semantically. However, the notion of a semantic approach varies from one study to another. Swales (1990) identified the functions of moves and steps semantically. But, based on his seminal work on genre analysis, he gave some coding examples (other than of coding semantically), based on "linguistic exponents and signals" (p. 144). For instance, Claiming Centrality could be realised in:

Example 2.8: Centrality claim statements (Swales, 1990)

> Recently, there has been a spate of interest in how to…
> In recent years, applied researchers have become increasingly interested in…

The ambiguous terminologies and limited examples of Swales's (1990) concept of semantic theme to categorise specific moves have been dealt with intuitively by some studies and this has resulted in different interpretations. In the case of Reviewing Previous Literature, for instance, Swales gives terminology for the readers to refer to but without giving explicit examples. The most noted distinction is integral and non-integral citation. The examples given do not clarify the definition. As a result, different ranges of classifications are employed by various researchers when doing text parsing. For example, Arulandu (2005), in her research on Master's and PhD theses, identified this step straightforwardly as I deduced in her thesis analysis and when she co-rated the present research in the first phase. Consistent with her understanding, any citations in the text were considered Reviewing Previous Research which has resulted in a very high percentage of usage. As mentioned above, her result was quite the opposite of many cross-cultural studies, where most only have a small percentage using this step.

As a consequence, genre analysis of research texts (articles and theses/dissertations) reveals no clear criteria for the identification of moves, alternating between lexico-grammatical terms, between semantic and functional approaches, and between linguistic and discourse clues. To conclude, Swales (2004) in his recent observation on the identification of move boundaries, says that they are "established by a mixed bag of criteria, which together typically, if not universally, produce defensible decision criteria."

As discussed above, attempts to classify a move and a step are not straightforward. Although genre analyses acknowledge that the communicative purpose of the genre drives the coding of moves, these studies have a variety of units of analysis in which the

communicative purposes of the genre can be realised. Table 2.8 summarises the inconsistencies in units of analysis in the coding of moves.

Table 2.8
Inconsistencies in Unit of Analysis of Moves in RAIs and Thesis Introductions

Researcher	Texts/ sections	Unit of analysis
Swales (1990)	RAI	Sentence(s)
Jogthong (2001)	RAI	Sentence
Pho (2010)	RA Abstract	Sentence, a phrase, a word, several sentences
Al-Qahtani (2006)	RAI	Sentence, whole text
Soler- Monreal (2010)	Thesis introductions	Sentence(s)

It is clear that the unit of analysis, when identifying moves, varies from a single sentence to several sentences and paragraphs. For instance, Jogthong (2001) used the sentence as his basic unit of coding, as did Pho (2010). Although his most common realisation of moves and steps is in the sentence, he also relied on a phrase, a word as well as several sentences. Swales (1990) relied on a sentence, as well as two or more sentences.

A realisation of the function of a text could also rely on the entirety of the text. The sentence as the basic unit of analysis was employed by Al-Qahtani (2006, p. 76), but he also pointed out that at times, he "had to read the sentence as a whole". It can be concluded that the sentence as a unit of analysis is preferred by researchers. However, in certain cases, it can also be manipulated by also using a word or a phrase or even a paragraph.

Based on the discussion of the concept of genre analysis and its inconsistencies, I would conclude that when performing a genre analysis, a researcher has to first decide on the approach to take towards text analysis. In doing so, the move analysis protocol suggested by Upton and Cohen (2009) can be considered. They suggest that genre analysis which looks at moves and steps can be done through the top-down or bottom-up approach. The top-down approach means that the researcher distinguishes the moves on the basis of content, relying on intuitive interpretations as well as signals such as verbs, nouns or tenses. Next, analysts point to particular lexical and grammatical items as characteristic of this move. The bottom-up approach, on the other hand, uses linguistic features to identify the cohesiveness of the content, hence understanding the text. The bottom-up approach distinguishes the moves on the basis of linguistic signals.

Next, the unit of analysis has to be determined. The basic unit of analysis is when a text segment constitutes a complete unit of meaning. In line with a study derived from

Swales's perspective of genre, the unit of analysis should realise the communicative purpose of the text. It can be a clause, a sentence, a few sentences or a paragraph(s), depending on the text.

The other important aspect that a researcher has to take into consideration is the coding strategy, particularly when identifying the moves. Identification and realisation of moves can be carried out through semantics, function, inferencing, linguistic clues or signals. This depends on the orientation of the study. If a study follows the bottom-up approach, then most probably the researcher will resort largely to linguistic clues or lexico-grammatical features. Conversely, the researcher would employ semantic coding if a top-down approach is used. This is not to say that both approaches (top-down and bottom-up) only use one coding system in isolation. As has been shown in the studies cited above, the variety of the coding system used is to primarily realise the rhetorical function of moves.

The notion of cycles also raises some important issues. One is a difference in interpretation between authors. Previous authors have not defined the notion of cycles. However, on the basis of the examples provided by them, I have concluded that their notion of cycles differs. The studies of Bunton (2002), Arulandu (2005) and Soler -Monreal et al. (2010) are used to explicate my point.

2.7   Corpus-based Approach to Move Analysis

A review of corpus-based analyses is included because the current study has attempted to employ this approach when analysing moves. A number of scholars have tried to define corpus. Hyland (2007a), for example, defines a corpus as a store of natural occurring examples of languages that have been collected for linguistic study. A more comprehensive description of a corpus is presented by Baker (2006). Baker (2006) describes a corpus by distinguishing it from text archives or databases. He suggests that corpora tend towards having a more balanced, carefully thought-out collection of texts that are representative of a language variety or genre. An archive or database, on the other hand, may consist of published works of a single author or work from a given year which implies "a repository, often huge and opportunistically collected, and normally not structured"(Kennedy, 1998, p. 4).

There are different types of corpus: a specialised corpus, a diachronic corpus and a reference corpus. The specialised corpus is used to study aspects of a particular variety or

genre of language. A specialised corpus depends on the genre as well as the specific topic of the study. A diachronic corpus, according to Baker (2006, p. 29), is a corpus built in order to be representative of a language or language variety over a particular period of time. Studies of language change can benefit from this type of corpus. A reference corpus is typically a large corpus which is representative of a particular language variety. For instance, the British National Corpus (BNC) is a reference corpus consisting of approximately 4,124 texts, including extracts from newspapers, journals, academic books and popular fiction, to name a few. Data of this study drew on specialised corpora, as obtaining the corpus was based on a particular genre (academic research writing) and section of a type of text (introduction), as well as consideration of the topic and texts by Malay writers.

The corpus-based approaches to move analysis described above (see Table 2.2 and 2.3) can be employed to texts of academic research writing. A corpus-based approach, using electronic encoding, allows for more complex and generalisable research findings, revealing linguistic patterns and frequency information (Baker, 2006, p. 2). Even though the present study does not focus on the linguistic features of moves, a corpus-based approach allows the study to describe the typical distributional and structural characteristics of each move type. The results of statistical analyses help in determining whether a move or a step is obligatory or optional. From this point on, a more qualitative interpretation will provoke questions as to the reasons for this scenario.

There are some criticisms voiced of corpus-based methodologies. One of the criticisms of corpus study is the use of decontextualised data. One possible step to countering some of the concerns, according to Baker (2006), would be for the researcher to become familiar with the corpus. Hardt-Mautner (1995a, p. 8) and Partington (2003, p. 259), as cited in Baker (2006), suggest that

> Some form of prior interaction with the text in the corpus, e.g., reading transcripts or listening to spoken files, will ensure that the discourse analyst does not commence from the position of *tabula rasa*. One means of familiarisation would be to actually build a corpus from scratch, choosing which texts are to go in it. The process of finding and selecting texts, obtaining permissions, transferring to electronic format, checking and annotating files will result in the researcher gaining a much better "feel" for the data and its idiosyncrasies. (p. 25)

Another criticism of corpus-based methodology regards the use of concordancing software for displaying the keyword in context. Flowerdew (2005, p. 324) highlights a criticism by Swales (2002) when performing concordance and keyword searches. Swales says that it "limits the analysis to a somewhat atomised, bottom-up type of investigation of the corpus data". However, the current study has shown that concordancing can be done through a top-down approach which is common to traditional move analysis. The starting point of this study is analysing the texts according to their function and communicative purpose which calls for cognitive judgements rather than judgements based on lexico-grammatical patterning.

In line with this approach, a corpus-based analysis is not distinctively a quantitative approach. It involves identification of moves and move types by making qualitative judgments about the communicative purpose of the text. This is done individually by the researcher. Even when the researcher has tagged the moves and obtained the quantitative data, the results must be interpreted qualitatively.

Several researchers have conducted corpus-based studies which can be considered as firmly based in the ESP genre camp, for example Flowerdew and Dudley-Evans's (2002) analysis of interpersonal features within various move structures in editorial letters; Gledhill's (2000) analyses of the phraseologies of various prepositions in different sections of research articles and Jones' (2007) bottom-up approach focusing on vocabulary patterns in biology research articles. Little attention has been given to corpus-based rhetorical move analyses of academic research writing. Flowerdew (1998) has also suggested that there is a lack of tagging in corpus studies at the move structure level:

> Another suggestion, which I believe would have wide pedagogical applications, is more exploitation of the tagging function of existing software on the market. As Leech (1991) remarks, most of the work on text annotation (tagging) has been done at the grammatical (word class) or syntactic (parsing) level. Very little has been done on the semantic or pragmatic discourse level to date. For example, text could be tagged manually to indicate the generic "moves structures" such as background, scope, purpose in the introductory sections of a report. (p. 159)

To my knowledge, only Kanoksilapatham (2007b) conducted a corpus-based, top-down analysis: he looked at the rhetorical moves of biochemistry research articles. No corpus-based, move analysis has been done on Master's or PhD theses. A corpus-based

approach to move analysis has the potential of providing insights not available in conventional, small-scale research. In the current study, the data on distribution and sequencing and relative emphasis on different moves and steps enables me to gain insights and draw conclusions not possible from conventional approaches. By using corpus analysis, particularly tagging software, Flowerdew's suggestion of tagging text to illustrate move structures and their location and purpose can be explored.

I have so far shown the presence and sequence of the three-move model in thesis introductions as well as the variations of the rhetorical structures at the steps level. Next, the influencing factors are presented. As mentioned, social and cultural factors are mostly examined in various contrastive genre studies of RAIs.

2.8   Contrastive Rhetoric

Besides genre theory, this study also addresses the notion of NNES writing from the point of view of Contrastive Rhetoric (CR), in particular the view that culture influences written discourse. CR can provide a framework for comparing this study's NNES Malaysian theses with those written in other non-English speaking countries, and so help in analysing the possible contributions of individual, organisational, discourse community and national level cultural factors to commonalities and variations in the theses investigated in the study and those in the existing literature. CR studies have at least taken three different approaches: studies comparing two or more different languages of L1, studies comparing text between L1 and L2 texts, and studies comparing two or more varieties of English. Though the present study is not an example of comparative research, it looks at other academic research writing by NNES for a comparative evaluation.

At its most basic, CR is defined as "an area of research in second language acquisition that identifies problems in composition encountered by second language writers and, by referring to the rhetorical strategies of the first language, attempts to explain them" (Connor, 1999, p. 5). Therefore, researchers who conduct contrastive rhetoric studies, particularly on text written by NNESS, are concerned with how writers' cultural backgrounds influence the organisation of their writing. It is also the focus of a CR study to see how the writers express their main ideas and how they write in languages other than their mother tongue, in most cases English.

Following Kaplan's (1966) controversial article "Cultural thought patterns in intercultural education", CR started in applied linguistics. In his article, Kaplan examined different patterns in the academic writing of ESL students from various cultures: English, Romance, Russian, Oriental and Semitic. He found that there were culturally-specific organisational conventions in the five different language families. For example, he claimed that the organisational structure of English expository writing is linear and direct. This structure, according to Kaplan, contrasts with the organisational structures of other language families: a parallel pattern in Semitic languages, indirect and circular in Oriental languages and digressive in Romance and Russian languages. This has been an eye-opener to ESL practitioners and thus led to numerous empirical studies to appear to demonstrate and reflect the version of early CR.[1]

2.8.1   Traditional Contrastive Rhetoric

Many text linguistic studies have contrasted discourse patterns of various kinds in different languages as well as English. Researchers analysing Arabic (Johnstone, 1986; Ostler, 1987), Chinese (Eason, 1995; Li & Thompson, 1982, Matelene, 1995), Hindi (Kachru, 1983) and Japanese (Hinds, 1980, 1983; Hirose & Sasaki, 1994; Kobayashi, 1984) claim that these languages have their own characteristic rhetorical organisations of expository and argumentative prose. Perhaps one area most researched in CR and text linguistics is differentiating between inductive and deductive patterns of organising text. Influential studies in the area of early CR taking the first two approaches have provided support for the claim that culture does have a significant impact on the writing product.

Hinds, for instance, has conducted an extensive study on Japanese-English texts. Hinds's (1983) cross-cultural comparative study of the organisational patterns of Japanese and English expository writing found some cross-cultural variations. He found that none of the organisational patterns in Japanese were acceptable in English prose. Hinds's (1990) study of the organisational patterns of Japanese, Chinese, Thai and Korean texts produced similar results. He referred to the organisational patterns of those languages as "quasi-inductive", arguing that the thesis statement was implied in the text. Other comparative

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[1] Like many other scholars (e.g., Kubota & Lehner, 2004) I would refer to studies that represent Kaplan's hypothesis that (1) each language or culture has rhetorical conventions that are unique to it, and that (2) the rhetorical conventions of students' L1 interfere with their ESL writing (Grabe & Kaplan, 1989; Kaplan, 1966, 1972; Kubota & Lehner, 2004) as "early" or "traditional" CR.

studies of Japanese and English that supported the early views of CR were conducted by Kobayashi (1984) and Hirose and Sasaki (1994).

Apart from looking at the indirect and direct organisational pattern of composition, many researchers who adopted the CR approach have also been fascinated by how the reader/writer responsibility in a specific culture affects the students' composition. The focal point of reader/writer responsibility is that "there are different expectations with regard to the degree of involvement a reader will have, and that this degree of involvement will depend on the language of the reader"(Hinds, 2001, p. 63). What this means is that in some languages, the person who is responsible for making the text effective can either be the writer or the reader. A writer-responsible culture is where the writer has to make the effort to make the statement clear and well organised, whereas in a reader-responsible culture, on the other hand, the reader has the responsibility of understanding what the writer is trying to say.

Many CR-oriented studies of NNESs' compositions have emphasised that non-English cultures show evidence of reader-responsible writing. Studies by Hinds (1980, 1983) of Japanese composition, for example, conclude that Japanese is a reader-responsible culture because there are no landmarks or transition signals to help readers follow the writers' logic. Readers have a very difficult task in making sense of the relationship of a single part of the composition to the text as a whole. Hinds (2001) says in his later review of his studies:

> This is not to say that there are no transition statements in Japanese. There are. It is not only to say that these transition devices may be more subtle and require a more active role for the reader. (p. 146)

This traditional concept of CR has been criticised, challenging both the hypothesis as well as scrutinising methodological issues. CR studies of writing have now expanded the type of writing analysis, from expository student writing to a variety of writing genres including academic and professional writing. In addition, CR studies have acknowledged the complexities of cultural, social and educational factors affecting a writing situation. Connor, in order to theorise the new CR and set the agenda for practical research applications, incorporated Fairclough's (1992) text in context theory. Through Fairclough, CR considers writing as a socially constructed activity and process. When doing research in writing, this theory postulates that the researcher not only examines the text, but also the "discursive and social practices" surrounding the text. Further, Connor (2008) presents a

model that posits various overlapping social institutions such as national culture and professional academic culture (see Figure 2.7). This model is a valuable tool for the present study in that it provides an understanding of the complexity of interacting cultures in an educational setting. Connor (2008, p. 308) suggests that national and cultural features of writing cannot be isolated.
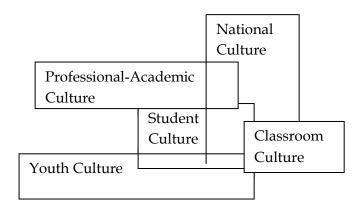
Figure 2.7. Model of culture.
Source: Connor, 2008, p. 308.

Many scholars have criticised CR for being static and homogenous and legitimating the superiority of English (Kachru, 1997; Kubota & Lehner, 2004; Matsuda, 1997). The main criticism comes from the point of view of World Englishes (WE). The most prominent scholar writing on World Englishes is Kachru. He states that WE "is not intended to indicate any divisiveness in the English-using communities but to recognise the functions of the language in diverse pluralistic contexts" (Kachru, 1997, p. 67). He criticised the hidden claim of CR that the Inner Circle[2] varieties of English constitute a point of reference as well as CR's failure to validate Outer Circle varieties of English, thus raising the issue of reinforcing and legitimating the superiority of English. Kowal (1998) adds that CR has caused plurality within language groups and has been overlooked because of the tendency to agree with the expectations of the native speakers or readers (English) that a discourse has a specific rhetorical norm.

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[2] B. Kachru (1985) divides the English-using world into three concentric circles: an Inner Circle consisting of native English-speaking countries, an Outer Circle consisting of the former colonies or spheres of influence of the UK and the United States, and an Expanding Circle of countries where English is fast becoming a dominant second language in the domains of education, science and technology. In countries in the Outer Circle, nativised varieties of English have achieved the status of an official language or of a language widely used in education, administration, the legal system and so on. Hence, Malaysia, once a British colony, is considered to be part of the Outer Circle. Though English is not the country's official language, it is used widely in education especially in higher education and in high school subjects such as Sciences and Mathematics. For the latter, however, the Malay language will soon replace English in 2012 following the strong urging of Malay nationalists and language advocates.

2.8.2 Genre-Contrastive Rhetoric Theory – Implications for the Study

In addition to the expansion of the concept of genre and the definition of culture, CR has moved to emphasise the social situation of writing. Mirroring the concept of genre, writing is regarded as socially situated in that it has to correspond to the norms and expectations of its community. Such a concept is also similar to Swales's "discourse community". Therefore, viewing genre through the CR lens of "context and culture" assists in looking at context as multilayered.

Although the initial impetus of CR, which was to assess cultural influence in discourse, is seen as stereotyping Western peoples and other users of English, it is still useful, especially when it is applied to a genre written by NNES. The new concept of culture in CR also involves the institutional context. The present study is grounded in the current understanding of genre and CR, including not just the big culture relationship to text but also the relationship of the text to the context in which it is produced. Context will be looked at in terms of a number of layers. Samraj (2002a, p. 165) presents a useful model of the relationship between academic writing and the context that influences the writing (see Figure 2.8). This model specifically addresses writings by students taking a course at an educational institution.
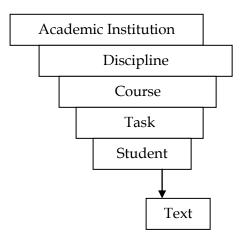
Figure 2.8. Layers of context.
Source: Samraj, 2002a, p. 165.

As Figure 2.7 shows, the highest level of context that appears to influence academic writing is the academic institution. The academic discipline forms a contextual level below this. The next level of the model is the context of the course which, according to Samraj, does

not completely overlap with the discipline in terms of its value. A more specific context is that of task, and finally there is the context of each individual student in terms of the background and choices influencing the text produced.

2.8.3 Contrastive Genre Studies of Research Article Introductions Using the CARS (1990) Model

The previous section presented the structure of theses in terms of the moves and steps. Although most studies found moves similar to Swales's moves, the steps that realised the moves varied in frequency and function. There are many factors than can influence the steps. Based on the ESP school of thought, a genre is shaped by its discourse community, that is, those people who have direct or virtual contact with the writers.

Most contrastive genre studies (either from an SFL or ESP perspective) look at culture as one overarching entity without determining the various layers of culture, which was suggested by the new CR as the major influence in thesis introductions. Those studies, however, overlooked the concept of discourse community that has been the pillar of ESP and SFL. Therefore, for the purpose of the current study, the influencing factors of a genre will be discussed with references to the different layers of culture – the discourse community, the big culture and the small culture, which includes the disciplinary influence and the influence of the genre itself.

Contrastive CARS studies show culture does, to some extent, shape a genre as well. One common finding from cross-cultural studies is that the structures of introductions vary in terms of the existence of moves and steps, as well as the frequency and the sequence of the moves and steps. Fakhri (2004), for example, in his study of 28 introductions of RAs in Arabic on historical, political, social and economic issues pertaining to the Arab world, found that the global organisation of the RAIs was at variance with the CARS (1990) model. Only 11 introductions (39%) exhibited some instantiation of the three moves proposed by the model. He accounted for the lack of uniformity of the Arab rhetorical structure by pointing to the various academic backgrounds of the authors, being educated at various Arab and Western universities, which meant that the writers had been exposed to a variety of rhetorical traditions. Fakhri also found that even though the Arab writers made reference to previous studies, evaluations and discussions of previous research were rare. The writers did not criticise or challenge previous studies as a means of establishing a niche, but rather only summarised them. Fakhri suggested that this lack of critical evaluation may be ascribed

to the Arab culture, being a knowledge-telling culture, which involves "simple display of information and subject matter obtained from other sources" (p. 1130).

Similarly, Zhang and Hu (2010), who examined the genre of Chinese and English RAIs, also found some variations in rhetorical structures and concluded that academic writing exhibited culture-specific characteristics. Only 50% of Chinese introductions followed the CARS (1990) model, whereas 90% of English RAIs conformed to the model. Their study showed that the percentage of RAIs in the Chinese corpora using Move 1 was higher (51.76%) than the percentage of RAIs in the English corpora (42.86%) in providing background information. This means that Chinese writers paid more attention to Move 1 so as to provide background information.

Contrastive genre studies also showed that the incidence and frequency of steps differ from one RAI to another. Zhang and Hu (2010) found that the RAIs in the Chinese corpora employed Step 2 of Move 1 (background information) more than the RAIs in the English corpora. They also found that the Chinese RAIs employed Step 3: Reviewing previous research less than the English RAIs. The frequency of the three steps is shown in Table 2.9.

Table 2.9
Distribution of Move 1 steps (%)

Steps	English %	Chinese %
Step 1	33.33	40.90
Step 2	13.73	25.00
Step 3	52.94	34.04

Source: Zhang & Hu, 2010, p.80.

Zhang and Hu (2010) reported that the Chinese writers disregarded the importance of reviewing other studies because they "undertake the writing task as individuals, without fully identifying themselves as members of the academic community" (p. 85). They also suggested that the lack of this particular step is due to deficiencies in academic education in schools as well as the competitive research environment in Chinese academia.

Hirano (2009) analysed 20 applied linguistics RAIs written in Brazilian Portuguese and English using Swales's (1990) CARS model as an analytical tool. Similar to the studies discussed above, she also found the introductions in Brazilian Portuguese tended to follow a

different pattern from that of the model. Table 2.10 demonstrates the move structure of the RAIs in Brazilian Portuguese and English.

Table 2.10
Move structure of Brazilian Portuguese RAIs

RAIs	Moves	RAIs	Moves
BESP1	1	ESPj1	3-2
BESP2	1-3	ESPj2	1-3
BESP3	3	ESPj3	1-2-3-1-2-3-2-1
BESP4	1-3	ESPj4	1-2-3
BESP5	1-3-1-2-3	ESPj5	1-2-1-3
BESP6	1-3	ESPj6	1-2-3
BESP7	1-3	ESPj7	1-2-1-2-3
BESP8	3	ESPj8	1-2-1-2-3
BESP9	1-2	ESPj9	1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2-1-3-1-2-
BESP10	1-2-1-3	ESPj10	3-1-2-3

Source: Hirano, 2009, p. 244.

Table 2.10 shows that none of the Brazilian Portuguese RAIs followed the M1-M2-M3 sequence, and three RAIs had only Move 1. A very significant finding from Hirano's study is the absence of Move 2 in the majority of the Brazilian Portuguese texts. The absence of Move 2 is also a major characteristic found in a considerable number of cross-cultural studies which will be discussed later.

However, not all cross-cultural studies suggest some rhetorical differences across languages. A study by Kanoksilapatham (2007a) of 42 Thai RAIs in the field of biochemistry, which used Swales's (2004) revised model for introductions, showed that the structures of RAIs written in the national language and in English were the same. All the Thai RAIs contained the three moves. However, across the two corpora, Moves 1 and 3 were always present (100%) and Move 2 occurred less frequently (64.29%). Despite the similarities across the two languages in terms of the number of moves and the move sequences, an important difference in steps was found. Unlike the English RAIs which pinpoint the flaws of previous studies, Thai writers were found to prefer establishing their niche of the study by indicating the absence of such studies in Thailand. Kanoksilapatham suggested that this scenario occurs because Thailand is not a "critique culture" (p. 199). The lack of this strategy can be explained by the fact that Thais follow Buddhism which teaches them to be "modest and humble" (p. 199). With this and other similar explanations, we need to exercise caution. They are examples of the "ecological fallacy", meaning that variables at one level (in this case national characteristics) are used to explain behaviour at another level (in this case the

individual level). Not only are such explanations tautologies, they are incapable of proof and cannot easily handle research that comes up with different results.

One of the earliest studies to analyse the structure of academic research utilising the CARS (1990) model in Malaysia was conducted by Ahmad (1997). She carried out a move analysis of scientific research articles in Malay, looking particularly at introductions. Her study, like the current one, was motivated by the large gaps in information (at that time) on discourse structure of scholarly Malay, in general. Twenty research articles were chosen, falling into several categories of science: agriculture, biological sciences, applied science and engineering. Her analysis of the structure of introductions showed great similarity to the model. Thirteen out of 20 research articles had the three moves identified in the CARS (1990) model. However, attention should be drawn to the six (30%) research articles which lacked Move 2. Ahmad (1997) explained that various factors may account for the way in which the introductions were written, one of these being that the relatively small Malaysian scientific academic community meant that everybody was familiar with the work of everyone else. Since writers may thus share the knowledge domain, writing and publishing research in Malay is like writing to and for one's colleagues. Ahmad also highlighted the fact that academic research writing in Malaysia was for a local readership, not for a larger international audience. Therefore, indicating a gap (Move 2, Step 1A) seemed not to be the priority. In sum, the discourse community in which the texts were constructed, influenced and shaped the structure of the texts.

Further analysis of those articles that did employ the rhetorical strategy of Move 2 provides insights into how the writers establish the niche of their study, whether they are simply addressing a gap or employing a more critical evaluation of a niche. Ahmad reported that these articles merely described and summarised, and rarely criticised or evaluated previous work. This means that the writers were merely using previous literature as the main source of establishing territory but did not review and evaluate previous work critically. This was observed from the data on steps of Move 2 made by the writers. Most of the steps were Step 1B and Step 1D, indicating a gap and continuing a tradition. Even so, these moves were deemed "evasive and diffident" (Ahmad, 1997, p. 292) when compared to English research articles, since the writers did not really indicate any specific research gaps. The basis of the findings pointed to a lack of pressure and competitiveness amongst the academic community.

2.8.4 Contextual Influences in Structure

As mentioned above, none of the move analysis studies of thesis introductions considered the influence of the multilayered context in which the texts were constructed. However, genre analysis that looks at the influence of context on the overall structure of theses can assist us in understanding the relationship between the multilayered context of the academic setting and thesis Introductions. The interrelationship between the texts and the contexts may also impact on the internal structure of moves and steps.

Samraj's (2008) text samples were from students in a Master's program in environmental science in a School of Natural Resources and the Environment at Midwestern University in the United States. The most important questions asked in the interests of the present study are these: Do the selected academic institutions in Malaysia have an impact on students' Introductions? Can the universities' policies, i.e., vision and mission of the universities, and the PhD guidelines by the Graduate School of each university, influence the students' writing structure and organisation?

In addition, we need to take into account that the values of different disciplines can form a contextual layer around which the text is produced. Wildlife Behaviour is a component of ecology and is mainly concerned with hypothesis-testing and observable animal behaviour. Therefore, the written discourse found includes predictions based on various hypotheses about animal behaviour and so the "if-then" implication statements were considered important. Samraj also found that the values of the Wildlife Behaviour subdiscipline influenced the intertextual strategy of texts which are restricted to biological and ecological studies of wildlife, to scientific texts and to experiments.

In the context of the model's hierarchy (Figure 2.7), Samraj claims that the context of an academic course shares some values with the context of an academic institution and the broader discipline of which the course is a part. The texts in her study consist of those from Environmental Science and of two courses: Wildlife Behaviour and Resource Policy. The context of task can be referred to as the type of genre and the requirements and purpose of the genre. Similarly, Parry (1998) noted that various disciplines carry their own values that influence the discourse. Parry (1998), in her article "Disciplinary discourse in doctoral theses", discusses the stylistic conventions within broad disciplinary groupings, i.e., sciences, social sciences/applied professions and humanities, in the language of doctoral theses. Parry also reviews the underlying epistemological and cultural influences which

shape the writing. Particular attention is directed to, among other matters, the overall structure of argument and the techniques for achieving coherence. Figure 2.11 illustrates the language features in PhD theses in three disciplines.

Her study does not provide a comprehensive map of the language features of different disciplines, nor does it account for any relationship with a particular rhetorical move structure in the Introduction chapter. Nevertheless, it throws valuable light on the characteristics of a thesis based on its discipline and how disciplinary differences shape and can be shaped by language. Thus, the present study attempts to analyse how a disciplinary, such as Education, the Social Sciences or the Humanities, might influence or constrain the structure of PhD thesis introductions. This involves looking at the possibilities of any relationship between disciplinary areas and the rhetorical move structure.

Table 2.11

Language features in PhD theses

Criterion	Science	Social science/Applied profession	Humanities
Focus of the discipline	To clarify, organise, and describe the material world.	To describe and explain the world of human experiences	To provide an individual interpretation of the world of human experiences
Focus of the thesis	To report what is happening in the physical world. To add to existing knowledge. To find an answer to a question	To find an alternative to, or to test, an existing model or construct and sometimes to develop a new theory/ framework.	To argue for an individual interpretation. To provide new insights.
Structures	Report and explanation	Explanation and argument	Argument with recounting with recounting and narrative.
Characteristics of the language	Technical and concrete. Information is read literally. Classifies using taxonomies. The emphasis is on reporting. Causality is tacitly assumed.	Metaphorical, technical and abstract. Information is read metaphorically. The emphasis is on explanation and causality.	Highly metaphorical and abstract. Information is read metaphorically. The emphasis is on interpretation and argument.
Structure of argument	Argument is mainly analytical, which does not often explicitly challenge existing norms. Work mainly within established paradigm, and paradigm shift is rare. An argument is seldom qualified and justified.	Strong argument that is hortatory (argues to change the status quo); with co-existing but competing paradigms. Argument is highly qualified within the main texts.	Strong hortatory arguments that argue for one's own interpretation. Intellectual fashions substitute for paradigms; paradigms are individualistic.
Paragraph structure	Links back to the information in the topic sentence because of reporting.	Links from one sentence to the next because it is predominantly about explanation and argument.	Longs paragraphs (often one page or more) with a mixture of linking patterns depending on purpose. This purpose may shift within the paragraph.
Reference to existing	Judgement by inclusion or exclusion.	Overtly judgemental. Authors are cited as part of the argument or	Explicit but infrequent. The degree of appraisal varies. Ranges from

| authors and research | Authors are often cited in parentheses. Information focus. | invoked in the argument. Source focus | harsh (philosophy) to considerate (history). Form of reference mainly footnoting. Information or source focus depends on the field. |

Source: Parry, 1997, p. 297.

Samraj (2002a) says that the context of the task has perhaps the most obvious influence on the texts produced, at least for the texts that she analysed. She analyses papers from Wildlife Behaviour which are designated review papers. Writing such a paper does not require the writers to report on original research. The basic task for writing this paper is to include "a report of previous research as well as discussion of computing hypotheses and suggestions for future research" (Samraj, 2002a, p. 176). Therefore, the report is organised either chronologically or non-chronologically, whereas previous research is organised in such a way as to explicate the constituent factors. The context of task, i.e., the assignments that the students have to do, and the genre (a review paper), explain the structure of Samraj's texts. Since the paper included reports about previous research, very few writers problematised or justified the literature review. In other words, establishing the niche of the study is seen as an unimportant strategy for the paper.

Samraj considers that the context of task and the genre may have some implications for the structure of thesis Introductions. As discussed above, a thesis is a formal document whose purpose is to demonstrate that the researcher has significantly contributed to the body of knowledge of a particular discipline. In the introductory chapter in particular, the writer has to inform the reader about the subject of the thesis. The writer has to persuasively inform the reader of the purpose of the study and argue that it has some sort of significance and makes a contribution to knowledge. Therefore, in response to these specific tasks, the structure of Introductions must be manipulated. Hence, how is the communicative purpose of the Introductions manifested in the overall strategies of students' writing? Can the context of task and the genre influence the structure of thesis Introductions? If yes, how and why is the construction of a move embedded in task and genre? Answering these questions would shed light particularly in theoretical and pedagogical terms.

The student's backgrounds exert an influence on the structure of a text. Samraj (2002a) suggests that because of the genre and the rhetorical context, the students adopt a certain role. The students in her study take on the persona of a policy staff member advising an elected official within the Governor's office. The students' persona can be seen in the recommendations given where the students do not adopt "the norms for academic writing of mitigating face-threatening acts" (Samraj, 2002a, p. 171). In other words, the use of hedging devices is conspicuously absent. Samraj did not identify the influence of "student" in the construction of move or steps and while the current study does not analyse the metadiscourse of students' writing, it would be interesting to see whether students'

backgrounds have some effect on the rhetorical move structure of thesis Introductions. The writers in the current study were PhD students in receipt of a government scholarship. Are there any scholarship policies that indirectly shape the students' writing structure either at the move or step level? Most of the writers were lecturers who used to supervise students at the Master's level. The persona that they adopt while being a PhD student writing for a higher level of academics would be different. Will that influence the writers' rhetorical structure of moves and steps that are evident in the introductory chapter?

2.9   Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the concept of genre analysis within the ESP school of genre. It provides a general methodology used in genre analysis and corpus-based move analysis. The structure of this chapter has been to present the various theoretical approaches, methodological issues (particularly related to coding) and different conclusions from previous studies, and proposed these as the basis of the present study. The argument in this chapter has been that various findings at the move level as a result of different methods of coding, and the different interpretations of methods of coding have led to inconsistent results. The discrepancies in the results show that I have to provide a more transparent method when conducting a move analysis so that my findings will be as accurate as possible in defining the genre.

Therefore, in Chapter Three I will discuss the methodology employed in the present study. The chapter firstly looks at the general methodology of the study. The second part discusses the coding strategy and approaches adopted in the study. I conclude with a discussion of the controversies surrounding the interpretations of different terms raised in the last section of the current chapter.

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the method adopted for the study and its justification. The first part of this chapter discusses the general methodology of the study. The research approach, the instruments used and some ethical issues in the study will also be described. This section also puts forth explanations and discussions of the corpus used and its background, methods of data collection, and data analysis procedures with an explanation of the step-by-step procedures which were used to analyse the data. In the second part of the chapter, the problematic issues discussed in the previous chapter are addressed for the purpose of analysing the data of this study. Since this study employed computer-assisted tools in analysing the data, a step-by-step approach to analysis using the Wordsmith Tools is presented.

Part I

3.2   General Methodology of Study

This section discusses the general methods used in the study. It presents the research approach and some ethical issues which arose when carrying out the study.

3.2.1   Research Approach

This study employs aspects of both qualitative and quantitative approaches to research. According to Croker (2009), when little is known about a phenomenon or even when the existing research is limited, qualitative research is very useful for the exploration of possible patterns and underlying processes. This study is exploratory, part of a small but growing body of research using genre analysis of PhD theses, in a specific non-Western context, i.e., in Malaysia. But it also uses quantitative tools for coding, measurement, mapping and describing the moves and steps employed by authors to accomplish their communicative purposes.

This study adopts constructivist and naturalistic perspectives. Hammersley and Atkinson (1983), cited in Bunton (2002), say that "naturalism proposes that, as far as possible, the social world should be studied in its 'natural state', undisturbed by the researcher". Based on this, this study looked at naturally occurring texts, PhD theses which

had been submitted, examined and confirmed. There was no intervention during the writing process.

Tesch (1990), cited in Bunton (2002), claims that qualitative research does not deal with narrative only, but also includes numbers to some extent. He says that,

Qualitative research uses numbers too. How else would they find out about the pattern in their data if they didn't establish for how many cases in their study a certain result. (Tesch, 1990 p. 56)

As both qualitative and quantitative data was collected, this study can be regarded as taking a mixed method approach. Creswell (2008) defines mixed method as

a procedure for collecting, analysing, and mixing quantitative and qualitative data at some stage of the research process within a single study in order to understand a research problem more completely. (p. 535)

Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998), who also have a similar concept of mixed methods, typically refer to both data collection techniques and analysis as combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. Following Tashakkori and Teddlie's mixed method design, this study can be described as a dominant-less dominant mixed method design. On balance, this study is predominantly qualitative research since it is focused on relating the construction of meaning to the rhetorical organisation of written theses. However, some quantification of the units of analysis is used to assist in the search for similarities and variation in how communicative purposes are achieved by different rhetorical strategies.

The collection, analysis and mixing of qualitative and quantitative data in this study are defined by three main characteristics of the mixed method approach: timing, weighting and mixing. Using Creswell's (2003) notation (based on Morse, 1991, and Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998), the conceptual framework of the study is as visualised in Figure 3.1.

QUAL	QUAL	quan	Interpret
Written text (N= 8)	Coding and categorisation	Improvement scale of coding	Based on QUAN and QUAL analysis
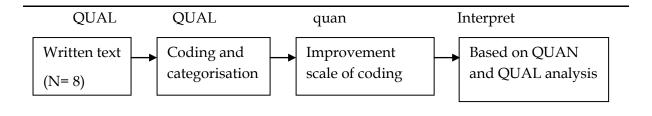
Figure 3.1. Conceptual framework of the study

The weight of the analysis differs from one point to another. QUAL (in u.c. letters) above the first two boxes shows the analysis employed solely a qualitative approach. The text samples are coded manually and the criteria for moves and the constituent steps are created based on the content. There is no quantification of data carried out during this process with the exception of having two raters check the reliability of the coding criteria, expressed as a percentage of the number of criteria agreed on. The terms QUAN and QUAL (in u.c. letters) in the final box show that similar weight is given to interpreting the data.

Timing, as suggested by Ivankova and Creswell (2009), refers to the sequence or order of the implementation of the qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis procedures and of two options, sequentially or concurrently. As shown in Figure 3.1, this study follows a sequential, linear process. Even though the QUAL coding and categorisation is in order, it has to be highlighted that the process of coding and devising of a new coding scheme was a rigorous one that took multiple readings and reflections on the texts. This happened when new findings that challenged the previous definition and criteria were found in a new text by a different writer.

Typically, genre analysis in general, and move analysis in particular, has been a quantitative endeavour because of the abundance of texts used. More importantly, the main aim of carrying out the schematic structure analysis is to find the presence and frequency of moves in order to classify the moves as either obligatory or optional. Upton and Cohen (2009) also suggest that a corpus-based approach requires both quantitative and qualitative techniques. Biber et al. (2007), cited in Upton and Cohen (2009), hold,

> Association patterns represent quantitative relations, measuring the extent to which features and variants are associated with contextual factors. However, functional [qualitative] interpretation is also an essential step in any corpus-based analysis. (p. 4)

Applying that to my study, the moves and steps in each text must be identified and coded individually and manually by the researcher. After the data have been quantitatively analysed, the results are interpreted qualitatively.

3.2.2 Instruments

The Create a Research Space (CARS) (1990) framework created by Swales, as well as a modified version by Bunton, were chosen as templates to analyse the thesis introductions in the study. Swales's (1990) CARS model was chosen as the template instead of the revised version because reducing the embeddedness of meaning of steps in the (1990) CARS model would be more significant when making comparison with other studies. The "Research Guideline Booklet" from each university selected for the study was also obtained for identification of possible influencing factors. Wordsmith Tools software was used for concordance and key-word search purposes. The plot dispersion tool in the concordance is important to validate the locations of the moves in the introductory chapters.

3.2.3 Context of Corpus

There are twenty government public universities and of these, five are conferred research universities by the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE). Three of these research universities are located in the state of Selangor and the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur. For reasons of access, I selected these three for my convenience sample: University of Malaya (UM), University Putra Malaysia (UPM) and National University of Malaysia (UKM). Theses were chosen from these three universities because the research community of the three universities was well established (at least for 30 years ago). Hence, the PhD framework from these universities that might influence the construction of the theses submitted to them is well established and nationally recognised.

3.2.3.1 Background of the Institutions

All higher institutions in Malaysia, including the twenty public universities, is supervised by the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia (MOHE). The ministry was established to administer the higher education matters and operations. Its vision is to make Malaysia a centre of higher educational excellence, in line with Vision 2020 set up by the government (MOHE p. 1). The three universities participating in this study are further under the jurisdiction of the Department of Higher Education, an organisation that regulates the nation's higher educational institutions, i.e., both public and private higher education in Malaysia. Its vision follows that of the ministry: to develop Malaysian Higher Educational Institutions as centres of academic excellence to an international standard. Therefore, to ensure the higher education sector's vision is in line with the ministry's and consequently,

the government's, the Department of Higher Education coordinates the policies, funding and activities. A further detailed description of MOHE and the Department of Higher Education is given in Appendix A. The importance of higher education achieving Malaysia's vision is stressed by Baba (2004, p. 1). He claims that higher education, according to the MOHE, is the main force in the implementation of the nation's vision in generating knowledgeable and skilled citizens. In addition, higher education is the main agent in creating a society "that is physically, emotionally, spiritually and intellectually ethical, respectable, competitive and well adjusted".

3.2.3.2   Research Policy of the Institutions

The postgraduate programme for the three universities comes under the administration of a separate unit of the universities: the Institute of Graduate Studies (UM), the Graduate School (UPM), and the Centre of Graduate Management (UKM). These units are important in upholding the universities' mission, and are equivalent to a university faculty. The missions and visions of the three universities are similar – to become world-renowned institutions and to have a society that is dynamic, knowledgeable and intellectually ethical.

In order to complete a postgraduate program in these universities, candidates are required to submit a dissertation or thesis. In view of this requirement, the research units of the three universities provide guidelines for the submission of dissertations or theses. These guidelines are intended to assist graduate students in the preparation of their theses in terms of format and writing conventions.

Upon confirmation, the theses have to be evaluated by at least three examiners specialised in the research area. Two examiners are academics from local universities in Malaysia and another must be an international scholar. After that, the PhD candidates have to undertake a viva voce examination which is an integral part of the examination process for all doctoral candidates in these three universities. This is where the candidates have to provide a verbal defence of their thesis.

3.2.4   Corpus of the Study

The primary corpus of this study is PhD thesis introductions. The reasons for this choice are:

1) Many genre analysis studies in the area of academic research writing have been carried out using research article introductions (RAIs); however, only a small number of studies have been conducted on PhD theses.

2) This study focuses on PhD theses rather than Master's theses because the former allows a more descriptive and critical evaluation. Even though theses can be done at two postgraduate levels, Master's and PhD, PhD theses are different from Master's theses in terms of their considerably longer length and also the functions of the PhD. PhD theses are required by many institutions (including in Malaysia) and are meant to show a higher academic level. The "gate-keepers" of PhD theses are more stringent in accepting a candidate into the academic community. Therefore, the pivotal feature of a PhD thesis is the writers' personal and original contributions to knowledge. Since undertaking a Master's thesis does not necessarily mean that the writers want to become members of the academic community, original contributions of the writers are not deemed essential, as in PhD theses. The examination of Master's theses is also not as rigorous as for PhD theses. Therefore, in realising this rigorous process, the PhD writer is assumed to devote a lot of thought to writing the thesis. The structure of the thesis must be appropriate and will be accepted by the academic community. A genre move analysis study of PhD theses allows a more descriptive and critical evaluation, especially in view of how texts shape and are shaped by social and cultural factors, institutional requirements and text type.

3) A more personal reason also contributed to the decision to choose PhD theses as the data for the study. As a PhD candidate myself, who, upon completion, will return to teaching and supervising postgraduate research, gaining a deep knowledge of the structure of PhD theses is invaluable. This will allow me to explain with more confidence and knowledge what a thesis needs (or at least what a Malaysian thesis should look like).

The theses were chosen on the basis of four criteria: field, time graduated, ethnic group and location of writers. The two disciplines selected were social sciences and humanities. This was not only to make the corpora as similar as possible but also because of the prominent variation in textual patterns. Echoing Duszak (1997, p. 11), the communication styles in the humanities and the social sciences "respond strongly to language and culture-bound discoursal preferences and constraints". The areas of studies

were then restricted to English or Educational Studies for both practical and substantive reasons. Firstly, the theses from these areas are written in English, whereas theses written in other fields are commonly done in the Malay language. Secondly, I am more familiar with these disciplines, compared to other disciplines, based on my educational background. Most importantly, knowledge about the thesis genre is useful for my teaching, being a teacher in the Faculty of Languages and Linguistics.

In addition to considering the fields, only recent postgraduate students who graduated in 2008 were selected. This must be taken into consideration since the temporal factor might also affect the rhetorical configuration of texts (Moreno, 2008) since genres are fluid and not of a fixed nature.

The third criterion was ethnicity. Malaysia has three main ethnic groups, i.e., Malay, Chinese and Indian; however, this study only focused on Malay writers. This was because past research has shown that one's first language does, to some extent, influence writing in the second language. Therefore, it was best (to my knowledge) to control for possible variables. Although it would be interesting to compare rhetorical strategies between the main linguistic and ethnic groups in Malaysia, this exploratory study only had the resources and time to study the rhetorical strategies of a single ethnic group, i.e., Malay. It would have been beyond the scope of an exploratory study to attempt a comparative analysis before the baseline knowledge for the majority group had been established.

Obtaining the theses was not without its problems. My first obstacle was identifying the theses. As I collected my data in 2009, the last participant had graduated in 2008. However, in accordance with the universities' policies, theses passed in the previous year are not placed in the library. When referring to "Thesis Online", a Malaysian online site where previous theses can be found, only some of the theses passed in 2008 were available. These theses, however, were not complete as only a maximum of twenty-five pages in a single thesis were published. Therefore, most of the introduction sections in the theses were not complete.

Hence, my only option was to ask each university for a copy of their 2008 Graduation Ceremony Booklet to obtain the names of the students who had graduated that particular year. As the scope of work was different from one university to the other, The Graduation Booklet was kept either in the library, with the School of Postgraduate Studies or in the Student Academic Office. The corpus was then individually chosen, based on the above

criteria. Another obstacle arose when searching for theses from UM and the booklet could not be found. Therefore, theses were chosen from the 2008 rack in the sorting department, before they were put on display on the public rack. After identifying the graduates, my second obstacle was to locate the graduates. Since the universities could not disclose their personal particulars, I searched via the Internet. The thesis writers were then contacted via e-mail, after which I called them personally.

Thesis writers living in the same State, preferably in an area close to the researcher, were selected. From these theses, the introduction sections were chosen. The step-by-step procedures in obtaining the corpus and the nature of the corpus are shown in Figure 3.2:

Universities (UM, UPM, UKM)
↓
School of Graduate studies
↓
Theses passed in 2008
↓
Theses from Humanities and Social Sciences
↓
Theses written by writers who are Malays
↓
Theses written by writers who are accessible
↓
Introduction section
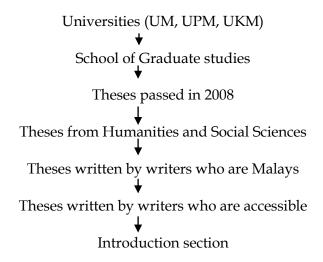
Figure 3.2. Procedure of data selection and nature of corpus

Therefore, only eight theses were identified. Nine students graduated from UM in 2008 but only four were Malays. The researcher identified three writers who were willing to participate. The three participants represent 75% of the total population of Malay PhD students from this university. From UPM, ten PhD students graduated in 2008, with five being Malay. Three were chosen as they live and/or work in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur, hence the data from this university comprises 60% of the population of Malay PhD students. From UKM, six PhD students graduated in 2008 from two faculties: Faculty of Education and Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities. Of the six theses, only three were written by Malay students, two of whom resided in Selangor and the other in Sarawak; hence I chose the writers from Selangor. Therefore the data from UKM comprises 70% of the total population of Malay PhD students. Table 3.1 summarises the characteristics of theses used in the study:

Table 3.1

Characteristics of the corpus

University	No. Of theses	Year	Disciplines	Ethnic of writers
UM	3	Theses passed	Social Sciences	All PhD writers
UPM	3	in	and Humanities	are Malay
UKM	2	2008		

3.2.5   Data Analysis Procedures

I began my text-coding approach by reviewing Upton and Cohen's (2009) BCU approach to move analysis as presented in Chapter Two.

In order to identify the move categories of a genre, it is necessary to get a "big picture" understanding of the overall rhetorical purpose of the text in the genre (1). Once the overall rhetorical purpose is understood, it is then necessary to look at the function of each text segment and evaluate what its local purpose is (2). This can be rather difficult. Move types need to be distinctive. Multiple readings and reflections on the text are needed before clear move types, with their defining function(s), emerge. During this process, one needs to look for any common functional and/ or semantic themes (3) represented by the various text segments that have been identified, especially those that are in relative proximity to each other or often occur in approximately the same location in various texts representing the genre. (Upton & Cohen, 2009, p. 591)

As seen in the above quotation, Upton and Cohen (2009) first suggest determining the rhetorical purpose of the genre. As for the introduction section in a thesis, the main purpose is to justify the value of the research and to show why it is distinct from what is documented in the literature (Creswell, 2003). Hashim (2008, p. 21) suggests that an introduction section of a thesis is to "… introduce the present study and provide necessary background information, and show that it is important or needed".

The text samples were then skimmed for the titles, the sub-headings, the objectives of the study and the research questions. The title gave a general idea of the writer's study. The sub-headings gave clues as to the writer's intention. Identifying the objective of the study as well as the research questions was vital to tell me what the writers' intentions were.

The first stage of coding was done on three theses as the basis of setting preliminary coding criteria. At this stage, looking at three theses was sufficient as it covered 38% of the total sample. In addition, it was considered that these three theses were sufficient in generalising to the rest of the samples as the new steps found were similar across these three theses. The first coding scheme used Bunton's modified CARS model as starting point. Since the identification of the communicative units or moves and their constituent element of steps in the first coding involve subjective judgements, a second or further coding might increase the validity of the results. One practical solution to the problem of achieving accuracy of text analysis is the use of the inter-rater reliability technique, using field specialists as independent raters. According to Bhatia (1993), since field specialists are active members of a particular discourse community, they are more aware of the generic features in a particular discipline than people outside the community. However, Swales (1990) claims that working with field specialists can be very time-consuming and that it raises uncertainty when comparing data from different disciplines. He notes that although they might seem to offer a solution for the potential subjectivity of the text analysis by the genre analyst, discussions with the field specialists are also "…subject to all subjective features of personality, allegiance, status and so on that this repertoire exhibits". He also reminds us that relying too much on field specialists may also posit a danger. They may know about the content, but unlike a genre analyst, they might be clueless as to how the information should be organised.

In this study, a panel of two co-raters was used to identify the validity of coding. The first co-rater was an English lecturer who specialised in genre theory and genre analysis. The second co-rater was also an English lecturer, continuing a postgraduate degree in English in Educational Studies. Since both of the co-raters had an English language teaching background, they were familiar with most of the topical research of the text samples. We coded the text by hand since "coders are seeking to understand the functional semantic purposes of text segments" (Biber, Connor, & Upton, 2007, p. 33). After that, I expected that the results should be confirmed with a sufficiently high level of agreement.

However, problems occurred in the initial coding in classifying certain statements into moves and steps. This happened when agreement amongst the raters, expressed in a percentage, was low. Agreement was calculated using the following formula:

No. of agreements / (No. of agreements + no. of differences) x 100 = percentage of agreements

In the first inter-reliability test, agreement was found to be 43%. This means that the coding of the texts by the raters was not consistent. In a subsequent meeting, several problematic issues were acknowledged and discussed. New coding criteria were set up in order to refine the definition of moves and validate the analysis, particularly where there were several statements with two (or more) or embedded meanings. One of the problematic codings occurred when classifying Step 4 of Move 1: Reviewing Previous Research. Excerpts from Thesis 1 are given as examples.

Example 3.1: Problematic Codings Classifying Move 1 Step 4 in Thesis 1

a)   A study that has attempted to examine CS among Malaysian university students in relation to the workplace domain was carried out by Halizah (2003). Her subjects were made up of six final-year students following the Chemical Engineering course at UKM. Only Malay students were involved in the study, which comprised three male and three female students.

b)   Studies on CS (e.g., Bialystok, 1983; Haastrup and Phillipson, 1983; Nayar 1987; Paribakht, 1985; Chen, 1990; Yarmohammadi and Seif, 1992; Khanji, 1996) have shown that communicators who were able to get their message across effectively use strategies which help to enhance communication. On the other hand, the less effective communicators who transmit a less clear message would make more use of reduction strategies.

c)   Pennycook (1994) indicates, for instance, that the educational policies of the British must be understood within the context of the economic and political interests of colonialisation.

The excerpts above show three statements using citations. Based on Bunton's template, all three statements could show Step 4. However, since coding was done subjectively based on individual judgements, the three excerpts were coded differently and 100% agreement on this step was not achieved. Therefore, the criteria for coding this particular step had to be fine-tuned. After improving the criteria, excerpts (a) and (b) were classified as Step 4: Reviewing previous studies and (c) Step 2: Making topic generalisation and giving background information.

Another major discrepancy amongst the raters was the identification of statements of problems and needs. We found that statements of this kind carried a dual function: one as background information to the topic and one assuming a heavier task. The excerpt below is an example taken from Thesis 1 from the first coding:

Example 3.2: Problematic Coding in the Identification of Problems/Need in

Thesis 1

However, Khong (1996) asserts that in most real-life situations, the needs for English "in certain areas" in the job market remains unfulfilled.

In the initial coding, the raters disagreed as to how to code the statement above as the niche of the study. One reason postulated in the discussion was the absence of any indication of the topic of research in the statement. The writer's focus of study was "Communicative strategies" and the statement above was considered a very general introductory statement.

To address the problems in the first coding, I referred to Lewin et al.'s (2001) and Kwan's (2006) semantic-functional approach of coding moves (see Part II of this chapter for detailed description). When a new step (which was not found in Bunton's template) was found, it was added to the list of steps to look for. This step helped to fine-tune the coding criteria by having clear definitions and examples taken from the present data. To retest the inter-reliability of the criteria, a second coding with the same three theses was conducted with the co-raters. The percentage of agreement in the second coding was 86%, which was higher than in the initial coding. At this point, some discussions to resolve the discrepancies took place.

An example of the discrepancies in the second coding was the over-coding of Move 3 Step 6: Significance of the Study. As Lewin et al. (2001) found, coding tends to refer to linguistic or lexico-grammatical features. As when describing the significance of the study in the present research, I considered modals as characterising criteria for steps. This eventually caused problematic coding when modals did not have a distinct function. Hence, a single modal item can form two functions at the same time. For example, the second coding criterion categorised Step 6 in three ways: Indicating significance by predicting (e.g., will); indicating significance by anticipating result (e.g., hope); and indicating significance through argument (e.g., could, may). Sometimes, a statement does not have any modals when

showing significance. This too affected the raters' agreement. The coding for this step was later fine-tuned until there was agreement by all raters. It was decided that any statements claiming significance and benefits to the study would be coded as M3s6.

The final coding of the remaining five theses took place to check the validity of the "new" coding criteria and to confirm the extent of a common rhetorical structure of the theses. A new model that was acceptable for ESL PhD theses by Malay writers was developed. These stages of identification of communicative units of moves and steps can be summarised in Figure 3.3. The procedures move from top to bottom as indicated by the arrow. Even though the procedures look linear, they are actually recursive i.e. involve frequent re-reading and referencing. As shown by the lines and arrows in the framework, the analyst has to refer to the whole idea of the particular study before confirming the moves and steps.

```
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ Determine the rhetorical purpose │
│ of the genre                │
└─────────────────────────────┘
           │
           ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ Identify and read the titles, sub- │
│ headings, objectives of the study │
│ and research questions      │
└─────────────────────────────┘
           │
           ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ Conduct first coding to identify │
│ the steps that realised a move by │
│ using Bunton's model as a   │
│ template                    │
└─────────────────────────────┘
           │
           ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ Conduct second coding to fine- │
│ tune definitions of coding criteria │
│ based on Kwan (2006) and Lewin │
│ et al. (2001)               │
└─────────────────────────────┘
           │
           ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ Develop coding criteria with │
│ clear definitions and examples of │
│ moves and steps             │
└─────────────────────────────┘
           │
           ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ Third coding was conducted to │
│ identify the moves and steps │
└─────────────────────────────┘
           │
           ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ Interpretation of data      │
└─────────────────────────────┘
```

Figure 3.3. Framework for developing an acceptable model for PhD theses by Malay writers

3.2.6 Ethical Issues

The main ethical issue in the study is the confidentiality and anonymity of the subjects. Although doctoral theses, once examined are public documents, the participants' confidentiality was still respected during the course of the study. Even though the number of participants in the study, particularly the PhD writers, is small and the possibility of them being recognised is high, I have maximised their anonymity, which was discussed with and agreed to by the participants. Hence, their names as well as the thesis titles were not disclosed, nor were the supervisors'. However, it would be difficult not to disclose the names of the universities involved. This is because the criteria for the study's data collection

limited the universities to the research universities in the states of Selangor and Federal Territory Kuala Lumpur. As there are only five research universities in Malaysia, and three of them are in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur, the universities participating in the study are easily recognised.

Part II

3.3   Coding Strategies Used in Text Samples

In Chapter 2, I identified a number of problematic issues in carrying out a genre analysis. From the literature of previous research we can conclude that the array of terminology in approaching the analysis has resulted in various interpretations and inconsistencies in conducting genre analysis. I have deduced three themes when coding data: (1) the general approach to the analysis of data; (2) the unit of analysis, which means a text segment that carries a meaning; and (3) the strategies used to identify the boundaries of moves.

The main purpose of this section is to present and discuss the coding strategies employed in the study. The quest for identifying the communicative unit of moves and steps was a rather laborious process. The first challenge was to identify the intention and the textual boundaries of the text. The question of how boundaries of structural elements in texts were determined in this study will be first addressed by various suggestions from past researchers, as discussed in Chapter Two, followed by my own reflections and consideration of what I think to be appropriate for the study. In doing so, I provide detailed descriptions from my own study.

3.3.1   Approach to Text Analysis

My study primarily takes a top-down approach when coding, based on meaning. However, to code a text segment the function of which is uncertain, a bottom-up approach is used for confirmation, and reference is made to several linguistic features.

3.3.2   Basic Unit of Analysis

Since the study is derived from Swales's perspective on genre, the unit of analysis should realise the communicative purpose of the text. Therefore, the study is flexible in

regard to the unit of analysis, initially proposing the sentence as its smallest unit of analysis. Example 3.3 below presents an excerpt from Thesis 1 as an instance of a move realised in a sentence.

Example 3.3: Thesis 1

> Communication takes place between teachers and learners, and learners and learners. However…

The sentence shows a single function which is Move 1, Step 2: Topic generalisation and background information. However, there are instances of sentences which consist of two or more clauses (compound and complex) where each clause realises a different function. This can be seen in the two examples (1a and 1b; 2a and 2b) in Figure 3.4.

(1a) **Therefore, other contexts concerning the workplace domain need to be studied,**

(1b) which the present study attempts to do.

(2a) Furthermore, as the skills of voicing agreement, disagreement, negotiating, and decision-making are essential when participating in a meeting,

(2b) the present study also attempts to examine how interactional CS are used when the ESL learners are engaged in such discourse.

Figure 3.4. Extract of an Introduction text: unit of analysis

Examples 1a and 1b show a sentence made up of two clauses. Al-Qahtani's (2006) criteria for the unit of analysis when there are two or more clauses (choose the function which is more obvious) could not be implemented in this case. This is because there were two identified functions which are of the same importance. 1a shows the niche of the study, which is the need (Move 2) and 1b indicates the aim of the study (Move 3). Similarly, 2a and 2b show the two parts of a compound sentence. 2a represents the scope of the study which the writer intends to examine (Move 3, Step 2), and 2b illustrates the aim of the research (Move 3 Step 2).

As in Al-Qahtani (2006), the realisation of a specific function is based on the text as a whole, as the extract from Thesis 1 in Example 3.4 below shows:

Example 3.4: Thesis 1

> The system of education in Malaysia was administered by the British in the early19th century in accordance with their policy of "divide and rule" that reflects their

colonial policy. Pennycook (1994) indicates, for instance, that the educational policies of the British must be understood within the context of the economic and political interests of colonialisation. This means that the locals were educated in order to train them for a workforce which would serve the needs of the colonial power…

As a result, Bahasa Melayu became the medium of instruction in the education system in the 1960's, while English was phased out as the medium of instruction in schools and began to be taught as a second language. Asmah (1992), indicates that the government, while firmly instituting the national language for purposes of nationalism, has allowed the use of English in certain domains, "even at the official level" (Asmah, 1992, pp. 64-67).

The whole paragraph is coded as Move 1, Step 2: Giving background information. The writer gives a historical review of language education in Malaysia. In short, the unit of analysis for this study is the communicative purpose which can be realised flexibly in a clause, a sentence, several sentences and paragraphs. In this study, in relation to communicative purpose, more than 50% of the units of analysis were sentences. The unit of analysis used least to discern communicative purpose is the clause. There were also a number of communicative purposes achieved within a paragraph, especially those of Move 3. In explaining the theoretical perspective of the study, Move 3, Step 9: Theoretical perspective, for example, was realised in a number of paragraphs. Another example is Move 3, Step 12: Defining terms. The thesis writers normally take a paragraph to interpret a term used for the study.

3.3.3 Identification of Move and its Boundaries

This study examined the moves and steps of PhD theses through both the semantic and the functional approach. Both approaches were considered because of the length of the chapter. Unlike introductions in RAs, PhD thesis introductions are around 7,000 words in length, which is equivalent to the average number of words in one article (normally around 5,000 to 8,000 words). Therefore, PhD thesis writers are able to use more diverse ways to report their research. RA writers, on the other hand, have to report their study in a clear-cut and precise manner. Using both approaches have helped the analysis and identification of the writers' intentions and hence, the boundaries of the texts.

As mentioned, I referred to Kwan's (2006) and Lewin et al.'s (2001) semantic-functional approach. The semantic approach to coding, according to Kwan, is analysis through recurring ideational elements that can categorise a move or a step. In classifying

Moves 1 and 2 through the semantic approach, Lewin et al. (2001) identified two basic categories, common to the two moves of the CARS (1990) model but realised variably in them. The first is "participants" and the second is "claim". In Move 3, the main purpose is to outline the contents of the study and/or describe the purpose of the study. The system and the realisation of Move 3 consist of three basic categories: "participants", "process" and "claim".

According to Lewin et al. (2001, p. 30), every move should contain at least one of the following participants: a research (product or producer); the phenomena being studied; and/or the population affected by the phenomena where each participant should bear some form of "attribute". They note that selecting the semantic term "attribute" would allow coding to include all descriptions, regardless of their grammatical class. An example of Lewin et al.'s (2001) system of realisation of moves can be seen in Table 3.2:

Table 3.2
Realisation rules for Move 1 "claim relevance"

FEATURE	REALISATION

Participants
   Phenomenon under study
   Research
        producers
        products
 	
Claim
Magnitude
	
	Aim of research
	
	Investigators
	Analysis, focus, study, topic
	
	attribute of [Research: products or producers]: *growing* literature; topic of discussion for *many years*

Text 5:
'Over the past decade, many investigators [MAGNITUDE + PRODUCER] have called for a close analysis of the language learning environment of the young infant …[AIM OF RESEARCH]

Source: Lewin et al., 2001, p. 33.

Applying the criteria for the semantic components of participants and attributes, the text above can be coded as claim relevance. It entails the participant "investigators" being the bearers of the attribute "magnitude". It is worth noting that Lewin et al.'s (2001) semantic network operates only as a guideline. Caution has to be taken since the text samples of their study and those of the present study are different. Thus far, I note that the coding criteria for the moves and steps should first and foremost reflect the text samples, and a statement of any moves or steps should have a participant and the attributes of the participant functions as the claim.

While coding following the semantic approach, I also tend to refer to linguistic clues such as conjunctions. I looked at the fixed formulaic as well as the discourse clues, including the sub-headings. Although they do not explicitly and directly signal the boundary of units, they facilitate their identification, to some extent, by providing important information for the analyst to understand and so identify the communicative purpose of the segment of a text. It should be noted that using linguistic clues for the identification of moves and steps is not a simple process; rather, a careful reading and understanding has to be carried out. Hasan (1978, p. 242), in her early work in the area of genre analysis, claimed that "the boundaries of a text can normally be determined by reference to patterns of cohesion", where one of the ways is through the use of cohesive markers, i.e., conjunctions. In the present study, the use of conjunctions could not completely facilitate the determination of moves and steps. This was because conjunctions were found to be wrongly employed in a number of occurrences. An example can be seen from the excerpt from Thesis 2 shown in Example 3.5 below:

Example 3.5: Conjunctions in Thesis 2

> According to Smith (1982), "comprehension means relating what we don't know or new information to what we already know, which is not a random collection of facts, but a theory of the world" (p. 84). However, a reader may not be able to comprehend a reading text if he does not know anything about the text. Thus, a critical determinant of comprehension is the reader's prior or background knowledge, otherwise known as "schemata".

The first sentence asserts the meaning of comprehension. By referring to the causal conjunction "however", one can judge it as the clue for the writer to establish her niche. However, the use of the conjunctions was not to establish a niche. The writer employed the conjunction to explain the cause of unsuccessful comprehension at Move 1 level. Therefore, considering lexical clues, such as in the example above, the identification of moves should be done cautiously. Similarly, Ventola (1987), in her research on "service encounter" texts, found conjunctions to be the least indicative of cohesive relations in marking text boundaries.

Some genre analysts employ formulaic expressions (FEs) in deciphering the meaning of text, for instance, Ahmad (2000) in his move analysis of Indonesian RAIs. Ahmad employed fixed or formulaic expressions such as "the general aim of the study" to identify

the main purpose of the research. However, from my point of view, an expression can only be considered "fixed" or "formulaic" when it is used several times in the text samples. Therefore, I only partially agree with Ahmad's idea.

I have a fairly different way of looking at the meaning of term(s) and how it relates to text comprehension. According to Lancker-Sidtis and Rallon (2004), FEs contain lexical items with non-literal meanings. In general, fixed expressions, especially idioms, proverbs and collocations, are more frequent in spoken than written text. In written text, they appear to be more frequent in narrative texts rather than, for example, expository and problem-solutions text. In tying it with Ahmad's interpretation of FEs, some of the FEs have a linguistic relation in "term": conjunctive adverbs. Therefore, FEs such as *in short* and *in fact* are collocations signalling a "summary" for the former and "moreover" for the latter.

The semantic approach was not sufficient to code the data, so I also resorted to a functional approach. Research by Hasan (1978), Ventola (1987) and Hunston (1989) concurred that structural divisions in texts should be viewed and analysed cognitively. Bhatia (1993) also maintains that, at certain points, we need to resort to cognitive judgement rather than linguistic criteria in identifying textual boundaries. Thus, when coding a segment of text using a functional approach, Kwan (2006) suggests the analyst ask some questions, such as "How does this segment help achieve the local purpose and the macro purpose of the text?" These types of questions allow answers that are in line with the theoretical definition of a move, i.e., that each move has a local purpose but also contributes to the overall rhetorical purpose of the text.

Therefore, taking the example of Reviewing Previous Studies in the initial coding in before, excerpt (c) in Example 3.1 cannot be coded as Step 4 because its local purpose is to describe a phenomenon by presenting findings of previous research.

So far, I have addressed the inconsistencies found in coding a move. I have attempted to interpret the major terms used when coding and applied them in my study. I have also, in Chapter Two, argued that there were discrepancies in the way researchers analysed and interpreted the findings of move cycles. Three different views on how a move cycle was interpreted, by Bunton (2002), Arulandu (2005) and Soler-Monreal et al. (2010, were presented.

For the present study, I agreed with Soler-Monreal et al.'s (2010) description of a move cycle. A move cycle is derived from the major move configuration. This move configuration shows the move sequence found in the text. A step-by-step example of how a cycle of move was interpreted in the study is presented below.

1. Text is tagged into moves

Since then, studies on creativity have been done in this country. The earliest academic study was pioneered by Yong (1984) and was followed by Palaniappan (1993…. Significant gender differences were found between boys and girls with respect to "Process". Palaniappan (1993), on the other hand, examined From Four students' creativity and their academic achievement along the intelligence continuum and discovered a creativity threshold.	Move 1
Based on these studies on Malaysian creativity, gaps still exist in the literature. Several dimensions of creativity still need to be examined and these creativity findings need to be added ..	Move 2
Numerous creativity correlates namely gender, location, socioeconomic status, cognitive levels, self-concept, intelligence, home environments, learning styles and parental influence have been examined….	Move 1
Apparently the pattern of these findings were inconclusive …	Move 2

2. Describe coded text as a move sequence

Based on the excerpt above, the sequence of moves is [1-2-1-2].

3. Identify the move configuration

A move configuration can be seen when the writer has achieved a single local communicative purpose, i.e., a move, and then progressed to achieve another communicative purpose, i.e., one move progresses to another, different move. The move sequence [1-2-1-2] of the excerpt shows the writer has succeeded in establishing the territory by reviewing previous research (Move 1) and then presented the problem that becomes the niche of the study (Move 2).

4. Identify and interpret cycles of move

The move found in the excerpt is the pairing of Move 1 and Move 2. Since this pairing occurs twice (as shown in Number 3), it can also be interpreted as two cycles. In other words, the writer organised the text through occupying Move 1 and Move 2 recursively before she situated her study within the research area. A move configuration may also consist of three moves. This happens when the writer presents some background

information of the study (Move 1), then problematises the study (Move 2) and then reports the writer's own research (Move 3). The move configuration based on this strategy is [1-2-3]. An example of this configuration can be seen in a particular part of the move sequence of Thesis 2 in Example 3.6 below. The sequence above shows the major configuration is [1-2-3] and it happens in two cycles.

Example 3.6: Two cycles of [1-2-3] in Thesis 2

Thesis 2: [1-2-3]-[1-2-3]

Since my interpretation of "cycle" is as outlined above, I do not discuss this term explicitly as Arulandu (2005) does. The term "cycle" in the move analysis of the present study does not mean the progression of one move to another, but instead shows the progression of one move configuration to another. In other words, I argue that discussing move cycles after identifying the move configuration shows a more critical way of interpreting the writer's structure.

After the text samples are coded, a computerised analysis takes place to provide the frequency and location of the moves and constituent steps. I did this by employing the WordSmith Tools software program.

3.3.4 Operating Wordsmith Tools in Data Analysis

WordSmith Tools (Scott, 2008) is a software program that provides corpus linguistic tools for looking for patterns in language. By manipulating the program, the frequency and location of moves can be graphically displayed. It can then inform us about the unique strategies of presenting the introductory chapter, how each writer incorporates the moves when providing the relevance of the research to the readers. At this point, it would be sufficient to carry out a corpus-based analysis of the thesis genre in order to visually confirm the overall move structure of the corpus. The selected texts are encoded electronically, revealing a more transparent outcome in terms of frequency distribution and organisational patterns.

As suggested by Connor, Biber and Upton (2007), in the top-down approach the analytical framework is developed first and the text analysis is carried out based on coding criteria developed for the analysis. Below is a systematic, comprehensive description of the corpus-based, top-down analysis used in the study.

1. Determining the move categories and coding the corpus

Considering the findings from previous studies, together with my own semantic-functional analyses of the present text samples, I prepared a new set of coding criteria (see Chapter Four). The texts were then coded and the coding checked for inter-rater reliability among the researcher and the two co-raters.

2. Coding moves in the corpus

Moves were tagged manually using WordSmith Tools. In order to operate tools in Wordsmith, texts samples must be in plain text (.txt). Figure 3.5 shows a screenshot of an excerpt illustrating how a thesis introduction is tagged to different moves in the plain text format. As can be seen, moves are coded in brackets. In the screenshot, the move tagged is (m1) which means Move 1. From here on, a number of applications in WordSmith Tools were used to ascertain the frequency and location of moves.
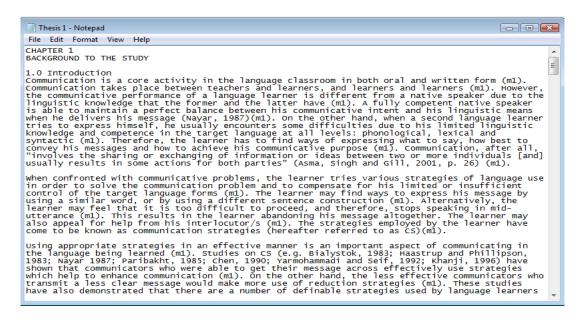
Figure 3.5. Screenshot of an Introduction in plain text (.txt) format

3. Analysing frequency of moves and identifying location of moves in thesis introductions

To see the frequency of moves and the location of moves in the text samples, I referred to WordSmith's Concord tool. Figure 3.6 shows a screenshot of a Concord setting from WordSmith's Concord tool. The two icons on the Concord Settings used were "Text" and "Search Word". In the screenshot, a search word "m1" is keyed in, and the computer will tag all "m1" in the texts.
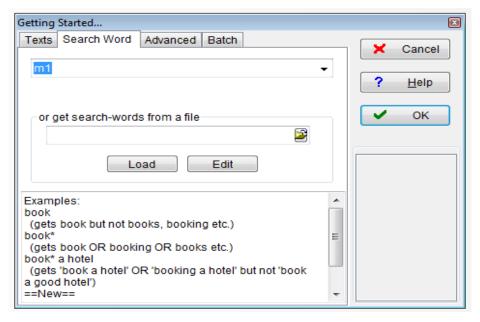
Figure 3.6. Screenshot from WordSmith – Concord setting

A text or a compilation of texts has to be selected in order for the Concord tool to find the search word. Therefore, the "Texts" tool seen on the far left of the Concord setting in Figure 3.6 is clicked to select the text. Figure 3.7 shows a screenshot of the text selection.
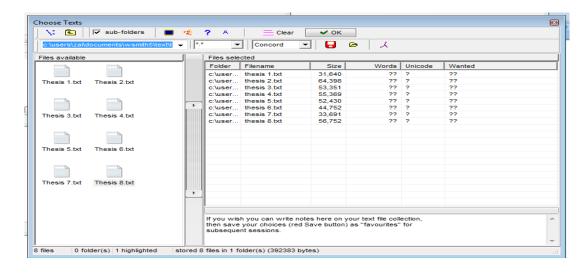
Figure 3.7. Screenshot from WordSmith – Text Selection

On the left of the screenshot in Figure 3.7, there are eight text files which have been imported from the plain text. The eight text files refer to the eight coded thesis introductions. On the right of the screenshot are the eight texts chosen for further analysis. Having specified the search term in eight text files, Figure 3.8 shows the first twenty-first lines of the concordance for "M1". The search word "M1" can be seen in the middle of the screenshot in

blue. On the far right of the screenshot are the names of the text files. The screenshot shows the first twenty-one "M1" occurrences in Thesis 1.
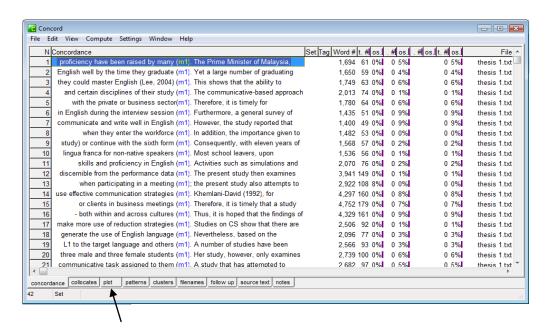
Figure 3.8. Screenshot from Concordance

According to Baker (2006), the object of creating concordances is to look for patterns of language use, based on repetitions. However, relying on concordances is not sufficient as they do not tell us where the search word occurs within individual texts. In order to see the location of M1 in the texts, the dispersion of the texts was plotted. The plot represents a visual representation of where a search term occurs. The dispersion plot can be retrieved from the concordance settings. The concordance screenshot of Figure 3.8 shows that there are nine tools at the base, each for a different purpose. The location of Move 1 in T1 can be viewed when choosing the "plot" tool. The dispersion plot in Figure 3.9 shows the location of Move 1 in T1.
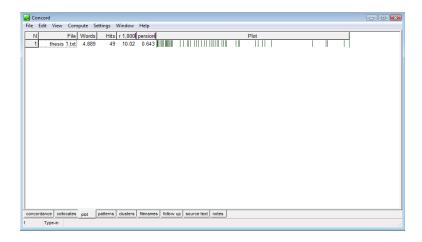
Figure 3.9. Screenshot from WordSmith – Plot Dispersion

The dispersion plot gives the file name, the total number of words in the file, the number of "hits" (occurrences of M1) and the number of occurrences per 1,000 words. The vertical black lines are the visual representation of where each occurrence of M1 is found in the corpus. Each black line in the dispersion plot represents one occurrence of Move 1. The frequency of moves can be seen from the "hits" matrix in the dispersion plot.

3.4   Conclusion

The first part of this chapter has presented the general methodology of the study, i.e., the research approach, the instruments used for data analysis and the ethics issues considered while undertaking this study. I have also included contextual aspects of the main data, including the site and nature of the corpus.

In the second part of this chapter, I illustrated how I tried to address any inconsistencies of coding by refining the terms used for the coding of moves. I suggested that the basic unit of analysis in the study is the communicative purpose of the genre and that the structural realisation of communicative purpose is flexible: it can be a clause, a sentence, a few sentences or paragraph(s). Lewin et al.'s (2001) and Kwan's (2006) semantic-functional approach was adopted in identifying a text's communicative purpose. Linguistic clues were also used to identify moves, but this was done rather cautiously. It is important to note that my study does not aim to solve the problem of inconsistencies and variations found in approaches to coding in different studies. I realise that whatever approach a researcher takes, our interpretations will not completely avoid ambiguity. However, I wish to suggest that some coding issues, i.e., terms or interpretations of analysis, can and ought to

be standardised when doing a move analysis, particularly in longer texts such as thesis introductions.

What follows in the presentation of my coding criteria in the next chapter represents the development of an approach that is more detailed, more rigorous and, I hope, more context- and purpose-sensitive, particularly in the analysis of thesis introductions. The coding criteria are derived mainly from Lewin et al.'s (2001) and Kwan's (2006) semantic network. I will provide evidence, that is, examples from the text samples, as a method of argument in building the coding criteria. I hope the quality of my approach will provide better analyses and a standard that will facilitate comparability across cultures and areas and possibly disciplines.

Chapter Four
Coding Criteria

4.1 Introduction

When comparing analyses from different studies, the question of validity is important, particularly when the degree of meaning of moves and steps varies. This could be because many studies do not formulate or construct their "common and recurring ideas" into a semantic theme or quantified attributes. To my knowledge, only Kwan (2006) and Lewin et al. (2001) provided criteria to do so. This study follows Lewin et al.'s (2001) and Kwan's (2006) functional approach, where cognitive judgments are used (based on text comprehension) as well as semantically driven attributes/themes. Adapting their semantic network, I have constructed a coding criterion reflecting the communicative purposes of the texts which are recognised by the expert members of the multilayered discourse community as definitive for the particular genre.

Primarily, I used Lewin et al.'s (2001) concept of "participant" and "attribute" as the two main aspects of a move in order to find commonalities of claims. It should be noted that their semantic network was employed only as a guideline for the codification of the moves since the nature of their corpus differs from that used in the present study. The identification of "participant" in the introductory sections of research journals, for example, may be straightforward given that they are much shorter than thesis introductions. I found Samraj's (2002) concept of the "real world" and the "research world knowledge" in her analysis of thesis introduction more suitable for the present study. For the purpose of highlighting my working definition or the criteria of each step, I have italicised them.

4.2 Move 1: Establishing the Territory

Move 1: Establishing the territory can be realised by three main steps. They are M1s1: Claiming centrality, M1s2: Topic generalisation and background information and M1s3: Reviewing items of previous research. In further realising the topic generalisation and background information, three sub-steps are found. These sub-steps are M1ss2a: Reporting what is known, M1ss2b: Problem and need at background level and M1ss2c: Anticipating solution. Figure 4.1 presents the steps and sub-steps of Move 1.
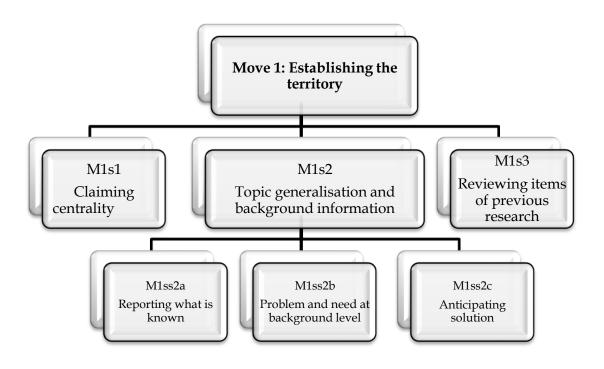
Figure 4.1. Steps and sub-steps of Move 1

4.2.1 Move 1 Step 1 (M1s1): Claiming Centrality

Swales (1990, p. 144) describes Claiming Centrality as claims that "appeal to the discourse community whereby members are asked to accept that the research about to be reported is part of a lively, significant or well-established research area". Authors can make a centrality claim by claiming interest or importance; referring to the classic, favourite or central character of the issue; or claiming that there are other investigators active in the area. Examples given by Swales are as follows:

Recently, there has been a spate of interest in how to…

The time development…is a classic problem in fluid mechanics.

The well-known…phenomena…have been favorite topics for analysis both in…

Knowledge of…has great importance for…

The effect of…has been studied extensively in recent years.

The theory that…has led to the hope that…

A central issue in…is the validity of…

Lewin et al. (2001) use semantic analysis when realising centrality claims. According to them, statements showing centrality claims aim at (a) claiming relevance for the research or (b) claiming relevance for human behaviour. Lewin et al.'s (2001, p. 33) semantic analysis of realisations of "claim relevance" is illustrated in Figure 4.2:

Variation A: Claim relevance for research	
FEATURE	REALISATION
Participants	
Phenomena under study	Aim of research
Research	
producers	*Investigators*
products	*Analysis, focus, study, topic*
Claim	
Magnitude	Attribute of [Research: producers or products]: *growing* literature; topic of discussion for *many years*

Variation B: Claim relevance for human behaviour	
FEATURE	REALISATION
Participants	
Phenomena under study	Affector
Population	Affected: *psychotic patients*
Research	
producers	Investigators
products	Analysis, focus, study, topic
Claim	
Magnitude	*Large numbers*
Intensity	*Most stressful*
Salience	*Importance* =Attribute of Affected, Affector, or Consequences of Affector

Figure 4.2. Semantic network of realisations of "claim relevance"
Source: Lewin et al., 2001, p. 33

Samraj (2002a, p. 4) recognises two types of centrality claims: assertions about the importance of the topic being discussed (importance to real world), and assertions concerning active research activity in the area concerned (importance to research world).

1. Chemical signals are **crucially important** in social behavior of many mammalian species, mediating sexual, aggressive, parental and spacing behavior, as well as influencing an animal's internal hormonal milieu (Bronson, 1979; Vanderberg, 1988; Johnston, 1990) (WB 4:1).

2. Since the result of Burley (1981, 1985, 1986) and Burley et al. (1982) on the effects of color bands on mate choice, reproductive success and survival in zebra finches,

Taeneopygia guttata, there have been **a number of studies** on birds both in captivity and the wild attempting to evaluate the impact of color bands. Results have varied, some showing no effects of color bands (e.g., Watt, 1982; Ratcliff & Boag, 1987; Beletsky & Orians, 1989) and other demonstrating effects (Brosky,1988; Hagan & Reed, 1988; Metz & Weatherhead, 1991).

Based on the above understandings and the pilot coding of three thesis introductions, I found that Lewin et al.'s (2001) elements of participants and claims could be adopted for the present corpus. The participants consist of the phenomena, the research product and the research producers. The three attributes of the participants are magnitude, intensity and salience. I will illustrate how this schema operates with excerpts taken from Thesis 1 and Thesis 2 below.

Example 4.1: Semantic scheme of realisation of Claiming Centrality in Theses 1 and 2

(i)   Phenomenon + intensity (real world)

<u>Communication</u> is a **core** activity in the language classroom in both oral and written form.

Thesis 1

(ii)   Phenomena – magnitude (real world)

In addition, <u>the importance given to a good command in the language</u> **has increased** in a rapidly growing global world. Furthermore, <u>globalization</u> has also **increased** communicative links with countries all over the world for all types of business. This further **strengthened** the role of English as the common lingua franca for non-native speakers.

Thesis 1

(iii)   Phenomena + salience (real world + research world)

One **important** area that will be greatly influenced by the students' approaches to learning involves the <u>reading process</u>. <u>This aspect of the learning process</u> has emerged as a topic of **much interest, debates and discussions** among researchers …

Thesis 1

(iv)   Research product + magnitude (research world)

A substantive body of <u>research</u> on students' initial experience of higher learning has identified many complex factors encountered by students in their transition from learning at school to learning at the university.

Thesis 2

(v)   Research producers + magnitude (real world)

The application of information and communication technologies (ICT) has **expanded greatly** since the mid-1990 with the public universities taking the

lead in offering online learning.

<div align="right">Thesis 2</div>

Therefore, centrality claims are:

1) *(as Swales initially suggests) research that is about to be reported is part of a lively, significant or well-established research area.*

2) *(as Samraj suggests) research that can be generated from the real world and the research world.*

3) *(as Lewin et al. postulate) events that consist of participants, i.e., phenomena, research producers and research products where each participant should have elements of accentuated-ness which can be any of these: magnitude, salience and intensity. Magnitude refers to accumulating-ness and accumulated-ness (Lewin et al., 2001) of the phenomenon (e.g., has been largely, has increased, a substantive). Salience relates to the significance or importance of the participant. Intensity suggests the degree of the claim.*

Centrality claim statements do not fully account for the totality of rhetorical strategies used to develop Move 1. Another rhetorical function performed in Move 1 falls under the rubrics topic generalisation and background information.

4.2.2 Move 1 Step 2 (M1s2): Topic Generalisation and Background Information

The step of making topical generalisations corresponds to the second part of the head act of Move 1 postulated by Lewin et al. (2001), i.e., Reporting what is known in the field, which the authors have not dealt with in depth. Based on the scant attention given to making topical generalisation in previous literature, insights into the semantic realisation of this step are therefore limited. Nevertheless, I have drawn on a number of studies, i.e., by Swales (1990), Lewin et al. (2001) and Kwan (2006), to understand the concept and approach to the analysis. Together with my preliminary coding, I refer making topic generalisations (M1s2) to three main categories: M1ss2a: Reporting what is known; M1ss2b: Problem and need at background level; and M1ss2c: Anticipating solution.

4.2.2.1 M1ss2a: Reporting what is known

An M1ss2a statement reports the established/existing real-world phenomena and it is composed of neutral and general statements. It carries the semantic features of displaying definition of

terms, categorisation of the concepts / theories / underlying themes of the study, and presentation of historical events. Statements of this type also describe the phenomena through the findings of previous research. Realisation of M1ss2a statements can be seen in Figure 4.3 below:

Figure 4.3. Realisation of M1ss2a statements

1) Statement(s) of definitions: whether indicating specificity of term, concepts or theories or making clarification and/or exemplification of terms, concepts or theories. Statements of attributing clarification and exemplification are not distinct, but they simultaneously facilitate denoting a theory or concept. In defining a term/theory/concept, a broad spectrum in how one defines a theory is found, i.e., finite to vague/explicit to implicit. There are a number of recognised ways to provide definitions of terms or concepts:

i) statement of equivalence where the propositions have the same truth-value. An example can be seen in Thesis 2 in Example 4.2 below:

Example 4.2: Statement of Definition in Thesis 2

> Ramsden (1992) *defines* studying in higher education as "an understanding of key concepts; an ability to go beyond the orthodox and the expected so that the hitherto unmet problems can be tackled with spirit; and – closely associated with the previous point – an awareness of what learning and understanding in the discipline consists of"

Following Saed (2003), similar meanings can be derived from the equivalence of two propositions (or in Lewin et al.'s (2001) terms, the head and the act). Applied to the Example 4.2 above, on every occasion where "studying in higher education as… the discipline consists of" expresses a true proposition, "an understanding…the discipline defines what

studying in higher education is" also expresses a true proposition. The verbs used to mean definition are explicit, for instance, "defines…as" or "…is…"

ii) when the elucidation of the head proposition is vague and lax. Terms such as "define" are easily and explicitly understood; however, some terms such as "describes" and "involves", are applied in a loose way. An excerpt from Thesis 1 is given in Example 4.3:

Example 4.3: Statement of Definition in Thesis 1

The "deep approach" *describes* students who began with an intention of understanding the meaning of the article and would then interact actively with the task until maximum meaning was extracted. On the other hand, the "surface approach" describes students whose original intentions were to satisfy course requirements, resulting in memorizing information without "developing any significant understanding of it" (Entwistle & Ramsden, 1983; Entwistle, 1997b). Later, a third category of approach was identified – strategic – where students started with the intention of getting the highest possible marks or grades leading them to engage in whatever strategies necessary to earn high marks (Biggs, 1987).

Thesis 2 in Example 4.4 also describes the concept, but in a more general way. The understanding of the concept is implicit. The phrase "according to the [concept]…" is used to imply the definition.

Example 4.4: Statement of definition in Thesis 2

According to this "schema-theory", readers possess different background knowledge, called schemata, which the readers apply when they approach a text to make sense of what they read. These "cognitive constructs" (Widdowson, 1983), include our knowledge of the world (from everyday to specialized knowledge) or content schemata, knowledge of texts as well as the genres they occur in and organization (textual schemata) and knowledge of words and syntactical structures (linguistic or language schemata).

In short, defining a term can be visualised in a continuum, on which the definitions of terms are placed, as shown in Figure 4.4.

specific   vague
(explicit)   (implicit)

Figure 4.4. Continuum of specificity of definition of terms

2) classification: categorisation of a concept/theory/underlying theme of the study

The other neutral kind of general statement is classification. The excerpt in Example 4.5 shows the writer's intentions in explaining a particular concept as the background of the study. In doing so, the writer informs the theory of "conceptions of learning" by indicating the categorisation of the concept.

Example 4.5: Statement of classification in Thesis 2

The first three of these conceptions reflect learning that involves lower level cognitive processing, or "quantitative", such as rote-memorization and imitation. The last three refer to qualitative-type of learning that involves developing higher level cognitive processing, such as, understanding meaning of information and relating new information (Chalmers & Fuller, 1996)

3) Statements of historical events: chronicles of historical event for the purpose of giving background information

An example of statements of historical events is taken from Thesis 1 presented in Example 4.6. It is located under the sub-heading *Language Education in Malaysia*. In fact, the whole paragraph (lines 1-19) is dedicated to the history of Malaysian education from the British colonial era to the present, and to policy development.

Example 4.6: Statement of historical event in Thesis 1

The system of education in Malaysia was administered by the British in the early 19th century in accordance with their policy of "divide and rule" that reflects their colonial policy.

4) Describing a phenomenon by presenting findings of previous research

A statement of previous research is considered as topic generalisation if findings alone are presented, and which has no indication of the semantic features of any research event, i.e., research instruments (e.g., questionnaires, interviews), research methodology

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(e.g., ethnographic studies). The statement foregrounds the findings as established/or existing knowledge rather than as specific research events. Two excerpts from Thesis 2 are provided as examples in Example 4.7:

Example 4.7: Statements of previous research in Thesis 2

> In a study conducted by Ramsden (1988) on final year students, findings reveal that many were able to apply complex skills in science, mathematics and humanities as well as reproduce large quantities of factual information and pass examinations.

> In reading in the second language for example, many poor readers have been found to be uninitiated and uninterested to read due to several factors, such as lack of vocabulary knowledge, difficult text as well as low language proficiency (Anderson, 1991, Ushioda, 2001).

Both examples stand out more as a knowledge claim than a narration of Ramsden's (Extract 1) and Anderson and Ushioda's (Extract 2) study. The deliberateness of the author to not have research signals in these statements shows that the main function or intention is to present the findings.

Many topic generalisations and much background information on the research topic contain a problem or need statement. This sub-step was originally found by Bunton as a strategy to establish the niche of the study (Move 2). However, I found that the statement of problem and need function not as neutral statement as does M1ss2a as it carries some weight in the writer's rhetorical purpose.

4.2.2.2 M1ss2b: Problem and Need at Background Level

I have argued in Chapter Three that one of the problems in coding the present text samples are the problem statements. More than 50% disagreement was found when coding the "problem and need statements" in the preliminary discussion with the co-raters. We found that not all statements of this kind establish the writer's niche for the study. Instead, some of the statements act at the background level of Move 1.

Statement(s) presenting problem and need in Move 1 represent a more complex kind of general statement than those discussed above. These statements show the participant bears some kind of problem and need but they do not suggest the niche of the study. An

example of a problem statement involving the research world at the background level is presented in Example 4.8:

Example 4.8: A statement of problem involving the research world in Thesis 2

> Studies in relation to students' approaches to learning have provided strong evidence that the surface approach to learning is more prevalent in higher education. Research findings reveal that students were more likely to adopt a surface approach to learning if they encountered excessive workload, as well as experienced lack of freedom in their choice of content and method of study (Entwistle, Meyer & Tait, 1991).

The excerpt below (Example 4.8) shows a statement of need which involves real-world phenomena, i.e., the situation of English in Malaysian Education. There is a claim of need to strengthen the position of English.

Example 4.8: A statement of need involving the real-world phenomenon in Thesis 1

> The call to strengthen the position of English as a Second Language in schools has been publicly voiced by the Minister of Education, Datuk Seri Hishamuddin Hussein. He asserts that fluency in English would enable students to compete in an increasingly global world in any field that they choose when they pursue their studies at tertiary level or to enter the workforce (Chin, 2007).

In the study, a statement of problem or need is considered as topic generalisation if the statement foregrounds shortcomings and needs as existing knowledge rather than establishing the niche of the study.

Another sub-step of background information and topic generalisation is taken when the writer provides positive/negative assumptions regarding a particular phenomenon, which, like a statement of problem and need, carries some weight in the writer's purpose.

4.2.2.3 M1ss2c: Anticipating Solution

When establishing the territory for their research, the writers may use not only statements like those of problems and needs above, which are not neutral, but also statements that show the writer's expectations. *A statement of M1ss2c reports the writer's*

positive speculation and assumption of the phenomena as background information. An example of M1ss2c is taken from Thesis 1 as shown in Example 4.9 below.

Example 4.9: A statement of anticipating solution in Thesis 1

> Consequently, with eleven years of learning English at school, including two years of learning the language at Matriculation colleges, with the emphasis placed on English in the curriculum *one would expect these students to be at least at the intermediate level, as far as their command of English is concerned. Furthermore, with the requirement to complete certain credit hours of English during their studies at universities, one assumes that the graduates would have mastered English well by the time they graduate.*

4.2.3 Move 1 Step 3 (M1s3): Reviewing Items of Previous Research (RPR)

Surveys of research which correspond to Bunton's model of Move 1 Step 4 were also observed in the study. Similar to other steps, an RPR statement is understood and defined differently by many researchers. The outcome of these different understandings is that a variety of results presents a problem when undertaking a contrastive analysis of other texts. Yang (2001, p. 211), for example, in her analysis of RAIs, coded the sentences below as RPR.

Example 4.10: RPR in Yang's (2001) RAIs analysis

> In contrast to earlier claims about the non-interactive nature of scientific academic writing, **recent sociological and linguistic research** has shown how professional writers can indeed successfully maintain interaction with their readers without compromising the factual information which is traditionally the concern of the research article (RA). **Several researchers** have demonstrated how interaction in the RA can be realized by, among others, modality and hedging **(see, for example, Myer 1989; Hyland 1994; Salager-Meyer 1994; and reporting (see Tadros 1989, 1994; Thomson & Ye 1991; Shaw 1992; Thomas & Hawes 1994).**

From the excerpt in Example 4.10, it can be concluded that she coded the sentences as RPR because of the words "research" and "researchers" and the citations, shown in bold in the excerpt. This would imply that coding this as such a step is purely based on the lexical item "work carried out".

The present research follows Kwan's and more importantly, Swales's. Kwan (2006) says that these segments (Reviewing Previous Research) were ones "in which the writers

review different aspects of previous studies". The "different aspects of other studies" was clearly expressed by Swales (2008) when he says:

> …the author needs to relate what has been found (or claimed) with who has found it (or claimed it). More precisely, the author needs to provide a specification (in varying degrees of detail) of previous findings, an attribution to research workers who publish those results, and a stance towards the findings themselves. (p. 148)

Therefore, based on Swales's definition as well as Kwan's insights on RPR, a statement of RPR is *first of all, when the text itself presents signals of surveying research items but not knowledge alone. These signals are provided by such metadiscourse as headings of a paragraph (e.g., "this section surveys research done on…"), which foreground research events rather than their findings as established knowledge. In addition to these signals, there should be explicit exhibition of any of the following semantic features: research processes, research instruments and methodological orientations.*

4.3   Move 2: Establishing the Study Niche

In the pilot coding, I discovered that the niche of the study can be derived in five different ways: by indicating the gap, indicating the problem and need of the research area, counter- claiming, question-raising and continuing tradition of other previous studies. The starting point of my coding criteria is distinguishing the participants of Move 2. Like Move 1, the main participants of Move 2 are (i) the real-world phenomena and (ii) the research world.

4.3.1   Move 2 Step 1a (M2s1a): Indicating a Gap

In identifying Move 2 Step 1a: Indicating a gap as the niche establishment, some linguistic clues were referred to. According to Werle (2007, p. 4), a sentence that expresses nonexistence can be derived in different ways: through negative quantifiers alone or through polarity items. The negative quantifiers that express nonexistence are the English "no" series, for example, *no, nothing, no one/nobody* and *never*. Negative polarity items (Cruse, 2004, p. 308) are expressions such as *anyone, anything, ever* or *any*.

Sanford, Fay and Moxey (2002, p. 131), from a psycholinguistics' point of view, suggest that quantifiers "provide a very powerful and linguistically simple means of putting different perspectives on basically the same information". In other words, quantifiers can be

positive/ negative or good/bad. An example to discuss this point is provided below:

Most studies on language learning strategies have been classroom-based.

Based on the sentence above, the probability that past literature on language learning strategies has been classroom-based is more than fifty per cent chance and can be intuitively understood as *almost all*. Therefore, the phenomenon that "language learning strategies have been classroom-based" is a positive statement. However, as has been said, quantifiers can be positive/negative. They can be a negative statement when preceded by the conditional adverb *however*. Consider this sentence:

However, most studies on language learning strategies have been classroom-based. (Thesis 2)

The inclusion of "however" in the sentence above shows that the writer suggests there is a lack of language learning studies in other approaches besides the classroom-based approach and the writer wishes to fill in the gap Therefore, the sentence above can be coded as M2s1a.

I also found that the gap that the writer wants to fill can also be presented implicitly. There is no indication of any linguistic clues provided by the writer. Two excerpts from Thesis 2 in Example 4.11 are given to illustrate my point.

Example 4.11: Indicating a Gap Statements in Thesis 2

i)   It was also discovered that these studies **concentrated on Chinese university students** such as in Hong Kong, China and Australia (Gow, Kember & Chow, 1991; Kember & Gow, 1994; Biggs, 1993).

ii)   The importance of reading has long been established, **but research in second language contexts is still expanding to explore** and understand the intricacies of the reading process.

Therefore, in the present study a statement of gap indication suggests nonexistence, scarcity, or paucity of the research world. An M2s1a statement is indicated by quantifiers, for instance, negative quantifiers, "bad" quantifiers that show negation, and negative polarity items. Statements indicating a gap can sometimes be implied.

4.3.2   Move 2 Step 1b (M2s1b): Establishing Need and Problem

Bunton (2002) found a new step "Problem and statement", but did not include detailed criteria for this particular step. Hence, the function of the step "Problem and need" is seen as being embedded within the "Indicating gap" step. To differentiate M2s1a and M2s1b, this study identified different participants for these steps. Gap statements involve the research world participant and the problem and need statement revolves around the real-world participant. Moreover, any indication of paucity and nonexistence is coded as a gap indication statement. *Therefore, the semantic features that realise problem and need for the study are a statement that shows obstacles, shortcomings, and problems of a real-world phenomenon.* An example to illustrate this step is the following:

Example 4.12: Establishing a problem and need statement of Move 2 in Thesis 3

> However, there was little communication between these disciplines, which might have led to a reformation and integration of research questions or designs. The two bodies of research, one in second language acquisition and the other in cognitive psychology, proceeded fully independent of each other with different orientations and methodologies.

4.3.3   Move 2 Step 1c (M2s1c): Counter-Claim

The description of a counter-claim in this study was consistent with Kwan's criteria. She categorised the types of defects that suggest counter-claim: flaws in research design, and inconclusive and inconsistent research results. There was only one example (Thesis 1) of this step found during the pilot coding. Many examples from other theses are presented in Chapter Seven.

Example 4.13: Counter-Claim statement in Thesis 1
> Her study, however, only examines one aspect of the workplace domain: the interview context.

In short, counter-claiming statements in the present study show defects in a specific research-oriented practice. The defects can display negative evaluations (e.g., limitations, shortcomings) of research design (e.g., theory, data collection) as well as presenting *negative evaluations (e.g., insufficient) of research outcomes/results.*

4.3.4 Move 2 Step 1d (M2s1d): Continuing Tradition

Kwan's (2005) classification of continuing tradition as a strategy in establishing a niche is proven to be workable for the theses in the preliminary coding. The excerpt from Thesis 1 (Example 4.14) shows that the author follows the previous study, which is similar but carried out in a different context (continuation of previous research). The lexical item "this" refers to the context and "basis" is used to distinguish the function of this statement.

Example 4.14: Continuing Tradition statement in Thesis 1

In fact, **this forms the basis** for the research interest of the present study.

Following Kwan, continuing tradition is "the claiming of the extension of the line of research or an application of a particular established practice"(Kwan, 2002). In other words, the proposed study may extend previous research's research design, theory, setting or instruments.

4.3.5 Move 2 Step 1e (M2s1e): Question Raising

Another step that has so far received less attention is question raising. Swales (1990) and Jogthong (2001) claim both direct (ii) and indirect (i) questions as a means of question-raising in establishing a niche of the study. Distinguishing question-raising by direct and indirect questions is inadequate because the issue in question should create the central purpose of the study instead of being information of knowledge background. Cruse (2004) provides a more useful interpretation of question raising. He suggests that the two items comprising "question raising" should be the "asking feature" and "what is asked", which involves a proposition. In order for a statement of question raising to be the central purpose of the study, the "answer-value" is derived in the writer's results section. The excerpt in Example 4.15 below is taken from Thesis 2 to illuminate this point.

Example 4.15: Question raising Statement in Thesis 2

While there is a shared consensus about the functions and goals of higher education, *there is much debate,* as will be presented in the next section, *as to whether* these students are accomplishing the intended objectives.	-Asking feature: indirect -What is asked (the answer to the question "Whether students accomplish the objectives of higher education" will be answered later in the "Result" section.

Therefore, for the purpose of the present study, the semantic features of question-raising must include an asking feature, which can be direct or indirect questions, and "what is asked", that is, what the writer's research tries to address.

4.4   Move 3: Occupying a Niche

Identifying statements of Move 3 are more straightforward, compared to identifying statements of Move 1 and Move 2. To reiterate, Lewin et al.'s (2001) semantic description of Move 3 comprises Participants and Claim. They discovered two main directions of Move 3: to describe the purpose of the study or to outline the content of the article. The systems and the realisation rules for this act were presented in Chapter Three.

4.4.1   Move 3 Step 1 (M3s1): Aims, Objectives, Purposes

The semantic features of M3s1 in the present study are similar to those identified by Lewin et al. (2001)**.** A statement showing aims or purpose of the reported study describes the overall intention of the research. The objective or purpose of the study is laid out in general, without identifying a specific subject (as in research scope). Since the purpose of the research is quite overwhelming, most of the sentences include stances of detachment so that the study and the result would seem achievable. Examples below illustrate the criteria of M3s1 for this study:

Example 4.16: Statements of Aims in Thesis 1 and Thesis 2

1)   **This study** attempts to **examine** CS employed by a group of ESL speakers from a tertiary-level institution in Malaysia in relation to another domain of the workplace: meetings.

2)   **This study** aims **to understand** the use of CS in a meeting, and hence, ESL learners with a business background have been selected

Thesis 1

1)   The purpose of **this study** is **to investigate** the experiences of reading an academic expository text of six second-year students of the English language program (B.A. ELS) at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM).

Thesis 2

4.4.2 Move 3 s2: Research Scope/Focus

Research scope usually bridges the Purpose of the study and the research questions. Therefore, the "participant" is more specific and is set down in questions in the research questions section. *Therefore, M3s2 carries features of the research done, which may include detailed areas to be studied.* Some examples are taken from Thesis 1 and Thesis 2 and are presented in Example 4.17.

Examples 4.17: Research Scope Statements in Thesis 1 and Thesis 2

1) **The interactional types of CS,** on the other hand, **are examined** in relation to how CS is employed by the speaker and the interlocutor in the discourse of expressing agreement, disagreement, arguing and negotiating. Furthermore, **the use of interactional CS as a device in resolving and understanding problems is also studied**.

2) This means that the present study investigates **the types of language production CS employed by the subjects when faced with communication problems at the word and sentence level. In addition, the interactional aspect of CS is also explored.** The interactional aspects involve understanding how the speaker and the interlocutor used interactional types of CS to maintain communication, to construct meaning when understanding problems occur in order to reach mutual understanding, within the discourse genre of a meeting.

<div align="right">Thesis 1</div>

3) However, the study will focus not only on one reading of the text, but five repeated and separate readings of the same text. To be precise, the researcher will focus **on the different themes that will emerge in each reading of the text.** These differences in their reading experiences are characterized in terms of "categories of descriptions", which constitute the main results of a phenomenographic study (Marton, 1994)

<div align="right">Thesis 2</div>

4.4.3 Move 3 Step 3: Method (+ Justification)

There are three sub-steps found to realise the method of the reported study. The study may inform the research approach, the data collection and instruments, and the procedures of the study.

Move 3ss3a: Research approach

A statement of M3s3a in this study is characterised by semantic features which indicate the approach or the research design the writer adopted. Justification of the approach chosen may be included. An example of M3ss3a is taken from Thesis 1 and is provided in Example 4.18.

Example 4.18: Statement of Research Approach in Thesis 1

The study uses the combined methods approach (Merriam, 1998), where both qualitative and quantitative techniques are deployed. As the research required a detailed examination of spoken interaction, a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques has allowed the researcher to gather detailed information for the purpose of answering the research questions.

M3ss3b: Data collection/Instruments

The sub-step M3ss3b statement in this study carries semantic features that describe the instruments used by the researcher to collect and analyse data. Some a priori lexical realisations posited for these features include questionnaires, interview protocols, tests, etc. Justifications of chosen instruments may be present. An example from Thesis 1 can be seen in Example 4.19 below.

Example 4.19: Statement of Data Collections/Instruments in Thesis 1

To answer this question, **the taxonomy of interactional communication strategies** is **referred to** in order to **identify** the types of interactional CS employed by ESL learners

Move 3ss3c: Procedures

Statements of sub-step M3ss3c display the procedures used by the writer to collect the data. Some justification statements may be present. An example can be seen in the excerpt from Thesis 2 in Example 4.20.

Example 4.20: Statement of Procedures in Thesis 2

Although there are different methods of revealing a person's experience of a particular phenomenon, the dominant method of discovery is through the **individual interview** (Booth, 1997; Marton, 1994). The aim of the interview is to have the participant to reflect on his or her experiences and relay these experiences to the interviewer in such a way that both will come to a mutual understanding about the meaning of the experience.

4.4.4 M3s4: Subjects or Materials

This sub-step features signifying people as subjects. It may also include the background of the subjects, e.g., their educational background. Two examples from Theses 1 and 2 are provided in Example 4.21.

Example 4.21: Statements of Subject or Materials in Thesis 1 and Thesis 2

Subject of the study

The study enlisted the help of **53 ESL learners who are students at UKM** as the main subjects of the study. A total of eleven groups were formed from the 53 UKM students in order to carry out the simulation task.

Thesis 1

Subject + educational background

The selected subjects for the present study are **students of (Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)**. The students are required to enrol for various English language courses during their course of study at the university. Their enrolment depends on their proficiency level upon entry and their chosen academic discipline. Based on the information gathered from the questionnaire given to the students involved in the present study, they would have completed three English language courses upon graduation.

Thesis 2

4.4.5 Move 3 Step 5: Predicting Findings or Results

Following Kwan (2005, p. 85), this step reports "outcomes of the writer's research which are characterised by such features as mental/analytical processes, data collected, phenomena observed, relations induced , general statistical description".

*This step was not found in the coding of the first three theses but I found it later in other theses in the final coding. It is included in the coding scheme here for completeness.

4.4.6 Move 3, Step 6: Significance of the Study/Justification

This step displays claims of the importance of one's research. It has been claimed that it carries features that can be found in Claiming Centrality. Bunton, for example, points out that Significance is almost similar to Claiming Centrality. In distinguishing these two steps, he suggested that "Claiming Centrality" is closely related only to its territory, while a step that is closely related to the present research is coded "Significance/ Justification". Bunton coded the sentence below *Claiming Centrality* because it came early in the introductory chapter and refers to the research of others.

> In the realm of X, the Y method is undoubtedly one of the most powerful and versatile tools.

The sentence below was identified as Significance/Justification because it came at the end of the Introduction and referred to the present research of the thesis.

> These studies should give further insight into the nature of…

Kwan showed that the significance of the study can be epistemic or non-epistemic. Epistemic significance of the study relates to important claims regarding some features of the study. An example from Kwan is the following:

> The significance of the study is demonstrated by efforts expended in the integration and differentiation of theories and concepts. The theoretical theme starts from… The present study certainly has its unique features… Whereas past studies examine the domains separately, the present one conjoins them into the holistic analytic framework.

Non-epistemic significance of the study points to the value the study can bring to a community or emphasises some distinguished epistemic features of the study the writer pursued. The writer, in the extract below, asserts the value of the insights regarding local music education.

> …This study examines the processes of social interaction with Hong Kong schools, and thus has the potential to provide an insight into how the status of music is maintained and reinforced through an analysis of how music teachers define their

situation and comes to terms with it. By enquiring into the music curriculum, a deeper understanding of the nature of valid knowledge embedded in the school curriculum of Hong Kong can hopefully be gained.

Examples of statements of significance (epistemic and non-epistemic) of the present study can be seen in the excerpts from Theses 1, 2 and 3 and are provided in Example 4.22.

Example 4.22: Statement of Significance of the Study in Theses 1, 2 and 3

Non-Epistemic Significance

This study will provide insights into the types of CS employed by ESL speakers (UKM students and executives) in meetings, with reference to the Malaysian context.

Thesis 1

Non-Epistemic Significance

Hence, the findings of this study would prove valuable, as it would provide teachers with an understanding of the complexities that are involved in students' approaches toward reading and the conditions that contribute to the quality of the reading process.

Thesis 2

Epistemic + non-epistemic significance

..indicating that findings from the study will not only shed light on the similarities and differences in the use of language learning strategies but also reveal how students cope and adapt to an online context. By identifying the various cognitive processes involved in the process of language learning; students' behaviour; and students' reaction to an online environment, the study will also be able to assist future teachers, educators and linguists in the designing of online language courses that meet the needs of Malaysian learners.

Thesis 3

In this study, a statement of significance of the study carries the epistemic and non-epistemic event which has not yet taken place. A writer who uses this step predicts or anticipates a result that has the probability to occur.

4.4.7 M3 Step 7: Thesis Structure

M3ss7a: Chapter Structure and Contents

This step presents the structure of the chapter as a means of setting out the organisation of the introductory chapter and presenting content as a means of previewing information. An excerpt from Thesis 3 in Example 4.23 illuminates this point.

Example 4.23: Statement of Chapter Structure and Contents in Thesis 3

This chapter has set the scene by first presenting a background to the study by introducing online learning as a variation or innovation that has attracted new explorations in this age of computers and technology.

M3ss7b: Thesis Structure and Contents

This step presents the structure of the thesis as means of setting out the organisation of the thesis and presenting content as a means of previewing information. Example 4.24 below presents an example taken from Thesis 1.

Example 4.24: Statement of Thesis Structure and Contents in Thesis 1

The next chapter reviews the theory and the relevant literature within which the study is situated.

4.4.8 Move 3 Step 8: Research Questions (RQ)

In this study RQ statements are interrogative statements and explicitly signalled and enumerated. They suggest what the study intends to investigate. RQ statements can be seen in Thesis 1 in Example 4.25.

Example 4.25: Statement of Research Questions in Thesis 1

Therefore, based on the problem and rationale presented, the study proposes to address the following research questions:

1. What types of language production communication strategies are used by ESL learners when they have communication problems during a group discussion?
2. How do the communication strategies help ESL learners handle their communication problems and enable them to convey their message?

3. How are interactional communication strategies used by ESL learners when they are engaged in the discourse of expressing agreement and disagreement, arguing, and negotiating?
4. How does the use of interactional communication strategies contribute to the achievement of mutual understanding when understanding problems occur in interactions?

4.4.9   Move 3, Step 9: Theoretical Positioning, Model and Theory Chosen

Creswell (1998), in his examination of the connection between the traditions of inquiry and research design, suggests that it is important to consider how "one frames the study within the theoretical and philosophical perspectives" in the beginning stage of design. These perspectives cover:

> …broad perspectives, such as epistemological and ontological assumptions, to ideological stances, such as postmodernism and critical perspectives, to more narrowly defined "theories" (Flinders & Mills, 1993) composed of propositions and hypotheses found in the social and human sciences. (p. 73)

It is important to note that the theories or models in the earlier part of the introduction refer to Establishing the Territory as it acts as background information of the study. Example 4.26 displays surveys of "learning theories" which give the background of the study.

Example 4.26: Statement of Theoretical Positioning, Model and Theory Chosen in Thesis 2

> The "deep approach" describes students who began with an intention of understanding the meaning of the article and would then interact actively with the task until maximum meaning was extracted. On the other hand, the "surface approach" describes students, whose original intentions were to satisfy course requirements, resulting in memorizing information without "developing any significant understanding of it" (Entwistle & Ramsden, 1983; Entwistle, 1997b). Later, a third category of approach was identified – strategic – where students started with the intention of getting the highest possible marks or grades leading them to engage in whatever strategies necessary to earn high marks (Biggs, 1987).

Therefore, a statement of M3s9 shows the particular theory or model used in the study as well as the research paradigm taken by the writers.

4.4.10 Move 3 Step 10: Limitation of Research/Research Parameters

In this study, a statement of the limitation of the research expresses the constraints, limitations and defects of the study, particularly with regards to method, e.g., Inadequacy of number of participants, type of participants, time constraint, type of instruments and research approach. Example 4.27 presents an excerpt of M3s10 found in Thesis 2.

Example 4.27: Statement of Limitation of Research/ Research parameters in Thesis 2

> This descriptive study of students' approaches of reading an academic expository text is limited in several ways. First of all, only six subjects participate in this study. Furthermore, all the subjects are female. Hence, neither are the results conclusive to include the reading approaches of ESL nor female students in general. Although the researcher would like to conduct interviews with more subjects, the time factor constrains. A total of six separate interviews are to be conducted with each subject to gather information on how they approach the reading of the text for about three and a half months. Secondly, the subjects are required to read an academic expository text. Thus, no conclusions can be drawn for other genres or types of texts. Finally, <u>this study</u> only describes the reading processes (how students read) and does not focus on reading comprehension (what students understand).

4.4.11 Move 3 Step 11: Research Suggestions

In this study a statement of M3s11 suggests an expanded area of research. An improvement in research method or theories may be recommended. An example of M3s11 is provided in Thesis 2 in Example 4.28.

Example 4.28: Statement of Research Suggestion in Thesis 2

> Other researchers can build on this study by identifying and describing students' approaches of reading other texts such as literary texts. In addition, further researches could be conducted to discover the relationship between the reading process and reading comprehension.

4.4.12   Move 3 Step 12: Defining Terms

"Definition of terms" moves very closely to topic generalisation and background information in Move 1ss2a. The excerpt in Example 4.29 of Thesis 2 below comes in the earlier part of a move to establish territory.

Example 4.28: Statement of Defining Terms in Move 1 in Thesis 2

Ramsden (1992) defines studying in higher education as "an understanding of key concepts; an ability to go beyond the orthodox and the expected so that the hitherto unmet problems can be tackled with spirit; and – closely associated with previous point – an awareness of what learning and understanding in the discipline consists of" (p. 21).

The above extract comes before any announcement of the present research, so that extract belongs firmly in Establishing Territory.

Unlike the previous case where Defining Terms belongs to the field as a whole, *Defining Terms* in the third move comes later in the chapter after the writer has presented his present study. Two examples of Step 12 in Move 3 are taken from Thesis 2 and Thesis 3 and can be seen in Example 4.30.

Example 4.30: Statement of Defining Terms in Move 3 in Thesis 2

Operational Definitions

For the purpose of **this study, the following operational definitions will be used**:

1. Learning approach. An approach to learning has been described in terms of "what" and "how" aspects (Marton, 1988). The "what" (referential) aspect denotes the intention with which students approach learning, described in terms of surface (memorization and reproduction of knowledge) and deep (making sense) intentions. The how (structural) aspect concerns the way students organize the learning task. Hence, a learning approach can be seen as a relation between the structural and referential aspects. Both aspects are dialectically bound as how a person goes about learning and it cannot be separated from what it is they learn.

Another example, from Thesis 3, illustrates the same point:

Example 4.31: Statement of Defining Terms in Move 3 in Thesis 3

> **Working Definitions of key terms**
>
> CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning)
>
> It is an interactive courseware designed for a specific group of learners who are learning a language.

A statement of M3s12 explicitly displays a definition that is selected for the purpose of the particular research.

4.5   Conclusion

To recapitulate, I based my definition of genre on Swales's claim that the criterion for classifying certain events as a genre is a set of shared communicative purposes. Many move analysis studies from the ESP perspective coded their texts based on the communicative purposes of the texts. However, these studies did not show in detail how each communicative purpose is realised, hence there is some variation of interpretation and findings. This chapter has outlined my attempt to construct a coding system for the realisation of each purpose and has provided examples from the texts used in the preliminary analysis of three of the theses to outline the logic and evidence supporting the proposed coding taxonomy.

In setting out the coding criteria for this study, Swales's and Bunton's analyses were used as the starting point in assisting me to define the basis of possible steps (strategies) as well as look at terms from various perspectives. However, the semantic-functional approach of this study followed primarily that of Lewin et al. (2001), and the coding criteria and findings by Kwan (2005, 2006) and Samraj (2002). Their semantic scheme in identifying the "participant" and distinguishing the attributes of the participant were helpful in devising coding criteria for the text samples since it allows "a researcher to include all descriptions, regardless of their grammatical class", for instance, solely employing adjectives as realisation criteria of Move 2 (Lewin et al., 2001, p. 30).

The next task is to see whether or not the taxonomy is applicable to the whole set of theses. This is carried out in Chapters Six and Seven. Before that is carried out in detail, I need to investigate the extent to which the Malaysian theses can be characterised as belonging to the genre of academic thesis as understood in Western academic discourse

communities. If the answer is affirmative, their introductions can be more confidently analysed on the assumption that the communicative purposes of their authors are consonant with those commonly understood in Western academic circles (and probably in much of the academic world).

Chapter Five- The preamble
Overall Structure of Theses and Thesis introductions

5.1   Introduction

This is a short chapter that acts as the preamble to the analysis of the thesis introductions. This chapter examines the macro structures of the introductory chapters of Malaysian theses. Having this chapter here as part of the analysis instead of using it for setting the context of the study or as a component of the methodology chapter, is important. One focus of this study is to establish the parameters, i.e. length and overall formal structure of the theses, so that we can make valid, comprehensive comparisons with both structure and content in other genre analysis studies on PhD theses from other countries.

This chapter focuses on answering the first research question of the study: Do Malaysian theses have an overall generic structure? Word count, number of pages, and chapter and section headings of theses are explored and followed by a summary and discussion of the findings.

The chapter is divided into two major parts: firstly, theses as a whole; and secondly, the thesis introduction chapter. It examines their general features, i.e., length and overall organisation. While the previous two chapters outlined the procedures used in this study, Chapter Five discusses the general methodology employed to introduce the text samples. This chapter is important, firstly, to identify the extent to which we can claim the Malaysian theses have a generic structure by generalising about their characteristics. If there is a commonality in terms of chapter headings (and sub-headings, particularly in the introductory chapter), can we generalise about the structure of the introductory chapters? Secondly, it is important to investigate whether or not we can claim that the theses do belong to a genre that is more or less the same as in the western academic world. In addition, by identifying the similarities and differences, the possible influence of other factors such as individual styles, organisational constraints or disciplinary practices can be identified.

Part I

5.2   Overall Organisation of Social Sciences / Humanities Theses

The organisation of theses has been discussed by a number of researchers. Thompson (2005) speaks of the short length of laboratory-based theses compared to theses of experimental work conducted under field conditions. It can be inferred that theses from the Sciences, which are usually laboratory-based, are shorter than those from the Social Sciences and Humanities. Bunton suggests that theses from Commonwealth universities are longer than American theses. In terms of the structure of theses, four types of thesis organisations have been identified: the traditional "simple" format, the traditional "complex" format; the topic-based format; and theses based on a compilation of published research articles. Most researchers conclude that not all disciplines require that theses written in a particular area of study be of a single type (Bunton, 2002; Dong, 1998; Dudley-Evans, 1999; Thompson, 1999). The impact of the discipline, field of study (Bunton, 2002), research perspective and advice given on the positioning and organisation of their text (Paltridge, 2002; Prior, 1995) may contribute to the variety of thesis organisation.

Theses from the Social Sciences and Humanities are predominantly organised in the traditional "simple" format and the topic-based format. Table 5.1 shows the types of organisation found in Social Sciences and Humanities PhD theses.

Table 5.1
Types of PhD Thesis in Previous Studies

Humanities / Social Sciences			
	Simple	Complex	Topic-based
Paltridge (2002)	3		2
Bunton (2002)		1	5
Starfield & Ravelli (2006)		2	18
Kwan (2006)	20		

5.2.1   Length

In order to analyse the length and overall organisation of a thesis, some important variables that indicate these features need to be considered. These variables are word count, number of pages, chapter headings and section headings. I referred to *Malaysian Online Theses*, a local website where awarded theses are converted into Portable Document Format

(PDF) form. Even though theses are available, the number of pages made available is limited. The maximum page limit is 25, which generally covers only the thesis cover layout, abstract, acknowledgement and table of content. I then referred to the Table of Contents because it is sufficient in giving me the information needed, i.e., number of pages and detailed chapter headings. The number of words of each thesis is not readily available for theses in PDF format. Consequently, estimates of word length were initially calculated in terms of pages of text and approximations were made. However, the number of words is not easily deduced because theses can incorporate a considerable number of tables, charts and figures. It was estimated that a thesis had an average 263 words per page, based on the average number of words per page of the Introductions of all eight theses.

Overall, the PhD theses in this study averaged 321 pages of text. The length would correspond to about 84,423 words (without tables, charts and figures and excluding references).

5.2.2   Organisation in Chapters

In order to identify the overall structure of the theses, I analysed the chapter headings used by the writers to identify the generic headings. The chapter headings are displayed in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2
Chapter headings of theses

Chapter	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	Total	Generic headings
Introduction (s)		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	6	**I**
Background of the Study	✓								1	
The Problem				✓					1	
Review of Literature	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8	**Lr**
Methodology/Research Methodology	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8	**M**
Data Analysis		✓	✓			✓			3	**R**
Data Analysis and **Results**				✓					1	
Findings of Study					✓				1	
Data Analysis and Findings							✓	✓	2	
Topic-based data analysis chapters	✓								1	
Conclusion	✓									**D**
Discussion, Implication, Conclusion		✓								
Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendation				✓	✓					
Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation							✓			

* Fonts in bold show the division of the main chapters
* Italics show different chapter structure to mean the generic-standard heading

The left-most column in Table 5.2 shows the chapter headings employed in the theses and the right-most column presents the generic headings that represent the chapter headings. One thing that stands out very clearly in Table 5.2 is that all theses have clearly demarcated reviews of literature (Lr) and methodology chapters (M). In representing the other standard generic chapter titles, various terminologies are used. For example, the generic title "Introduction" is used in six theses whilst the other two theses (Thesis 1 and Thesis 4), employ different title headings. This does not mean that the initial chapters of Thesis 1 and Thesis 4 serve different purposes. Like the other six theses that have clearly

marked "Introductions", Thesis 1 and Thesis 4 provide some background of the story they intend to tell, notify the reader about the objectives of the study and inform us about the methodology used. Another example taken from Table 5.2 is the generic title **"Results"**. Five different title headings are used but they point to having a similar purpose: presenting the results of the analysis.

In relation to the findings discussed above, one major conclusion seems to emerge. There are various terms used to represent the standard generic headings, i.e., Introduction – Literature Review – Methodology – Results – Discussion. The macro structure of the selected PhD theses generally follows the traditional Introduction – Literature Review – Methodology – Results – Discussion (ILrMRD) pattern. Seven theses followed the traditional simple format and one thesis, Thesis 1, while still employing the traditional structure, has a more complex internal structure. Thesis 1 commenced with Introduction and Literature Review chapters as found in the traditional format. The Methodology chapter of Thesis 1 is followed by a number of chapters discussing the findings of the study, each with a particular topical focus. In short, the overall organisation of the eight theses in the study into chapters falls into two patterns: traditional simple and complex. The detailed format is shown in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3
Patterns of Theses in the Present Study

Pattern 1 Simple	- Introduction - Literature Review - Methodology - Results/Findings - Discussion - Conclusion
Pattern 2 Complex	- Introduction - Literature Review - Methodology - Results and Findings are structured into three separate chapters in which each chapter focuses on presenting an analysis of one model/theory - Conclusion

This section has described the overall features of theses, and the following section presents the results of the investigation of the length and organisation of thesis introductory chapters. Like the above analysis, it begins with the methodology and is followed by findings and discussion.

5.3 Overall Structure of Thesis introductions

According to Bhatia (1993, p. 82), Introductions play an important role because they relate the research being reported to previous studies in the research area. In line with this, manuals on research writing show that introductions should be used to orient readers' attention, introduce the present study, and provide them with the perspective they need to understand as well as information for later sections. Hashim (2008, p. 21), in her manual prepared for ESL in Malaysia, contends that the role of the Introduction in a thesis is to "capture the reader's attention and convince them that the thesis is worth reading or that the research needs to be undertaken, provide necessary background information or argument…". Salom, Monreal and Olivares (2008) suggest that manuals for Spanish graduates similarly state the role of the introduction. The authors have to justify their choice of topic, make the objectives, method and constraints of their work explicit and review previous literature.

In sum, the introductory chapter is important as it not only introduces the research study but must also present the related background information of the study by reviewing (some of) the relevant literature on the subject matter, devise the questions and finally report on the claimed importance of the new research. When describing thesis introductions in the Social Sciences and the Humanities, Bunton (2002) claims that introduction chapters are longer than in theses from the Sciences. He found the average number of pages of his Social Sciences and Humanities text samples to be nearly three times longer than those from the Sciences. Bunton also found that Social Sciences theses have more section headings than do the Sciences theses.

5.3.1 Findings: Length

This section discusses the "face-value" of the Introduction, where I look at the number of pages as well as the section headings. Number of pages is easily established since all theses contain the page number at the bottom (middle or on the far right) of every page. I found that the number of pages in the Introduction chapter in each thesis varies. The minimum number is 20 pages (Thesis 1) with 4,763 words and the maximum is 34 pages with 9,557 words in Thesis 2 and 8,827 words in Thesis 8. The average length is 28 pages. Table 5.4 sets out the length and number of words of each Introduction text.

Table 5.4
Length of Thesis Introductions

Thesis	No. of pages in Introduction	No. of words
T1	20	4,763
T2	34	9,557
T3	25	7,602
T4	32	8,272
T5	30	7,285
T6	27	7,061
T7	22	5,019
T8	34	8,827
Mean	**28**	**7,373**

5.3.2 Findings: Section Headings

Section headings in the introductory chapter were noted because they can act like a signpost when identifying writers' intentions. Identification of section headings and sub-headings in five theses (Thesis 1, Thesis 2, Thesis 3, Thesis 4, and Thesis 8) was straightforward since they were numbered. However, in the other three theses (Thesis 5, Thesis 6, and Thesis 7) they were identified by the indentation strategy employed by the writers. The outcome of the findings and discussion are presented next.

Following Bunton (2002), section headings and sub-headings can be observed in the text samples. There are 26 generic section headings in the eight Introductions. These generic section headings are not topic-specific. Examples of generic section headings are "Purpose of the Study" and "Significance of the Study". Thesis 2, for instance, includes many issues under the section heading "Statement of the Problem", ranging from the background of the Malaysian education system to the theory of communication. In contrast, sub-headings are more topic-specific, with particular issues discussed under a specific topic. The sub-heading "Modals and Modality" in Thesis 8, for example, only discusses the possible definitions of modals and modality, while the sub-heading "Modals in Malaysia" heralds a variety of previous studies on the use of modals in Malaysia. Appendix B provides detailed section headings and sub-headings for all theses. Full details of the section headings from all text samples are given in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5

Generic section headings of Introduction

Section Headings	Frequencies	Theses
Introduction	2	T1, T2
Background of the Study	**5**	**T3, T4, T5, T6, T8**
The Nature of the Problem	1	T7
Background and Rationale of the study	1	T1
Statement of the Problem	**7**	T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8
Aims of the Study	1	T1
Purpose of the Study	4	T2, T4, T6, T7
Objectives of the Study	1	T5
Research Objectives	1	T8
Research Objectives and questions	1	T3
Research Questions	**6**	T, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8
Methodology	1	T1
Research Design	1	T7
Significance of the Study	**8**	T1-T8
Limitations of the Study	**4**	T1, T2, T5, T6
Assumptions and	1	T3
Limitations	2	T2, T7
Operational Definitions	1	T3
Working Definitions	**4**	T4, T5, T6, T8
Definitions of Terms	2	T3, T5
The Conceptual Framework	1	T8
Conceptual Framework of the Study	1	T5
Theoretical Framework	1	T7
Theoretical Perspective	3	T1, T5, T6
Summary	1	T3
Conclusions	1	T4
Overview of the Thesis		

Even though there were 26 section headings found in the theses, in many cases they varied in terminology but nonetheless had a similar purpose. For example, the individual writer's intention in undertaking the study can be represented in four different topic headings: Aims of the Study, Purpose of the Study, Objectives of the Study, or Research Objectives. Table 5.6 gives the generic section headings based on the highest frequency of occurrence.

Table 5.6
Generic section headings of Introduction based on occurrence

Background of the Study
Statement of the Problem
Purpose of the Study
Research Questions
Significance of the Study
Limitations of the Study
Definition of Terms

Table 5.6 shows that there are seven generic section headings (headings found in more than four theses). They are Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Research Questions, Significance of the Study, Limitations of the Study and Definition of Terms.

5.4 Conclusion

The analysis in this chapter shows that all theses followed the traditional format of thesis structure typical of Social Sciences and Humanities theses. One of the chapter headings found in most theses (six of eight theses) is the introductory chapter. The preliminary analysis of the macro-structure of the thesis introduction informs us of the general structure of the chapter by the identification of the generic section headings. They are: background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations of the study and definition of terms. The generic section headings used by the writers suggest that their introduction chapters function to achieve the communicative purpose of the genre, which is to present some form of topical background of the study and the nature of the problem, followed by reporting the study carried out. However, does this commonality of purpose also imply that the internal structure of the introductory chapters is similar?

Chapter Six will present the first of two in-depth analyses looking further into the detailed structure of the introductory chapters, specifically probing further into the unit of analysis and the semantic criteria for coding the text samples. As in this chapter, the various methods presented will provide a more logical and coherent understanding of this study's topic. The chapter first looks at the presence of moves and steps in the theses. The purpose is

to identify moves and steps that are common in the Introduction. Next, the chapter also seeks to identify the generic moves structure and compare it to the revised CARS (1990) model. In order to ascertain this, investigations into the frequency and location of the moves are carried out. With computer-assisted tools, the extent of moves can be graphically displayed and therefore help in generalising the moves structure. Finally, a more detailed examination of the sequence of moves will be presented. The aim of this section is to distinguish the manner of the move structure.

Chapter Six

Analysis of Moves in Introductions

6.1 Introduction

Chapter Five has presented the general features of all eight theses and their introduction chapters. The theses were found to be in the traditional ILrMRD format, with seven following the traditional simple format and only one the complex version of ILrMRD. The findings also revealed that one of the chapter headings found in most of the theses is "Introduction", for the introductory chapter. The findings also revealed the generic section headings of the thesis introductions. Based on the general similarity of the overall generic section headings, we can assume that all eight introduction chapters are intended to achieve the communicative purpose of this genre. However, we are still unsure of the extent of the similarities/differences of the strategies used in order to realise the purpose of the introductory chapters.

In order to see how the Malaysian introductory thesis chapters achieve the global purpose of this genre, I carried out a further analysis of the move structure. Its main purposes were to answer the research question(s) by describing the moves, making a judgment about the extent to which they follow the CARS (1990) model, and showing the mechanisms/rhetorical strategies for achieving the communicative purpose. I also tested the coding strategy to see whether it worked effectively, and compared the results with those of other relevant research. The goal was to provide answers to the research question(s) and the issues of coding and corpus-based analysis raised in Chapters One and Two. The current chapter then expands the study by investigating the moves in the introductory thesis chapters. It seeks answers to the third primary research question, "Do the thesis Introductions conform to Swales's (1990) CARS model of moves and steps?"

To answer this question, several analyses have been carried out. Each analysis offers indispensible information in developing the portrayal of the move structure of the introductory chapters. It begins with determining the generic moves and steps by looking at the presence of moves, followed by the analysis of the overall move structure of thesis introductions. The main objective is to find the common move structure of the introductory chapters. To have a convincing outcome, computer-assisted tools were utilised. Analysis of this kind enables my study to achieve the specific aim of graphically documenting whether

the introductions employed by the writers conform to the prototypical 1-2-3 move model. I explore the sequence of moves and draw out the major move configurations that make up the text. In order to have a coherent flow of analysis, this chapter is divided into three sections: Part I: Move-step occurrences, Part II: Analysis of moves structure, and Part III: Analysis of moves sequence.

Part I

6.2 Findings and Discussions of Overall Move-step Analysis

This section distinguishes and summarises the common usage of moves and steps in the text samples. I first examine the presence of each move and its constituent step in all theses. Table 6.1 displays the detailed presence of the moves and steps of the eight thesis introductory chapters in the study.

Table 6.1
Detailed presence of Moves and Steps

Moves and Steps	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	Total
Move 1: Establishing Territory									
M1s1: Claiming Centrality	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	**8**
M1s2: Making topic generalisations and giving background information									
M1ss2a: Reporting what is known	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	**8**
M1ss2b: Problematising and Presenting Needs of Knowledge Claims and Phenomena as Background Information*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	7
M1ss2c: Anticipating outcome*	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	5
M1s3: Reviewing Previous Literature	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	**8**
Move 2: Establishing Niche									
M2s1a: Gap*		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	5
M2s1b: Need and Problem	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	**8**
M2s1c: Counter Claim**	✓				✓	✓	✓		4
M2s1d: Extending/ Continuing Tradition**	✓								1
M2s1e: Question-raising**		✓		✓	✓			✓	4
Move 3: Occupying Niche									
M3s1: Purpose of the Study	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	**8**
M3s2: Scope/ Focus of Research*	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7
M3s3a: Research Design*	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7
M3s3b: Instruments**	✓			✓				✓	3
M3s3c: Procedures	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	**8**
M3s4: Subjects/ Materials*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	7
M3s5: Presenting results**				✓	✓			✓	3
M3s6: Significance of the Study	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	**8**
M3s7a: Chapter structure and content**	✓		✓	✓		✓			4
M3s7b: Thesis structure and content*	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	6
M3s8: Research Questions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	**8**
M3s9: Theoretical positioning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	**8**
M3s10: Limitations of Research*	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	6
M3s11: Suggestions**		✓							1
M3s12: Defining Terms*		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7
M3s13: Conceptual Framework**			✓		✓	✓		✓	4

*Steps commonly found in theses
**Uncommon steps found in the theses
Moves found in all theses
Bold Steps found in all theses

One thing that clearly stands out is the presence of all moves. Every thesis employed the three moves suggested by Swales in his revised version of CARS (Swales, 1990, p. 141).

Since the three moves occurred in all eight introductions, they are considered obligatory. This means that these moves are essential in structuring the introductory chapter.

Table 6.1 also shows nine steps that are present in all the introductory chapters. They are Centrality Claim, Background Information, and Reviewing Previous Research of Move 1; Indicating Problem and Need of Move 2; and Purpose of the Study, Research Procedures, the Significance of the Study, the Research Questions and Theoretical Positioning of Move 3.

Common steps i.e., the steps used in five to seven theses, can be seen in Move 1 and Move 3. Besides occupying strategies 1, 2a and 3 of Move 1, most writers also used 2b (Need and Problem) and 2c (Anticipating Solution) when generalising the topic of study. Another preferred strategy, besides presenting need and problems when establishing the niche (Move 2), is building a gap in the area under study. Five of eight theses employed this strategy in order to state the main concern of the study. When reporting the study (Move 3), a number of similar strategies are found in most of the theses. They are presenting the focus of the study, the research design, defining the subjects and defining terms. Besides that, thesis organisation and descriptions of research limitations are also frequently found in the corpus texts.

Uncommon strategies are recurring steps found in four or fewer theses: Counter Claim, Extending Tradition and Question-Raising in Move 2. Many steps in Move 3 were also less significant: presenting the instruments of the study; presenting results; presenting chapter structure; giving further suggestions for future research as well as presenting a conceptual framework.

The analysis of the occurrences of the moves and steps above is important as it will show whether they are obligatory or optional strategies.

Part II

6.3   Analysis of Frequency and Location of Moves

Part 1 shows that Swales's three CARS moves are obligatory in thesis introductions. However, it is still uncertain whether the moves in the Malaysian thesis introductions conform to Swales's CARS move model. Do the moves in this study follow the CARS (1990)

model structure in terms of its linearity or do they demonstrate the cyclical sequences that were found in studies such as those of Bunton (2001), Kwan (2002) and Soler- Monreal (2010)?

Most previous corpus-based studies have used lexical software to explore the linguistic features of a genre but visual confirmation of this via demonstrating the location of moves is missing. This study adds depth to the analysis of move structure of this particular genre by using computer assisted tools.

6.3.1 Findings: Frequency of Moves

It was shown in Part One that all moves in thesis introductions are obligatory. This section analyses the frequency and location of each move. The frequency of each move may show the writers' choices and, indirectly, further enhance our understanding of how ESL writers in the present study strategised their writing so that the texts may "belong" to this particular genre in Malaysia. Figure 6.1 presents the amount of attention afforded to each move across all eight thesis introductory chapters.

	Move 1	Move 2	Move 3
Frequency	56,1	11,7	35,4

Figure 6.1. Percentages of moves

It is very clear from Figure 6.1 that the theses extensively employed Move 1. Fifty-six per cent of the introductory thesis chapter moves revolve around the writer providing a map of the existing territory. The next most frequent move is Move 3. This high frequency in the realisation of Move 3 which comprises 35 per cent of the text of the chapter may be the outcome of the various methodological strategies. As can be seen in the coding criteria (see

Chapter Four), I identified fourteen steps that potentially realise the niche of the study. Move 2 is the least employed with only about 12 per cent of the thesis introductory chapters, thus only one fifth of the amount of text realising of Move 1.

A closer look at the use of each move in each thesis will give a whole new interpretation. Table 6.2 presents the proportion of each thesis introduction that is taken up by each move or moves.

Table 6.2
Percentages of Moves in Each Thesis Introduction

Move	T1 (%)	T2 (%)	T3 (%)	T4 (%)	T5 (%)	T6 (%)	T7 (%)	T8 (%)	Average (%)
Move 1	34.0	67.7	75.0	65.3	43.6	58.1	34.0	71.6	56.1
Move 2	10.4	15.1	8.0	9.1	12.8	14.5	19.0	4.7	11.7
Move 3	56.0	17.2	17.0	25.6	43.6	27.4	73.0	23.7	35.4
Total hits	100 (124)	100 (192)	100 (176)	100 (207)	100 (181)	100 (124)	100 (126)	100 (215)	

Table 6.2 presents the detailed percentages of each move found in the eight thesis introductions. The total number of hits in the table refers to the number of occurrences of the three moves. As stated in Chapter 3, the number of hits can be identified through the dispersion plot. The table indicates that the amount of overall attention given to each move is not fixed, even though Move 1 was the most preferred and Move 2 the least preferred move. The detailed analysis indicates the inconsistency with which each move is employed. For instance, Thesis 3 devotes 75 per cent (132 hits) of the total length of the introductory chapter to establishing territory (which includes all sub-steps), and 17 per cent to previewing the writer's own study (Move 3). In contrast, Writer 7 devotes the major part of her thesis introductions (73 per cent) to Move 3 and 34 per cent to Move 1. Similarly, the need to establish the niche can occupy anywhere from 4.7 per cent in (Thesis 8) to 19 per cent (Thesis 7) of the introductory chapter. This variation in length of Move 2 is complicated, as are the reasons for it, which will be reviewed later in this chapter.

As to the distribution of moves in each thesis shown in Table 6.2, the following peculiarities were observed:

i)   The majority of the theses (Thesis 2, Thesis 3, Thesis 4, Thesis 6, and Thesis 8) employed Move 1 more extensively than the other moves. More than half of the introductory chapter of these five theses consisted of Move 1, the text comprising

Move 1 comprising as little as 56.1 per cent of the whole chapter and as much as 75 per cent.

ii)   On the other hand, two theses (Thesis 1 and Thesis 7) employed Move 3 more frequently than Move 1 and Move 2. Move 3 comprised 56 per cent of the text of the introductory chapter of Thesis 1 and a massive 71 per cent of the text of the introductory chapter of Thesis 7 consisted of Move 3.

iii)   Only one thesis (Thesis 5) employed Move 1 and 3 equally.

iv)   All theses employed Move 2 the least.

These three particularities can be clearly seen in Figure 6.2:
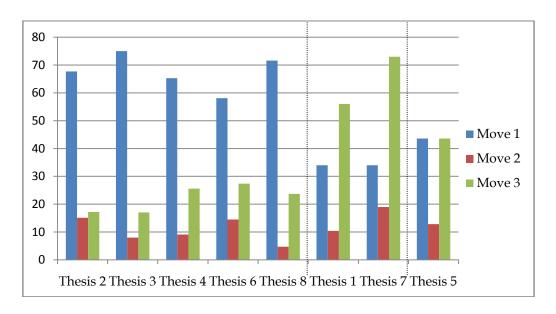
Figure 6.2. Detailed move presence in each thesis introduction

So far it has been concluded that all three moves in Swales's (1990) CARS model occurred in the eight thesis introductions; however, these moves are unevenly distributed in the corpus. What was obvious was the extensive use of Move 1: Establishing the Territory of the subject under study, and the infrequent use of Move 2. Sixty-two per cent of the introduction chapters employed Move 1 the most frequently, while twenty-five per cent of the introduction chapters employed Move 3 the most frequently. Analysing the locations tells us where these preferred moves occur in the text and to what extent the thesis introduction chapters occupy the moves (i.e., how much of the text of the chapters is devoted to each move).

Locating the moves is important to see the extent of each move employed in the introduction chapter, and whether the moves in the introduction conform to Swales's linear 1-2-3 model. The analysis of the distribution of moves carried out using the Dispersion Plot in WordSmith Tools, from Move 1 to Move 3.

6.3.2 Location of Moves

6.3.2.1 Move 1

By using a visual representation, the location and distribution of moves can be grasped more easily. Figure 6.3 shows the location of Move 1 in the eight thesis introductions.

N	File	Words	Hits	r 1,000	persion	Plot
1	thesis 1.txt	4,889	49	10.02	0.643	
2	thesis 2.txt	9,712	130	13.39	0.825	
3	thesis 3.txt	7,775	132	16.98	0.789	
4	thesis 4.txt	8,473	135	15.93	0.794	
5	thesis 5.txt	7,444	79	10.61	0.728	
6	thesis 6.txt	7,191	72	10.01	0.781	
7	thesis 7.txt	5,039	34	6.75	0.648	
8	thesis 8.txt	9,039	154	17.04	0.801	
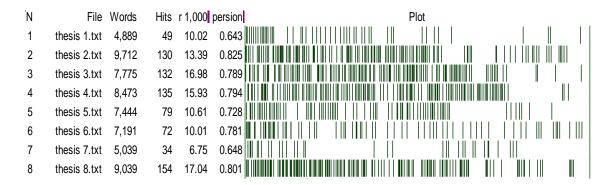
Figure 6.3. Dispersion plot of Move 1 in thesis introductions

The dispersion plot exhibits a range of information: a separate dispersion plot for each of the eight thesis introductions; the number of words in each of the text samples; the number of hits or occurrences of Move 1 in each introduction chapter; the number of occurrences per 1,000 words in the corpus; the dispersion of Move 1 in each thesis introduction; and where each instance of Move 1 occurs in the corpus, shown by the black vertical lines.

The plot in Figure 6.3 shows that, firstly, statements of Move 1: Establishing the Territory can be seen spread throughout the text samples. The extent of the writers using Move 1 statements can be seen by referring to the dispersion column (right-most column). All theses show more than 0.5 dispersion percentage. This means that Move 1 is employed in over more than half of the total number of pages of each thesis introductions chapter. The highest dispersion percentage of this move type can be found in Thesis 2, which is 0.825, or 82 per cent of the whole thesis. The lowest dispersion is found in Thesis 1 which is 0.643, or 64.3 per cent of the whole thesis. Figure 6.9 also shows that Thesis 8 has the highest number

of occurrences of Move 1 per 1,000 words (17.04) and that Thesis 7 has the lowest number (6.74).

The importance of these patterns is the extensiveness of Move 1 in the introductions, illustrating the over-arching conception of what is an introduction. The thesis writers put great effort in providing background for the topic under study so as to inform the readers of the study's perspective and prepare them for what is coming in subsequent chapters. The analysis also shows that writers vary in the proportion of the text of the chapter taken up by Move 1 and the amount of attention given to Move 1.

6.3.2.2 Move 2

Like Move 1, distributions of Move 2: Establishing the Niche statements can also be found throughout the thesis introductions. However, unlike Move 1, determining the location of this move type is not a straightforward task. As can be seen in Figure 6.4, the locations of Move 2 vary. The dispersion plot shows that even though the dispersion of Move 2 is fairly high, with six of eight thesis introductions show more than fifty per cent dispersion, the locations are unevenly scattered throughout the thesis introductions chapters. Thesis 5, for example, clearly employed Move 2 in three different locations. On the other hand, Move 2 statements in Thesis 7 were concentrated in the early part of the introductory chapter. Based on the dispersion plot, this move type is generally concentrated either in the early part of the introduction or somewhere at a midpoint of the chapter.

N	File	Words	Hits	r 1,000	persion	Plot
1	thesis 1.txt	4,883	13	2.66	0.516	
2	thesis 2.txt	9,712	29	2.99	0.490	
3	thesis 3.txt	7,775	14	1.80	0.535	
4	thesis 4.txt	8,473	19	2.24	0.559	
5	thesis 5.txt	7,444	23	3.09	0.672	
6	thesis 6.txt	7,191	18	2.50	0.470	
7	thesis 7.txt	5,039	19	3.77	0.551	
8	thesis 8.txt	9,039	10	1.11	0.649	
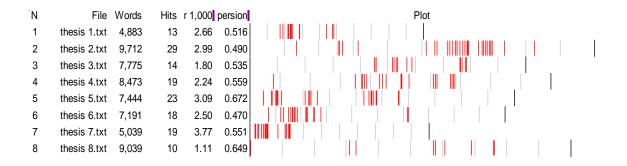
Figure 6.4. Dispersion plot of Move 2 in thesis introductions

To confirm the locations of Move 2 in the thesis introductions, a 'ruler' is added in the dispersion plot. A ruler in dispersion plot is one application in the Concordance which is use to split the display into segments. Figure 6.4 shows ten grey ruler segments; the numbers of running words for all ruler segments are the same. The classification of Move 2

from the ruler segment is then put into a table so that the locations of Move 2 (the red vertical lines) can be clearly seen. Five or more occurrences will show the common locations of Move 2 in the introductory chapters. Table 6.3 below provides a visual account of the popular locations of this move.

Table 6.3
Locations of Move 2 in text samples

Thesis/Ruler segment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1		X	X		X					
2		X	X	X		X	X	X		
3				X	X	X	X			
4	X			X	X	X	X			
5	X	X	X		X	X				
6	X	X	X				X			
7	X	X	X							
8				X		X	X	X		

On the basis of Table 6.3, I can now state that the most frequent occurrences of Move 2 are located somewhere in the middle of the text, particularly at rulers 2, 3, 6 and 7. However, a number of things have to be taken into consideration. The location of Move 2 depends on (i) the location of the section headings; (ii) the length of each section in the introductory chapter; and (iii) the unit of analysis in coding this move type. As the location and length of each section varies in each introductory thesis chapter, a further analysis of each thesis chapter was carried out to clarify our understanding of the location of this move type.

(i) Location of section headings

Table 6.3 shows that Move 2 is commonly located in the early part of the introductory chapter, following the section headings that serve this particular communicative purpose. The section headings proposing the niche of the study are regularly situated at the beginning of the chapter after the writer has set up the background of the study. Move 2 statements are logically found under the generic section heading "Statement of the Problem" (see Chapter 5). In order to accurately and thoroughly describe the location of Move 2, examples of move sequences from Thesis 2, Thesis 5 and Thesis 6 are provided below.

The first step in identifying the location is to look at the sequence of moves. For examples of this we look at several of the theses in detail. Thesis 2 has a very short chapter

opening before problematising the research. Under the "Statement of Problem" heading, there are several occurrences of Move 2. The move sequence of Thesis 2 is set out in Example 6.1:

Example 6.1: Location of Move 2 in the early part of Thesis 2

    Introduction 1-3-1-2 **Statement of the Problem** 1-2-1-2-1-3-1-2-1-3-1-2-1-2-1-2-3

I also found that Move 2 statements in Thesis 5 occurred several times in the early part of the introductory chapter before the theoretical framework of the study was presented. By taking a closer look at the text, it became apparent that the opening section of the introductory chapter was "The Nature of the Problem". Therefore, there were many instances of niche statements (Move 2) in the early part of Thesis 5. Move sequence of Thesis 5 is presented in Example 6.2.

Example 6.2: Location of Move 2 in the early part of Thesis 5

    The Nature of the Problem 1-2-1-3-1-2-1-2-3-1-2-3-1-3 **Theoretical Framework**

Similarly, Thesis 6 introduces the niche of the study in the "Statement of the Problem" section, following the opening section heading "Background". The detailed move sequence of Thesis 6 in Example 6.3 shows that the niche of the study was developed early in the chapter.

Example 6.3: Location of Move 2 in the early part of Thesis 6

    Background 1 **Statement of the Problem** 2-1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2-3-1-3-1-2-1-2-1-3
    Conceptual Framework

Table 6.3 also shows that Move 2 statements are commonly found in rulers segments 6 and 7, the main reason being the length of the preceding section. As in the extracts from Thesis 5 and Thesis 6 above, the section heading that proposes the problem of the study is normally indicated after the writer has provided some background information of the topic (Move 1). However, writers employed Move 1 strategies so extensively that statements of Move 2 come later in the chapter.

(ii) Length of each section in the introductory chapter

The highest frequency of Move 2 statements located in the second half of the chapter (ruler segments 6-10) are found in Theses 3, 4 and 8. Thesis 3 in Example 6.4 below employed Move 2 later in the chapter. The introductory chapter has a lengthy background information section under six sub-headings before the presentation of the need and problem statements under the section headings "Language Learning Strategies" and "Statement of the Problem". This vast explication of topic background has taken up a number of pages in the introductory chapter.

Example 6.4: Thesis 3

Background of the Study (Move 1) **Benefits of Online Learning** (Move1) – **Online Learning in the Educational Environment** (Move 1) – **Online Learning in Malaysia** (Move 1) – **Language Learning from an Information Processing Perspective** (Moves 1-3-1) **Learning Strategies** (Move 1) – **Language Learning Strategies** (Moves 1-3-1-2) **Statement of the Problem** (Moves 1-2-1-2-1-2)

(iii) Unit of analysis in coding Move 2

The unit of analysis can to a certain extent affect the location of the move. As discussed with regards to Move 1, the unit of analysis influences the number of "hits" the move scores. Unlike "hits" in Move 1, which were very close to each other, Move 2 "hits" were quite distant from each other. This is because in order to serve the communicative function of this move type, longer sentences are sometimes required. For example, to achieve the communicative purpose of Move 2, Step 1c: Counter-claim, as shown in Figure 6.5, the writer has to explicate the methodological problem of previous studies. The screenshot in Figure 6.5 is an extract from Thesis 4. The writer located flaws in a previous study's theoretical perspective that has resulted in an imperfect outcome. In order to explain this, hence achieve the purpose of this Move 2, she argued her case in a number of sentences.

Most of the creativity studies in the past focused on respondents' cognitive (Process) ersonality traits (Person). They were done in isolation and resulted in a fragmented view of vity (Sternberg, 1999). For instance, the Cognitive (Process) and Social Personality aches (Person) provided valuable insights into creativity but Cognitive studies alone failed ate the influence of personality attributes and environmental factors on the creative ss of respondents (Sternberg, 1999). Similarly, Personality and Social Psychological aches ignored the importance of mental process underlying creativity.

berg (1999) emphasized:

The cognitive and social-personality approaches have each provided valuable insights into creativity. However, if you look for research that investigates both cognitive and social personality variables at the same time, you will find only a handful of studies. The cognitive tended to ignore or downplay the personality and social system, and the social-personality approaches tended to have little or nothing to say about the mental representations and processes underlying creativity (p. 9).

Comment [szz52]: M1ss2a

Comment [szz53]: M2s1c: counter cliam

Comment [szz54]: M2s1c

Figure 6.5. Screenshot of extract of Thesis 4 in .txt format

The length of a PhD thesis and its introductory chapter account for the important reasons requiring a structure that shows intricate move patterns. Exploring the location of Move 2 was particularly difficult as the dispersion plot shows scattered occurrences. This move type was commonly found in the middle part of the introductory chapter, interspersed with other moves.

This move type usually, but not always, comes under the generic section heading "Problem of the Study". As observed in Thesis 2 (Example 6.1), Move 2 was first introduced in the "Introduction" section and many instances of this move occurred in the next section "Statement of the Problem". Four of the text samples employed Move 2 in the first half of the thesis introductions. In another four thesis introductions, Move 2 was mostly located in the second half of the chapter. There are two reasons for this: the location of chapter headings and the length of each section in the introduction chapter.

The location of Move 2 in the present study is similar to the location of Move 2 in most of the text samples in Arulandu (2005, p. 100) and in Solar-Monreal et al. (2008). In Table 6.4, three text samples from Arulandu's study clearly show that instances of Move 2 (underlined) are located earlier in the chapters, after the writers have set out the topic and before occupying the niche.

Table 6.4
Move sequence in PhD Social Sciences theses

Thesis	Move Sequence
D1	121212121212121<u>2</u>3131321
D3	1212121212121212121<u>2</u>1323
D7	3<u>1212123212121212121</u>23212323232323213

Source: Arulandu, 2005, p. 100.

Four thesis introductions in the study by Soler-Monreal et al. (2008) in Spanish consist of the prototypical sequence of M1-M2-M3. However, it is more significant to look at and discuss the move sequence in theses that have alternating moves, because they are comparable to the present study. Most of the theses introductions in Soler-Monreal et al. (2008) resemble the theses in the present study where the location of Move 2 is concerned. The location of Move 2 in Table 6.5 shows that Move 2 in the Spanish corpus is commonly found at the halfway point of the introductory chapter.

Table 6.5
Move sequence in Spanish PhD theses

T1	M1{M2}-M3-M1[M2]-M3
T9	M3-M1-**M2**-M1-M2-M3
T10	M1-**M2**-M3-M1-M3
T11	M3-M1-**M2**-M3-M1-M2-M1-M3
T15	M3-M1-**M2**-M1-M3-M1-M3-M2[M1]-M3
T16	M1-M3-**M2**-M3-M1[M3]-M3
T17	M3-M1-**M2**-M3-M1[M3]
T19	**M1-M2-M1-M2-M1-M2-M1-M2**-M1-M3

Source: Solar -Monreal et al., 2008, p. 91.

To this point, the analysis of the location and distribution of Move 2 is problematic. Unlike the location of Move 1 which is more direct, Move 2 occurs in various parts of the introduction chapter. One notable reason for the variety of locations of Move 2 is the introduction's section heading. Some writers include the nature of the problem in the first section heading of the thesis introduction and so several occurrences of Move 2 are found in the early part of the chapter. Sometimes, Move 2 statements occurred at the mid-point of the thesis introduction chapter primarily because the writers provide a lengthy background before establishing the niche.

6.3.2.3 Move 3

Determining the location in which Move 3: Occupying the Niche statements are frequently found is as straightforward as it was for Move 1. Figure 6.6 shows the dispersion plot of Move 3.

N	File	Words	Hits	r 1,000	persion	Plot
1	thesis 1.txt	4,883	69	14.13	0.709	
2	thesis 2.txt	9,712	33	3.40	0.463	
3	thesis 3.txt	7,775	30	3.86	0.520	
4	thesis 4.txt	8,473	53	6.26	0.472	
5	thesis 5.txt	7,444	79	10.61	0.803	
6	thesis 6.txt	7,191	34	4.73	0.531	
7	thesis 7.txt	5,039	73	14.49	0.766	
8	thesis 8.txt	9,039	51	5.64	0.636	
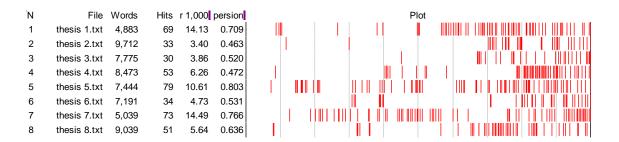
Figure 6.6. Dispersion Plot of Move 3

As Figure 6.6 shows, in six of the eight thesis introduction chapters the dispersion of Move 3 is greater than 0.5 per cent. This suggests that the writers frequently situate their study throughout the thesis introductions. This move type is mostly found at the end of the second half of introductory chapters. However, like Moves 1 and 2, there are some instances in which moves occur in medial position in texts. An example can be seen in Thesis 5 in the dispersion plot of Figure 6.6, where Move 3 can be found in the early part of the chapter and the frequency increases towards the end of the chapter.

The findings above have proven that the introductions do not adhere to the linear M1-M2-M3 mode as proposed in CARS (1990) model. Each move can be seen recurring throughout the thesis introduction. However, the analysis also shows that some moves can be clearly seen clustered at a certain stage of the introduction chapter. How then do the writers organise their ideas and make them into one textual unit? In order to see how the introductory chapter is presented as a textual unit, a more complex but insightful analysis on move sequence was carried out. The aim of the next section is to identify the major move configurations that made up the texts into one textual unit.

Part III

6.4 Analysis of Sequence of Moves

Section 6.3 concluded that the introductions of theses do not conform closely to the linear M1-M2-M3 model. This conclusion was based on the overall location of the three moves. A more detailed analysis of move sequences provides information of the extent to which Swales's (1990) CARS model is found in the thesis introductions in this study.

6.4.1 Move Sequence

Several findings regarding move sequences are quite obvious. Firstly, the locations of moves are not distinct (i.e., the moves are spread out); and secondly, no texts present Moves 1, 2, and 3 in a linear sequence, as every thesis introduction displays moves which are intricately interspersed and interwoven. This can be seen from the vertical bars of the dispersion plot for each move in an individual introductory chapter. Figure 6.7 shows the dispersion plot of the three moves in Thesis 3. Move 1 in the first line can be clearly seen to be clustered in the first half of the thesis introductory chapter. Moves 2 and 3 occurred later in the chapter. However, at a certain point, the three moves intertwined, as shown in the dispersion plot.

N	File	Words	Hits	r 1,000	persion	Plot
1	thesis 3.txt m1	7,775	132	16.98	0.789	
2	thesis 3.txt m2	7,775	14	1.80	0.449	
3	thesis 3.txt m3	7,775	30	3.86	0.465	

Figure 6.7. Dispersion plot of moves in Thesis 3

Another example which illustrates an extreme case of "interwoven moves" is Thesis 5. The dispersion plot of Thesis 5 in Figure 6.8 below shows that each move is "stretched" throughout the introductions, but that they merge at many points. This phenomenon constitutes a series of two-move or three move patterns.

N	File	Words	Hits	r 1,000	persion	Plot
1	thesis 5.txt m1	7,444	79	10.61	0.728	
2	thesis 5.txt m2	7,444	23	3.09	0.625	
3	thesis 5.txt m3	7,444	79	10.61	0.781	

Figure 6.8. "Interwoven moves" in the dispersion plot of Thesis 5

Two two-move patterns can be seen in the dispersion plot of Thesis 6 presented in Figure 6.9 below. The arrow next to "A" in Thesis 6 represents two alternate moves, i.e., Moves 1 and 2. The writer may give the background of the topic (Move 1) and present the niche. This sequence of Moves 1 and 2 recurred before she finally occupied the niche of the study (Move 3). The arrow next to "B" shows the writer may first discuss the subject of the study and then situate her study (Move 3). This sequence can be seen to be recursive. The arrow next to "B" also shows that the writer did not establish the niche, and therefore the rhetorical move sequence is [M1-M3]. Other dispersion plots can be seen in Appendix C.
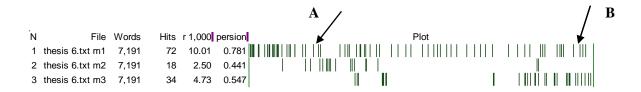
Figure 6.9. Two two-move patterns in Thesis 6

So far, I have concluded that the introductory chapter of the selected theses does not follow the linear 1-2-3 model on the basis that moves may be intertwined in individual texts. If the moves are not linear, what are the prototypical moves in the corpus? In order to develop an accurate idea of the extent of the rhetorical move organisation of Introductions, an in-depth analysis of the move sequence of each thesis has to be carried out. In line with Lewin et al.'s (2001) claim, one of the questions that must be addressed in genre analysis is the prototypical sequence of moves.

Table 6.6 shows the move sequence of the text samples. The move sequence describes the writers' strategies when attempting to achieve the communicative purpose of the genre.

Table 6.6
Results of move sequence of the text samples

Thesis	Move Sequence
T1	1-3-1-3-1-2-1-2-3-1-2-3-1-2-3-2-3-1-3-1-2-1-3-2-3-2-3
T2	1-3-1-2-1-2-1-2-1-3-1-2-1-3-1-2-1-2-1-2-3-1-2-3-1-3-1-3-1-2-1-3-1-3-1-3
T3	1-3-1-3-1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2-3-1-2-1-3-1-2-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-2-3-2-3-1-2-3
T4	1-3-2-1-3-1-3-2-3-1-2-1-2-1-3-1-2-3-1-2-1-2-3-1-2-3-1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2-3
T5	1-2-1-3-1-2-1-2-3-1-2-3-1-3-1-3-1-2-1-2-3-1-3-1-2-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-2-1-2-1-2-3-2-3-2-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3
T6	1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2-3-1-3-1-2-1-2-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-2-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3
T7	1-2-1-2-1-2-3-1-2-1-2-3-1-2-3-2-3-2-3-1-2-3-1-2-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3
T8	2-1-3-1-3-1-3-2-1-2-3-1-3-1-2-3-1-2-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-2-3-1-3-1-2-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1

Table 6.6 illustrates the complexities of the rhetorical strategies in eight thesis introductions, exhibiting a great deal of variation in terms of move structuring. However, from the move sequence in Table 6.6, we need to further distinguish what are the main move sequences that the writers used in their introductory chapters.

6.4.2   Major Move Configurations

Following Kwan (2006), I categorised the data according to number of moves in order to identify the major move configurations employed by the writers. The move categorisations are as follows:

  (i) single move   [M2]

  (ii) two-move   [M1-M3], [M1-M2], [M2-M3]

                                   $[M1-M3]^n$, $[M1-M2]^n$, $[M2-M3]^n$

  (iii) three-move   [M1-M2-M3]

                                   $[M1-M2-M3]^n$

                                   $[M1-M2]^n-M3$

  (iv) irregular three-move   [M1-M3-M2]

  * "n" refers to the number of times the configuration recurs.

The major move configurations according to this categorisation are set out in Table 6.7.

Table 6.7
Major move configurations

Major move configurations	Move configuration	Occurrences	Total
Two-move	[M1-M3]^n	14	26 [M1-M3]
	[M1-M3]	12	
	[M1-M2]	7	10 [M1-M2]
	[M1-M2]^n	3	
	[M2-M3]	4	
	[M2-M3]^n	4	8 [M2-M3]
Three-move	[M1-M2-M3]	10	22
	[M1-M2-M3]^n	2	
	[M1-M2]^n-M3	10	
One move	[M2]	1	1
Irregular three-move	[M1-M3-M2]	1	1
			68

Table 6.7 shows that pairings of two-move configurations are the most frequently employed. The total number of occurrences of [M1-M3], [M1-M2] and [M2-M3] is 44. The second most common ones are those of three-move configurations which tallied at 22. The least common ones are the single move and the irregular three-move configurations. The most frequent pairing in a two-move configuration is [M1-M3], followed by [M1-M2], with [M1-M2-M3] being the most commonly employed pairing in the three-move configuration.

6.4.2.2   Two-move Configurations: [M1-M3]

The pairing that is very often used is [M1-M3]. This move configuration means that the writers present background information for the study and then situate their research. The configuration has two patterns: [M1-M3] and [M1-M3]^n. Both patterns are frequently used; twelve times and fourteen times respectively.

(i) Single pairing [M1-M3]

A single pairing of [M1-M3] can be seen in the extract from Thesis 2 displayed in Example 6.5. There are three instances of this move configuration found in the introductory chapter of Thesis 2. The first instance of the pairing [M1-M3] is used as an opening and introducing the perspective underlying the present study. A series of discussions on learning process (Move 1) are alternately presented with the problems identified (Move 2). Instead of presenting the climax of her study, which is positioning her research, she

continues with claiming the importance of the learning process. In the second instance of [M1-M3], she gives an indication that issues of learning strategy are the focus of the study. A single pairing of [M1-M3] in this case is deemed an anti-climax.

Example 6.5: Single pairing [M1-M3] in Thesis 2

[1-3]-1-2-1-2-1-2-[1-3]-1-2-[1-3]/-1-2-1-2-1-2-3-1-2-3-1-3-1-3-1-2-1-3-1-3-1-3

Introduction **Statement of the Problem**	
If learning in the university is seen as "enhancing the capabilities of its students" (Bowden & Marton, 1998…	Move 1
This aspect of the learning process has emerged as a topic of much interest, debates and discussions among researchers and remains the primary focus of this study.	Move 3
Without doubt, in any academic or higher learning context, reading is perceived as the most prominent academic language skill for all second language learners. ..	Move 1
However, most often, many first year students, specifically second language learners, who enter institutions of higher learning, are found to be unprepared for the reading demands placed upon them and they encounter difficulties.	Move 2

(ii) Recursive pairing [M1-M3] ([M1-M3]^n)

The recursive pairing of [M1-M3] can be identified in the early part of the thesis, in medial position or at the end after a statement of "Purpose of the Study". As shown in Table 6.6, there are two instances (Thesis 1 and Thesis 3) of this pattern in the early part of the thesis. The recurrence of move sequence [M1-M3] can be seen in the move sequence of Thesis 1 in Example 6.6.

Example 6.6: [M1-M3]^n in Thesis 1

[1-3-1-3]-1-2-1-2-3-1-2-3-1-2-3-2-3-1-3-1-2-1-3-2-3-2-3

Introduction	
…	
These studies have also demonstrated that there are a number of definable strategies used by language learners when they encounter problems in their communication. The aspect of CS among second language learners (henceforth, ESL learners) when they interact in group discussion is the focus of the present study.	Move 1
This chapter, therefore, introduces the research study by presenting the background and rationale of the study, the aims of the study, research questions, limitations of the study, as well as its implications.	Move 3
Language education in Malaysia	
… He asserts that fluency in English would enable students to compete in an increasingly global world in any field that they choose when they pursue their studies at tertiary level or to enter the workforce (Chin, 2007).	Move 1
The following section gives a brief review of the use of spoken English in the Malaysian workplace, which provides the setting for the background and rationale of the study.	Move 3

A longer cycle of [M1-M3] can be observed in Thesis 5, presented in Example 6.7. The recursive [M1-M3] configuration is situated at the medial position of the introductory chapter.

Example 6.7: [M1-M3]^n in Thesis 5

1-2-1-3-1-2-1-2-3-1-2-3-1-3-1-3-1-2-1-2-3-1-3-1-2-3-[1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3]-1-2-1-2-1-2-3-2-3-2-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3

The [M1-M3] sequence above takes eight cycles. Under the sub-heading "Confluence Approach (Contextual Approach) to Creativity", the author presents several theories. After reviewing a theory, she situates her study and justifies her reason for doing so. Presenting the text in that order, she alternately employed the [M1-M3] sequence in a number of cycles. Below is an excerpt from Thesis 5 which shows three cycles of the [M1-M3] configuration.

Thesis 5:

Confluence Approach (Contextual Approach) to Creativity Recent studies suggest that… The Confluence Approach incorporates several theories namely: The Cognitive Theories (Wallas, 1926; Guilford, 1959; cited in Isaksen, 1987), The Implicit	Move 1

Theory (Sternberg, 1985, 1999), and The Investment Theory (Sternberg, 1999).	
In the present study, the researcher will use the Cognitive theory as a basis for understanding the Year Five pupils' Creative Process. … (justification)	Move 3
The Structure of Intellect (SOI) model is to the periodic table it that …	Move 1
Creativity (the creative process) is not a stagnant thinking process but it is seen …	
Torrance (1988) and Plsek (1996) suggested that Wallas' model is the foundation …	
…Further, the Implicit theory guides the researcher in identifying the relationship…	Move 3
This theory helps the researcher in recognizing the interplay between a person's creative personality attributes and environmental influences (Press) on the person's creative development (Sternberg & Lubart, 1991, 1995, 1996). This theory describes the importance of a supportive environment which is necessary for creative growth. In this theory, Sternberg and Lubart (1996) highlight the concept of "buying low and selling high"…	Move 1
This theory is relevant as it helps the researcher to identify several creative personality attributes important for this study namely: the ability to defend and pursue unknown ideas and to defend them, the ability to resist challenges and critics, and the ability promote and propose unique ideas.	Move 3

Many cases of recursive [M1-M3] configuration, however, are located after the writers have situated their study, usually after the generic section heading "Purpose of the Study"(/). Move sequences from Thesis 5, Thesis 6, Thesis 7 and Thesis 8 display the recursive [M1-M3] statements (underlined) extensively in this part of the section.

Thesis 5: 1-2-1-3-1-2-1-2-3-1-2-3-1-3-1-3-1-2-1-2-3-1-3-1-2-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-
3-1-2-1-2-1-2-3-2-3/-2-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3

Thesis 6: 1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2-3-1-3-1-2-1-2-1-3-1-3-1/-3-1-3-1-3-2-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-
1-3-1-3

Thesis 7: 1-2-1-2-1-2-3-1-2-1-2-3-1-2-3-2-3/3-2-3-1-2-3-1-2-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3

Thesis 8: 2-1-3-1-3-1-3-2-1-2-3-1-3-1-2-3-1-2-/3-1-3-1-3-1-3-2-3-1-3-1-2-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1

6.4.2.3 Two-move Configurations: [M1-M2]

The pairing [M1-M2] has two patterns: the single pairing [M1-M2] and [M1-M2]^n. Both patterns are frequently used, twelve times and fourteen times respectively.

(i) Single pairing [M1-M2]

The first pattern is the single cycle [M1-M2] which is used seven times in the thesis introductions. Five of the eight theses used this particular single move configuration. An example is shown in Thesis 2 of Example 6.8.

Example 6.8: Single pairing [M1-M2] in Thesis 2

1-3-1-2-1-2-1-2-1-3-[1-2]-1-3-1-2-1-2-1-2-3-1-2-3-1-3-1-3-[1-2]-1-3-1-3-1-3

Related studies have shown that students are not willing to seek new knowledge and understanding, and at the same time, incapable of applying learned knowledge to solve problems…	Move 1
This aspect of the learning process has emerged as a topic of much interest, debates and discussions among researchers and remains the primary focus of this study.	Move 3
Without doubt, in any academic or higher learning context, reading is perceived as the most prominent academic language skill for all second language learners…	Move 1
However, most often, many first year students, specifically second language learners, who enter institutions of higher learning, are found to be unprepared for the reading demands placed upon them and they encounter difficulties.	Move 2
There are various factors that contribute to the reading problems of these learners at the tertiary level.	Move 1
Another factor which is equally influential in motivation and is one of the focal points discussed in this study refers to the aim or purpose of reading.	Move 3

(ii) Recursive pairing [M1-M2] ([M1-M2]^n)

The pairing of [M1-M2] can also be in a number of cycles. The pairing of [M1-M2] recurs and is mostly situated under the generic "Statement of the Problem" section headings. An example can be seen in move sequence of Thesis 2 below displayed in Example 6.9:

Example 6.9: [M1-M2]^n in Thesis 2

Thesis 2: 1-3-[1-2-1-2-1-2]-1-3-1-2-1-3/3-1-2-1-2-1-2-3-1-2-3-1-3-1-3-1-2-1-3-1-3- 1-3

An excerpt taken from Thesis 2 further illuminates this point.

Thesis 2:

Most discerningly, there is increasing evidence that a "quantitative" type of learning is the more dominant approach engaged by university students, which is opposite to what is intended by a university education (Gow & Kember, 1990, Ramsden, 1992)….	Move 1
While there is a shared consensus about the functions and goals of higher education, there is much debate…	Move 2
In order to foster a "qualitative" type of learning, it is necessary to create conditions that would facilitate the achievement of such learning. For example…	Move 1
Ramsden (1992) defines studying in higher education as …	
In her search of related studies in the area of ESL, the researcher managed to locate a few, which look at the relationship between approach to learning and English language ability, but could not find any similar study conducted within the Malaysian educational context…	Move 2
	Move 1
For example, in a study using the Study Process Questionnaire (SPQ) to measure students' approaches to learning, Gow and colleagues (1991) discovered…	
	Move 2
More importantly, one can conclude that very limited studies of this nature have been cited in the literature…	

6.4.2.4   Two-move Configurations: [M2-M3]

(i) Single pairing [M2-M3]

Writers employing [M2-M3] move configurations present the problem of the study followed by the niche of the study. Example 6.10 presents a part of the move sequence and an excerpt from Thesis 4 which illustrates my point.

Example 6.10: Single pairing [M2-M3] in Thesis 4

1-3-2-1-3-1-3-[2-3]-1

… Subramaniam (2003: vii) surmises the situation of the Malaysian ELT teachers as: Many English language teachers have had little opportunity to be formally instructed in ways of reading and studying literary text. But, now that literature is a compulsory part of the Malaysian secondary school's ELT syllabus all English language teachers will have to teach literature. This surely presents a problem for the teachers, learners and trainers.	Move 2
The issue regarding teachers' ability and competency in content as well as the pedagogic perspective of the component is one of the concerns of the thesis.	Move 3
For most of the teachers, the literature component was welcomed with anxiety and misconceptions (Ganakumaran, Shahizah and Koo, 2003; Aslam Khan, 2003).	Move 1

(ii) Recursive [M2-M3] ([M2-M3)^n

There are many instances of the pairing [M2-M3] recurring. An example is taken from the move sequence of Thesis 3. Under the sub-heading "Significance of the Study", the writer informs us that there is lack of study within the research area. She then continues to present the benefits of the study. Again, the writer provides another problem, i.e., that previous studies have only been done within the classroom context. She occupies the niche by presenting the importance of her study. Example 6.10 presents the excerpt from Thesis 3 which illuminates this strategy.

Example 6.10: [M2-M3]^n in Thesis 3

Thesis 3:   1-3-1-3-1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2/ -3-1-2-1-3-1-2-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-[2-3-2-3]-1-2-3

As there is little research being done in the field pertaining to language learning strategies by Malaysian students…,	Move 2
the study is expected to provide significant insights into how Malaysian ESL students cope with this novel approach…	Move 3
Previous studies have only been conducted on language learning strategies in a classroom context…	Move 2
indicating that findings from the study will not only shed light on the similarities and differences in the use of language learning strategies but also reveal how students cope and adapt to an online context. …	Move 3
No doubt online courses are no longer unusual as an educational feature in developed countries and many have researched in collaborative writing and authoring (Chan 1996, Keenan 1996).	Move 1

6.4.2.5 Three-move Configuration: [M1-M2-M3]

Besides the high frequency pairing of [M1-M3] in the thesis introductions, Table 6.7 also shows that the three-move configuration [M1-M2-M3] is also frequently employed. The three types of this move configuration are the composite linear structure [M1-M2-M3], the recurring composite linear structure [M1-M2-M3] ([M1-M2-M3]^n) and the cyclical structure [M1-M2]-M3 ([M1-M2]^n-M3). In total, there are 22 occurrences of the three-move configuration [M1-M2-M3].

The issue of composite and cyclical structures was raised by Swales (1990, p. 158). He noted that a composite configuration occurs when the argument for establishing the research space is linear and cumulative. The writer presents the centrality of the study, informs us of its niche and reports the study. But, since the "niche establishment does not necessarily occur at the end of a literature review, but may follow reviews of individual items", cycles of Move 1 and Move 2 (1-2) may recur.

(i)   Composite [M1-M2-M3]

A composite form can be found in a sequence of [M1-M2-M3], that is, a composite "chunked" Move 1 followed by a composite Move 2 (Swales, 1990 p. 158). In other words, Move 2 is reported as a general statement at the end of a literature review.

As noted, writers who opted for a composite strategy begin with a composite "chunk" of Move 1 followed by composite Move 2 and Move 3. A composite linear [M1-M2-M3] configuration can be seen as frequently as ten times in the eight thesis introductions. When employing this move configuration, the writer situates her study by recapitulating some background information, presenting the niche of the state of the art and then occupying it. This move only failed to be employed in two thesis introductions (Theses 1 and 6). An excerpt from Thesis 3 in Example 6.11 illuminates this phenomenon.

Example 6.11: Composite [M1-M2-M3] in Thesis 3

Online learning is fast establishing itself as an educational context through which an individual learns just as in the formal classroom learning context.	Move 1
But little is known about the theoretical application of online learning in the field of second language learning.	Move 2
This gap forms the conceptual framework of the current study as it seeks to explore the language learning strategies used by learners in an online environment to facilitate the process of language learning.	Move 3

Another example can be drawn from Thesis 8. The [ ] in move sequence Example 6.12 below shows the presence of this move configuration.

Example 6.12: Composite [M1-M2-M3] in Thesis 8

Thesis 8:   2-1-3-1-3-1-3-2-[1-2-3]-1-3-1-2-3-1-2-/3-1-3-1-3-1-3-2-3-1-3-[1-2-3]-1-3-1-3-1-3-1

(ii)   Recursive [M1-M2-M3] ([M1-M2-M3]^n)

A composite linear configuration [M1-M2-M3] can also recur in a few cycles. As presented in the move sequence of Thesis 1 below, there are two recurring [M1-M2-M3] configurations. The following move sequence and excerpt from Thesis 1 in Example 6.13 further illustrates how the writer manipulates this configuration.

Example 6.13: [M1-M2-M3]^n in Thesis 1

Thesis 1:   1-3-1-3-1-2-1-2-3-[1-2-3]-[1-2-3]-2-3-1-3-1-2-1-3-2-3-2-3

Concerns regarding incompetence and the level of local graduates' English proficiency have been raised by many… especially for graduates whose future jobs involved dealing with the private or business sector.	Move 1
Therefore, it is timely for Malaysians, in particular local graduates, to have the required proficiency… it is necessary for educators at universities to undertake measures to meet the need.	Move 2
The selected subjects for the present study are students of Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM). …	Move 3
Two of the English language courses are handled by the Pusat Pengajian Umum (PPU), and one English course is handled by the Faculty of Economics and Business…	Move 1
As previously indicated, the students enrolled for the English language courses in the first year only. As a result, this could create repercussions in the students' level of English proficiency …	Move 2
Therefore, this study developed from the awareness that there is a need to … necessary to address the issue pertaining to the growing concern with the local graduates' performance in their communication skills in English when they enter the workforce.	
This study, thus, intends to … The target speakers are students from the Faculty of Economics and Business. The next section describes the aims of the present study.	Move 3
1.3 Aims of the Study	

(iii)   Cyclical [M1-M2]-M3 ([M1-M2]^n-M3)

A cyclical form can be found in [M1-M2]-3 where each niche of the study follows a review of a particular variable, so that cycles comprised of Move 1 and Move 2 recur. This type of move order has been found by a number of investigators (Crookes, 1986a; Hopkins & Dudley-Evans, 1988). They have pointed out that "niche-establishment does not necessarily occur only at the end of a literature review, but may follow reviews of individual items…" (Hopkins & Dudley-Evans, 1988, in Swales, 1990, p. 158). Table 6.7 shows ten instances of cyclical [M1-M2-]^n M3 in eight thesis introductory chapters in the present study.

In Thesis 7 of Example 6.14, the writer strategised her niche establishment at the end of a few cycles of [M1-M2]. Before situating her study in the generic section heading "Purpose of the Study", she employed two sets of cyclical [M1-M2]^n-M3 configurations.

Example 6.14: [M1-M2]^n-M3 in Thesis 7

Thesis 7:   [1-2-1-2-1-2]-3-[1-2-1-2]-3-1-2-3-2-3

                 1   2

In configuration 1, there are three cycles of [M1-M2] before she introduces her study. The writer established her territory on the subject under study, alternating them with Move 2 statements. She situates her study afterwards. Similarly in configuration 2, her niche establishment was done in two cycles before positioning her study.

Another example can be found in Thesis 6. In Example 6.15 below, Thesis 6 exhibits six cycles of the [M1-M2] move configuration before the writer situates her study. The move sequence shows that this configuration takes place in the early part of her chapter. The excerpt further illustrates how the writer strategised her niche establishment.

Example 6.15: **[M1-M2]^n-M3 in Thesis 6**

Thesis 6:   [1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2]-3-1-3-1-2-1-2-1-3-1-3-1

                 1

In the research study by Yarrow and Topping (2001) about peer interaction in the writing classroom, similar findings to the ones by Leong (1999) and Lim (1997) were found…	Move 1
If both parties are not comfortable with the approach, then it is not possible to hope for positive reactions towards the teaching and learning in the writing classroom using the process approach.	Move 2
However, the process approach in the teaching of writing involves the use of many strategies. Writing teachers may claim they use the process approach in the writing class…	Move 1
So, the research by Leong (1999) and Lim (1997) on whether the process approach was applicable in the classroom could not succeed in teaching some skills as required for the process writing exercise. Furthermore The research by Leong (1999) and Lim (1997) did not cover specific activities. For instance, one aspect in the writing process known as peer editing among students in the classroom was not studied. Furthermore, ….	Move 2
Thirdly, and most importantly, the process approach is actually not merely an approach just like another newly added approach in the classroom teaching. Using the process approach in the ESL writing classroom is actually making major changes to the teacher's attitude and perceptions about writing and the teaching of writing.	Move 1
Unfortunately many first timers of this process approach have tried to do too many things all at any one time. …	Move 2
This research study will look into the process approach – particularly the revision/ response stage among tertiary level students. Since one of the reasons for not being able to practice this process approach is time constraint and class size (Lim, 1997), this study will deal …	Move 3

So far, we have observed configurations from pairings of [M1-M2], [M1-M3] and the linear [M1-M2-M3] all of which begin with the writers providing some background information on the topic. Another obvious move configuration is [M2-M3]. Seventeen per cent of the total move configurations used this pattern. Most instances of this configuration occur under the section headings "Significance of the Study" and "Aims of the Study", as can be seen in Thesis 1, Thesis 5, Thesis 6, Thesis 7 and Thesis 8.

Thesis 1:   1-3-1-3-1-2-1-2-3-1-2-3/ -1-2-3-[2-3]-1-3-1-2-1-3-[2-3-2-3]

Thesis 5:   1-2-1-3-1-2-1-2-3-1-2-3-1-3-1-3-1-2-1-2-3-1-3-1-2-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1- 3-1-3-1-3-1-2-1-2-1-2-3-[2-3]/[2-3]-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3-1-3

Other move configurations that realised the introductory chapters are [M1-M3-M2] and a single move [M2].

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has presented findings concerning the frequency, locations and sequence of moves. The frequency analysis shows that all theses employed the three obligatory moves of academic research writing introductions as proposed by Swales (1990) and Bunton (2002). Thus the thesis introductions in the study have attempted to achieve the communicative purpose of the genre.

However, the attention given to each move differs across the text samples. The occurrences, locations and intertwining of moves are different in each thesis introduction. Some introductions put more thought into establishing the territory, and a number concentrate on situating the study within the subject or theme. A number of writers prefer a cyclical way of arguing and some frequently employ the composite way of structuring argumentation. Even though there are mixtures of patterns, each thesis writer tries to achieve the same broad communicative purposes appropriate to a thesis introduction.

In this chapter we have noted how the three CARS moves are used to achieve the communicative purpose of this genre. I have demonstrated that the CARS template is applicable at a general level, within which there is a great deal of variation in move location, sequencing, combination and cycling. Clearly we need to know more about whether or not there are patterns in the way authors use steps, and the specific strategies by which each move/communicative purpose is realised. To know this, we need to analyse the different combinations of steps. In the next chapter, I will analyse how each author configures this internal move structure.

Chapter Seven

Analysis of Steps

7.1   Introduction

In Chapter 5, I analysed the overall structure of Malaysian theses and their introductory chapters and I demonstrated that all but one of the theses in the study adhered to the traditional 'simple' thesis format. These formats are typically used in Social Sciences/ Humanities theses although several researchers have also found theses from these disciplines to be of topic-based format. I also discovered that all the theses provided an exclusive introductory chapter. A further analysis into the overall organisation of thesis introductions demonstrated that there are generic section headings that inform us of the general structure of the introductory chapter. However, at that point, the extent of the similarities or differences of the internal structure in all the text samples, adopted by authors to achieve the communicative purpose of the genre was still unclear. An additional analysis is needed to examine more closely the internal structure of the introductory chapters. I will base this on the approach of the ESP genre school, in particular Swales' CARS framework, for understanding move structures and text organisation.

In Chapter 6, I examined various claims about the structures of thesis introductions at the move level and concluded that the analyses of the occurrences, frequency distribution, locations and sequences of moves inform us how Malaysian theses broadly conform to the recognisable and universal genre. The presence of all the three moves indicates that the text samples have the same global communicative purposes of academic research study Introductions. However, the findings from the locations of the moves suggested that the introductory chapters do not follow the linear M1-M2-M3 Swales' (1990) CARS model. The findings emanating from the frequency distribution and sequences of moves illustrate even further the various idiosyncratic variations used by authors when structuring this particular chapter of their theses.

Those analyses, however, are regrettably still insufficient in defining theses as a genre in Malaysia, as they only explain the organisation of moves. Since each move has its own particular purpose, a more comprehensive analysis of how these moves are realised has to be carried out. Understanding the strategies or steps in realising a move will give a clearer

indication of the detailed structuring of the introductory chapters. Thus, this chapter is designed to look further into the steps, to deepen our understanding.

The discussion of the analysis conducted in this chapter includes the steps of the following kinds: those found in all thesis introductions in the study; those that are newly found compared to other authors, particularly Bunton (2002) and Arulandu (2005); and those that provide an extension in the semantic scheme compared with the coding system of Chapter 4. However, I will also point out when the steps in each move are the same as what has been suggested in the coding criteria. In sum, all the main steps of Moves 1 and 2 are discussed since I found new developments in terms of their criteria that can enhance our understanding of the steps. The sub-steps of Move 1 are also examined, since they are new strategies compared to Arulandu's model on Malaysian thesis introductions. Only several of the steps in Move 3 will be discussed, since many steps have similar criteria to those found in the pilot coding, as well as to criteria used in previous research. Examples provided are taken from all eight theses. This is deliberately done in order to show that the criteria were relevant in all theses. It is also important to note that even though this chapter used a particular thesis as a direct example of steps, sometimes the active agent "Writer" is also used to show that the rhetorical strategy is tactically employed.

This chapter begins with findings of the overall frequency distribution of steps and follows with a detailed analysis of each step. For the purpose of simple reading and understanding, this chapter is divided into three sections. They are Part I: Analysis of Steps in Move 1, Part II: Analysis of Steps in Move 2 and Part III: Analysis of Steps in Move 3.

Part I

7.2   Part I: Analysis of Steps in Move 1

7.2.1   Frequency distribution of steps in Move 1

This section begins by presenting the frequencies of the three main steps of Move 1 employed by the thesis writers. As stated in Chapter Three, the frequencies of moves and steps can be identified by referring to the total number of hits of the particular step in the WordSmith plot dispersion. An example of the frequency of the steps - Step 1: Claiming

Centrality, can be seen in Figure 7.1 below. The results are extremely valuable as they emphasise the idea of how the eight thesis writers create their research space.

N	File	Words	Hits	r 1,000	persion	Plot
1	iza - m1ss2a.txt	4,884	7	1.43	0.370	
2	dr norizah.txt	9,714	9	0.93	0.544	
3	dr zaini[1].txt	7,776	25	3.22	0.754	
4	dr norherani.txt	8,474	5	0.59	0.359	
5	dr siti rafiah.txt	7,446	9	1.21	0.622	
6	dr noorhanim.txt	7,181	4	0.56	0.192	
7	dr.kamisah.txt	5,027	5	0.99	0.359	
8	p. 1 dr ummi.txt	9,039	26	2.88	0.618	
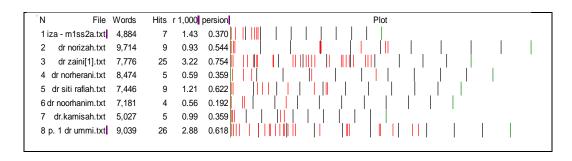
Figure 7.1. Number of hits of M1s2: Claiming centrality

Consistent with Swales' CARS framework of Move 1, establishing the territory in the corpus was also realised in three variations or steps. **Step 1: Claiming Centrality (M1s1)** assures the reader that the theme of the topic under study is worth investigating and is well established. **Step 2: Topic generalisations and giving background information (M1s2)** presents overviews about the subject of the study. **Step 3: Reviewing previous research (M1s3)** reports previous studies deemed to be relevant to the topic being discussed. Based on the plot dispersion of the three steps, there are a total of 778 Move 1 steps in all eight introductions. Specifically, there are 90 occurrences of M1s1, 642 occurrences of M1s2 and 46 numbers of hits of M1s3. The findings about the distribution of frequency of steps in Move 1 are summarised in Figure 7.2 below for a clearer perspective on the situation.
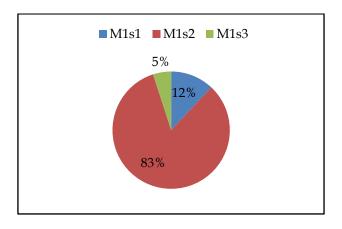
Figure 7.2. Percentages distribution of steps in Move 1

One obvious observation from Figure 7.2 is that Step 2: Topic generalisation and background information takes up the major part of Move 1. Step 2 covers more than three-quarters of the total distribution and is followed by Step 1 with twelve per cent and Step 3 with only five per cent. The figures clearly suggest that the writers consider that presenting

extensive background of their topic is important primarily in preparing the readers for the study. The small percentage of Step 3: Reviewing previous research (RPR) has several possible implications. One could be that RPR is the least important and least preferred strategy of the writers. Another could be that the writers do not provide us with enough evidence for a critical discussion on their perspectives of what a RPR is. The second would be more significant and worth discussing. A critical discussion of RPR can gain a two-fold advantage. Firstly, a detailed analysis of RPR in the text can provide a general perspective of what RPR represents from the point of view of the writers. Secondly, this perspective would benefit future research writers when writing academic research texts.

7.2.1.1   M1s1: Claiming Centrality

Step 1 of Move 1 focuses on the claims that the research topics are significant in some way. Figure 7.1 above shows that the percentage of usage is low: only 12 per cent of all the steps in Move 1. Nonetheless, a more profound finding is demonstrated: that all thesis writers employed this step and thus regard Step 1: Claiming Centrality as essential in introducing the subject of the study and claiming its significance. This proves that having Claiming Centrality in the introductory chapters as proposed by Swales is of great importance. The writers acknowledged the implication of presenting this strategy in their theses.

The detailed move-step sequence in each thesis (refer to Appendix D) show that six writers begin their introductory chapter with a statement(s) of Claiming Centrality. It seems that all the opening statements of Theses 1-6 consist of the theme, where they assert their value in terms of magnitude, salience and relevance to the study in general. This can be seen from the lexical items *core, sudden, increasing, ultimate and uncontested*. Many Claiming Centrality statements in the theses make many assertions about the phenomenon being investigated, compared to reviewing it as a form of active (on-going or completed) research.

(i)   Locations and style configurations

Statements of Centrality Claims were most commonly found co-occurring with other Move 1 statements in the early part of the Introductions. As seen in Appendix D, various configurations can be visually observed, for example [*m1s1/ m1ss2a/ m1s1/ m1ss2a* or *m1ss2b/ m1s1/ m1ss2a*]. An example of the first configuration is taken from Thesis 3. An excerpt from Thesis 3 presented in Example 7.1 below shows the writer starts by claiming that there is an

increase in the number of users of computers in education. The following sentence is a neutral statement. The lexical *widespread* in Line 3 continues the writer's stance on the growth of computer users. Lines 3 to 8 impart the outcome of the Internet. In Line 9, Writer 3 again strongly declares and at the same time concludes that the Internet has changed and benefited communication. The time adjunct *over the last two decades* shows that the writer attempts to accentuate the impact of ICT. After the writer has emphasised the importance of the Internet, especially with reference to online learning, the paragraph is concluded by a definition of what online learning is.

Example 7.1: Claiming Centrality Statements co-occurring with Move 1 in Thesis 3

<u>The number of computer users in the education sphere is increasing daily.</u>	1
Much of the growth is attributed to educators and learners using the	2
Internet. <u>The widespread</u> use of the Internet has resulted in expectations	3
that information communication and technology (ICT) can enhance	4
learning and would be able to provide high-quality education accessible to	5
all. It has transformed the traditional delivery of education whereby	6
educators, teachers, and linguists have seen pedagogic changes, from a	7
teacher-centered teaching and learning environment to a learner-centered	8
one<u>. The Internet has dramatically changed the efficiency of information</u>	9
<u>dissemination and human communication. Advances in ICT over the last</u>	10
<u>two decades have placed schools and colleges in a unique position to take</u>	11
<u>advantage of new learning opportunities.</u> Coopers (2004) stated that	12
online learning defined as the exploitation of interactive technologies and	13
communication system to improve the learning experience in principle,	14
reach into every part of the educational experience both in the classroom	15
and increasingly outside the normal learning environment.	16

Claiming Centrality statements can also precede a Move 2 step. An excerpt from Thesis 5 is an example. Centrality statements in Thesis 5 presented in Example 7.2 refer to the importance of an integrated approach when conducting a study on creativity. It is then supported by citations of previous researchers to show that the concept has been accepted by many researchers. In establishing the research niche, the writer presents the problem and need of the study. Finally, the writer informs the approach chosen for her study and justifies her decision.

Example 7.2: Claiming Centrality Statements precede Move 2 in Thesis 5

Furthermore, recent trends in the studies of creativity indicate a growing concern toward an integrated approach, which "hypothesized	M1s1

that multiple components must converge for creativity to occur" (Amabile, 1983, 1996; Csikszentmihalyi, 1988; Gardner, 1993; Gruber, 1989; Lubart, 1994; Mumford & Gustafson, 1988; Perkins, 1981; Simonton, 1988; Sternberg, 1985).	
Creative process, for instance, cannot be studied in isolation and it requires a…	M2s1b
The confluence approach has been selected for this study because …	M3s10

Centrality statements can also co-occur with Move 3 [*m1s1/ m3s2/ m1s1*]. In this study, it is a very rare rhetorical strategy as I found only one instance of this configuration. In Thesis 2 (Example 7.3), the writer asserts the importance of reading in the learning process and the attention it receives from researchers. However, the underlined phrase "the primary focus of this study" abruptly suggests that the subject matter would occur in and be the focus of her study.

Example 7.3: Claiming Centrality Statement co-occurring with Move 3 in Thesis 2

> One important area that will be greatly influenced by the students' approaches to learning involves the reading process. This aspect of the learning process has emerged as a topic of much interest, debates and discussions among researchers and remains <u>the primary focus of this study.</u> Without doubt, in any academic or higher learning context, reading is perceived as the most prominent academic language skill for all second language learners.

(ii)   Value of Centrality Claims

As pointed in Chapter Four, Centrality claims are events (phenomena or research) that can be generated from both the real world and the research world. Throughout the thesis introductions, many Centrality Claims statements relate mainly to the value of magnitude and salience of the phenomena in the real world. The occurrence of real-world and research-world Centrality Claim statements in the introductory chapter is presented in Table 7.1 below.

Table 7.1
Real-world and research-world Centrality Claims

Thesis	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	Total	%
Real-world	6	5	19	4	5	4	1	21	65	74
Research-world	1	3	5	1	4	0	4	5	23	26

Showing general themes that have no direct relevance to the writers' research are most preferred by the thesis writers. Seventy-four per cent of the total centrality claims were assertions of the importance of the theme being discussed. Thesis 2, for example, looked at the learning strategies in ESL students in her thesis titled "ESL students' approaches to reading an academic expository text". The writer opened her introductory chapter with a general statement on how the life of a first year student in university would be difficult compared to when they were in school. The writer did not focus on any features of life in campus that would then be difficult. The excerpt in Example 7.4 below is the opening statement of her thesis:

Example 7.4: Centrality Claim statement of General Themes in Thesis 2

> Studying in the university for the first time would involve a sudden change in the way of life for most students.

A more upfront statement would indicate that "reading approaches" have been widely looked at. An active real-world research Claiming Centrality of this thesis' theme can be presented like this:

> 7.4a.   Recently, there has been wide interest in reading approaches amongst students in various contexts. (the fact that this theme is of interest and actively studied)
> 7.4b.   Many researchers have concluded that the identification of the various reading approaches is vital in order to improve comprehension and understanding especially amongst the ESL students. (the fact that the theme has been studied and claimed its importance)

Example 7.5 below presents another instance of a real-world Claiming Centrality as seen in this opening statement of the introductory chapter in Thesis 4.

Example 7.5: Real-world Claiming Centrality statement in Thesis 4

> The ultimate purpose of learning and teaching is for meaning (Brooks, 2004). This is the basic objective of lessons which cut across all curricula and disciplines. Educators and teachers alike strive for meaningful lessons.

The excerpt in Example 7.5 above is taken from Thesis 4, titled "Teachers' beliefs and practice on meaning making in the teaching of literature in English". As the excerpt indicates, the theme which is "learning for meaning" is shown to emphasise its importance.

It is quite common for these real-world statements of Claiming Centrality to aim for a certain degree of importance of a problem in the writers' country. An extract from Thesis 7 in Example 7.6 below is a case in point. The writer began with a general understanding of communication in multicultural countries. The underlined parts highlight the claim of similar phenomena in Malaysia and that it has been a popular research topic because Malaysia is a multicultural and multilingual country.

Example 7.6: Real-world Centrality Claim showing importance to the writer's country in Thesis 7

> Malaysia is no exception. Much has been said and studies [*sic*] about the language use or choice and preference of speakers when communicating within the multilingual and multicultural milieu in Malaysia.

Writer 3 also utilised this type of rhetorical strategy extensively as a way to stress the mounting importance of online learning in Malaysia. An excerpt from Thesis 3 is presented in Example 7.7.

Example 7.7: Real-world Centrality Claim showing importance to the writer's country in Thesis 3

> In the Malaysian scenario, online learning is not only a growing industry but also, potentially, an important vehicle for the provision of education, knowledge and information to the public.

Another common Centrality Claim points to assertions that the theme under study has been researched widely. There are few occurrences of Move 1 Step 1 of this criterion in the text samples. Two theses have the most occurrences of Centrality Claims but only little reference to the research issue as being an active rationale. Thesis 3 has only five instances of research-world knowledge as compared to nineteen real-world Centrality Claims. Thesis 8 has the highest number of Centrality Claims. However, only five claims were reported to be active research. The excerpt from Thesis 8 in Example 7.8 below reveals one of the claims:

Example 7.8: Research-world Centrality Claim in Thesis 8

> In fact, corpus study has been around for the past forty years with pioneers like Kucera and Francis (1967). Johansson (1980) and colleagues produced a parallel corpus of British English that added another dimension of comparison.

The extract from Thesis 2 in Example 7.9 below explained that there were numerous complicated reasons leading to problems during the transition from school to university as claimed by many studies.

Example 7.9: Research-world Centrality Claim in Thesis 2

A substantive body of research on students' initial experience of higher learning has identified many complex factors encountered by students in their transition from learning at school to learning at the university.

Like the real-world statements of Centrality Claims, the statements of research-world Centrality Claims also point to the relevance of the writer's home country. Writer 7, for example, presented the scores of studies in the area of language and choice in Malaysia. Example 7.10 illuminates this point.

Example 7.10: Real-world Centrality Claim showing importance to the writer's country in Thesis 7

The literature of the subject of language use and choice within the Malaysian multilingual settings is quite replete (Asmah, 1982; 1988; 1985; Morais, 1994; Anie, 1998; David, 1998; Kuang. 1999; Nair-Venugopal, 2000; Ain-Nadzimah, 2005; Rafik-Galea & Fernandez, 2005).

7.2.1.2   M1s2: Making Topic generalisations and background information

As Swales (1990) asserts, the function of this step is to express general statements about the current state of the art - the knowledge and phenomena. As shown in Figure 7.1, the frequency of Move 1 Step 2 (M1s2) is the highest. This shows that the writers provided lengthy background information in preparing the readers for the topic. Most obviously, given the fact that the writers have a great deal of information to impart, various rhetorical strategies are bound to be used.

Using the interpretations and attributes of steps in Swales (1990), Bunton (2002), Lewin et al. (2001) and Kwan (2005, 2006) as well as my own text samples, I discovered various apparently new sub-steps that served to realise the local purpose of M1s2. These varieties of rhetorical sophistication strategies of Step 2 are: **M1ss2a: Reporting What is Known in the Field; M1ss2b: Reporting Problematic Knowledge and Needs Claims;**

M1ss2c: Presenting Writers' Anticipation. Figure 7.3 below shows the percentage distribution of Move 1 Step 2.
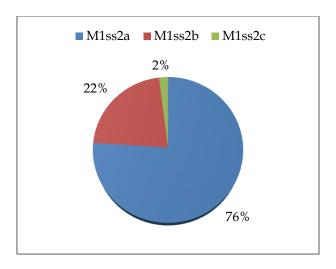
Figure 7.3. Percentage distribution (%) of Move 1 Step 2 sub-steps

The analysis of the data showed extensive use of M1ss2a which made up more than half of the overall Step 2 strategies employed. The thesis writers also relied heavily on M1ss2b in an attempt to create the research space. The least used step was M1ss2c, with less than five per cent usage.

(i)   M1ss2a: Reporting what is known

In M1ss2a, writers typically make general statements about the current state of the art or statements about interesting phenomenon. This sub-step is found to be more neutral than M1s1 and other sub-steps of Step 2. As we have already seen, sub-step M1ss2a was extensively employed by the thesis writers. The length of this sub-step varies: it can be as short as a clause or as long as a few sentences. It can also cover a few pages. Writer 1, for instance, captured the history of education in Malaysia in two pages and Writer 5 took up nearly three pages describing the concept of her theoretical framework.

This section discusses M1ss2a in two parts: firstly, statements of neutral kinds; and secondly, statements of more complex kinds. As presented in Chapter Four, the neutral kinds of statements are those of definitions of terms, concept, or theory; statements that show classification or categorisation; and statements of historical events. The more complex statements describe the existing phenomenon or when the writer uses previous findings to describe a phenomenon.

The semantic analysis shows that statements of M1ss2a of a more neutral kind are commonly statements of definitions. The complex establishment of defining a term, concept or theory was discussed in detail in Chapter Four. To recall, statements that represent definitions come in a broad spectrum of specificity - whether they are explicitly shown or only implied.

The writer of Thesis 8 for example began her introduction chapter with a question "What is a modal?" In solving this, she used a variety of strategies to define and characterise modals. The extracts in Example 7.11 below are evidence on how Writer 8 explicitly presents definitions of a "corpus" by using the underlined lexical item *define*.

Example 7.11: Explicit Strategy in Presenting Definition in Thesis 8

> **Corpus Linguistics and Language Research**
>
> Corpus as <u>defined</u> by the Expert Advisory Group on Language Engineering Standards (EAGLES) is a collection of any text type, including prose, newspapers, poetry and drama, and also word lists and dictionaries (Meyer, 2002). Other linguists <u>define</u> a corpus as something more than a collection of texts or part of texts upon which some general linguistic analysis can be conducted. (p.13)

Under the sub-heading "Modals and Modality", Writer 8 tried to describe the concept of modals and modality by intertwining specific and indefinite statements. Example 7.12 below displays another excerpt from Thesis 8. In Line 1, lexical item *issues concerning* sets off the readers' interpretation in defining "modals and modality". Lines 2-4 present the three main issues that can lead to the generalisation of modals. Lines 2-4 are the issues that can help the readers define the subject matter. Lines 8-12 illustrate some definitions of modals provided by a number of researchers from the specific lexical item *defines* to a more loosely semantic meaning *sees*. Again, as observed in Lines 17-31, the writer described the definition of 'modals and modality' loosely by explicating the concepts of the subject matter from a grammatical perspective.

Example 7.12: Implicit and Explicit Strategies in Presenting Definition in Thesis 8

Modals and Modality	
Palmer (1990: 1) discusses three *issues concerning* modals and modality. The	1
first is the general nature of modality; the second is the formal system in	2
English and the third is the meanings associated with the category in	3

English. Modals have been described in many ways by linguists and grammarians and these varied definitions and terminology used have caused confusion to ESL learners.	4 5 6
There is no simple, clearly definable, semantic category that could describe modality. Lyons (1977) *defines* modality as something that concerns the opinion and attitude of the speaker. Mindt (1995) *sees* modal verbs as a tool for speaker or writer to express certain meaning. However, Palmer (1990) *sees* modality as a grammatical system and it expresses part of the central set of modal meanings. There exists a vagueness and indeterminacy of the semantic system that seems to lead to some lack of clear determination in the formal system that gives no clear guidelines concerning the limits of defining modals (Palmer, 1990).	7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15
The first assumption is that there is a grammatical, or semantic grammatical category known as modality and the second is that modality is expressed in English by modal verbs. Definitions of modals have been given in many ways. In English, there are six modal verbs that must certainly be included and they are: *will, shall, may, can, must* and *ought to* and there are also others that could be included as semi-modals like *dare* and *need* (Palmer 1990). A modal auxiliary is defined as a verb used to express a mood such as optative, obligative, and others with no third person singular inflexion, for example, *can, dare, may, must,* and also to indicate attitudes of speakers or writers towards the state or event expressed by another verb (Dictionary of Language and Linguistics, 1973; Longman's Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics, 1992 and Times Chambers Essential Dictionary, 1997). All these varied meanings and definitions show how complex modals and modality are. (p.8)	16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29

Characteristics that are presented can also implicitly interpret a concept or a theme. In comparing skilled and less skilled writers, Thesis 6 exhibited the traits of both. The extract in Example 7.13 below shows some attributes of skilled writers.

Example 7.13: Implicit Strategies in Presenting Definition in Thesis 6:

1.3 Conceptual Framework of the Study

1.3.3 Types of Writers

Flower and Hayes (cited in Grabe and Kaplan, 1996) put forward several characteristics of the skilled writer. Firstly, when it comes to rhetorical problems, skilled writers consider more aspects. They even look at the problems at a greater

depth. Skilled writers are also able to visualize a fully developed image of the rhetorical problem. Secondly, skilled writers respond uniquely to rhetorical problems. Skilled writers are able to present a fully developed representation of the problem. Thirdly, skilled writers can reassess their goals in the light of the rhetorical problem while writing. Consequently, they can also alter their goals if and when the need arises. Finally, skilled writers are also creative in both finding and solving problems. (p.13)

The semantic criteria in Chapter Four have also differentiated statements of classification as attributes of M1ss2a. Statements of this kind categorised a number of aspects in order to show a concept. Thesis 5 (Example 7.14) in her "Theoretical Framework" sub-heading categorised a number of different perspectives in analysing creativity. Numerals are usually used to show categorisation.

Example 7.14: Statement of Classification in Thesis 5:

As a result of these orientations, creativity has been analyzed and approached via different perspectives. The **first** perspective is the Cognitive approach and it has widely been studied by researchers …

The **following** approach is known as the Social-Personality approach (personal trait and environment) and has been used by researchers …

So far, two types of neutral statements attributed to M1ss2a have been reviewed - statements of definitions and those of classification. Another attribute of M1ss2a of the neutral kind highlighted in Chapter Four revolves around statements of historical events. This new rhetorical strategy is an important strategy as it is found in 63 per cent of the text samples. Not only did it occur in most of the theses, but the length and depth of this statement type showed this sub-step to be important to the Malaysian writers. Further analysis found that the statements of historical events are of two kinds: historical presentation of the underlying theme(s) associated with the study and the chronicles of history of the country. The discussions of historical events seemed to be so important that the writers positioned them under a specific sub-heading. Table 7.2 below shows the sub-headings that focus on presenting the historical events in the introductory chapter of five theses.

Table 7.2
Sub-headings of historical event statements in the chapters

Thesis	Historical Events
Thesis 1	Language education in Malaysia
Thesis 3	Background of the study- History of distance education system
Thesis 4	Online learning in Malaysia
Thesis 5	Teaching Literature in English in Malaysia
Thesis 8	Problem Statement- Creativity in Malaysian syllabus
	Modals and Malaysian English
	History of Corpus study

The first type of historical event statement occurs when the writer describes one of the themes of the study historically. In the case of the extract in Example 7.15, Writer 8 reviewed the history of corpus study under an exclusive sub-heading "History of Corpus Study". This section covered three pages. It seems that the writer includes this section to give the readers some background information on the research method that she is using.

Example 7.15: Statements of Historical Event Describing the Theme in Thesis 8:

History of Corpus Study
Work on corpus linguistics started in the early 60's with Quirk's (1960) execution of the construction of the Survey of English Usage (SEU) (McEnery and Wilson, 2001).

...

All these corpora should be able to produce a generalised picture of the Malaysian ESL learners that shows a Malaysian learner, like other learners of English language in the world, will make errors traceable to the languages they are familiar with before (Knowles, 2004). (pages 16-18)

Another type of statement on historical events is associated with the history of the country, particularly chronicles concerning education and language education. Five of the eight theses employed this type of statement. Thesis 1 has an exclusive sub-heading that reported on the history of the education system in Malaysia from colonial times until the present. Although M1ss2a statements were intermittent with other sub-steps (for instance m1s1 and m1ss2b), more than three-quarters of the section under the sub-heading was dedicated to the Malaysian education system. An excerpt from Thesis 1 is shown in Example 7.16.

Example 7.16: Statement of Historical Event Describing the Education System in Thesis 1.

> **1.0 Introduction**
> **1.1 Language education in Malaysia**
> The system of education in Malaysia was administered by the British in the early 19th century in accordance with their policy of "divide and rule" that reflects their colonial policy [...] [3]Asmah (1992), indicates that the government, while firmly instituting the national language for purposes of nationalism, has allowed the use of English in certain domains, "even at the official level" (Asmah, 1992, pp. 64-67). (p. 3)

Sometimes, when the writers were presenting the history of education, particularly on the history of language education, they also included an extensive discussion of the Malaysian English syllabus. An example is taken from Thesis 1 and is presented in Example 7.17 below:

Example 7.17: Statement of Historical Event Describing the Syllabus in Thesis 1:

> The overall objective in the teaching of English in Malaysia is the development of communicative ability. The English language syllabus states that the teaching of English in Malaysian schools is for the purpose of equipping students with "the skills and knowledge of English to communicate in everyday activities and certain job situations and also to provide points for take-off for various post-secondary school needs" (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 1987)...

> The 2000 revised syllabus explicitly states the importance of the English language:

Another instance where historical events describing the syllabus of education have been extensively used for the purpose of giving background information is visible in Thesis 4. The title of Writer 4's thesis is "Meaning-making of Literature among Teachers" and the portrayal of the history of literature in the Malaysian education system came under an exclusive sub-heading 'Teaching of Literature in English in Malaysia'. Writer 4 devoted over five (5) pages to discussing the chronicles on literature education in Malaysia. Example 7.18 presents an excerpt of the discussion.

---

[3] [...] refers to statements of other steps than m1ss2a. It can be as little as a sentence to as much as a whole paragraph.

Example 7.18: Statement of Historical Event Describing the Syllabus in Thesis 4:

Teaching of Literature in English in Malaysia

> English Literature used to have a major part in English Language teaching in the country after Independence as a result of a British Colonial past, declined in the 1980s and now in the twenty-first century has made a comeback to the school syllabus (Subramaniam, 2003). When English literature, as it was called then, was taught in Malaysian secondary schools, it was for the purpose of studying literature. English literature was taught as a subject both at the primary and secondary school levels....

The writer provided a factual, narrative account of the history. There was no indication of any themes related to the theories or concept or to issues in the area being investigated.

The second type of M1ss2a represents a more complex kind of general statement. The semantic analysis of sub-step 2 also uncovered statements about existing phenomena. This type of strategy is similar to the ones proposed by Swales (1990, p. 146) and is employed regularly in all the text samples. The excerpt from Thesis 1 in Example 7.19 below indicates a common phenomenon amongst ESL learners when confronted with communication problems.

Example 7.19: Statements of Existing Phenomenon in Thesis 1:

> **1.0 Introduction**
>
> When confronted with communicative problems, the learner tries various strategies of language use in order to solve the communication problem and to compensate for his limited or insufficient control of the target language forms. The learner may find ways to express his message by using a similar word, or by using a different sentence construction... The strategies employed by the learner have come to be known as communication strategies (hereafter referred to as CS). (p.1)

Existing phenomena of M1ss2a can also inform the background of the study by presenting the findings of previous research. Rhetorical strategy of this sort is common in all text samples. The main purpose of this sub-step is to report findings of the themes relevant to the study in order to enhance the readers' understanding of the topic. This sub-step differs to M1s3: Reviewing Previous Research in that the semantic analysis of the latter indicates different attributes.

The immediate preceding extract from Thesis 8 is an example of this sub-step. Under the sub-heading "Modals and Malaysian English", the writer began with assertions of Malaysian students' unconstructive attitudes towards MEI. Writer 8 then provided two reports (underlined) to counter-argue the claim, presenting the viewpoint that attitude and motivation in learning English language amongst the Malays were in fact high, even though Malay ESL learners had poor English language skills. In other words, previous studies here focused solely on the findings to highlight the issue under debate.

Example 7.20: Statement of Existing Phenomenon Presenting Findings of Previous Research in Thesis 8:

> **Modals and Malaysian English**
>
> Students from the Malay-medium schools who use MEII rarely use MEI in oral communication and even less in writing. This is attributed to the lack of exposure to the language especially to those from the rural areas and the "shyness" attitude that Bahiyah Abd. Hamid (1992) describes from her observation of a class where English is taught as a second language in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, where most of the Malay students seldom volunteer, give opinions and initiate communication. These students are mostly from the rural areas and do not have much opportunity to speak in English language, and thus are not able to practise the language.

Move 1 Step 2a: Reporting what is known was used extensively by all theses to fulfil various communicative needs. The writers provided general information and background with the intention of informing and educating readers about the research area. It also served as justification for various aspects used in the study, for example methodological issues. Next, I will discuss another sub-step of Move 1 Step 2.

(ii)   M1ss2b: Problematising and Presenting Needs of Knowledge Claims and Phenomena as Background Information

Frequency distribution of M1ss2b

Bunton's "Problem and Need" step fulfils the communicative function of Move 2. Paradoxically, the present study found this step also functions as part of another move. This strategy can be found in all theses at the background level of Move 1. It has twenty-two per cent occurrences across the eight theses (see Figure 7.2). This occurrence has, to my knowledge, been documented in one other study (i.e. Soler-Monreal et al (2008, 2010) but, at

this stage of our knowledge, the semantic attributes of this sub-step appear to be unique to the Malaysian thesis' introductory chapters.

Table 7.3
Percentage of M1ss2b Occurrences Across Theses

Thesis	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	Total
Percentage (%)	25	27	27.9	29	9	17	4	28	100.0
Total (n)	7	24	29	16	8	17	1	33	135

Table 7.3 above presents the percentage of occurrence of M2ss1b across the eight theses. Five of the theses' Introductions (Thesis 1, Thesis 2, Thesis 3, Thesis 4 and Thesis 8) employed this particular rhetorical strategy, i.e. more than twenty-five per cent (a quarter) of the whole Move 1 steps. Since all of the text samples made significant use of this step, it can then be considered a major rhetorical strategy in the Malaysian theses. As found in the preliminary analysis in Chapter Four, this sub-step fulfils two functions: 1) displaying problems; and 2) displaying needs at the background level. The use of this strategy as depicting problems is presented first, and followed by statements displaying needs.

Value of M1ss2b

i)   Problem

This sub-step shares characteristics of Bunton's Step 2b (2008) of Move 2 criteria in some ways, but it is not exactly the same. It is similar to Bunton's in terms of the idea of proposing some problematic issues. However, M1ss2b statements in this study are distinct from those of Bunton's at the move level. Statements of problem and needs here are not meant to be the niche of the study. Unlike M1ss2a statements before, the statements of this sub-step type are not neutral and they carry weight in terms of the writer's intention.

The semantic analysis in Chapter Four looked at three thesis Introductions as a starting point for identifying features that specify M1ss2b. Based on the initial findings, the rhetorical strategy of this kind presents each individual writer's problems and needs of the knowledge claims and phenomena. Further analyses of other text samples (Theses 4-8) showed a similar outcome. In addition, I found that the underlying problems and needs came from the historical/political statements of the writers' country.

Writer 8 in her thesis titled "Modals in ESL" wanted to investigate the ESL students' usage of "modals". Under the sub-heading "Modals and Malaysian English", she introduced documents on the existence of the English language in Malaysia (M1ss2a). She then informed readers about the problems that emerged when many varieties of Malaysian English developed. The underlined sentences in the extract in Example 7.21 below illustrate the case in point.

Example 7.21: Statement of M1ss2b in Thesis 8:

Modals and Malaysian English

... However, in a study conducted by Vethamani (2004), it was found that teachers, in their attempts to be understood by their learners and to communicate <u>use the mesolectal range and sometimes even the basilectal range or the non-standard variety of Malaysian English.</u> Vethamani (1991 and 2004) believes that this can be detrimental towards developing proficient English language speakers in Malaysia.

Excessive code-mixing, code-switching and lexical borrowings have resulted in the emergence of a variety of Malaysian English that is "mangled" to produce what is known as "Manglish" or "Broken English", and <u>if spoken internationally will impede communication</u> (Vethamani, 2004).

Notice that there was no mention of the topic under study, which was "modals". The writer generally informed the reader about the current state of English language in Malaysia. This situation will invite problematic consequences in communication but the phenomenon did not serve as the niche or focus of her study.

Statements of M1ss2b that highlight the problem of English education in Malaysia are common in all the theses. Writer 4, for instance, revealed that the medium of instruction as well as the amount of English in the curriculum was associated with the declining use of English language amongst students, and indirectly impacted on the literature program in the curriculum (underlined). The underlined phrases representing lexical items *the declining* and *a drastic drop* suggest that the writer is acknowledging these problems. However, even though she presented some problems here, the writer did not consider them to be the niche of her study.

Example 7.22: Statements of M1ss2b Highlighting the Problem of English Education in Thesis 4:

> Nevertheless, the language conversion programme has affected the amount and quality of English used within the classroom (Talif, 1995). This is due to the fact that English is only taught as a subject five times a week. The change in the medium of instruction is often associated with <u>the declining</u> role and importance of the English language in education, and inevitably, <u>a drastic drop in students taking literature</u> in English paper was evident. This contributed to the decline in the standard of English amongst Malaysian students. Inevitably, this change had an impact on the fate of literature in English in the curriculum.

ii) Need

This sub-step type also displays "needs" at the background level. It has been observed that the "needs" of M1ss2b can be infused in many ways - in the phenomena of underlying theme and in the chronicles of the country's history which include how the country is envisioned. The extract from Thesis 6 in Example 7.23 below mirrors the semantic features of sub-step M1ss2b discussed in Chapter Four. Unlike the examples above, the writer's intention to show the need of a phenomenon was carried out implicitly. This thesis focused on peer review in writing. The extract below informs the readers about collaborative learning (of which peer review is one strategy). Here, Writer 6 presented the advantages of collaborative learning (see underlined) and, indirectly, the writer also informed the reader about the benefit of the peer review strategy and that implied that writing classes need to adopt such practices.

Example 7.23: Statements of M1ss2b Highlighting the Need of a Phenomenon in Thesis 6:

> <u>Collaborative learning enables the learners to achieve</u> meaningful learning and solve problems among peers better than any individual can do so alone (Tinzmann, et al. 1990). This form of learning is also based on the social construction theory that knowledge itself is constructed through the negotiations of a community (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). This means that <u>students are able to discover</u> not only new ways of reading other texts but also other ways of reading their own text. As such, writers would realize that meaning is not found in the text but is <u>actually created by the reader of that text</u>.

As with strategies for Claiming Centrality, statements which incorporate the country's vision were also used widely in sub-step 2. Writer 5 looked at the creative thinking

of Malaysian students. In the previous paragraph, the writer described the challenges Malaysia faced in changing from an industrial country to a knowledge-based economy. Later, the writer quoted the Minister of Human Resources to emphasise the crucial needs of Malaysians being creative citizens in order to achieve the K-economy status. Creativity would be a requirement for the country's economic development. The extract from Thesis 5 is shown below:

Example 7.24: Statements of M1ss2b Highlighting the Need of the Country in Thesis 5:

> The present Minister of Human Resources of Malaysia, Dato' Seri Fong Chan Onn <u>encouraged the people of Malaysia to equip themselves with all the creativity skills (divergent thinking skills) as the country has gradually been geared towards the K-economy</u> (Fong, 2006). <u>Success of the K-economy depends on the nation's intellectual assets</u>: its human capital which includes the combined knowledge and skills of its workers.

In the next paragraph, the writer reiterated the view that creativity would benefit the country, especially when fostered early. The underlined statements provide the semantic meaning. The lexical items *benefit* and *gain* suggest that early fostering of creativity is needed for the benefit of the country.

> An <u>early start in fostering creativity will benefit Malaysia.</u> If the nation is able to <u>integrate creativity early among children and adolescents the country will gain economically at the organization and national level</u> in the long run (Fong, 2006; Shariffadeen, 2001)

Interestingly, the inclination of quoting a political representative of the country to emphasise the urgency and hence the need, was part of the writer's rhetorical strategy. To recall, the extract above referred to the Minister of Human Resources in order to stress the importance of and need for creativity skills. Writer 1 also assumed that the claims of needs from the Minister of Education in (i) and the Prime Minister in (ii) were true and important. Example 7.25 presents an excerpt taken from Thesis 1.

Example 7.25: Statements of M1ss2b Highlighting the Need Quoting from a Political Representative in Thesis 1

> (i) The call to strengthen the position of English as a Second Language in schools has been publicly voiced by the <u>Minister of Education</u>, Datuk Seri Hishamuddin Hussein. He asserts that <u>fluency in English would enable students to compete</u> in an

increasingly global world in any field that they choose when they pursue their studies at tertiary level or to enter the workforce (Chin, 2007).

(ii) Concerns regarding incompetence and the level of local graduates' English proficiency have been raised by many. <u>The Prime Minister of Malaysia</u>, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, for instance, expressed his concern over the poor command of the English language displayed by the local graduates. He emphasised that <u>Malaysians would only stand a chance at succeeding in effective negotiations at the World Trade Organisation if they could master English</u> (Lee, 2004).

i)   M1ss2c - Anticipating outcome

This step represents another new strategy used by the writers to explicate the background information of their topics. These types of statements are typically derived from the writers' own prediction. After I recoded the Introductions and cross-checked with two other coders, I was able to identify the statements that show the writer's prediction of problems or consequences at the background level. Six of the eight theses employed this step but the occurrences in each were minimal. When establishing a territory, Writer 2 had foreseen the problem concerning students' reading comprehension when background knowledge is lacking. This was seen as a way for the writer to tackle the need of the study. An excerpt of M1ss2c taken from Thesis 2 can be seen in Example 7.26.

Example 7.26: Statement of M1ss2c in Thesis 2:

> If these learners have difficulty in processing the information that they read from texts due from lack of background knowledge, then, definitely how they approach reading the text would influence their comprehension of the text.

7.2.1.3   M1s3 - Reviewing Previous Research (RPR)

The third type of Move 1, as suggested by Swales and also found in many other genre studies, is Reviewing Previous Research. As was discussed in Chapter Four, defining RPR was complex because it can sometimes present research findings as the knowledge background. As mentioned previously, my preliminary findings relating to RPR were based on Swales and Kwan's take on RPR, as well as my referring to Theses 1, 2 and 3 in the study.

(a) Frequency of M1s3

Further investigation found RPR also occurred in the other five theses. Table 7.4 below shows the frequency of RPR in all eight theses. However, there was only one thesis that employs this step quite extensively. The other seven theses have five or less RPR.

Table 7.4
Frequency Occurrences of RPR in Theses' Introduction

Moves	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	Total	%
M1s3	2	18	4	2	4	2	1	5	38	6.7

(b) Value of M1s3

I have presented the semantic attributes of RPR in Chapter Four. The same semantic attributes of RPR can be seen in all eight theses. An example statement that constitutes an RPR can be seen in Thesis 2 in Example 7.27 below.

Example 7.27: Statement of RPR in Thesis 2.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Researches on the influence of schema have provided evidence on its important role in text comprehension (Steffensen & Joag-Dev, 1984; Pritchard, 1990, Kang, 1992; Johnson, 1982; Carrell, 1987). For example, the study by Steffenson and Joag-Dev demonstrate **(1)** the effect of cultural background on reading comprehension. In their study, **(2)** subjects consisting of Indian (subcontinent) and American backgrounds were asked **(3)** to read and recall two texts describing an Indian and American wedding respectively. **(4)** It was discovered that each group of subjects could comprehend and recall texts about their own culture more accurately than the other. There is another evidence that suggests that readers' content schemata also affect comprehension and recall of text. In Carrell's study (1987), 28 Muslim Arabs and 24 Catholic Hispanic ESL university students were asked to read two texts: one with Muslim oriented content and the other with Catholic-oriented content. An analysis of the recall protocols and scores on the comprehension questions revealed that the subjects understood and remembered the text that was similar or more familiar to their native cultures. (13)

I have identified four distinct examples of RPR in the extract above.

1) the objective of the study: *the effect of cultural background on reading comprehension*

2) the subject of the study: *Indian (subcontinent) and American background and 28 Muslim Arab and 24 Catholic Hispanic ESL*

3). the methodology of the study which includes the procedures and the instrument: *to read and recall two texts describing an Indian and American wedding respectively.* and *to read two texts: one with Muslim oriented content and the other with Catholic-oriented content* as well as analysing of data *recall protocols and scores on the comprehension questions*

4). the findings of the study: *It was discovered...accurately than other* and *the subjects understood...their native cultures.*

After I explored RPR in all eight Introductions using these criteria, I found that other aspects of this particular step were intriguing. There were two ways in which RPR was presented in the theses: (i) reviewing previous studies without any indication of setting a niche for the present study; and (ii) reviewing previous literature in order to create a niche for the present study.

The first type (i) was realised when the writer used RPR to support a claim and to explain a claim. This RPR function often begins with acknowledging a claim of M1ss2a and ends with any of the sub-steps of Move 1. The preceding extract in Example 7.28 from Thesis 8 illuminates the phenomena. Writer 8 claimed that modals were problematic to ESL students. The review of a study by Rosli and Edwin substantiated her point.

Example 7.28: Statement of RPR to Support and Explain a Claim in Thesis 8:

Modals and ESL Learning

Modals are said to be part of the grammatical items that are considered problematic (Palmer, 1977). .. Rosli and Edwin (1989) in their study of students' errors in Form Four students' composition found that verb forms and the verb aspects of modals are the most problematic.(5)

In another part of the study, Writer 8 reviewed a study by providing the research design, research sample and findings (see underlined parts). This illustration of a previous study merely functioned to support the knowledge claim (in italics). Both of the excerpts did not contain any evaluations from the writer.

Statement of the Problem

One of the problematic grammatical items faced by Malaysian ESL learners is in the correct use of modals (Hughes and Heah, 1993). Rosli and Edwin (1989) in their <u>error analysis</u> of <u>Form Four English</u> composition <u>found that students in both urban and rural areas have problems using verb forms and this includes the modal auxiliary since a modal is formed with a verb phrase</u>.(20)

RPR also functions to support a claim by explicitly informing the readers through the lexical item *for example*. An example can be seen from the excerpts taken from Thesis 2. In the extract, the italicised statement claimed that many studies have found undergraduates to be "reproductive" in learning. The writer then followed with an example that supported the claim by explicitly indicating using the lexical item *for example*.

Example 7.29: Lexical item *for example* used to show statement of RPR in Thesis 2.

1.0 Introduction

One important finding based on a review of studies on students' conceptions of learning has shown that many first year undergraduates hold a 'reproductive' conception of learning. For example, Norton and Crowley (1995) discovered that 77% of the 123 students, who participated in their study, revealed a 'naïve conception of learning' and whether these students would progress to more 'sophisticated' conceptions of learning would largely depend on their learning environment. (p.4)

Sometimes the writer does not explicitly inform the reader that the reviewed study functions as an example. Like the excerpt from Thesis 7 in Example 7.30, the RPR statement was assumed to be an example because the citation *Fishman (2000)* can be found in the lists of previous researchers in the knowledge claim.

Example 7.30: Implicit Strategy Used to Indicate Statement of RPR in Thesis 7.

1.7 Theoretical Perspective

Domains of Language Use

The relationship between language choice and domains has been described by many researchers (Fishman, 1972; 2000; Fishman, Cooper & Ma, 1972; Greenfield, 1972; Parasher, 1980; Gorlach, 1991; Hoffman, 1991; Saghal, 1991; Annamalai, 2003).

Fishman (2000) has described the use of languages in various contexts in a multilingual society. In his domain analysis, Fishman put forward that a consideration of several descriptive and analytic variables may contribute to an

understanding of '*who* speaks *what* language *to whom* and *when* in those settings that are characterised by widespread and relatively stable multilingualism' (2000, p. 89). (7)

The examples above reviewed statements of RPR that functioned as supporting a claim. As mentioned previously, RPR statements also functioned as an explanation device, as used by Writer 8. The knowledge claim was shown in the first sentence and the writer used a study to elucidate and justify the claim. The semantic analysis of the RPR statement below shows similar attributes to those other RPR statements: the major findings, methodology of the study which include the data collection procedures (*observation*), the subject (*ESL students*) and the location of the study *(Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia)*.

Example 7.31: Statement of RPR as an Explanation Device in Thesis 8:

Modals and Malaysian English

Students from the Malay-medium schools who use MEII rarely use MEI in oral communication and even less in writing. This is attributed to the lack of exposure to the language especially to those from the rural areas and the "shyness" attitude that Bahiyah Abd. Hamid (1992) describes from her observation of a class where English is taught as a second language in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, where most of the Malay students seldom volunteer, give opinions and initiate communication. (p.10)

A more critical way of using RPR statements is when it paves the way for the writer to establish the niche of her study. This second type of RPR function is usually followed by a Move 2 statement. Writer 6, for instance, reviewed a couple of previous studies before pointing out the flaws in them. As illustrated in the excerpt taken from Thesis 6 presented in Example 7.32 below, the writer began by introducing two studies looking at the process approach in Malaysia and their general results. She presented Leong's (1999) study and then compared it to another. She reviewed the second study by presenting the methodology (Line 7: 'case study'), the objective of the study (Lines 8-9: 'looked at the use of the process approach in the Malaysian writing classroom'), and the results of the study (Lines 9-14). Lines 15-18 present the writer's niche where she criticised the study's single approach.

Example 7.32: Statement of RPR used to create the niche of the Study in Thesis 6.

1.2 Statement of the Problem	
A <u>few studies</u> have been conducted on the implementation of the	1
process approach in the teaching of writing in Malaysian schools. Both the	2
research studies by Leong (1999) and Lim (1997) did not show favourable	3
results when it came to implementing the process writing in the Malaysian	4
context. Leong's (1999) research has found that the students did not gain	5
any benefit from the process approach in the writing class. The research by	6
Lim (1997) is <u>a case study</u> of a teacher and her class. The researcher has	7
<u>looked at the use of the process approach in the Malaysian writing</u>	8
<u>classroom</u>. <u>The result</u> of this research also has shown that the process	9
approach in the writing classroom was not readily accepted by both the	10
teachers and students. Among some of the contributing factors were the	11
time constraint, the teachers' lack of the knowledge that their students need,	12
and also the students' ability (or disability) to perform the task required by	13
the processes in writing.	14
What was interesting was that both the research studies have looked	15
at the process approach as a big entity. It is as if the process approach is	16
ONE approach a teacher uses in the classroom and failure in the	17
implementation seemed to pin-point on the approach as a whole.	18

Another example taken from Thesis 4 is presented in Example 7.33. As can be observed (see the underlined parts), the writer reviewed previous research by displaying the location and samples of the study and its aims, then by elaborating the major findings. The following paragraph showed the writer situated the problems that later became the niche of her study.

Example 7.33: Statement of RPR used to create the niche of the Study in Thesis 4:

Statement of the Problem

However, the most alarming concern about the teaching of literature is the findings from a recent <u>study conducted in five states in Malaysia</u> (location and samples) by Subramaniam, Shahiza and Koo (2003) on the <u>pedagogical implications of the incorporation of the literature component in the Malaysian ESL Syllabus</u> (aim). The <u>results show that 51% of the teachers think that they have enough knowledge of the literature component, with the rest which is 49%, thinking they have little or lack this of knowledge. Only 61% of the teachers think that the literature component is relevant and an alarming figure of 39% disagree or are indifferent. A total of 42% of the teachers have adequate knowledge about the methodology of teaching literature,</u>

(major findings)
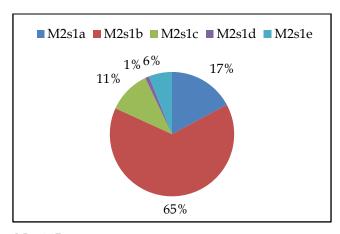
In short, all three steps were employed by the writers in their introductory chapters when establishing the territory of the study. The most employed step was M1s2, followed with M1s2 and M1s3. I have elaborated each step and sub-step in detail and argued that there are some new criteria that enhance our understanding of how the writers establish the territory in their introductory chapters.

Part II

7.3 Part II: Analysis of Steps in Move 2

7.3.1 Frequency distribution of steps in Move 2

I have divided into five categories the ways the writers establish the niche strategies. They are: M2s1a: Indicating gap; M2s1b: Indicating problem and need; M2s1c: Counter-Claim; M2s1d: Continuing tradition; and M2s1e: Question-raising. Figure 7.4 indicates the percentages of Move 2 steps accounted for by each of these steps.

N= 145

Figure 7.4.Percentage occurrences (%) of Move 2 steps

Figure 7.4 above also shows the overall percentages of steps found in the eight theses. Step M2s1b: Indicating problem and need, occurred the most with sixty-four per cent of all the Move 2 steps. Indicating a gap is the second highest step, followed by M2s1c a step where a writer makes counter-claims against some published studies. The least occurring step of Move 2 is M2s1d.

Next, I will present the preferred step in each thesis. One apparent outcome of Figure 7.4 is that all thesis writers did not depend solely on one strategy when establishing their

particular niche. The majority of the introductory chapters (6 out of 8) employed three steps of Move 2. Thesis 5 made use of four steps and Thesis 6 employed only two steps.
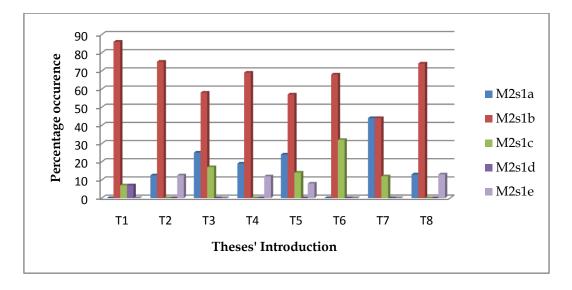
Figure 7.5. Percentages of steps within Move 2 in each thesis Introduction

Figure 7.5 also indicates each thesis writer's step preference. The figure clearly shows that all writers employed problem and need indication as the main strategy when establishing a niche for their topic. Seven of eight writers utilised this step in more than fifty per cent of their overall strategies. The highest occurrence of M2s1b was in Thesis 1. The author employed it in more than eighty per cent of the total number of steps in establishing shortcomings in what had already been written about a certain phenomenon. Another author highly dependent on this step was the writer of Thesis 2. She strategised the niche of her study by focusing on the current problematic situation.

The second most preferred step is M2s1a: Gap indication. Figure 7.4 shows that six of the theses which occupied this step (Theses 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8) considered it to be one of the most important strategies in niche establishment. This step was the second highest step in Thesis 2, Thesis 3, Thesis 4 and Thesis 5. Theses 7 and 8 utilised this step as much as M2s1b.

The next obvious strategy found in almost all theses is M2s1c: Counter claim. The importance of this strategy is apparent. A majority of the writers (five of eight) built and constructed the niche of their study by distinguishing some defects in previous studies. The writers critically reviewed their methodological aspects that caused an inconclusive result or outcome to emerge. Thesis 6 depended on this step as much as she did on M2s1b, and Thesis 1 employed this step as much as she used M2s1a. The next step, which was also found in

five theses, but at a very minimal occurrence is M2s1d: Question-raising. The least preferred step amongst the writers is M2s1e: Continuing a tradition. It only occurred in two theses.

7.3.1.1 Overview of Move 2 organisation- Cyclical and composite Move 2 sub-steps

The strategies of writers establishing their niche of the study was highlighted by Swales (1990) in terms of the cyclical and composite organisation. In Chapter 6 (Section 6.4.2.5), I discussed the cyclical and composite [M1-M2-M3] models. Three types of three-move configurations were found: the composite [M1-M2-M3], the cyclical [M1-M2]^n-M3 and the recursive [M1-M2-M3]^n.

Further analysis of Move 2 steps resulted in a more complex internal step configuration. Most of the time, writers utilised a single Move 2 step when establishing the niche. However, I also discovered that writers employed two or more steps that recurred one after another. The recurring Move 2 steps were found within (i) the composite [M1-M2-M3] and (ii) the cyclical [M1-M2] ^{n}-M3. There were ten instances in the theses where the recurring Move 2 steps were found.

In (i): Different recurring Move 2 steps were used in the composite [M1-M2-M3]

   a) Move 1- [M2s1a-M2s1b]- Move 3
   b) Move 1- [M2s1b- M2s1a]- Move 3
   c) Move 1- [M2s1b- M2s1c]- Move 3
   d) Move 1- [M2s1b- m2s1e- m2s1b]- Move 3

In (ii): Different recurring Move 2 steps were used in the cyclical [M1-M2]^n- M3

   a) Move 1- [M2s1a- M2s1b]- Move 1- Move 2- Move 1- Move 2- Move 3
   b) Move 1- [M2s1a- M2s1b]- Move1- Move 2- Move 3
   c) Move 1- [M2s1b- M2s1e]- Move 1- Move 2- Move 3
   d) Move 1- [M2s1b- M2d1c- M2s1b]- Move 1- Move 2- Move 3
   e) Move 1- [M2s1a- M2s1b- M2s1a]- Move 1- [M2s1c- M2s1a- M2s1c- M2s1b]- Move 3

Figure 7.6 below shows the preference in Move 2 step configurations. There are fifty-five occurrences of a single step, five occurrences for recurring steps in composite form and five in cyclical form.
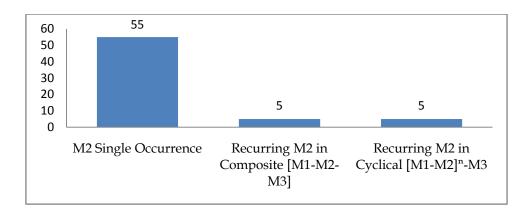
Figure 7.6. Preference in Move 2 step configurations

The (small) number of recurring Move 2 steps occurred when writers wanted to strengthen their claims. The author of Thesis 5, for instance, employed the recurring [M2s1a-M2s1b] before she introduced her study. In (1), she firstly discovered a lack of research looking at creativity through the four dimensions. She then continued emphasising that some of the few studies to date provided inconclusive results. Because of the scarcity of studies and problems found in this area of research, the writer suggested that it was important such study to be carried out (see 2).

Example 7.34: Recurring [M2s1a-M2s1b]-M3 in Thesis 5.

> Few attempts have been made to establish the relationship between creativity and the four dimensions of creativity (Process, Person, Press and Product) in this country **(1)**. Moreover, the findings on creativity and its correlates are far from conclusive. In order to validate findings on children's creativity in Western studies and address the scarcity of important information on children's creativity in this country, a study on the Malaysian children's creativity has been found necessary to help establish the Malaysian creativity profile **(2)**.

In another part of Thesis 5, I identified a step configuration of M2s1b-M2s1e- M2s1b. In (1) (see below), the writer stated that having a creative workforce is essential for the country's K-economy success. Then she strengthened this claim of need by provoking the readers to think about the current situation (2). In (3), she explicitly identified the need of the study. This step is a unique rhetorical strategy to get the readers' attention, engaging them to be a part of the study and then agree with its necessity and urgency.

> The success of the K-economy has long been emphasized by Shariffadeen (2001) and Fong (2006) who suggested that the presence of a dynamic and creative workforce is capable of planning economic strategies and overcoming economic hindrances and

shortcomings **(1)**. Based on the nature of our students' thinking abilities and the requirement for a dynamic, innovative and creative workforce as our "global players", are we ready to fulfill the needs of our very own K-Economy? **(2)**

In light of the above, it is high time for us to re-examine our KBKK component in the primary and secondary school curriculum. In order for us to consider several pragmatic actions, there is a need for us to examine our children's creativity in school **(3).**

An example of recurring M2 steps used in the cyclical $[M1-M2]^n$- M3 can be found in Thesis 7. The aim of the research was to analyse language use in the public workplace domain. The writer initially claimed that the topic of language use and choice was a well-researched area in Malaysia (Move 1- Claiming Centrality). She then pointed out the problem of the topic (Move 2-M2s1b) and then the gap in the research area (Move 2-M2s1a). This was followed immediately by the background on Malay language policy in Malaysia (Move 1- M1ss2a). She informed the reader about the compulsory use of the Malay language by public organisations for official purposes. Based on the policy, the writer again established the niche of the study by presenting the lack of research that investigates whether public organisations adhere to this policy (Move 2- M2s1a). The writer also pointed out other problems: that many past researchers assumed the organisations would comply with the policy, which led them to concentrate more on other workplace domain. As well she adds her own observation on the current situation in the public organisation (Move 2-M2s1b). Finally, she occupied the niche by presenting the aim of the study (Move 3-M3s1). From the summary text above, the step configurations can be concluded as: M1-[M2s1b-M2s1a]-M1-[M2s1a-M2s1b]-M3.

Next, I will look in more detail at each of the steps found in Move 2. As in Part I, I will begin by presenting their frequency of occurrence and investigating the common configurations of the step, if any. The bulk of the discussion will be on the value of each step. This type of analysis will further enhance our understanding of how writers used each step to establish the niche of their study.

7.3.2   M2s1a: Indicating a gap

Indicating a gap step is a common strategy in establishing the niche of a study. It has been found in all move-step analysis studies, particularly with reference to academic

research writing. This step is also an important strategy for Malaysian writers. Figure 7.5 above has indicated that this step was the second most common step used to launch the study's niche. Table 7.5 below shows the importance of this step in individual theses.

Table 7.5:
M2s1a Steps as a Percentage of Total Move 2 steps

Thesis	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	Overall
Percentage	-	9.0	14.0	14.0	23.0	-	36.0	4.0	100
Total (n)	0	2	3	3	5	0	8	1	22

Six of the theses relied on gap indication, which constituted seventeen per cent of the total steps used in the study. The highest occurrence of this step can be found in Thesis 7 with thirty-six per cent. Twenty-three per cent of Move 2 steps in Thesis 5 were dedicated to M2s1a. Both Thesis 3 and Thesis 4 have the same M2s1a occurrence and only nine per cent of Move 2 was dedicated to M2s1a in Thesis 2. The lowest percentage occurrence of this step was found in Thesis 8 with only 4 per cent occurrence. Theses 1 and 6 did not employ this particular Move 2 step.

Preliminary analysis on three theses has provided me with some understanding of the notion of this particular step. Statements to qualify for this step must show the non-existence, or paucity of a phenomenon. As indicated in my initial analysis (as well as by other studies), statements of these kinds can be realised by employing quantifiers: negative or quasi-quantifiers, negative polarity or lexical negation. In the present study, all but one M2s1a statements (21 of 22) showed a gap indication by using these linguistic signals when indicating gaps.

The criteria discussed in Chapter Four can be applied to the rest of the theses reviewed here. All statements of gap indication in Thesis 7, for instance, showed either non-existence or scarcity of research in the field. The writer used a combination of quantifiers: negative quantifiers and negative polarity, to show paucity of research. The extract from Thesis 7 in Example 7.35 below shows the lack of research into determining the language use in the public organisations using a negative quantifier.

Example 7.35: Gap Indication Using Negative Quantifiers in Thesis 7.

However, there is very *little* documented information on language use within organisations which can provide evidence of this policy. *Little* is known about the extent to which BM, or other languages, is used in the organisations.

Two excerpts from Thesis 7 in Example 7.36 below show gap indication using negative polarity. In (i), the writer used *no* to show non-existence. In (ii), Writer 7 made use of *any* to quantify the word *hardly* to mean scarcity of research.

Example 7.36: Gap Indication Using Negative Polarity in Thesis 7.

(i)   However, since the declaration of the National Language Act 1967, *no* assessment has been done on this imperative in the public sector (except for Asmah's (1988) and Nik Safiah and Hamdan's (1992) studies mentioned earlier).

(ii)   There has been *hardly any* research in the formal context of training in the public workplace domain.

Examples above clearly indicate the scarcity of the phenomenon. As discussed in Chapter Four, indicating a gap can also be implicitly presented. This strategy lets the readers determine their intention themselves. This implicit gap strategy occurred when the writer did not provide any lexical words of scarcity. The implicit gap statement can be seen in Example 7.37 of Thesis 5.

Example 7.37: Implicit Gap Indication in Thesis 5.

Torrance's empirical findings on the 4th-grade creativity slump suggested that children's creativity peaked between 5 to 6 years old, and declined at 9 years old due to school and peer influences. The children's creativity peaked again between 10 until 11 years old (Claxton, Pannells, & Rhoads, 2005).

It is inferred from this finding that this age range (between 10 through 11 years) may also provide interesting information about children's creativity if studies were to be undertaken on Malaysian children. The primary school level has been identified by Torrance (1968) as the most important timeframe for investigating children's creativity. *In this study, the researcher will examine the Year Five (11-year-old) pupils' creativity.*

In the excerpt above (Example 7.37), the writer did not use any linguistic signal to indicate the gap of the study. The underlined phrases "between 10 through 11 years" and "if studies were to be undertaken in Malaysia" provide an initial clue that studies had not been done for 10-11 years. The writer's intention was confirmed by the reader after some further readings into the text, usually not until the statement of the research objective (see italics).

7.3.3   M2s1b: Indicating problem and need

(a)Frequency and location

Earlier, I claimed that step M2s1b is an obligatory and a major step in the Malaysian writers' thesis Introductions. As seen in Figure 7.5 above, this step was used by all writers and their dependence on this particular step was obvious. Therefore, it was not surprising that this move takes sixty-four per cent of the total steps involving Move 2. Building on this theme, I found that seven theses employed this step, more than fifty per cent of the total steps used. The highest occurrences of step M21sb were in Thesis 1, where eighty-six per cent of the total steps were dedicated to the writer presenting the problem of the study and a positive justification for the need of the study. The lowest occurrences of this step can be found in Thesis 7. The writer dedicated only forty-four per cent of this step to establishing the niche.

The attention given to indicating the problem and need when establishing the niche of their studies differ. Table 7.6 below shows that Malaysian introductory chapters employed more statements of needs than statements of problems in Move 2.

Table 7.6
Occurrences of statements of problems and needs

Step M2s1b	Problem	Need	Total
Occurrences	36	44	80

Samraj suggests in her study that statements of problems usually precede the justification for why the study is needed. The writers who used the 'need' statements strategy in this order may want to elevate the problem of the research subject as a way of justifying the research. This interpretation seems relevant also to the present study. I provide an excerpt from Thesis 5 in Example 7.38 that aims to problematise a theory (see 1) and then show a need for a new approach (see 2).

Example 7.38: A Statement of Problems That Precede a Statement of Need in Thesis 5

Creative process, for instance, cannot be studied in isolation and it requires a thorough examination of the importance of environmental issues and personality traits as well **(1)**. Therefore, the study of creativity requires an integrated approach which examines the creative process (Process), on one hand, and its relationship with creative personality traits (Person), creative environment (Press), and creative product (Product) on the other **(2)**.

I also found that at many times, statements of problems precede other steps in Move 1 (for example M1s2: Reviewing Previous Studies) or Move 2 (M2s1a: Indicating a gap). It can also precede a Move 3 step (for instance M3s1: Aim of the Study).

(b) Value of step

Previous researchers have various interpretations when describing step M2s1b, as it has embedded meanings. The word "problem" at one end sometimes shows the gap in the phenomenon (Kwan, 2006), but at other times it shows methodological problems in previous research. By not relying on the general meaning of "problem", I have differentiated between various criteria for the three steps, based on different "Participant" and "Attributes". Based on an investigation of three theses, I suggest that: M2s1a indicates non-existence and paucity in the real world phenomenon and research world knowledge; M2s1b refers to statements that revolve around any shortcomings in real world phenomenon; and M2s1c shows shortcomings in a specific previous study.

I confirmed the value of this categorisation of M2s1b criteria in the Malaysian theses after analysing all the eight theses. I summarise this more detailed conception of this step in Table 7.7.

Table 7.7
Different aspects of Problem and Need

	Categorisation	Description
Problem	Problematic scenario and theoretical topics	Explicit
Need	Problems of real word and theoretical topics	Explicit and implied (lexeme "importance" and others

In my analysis, Step M2s1b: Problem and need, encompasses both real-world and theoretical topics. The real-world problems and need statements of the real- world are the claims related to the current phenomenon of the theme/topic under study. The problematic and

need statements of theoretical topics on the other hand, display claims associated with the study's theory or conceptual focus.

a) M2s1b: Problems

(i)   Problems realised by the current situation

All eight theses showed similar types of problem statements: they either portrayed the current problematic phenomenon of the real-world or presented any shortcomings in the underpinned theory or concept of the study. Eighty one per cent of problem statements were dedicated to those of the real-world. For example, Writer 2 in her thesis titled 'ESL students' approaches to reading an academic text' used her observation during teaching to point to the current problematic situation of students in the National University of Malaysia, where her research was located. A lengthy description on the students' difficulties in ESL classroom was provided to establish the niche. The extract in Example 7.39 from her introductory chapter proves this point:

Example 7.39: Real-world Problem Statement in Thesis 2.

> In the researcher's personal experiences of teaching English to second language learners (1), she also discovered similar encounters within the reading context. One problem that confronted the students was when they were not familiar with the words in the text (2). The lack of vocabulary knowledge acted as a barrier ... Throughout the reading of the text, these students may have needed to stop their reading many times to attend to unknown words. As a result, the reading process becomes a slow and stressful experience. Due to these experiences, many students often ignored the words that they did not know and continued reading. However, when they stumbled across many unknown words, comprehension of the text broke down and finally the reading is ceased (3).

In (1), the writer relates the problem of her study by presenting her own personal experience when teaching ESL students. Following that, she claimed the main problem of students' difficulty in reading was unfamiliarity with vocabularies (2). The bulk of the discussion is the detailed situation in her classroom during the reading activity. Because these scenarios are so challenging, the students will eventually disregard reading (3).

Displaying the problem of the study based on one's own observation was also preferred by Writer 7. She investigated the presence of possible languages, other than

Malay, in the Malaysian public organisation context. The following excerpt from Thesis 7 articulates the strategy well.

Example 7.40: Problematic Statement Based on Observation in Thesis 7.

> Malaysian people are bilinguals or multilinguals. The researcher's personal experience and direct observation have shown that despite the ascribed language policy on the use of BM for official purposes in public organisations, other languages that are understood by the speakers are also used. It is not uncommon to observe other languages emerge in any context of interaction.

Presenting current problems that exist in school classrooms in Malaysia is common. Thesis 5 associated the failure of meaning-making in literature to two current phenomena in the literature classroom: the teaching situation and the attitudes of teachers.

Example 7.41: Current Problems in Malaysian Classrooms in Thesis 5

> Brown explains the autonomy over choice of instruction as a sense of "ownership" (1987:95) that is the teaching of the subject knowledge-what a teacher does in a classroom. Brown states that the teaching of literature entails three factors:
>
> 1. Choice over material and response to it.
> 2. The life experience brought to the work.
> 3. The cumulative experience to literature.
>
> <u>Unfortunately, the power of choice in text selection does not belong to the teachers</u>.

Initially, the writer provided some background information on how the teacher should "own" a literary text in order to have a successful literature classroom. She then pointed out the decline of meaning-making was occurring because teachers did not have the freedom to choose literature texts they can relate to (see underlined).

Writer 5 continues her description of the inabilities of teachers to relate to the literature texts. The teachers could not teach literature because they were uncertain of the meaning of the literary text. In the end, the literature classroom failed.

Teachers' inability or inadequacy of making-meaning about the text creates apprehension among teachers. The lack of subject content and knowledge about literary studies has built uncertainties regarding meaning-making... It is extremely difficult for teachers to teach something that they are not sure of, more aptly, to teach something that they themselves could not make meaning of. Therefore, this difficulty or problem seems in effect to be a huge obstacle for the language teacher to perform well in the classroom.

(ii)   Theoretical topics problem

Besides describing the current problematic situation of the real world as the niche of the study, writers also pointed out problems in the theory or concept of the themes under study. To explain this further, an excerpt from Thesis 2 presented in Example 7.42 is provided. The underlined concerned the themes of the reading approaches. They were the main aspects to consider when investigating reading comprehension.

Example 7.42: Problems in the Concept of the Study in Thesis 2.

Other factors such as <u>poor reading strategy knowledge, perceptions of reading, interest, past experiences and lack of vocabulary knowledge (1)</u> are those often mentioned by researches [*sic*] as contributing toward the Malaysian students' problems in approaching reading (Ramaiah & Nambiar, 1993; Ramaiah, 1997; Faizah et al., 2002, Wong & Mardziah, 2003).

b) M2s1b: Need

Another common attribute of M2s1b is statement of needs. Table 7.7 above shows that statements of need as the strategy for establishing a niche are more prevalent than those of problems. Justification of need for the study also revolved around the real-world phenomenon and the theoretical topics phenomenon; they were presented both explicitly and implicitly. Table 7.8 summarises the detailed findings of Move 2 "need" statements.

Table 7.8
Detailed findings of M21sb: Need statements

	Explicit	Implied	
Need (real world and theoretical topics)	Lexical word *need*	*importance*	Others
N= 44	25	10	9

Table 7.8 above indicates there are twenty-five instances of explicit 'need' statements and nineteen implicitly presented. The most preferred way was by explicitly using the word *need*. The writer of Thesis 8, for instance, used *need* in most of her need statements to show the magnitude of "essential" and "worth" of a study.

Example 7.43: Explicit Statement of Need in Thesis 8.

i)   Therefore, Malaysian ESL learners *need* to understand how modals should be learned to attain mastery of the use of modals in their language;

ii)   Gill (2002) feels that there is a *need* to further research Malaysian English so that the results can be well disseminated and used to inform teachers and teacher trainers.

iii)   However, in order to be understood, there must be a standard variety that is acceptable internationally and that is what the formal Malaysian English is. Therefore, ESL learners *need* to master the use of modals with regard to the accepted Standard Malaysian English that is understood in the country and internationally.

Many of the statements of need were done implicitly. Similar to the results found in Samraj's study, most of the implied need statements in my research showed the importance and the benefit of the study, leading to an implicit justification of the research. Excerpts from Thesis 4 and Thesis 5 in Example 7.44 below used the word *important* to signify the need of the study.

Example 7.44: Implicit Statement of Need 'Important' in Theses 4 and 5.

The *importance* of understanding the teachers' belief system is crucial in this   in order to relate and comprehend practices in the classroom. (Thesis 4)

Hence, further investigation on all four dimensions of creativity namely: Process (creative process), Person (personality attributes), Press (school and home environment) and Product are equally *important*. (Thesis 5)

Sometimes, the writers use other lexical words to show needs as the niche of the study. Other implied need statements can be found in Thesis 6 (underlined) in Example 7.45. In the first paragraph, Writer 6 wanted to show the benefit of focusing a study on only one component of the revision stage.

Example 7.45: Implicit Statement of Need Thesis 6.

<u>Focusing on only one component the revision stage, would give a clearer picture of how this process approach can actually be beneficial to both teachers and students.</u> Unfortunately … <u>So, trying an important component of this process approach in a favourable setting may help to bring about positive results.</u>

In the following paragraph, the writer described the responses of writers in a peer review activity. The underlined statements implicitly asking readers to accept her study by evoking their sense of curiosity.

Some writers take comments seriously and make the necessary changes. Some writers ignore the comments because they (the writers) either do not trust the comments made or simply do not know what to make out of the comments to even proceed to make revisions. <u>It would also be interesting to see what types of comments peers make when they write. It would be fruitful to see what types of comments students make when they talk about essays with their friends.</u>

One fascinating characteristic of a need statement in Move 2 is the common depiction of patriotic obligation. Of the forty-four Move 2 "need" statements, I found nine (9) occurrences where the writers explicitly expressed urgency and the importance of the study to their country. The use of *Malaysia* or *this country* exhibited the patriotism of the writer. Examples taken from Thesis 4 and Thesis 5 in Example 7.46 are provided below to illustrate my point:

Example 7.46: Patriotic Obligation in Statement of Need in Theses 4 and 5.

(i)   The main focus that needs to be addressed is the teaching strategies and techniques that could help our *Malaysian teachers* be better teachers, and how we can help teachers to improve their subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and practical knowledge. (Thesis 4)

(i)   ... a study on the *Malaysian children's creativity* has been found necessary to help establish the *Malaysian creativity profile*.

(ii)   As such, a study on Year Five children's creativity is viewed necessary to substantiate the body of knowledge on *creativity in this country*. (Thesis 5)

7.3.4   M2s1c: Counter-Claim

Another common step found in the text samples of the present study is M2s1c: Counter-claim. As can be seen in Figure 7.3, it is the third most preferred step, which five of eight writers employed when establishing their niche. The table shows that this step occurred fourteen times, or eleven per cent of the total steps found in all theses. The writers using this step either claim defects in the research design in other studies or inconclusive outcomes in a particular research.

(a) **Value of step**

As mentioned in Chapter 4, statements of M2s1c: Counter-claims display negative evaluations of the research design as well as the research outcomes. M2s1c can be seen in Examples 7.47 and 7.48 below. Both examples show how the writers criticised the methods used in the previous studies because they led to inconclusive results.

The author of Thesis 5 has previously presented similar studies that have been done within the area of creativity. The counter claim statement begins when the writer claimed that research in creativity cannot be carried out in isolation as shown in Example 7.47 below. Then, she further suggested that the repercussions of such research would be defective outcomes as mentioned in (2). In order to strengthening her claim, the writer then in (3) gave some examples of the issues when the study looked at only one aspect of Creativity.

Example 7.47: Statement of Counter Claim in Thesis 5.

[Most of the creativity studies in the past focused on respondents' cognitive (Process) and personality traits (Person). They were done in isolation] (**1**) [and resulted in a fragmented view of creativity (Sternberg, 1999)] (**2**). [For instance, the Cognitive (Process) and Social Personality approaches (Person) provided valuable insights into creativity but Cognitive studies alone failed to relate the influence of personality attributes and environmental factors on the creative process of respondents (Sternberg, 1999). Similarly, Personality and Social Psychological approaches ignored the importance of mental process underlying creativity.] (**3**)

The following Example 7.48, in Thesis 7, reveals a similar strategy. In the previous paragraphs, the writer presented several similar studies that have been done previously. In (1), the author then informed us that most of the studies only used the survey questionnaire in collecting the data. Next, she commented on the flaw of using a survey questionnaire as the only data collection method, as shown in (2).

Example 7.48: Statement of Counter Claim in Thesis 7.

> However, most of the studies in this field in the Malaysian context have generally employed the <u>survey questionnaire</u> method in data collection (1). While this method of data collection may be straightforward and less complicated in terms of analysis, the <u>responses may be insufficient in providing full explanation</u> of the speakers' communicative behaviour (2).

In discussing Reviewing Previous Research (RPR) in the previous section, I claimed that six RPR statements were critically discussed by the writers to make niche establishment possible. One strategy to establish the niche from review of previous studies is by pointing to some methodological shortcomings. An example of M2s1c following a RPR statement can be found in Thesis 1 and Thesis 6. Writer 1 first reviewed a previous study by Hafizah (see 1). She then pointed out the flaws in the sample as well as the limited aspect of workplace domain in the research.

Example 7.49: A Counter Claim Statements Following a RPR statement in Theses 1 and 6

> A study that has attempted to examine CS among Malaysian university students in relation to the workplace domain was carried out by Halizah (2003). Her subjects were made up of six final-year students following the Chemical Engineering course at UKM**.** Only Malay students were involved in the study, which comprised three male and three female students **(1).** Her study, however, only examines one aspect of the workplace domain: the interview context **(2).** (Thesis 5)

Thesis 6 documented a review of previous studies by Leong and Lim (1999) in the first paragraph. In the following paragraph, the writer then indicated that the researchers' perspective of the process approach in teaching writing is inaccurate. Writer 6 commented that the researchers were wrong to imply that the process approach is a single element and failed to realise the various elements within the process approach.

A few studies have been conducted on the implementation of the process approach

in the teaching of writing in Malaysian schools. Both the research studies by Leong (1999) and Lim (1997) did not show favourable results when it came to implementing the process writing in the Malaysian context. Leong's (1999) research … The result of this research also has shown that the process approach in the writing classroom was not readily accepted by both the teachers and students. Among some of the contributing factors were the time constraints …

What was interesting was that both the research studies have looked at the process approach as a big entity. It is as if the process approach is ONE approach a teacher uses in the classroom and failure in the implementation seemed to pin-point on the approach as a whole. (Thesis 6)

7.3.5   M2s1d: Continuing tradition

Discussion of criteria of this step type is based on a statement found in Thesis 1. After analysing the remainder of the theses, I could not find any other M2s1e statements. This shows that this step is the least favoured among all the theses. As shown in Chapter Four - the coding criteria - Writer 1 applied the same theoretical perspective found in a previous study and extended it to another context.

7.3.6   M2s1e: Question-raising

Frequency distribution

Another common strategy in niche establishment is M2s1e: Question-raising. However, the frequency used in each thesis is low. Table 7.9 below shows the number of occurrences of this step in each thesis. Thesis 2 and Thesis 4 employed this strategy twice and Theses 1, 4 and 8 only used it once.

Table 7.9
Frequency occurrences of M2s1e: Question-raising

Thesis	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	Total
Occurrences	1	2	-	2	1	-	-	1	7

As indicated elsewhere, this step type is used when the writer wants to address the research. It can be presented in two ways: direct or indirect speech. All question-raising statements in the rest of the theses (other than the first three in the preliminary analysis)

were in direct question mode. Examples are taken from Thesis 4, Thesis 5 and Thesis 8 and are presented in Example 7.50.

Example 7.50: Question-raising Using Direct mode Strategy in Thesis 4, 5 and 8.

> The question is: how do they view this transaction between reader and text, and are the same beliefs manifested in their practice in the ESL classrooms? (Thesis 4)

> Based on the nature of our students' thinking abilities and the requirement for a dynamic, innovative and creative workforce as our "global players", are we ready to fulfil the needs of our very own K-Economy? (Thesis 5)

> The study started with this simple question: What is a modal and what does it do? (Thesis 8)

To summarise, I have presented in-depth analysis of each step in Move 2. The discussions were based on the development of the step criteria derived from the initial analysis of three theses (as discussed in Chapter 4). However, after the analysis of all eight theses has been carried out, I have established that there are additional elements in the realisation of some of the steps.

Part III

7.4 Part III: Analysis of Steps in Move 3

7.4.1 Frequency distribution of steps in Move 3

Next, an analysis of steps in Move 3: Occupying a Niche, will be presented. Overall, the introductory chapter is a place where students introduce their topic, impart the intended procedures, inform readers about the research questions and, as well, tell the reader where the current study positions itself in the field. I have found twelve steps that have been used to accomplish Move 3. However, the occurrences of the twelve steps varied. As mentioned in Chapter 3, steps can be divided into three categories -- obligatory, common and uncommon, based on the number of occurrences. The steps that are found in all introductions are regarded as obligatory and steps that are used in five to seven theses are considered common. Uncommon steps are those found in only four or fewer theses.

The analysis reveals that there are four steps and one sub-step that emerge as obligatory steps. Common steps consist of four steps and two sub-steps. Steps that are occasionally used involve two steps and two sub-steps. Table 7.10 summarises Move 3 in the study.

Table 7.10
Categorisation of Move 3 steps

Obligatory	Common	Uncommon
M3s1: Purpose of the study	M3s7: Scope of the research	M3ss3a:Methods: Instruments
M3ss3c: Method: Procedures	M3ss3b: Method-Research design	M3s5: Presenting results
M3s6: Significance of the study	M3s4: Subjects	M3ss7a: Chapter structure and content
M3s8: Research questions	M3ss7b: Thesis structure and content	M3s11: Suggestions
M3s9:Theoretical positioning	M3s10: Limitations of research	
	M3s12: Defining terms	

Unlike the steps in Move 1 and Move 2, the semantic criteria of many steps in Move 3 are straightforward. The criteria I used in this study were in many instances similar to those of Kwan (2006), Bunton (2002), Arulandu (2005) and Olivares, Salom and Monreal (2009). However, after the initial analysis, I found three steps that have been semantically improvised. These are: M3s2: scope of the study, M3s3: Methods, and M3s6: Significance of the study. Altogether, there are a total of 365 Move 3 steps occurrences found in the text samples. The detailed number of occurrences for each step is presented in Table 7.10 below.

Table 7.11
Frequency of Move 3 steps

Steps	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	S11	S12	Total
Occ.	**67**	31	**52**	26	3	**76**	22	17	27	28	1	15	365

The three most employed steps were: M3s1: Purpose of the Study; M3s3: Methods; and M3s6: Significance of the Study. Table 7.11 indicates that step M3s6 was employed most. Seventy-six occurrences account for twenty-two per cent (22%) of the overall Move 3 steps. This was followed by Step M3s1: Purpose of the study, with sixty-seven occurrences (19%).

The next highest step concerning when the writers inform the readers about their methodology was fifty-two occurrences, or fifteen per cent (15%) of the total Move 3 steps. The least occurring steps are M3s5: Presenting results and M3s11: Suggestions. These findings are illustrated in Figure 7.7 below.
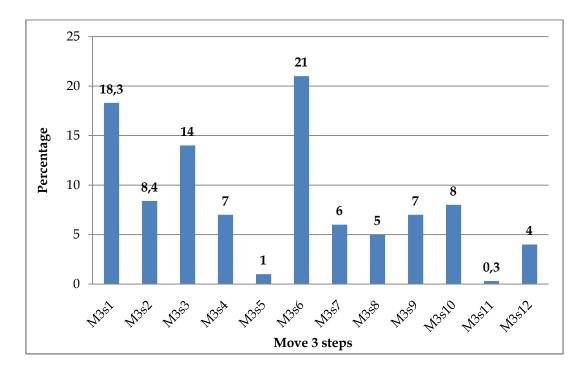
Figure 7.7. Percentage Distribution of Move 3 Steps.

From here on, I will discuss the value of only a selected number of the steps. They are:

(i)   M3s1, M3s3 and M3s6 because not only they are obligatory steps but the occurrence of these steps are the highest. Most importantly, there are new developments in terms of either the common configurations or value of the steps, which was not highlighted in Chapter 4. Discussing these steps is important because it will further contribute to our understanding of Malaysian writers' strategies.

(ii)   M3s2: Scope of the study, since this is a new-found step.

Other Move 3 steps- Steps 4: Subjects/ Materials; Step 5; Presenting results; Step 7: Thesis/ Chapter structure; Step 8: Research questions; Step 9: Theoretical positioning; Step 10: Limitation of research; Step 11: Suggestions; and Step 12: Defining Terms, will not be discussed in this study. These steps account for between 9 and 5 per cent of all steps, i.e. they are small in percentage. They are optional, but obviously useful to a lot of the writers.

Like most of the Move 3 steps, these steps were simpler syntactically and there were no new semantic developments from those employed in other research. Therefore, the statements of these move types do not seem to provide any surprises in terms of their content and use, and are well covered in the existing research where their functions are well described. An example is Move 3 Step 10: Limitations of research. The semantic attributes of this step, based on the pilot coding, were statements highlighting the restrictions and defects of the method. After the real text parsing was done on all theses, I did not find any new semantic development. An example can be seen in the excerpt from Thesis 4 in Example 7.51.

Example 7.51: Limitations of Research in Thesis 4

> **Limitations of the Study**
>
> The present study does not see generalisibility but profundity and depth in its findings and interpretation. Thus there are *delimiting* variables that need to be clarified.

The statements in Example 7.51 showing the limitation of the study comes under a specific sub-heading. The claim of restriction in method was indicated by the lexical word *delimiting*. The same attributes can be found in Bunton (2002). An example of this step is evident in Bunton's (2002) study.

> Due to the nature of the research questions and the **restrictions** of time and human resources in doing a higher degree project... the present research study has been completed **within the following limits**: (Bunton, 2002, p. 164)

Therefore, I will not spend further space in discussion of this step. The other steps mentioned previously will also not be discussed as I would only be replicating prior studies' comments for instance Salom, Monreal, and Olivares (2008). I turn now to analysis of those steps I have identified for which I can offer innovative contributions to the literature in this area of genre studies.

7.4.2   M3s1: Purpose of the study

Frequency and configuration of step

All the thesis writers used this step recurrently. One of the highest occurrences can be found in Thesis 4. She employed it sixteen times in her introductory chapter. Thesis 5

utilised this step fifteen times. The lowest occurrence was in Thesis 3, where the writer used it four times. Most times, this step type followed a Move 2 step. An extract from Thesis 5 below (Example 7.52) shows that the writer informed her audience about the purpose of the study (underlined) after she presented the problem and the importance of the study.

Example 7.52: Statement of Purpose of the Study in Thesis 5.

> In light of the above, it is high time for us to re-examine our KBKK component in the primary and secondary school curriculum. In order for us to consider several pragmatic actions, there is a need for us to examine our children's creativity in school. <u>As such, this study aimed to examine the creativity of Year Five children in a Malaysian primary school.</u>

Thesis 7 in Example 7.53 used this step to inform the reader that the purpose of her study is to fill in the gap - to study language used in the workplace domain.

Example 7.53: Statement of Purpose in Thesis 7

> However, as mentioned earlier, there is very few available documentation on this issue. <u>This study, therefore, seeks to augment the little available information on language use in the public workplace domain.</u>

This step was not necessarily occupied after the writer had established the niche. An extract from Thesis 4 in Example 7.54 below shows M3s1 came after a Move 1 step. In (1), the writer informed the reader about the reading process from the point of view of a student learner. Without claiming any gap in studies that look at reading processes from the teachers' perspective, she directly told the reader the aim of her study (2).

Example 7.54: Statement of Purpose of the Study after a Move 1 Step (M1ss2a + M3s1) in Thesis 4.

> According to Langer (1994), readers seek for the "real and hidden" story and construct views as a way to explore ideas. Studies in this project show that readers approach the text first by understanding its overall meaning. The second approach ... (1)

> The present study aims to comprehend this process of reading from another perspective, that is, from the viewpoint of the teachers teaching literary texts. (2)

There were many instances where step M3s1 came after the steps of Move 3. The author of Thesis 5 posited that the study operated under the Confluence approach and also provided a justification for it (1). She then introduced the study, which was to examine creativity from the four dimensions (2).

Example 7.55: Statement of Purpose of the Study after a Move 3 step (M3s9 + M3s1) in Thesis 5.

In summary, the Confluence approach is instrumental to this study in that it accounts for the four dimensions of creativity (1) which will be examined by this study (2).

Another step configuration found was [M3ss3a +M3s1]. An excerpt from Thesis 6 in Example 7.56 below shows how the writer merged the method and purpose of her study in a single sentence.

Example 7.56: Statement of Purpose of the Study after a Move 3 step (M3s9 + M3s1) in Thesis 6

This case study <u>looked at what happened when peers take the role of the reader and read his or her peers' essays.</u>

Another common step configuration is [M3s11 + M3s1]. The author of Thesis 7 identified the theory used in the study. She then proposed the objective of the study (underlined) that reflected the theory used. The excerpt in Example 7.57 illustrates my point.

Example 7.57: Statement of Purpose of the Study after a Move 3 step (M3s11 + M3s1) in Thesis 7.

Thus, in this light, the study also integrates the frameworks of interpretive and interactional sociolinguistics along the lines of:

1) language stylistic with a focus on colloquial BM framework as suggested by Asmah (1985), Nik Safiah et al. (1993) and Goddard (2002); and ME 16 framework as suggested by Wong (1983), Baskaran (1987) and Yen (1991),
2) communication strategies with a focus on:
i. speech accommodation as attested by the works of Giles (1973), Giles and Powesland (1975), and Coupland, Giles and Coupland (1991); and
ii. code-switching which is grounded in Poplack's (1981) and Bakhtin's (1981) contention on types and levels of code-switching (CS); Myers- Scotton's (1983; 1988;

1989) markedness and Matrix Language Frame models; and Gumperz's (1982) proposition on conversational functions of code-switching (CS).

<u>The study examines how speakers' speech may be mediated by these social and language variables to achieve the goal of communication.</u>

7.4.3   M3s2: Scope/ Focus of the research

Although the most usual strategy is to simply announce the aim of the study, the writers also often inform the reader of the focal point of their research. The function of this step is to inform the readers of the detailed area of the study the writer wants to cover. All theses employed this strategy. Excerpts from Thesis 4 and Thesis 5 in Example 7.58 illustrate this communicative purpose.

Example 7.58: Statement of Scope/ Focus in Thesis 4 and Thesis 5.

The scope of this study thus lies within the boundaries of English language teachers teaching literature in English, their beliefs, content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, experiences and interpretation of the meaning-making process. (Thesis 4)

This study examined the four dimensions of creativity among Year Five children in a primary school. The dimensions are process, person, press, and product. (Thesis 5)

7.4.4   M3s3: Method

Another step that is obligatory in the introductory chapters of the Malaysian theses is M3s1: Method. I found three sub-steps that writers used when introducing their methodology. They proposed the research design, introduced the instruments for their data collection and analysis, and informed the readers of the procedures of their study.

As indicated in Table 7.9 above, sub-step M3ss3c: Procedures, was found to be obligatory. M3ss3a: Research design, was considered to be a common sub-step because seven of eight writers employed this strategy. Presenting the procedures was considered not important in the introductory chapter, since only three writers used it.

Table 7.12 below shows the occurrences of Move 3 s3 steps in the theses. It shows the highest occurrence in presenting the procedures of the research. This step occurred twenty-eight times. This table also indicates, in a very interesting result, that even though only three

writers used M3ss3b: Instrument, its occurrence was higher than that of sub-step M3ss3a. This suggests that, having introduced the data gathering research instruments, the authors felt free or obliged to describe them at some length. The same does not appear to hold true for the broader topic of research design.

Table 7.12
Sub-step occurrences of M3s3

M3ss3a: Research Design	M3ss3b: Instruments	M3ss3c: Procedures
10	14	28

N=52

The semantic criteria of these sub-steps in the preliminary study based on three theses, identified the language with which the writers justify their choice of methods. The rest of the writers also found that justifying their choice constituted a very important rhetorical strategy when introducing their methodology. Excerpts from Theses 7, 8 and 4 illuminate my point. In Thesis 7 of Example 7.59, the writer notified the approach of the study (underlined). The rest of the excerpts (2) were the justifications for the chosen approach.

Example 7.59: Research Design and Justification in Thesis 7

> Thus, in the light of this study, a discourse analysis of the interactions can be useful to understand the linguistic pattern of the communication (1). As claimed by McCarthy and Carter (1994); Riggenbach (1999); Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000), by exploring natural language use in authentic environments, learners gain a greater appreciation and understanding of the discourse ... Kheng (1993) agreed with this view that in a natural discourse, speaker is usually concentrating more on what he is saying, not so much on how he is saying it, and so, the researcher could get a more accurate manifestation of the subjects' real command on the language (p. 104). (2)

The excerpt from Thesis 8 in Example 7.60 shows the instrument used by the writer (1). She also justified her choice in (2).

Example 7.60: Instruments and Justification in Thesis 8.

> The use of "concordance" programme (1) is faster with the machine-readable form, which will allow for extractions of frequency lists and other indices of various words (McEnery and Wilson, 2001). (2)

Writers also considered that it was important to justify the procedures used in their particular research. Writer 4 for instance carried out a classroom observation. In (2), she backed up her choice.

Example 7.61: Procedures and Justification in Thesis 4.

Classroom observation (1) provides the opportunity to research actual teaching/learning activity that is getting to the core of a problem. Theories and approaches are basis to practise but the actual challenge lies in the classroom itself. The teachers' approaches, strategies and techniques will support their stance in the teaching of literature. (2)

7.4.5   M3s6: Significance of the Study

This step is classified as obligatory because it appeared in every thesis. It was used to strengthen the writers' claims concerning the importance of the chosen study and a means to justify the chosen research. My analysis showed the major reasons for pointing out the significance of one's study are firstly, to suggest the benefits of the study and secondly, to ask appropriate authorities to act based on the outcomes of the study. In other words, many statements of M3s6 allude to the significance of non-epistemic events.

Thesis 4 suggested that the result of her study was important to literature teachers. Additionally, the results of her study would help the appropriate authority design a suitable curriculum and syllabus concerning literature in schools. The excerpt in Example 7.62 presents my point.

Example 7.62: Statement of Significance of the Study in Thesis 4.

Decision making based on a selection of strategies and techniques will be fruitful and indirectly shape the teacher's knowledge and approaches. The understanding of teachers' beliefs will be an invaluable insight for those involved in teacher education in determining the curricular constructs of teacher-related programmes and training in ESL.

Similar to presenting needs at the background level, this Move 3 step also showed it can either be significant to real-world phenomena or to the topic being discussed. Excerpts from Theses 3, 5, and 8 in Example 7.63 below displayed the significance of the study to the

country or a government institution/body by explicitly using the terms *Malaysia*, *this country* and *University of Malaya*.

Example 7.63: Statements of Significance of the Study to the Country in Theses 3, 5 and 8.

> By identifying the various cognitive processes involved in the process of language learning; students' behaviour; and students' reaction to an online environment, the study will also be able to assist future teachers, educators and linguists in the designing of online language courses that meet the needs of <u>Malaysian learners</u>. (Thesis 3)

> The findings too would help educational experts from the <u>Ministry of Education</u> to design creativity modules and creativity enhancement programs suitable for the <u>Malaysian needs</u>. (Thesis 5)

> The study hopes to reveal the appropriate methods for modals to be understood by the <u>Malaysian ESL learners so that they are able to write and speak fluently.</u> The presence of the corpus and results from analyses carried out on the data will contribute to <u>MACLE of University Malaya</u> to form a generalised picture of language employed by Malaysian ESL learners. (Thesis 8)

7.5   Conclusion

The analysis of steps in this chapter has enhanced our understanding of the internal strategies used by Malay thesis writers. In addition to confirming that the criteria presented in Chapter Four for the three test theses also occurred in the rest of the corpus, this chapter has also presented discoveries on the variety and use of steps that can further enhance our understanding of how rhetorical strategies are constructed. At this stage of our knowledge, we are not yet in a position to know the extent to which these new findings may be distinctive to thesis introductions in the Malaysian context, and which might have wider application.

In the next chapter I will draw together the main results of my analyses to provide some answers to my research questions.

Chapter Eight
Discussion

8.1 Introduction

This study has attempted to document and explain the strategies of Malaysian writers trying to communicate the purpose of their thesis introductions. Specifically, this study focuses on the analysis of rhetorical moves from the framework developed by Swales (1990) within the ESP genre perspective. This chapter discusses the issues raised by the results and seeks to answer the following questions:

i) Do Malaysian theses have an overall generic structure?

ii) Do they have a generic structure for their introductory chapter?

iii) Do theses Introductions conform to Swales' (1990) CARS model of moves and steps?

iv) Is there any distinct rhetorical strategy in the thesis introductory chapter that can be explained from cultural and social perspectives?

v) What effect do the method of coding and the computer assisted move analysis have on our interpretation of the rhetorical structure of thesis introductions?

I will answer the first three questions with particular reference to the socio-cultural perspectives as raised in question (iv).

8.2 Malaysian theses' overall generic structure

The analysis on the length of Malaysian theses in Chapter Five showed that the length was within the permitted number of words; the average length was 84,423 words and the average number of pages was 321. The high average length of text samples reflected current PhD practices in Malaysia, specifically what is practiced in the three Malaysian universities in this sample. The three universities' thesis guideline Handbooks postulate that the maximum number of pages for a PhD thesis varies from 240 pages (University Putra Malaysia- UPM) to 400 pages (University of Malaya- UM and National University of Malaysia- UKM) or 100,000 words excluding tables, figures and appendices.

The extensive number of pages and words noted in the PhD Handbooks is probably derived from British academic traditions that continued to be practised in the Malaysian

government's education policy following independence.[4]   Bunton (2002) also attributes the long length of his corpus to the university being a Commonwealth institution.   When comparing to American references, he found that British and Commonwealth writers' PhD theses consisted generally of 312 to 333 pages of text (without appendices and tables), which was double the average length of 174 to 225 pages in American dissertations. (Most American doctoral programs include several years of coursework in which long essays are also presented.) Much the same can be said about other universities in former British colonies, which suggests relatively comparable regulations in terms of word count. Kamler and Threadgold (1997, p. 55), at an Australian conference on tertiary literacy, speak of "the typical 80,000 word (PhD) thesis". The regulations governing the format layout, however, vary between faculties at UWA where a thesis is "not restricted to *one volume*" (Chandreasekar, 2002, p. 18). The University of Melbourne's PhD Handbook states that "candidates should aim to write a thesis of 80,000 words" and are allowed to write up to 100,000 words (University of Melbourne PhD Handbook, 2012, p. 27). This is also in line with the general word length for a thesis expected by the Research Graduate School at Monash University. It states that generally, a thesis must not exceed 100,000 words. Like the three Malaysian universities' PhD Handbooks, the word length does not include footnotes, references, appendices, nor does it include tables and diagrams. Therefore, on the basis of word length, Malaysian universities tend to agree with other universities that 100,000 words are considered sufficient in presenting a writer's arguments and justifications.

Making a comparison in terms of pages between the longer and shorter theses being written at British and Commonwealth universities is, however, difficult. It should be noted that the strict typeface and spacing guide implemented by the Malaysian universities probably result in a longer maximum number of pages, which is 400. UPM for instance states that the font size of the entire text (excluding footnotes and text in tables) should be 12-point and the spacing of a thesis must be "typed double-spaced, with four spaces between paragraph and sections." (UPM, 2010, p. 2). The University of Hong Kong also explicitly states that font size 12cpi should be used. UWA on the other hand says that a thesis "should be double or one and a half space" (Chandrasekhar, 2002, p.18). Melbourne University, like Monash University, does not specify any spacing guide. Therefore, though

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[4] Malaysia had been a British colony and still followed the 'mother' country's education policy. PhD programs in the U.S. universities have taught <u>component and a shorter doctoral dissertation following the taught courses</u> .However, according to Bunton (2002), many British and Commonwealth universities require a rather longer thesis for the award to be conferred.

the thickness of two theses from different universities may differ, the word count may be about the same.

The regulations of thesis length as postulated by the universities' guidelines can only be seen as partially contributing to the lengthy theses in this study. A useful distinction can be drawn between major fields of studies. What has been established to date is that the length of theses from the Sciences is shorter than those from the Social Sciences/ Humanities. The theses in the present study are those in the Social Sciences field. They were considered long when compared to, for instance, the Agricultural Botany theses which averaged 31,000 words (Thompson, 2005). Bunton (2002) also suggests a lower average word count in his Science and Technology (ST) theses corpus compared to theses from the Social Sciences and Humanities (HSS). He discovered that ST theses averaged 162 pages (about 39,000 words) and were twice as less than HSS theses which averaged 305 pages (about 73,000 words).

The hypothesis of length as indicating a good or bad thesis is - as other researchers have suggested - naive. However, the topic regarding length should not be overlooked. The information that makes up the length and how the information is imparted are two factors that shape a decent and worthy thesis. The latter - among others - leads to questions concerning the structure of organisation, which is the central concern of the present study.

The findings from Chapter Five also showed that Social Sciences and Humanities theses in Malaysia followed the traditional ILrMRD method, either the simple traditional format or the complex traditional format. Similar to this study, Kwan (2005) found that all twenty Humanities and Social Sciences theses follow the traditional format of ILrMRD. In contrast, Starfield and Ravelli's (2006) study of twenty theses exclusively drawn from Arts and Social Sciences at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) concluded that none of her text samples followed the traditional simple format. Only two theses presented in a traditional-complex way and eighteen preferred the topic-based format. The two patterns can also be compared to the findings of Bunton (2002) and Paltridge (2002). Bunton formulated a three-stream model (see Chapter 2) in his studies of 21 theses from both Humanities and Sciences at the University of Hong Kong and Paltridge discovered four thesis structure types (see to Chapter 2). The result of this study informs us that Malaysian Social Sciences and Humanities' theses have less variation than the theses from other countries. Table 8.1 summarises the types of PhD thesis discussed in previous studies.

Table 8.1

Types of PhD thesis in previous studies

Arts/ Humanities/ Social Sciences			
	Simple	Complex	Topic-based
Paltridge (2002)	3		
Bunton (2002)			
Starfield & Ravelli (2006)		2	18
Kwan (2005)	20		

The table suggests that Social Science/ Humanities/ Arts theses were mostly written in the simple traditional form or adopted a topic-based form. Starfield and Ravelli' study provides a good example of theses in this discipline slowly shying away from the simple traditional format.

The similar style convention of the theses has its justification. One possible reason is that the theses reflect the three universities' PhD guidelines. All three universities' PhD Handbook explicitly state the preferred chapter layout (see Appendix E). All the recommended chapter layouts from the three universities show similar conventions in so far as the sections on Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology and Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Research are concerned. Even though it serves only as a guideline, UM reminds its candidates and supervisors to follow the agreed conventions. UM states that,

> Candidates and supervisors should ensure that the text follows the agreed conventions of the individual faculty. Normally, the text consists of the following chapters: 2.2.1 Introduction..., 2.2.2 Literature Review..., 2.2.3 Methodology..., 2.2.4 Result..., 2.2.5 Discussion..., 2.2.6 Conclusion... (Institute of Graduate Studies, 2010, p. 4)

The preface in *Gaya UKM*, the PhD Handbook of National University of Malaysia, also emphasises caution to all candidates to follow the guidelines and the format set by the Graduate Centre. UPM - which advised the students to "refer closely" (UPM, 2009, p. 1) to the Handbook - hopes that a certain measure of uniformity can be achieved. However, UPM has included two other formatting options. Style 2 has the same generic headings in Introduction, Literature Review and Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Research. However, the body of the thesis is written as separate chapters or

manuscripts of related studies with their own IMRD. Style 3 is essentially meant for student writers who have already published the prescribed number of research articles based on the research the student writer had conducted during the period of candidacy. It is a manuscript style, consists of a compilation of published research journals that are then made into a coherent whole, prefaced by the Introduction and closed with a Conclusion chapter. Even though the statistics for PhD theses following this format are not available from UPM, a random survey of recent PhD theses in the Social Science English Department found that most theses follow the traditional format.

A very interesting discussion regarding issues of diversity in rhetorical styles in thesis writing was highlighted by Casanave (2010) in her article "Taking risks?: a study of three doctoral students writing qualitative dissertations at an American university in Japan". Her initial assertion, that the style of theses in social sciences - specifically TESOL and applied linguistics - was continually influenced by the formulaic style from the Sciences, holds true in the case of the present study. The seven theses, although the products of the Social Sciences disciplines, follow the ILrMRD format.

The discussion in her case study about the journey of three Japanese PhD candidates writing their theses can actually be exploited in this study, by providing another explanation for the conventional dissertation writing of the theses. She noted that the issues of "fear", "risk", and "protect" stifled the candidates' written texts, despite their inclination towards unconventional theses style at the beginning of their writing process. Casanave (2010), however, still questions the advice on stylistic changes in dissertations by stating that the formulaic style of dissertation writing happens through:

> Lessons learned from course work, course paper requirements, and a school's dissertation manuals and templates; through course readings that serve as models for students as to how research and writing should be done; through advice books and style manuals; and through fear of and resistance to change on the part of both faculty and students. (p. 12)

It is important to discuss the only thesis (Thesis 1) which did not follow the "conservative" traditional simple structure of a thesis. This means that even though Thesis 1 follows the ILrMRD pattern, the thesis has a number of chapters discussing the findings of the study. Even though there is only one corpus of this kind in the study, it may

demonstrate that the advisors, faculty members and the Senate approving her thesis were at the bridge between academic conservatism and academic globalisation. Another reason explaining style preference is that Writer 1 might be avoiding a disproportionately bulky chapter (Swales, 1990). In her thesis, Writer 1 allocated three chapters to results, each one covering one aspect/variable of her theory. A combined discussion of all three variables in a single chapter would make one of her chapters considerably longer than the other chapters. Other possible explanations are the result of post-modernism and qualitative research methods which "question traditional ideas of knowledge and the possibility of an objective researcher" (Hyland, 2009). Hyland argues that post-modernism has affected research in many ways, particularly in qualitative research methods. He claims that by employing post-modernism in qualitative research, the meaning and acquisition of knowledge are revolutionised. The post-modernism idea postulated by Richardson (2000) that there is no clear boundary in thesis style across disciplines has been validated by Paltridge, Starfield and Ravelli's studies. In a small but important way, Thesis 1 in the present study signifies that the academic community is gradually accepting post-modernist views about thesis writing.

8.3   Generic structure for Malaysian theses' introductory chapter

The Malaysian introductory chapters are considered long when compared to the average of thesis introductions studies by researchers in other countries, for example Bunton (2002) and Soler -Monreal, et al. (2010). Bunton (2002) found that his theses samples from Hong Kong University averaged at 19.67 pages. The Spanish and English theses in Soler-Monreal, et al.'s (2010) study averaged 9.1 and 12.1 pages respectively. The deduction that Malaysian' thesis Introductions are lengthier is confirmed in Arulandu's (2005) study. She did a comparative analysis of structures in the Masters and PhD theses in Malaysia. In her preliminary analysis on obtaining the background features of eight PhD theses in the Social Sciences, she found that the average number of pages in her text samples was 23. Even though the number of words was not stated in her study, it can be concluded that her text samples were just as long as the introductory chapters used in this study.

There seemed to be a generic section heading of the Malaysian thesis introductions. Analysis of the sub-headings used in all the eight theses showed a number of sub-headings that were commonly used in the introductory chapter of Malaysian thesis. They are:

Background of the Study; Statement of the Problem; Purpose of the Study; Research Questions; Significance of the Study; Limitations of the Study; and Definition of Terms.

The generic headings used in the theses in this study adhere to the universities' manuals and templates. UM and UKM presented a more explicit and rigid text convention. The introductory chapter, according to UM, contains 'the introduction to the issues in which the research is concerned, the aims and objectives of the study, and the outline of the research approach' (UM, 2010, p. 4). *Gaya* UKM or UKM Style says,

> *Teks hendaklah dimulakan dengan BAB 1, iaitu PENDAHULUAN. Bab ini terdiri daripada pengenalan, permasalahan/ persoalan kajian, tujuan kajian, skop kajian dan kepentingan kajian.*
>
> Texts must begin with CHAPTER 1, which is INTRODUCTION. This chapter consists [*sic*] of introduction, problem of the study/ research question, aims of the study, scope of the study and importance of the study. (Pusat Pengurusan Siswazah, 2009, p. 14)

Universiti Putra Malaysia states that "the introductory chapter introduces the subject matter and problem(s) under the study, and indicates its importance and validity." It sets out the "hypotheses to be tested and research objectives to be attained" (UPM, 2009, p. 10). From the guidelines, some of the keywords used in section headings can be established; for instance "introduces the subject matter" would suggest that a writer has to give some background information about the intended study. Other keywords in the Handbook that point to the section heading are "problem under the study", "research objectives" and "importance" which would directly suggest "Statement of the Problem", "Purpose of the Study" and "Significance of the Study", respectively. Figure 8.1 summarises the similarity between the generic section headings of the text samples and the formulaic headings of Introductions in the three universities' PhD manuals.

Generic section headings of the text samples	Text convention in Introduction
Background of the Study ⟶	Introduction to the study
Statement of the Problem ⟶	Problem of the study
Purpose of the Study ⟶	Aims of the study
Research Questions ⟶	Research question/ hypotheses
Significance of the Study ⟶	Importance of the study
Limitations of the Study	
Definition of Terms	
Summary	

*Figure 8.1.*Generic section headings and formulaic universities' text conventions

Some manuals from other universities also describe the functions and characteristics of the introductory chapter of a thesis. The Faculty of Education at Monash University, for example, provides text conventions of an introductory chapter that are similar to the Malaysian institutions. Hong Kong University, however, does not provide a clear indication of what an introduction chapter is. This confirms the validity of Bunton's study of introductions' section headings in the Social Sciences theses as having more section headings than Science and Technology theses. The Handbook says,

> This section sets the context for your proposed project and must capture the reader's interest. You should explain the background of your study starting from a broad picture narrowing in on your research questions, listing the relevant references, as appropriate. The introduction should be at a level that makes it easy to understand for readers with a general background in your field. (Graduate School, 2009**)**

All these observations allow me to conclude that each institution's policy plays a very important, if not decisive role, in shaping the features or styles of theses. What has been seen so far is that Malaysian theses are still conventional in their style. The PhD Handbooks imposed by the universities, even though it must be stress**e**d that they are only guidelines for preparing a thesis, somehow restricted student writers from exploring new ways of organising their theses. The format of the theses is predominantly conventional but it is still worth considering other "intellectual styles".

8.4   Swales's (1990) CARS model of moves and steps in Malaysian Thesis introductions

The findings from Chapter Six provide a general idea of what constitutes an introduction of the theses in the present study. This section discusses whether the present text samples conform to Swales' CARS model and, if so, in what ways and to what extent.

8.4.1   Presence of moves

All moves in Swales' CARS are found in all the thesis introduction chapters. There are twelve steps in realising the moves. In categorising the moves and steps the terms used by Bunton (2002) (i.e. "obligatory" and "optional"), have to be treated with caution. This is because these terms can be used only when a strategy (in this case a move or step) is seen as a compulsory strategy by each university. Academic writing manuals (Swales and Feak, 1994; Hashim, 2009; Soler-Monreal, 2009) as well as the PhD Handbooks agree that in order to persuade the reader to accept the validity of the study, the introductory chapter does not only introduce the research study but also presents the related background information of the study by surveying the relevant literature on the subject matter, then problematises the research and finally reports their own research. This notion reflects Swales' (1990) three-move CARS model as the means to achieve the communicative purpose of this genre. Therefore the term 'obligatory' and 'optional' could be used to categorise moves if we understood and accepted this context of institutional mandating.

However, there was no indication in the handbooks of specific strategies to realise these moves. Hence, more cautious terms for steps are probably more appropriate. In this study, distinct meanings to the steps categories are developed. The terms "obligatory" and "optional"are used to represent moves and 'usually present' and 'occasionally present' are more appropriate terms when categorising steps. Analysing the presence of moves and steps, as discussed before, permits the researcher to determine whether they are prerequisite organisational features in the introductory chapter. Table 8.2 presents the presence of moves-steps in the samples.

Table 8.2.

Presence of moves and steps in the Introductions

Obligatory	Usually Present	Occasionally Present

Move 1	M2s1: Claiming Centrality
	M2s2: Making topic generalisations and giving background information
	    M1ss2a: Reporting what is known
	    M1ss2b: Problematising and
	        Presenting Needs of
	        Knowledge Claims and
	        Phenomena as Background
	        Information
	    M1ss2c: Anticipating outcome
	M2s3:Reviewing Previous Literature	

Move 2	M2s1a: Gap M2s1b: Problem and Need	M2s1c: Counter Claim M2s1d: Extending/ Continuing Tradition M2s1e: Question Raising

Move 3	M3s1: Purpose of the Study
	M3s2: Focus of Research
	M3s3: Method:
	    M3ss3a: Research design
	    M3ss3c: Instruments
	M3s4: Subjects and Materials
	M3s6: Significance of the Study
	    M3ss7b: Thesis structure and content
	M3s8: Research Questions
	M3s9: Theoretical Positioning
	M3s10: Limitations of Research
	M3s12: Definition of Terms
		M3s3b:Research Instruments
		M3s5: Presenting Results
		    M3ss7a: Chapter
		M3s7b: Structure and content
		M3s11:Suggestions
		M3s13:Conceptual Framework

Up to this point, we have concluded that all moves proposed by Swales are present and obligatory in the theses' introductions. These moves are obligatory, constituted by some frequently used steps that are characterised by the local communicative function. The implication of this analysis is the possibility of flexibility among authors to achieve the moves, which suggests that at the level of analysing steps we see a lot of variation in the meaning of moves.

Further discussions on the detailed organisation of moves in the introductions are more crucial in framing our understanding of how Malaysian thesis writers construct their dissertations. The analysis of occurrence of moves encourages the exploration of which moves the writers relied on more in the chapter, while the location of moves give us another level of enquiry, i.e. whether the Malaysian theses following the moves were strategised

linearly as proposed by Swales in his CARS (1990) model. The analysis of move configurations enhances our understanding of the actual strategy used by the writers in the introductory chapters in achieving the communicative purpose of the genre.

8.4.2 Occurrences of moves

The first information obtained from the findings in Chapter Six was that the amount of attention given to a move varies. As shown previously, the theses writers employed Move 1 the most when introducing the topic under study, furnishing the rationale and providing an overview of the study's methodology. Several strategies (which will be discussed in the next chapter) were used to inform the readers of the study's background. Move 3 was observed as the next preferred move and Move 2 was the least preferred.

This finding is consistent with the research carried out by Arulandu (2005). She found that Move 1 was utilised most in the introductory chapter. However, her analysis contrasts with mine in the use of Moves 2 and 3. She found that Move 3 was the least employed by the writers. As she did not cite any reason for this, I would think that the differences in our results for Move 1 and Move 2 emerged because of the difference in the coding criteria. Quite similar to my analysis, she used Bunton's as her guide. In referring back to his revised model, she postulated a new step in Move 2 which was "Problem and Need" as another strategy in establishing the niche of a study. My semantic and functional approach to coding, which was deliberately done to reflect the text, however, found that presenting problems and needs can also be at Move 1 level. Here, the writers presented the problems not directly to the study topic but only at the background level. Therefore, when Arulandu coded all "Problem and Need" statements, she regarded them as a step in Move 2, "Establishing the Niche." As a result of our conflicting coding criteria in this particular step, our results differ.

Move 2 was also less employed in the Spanish thesis' introductory chapters as found by Salom et al. (2008). They found that 6 out of 10 theses did not have Move 2. Most of the theses with Move 2 employed this move type less than the other two moves. It is probably better to compare with research on Introductions in articles written by Ahmad (1997) since it was done in Malaysia. She also found that Move 2 was the least preferred by the writers. She argued that the lack of related research in Malaysia contributed to the underuse of this move. This assertion cannot be confirmed until we discuss the specific steps in the later

section of this chapter. Findings from Kanoksilapatham (2007a) on English RAIs written by NNES, on Thai RAIs by Hirano (2009), on Spanish RAIs and from Zang and Hu (2010) on Chinese RAIs also indicated that this particular move is the least found in the introductions of journal articles.

8.4.3   Locations of moves in the introductory chapters

The dispersion plots of Moves 1, 2 and 3 reviewed in Chapter Six point to one important fact about the text samples: that the moves in the introductory chapters do not follow the linear M1-M2-M3 Swales' (1990) CARS model. This can be further illustrated from the visual dispersion plots of three individual introductory chapters in Figure 8.2 below. It shows that Thesis 8 put more effort into establishing the territory than the other two moves. In comparison to Thesis 8, the introductory chapter of Thesis 7 concentrates on situating the study within the subject or topic. Thesis 2 on the other hand, places almost equal attention on Move 2 and Move 3, establishing the niche of the study and occupying the niche of the study.

Thesis 8:

N	File	Words	Hits	r 1,000	persion	Plot
1	thesis 8.txt m1	9,039	154	17.04	0.801	
2	thesis 8.txt m2	9,039	10	1.11	0.732	
3	thesis 8.txt m3	9,039	51	5.64	0.609	

Thesis 7

N	File	Words	Hits	r 1,000	persion	Plot
1	thesis 7.txt m1	5,039	34	6.75	0.648	
2	thesis 7.txt m2	5,039	19	3.77	0.512	
3	thesis 7.txt m3	5,039	73	14.49	0.733	

Thesis 2

N	File	Words	Hits	r 1,000	persion	Plot
1	thesis 2.txt m1	9,712	130	13.39	0.825	
2	thesis 2.txt m2	9,712	29	2.99	0.474	
3	thesis 2.txt m3	9,712	33	3.40	0.504	

Figure 8.2. The location of moves in three introductory chapters

The varied and unequal distribution of moves makes it impossible to assume that the introductory chapters follow a definite M1-M2-M3 sequence model. The visual dispersion

plots of the three moves indicate that all moves are stretched throughout the introductory chapters. This is possible due to the length of the chapters. However, based on the clusters of high occurrence of moves shown in the dispersion plots, it can be said that: in general, statements of Move 1 are **most frequently** used in the early part of the theses; Move 2 are scattered but **often situated somewhere in the midpoint** of the theses; and Move 3 statements are found **throughout but are most frequent in the second half of the theses**. So, only at the most general level can we talk of a M1-M2-M3 pattern: it is characterised as much by variability as by linearity.

So now we have a new question. If the introductions do not adhere to the linear M1-M2-M3 Swales' model, then how are the moves in the model manipulated by the writers in order to organise their ideas and make them into one textual unit and consequently be accepted as a genre fit for the local discourse community?

8.4.4 Major move configurations employed by the writers

Detailed investigation of the move sequence on the introduction under considerations reveals a great deal of rhetorical variation. There are no instances of a single linear M1-M2-M3 move sequence in the text samples. The three CARS moves are realised in a highly recursive manner. The findings in Chapter Six show that the pairing of [M1-M3], [M1-M2] and the move sequence [M1-M2-M3] re-occur most often throughout the thesis introductions. The highest re-occurrence of pairing Moves 1 and 3 is in line with the highest frequency of moves identified in the previous section. The occurrences of this pair at different locations in the theses are worth investigating. The current level of knowledge that I have leads me to speculate that the pairing occurs in the first half (early to medial positions) probably because the writers would want to engage readers and justify their thesis topic almost immediately after the extensive presentation of background information on the subject. Similar explanation may also justify Soler-Monreal, C et al. (2010) and Arulandu's (2005) early inclusion of move configuration [1-3] in the thesis introductions. Several examples taken from their move sequences are provided below:

Soler-Monreal, C et al. (2010):

> T5: <u>1-3-1-3</u>-1-2-3-2-3
>
> T18: 3-<u>1-3-1-3</u>-1-2-3- [...]

Arulandu (2005):

D4: 1-2-<u>1-3-1-3</u>-1-2-3-1-3- [...]

D5: <u>1-3-1-3</u>-2-[...]

D6: <u>1-3-1-3</u>-2-3-1- [...]

Many of these pairings also occur after the "Purpose of the study" section headings. Since the function of this part of a thesis is to introduce one's own study, Move 3 is seen as the major move that fulfils this communicative purpose.

However, what is most interesting is the observation of the writers integrating the establishment of niche of the study in the introductory chapters. Swales (1990) suggests two ways the writers can introduce the niche - either composite or cyclical. Chapter Six found that the introductions by the writers exhibited a more complicated structure. As observed, the major pattern is that of cyclical $[M1-M2]^n$-M3 form which comprises 19 per cent of the total frequency of move configurations. For the writers, however, there are also some occurrences of the composite form, the highest being [M1-M2-M3] and 'chunks' of [M2] i.e. $M1-[M2]^n$-M3.

The types of discipline might contribute to the recursive move configuration. The lack of linearity in structure proved by the high occurrence of the cyclical pattern $[M1-M2]^n$-M3 implies that it is the predominant pattern in thesis Introductions. There is some empirical support in the present study. Swales, (1990, p. 158) speculates that the nature of the field of study also might influence the choice of strategy. He says:

> Choice [composite vs. cyclical form] is influenced by how the research
> field is perceived. If the relevant research tradition is viewed as linear
> and cumulative, then a composite arrangement may work well.
> However, if the field is viewed as branching- consisting of several
> loosely connected topics- than a cyclic approach may be preferred.
> (Swales, 1990, p. 158)

The choice of move orders does not only conform to the field of research, but also embedded to the types of text. As Parry notes in her study, theses from the Humanities and Social Sciences generally focus on describing, explaining and providing an interpretation of the world of human experiences. They have to find an alternative to, or to test existing

models or develop a new theory. In order to achieve these, the structure of the text should be exploratory, argumentative and persuasive. Therefore, the writers have to illuminate the phenomenon and argue its inadequacies. Bazerman (1981) also points out that disciplines influence how one structures and styles arguments. His text samples are from the Social Science field. He says that writing from this discipline 'must persuade the audience to accept a particular interpretation because scholars do not necessarily share methodological or theoretical frameworks' (Bazerman, 1981, p. This explains the highly recursive pairing of [M1-M2] before the writer reported her own study.

The length of the texts may offer some complexities. Crookes (1986, cited in Swales, 1990) also points out that the length of the introduction plays some part, that 'the longer the introduction the greater the probability of some recycling' (Crookes, 1986, p. 158). The average length of the theses introductions is 28 pages, hence it is impossible to include much information in a single linear structure.

It is also appropriate to review Arulandu's study (2005) on move sequence. Although she did not describe in more detail the major move configurations, I attempted to see if there are any similarities with the present study. I noticed that what was similar were the many moves being cyclical, especially [M1-M2-M3] and pairings of [M1-M2] and [M1-M3]. Several examples of $[M1-M2]^n$-M3 taken from her summary of move cycles can be seen below:

(i)   D1: <u>1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2-3</u>-1-3-1-3-2-1

(ii)   D5: 1-3-1-3-2-3-<u>1-2-1-2-1-2-3</u>-1-2-3-2-3

(iii)   D7: 3-<u>1-2-1-2-1-2-3</u>-2-<u>1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2-1-2-3</u>-2-[...]

The underlined move sequences of the three theses above demonstrate the several cycles of [1-2] before they end with Move 3. These mean that in making the research space of the study, the writers display some sort of background information of the study and then make available the niche before reporting her own study. In line with the nature of Social Sciences and Humanities thesis, a valid and cogent argument has to be provided in order to convince the audience to agree with the perspective of the writers. Since making an argument is not a simple matter, but rather "intricate web of reasoning, evidence, and refutation" (Cavender & Kahane, 1989, p. 28), an intricate and a more sophisticated format of cyclical writing is formed. A further look into how the nature of task in thesis writing particularly those of Social Sciences and Humanities, affects the writers' strategies in order

to persuade and convince the audience that a particular thesis is cogent will be presented in Section 8.4.6 later in this chapter.

Previously, we have discussed how the academic textual practices i.e. the nature of a thesis and a specific disciplinary, have bearings on the structure of the introductory chapter of a thesis at the move level. The individuals in the academic communities in this case, the supervisory committee can have some effects on the move structure of the introductory chapters.

In support of this suggestion, it should be remembered that the PhD theses in the study were rigorously reviewed by supervisory committees which, at this level, have at least three members. Apart from evaluating the content of the study, they also had to review the structural organisation of the theses. So it could be argued that the rhetorical move structure of the theses in this study, though comprising various move configurations, might be considered as a textual unit acceptable for consideration within the thesis genre in the local discourse community.

To this point, I have argued that the organisation of moves in the introductory chapters of the Malaysian theses is more complex than what Swales' proposes for RAIs and it is influenced by the types of text and the discipline of the text. Further discussions entails looking at the strategies the writers employed in realising the moves within the constraint of the Malaysian academic context.

8.4.5   The strategies employed by the writers when establishing the territory of the study

What is most evident about the writers establishing the territory (Move 1) of the study introductions was the extensiveness of M1s2: Making topic generalisations and giving background information of the topic. In most of the text samples, these topic generalisations and background information occupied the major part of the space in the introductory chapter. The primacy of content encapsulating this step was attributed to the embedded influences of disciplinary, cultural and socio-political contexts. Characteristics of Social Science and Humanities academic research writing play a significant role in the extensive occurrence of M1s2. One such characteristic of this discipline is that the argument presented is highly subjective (Belcher, 2009). Therefore when a writer from these disciplines asserts a new perspective for the study, she has to depend on many relevant issues in order to present

a highly persuasive and credible argument. This can be done by describing a concept and theories of the underlying theme of the study, or presenting various methodological approaches and establishing an appropriate approach, as well as imparting a personal viewpoint. Bazerman (1981, cited in Parry, 1998, p. 275) also suggests that 'the purpose of the argument is a major disciplinary influence affecting structure and style.' He further states that:

> ... social science writing must persuade the audience to accept a particular interpretation because scholars do not necessarily share methodological or theoretical frameworks. Writing in the humanities, by way of contrast, requires that phenomena must be established as consequential within a personal perspective so that the audience can be persuaded to accept new insight. (p. 275)

Therefore, in order for the readers to accept the writers' theoretical perspective and the methodology, a vast amount of background information regarding the related issues has to be included.

When it comes to explaining the attention given to the M1s2 step, this indirectly relates to one recurring issue concerning socio-cultural influences in traditional Contrastive Rhetoric studies. It relates to the rhetorical styles of L1 or L2 written discourse - whether they are in a direct or indirect format. The high frequency occurrence of M1ss2a: Reporting what is known statements can also be interpreted as the texts being indirect, in the sense of lengthy descriptions of concepts and theories concerning the study topic. Their background information also revolved around describing the historical events of the theme being investigated without explaining the importance of such documentations. A similar strategy was also found in Ahmad's (1997) study of Malay RAIs. One of the RAIs in her study began with a short history of the development of seaweed cultivation in Sabah (a state in West Malaysia). Ahmad (2006) researching Indonesian RAIs, also found two common types of background information: providing long definitions of terminologies and narrating the history of the research field.

Why do these thesis writers adopt such a strategy? This strategy may not go down well in certain academic contexts, but to these writers (and the academic community they are in), there are logical reasons. For one, as globally understood, the main audience of writing is the reader. The reader - an (imagined) thesis examiner, for instance - might not be

familiar with the local context of the writer's topic. The writers also hope that presenting a lengthy historical event of the theme being analysed would provide methodological justification for it. For instance, Thesis 8 firstly presented the history of corpus study and then she listed various available corpora. This vast information on corpus studies implies that her corpus-based approach in investigating modals is valid.

Besides the influence of the reader, the extensive use of M1ss2a step might reflect the supervisor's and the supervisory committee's advice. They may have recommended the students to provide detailed topical information in order to demonstrate their knowledge of the field.

Another possible context that affects an individual's writing is the writer's own writing practice. Since writing a thesis is mostly a solitary act, writers may consult other theses to verify the writing style. As a student writer myself, referring to other theses for the purpose of looking at the organisation of text is vital. In my case, I often refer to theses from the same local context. The writers in the present study most probably referred to theses from their university or any other local universities in Malaysia. Therefore, a lot of M1ss2a have been traditionally passed down to other writers. This is "textual mentorship"(Li, 2007, p.67-69).

The indirect manner of presenting arguments can also be seen through the prevalence of step M1ss2b: Presenting Problem and Need as Background level. The inclusion of this strategy type is not without its rhetorical rationale. Theses 1 and 5 for instance respectively look at communication strategies used by ESL learners and Literature in English in Malaysia. Presenting the historical events as well as the changes in syllabus content, the writers indirectly point out the flaws of the education system. In other words, the current students' declining proficiency was the result of the education policy being inconsistent. However, the writers did not explicitly inform the reader of this. Their intention was implied. It is the reader's responsible to unearth the meaning. The subject of reader-writer responsibility in text comprehension has been one of the core issues in contrastive studies. As suggested by Connor (2005, p.38), a piece of writing is incoherent, not precise and reader-responsible when a writer relies on 'appeals to history, tradition, and authority and its frequent references to historical and religious texts as well as proverbs'.

The implied intention suggests that the writers did not want to appear to be disrespectful to the government in directly suggesting that the policy set by the government

is the initiator of the current problematic situation. As this act is considered inappropriate and unacceptable, the writers diverted the blame to the teaching classrooms and the teachers. The sense of authoritarianism of the higher echelons of the government has been pointed out by Musa (2003).

> The Ministry of Education (MOE), like the rest of the Government of Malaysia, is highly centralised, with strict hierarchal top-down command and a penchant for total control. Nothing happens in schools, universities, or anywhere else in the vast education land without the ministry and its bureaucrats knowing and approving of it. (p. 236)

Another possible influence on this implied-indirect strategy of imparting negative accounts of information at the Move 1 instead of Move 2 level is because of the writers' personal circumstances as PhD candidates. Almost all thesis writers in the present study undertook their PhD with a government scheme or scholarship. From my knowledge of the Malaysian academic research process, all thesis writers with a scholarship have to present their research proposal not only to the university Senate Committee but also to the Ministry of Higher Education as well. Direct criticism of the education system is inappropriate as this act would mean disobeying the higher authority. A more plausible way to highlight blame is to strategise it circuitously.

Reader-writer responsibility also occurs when the writer asserts claims of needs at the background level. Statements of need at the Move 1 level did not suggest that it is the niche of the study. The intention of the writer is implied. The claim of need is infused in the writer's presentation of historical events regarding Malaysian education. Statements of this kind are very common in the introductory chapters of Malaysian theses. Acquiring new knowledge from the study is important for the development of the country. The emphasis put on the contribution of knowledge to the country were done through government proclamations and statements by high-ranking officials in the ministry. For example, Thesis 1 quoted the Prime Minister of Malaysia and Minister of Higher Education to indicate the importance of having English-proficient students in order to achieve the country's Vision 2020.

Another point to highlight is the way the writers impart the importance of subject or theme to their study. This is M1s1: Claiming Centrality. The writers, no doubt, often

informed the readers about the significance of the topic throughout the introductory chapter. However, most of these centrality statements operated at the real-world knowledge level. Similar to Samraj's (2008) study, most of the writers explained the importance of the topic at the real-world knowledge level rather than that of research-world knowledge. The issue of disciplinary influence may play a role in the preference of the former centrality claims. Arguments in Humanities and Social Sciences disciplines have to be persuasive because different readers may have different perspectives on a certain subject. In order to be persuasive and accepted by the readers, the writers have to frequently present the themes that are important and have been globally accepted.

Another Move 1 strategy that was seen to be influenced by the context is M1s3: Reviewing Previous Research (RPR). Functions of RPR in theses differ in their various sections. In the Introduction, RPR plays an important role in providing an overview of previous research on the topic so as to create the niche of the study. Fakhri (2004, p.1128) also points out that in order to signify the writer's contribution to the topic, extensive discussion of previous research that raises 'a gap or a question' have to be included. A rhetorical citation to fulfil the aim suggested by Fakhri is one that establishes various sources and reviews them critically.

However, only six of thirty-one RPRs in the Introduction adopted this strategy. Twenty-three of the theses' Introductions cited previous studies mostly as a means of attributing information to an author, without explicit criticism. An example is Thesis 2, which contains the highest number of occurrences of RPR. All of the RPR statements functions as a description of a claim made before. An excerpt of an RPR of this type is shown below:

Thesis 2:

> One important finding based on a review of studies on students' conceptions of learning has shown that many first year undergraduates hold a 'reproductive' conception of learning. For example, Norton and Crowley (1995) discovered that 77% of the 123 students, who participated in their study, revealed a 'naïve conception of learning' and whether these students would progress to more 'sophisticated' conceptions of learning would largely depend on their learning environment.

What emerges from the excerpt is that, rather than evaluating previous research or challenging it, the writer simply uses this as an exemplification strategy. Fakhri (2004,

p.1129) in his study on Arabic RAIs, also found RPR lacking any analytical evaluation proved to be extremely rare. The rare case of evaluating previous research can be attributed to 'self promotion in the culture'. Fakhri asserts that the act of citing other scholars rather than challenging them to establish a niche gives the writer a scholarly and convincing air.

Similar findings can be found in a recent genre analysis study on Chinese RAIs by Zhang and Hu (2010). They found on average, just two RPR in each Chinese RAI. Like many RPR statements in the present study, theirs did not criticise or challenge the existing research. According to Zhang and Hu, this outcome may be attributed to Chinese academia being a knowledge-telling context where Chinese writers define the task of writing as one of reporting knowledge instead of evaluating and reflecting on the information. Studies like Taylor and Chen (1991) on Chinese text, and Jogthong (2001) on Thai text, point to the "unacceptability of argumentative styles" as a factor for the absence of evaluation of previous research.

The previous justification by Taylor and Chen as well as by Jogthong is not valid in the present case. From my knowledge of the academic context in Malaysia, through experience being a teacher in both school and university, an argumentative writing style has been preached to student learners as early as Lower Secondary School (Year 7). Universities' writing tasks are also argument-based. Therefore, the 'unacceptability of argumentative styles' cannot be the reason for the lack of RPR in Malaysian writers' texts. The small number of RPR in the study where the writers argue and evaluate may be attributed to the existence of the Literature Review chapter. PhD writers usually devote a detailed discussion of the main concepts and the theories or themes of the research in this chapter. It is here that the writer refers to and evaluates previous studies.

8.4.6 The strategies in establishing the niche of the study

Five steps have been identified when establishing a niche in the thesis' introductory chapters. They are M2s1a: Indicating a gap, M2s1b: Indicating problem and need, M2s1c: Counter-claim, M2s1d: Continuing a Tradition and M2s1e: Question-raising. The only step employed in all theses in the study was M2s1b but there were also high occurrences M2s1a, M2s1c and M2s1e.

The variety of niche strategies is particularly influenced by the genre and also the audience. Previously, I proposed the argument that one of the major strategies of the writers

in establishing the communicative purpose of this genre was through the move sequence [M1-M2-M3]. The findings of steps in Move 2 in Chapter Seven led to a more interesting discovery. Move 2 in the move sequence [M1-M2-M3] did not only occur at the move level but also at the step level. Hence, a more complex recursive M2 steps within the move sequence [M1-M2-M3] emerged (see Chapter 7).

The array of niche strategies in the introduction chapters might be attributed to the juxtaposition of the core purposes of the text itself. It has been acknowledged that writing a thesis in general is an arduous task for a novice writer because it is a combination of an argumentative text as well as a persuasive piece of writing. Kamimura and Oi (1998) stated that as an argumentative discourse, it should integrate rational and affective appeals. Therefore, a writer has to inform, refute and convince her audience about her position and claim that the research is worth doing.

How do the acts of informing, refuting and convincing the readers affect a text's variety of niche strategies? By informing the reader with background information on the topic under discussion or presenting the current scenario, the writer actually wants to argue a point. Three different strategies can be used to achieve the writer's niche: indicating problem and need, counter-claiming previous studies, and indicating the gap. For example, Writer 4 spoke of the difficulties in non-native students' writing approaches and processes. After a long description of the scenario, the writers indicated the problem and the repercussions for the students and their country if this study was not carried out. The writer, therefore, employed M2s1b: problem and need strategy. However, it was not enough to rely on the strategy above as the arguments only evoked the emotional empathy of readers. The writer acknowledged that she had to include a more rational appeal.

One way to create a rational appeal is by refuting an argument that a writer disagrees with (Cavender & Kahane, 1989). A writer may suggest that the results in previous studies are fallacious because of the shortcomings in the theories used, the perspective underlying the study, or even inappropriate methods (M2s1c). Writer 4 utilised this strategy. She informed the readers of the theories of L2 writing and then discussed the flaws in some of the theories, which were the teachers' incorrect methods when carrying out the process approach in the writing class. To further strengthen her argument why her study was needed, she pointed out that such a study had not been done in Malaysia (M2s1a).

As discussed earlier, an introductory chapter is both argumentative and persuasive. Valid arguments have to be imparted. Persuading the readers to accept the claim is also important in writing an Introduction and it directly affects the writer's strategies. A writer has to bear in mind who her audience is. In most cases, the main audience of a thesis is the examiners. In the case of the present study, the theses were written for a dual audience: the examiners and the people in the ministry who awarded them the scholarships. As stated previously, most of the writers doing a PhD had a special government scheme or scholarship to support them during their candidature. This scheme is given particularly to research that may contribute new knowledge in a particular field as well as to the betterment of the country. Therefore, it is common to read statements about the importance of their study to the country. On this theme the purpose of the Introduction is to galvanise the readers into action. This type of step, M2s1b: need, is apparent in the theses.

To reiterate, Move 1 problem statements pointed out the erroneous education policy created by the government, but this was done indirectly through the exposition of the history and chronology of Malaysian education. In contrast to this, Move 2 problematic statements revolved around the situation and the predicament in the classroom and the attitudes of the teachers. Statements of this kind were made explicitly.

Paradoxically, the attributes of statements of need regarding Move 2 are considered to be very patriotic. Unlike Move 2's problem statement, which underscored the defects in the country's educational policy, there is much signalling of patriotic obligation in the need statements. This statement type asserts the study is important to the country. Studies in the education and language fields are essential because the outcomes of these studies are hoped to contribute to the government's nation building and transformation plan, which are considered a core agenda of the country. The idea of doing something for the sake and benefit of the country has been infused in every Malaysian's way of life. Being a Malaysian means that one has to sacrifice for the sake of "agama (religion), bangsa (race) and negara (nation)". This need-type statement is a powerful rhetorical tool in Malaysian writers' attempts to establish their study's niche.

The third most employed step when establishing the niche of the study in the introductory chapters in the present study was M2s1c: Counter Claim. The importance of this step in other studies is inconsistent. Bunton (2002) and Arulandu (2005) found that thesis writers rarely used this step when establishing the niche of the study. They considered

this step to be optional since it is only occasionally present. Salom- Monreal, et al. (2008) on the other hand found that this step is used as much as the steps indicating gap indication and problem statement.

Many contrastive studies across cultures of RAIs show M2s1c is not a preferred step. The lack of focus on counter-claims by Chinese scholars in Zhang and Hu's (2010) study has led them to claim that Chinese writers tend to avoid critical evaluation of other research. Some of the writers even employ self-citation as a way "to continue the research tradition" (p.88). They also suggest that Chinese writers prefer to offer a positive review. When they do criticise other studies, they mitigate their evaluative tone. Chinese writers were also found to 'understate their research to show their respect to other researchers, avoid criticism, or show honesty and modesty' (p. 87). Kanoksilapatham (2007a), in her study on Thai RAIs, found that there were no instances of this step in her text samples. She suggested that the strong belief regarding the 'family' institution might explain this outcome. The fact that Thai people respect their elders, whether they are blood-related or not, means that it is considered disrespectful to evaluate and express negative comments about others. She also pointed out that Buddhism may also suppress the tendency to critique among Thai scholars. Buddhist teaching says one should be modest and humble and it is reflected in the 'unevaluative culture' of the research genres.

I find that their justification is too philosophical for the present study. China, Thailand and Malaysia are three different countries but have a similar adherence to culture, tradition and religion. As seen in the present study, there are indications that culture - small and big - influences how thesis writers structure their text. However, relying on religion does seem too far-fetched a justification for the findings presented here. Like Buddhism, Muslim teachings are a way of life. Muslims also practice modesty and are humble towards one another, yet there is no concrete evidence in my study that suggests being a Muslim reflects the moderate use of the M2s1c step.

The occurrence of M2s1c in the thesis' introductory chapter might contribute to the fact that Malaysia has been promoting and encouraging students to be creative and critical citizens. Most educators at all levels, in both in schools and universities, acknowledge the country's vision. Teachers have implemented creative, critical, and analytical thinking skills in their classrooms. Therefore, a valid alternative explanation for using the counter-claiming step, though moderate, is the influence of their supervisors. The supervisor(s) of non-native

students in overseas universities may pay a lot of attention to the mechanics of thesis writing (Dong, 1998) but supervisors of non-native students in local Malaysian universities also put a premium on structuring the content. Realising the country's vision, they are expected to encourage students to think critically. Also, since many Malaysian PhD supervisors are trained overseas (at one or more levels of their higher education) in western universities, it is expected that the western academic practice of the critical literature review was passed down to their own PhD students. More importantly, they also know that for the thesis to be accepted, it has to be evaluated by academicians who are experienced research writers and specialists in the area where critical argument is an essential part of the style of a thesis. The importance of the supervisor in moulding a student's thesis was also pointed out by Dong (1998) in his research on the role of supervisors and non-native students:

> The thesis/dissertation advisor has an important role to play in socializing the advisee into the disciplinary community through thesis/dissertation writing supervision. (p. 370)

The discussions on the Move 2 steps in the text samples above show the complexities when balancing what to include in terms of the appropriate claims and how to strategise writing in order to achieve the local purpose of Move 2. This helps establish the niche of the study. The Introductions were clearly shaped by the juxtaposition of the genre (i.e. PhD thesis), the task of this particular genre (i.e. argumentative and persuasive) and the writers' backgrounds (i.e. lecturers, scholarship students, etc.)

8.4.7 The strategies in occupying the niche of the study

Findings in the study showed that there are several steps of Move 3 that clearly can be considered obligatory due to their occurrence in every thesis. Identifying these obligatory steps suggests that the writers deem the introductory chapter to be a space where they not only give the background of the topic and justification of the study, they also acknowledge the importance of introducing their study. It was also a place for them to inform the reader about the methodology of the research as well as the significance of the work done.

Like the steps involved in Moves 1 and 2, the embedded culture and academic contexts were seen to influence the way the writers situate their studies. However, many of the steps associated with this move were seen to be the result of the genre, particularly the

tasks of the genre. The national culture has less influence on the strategies to realise Move 3 than does the common communicative purpose of the genre in the particular institutions.

First of all, I would like to discuss the steps which are obligatory. To reiterate, they are: M3s1: Purpose of the study; M3ss3c: Method- Procedures; M3s6: Significance of the study; M3s8: Research questions; and M3s9: Theoretical positioning. Based on my analysis, I found that most of the obligatory steps reflected not the genre, but the task of the genre and the research policy of the academic institutions. They are not seen as isolated elements but closely linked with each other. The genre is a PhD thesis Introduction and thus the writers have the task to inform the reader of the research being carried out. Furthermore the preferred content of the Introduction chapter has been established by the various universities' PhD thesis guidelines. These guidelines collectively agreed that an Introduction is a space where the writer outlines the research carried out. The thesis guideline from the National University of Malaysia, for example, states that the introductory chapter should contain the purpose of the study, the scope of research and the significance of the study. Thesis guidelines also state that this chapter presents "the aims and objective of the study, and the outline of the research approach" (UM, 2010, p.4). The analysis also found that sub-steps of Move 3: Method included the writers' justification. This requires the writers' conscious acknowledgment that a thesis is an argumentative and persuasively written discourse. In order for the writers to accept the methods of their study, they have to justify their research design, the instruments chosen to collect and analyse the data as well as the procedures of the research.

As we have seen, most of the obligatory steps are influenced by the embedded layers of academic contexts. However, I found that step M3s6: Significance of the study, is interesting as another step having persuasive values directed at a discourse community that transcended academia and its organisations. The writers presented their study as beneficial not only to the research world, but also to a particular group and country. As with Move 2: Problem and need statements, the Move 3 "Significance of the study" statements were seen to incorporate the writers' sense of patriotism and desire to help achieve the country's vision, which was integrated in the mission statements of all national organisations. The present study's take on this particular step is similar to Ahmad's (1997) study on Malaysian RAIs. She also found that constant references made to the country's needs and development were common.

8.4.8   The effects of the method of coding and the computer assisted move analysis have on our interpretation of the rhetorical structure of thesis introductions

The coding of moves and the constituent steps in this study was conducted using the semantic-functional approach. The functional approach calls for cognitive judgement (Kwan, 2006) and the semantic network which was adapted primarily from Lewin et al. (2001) involves the analyst to determine the common semantic features. Since their text samples were of shorter texts i.e. journal articles and their semantic scheme only covers the moves, I have also relied on findings generated by Kwan (2005, 2006) and Samraj (2002b). Using Lewin et al. (2001) semantic scheme of "participant" and "attribute" have allowed me to arrive to a systematic and standardised coding criteria with clear descriptions of each steps and exclusive examples taken from the text samples of the study.

In view of the fact that the coding criteria entail explicit accounts of steps and examples, it reduces the "embeddedness" of function of moves and their steps. An example can be seen from my first attempt of coding the problem and need statement largely based on intuition. As previously mentioned in Chapter Four, I found that this step was one of the most problematic steps and it was one of the major reasons for the inter-reliability percentage agreement in the pilot coding to be less than fifty per cent. During the discussion with the other two raters, we found that the problem and need statements can have dual rhetorical functions. A coding criteria generated from the semantic scheme which included the problem and need statements at two different moves has successfully facilitated further analysis with other text samples and hence, a higher inter rater reliability percentage agreement in the subsequent coding. By having the problem and need statements at two different moves, it also shows that the problem and need statement is a distinctive rhetorical strategy to the thesis introductions by Malay writers writing in Malaysia.

In comparison to Arulandu's (2005) study whose text samples were also from several Malaysian institutes, she noted several steps to be embedded with other steps. One instance is the coding of reviewing previous study (RPR) statements. Some examples that show the coded the RPR statements but have embedded functions are provided below:

(i)   Between Step 4 and Step 1:

The latest entry of this big corporation into retail pharmacy speaks for itself the potential growth of this market [R].

(ii)   Between Step 4 and Step 2:

Over the space of fifteen years, a total of 193 kilometres of fibre-optic cables has been installed worldwide.

(iii)   Between Step 4 and Step 3 (defining terms):

Marriage can be defined as the emotional and legal commitment…(R)

Coding the text largely by employing the linguistic feature "integral and non-integral citations"(Swales, 1990, p. 148), has led her to categorise the statements above as RPR. However, based on the coding criteria in my study using the concept of attributes, the embeddedness of steps was reduced. Statements (i)and (ii) above can be coded as claiming centrality statements (Move 1 Step 1) since they show the magnitude of the real-world phenomenon and statement (iii) can be coded as Move 1 Step 2: Reporting what is known since it carries the semantic features of displaying definition of terms.

Besides that, the nature of this system has allowed the expansion of categories whenever any additional features are found and ultimately, it includes all descriptions and the common functions that are distinctive to the thesis introductions chapters constructed in Malaysia. This can be clearly seen through a number of new sub-steps when realising Move 1 Step 2: Giving background information and making topic generalisation. In comparison with Arulandu's findings, this study found that Move 1 Step 2 can be realised in four ways and these findings have further enhanced our understanding of the common rhetorical strategies used by Malay writers establishing the territory of the study.

As discussed in Chapter Four, the interpretation and discussion of move cycles in this study differ from that of Bunton (2002) and Arulandu (2005) and offer a more critical evaluation of the common strategies employed by the writers. In discussing my point, I will again take Arulandu's analysis since her text samples were constructed in similar context as the present study (and the fact that Bunton did not present the move sequence in detail in his study). In discussing the move cycles of her data, Arulandu noted that the highest number of cycles did not necessarily take the longest text. While this may show that the writer have employed a number of strategies within a short text, we nonetheless could not identify the common strategies used by the writer in making a research space for the study.

This study has highlighted that move cycles are discussed after the identification of major move configurations. As presented in Chapter Six, the major move configurations are

the pairings of [M1-M3], [M1-M2] and [M1-M2-M3]. In the case of the pairing [M1-M3], the writer may have used this strategy in a few cycles in order to situate her study.

As a supplementary analysis technique, this study has employed the corpus-based approach to genre analysis. In Chapter Two, I have provided some criticisms of corpus studies summarised by Flowerdew (2005). To reiterate, one criticism that has been highlighted is the methodology in analysing corpora, normally the concordancing software which confines the analysis of moves to a bottom-up type of investigation i.e. identification and characterising of moves using linguistic features. As suggested by Flowerdew (2005), this dissatisfaction may be valid for analyses on shorter texts. This study, in line with the coding of text based on the communicative purpose, proved that a "move structure" tagging system on larger stretches of texts can employed a top-down approach and successfully captured the value of moves in the thesis' introductory chapters.

This study has also proven that corpus-based analysis does not decontextualise the corpus, but on the other hand amplifies our conception of the genre. To reiterate, as mentioned previously in Chapter Two, a corpus study is criticised mainly by the proponents of the New Rhetoric for instance Widdowson (1998, 2002) for not taking account of contextual and intertextual aspects of texts. He argues that the corpus is not an example of authentic language because it is separated from the community context in which it is created. As suggested by Flowerdew (2005), corpus-based investigations on a small scale data can counter evidence Widdowson's argument if the analyst is of a specialist informant. In her own words, she claims that:

> ...the analyst is probably also the compiler and does have familiarity with the wider social context in which the text was created, or else has access to specialist informants in the area. The compiler-cum-analyst can therefore act as a kind of mediating ethnographic specialist informant to shed light on the corpus data. (p. 329)

There are three analysts in coding the corpus for this study and based on what Flowerdew has mentioned above, the three analysts can be considered as special informants in their right. The background of the raters has assisted the coding in distinguishing the rhetorical strategies in realising a move. For instance, Thesis 6 reports in detail about the process writing and the collaborative approach in her introductory chapter of her thesis

focusing on peer-review writing in the NNES classrooms. Parts of the statements are as shown below:

Thesis 4:

> The process approach to writing began in the early 1970's. With this approach, the teaching of writing ...
> Collaborative learning enables the learners to achieve meaningful learning and solve problems among peers better than any individual can do so alone (Tinzmann et al. (1990). This form of learning...

With the background knowledge on composition studies, one of the raters has helped us in understanding the text and ultimately distinguished the functions of the lengthy information about process writing and the collaborative approach in her thesis introductions chapter which is to give some background information particularly on the position of peer-review in the composition process.

Employing the corpus-based approach to move analysis in this study has also allowed the "description of the typical distributional and structural of each move type" (Biber, Connor and Upton, 2007, p. 39). In the present study, a variety of descriptive counts were made after the corpus has been tagged in the system. One obvious contribution is the frequency occurrence of each move type. Analysis such as this has led us to determine the attention given to each move. As discussed in Chapter Six, most theses gave more attention to Move 1: establishing the territory of the study rather than Move 2: establishing the niche of the study as shown by the "hits" count of Move 1.

Besides assisting the present study by providing the frequency occurrences of the moves, the computer assisted move analysis provides the locations of the moves. These sorts of observations have allowed me to extend the analysis in several ways. First, several move analysis studies on thesis introductions have claimed that most of the moves in their text samples do not follow the linear M1-M2-M3 only by the presentation of the summary of move sequence but the visual representation of moves using the dispersion plot tool have verified that the move structure of the corpus in this study do not conform to the linear M1-M2-M3 model. The corpus-based analysis has also enhanced our understanding that the un-linearity of Swales CARS also extends to the individual thesis' introductory chapters and that attention given to each move is different. After claiming that all the thesis' introductory chapters in the study do not follow the linear M1-M2-M3 model, the visual representation of

the dispersion plot further extend our understanding on the interwoven nature of moves. A dispersion plot of a thesis in Chapter Six has illustrated that there are two and three intertwining moves.

8.5   Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to answer the research questions of this study by assessing and discussing the results from the overall analysis of the theses and their introductory chapters (Chapter Five) and the move-step analysis of the thesis introductions chapters (Chapters Six and Seven). The findings offer a picture of the overall structure of Malaysian theses and the introductory chapter. The findings also offer insights on the internal structure of the thesis' introductory chapters at the move and step level. The current study data suggest that the generic structure of the Malaysian thesis introductions achieved the global communicative purpose of the genre, albeit the subtle internal structure differences suggested by Swales's (1990) CARS model. The identification of moves and steps using the coding strategy has informed us of the common strategies used as well as characterised the distinctive rhetorical Malaysian strategies in creating the research space for their study in the thesis introductions chapters. The discussions above also supports the well-accepted claims that writing, particularly the academic writing genre, does not take place in a vacuum (Candlin, 2000; Hyland, 2002). The discussions above are in accord with Candlin's (2000) claims that written texts are patterned in reasonably predictable ways according to the social interaction in a particular culture and within the area of academic research writing genre, in particular the dissertation and theses writing, the needs and expectations of the academic community (i.e. the institution and the discipline/ field) and in accord with the larger cultural contexts are inextricably interrelated.

In the next chapter, I will explore some of the implications of the study. The outcomes of this study have some relevance to theoretical issues, especially in terms of the influence of contexts at either or both the moves and steps levels. Additionally, I will discuss the implications of this within the Contrastive Rhetoric theory specifically from the point of view of World Englishes. Apart from the theoretical issues, this study also has some methodological and pedagogical contributions to make regarding the teaching of model-based writing.

<div align="center">**Chapter Nine**</div>

<div align="center">**Conclusion**</div>

9.1   Introduction

In this final chapter I will summarize the important conclusion of the analysis. Then I will relate them to some theoretical, methodological and pedagogical issues in the study of genre, contrastive rhetoric, corpus analysis and the teaching of EFL students.

9.2   Overview of the study

This study looked at the rhetorical characteristics of PhD theses by ESL Malaysian writers with a particular focus on the Introduction chapter of theses from the Social Sciences and the Humanities. In essence, the analysis focused on the structural moves and their constituent steps. The linguistic features were not investigated in their own right but were highlighted to show the communicative purpose of moves and steps. The analysis of identifying moves was built on the semantic network developed by Lewin et al. (2001) and Kwan (2005, 2006) in my response to the inconsistencies of coding strategies in previous studies. To further analyse the extent of Swales's CARS moves in the context of Malaysian thesis introductory chapters, the present study also employed computer-based tools for the visual representation of moves. This study also focused on the underlying factors that seem to have influenced the specific conventions of the texts. From the discussions and evidence presented in the study, several important conclusions can be drawn.

First, the overall format of the Social Sciences and the Humanities' theses in the study is still conservative. Seven theses followed the traditional IlrMRD format and only one employed the complex-traditional format where the result and discussion chapters were organized into several chapters based on particular themes. This suggests that Malaysian writers consider the traditional format as sufficient and straightforward when presenting their arguments within the suggested word limit. The overall structure of Malaysian writers' introductory chapters also displays some conservativeness. This is seen from the generic sub-headings of the chapter.

Second, the examples and illustrations presented in this study showed that the basic CARS model is not adequate to capture the specific rhetorical strategies used in the theses. Typically, the flow of a thesis introduction begins with the writer claiming the centrality or

significance of the research in question, and then describing the nature of the problem by outlining the argument of the thesis. Overall, the introductory chapters end with the writers outlining their own study (consistent with Swales, 1990). Although all the introductions showed that the three moves were present, the organisation of moves is at variance with the CARS (1990) model. The visual representations of moves show none of the introduction chapters exhibited the 1-2-3 linear structure and there are many irregularities in the sequence of moves. The analysis revealed that moves frequently unfold repeatedly, notably in the canonical [M1-M3], [M1-M2] and [M1-M2-M3] patterns.

One possible reason for these significant deviations from the structure proposed by the CARS model is the type of text and the discipline of the research. For a thesis from the Social Sciences and Humanities to be accepted as worthy, the writers need to exhibit strong emphasis in their arguments. The sequences found in the study indicate that the logic of structures of argument is inherent in the context and purpose of the theses. As illustrated previously, in establishing a viable theoretical and methodological framework of the study, the writers at many times presented the underlying topics and then reported their own study. Most often, the writers provided the background information of the topic and then moved on to explain the niche of the study before reporting their own work. The various move sequences of this study show that for a doctoral thesis from the Social Sciences and Humanities, 'this kind of logical progression shows how the argument structure is developed holistically, according to a particular vision… and there is no standard format' (Parry,1998, p. 281).

In addition to showing the distinctive characteristics of Malaysians' moves and steps in thesis introductions, my thesis has made a contribution to the development of a systematic coding system. My revised coding criteria, which were formulated using Lewin et al.'s (2001) semantic network and the study's text samples, have provided this study with a standardized system for describing the realisation of each move and its constituent steps. This transparent analysis provided the study with valuable findings in describing the rhetorical strategies of Malaysian writers when structuring the thesis introductions. One striking finding in the study lies in the prevalent use of Move 1. More than fifty per cent of the thesis introductions were dedicated to the writers establishing the territory of the study. In accomplishing that, the writers provided extensive background information on the topic under study (more than 70 per cent), mostly concentrating on defining the key terms of the theories and concepts related to the topic and presenting the history of the research topic as

well as the history of Malaysia's education system. Presenting a substantial definition of terms is important in the Social Sciences and Humanities thesis because imparting a store of relevant material can "provide a persuasive context for the perspective" (Parry, 1998, p. 279). This may be a feature of Malaysian texts but it could equally be a feature of theses written in Humanities. This suggests that care needs to be taken to critically evaluate the source of differences.

An important rhetorical element found when providing the background information of the study is the inclusion and elaboration of the national education curriculum and the government policy in all of the thesis introductions. The rationale of having this information in the chapter is two-fold. First, this information provides the readers with the schemata concerning the Malaysian education system. Second, elaborate information on the education syllabus and government policy indirectly suggests that the problem is rooted in the education system. It enhances the importance of the study in helping achieve the country's vision. The combination of sense of politeness and respect in Malaysian culture for higher authority may play a crucial role in the construction of this strategy. The topic of the thesis could also affect the choice of content. This further highlights the need for an in depth analysis of a range of variables in any further study of thesis introductions.

Another important rhetorical finding in the present study is the way the writers justify their research. More than forty per cent of the Move 2 strategies used by all the writers were coded as M2s1b: Indication of problem and need. The majority of the problems (81%) reported in the thesis introductions involved solving real-world phenomena, particularly the challenging situation in Malaysia, rather than attempting to look into the theoretical knowledge of the topic being studied. The justification of their study is further enhanced through an extensive indication of the importance of such studies for the country and its people. As mentioned previously, this strategy may seem unimportant to non-Malaysians but, to these Malaysian writers, there are logical reasons for including this strategy. Since education in Malaysia is central to its development policies, studies that contribute to this are given higher priority in the education system and justify the research undertaken. The importance of education to the country's development is stressed by Lee (1999). She writes:

Education is to play an important role in helping the country to meet the above challenges (Vision 2020) of becoming a developed nation. Specifically, education is

perceived as promoting national unity, social equality, and economic development…
The education system has an important role to play in supplying human resources for
economic growth. (p. 88)

This study has highlighted some important differences between the Malaysian data
and the structure of introductions proposed in the CARS (1990) model. The adopted and
revised coding criteria have provided clearer evidence for the rhetorical strategy of the
introductory chapters written by Malaysians. The visual representations of moves obtained
by the corpus-based analysis using computer tools have informed us about the extent to
which the moves do or do not conform to Swales'(1990) CARS model. The findings also
show that thesis introductions in Malaysia are complex not only because of the nature of the
genre itself, but because of the writers' need to contextualize their research according to
expectations of the academic discourse community as well as the national culture.

To generalize about the findings, my conclusion is that the Malaysians in this study
employ rhetorical structures appropriate to their traditional, conservative framing of the
thesis genre, but cannot avoid strategic patterns reflecting overlapping cultural influences
and personal idiosyncrasies. The overall format of these eight theses in the Social Sciences
and the Humanities in Malaysia is still traditional. Seven theses followed the traditional
IlrMRD format and only one employed the complex-traditional format where the result and
discussion chapters were organized into several chapters based on particular themes. This
suggests that Malaysian writers consider the traditional format as sufficient and
straightforward when presenting their arguments within the word limit. Labels used to
indicate chapter subheadings are similarly traditional. Many of the Malaysian writers'
introductory chapters use generic sub-headings. Other aspects of the thesis follow expected
patterns, but not consistently, suggesting cultural and social contexts might play an
important role in understanding the nature of thesis introductions in Malaysia (and other
Outer and Expanding Circle countries).

If these conclusions seem reasonable, there are some important implications. With
the increase in doctoral theses written by ESL and EFL students in recent years, it is
important to empower all users of English to use culturally appropriate ways of writing
English. It is also important to help native speakers of English understand different
expressions of generic conventions to enable greater acceptance of the influence of culturally
specific contexts on written academic English.

9.3   Implications to the Study

9.3.1   Some Theoretical Issues

i) Genre theory

Paltridge (2007, p. 83) writes that the Introduction chapter to a thesis is of strategic importance as it "clearly signals the relationship between the specific topic of the thesis and the field of work into which the thesis is being inserted"'. The typical understanding of the structure and organisation to accomplish the mentioned purpose draws on Swales' (1990) CARS model. The three moves are significant in achieving the communicative purpose of the genre. The strategies that shape the convention of the genre, however, are operated within the discourse community in which the text is constructed. This study shows that they are not only formulated in the multi-layered contexts of an academic discourse community but also in socio-political and cultural elements as well. I have tried to represent this contextual embedding of genre studies graphically in Figure 9.1 below.
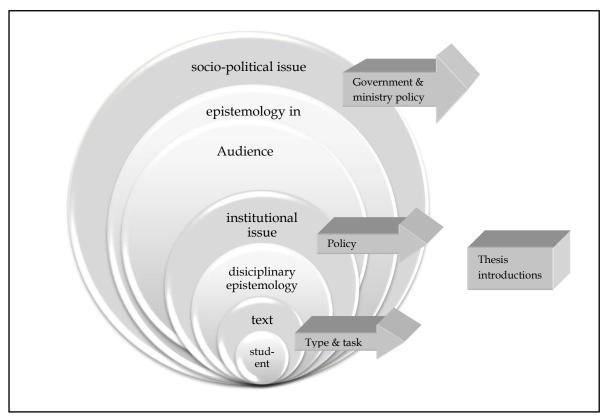
Figure 9.1. Contextual influences on Malaysian writers' thesis introductions

The diagram above is a graphic way in presenting the issue of competing and overlapping influences on the construction of the texts. The arrangements of the levels of the circles do not suggest that that the larger circle has the most important influence on the structure of the thesis' introductory chapters. The circles in Figure 9.1 merely depict how the various contextual elements may be associated to one another, and together, they account for the structure of the texts. Compared to Samraj's (2002a) layers of contexts presented in Chapter Two, this taxonomy further explains how national characters along with the academic discourse community contexts interact with the texts. However, we have to be cautious in making direct assumptions on the influence of national culture on a text so as not to be accused of falling into the ecological fallacy. I have, in Chapter Two, raised this issue when reviewing Kanoksilapatham's (2007a) findings. She claimed that the lack of Move 2 in her corpus was the result of the Thais being modest and humble, two rather important tenets in Buddhist teachings. My suggestion for an explanation is more simple: it is simply that the national level social and political context also influences the writers, in addition to the influences of organisations and the members of the academic discourse community who are the gatekeepers of the discipline or area of the study. This theoretical argument concurrently suggests that national level influences need to be included in genre-contrastive studies.

These influences could be analysed from a perspective of their mutual interaction and recursive relationships. This would lead us to analyse the mutual interactions of global and local interpretations of genre requirements, and how local cultural traditions and different disciplines create variations in how globally extensive 'genres' are realized in practice. Or they could be analysed from a hierarchical perspective, with a focus on the downward influence of government policy on institutional (university) policy and culture and so on down to the influence on individual writers. Extensive analysis in either of these two directions is not possible within the constraints of this thesis, and will have to be taken up at a later stage. However, there are several threads relevant to this kind of analysis that can be taken up briefly in this final chapter.

As Samraj (2002a) has highlighted, there are multi-layers of academic context that influence the structures of a text, in this case, the thesis introductions. In the academic circles directly affiliated to the student writers, authority can be held by the supervisory committee, the examiners, the discipline and the text type. The elaboration of concepts and theories in the M1ss2a step, for example, can be largely attributed to the discipline of the text and the

task of the genre. The writers have to explain the underlying themes of their study or topic from various perspectives before arguing their own.

Prior (1994) notes that there is a broad authority running through curricula and examinations that shapes a genre. Prior's concept of broad authority can be inferred to mean the implementation of institutional policies in Malaysia. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the institutional policies in Malaysia are linked to various governmental organisations, hence the mission and vision of the country developed at the ministerial level are also integrated in the education system in Malaysia. It is therefore evident that a genre can be very much influenced by the socio-political elements of the country. The indirect influence of government policy on the construction of need as indicated in Move 1 and 2 as well as the significance of the study is a case in point. It shows that education in Malaysia is a powerful political and cultural symbol. Azman and Ahmad (2006) say that,

> In Malaysia, the combined effects of the globalizing markets and the economy and of the scientific and technological revolution have deeply affected Malaysian education policies and perspectives. (p. 80)

We do not know whether or not this kind of approach would be useful for analysing most, or even a significant proportion, of theses written by Malaysians. It would certainly be important to establish the perceptions of thesis writers themselves, to try to identify the relative importance on them of these overlapping contextual influences. Some are told to write for "the examiners", but it is difficult to really know what this means. In many cases the influence of the supervisors is supremely important, but in others relatively minor. Some doctoral students are attuned to the detailed expectations of their disciplines, or at least the characteristics of the literature they have reviewed and the scholarship relevant to their own research topic. For Malaysia, and possibly for most other countries in which doctoral theses are written, it is at this stage difficult to establish the relative importance of these inter-related and overlapping influences on choice of rhetorical strategies.

But it does seem useful to argue that for Malaysia, and possibly for other countries with a strongly utilitarian and instrumental concept of the role of higher degrees in national growth, influences at the national level should be incorporated into further studies of rhetorical strategies employed by thesis writers. I am not endorsing older approaches to contrastive rhetorical scholarship, with their emphasis on generalized rhetorical forms and

their recourse to explanatory concepts like national character or national culture. I am also not endorsing studies that employ the ecological fallacy of explaining rhetorical strategies used by individual writers by reference to imputed national cultural characteristics. All I can do at this stage of my research is to bring to the reader's attention that the national level social and political contexts in Malaysia have a visible impact on these writers' rhetorical strategies, especially the sequence and frequency of their rationales for research and the contexts in which they locate their own research topics. These influences seem to be effected via the expectations of the personnel at various levels in universities and government organisations, including the members of the academic discourse community who are the gatekeepers of the disciplines and topics/area of study considered appropriate.

(ii) Contrastive genre studies and the issue of 'World Englishes.'

This study has probed the underlying rhetorical conventions of eight PhD thesis introductory chapters in Malaysia. Even though the corpus is small in number, it has provided some significant implications on contrastive genre studies and to a certain extent, on the issue of World Englishes. The most obvious implication of this study for CR is cultural awareness for the academic community, i.e. both students and teachers. Even though many researchers have argued against the stereotyping of rhetorical patterns according to language groups, the findings of this study as well as those of recent contrastive genre studies relating to Chinese (Zhang and Hu, 2010); Indonesian (Ahmad, 2006); Malaysian (Ahmad, 1997); and Arabic (Fakhri, 2004) have shown that there are some cultural elements that influence the conventions of written texts. On these same lines, Kaplan (1998, cited in Zhang and Hu, 2010, p. 89) says that different composing conventions do exist in different cultures.

This has an implication for the "World Englishes" view. A view of genre that has been discussed widely is that it has its own generic conventions which are shared more or less amongst the (global) academic discourse community. However, a genre, from the World Englishes view, can also create a 'social distance between those who share the generic knowledge and can manipulate it for their purpose and those who are outside the generic community' (Kachru and Nelson, 2006, p. 300). A similar view suggested by Bhatia (1997b) concludes that:

The power and politics of genre are two sides of the same coin. In one context, it can be seen as a legitimate force often used to maintain solidarity within a disciplinary community, whereas, on the other hand, it is used to keep outsiders at a distance. On the one hand, it empowers some people, the insiders, while at the same time, it tends to silence the others, especially the outsiders. (p. 366-367)

This silencing of others or the "gatekeepers" (Kachru & Nelson, 2006, p. 300) within the academic fields in this case concerns the examiners who decide whether the thesis is worthy of becoming part of the academic community or not. Since much of contemporary discourse and genre studies is dominated and determined by Western conventions, the acceptance of these theses in the study by international examiners decreases the issues of marginalization of the Inner Circle and the Outer as well as the Expanding Circle varieties, a classification of the sociolinguistic profile of English. According to Kachru (1985, p.366), the Inner Circle varieties referred to countries which have 'the traditional and cultural linguistic bases of English', for example America and Australia. On the other hand, the Outer Circle varieties were the countries where English had developed an institutional role like Malaysia and Singapore. Thailand was an example of the Expanding Circle since English was learned solely as foreign language. They also illustrate a gradual validation of the Outer Circle and Expanding Circle rhetorical varieties of English. Strevens (1992, cited in Bhatia, 1997b) also highlights the recognition of variation in the use of English across the three circles of English varieties. He says,

The use of English in a majority of situations outside the native contexts, be they academic or professional, may not always involve a native speaker as one of the interactants. Even when a native speaker is involved as one of the interactants in contexts outside the 'inner circle', it is the responsibility of both parties to make efforts to avoid misunderstanding and miscommunication arising from cross-cultural factors in the language. (p. 317)

9.3.2 Methodological Implications of this research

i) Coding

The need for analysis and identification of components of different genres is clear (Lewin et al., 2001). However, as demonstrated in Chapter Two, move analysis studies do not systematically provide realisation criteria, particularly concerning the extent of moves

for the proposed structure. In the studies of thesis introductions, Bunton (2002), Arulandu (2005) and Soler-Monreal et al. (2010) established three generic structures, which they referred to as "moves", and which are similar to Swales' CARS (1990) model. This body of work still leaves two significant problems to be solved. First, they followed Swales' methods, which do not specify the extent of a move. Descriptions of moves and their constituent steps were a concoction of applying the linguistic features and individual intuitions. This leads to inconsistency, particularly evident where one move realizes several such functions. The second problem is interpreting their result, in particular the implication of the sequence of move for the structure of the texts. Because of ambiguous terms, a variety of interpretations on the findings occurred. It meant that due to these problems, comparisons between texts have to be made cautiously.

The discussion of the identification of moves and their boundaries will not be a subject of great importance if an author has pre-chosen an approach to analysis. As I have discussed in Chapter Two, the two different approaches in genre move analysis are the bottom-up approach and the top-down approach. The description of the bottom-up approach means identification of moves on the basis of certain linguistic signals. On the other hand, an analyst who employs the top-down approach looks at content as the basis. Since it is mainly based on content and function, it can be criticized for its subjectivity (see Paltridge, 1994). However, the subjectivity can be reduced by creating a criterion of moves in order to "arrive at an objective definition of each type of unit" (Lewin et al., 2001, p. 28) and as suggested by Crookes (1986), a satisfactory level of inter-rater reliability.

In a top-down approach to analysis, what is needed is a system that is systematic enough to balance the linguistic features and the analyst's intuition in the identification of moves and the constituent steps involved in a particular social event. I found that this can be achieved through the semantic network proposed by Lewin et al. (2001) in their analysis of Social Sciences articles. The basis of their semantic network is the realisation criterion: that in realising a move, a statement must contain a "participant" and the participant should bear some attributes. In resolving the extent of the unit of analysis, they concurred that a rhetorical function is realized by the communicative purpose of the texts and it cannot be constrained by a set of grammatical units such as a sentence or a clause. Constraining moves into a segment of text does not seem reasonable, especially for a longer text such as the thesis introductions analysed in this study.

Lewin et al. (2001) neglected the linguistic features such as a specific lexical signal or conjunctions as a possible option in realising the move. This is parallel to Biber et al.'s (2007) top-down corpus-based approach. However, I still considered them valuable enough to assist and confirm the identification of move boundaries. In reducing the subjectivity level of content-based move identification, I ensured that the thesis introductions were also coded by two other people. This process yielded a high inter rater reliability rate of more than 90%, after the coding categories were thoroughly negotiated and made explicit. This emphasis on inter-rater reliability with rigorous specification of category criteria is vital for progress in identification of coding dissimilarity as a cause of variation in results in this area of research.

ii) Corpus-based approaches

Although move-step genre analyses are commonly pursued, especially in research articles, corpus-based move-analysis research on thesis writing is still underrepresented. Firstly, this study shows that a corpus-based analysis, using the top-down approach, is a multi-level analysis because it incorporates manual, hand-tagged coding and computerized analysis. Secondly, this study has demonstrated the efficacy of this technique in investigating the move structure of a genre. It shows how a corpus-based approach can be operationalised to allow for counts and locations of moves related to Swales' (1990) CARS model. It makes it possible to distinguish the structure of a thesis introduction and provides a significant perspective on the extent of Swales' CARS moves in the introductory chapters. There does not seem to be any obvious theoretical reason why this approach cannot be applied more widely. Indeed, its assistance in the processes of mapping, identifying and interpreting move and step locations and sequences would seem a good reason for recommending its broader use.

9.3.3 Pedagogical implications of this research

The main pedagogical implication of this study relates to the teaching of a postgraduate course for Malaysian university students and the sorts of teaching required. Given that a doctoral dissertation is principal in determining a student's acceptance by the academic community, both local and international, the students need to be able to familiarize themselves with this genre.

From the ESP perspective, the discourse community plays a central concept in a written genre as it is a "powerful metaphor joining writers, texts and readers in a particular

discursive space" (Hyland, 2003; Porter, 1992; Swales, 1990, 1998). As the findings proved in this study, this particular genre is context-sensitive and it has some distinctive elements that are socially constructed within the Malaysian setting. Students have to be conscious about the various influences that shape a genre. For this purpose, views on the roles of the genre approaches in teaching the academic research writing - particularly the thesis introductory chapter - will be discussed.

9.3.3.1   Genre-based approach in teaching writing

Two dominant approaches to NNES writing classrooms are the process approach and the genre-based approach. A process-driven writing course gives priority to written techniques. A number of their disadvantages have been noted by Hyland (2003). One of the shortcomings of the process approach is the minor focus on the ways in which meanings are socially constructed. As a response to this approach, a genre-based pedagogy is thought by many ESP scholars to provide a more context-sensitive view in teaching a more appropriate teaching instruction in the NNES academic writing classroom.

In a genre-based pedagogy, students have to possess "genre knowledge" (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995, p. ix) in order for them to be able to see texts as similar or different as well as respond to them. Hyland (2007a) also stresses that writing teachers in NNES classrooms have to realise the importance of genre knowledge in order to conduct an academic writing class. Genre knowledge as suggested by Hyland (2007a, p.57) consists of: knowledge of the communicative purposes that the genre is commonly used to achieve; knowledge of the appropriate forms that are needed to construct and interpret texts; knowledge of content and register; and knowledge of the contexts in which a genre is regularly found.

Hyland (2007b, p. 150) proposes a number of advantages for a genre-based writing instruction. They are:

i)   Explicit: Makes clear what is to be learned to facilitate the acquisition of writing skills
ii)   Systematic: Provides a coherent framework for focusing on both language and contexts
iii) Need-based: Ensures that course objectives and content are derived from student needs

iv) Supportive: Gives teachers a central role in scaffolding student learning and creativity

v) Empowering: Provides access to the patterns and possibilities of variation in valued discourses

vi) Critical: Provides the resources for students to understand and challenge valued discourses

vii) Consciousness-raising: Increase awareness of texts to confidently advice students on their writing

Hyland (2003) also stresses the key principles which underpin genre-based teaching, which can be reflected in the course syllabus goals and also the teaching methodology: writing is a social activity; learning to write is needs-oriented; learning to write requires explicit outcomes and expectations; and learning to write is a social activity. Therefore, a practical application of these principles based on the findings of the study is proposed for a course in academic writing of NNES.

The concept of scaffolding is implicit in much ESP genre teaching which seeks to provide learners with the means to understand and then create new texts. A common approach is to ask students, often in small groups, to analyse, compare and manipulate representative samples in a process known as rhetorical consciousness raising.

9.3.3.2 Models as the main pedagogical strategy

Models represent an eminent instructional device in teaching and much of academic writing instruction includes examples of the particular genre the students are learning (Macbeth, 2010, p. 34). Even though texts as models in writing instruction have been a staple for many writing teachers, this pedagogical strategy is never short of criticism. The biggest disadvantage using models in the writing classroom is that the form and the style imposed by the teachers will create students who do not have the freedom to express their own content and rhetorical style (Elbow, 1998; 1999). Text-based model approaches in the ESP (and SFL) have also been accused of being "accomodationist" in that they promote textual hegemony where students master the conventions and values of the academic writing in a critical way (Benesch, 2001; Bruce 2008). In sum, text-based approaches as models in teaching the NNES writing classroom allow for little critique and critical questioning because the text features are considered to be a template.

Other genre theorists, however, found that text-based instruction in teaching genre is necessary. Macbeth (2010, p. 36) recently claimed that genre-based instruction using text as models can uncover "features or rules for writing in specific disciplines as well as the contexts and functions they serve for discourse communities". Hyland (2007c), with reference to ESP pedagogy, suggests that texts should be used as the starting point to develop awareness in students. In his own words, he argues that:

> Genre-driven courses … will take texts as the starting point but provide opportunities for learners to develop text-generating strategies. The guiding principle is that literacy development requires an explicit focus on the ways texts are organized and the language choices that users must make to achieve their purposes in particular contexts. Genre offers a focus for understanding the types of texts that students will need in a given situation. (p. 75)

Correspondingly, Johns (2011, p. 64) also suggests that academic writing classes, particularly among novice students, should begin with text structures and then refocus on viewing genre as "socially mediated entities". Macbeth (2010) suggests that using texts as models is important but, according to her, students should be learning the limits of models as well.

Since genre pedagogies suggest that teaching writing will be more successful if the students are aware of what the genre looks like, authentic texts from the same context should be used as models. In recognizing the conventions of the thesis introduction chapters for example, the postgraduate students in the academic writing course should be given several thesis introductions as exemplars. Given that genre is grounded socially and culturally, further critical examinations using the texts can assist students on how these elements frame the structural features (as well as linguistic features) of the thesis' introductory chapter.

9.3.3.3 Writing instructions in the genre-based approach

The findings of this study can be employed in the development of courses in academic writing for second language Master's and PhD level students in Malaysia. Students can be instructed on not just the structure of the thesis but the contextual aspects that shape the text. They can be made aware of the many influences in the academic writing,

particularly the requirements of the specific institution and the different conventions of the area of study. They can also be helped to realize who their audience is and be aware of their importance and the influence they bring to the construction of the text.

Henry and Roseberry (1998) investigated the extent to which genre-based instruction and materials improved the learners' ability to produce effective genre by using three measures: a motivation index, a move score and a texture index. The results of their study indicated that a teaching approach based on rhetorical organization can be successful. Other genre scholars like Pang (2002), Swales and Lindemann (2002) and Cheng (2007) also claim that an approach based on rhetorical organization can be successful in ESP/EAP teaching situations. The advantages which derive from introducing rhetorical structure as the central element in a course are "a knowledge of the rhetorical divisions of an experimental-research paper within the paper and the function of those divisions within the paper greatly enhances ESL student reading and writing skills" (Hill et al., 1982, cited in Swales, 1990, p. 215). Therefore, some scholars suggest that formal schemata have their advantages and should be developed. However, it needs to be noted that the pedagogies of formal schemata should not create a template that is rigid and inflexible but more a "caricature which self-evidently simplify and distort certain features in an attempt to capture general identity" (Swales, 1990, p. 213).

One pedagogical instruction that can be conducted in the NNES academic writing class in order to introduce the general approach of the thesis introductory chapter is to reconstruct a text from jumbled paragraphs (Swales, 1990; Flowerdew, 2000; Hyland, 2007a). This task - while appearing to be straightforward - brings multiple consciousness raising amongst the writers. When Swales carried out this activity with approximately 250 pairs of students in class and numerous instructors and colleagues in workshops and presentations, he found fewer than 10 fully succeeded. A similar result occurred when Flowerdew carried out this exercise in her writing classroom. She discovered that many students put Move 3 first. Similar results may have occurred in Swales's classroom. He suggests that his participants underestimate the amount of rhetorical work that the authors had done before they announce their research. The same instruction can be done with Malaysian postgraduate students. As an introductory lesson to thesis organization, students could be given jumbled up paragraphs and asked to reassemble them in the original order. This kind of instruction can inform students about the problem-solution and general-specific ordering of the chapter.

In introducing the general structure of a thesis, the IMRD structure can be used as a point of departure. The rationale is that IMRD provides a general prototype or baseline against which disciplinary differences and preferences in research writing can be identified and analysed. Students can examine their own research writing in their own disciplines. This process can help students develop awareness about the range of differences that can occur in thesis writing based on different disciplines and contextual backgrounds.

As many practitioners have pointed out, there is no rigid model capable of truly representing a genre. As shown in this study, although moves are present that are similar to Swales' (1990) CARS model and those found in a number of previous genre studies looking at thesis introductions, there is no conformity in the linear sequence of the moves. In teaching the students about the unstable structure of the genre, various texts can be compared to identify their move structures. Using a number of texts as examples and Swales' move as a template, students can be asked to compare and identify move structures and comment on the differences in the move organization. In order to inform the students about the obligatory and optional moves and the constituent elements, students can be asked to categorize moves and steps that occur in all texts, those that are common and those that are optional.

Hyland (2007b, p. 156) claims one key feature of ESP pedagogy is that considerable attention is given to the contexts in which genres are employed. As argued in the present study, the thesis introduction chapters in the Social Sciences and Humanities constructed in Malaysia have specific cultural elements. Novice writers may not be aware of these cultural elements employed in their own specific contexts. A comparison with the same genre in other countries (specifically L1 countries) would help the writers exploit the generic conventions and find possible similarities and differences. With the advantages of knowing different ways in constructing a text, the writers can employ both, without solely accommodating the existing practice, but suiting both the current context and being accepted in a particular community of scholars. To quote Matsuda (2003,p. 28), "For second language writing instruction to be most effective in various disciplinary and institutional contexts, it needs to reflect the findings of studies conducted in a wide variety of instructional contexts as well as disciplinary perspectives".

In exploring academic practices and discourse conventions with students, a number of activities can be done in the classroom. To see the influence of the institution on the

structural context, a writing teacher can adopt Swales and Feak's (2000) writing instruction where students have to survey the advice given about a feature in a sample of style guides and textbooks and compare this with actual use in a target genre or students' own writing. Since one of the primary influences is the area of discipline of the thesis, students can conduct a mini-analysis of a feature in a text in a student's discipline, count and tabulate results, and compare these with those of students from other fields (Swales and Feak, 2000). Swales and Feak also suggest that the students discuss the extent to which students feel they have to adopt an English "academic style" in their writing or are able to preserve something of their own academic culture or personal identity. I also endorse Hyland (2007a, p. 138) who suggests that, in order to raise students' contextual consciousness in text, teachers can compare the use of genre across different disciplines, institutions and cultures.

9.3.3.4 Syllabus design

Curriculum and policies for NNES writing can be organized in programs at the institutional, state or national level. Dovey (2010, p. 46) claims that genre-based pedagogies are useful with ad hoc lectures such as one-off workshops or short intensive courses. For a university course that usually spans a semester, lecturers can achieve more sustained support for the reading and writing process. Therefore, a genre class should integrate genre-based and process-based pedagogies in order for the students to be aware of the contextual aspects and be critical of them at the same time.

Hyland has suggested a model for describing the genre-driven syllabus. This is shown in Figure 9.2:

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                    Establishing a context                     │
│      (exploring the situations that require a particular genre,│
│                       purpose, topic)                         │
│                            ↓                                  │
│                     Modeling the genre                        │
│            (reading texts of the appropriate genre)           │
│                            ↓                                  │
│                         Noticing                              │
│    (drawing attention to typical functions, features, and stages│
│                       of the genre)                           │
│                            ↓                                  │
│                  Explicit analysis of texts                   │
│      (focus on features, grammar activities, and info transfer)│
│                            ↓                                  │
│                    Controlled production                      │
│      (text completion, text reconstruction, re-ordering)      │
│                                                               │
│                     Independent writing                       │
│        (planning, drafting, teacher and peer feedback)        │
│                            ↓                                  │
│                           Text                                │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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Figure 9.2: Hyland's (2007c) genre-driven syllabus

9.4   Suggestions for future studies

The present study has examined and discussed the rhetorical moves of Malaysian thesis introductions in detail and then discussed some of the possible influences of socio-political, cultural and academic variables on them. However, in testing the findings of this study, further analysis of thesis introductions is necessary. In this final section of the chapter, several useful topics for investigation are suggested.

First, since the study has been conducted on a limited corpus, validating the structure pattern identified is necessary. For instance, similar studies on some of the issues of disciplinary variation deserve further research. A comparative study on Malaysian theses from several different disciplines, for example the Social Sciences and the Sciences, is needed to assess whether PhD thesis introductions vary in their structure. Further research on different branches within a single discipline is required, i.e. linguistics and education, in order to understand the differences in structures.

Discussions on the disciplinary influences of Social Sciences and Humanities on thesis introductory chapters have been noted in this study. A comparison between different disciplines can also provide knowledge on how different academic communities can influence the structure of a thesis. The academic discourse communities from the Sciences have different expectations and conventions that shape a thesis, but exactly what these are and how influential they are on completed theses still requires study, especially in Malaysia.

Secondly, a further study could extend the present study by examining theses written by the three major ethnic groups in Malaysia: Malay, Chinese and Indian. On the basis of cultural influence, it would be instructive to see if there are any specific linguistic and ethnic/ cultural influences on the way these writers understand the 'appropriate' structure of a thesis.

In the Malaysian theses introductions, background information was provided, not only for the readers to become familiar with particular terms of the topic being studied, the education policy and other national policies. Writers also indirectly attempted to show that the nature of the problem is deeply rooted in the policy developed by government. In consequence, the Malaysian thesis writers established the niche of their particular study topic based on their country's need for development. These findings pave the way for a politically oriented study in a different setting. It would be useful to compare the extent to which this strategy is reflected in theses written by authors from countries that have a similar centralized/authoritarian government system to that which operates in Malaysia, particularly among South East Asian countries.

Another obvious and interesting extension would be to see how the approach to coding in this study could be applied to other similar genres, particularly to lengthy texts. Can the framework for developing an acceptable model for PhD theses in this study be employed on other similar studies or other academic research genres?

Finally, most of the move-based studies in PhD thesis are limited by their exclusive focus on rhetorical moves, with little or no attention given to the lexico-grammatical characteristics of moves. The main reason is because of the length of the texts. For this reason, it would be useful to carry out a corpus-based analysis coding of all the moves followed by an analysis of the linguistic structures that make up those moves. Combining the strength of both qualitative and quantitative analytical tools will provide a more

comprehensive and feasible description of rhetorical organization in PhD theses and their linguistic features than has been previously done.

9.5   Concluding remarks

The process of researching and writing this thesis has taken me on a journey from being a teacher who deals with teaching academic writing to students (mostly based on my own knowledge gained from writing my Master's thesis), to being a researcher examining the construction of thesis writing, particularly the introductory chapter, and interpreting it from the socio-cultural and academic discourse community perspectives. I have been able to reexamine and reflect on my Master's thesis' introductory chapter by looking at the structure of the present texts from situations similar to my own. There are not many differences in our structure.

As a researcher writing a thesis, I am now able to strongly agree with claims by previous researchers that writing a thesis is not an easy task, particularly for a non-native speaker of English learning in an English speaking country. The journey of my writing this thesis in an 'Inner Circle' country is, without doubt, the most arduous and challenging but enriching experience. This is because while bringing along my own cultural background and previous knowledge in writing a thesis in Malaysia, I would now have to adapt and be more conscious of the academic community that I am currently in. Writing the introduction chapter of this thesis, for instance, took me several drafts before getting approval from my supervisor. In meeting the terms of my supervisor, the communicative purpose of this genre was achieved through a direct approach that includes some background information of the study, an explicit niche claim and general map of the study to be carried out.

Appendices

Appendix A

Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE)

Introduction

The Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) was created on 27 March 2004 to take charge of higher education in Malaysia which involves more than 900,000 students pursuing higher education in 20 public universities, 33 private universities and university colleges, 4 foreign university branch campuses, 22 polytechnics, 37 community colleges and about 500 private colleges. The MOHE's mission is to create a higher education environment that will foster the development of academic and institutional excellence. It is in line with the vision of the government to make Malaysia a centre of educational excellence and to internationalise of Malaysian education.

There are also other government agencies involved in higher education under the jurisdiction of MOHE; namely the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA), the National Higher Education Fund Corporation (Perbadanan Tabung Pendidikan Tinggi Nasional – PTPTN) and Yayasan Tunku Abdul Rahman (YTAR).

Vision

To make Malaysia a centre of higher educational excellence by the year 2020.

Mission

To build and create a higher education environment that is conducive for the development of a superior centre of knowledge and to generate individuals who are competent, innovative and of noble character to serve the needs of the nation and the world.

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1. To create a strategic and systematic plan for higher education
2. To reinforce the management system of higher education
3. To increase the level of capacity, accessibility and participation in higher education
4. To enhance the quality of higher education at par with international standards
5. To internationalise Malaysian higher education

Organisations of MOHE

The MOHE comprises the following departments/sectors:

- o   The Department of Higher Education
- o   The Department of Polytechnic and Community College Education
- o   The Management Sector
- o   The Development Sector

The Department of Higher Education

The Department of Higher Education is supported by several sectors and divisions that is responsible for the development of both public and private higher education in Malaysia. It also ensures that the universities and colleges are of international standing. This Department is also involved in the marketing of

Malaysian higher education to the international market as well as being in charge of the international student welfare.

The sector designated with the jurisdiction over public higher education is known as the Sector of Public Higher Education Management while the sector designated with the jurisdiction over private higher education is known as the Sector of Private Higher Education Management.

The Department of Polytechnic and Community College Education

Department is committed to providing education and training at Polytechnics and Community Colleges to fulfill the human capital needs of the nation through strategic management, relevant and dynamic curricula, effective training and career development programmes, continuous quality assurance and strong support services based on the National Education Philosophy.

The Polytechnics and Community Colleges serve as alternative paths for high school graduates to further their education apart from public universities.

Polytechnic Education also provides relevant technological or entrepreneurial education and training. These are aimed at upgrading basic skills as well as to promote research and development projects in collaboration with businesses and industries.

Community Colleges aim to provide life-long learning opportunities for the community and high school graduates particularly those who study under the vocational stream. Students will be trained, 're-skilled' or 'up-skilled', leading to the award of certificate qualification.

The Management Sector

This is the corporate and management services sector. It consists of the Information Technology Division, Human Resource Management Division, Human Development and Training Division, as well as the Finance Division. Overall, this sector handles the administration of the Ministry, the corporate image and other management functions.

The Development Sector

The Development Sector consists of the International Division, Planning and Research Division, and Scholarship Division. Its many functions include preparation of physical development plans that cover the five-year Malaysian Plan, facilities of public higher educational institutions, as well as the Polytechnics and Community Colleges. It also handles the finances for management and development of public higher educational institutions besides making monthly, quarterly and half-yearly reports.

Department of Higher Education
Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia

Introduction

The Department of Higher Education is one of the four departments/sectors under the Ministry of Higher Education which regulates the nation's higher educational institutions' affairs (both public and private). It was formed with the establishment of the Ministry of Higher Education on 27 March 2004.

The department is made up of several sectors or divisions that manage the vital processes in higher education that gears Malaysian higher institutions towards excellence through the coordination of policies, funding and activities. These divisions play their respective roles in improving the quality of education services and ensuring that programmes offered by the public and private higher educational institutions in Malaysia are of high quality and interna¬tional standards. These divisions are:

- **Public Higher Education Management Sector**
    - Public Higher Education Student Intake Management Division
    - Public Higher Education Governance Division
    - Academic Development Management Division
- **Private Higher Education Management Sector**
    - Private Higher Education Governance Division
    - Enforcement & Inspectorate Division
    - Registration & Standard Division
- Industrial Relations Division
- Development and Student Affairs Division
- Education Marketing Division
- Management Services Division
- Data and Information Centre

Vision

To develop Malaysian Higher Educational Institutions as Centre of Academic Excellence of International Standard.

Mission

To develop and strengthen the higher educational institutions that produce individuals who are competitive and innovative with high moral values to meet the nation's aspirations.

Objectives

To drive the higher educational institutions in producing graduates who are competitive and able to generate new knowledge through world class quality research of world class.

Organisation Structure of The Department of Higher Education (JPT)

CARTA ORGANISASI JABATAN PENGAJIAN TINGGI

Functions

The key functions of the Department are:

- To draft, implement, monitor and evaluate policies, programmes and activities of higher educational institutions with an aim towards higher education excellence.
- To develop an efficient and innovative management system for the higher educational institutions.
- To plan and ensure that the establishment of higher educational institutions and their facilities are conducive and of high quality which are at par with international best practices.
- To plan and coordinate the establishment of centres of excellence in higher educational institutions.
- To develop academicians of higher educational institutions who possess high scholastic qualifications to excel in their respective specialised fields of specialisation.
- To research, draft, update and enforce the Acts that are related to higher education.
- To plan and coordinate policies that inculate a research culture by strengthening research activities, development and commercialisation through better collaboration among higher educational institutions, industries and the government.
- To develop, monitor and supervise academic programmes of higher educational institutions to fulfill the needs of the employment market and to gain international recognition.
- To draft, coordinate and execute the policies for local and international student admissions into higher educational institutions.

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- To draft and coordinate policies as well as to plan the personal development and welfare of Malaysian students studying in local and foreign higher educational institutions, so as to produce holistic graduates in line with the national aspiration.
- To plan, encourage and coordinate activities the for the internationalisation of Malaysian higher educational through various strategic approaches.
- To plan, implement and coordinate marketing activities of higher education locally and internationally, towards positioning Malaysia
  as a Centre of Educational Excellence.

In its endeavour to internationalise Malaysian higher education and to attract more international students to Malaysia, the Ministry of Higher Education has established four Malaysia Education Promotional Centres (MEPC) in Dubai, Jakarta, Ho Chi Minh City and Beijing. A technical committee has also been formed to make Malaysia a Centre of Excellence. This committee is chaired by the Minister of Higher Education. A technical committee on Edu-Tourism has also been formed.

In addition, MOHE has also set up 11 Malaysian Student Departments (MSD) in 9 countries. The objectives of MSD are to manage student affairs with regard to their financial needs and well being;to provide guidance on academic, social, religious or vocational matters; to be an enabler in helping the students to be knowledgeable, highly skilled, of exemplary behaviour and highly competitive.

Other strategies include incentives offered to institutions promoting education overseas; recognition of Malaysian degrees by foreign countries and the establishment of the Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF) under the management of the Malaysian qualifications Agency (MQA). The ultimate aim of all these strategies is to make Malaysia a 'favoured' destination for international and local students to pursue tertiary education. In turn, it will make education an important export commodity that will generate foreign exchange for the country.

Conclusion

The different divisions under the Department of Higher Education will concentrate on their respective areas in improving the quality of education services and ensuring that programmes offered by the public and private higher educational institutions in Malaysia are of high quality and international standards. In their endeavour to achieve these goals, they have established promotional offices in Dubai, Jakarta, Ho-Chi Minh City and Beijing. A Technical Committee has also been formed to make Malaysia a Centre of Excellence. This committee is chaired by the Minister of Higher Education. A Technical Committee on 'Edu-Tourism' was also formed.

Other marketing strategies include incentives offered to institutions promoting education overseas; recognition of Malaysian degrees by foreign countries and the establishment of the new national quality agency for both private and public higher educational institutions, i.e. Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA). The ultimate aim of all these strategies is to make Malaysia a 'favoured' destination for international and local students to pursue their tertiary education besides making education an important export commodity that will generate foreign exchange for the country.

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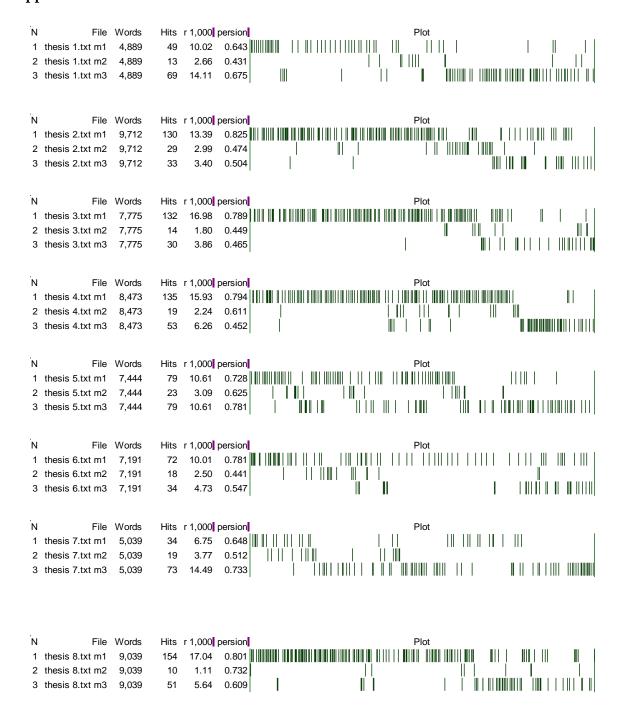
Appendix B

Thesis 1	Thesis 2	Thesis 3	Thesis 4	Thesis 5
20 pages	34 pages	25 pages	27 pages	32 pages
1.0 Introduction (1-3) 1.1 Language education in Malaysia (3-5) 1.2 Background and rationale of the study (6-10) 1.3 Aims of the Study (10-12) 1.4 Research Questions (13-15) 1.5 Methodology 15-17) 1.6 Significance of the Study (17-18) 1.7 Limitations of the Study (18-19) 1.8 Summary (19-20)	1.0 Introduction (1-5) 1.1 Statement of the Problem (5-24) 1.2 Purpose of the Study (24-27) 1.3 Significance of the Study (27-31) 1.4 Limitations of the Study (32) 1.5 Operational Definitions (32-34)	1.0 Background of the Study 1.1 Benefits of Online learning 1.1.1 online leaning in the educational environment 1.1.2 Online learning in Malaysia 1.1.3 Language learning from an information processing perspective 1.1.3.1 Learning strategies 1.1.3.2 Language learning strategies 1.2 Statement of Problem 1.3 Research objectives and questions 1.4 The Conceptual Framework 1.5 Working Definitions of key terms 1.6 Assumptions and Limitations of the Study 1.7 Significance of the study 1.8 Conclusion	1.1 Background (1-3) 1.2 Statement of Problem (3-10) 1.3 Conceptual Framework of the Study (10) 1.3.1 Theory of Revision 1.3.2 Revision Behaviour 1.3.3 Types of Writers 1.3.4 Types of Stances 1.3.5 Types of Readers' Comments 1.3.6 Types of Revision Activity 1.4 Research Objectives (21-22) 1.5 Research Questions (22) 1.6 Significance of the Study (2324) 1.7 Definition of Terms (24-27)	Background of the Study (1-3) - Teaching Literature in English in Malaysia (3-9) - The Malaysian English Language Teachers and Teaching of Literature in English (9-16) - Research in the Teaching of Literature (16-18) -Teachers' Beliefs and Practice (18) -Meaning- Making and Teaching of Literature (19-22) Statement of the Problem(22-24) Purpose of the Study (24) Research Questions (25) Significance of the Study (25-27) Scope of the Study (27) Limitations of the Study (28) Definition of Terms (29-31) Summary (31-32)

Thesis 6	Thesis 7	Thesis 8
30 pages	22pages	34 pages
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Appendix C

N	File	Words	Hits	r 1,000	persion	Plot
1	thesis 1.txt m1	4,889	49	10.02	0.643	
2	thesis 1.txt m2	4,889	13	2.66	0.431	
3	thesis 1.txt m3	4,889	69	14.11	0.675	

N	File	Words	Hits	r 1,000	persion	Plot
1	thesis 2.txt m1	9,712	130	13.39	0.825	
2	thesis 2.txt m2	9,712	29	2.99	0.474	
3	thesis 2.txt m3	9,712	33	3.40	0.504	

N	File	Words	Hits	r 1,000	persion	Plot
1	thesis 3.txt m1	7,775	132	16.98	0.789	
2	thesis 3.txt m2	7,775	14	1.80	0.449	
3	thesis 3.txt m3	7,775	30	3.86	0.465	

N	File	Words	Hits	r 1,000	persion	Plot
1	thesis 4.txt m1	8,473	135	15.93	0.794	
2	thesis 4.txt m2	8,473	19	2.24	0.611	
3	thesis 4.txt m3	8,473	53	6.26	0.452	

N	File	Words	Hits	r 1,000	persion	Plot
1	thesis 5.txt m1	7,444	79	10.61	0.728	
2	thesis 5.txt m2	7,444	23	3.09	0.625	
3	thesis 5.txt m3	7,444	79	10.61	0.781	

N	File	Words	Hits	r 1,000	persion	Plot
1	thesis 6.txt m1	7,191	72	10.01	0.781	
2	thesis 6.txt m2	7,191	18	2.50	0.441	
3	thesis 6.txt m3	7,191	34	4.73	0.547	

N	File	Words	Hits	r 1,000	persion	Plot
1	thesis 7.txt m1	5,039	34	6.75	0.648	
2	thesis 7.txt m2	5,039	19	3.77	0.512	
3	thesis 7.txt m3	5,039	73	14.49	0.733	

N	File	Words	Hits	r 1,000	persion	Plot
1	thesis 8.txt m1	9,039	154	17.04	0.801	
2	thesis 8.txt m2	9,039	10	1.11	0.732	
3	thesis 8.txt m3	9,039	51	5.64	0.609	

Appendix D

Thesis 1

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Thesis 7

Background of the Study m1ss2a/ m1s1/ m1ss2a/ m1s1/ m2s1b/ m2s1a/ m1ss2a/ m2s1a/ m2s1b/ m1ss2a/ m1ss2c/ m2s1a/ m3s1 **Statement of the Problem** m1ss2a/ m2s1a/ m1ss2a/ m2s1b/ m3ss6a/

m1ss2a/ m1ss2b/ m2s1b/ m2s1a/ m3s1/ m2s1a/ m3s1 **Purpose of the Study** m3s1/ m3ss6c/ m3s2/ **Research Question** m3s8 **Significance of the Study** m3ss6c/ m3ss6a/ m3ss3a/ m3ss3c/ m3ss6c/ m2s1c/ m3ss3a/ m3ss6a/ m3ss6c/ m1ss2a/ m2s1a/ m3ss6a/ m2s1c/ m3ss6a/ m1ss2a/ m2s1a/ m2s1b/ m3ss6c/ m3ss6a/ m3s11/ m3ss6b/ m3ss6c/ m3ss6a/ m3ss6c **Scope of the Study Theoretical Perspective Domains of Language Usem3s9**/ m1s1/ m1s3/ m1ss2a/ m3s11/ m1ss2a/ m1s1/ m1ss2a **Communication Strategies** m1ss2a/ m3s11/ m3s1/ m3ss7b **Speech Act** ?/ m1ss2a/ m3s11 **Definition of Terms** m3s13/ **Overview of the Thesis** m3ss7b

Thesis 8

Background of the Study m2s1e/ m1s1/ m1ss2a/ m1s1/ m1ss2a/ m1s1/ m1ss2a/ m1ss2c/ m1s1/ m1ss2a/ m1ss2c/ m1ss2b/ m1ss2a/ m1ss2c/ m1ss2a/ m1ss2b/ m1ss2a **Modals and ESL Learning** m1s1/ m1s3/ m3s1/ m3ss6a/ m1ss2b/ m1ss2a/ m1ss2c/ m1s1/ m1ss2a/ m1ss2b/ m1ss2a/ m1s1/ m1ss2b/ m1ss2a/ m1s3/ m1s1/ m1ss2b **Teaching of Modals** m1s1/ m1ss2a/ m1ss2b/ m1ss2a/ m1ss2b/ m1s1/ m1ss2a/ m1ss2b/ m1s1/ m1ss2a/ m1ss2b **Modals and Modality** m1ss2a/ m1s1/ m1ss2a/ m1s1/ m1ss2a/ m1ss2b/ m1ss2a/ m1s1/ m1ss2a/ m1ss2b/ m1s1/ m1ss2b **Modals and Malaysian English** m1ss2a/ m1ss2b/ m1ss2a/ m1s3/ m1ss2a/ m1ss2b/ m1ss2a/ m3s2/ m3ss3a/ m3ss3c/ m3s2/ m1ss2a/ m3s1/ m2s1a/ m1ss2a **Implications for the Learning of Modals** m1s1/ m1ss2b/ m1ss2a/ m1ss2b/ m2ss1b/ m3s1/ m3ss6a/ m1s3/ m1ss2a **Corpus Linguistics and Language Research** m1ss2a/ m1s1/ m1ss2a/ m1s1/ m1ss2a **History of Corpus Study** m1ss2a/ m1ss2b/ m1ss2a/ m1ss2b/ **The Emas Corpus** m1ss2a/ m3ss7b/ **Statement of the Problem** M1s1/ m1s3 / m1ss2b/ m1ss2a/ m2s1b/ m3ss3c/ m2s1b/ m1s1 / m1ss2a/ m1ss2b/ m1ss2a/ m2s1b/ **Objectives of the Study** m3s1/ m3s2 **Research Questions** m3s8/ m3ss6a **Significance of the Study** m1s1/ m1ss2b/ m3s5/ m1ss2b/ m3ss6a/ m1s1/ m3ss6c/ m3s4/ m3ss6a/ m2ss1b/ m3ss6c **Limitations of the Study** m1ss2a/ m3s11/ m3s4/ m3s11/ m3s2/ m3s11/ m3s13 **Conceptual Framework** m1s1/ m1ss2a/ m1ss2b/ m2s1b/ m3s9/ m1ss2a/ m3ss6a/ m3s14/ m3ss6a/ m3ss3c/ m3s1/ m1ss2a **Definitions of Terms** m3s13/ m3s2/ m3s13 **Summary** m1ss2a/ m1ss2b/ m3s4/ m3s1/ m3ss6a/ m3s4/ m3ss3b/ m1ss2a

Chap.	University A	Chap.	University B	Chap.	University C
1	Introduction		**Style 1**	**1**	Introduction
2	Literature Review	**1**	Introduction	**2**	Literature Review
3	Methodology	**2**	Literature Review	**3**	Methodology
4	Results/ Findings	**3**	Methodology	**4**	*Results/ Findings
5	Discussion	**4**	*Results/ Findings	**5**	*Discussion
6	Conclusion	**5**	*Discussion	**6**	Summary, Conclusion, and Implications
		6	Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Research		
			Style 2		
		1	Introduction		
		2	Literature Review		
		#3-5	Research chapters: Each chapter represents a separate study that has its own Introduction, Methodology, *Results, *Discussion, and Conclusion		
		6	Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Research		
			Style 3		
		1	Manuscript-style format		
		2	Introduction		
		3	Literature Review		
		#4-7	Methodology		
			*Research chapters (research journals)		
		8	Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Research		

Appendix F

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Education

PO Box 199,
Victoria 3552 Australia
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www.latrobe.edu.au/education

16 March 2009

Siti Zaidah Zainuddin
C/o La Trobe University
Bundoora Campus

Dear Siti Zaidah Zainuddin

RE:	YOUR APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL
FHEC No:	R005/09
Supervisor/s	Dr Keith Simkin
Project/Activity Title:	Rhetorics of theses by Malay ESL writers: an exploratory study.

Thank you for submitting your project for consideration by the Education Faculty Human Ethics Committee. The proposal has now been considered by the Committee and has been assessed as complying with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. Your project has now been granted ethics approval and you may now commence the study.

The project has been granted approval till **31/12/2009.**

The following standard conditions apply to your project:

• **Complaints** - If any complaints are received or ethical issues arise during the course of the project, researchers should advise the Secretary of the Education FHEC.

• **Limit of Approval** - Approval is limited strictly to the research proposal as submitted in your application while taking into account the conditions and approval dates advised by the FHEC.

• **Variation to Approval** - As a consequence of the previous conditions, any subsequent variations or modifications you wish to make to your project must be notified formally to the FEHC. This can be done using the 'Application for Approval of Modification to Research project' which is available at http://www.latrobe.edu.au/rgso/ethics/.

• **Progress Report** - A condition of approval is that you submit a Progress Report to the Committee annually throughout the approval period, to cover activities of the previous calendar year and is due on **12 February.** Failure to submit a progress report may result in the withdrawal of Human Ethics approval. A Final Report will be due within 6 months of the expiry date of the approval period. The Report Form is available from http://www.latrobe.edu.au/rgso/ethics/human.htm.

Please note that your application has been reviewed by a sub-committee of the FHEC in the interest of facilitating a decision before the next committee meeting. The decision will require ratification by the full Human Ethics Committee and, as a consequence, approval may be withdrawn or conditions of the approval altered. However, you may commence your project prior to ratification of the approval decision and you will be notified if the approval status is altered.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your project, please contact your supervisor (if you are a student) in the first instance, the Secretary Ms Joan Freeman, (j.freeman@latrobe.edu.au) or the Chairperson Dr Ramon Lewis (r.lewis@latrobe.edu.au).

On behalf of the Committee, best wishes with the success of your project.

Yours sincerely,

Joan Freeman
Executive Secretary, Education Faculty Human Ethics Committee.

cc: Chair: Supervisor/s   Dr Keith Simkin

Appendix G

LA TROBE
UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Education
PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Ethic Approval No.: _2005/09_

Research Title: Rhetorics of theses by Malay ESL writers: an exploratory study

Dear …,

My name is Siti Zaidah Zainuddin and I am a research student at La Trobe University, Melbourne. I am conducting an exploratory study for my Ph.D. to explore and analyse Malay writers' L2 theses in Malaysia. As part of this research, I will need to interview student writers and supervisors in selected universities. I would like to invite you to participate in the interview about writing your thesis/ thesis supervision. Your participation will be greatly appreciated. You are under no pressure or compulsion to take part and your participation will be on a purely voluntary basis. You may withdraw from the research project at any time. Findings from this study will be presented at some future academic conferences or in academic publications, but no person or school will be identifiable, and the information collected in the research will remain confidential.

Benefits to you
This study will increase awareness of the rhetorical strategies in academic thesis.

Broader benefits
The findings of the study should offer several suggestions that may enhance the teaching and learning of academic research writing for teachers and students. It provides a greater insight on Malay ESL rhetorical strategies and its socio-cultural influence. The outcome of this study is also to bring about awareness to the world on how and why Malay writers write their theses.

Administration
When you have agreed to participate by signing the consent form, arrangements for place and time for interview will be made with you. Interview will be audio-taped.

I will be happy to answer any questions you may have regarding this research activity.

If you have any complaints or queries that the researcher has not been able to answer to your satisfaction, you may contact the supervisor, Dr Keith Simkin or Secretary Education, Faculty Human Ethics Committee, Faculty of Education, PO Box 199, Bendigo Victoria 3552 or email at: educationethics@latrobe.edu.au

Sincerely,

Siti Zaidah Zainuddin
La Trobe University
Faculty of Education
VIC 3086
zaidah75@gmail.com

Dr. Keith Simkin
Lecturer
Faculty of Education
VIC 3086
k.simkin@latrobe.edu.au

Appendix H

Withdrawal of Consent for Use of Data Form

Research Title:

Rhetorics of theses by Malay ESL writers: an exploratory study

"I, _____(the participant), wish to WITHDRAW my consent to the use of data arising from my participation in the above named project. Data arising from my participation must NOT be used in this research project as described in the Participation Information Sheet and Consent Form.

I understand that data arising from my participation will be destroyed provided this request is received within eight weeks of the completion of my participation in this project. I understand that this notification will be retained together with my consent form as evidence of the withdrawal of my consent to use the data I have provided specifically for this research project."

Participant's name (Block Letters):

....

Signature:

....

Date:

Please forward to:

Siti Zaidah Zainuddin
Faculty of Education
La Trobe University
Victoria 3086

AUSTRALIA

Appendix I

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

ETHICS APPROVAL NO: _R005/09_

Research Title:

Rhetorics of theses by Malay ESL writers: an exploratory study

In order to participate in this study, this Consent Form must be signed by participant.

I _____ have read the Participation Information Sheet for the above research project and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this research by Siti Zaidah Zainuddin, realising that I may withdraw at any time within eight weeks of completion of my participation in the project, without reason and without prejudice.

I understand that all information provided is treated as strictly confidential.
I agree that research data gathered for this study may be published provided my name or other identifying information is not used.

If you have any questions regarding this study you may contact Siti Zaidah Zainuddin, of the Faculty of Education, La Trobe University, Bundoora 3086 Melbourne Australia. If you have any complaints or queries that the researcher has not been able to answer to your satisfaction, you may contact Dr. Keith Simkin (Supervisor), Faculty of Education or Secretary Education, Faculty Human Ethics Committee, Faculty of Education, PO Box 199, Bendigo Victoria 3552 or email at: educationethics@latrobe.edu.au

Participant's signature   Researcher's signature

Date: _24/5/09_   Date: _24.5.2009_

Contact details:

Siti Zaidah Zainuddin, PhD (Education) candidate, Faculty of Education, La Trobe University, Victoria, Australia 3086.
Telephone: +614 13551470. E-mail: zaidah75@gmail.com

Dr Keith Simkin, Lecturer, Faculty of Education, La Trobe University, Victoria, Australia 3086.
Telephone: +613 94792652. E-mail: k.simkin@latrobe.edu.au

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

ETHICS APPROVAL NO: _R005/09_

Research Title:

Rhetorics of theses by Malay ESL writers: an exploratory study

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Participant's signature   Researcher's signature

Date: 16/7/09   Date: 16.7.09

Contact details:

Siti Zaidah Zainuddin, PhD (Education) candidate, Faculty of Education, La Trobe University, Victoria, Australia 3086.
Telephone: +614 13551470. E-mail: zaidah75@gmail.com

Dr Keith Simkin, Lecturer, Faculty of Education, La Trobe University, Victoria, Australia 3086.
Telephone: +613 94792652. E-mail: k.simkin@latrobe.edu.au

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

ETHICS APPROVAL NO: ____R005/09____

Research Title:

Rhetorics of theses by Malay ESL writers: an exploratory study

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Participant's signature   Researcher's signature

Date: 29/6/2009   Date: 29.6.2009

_____

Contact details:

Siti Zaidah Zainuddin, PhD (Education) candidate, Faculty of Education, La Trobe University, Victoria, Australia 3086.
Telephone: +614 13551470. E-mail: zaidah75@gmail.com

Dr Keith Simkin, Lecturer, Faculty of Education, La Trobe University, Victoria, Australia 3086.
Telephone: +613 94792652. E-mail: k.simkin@latrobe.edu.au

LA TROBE
UNIVERSITY

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Participant's signature   Researcher's signature

Date: _22/06/09_   Date: _22.06.2009_

Contact details:

Siti Zaidah Zainuddin, PhD (Education) candidate, Faculty of Education, La Trobe University, Victoria, Australia 3086.
Telephone: +614 13551470. E-mail: zaidah75@gmail.com

Dr Keith Simkin, Lecturer, Faculty of Education, La Trobe University, Victoria, Australia 3086.
Telephone: +613 94792652. E-mail: k.simkin@latrobe.edu.au

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

ETHICS APPROVAL NO: _R 005/09_

Research Title:

Rhetorics of theses by Malay ESL writers: an exploratory study

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Participant's signature   Researcher's signature

Date: _17/06/2009_   Date: _17.6.2009_

_____

Contact details:

Siti Zaidah Zainuddin, PhD (Education) candidate, Faculty of Education, La Trobe University, Victoria, Australia 3086.
Telephone: +614 13551470. E-mail: zaidah75@gmail.com

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Research Title:

Rhetorics of theses by Malay ESL writers: an exploratory study

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Participant's signature   Researcher's signature

Date: 18/6/09   Date: 18.6.2009

Contact details:

Siti Zaidah Zainuddin, PhD (Education) candidate, Faculty of Education, La Trobe University, Victoria, Australia 3086.
Telephone: +614 13551470. E-mail: zaidah75@gmail.com

Dr Keith Simkin, Lecturer, Faculty of Education, La Trobe University, Victoria, Australia 3086.
Telephone: +613 94792652. E-mail: k.simkin@latrobe.edu.au

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

ETHICS APPROVAL NO: ___R 005 / 09___

Research Title:

Rhetorics of theses by Malay ESL writers: an exploratory study

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Participant's signature   Researcher's signature

Date: __14/6/09__   Date: __14.6.2009__

Contact details:

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LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

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Participant's signature   Researcher's signature

Date: _4/8/2009_   Date: _4.8.2009_

Contact details:

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REFERENCES

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