



## Genre Analysis of Acknowledgement Texts by Pakistani Master Level Theses Writers

Correspondence:	Muhammad Ahmad <ahmad453@yandex.com>	PhD Candidate, Department of Applied Linguistics, Government College University, Faisalabad Pakistan
	Ali Raza Siddique <aalimalik381@gmail.com>	PhD Candidate, Department of Applied Linguistics, Government College University, Faisalabad Pakistan
	Muhammad Mushtaq <mushi121@hotmail.com>	PhD Candidate, Department of Applied Linguistics, Government College University, Faisalabad Pakistan

### Abstract

This study aims to investigate the lexical, structural and cultural elements in acknowledgement texts written by Pakistani candidates of master of philosophy degrees (18 years of education). For this purpose, a corpus of 100 acknowledgement texts has been developed and analyzed with the help of AntConc 3.4.4.0. Results reveal that Pakistani master level acknowledgement writers use gratitude markers extravagantly to thank their contributors and use high sounding adjectives exaggeratedly to increase the effect of thankfulness and glorify the acknowledged persons. Acknowledgement texts are a blend of different patterns which are the example of their own. Study concludes that Pakistani acknowledgement texts are affected by cultural, social and personal elements with the help of which Pakistani acknowledgers pay gratitude directly, emotionally and warmly using direct, emotional and rhetorical language.

**Keywords:** acknowledgement texts, genre analysis, gratitude markers, theses' acknowledgments, distinct elements in acknowledgement texts

### 1. Introduction

"Expressing gratitude in academia", says Yang (2012), "is a common practice and is also seen in academic texts, in particular, in dissertation acknowledgements" (p. 52). Acknowledgements are actually the expressions of gratitude written particularly to acknowledge the assistance in production of creative works. Acknowledgements, according to Williams (2018), express written gratitude remarks for the efforts of persons as well as organizations that have helped someone complete his/her article, dissertation, book, report, project or thesis. Acknowledgements imply that though the people or the organizations do not directly complete the research work, yet they have immense involvement in the shape of financial support or encouragement (Ahmad, Ismail & Aqeel, 2018; Cronin, 1995; Shuttleworth, 2009). Acknowledgements, therefore, do not entail just the listing of addressees (Yang, 2012). Rather, in the view of Hyland (2003), are the complex and sophisticated contextual constructs which link personal with public, social with professional and academic with lay. Composing an acknowledgement is an excited reaction. It lets writers to grant contributors a spendable form or recognition (Giannoni, 2002) and to convey gratitude in a formal way (Dunams, 2010).

Role of the contributor is of great importance for the acknowledgers. For, it is the contributors' support which makes the work easy and increases its quality for the researchers. Sometimes, the writers find it difficult to convey the full extent of thankfulness to the contributors (Greenleaf, 2018). Then, acknowledgements help them signify inter-personal relationships using rhetoric (Yang, 2012) and thereby formally appreciate the contributors' efforts (Dunams, 2010; Ragsdale, 2016). Acknowledgements are written in different patterns comprising of different moves and sub steps of the moves (Ahmad, Ismail & Aqeel, 2018), which mirror a writer's personality, conventions, culture, social values as well as intellectual and rhetoric patterns (Rofess & Mahmood, 2015; Yang, 2012) and unequal use of language (Kaplan, 1987; Nkemleke, 2006). In addition, some socio-cultural differences (religion, social status, norms and discursive practices) also reflect from the acknowledgements which influence the thanking expressions (Cheng, 2012; Rofess & Mahmood, 2015; Yang, 2012).

The voluntary nature of acknowledgement texts is the indication of its effectiveness in discourse communities (Cronin, 1995). In fact, acknowledgement and authorship both are the shapes of an academic credit (Giannoni, 2002). Therefore, by recognizing contributors' efforts, acknowledgements pay back the intellectual debts by introducing and re-introducing contributors' names (Ben-Ari, 1987: 68). In this way, acknowledgements form themselves as staged texts having a sound rationale which creates a harmonious microcosm of intellectual empathy as well as harmony (Giannoni, 2002). Moreover, acknowledgements have got an important place in academic research writings (Rofess & Mahmood, 2015). But still they are avoided by the researchers (Giannoni 2002; Hyland 2003, 2004b; Rofess & Mahmood 2015; Swales 2004; Yang, 2012; Yasmeen & Mahmood 2107). The avoidance of acknowledgements by researchers may result in writing inappropriate acknowledgement writing (Ahmad, Ismail & Aqeel, 2018; Rofess & Mahmood, 2015).

Historically speaking, the study of academic texts has passed through three distinct approaches: (a) Halliday's (1964) register approach; (b) Lackstrom, Selinker and Trimble's (1973) functional approach and (c) Bhatia's (1993) and Swales' (1987, 1990) genre approach. Halliday's (1964) register approach maintains that textual varieties can be separated from each other by their relative frequencies of lexicogrammatical features. A positive feature of this type of description is that it may inform about distinct linguistic categories to differentiate between language varieties. Yet, it fails to prove useful as it offers a very little or no rationalization of why some forms are less or more repeatedly found in a particular variety. Whereas, Lackstrom, Trimble and Selinker (1973) struggled to fill this gap by co-relating grammatical choices and functions (grammatical choice means the choice of tense or article and grammatical function means the description of events or object in present or past tenses. Such descriptions depend on the choice of tense or article by a writer on the basis of the nature of objects or events. For example, a scientist will describe an apparatus used by him in an experiment either in present or in past tense depending on the nature of the apparatus i.e., if the apparatus is prepared particularly for that specific experiment, then the description will be in past tense. And if the apparatus can also be used for other experiments than that particular experiment, the



description then will be in the present tense). The limitation of functional approach is that it focuses on scientific texts only. Therefore, it fails to yield generalized results (Ahmad, Ismail & Aqeel, 2018; Farukh, 2005).

Bhatia's (1993) and Swales' (1987, 1990) genre approach, on the other hand, not only involves the positive features of functional as well as register approaches, but also guards against their drawbacks (i.e., as mentioned earlier, functional approach could not yield generalizable results beyond scientific texts whereas the register approach could not provide the justification of as to why certain forms occurred less or more repeatedly in a certain language variety). In fact, genre approach recognizes a language situated in the discourse community and aims to analyze a piece of discourse with reference to conventions of the community presenting not only what specific linguistic elements constitute a variety, but also providing the reason for specific choices opted by communicators in view of the conventions of the community they belong to. Thus, genre approach in Bhatia's (1993) viewpoint is very conventional which involves such structured constraints like moves and lexis as are used by a discourse community members involved in communication. According to Behnam and Golpour (2014) one of the significant research lines concerned with genre to receive excessive interest from the researchers is "move analysis" (p. 173) which according to Nwogu (1997), means the detection of schematic units in the texts. Move analysis helps study the structural patterns of different texts (Atai, 2012; Lim, 2006; Nwogu, 1997; Pho, 2008; Salager-Mayer, 1992; Samraj, 2002, 2005; Swales, 1990, 2004; Yang & Allison, 2003).

An important characteristic of genre approach is that it has the potential to recognize language as situated in discourse community. In addition, it examines discourse in accordance with particular conventions of a discourse community. It is for these reasons that genre is considered as an important tool of language description. Another noteworthy contribution of genre approach is that it has prompted many researches in occupational and academic situations (Ahmad, Ismail & Ismail, 2018; Behnam & Golpour, 2014; Rofess & Mahmood, 2015; Farukh, 2005). Genre analysis helps recognize situation-based dynamics of language use (Lee, 2001). In addition, it helps researchers know about how texts distinguish and organize in socio-cultural and conventional contexts of communication. Moreover, it presents systematic, but simple explanation of the ways a language functions in a particular society (Hyland, 2004a). Owing to these reasons researchers rely on genre approach to study the acknowledgements (Rofess & Mahmood, 2015; Yang, 2012). This study presents a genre-based analysis of these acknowledgements composed by EFL candidates of the master of philosophy in applied linguistics degrees (equivalent to 18 years of education) in Pakistan. It aims to investigate:

1. Which lexical, structural and cultural elements are used by Pakistani acknowledgement writers?

## 2. Literature Review

An article by Giannoni (2002) published in Applied Linguistics journal under the title 'Worlds of gratitude: a contrastive study of acknowledgement texts in English and Italian research articles', proves an important effort for applying genre approach to study acknowledgements. His article concludes that the structure of a genre is influenced by national patterns of different disciplinary communities. After that, researchers started studying acknowledgements with the help of genre approach.

Among such researchers include Zhao and Jiang (2010). They analyzed dissertation acknowledgements (DA) by Chinese EFL writers using a corpus from English related departments and discovered that the acknowledgement structures conformed to Hyland's (2004a) model showing some differences which were associated with cultural, academic and mental differences. They also noted that moves 1 and 2, chiefly Step 3.2, were not present in the corpus of their study. On the other hand, Yang (2012), in his study, found the presence of a unique step in Move 3 through which the acknowledgers had made confessions to those who had helped them. Yang (2012), on the base of the results of another similar study claims that Taiwanese use emotional, direct, precise and rhetorical language to acknowledge their contributors. He listed institutional preference, academic convention, socio-cultural factors, and language context as a cause of this tendency. Cheng and Kuo (2011) investigated DAs, written by Chinese EFL writers from Taiwan who were the candidates of doctorate degrees in applied linguistics. The researchers noticed that Taiwanese EFL DA writers conveyed gratitude explicitly but used complex strategies in this process.

Variation in move and sub-step arrangement and also in ways to pay gratitude to the contributors has been noticed in different cultures in different studies. For instance, a new step has been reported in Al-Ali's (2006, 2010) corpora taken from the Muslim cultures written by Arabic EFL writers. He observed the presence of a unique step to which he named 'Thanking ALLAH'. In the same way, Lasaky's (2011) study on DAs by non-native as well as native EFL Iranian writers concludes that Iranians consider DA writing as their duty, their DAs are organized after Hyland's (2004a) pattern and are influenced by socio-cultural factors. Similarly, Goulpour (2011) in his research compares DAs by Iranian non-native and native writers and finds the existence of a new step to which he names 'Thanking God'. He adds that Iranian non-native DA writers use this step i.e., 'Thanking God' more repeatedly than the native writers. Rofess and Mahmood's (2015) study, on Pakistani DAs, generalizes that the Pakistani acknowledgements are written on a general pattern which are elaborated, complex and distinct varieties for having an Islamic colouring and are greatly influenced by social as well as cultural factors. For Pakistanis DA writing is not a formality. Rather, it is a serious matter for them. Moreover, Pakistani dissertation writers are aware of DA writing styles and their DA structures are a unique blend of the dissertation acknowledgement (DA) structures presented by Al-Ali (2010) and Hyland (2004a). In the view of Nkemleke (2006), DA writers use different nominal as well as titular phrases to acknowledge the contributors i.e., supervisors or advisors. Afful and Mwinlarru (2010) add that DA writers use different lexis, grammar and discourse to map their identities and show relationships with the acknowledgees. According to Hyland and Tse (2004) DA writers utilize diverse linguistic features to realize the importance of thankfulness and the use of nominal expressions is most frequent. These studies (i.e., Afful & Mwinlarru, 2010; Hyland & Tse, 2004; Nkemleke, 2006) also point out that most of the DA writers feel comfortable in using first person pronoun 'I'. Scrivener (2009) is of the view that the acknowledgers tend to incorporate more and more people to thank to and they have made DAs less formal by dramatically shifting to the use of 'I' from third person. But Huckin (1996) has already rejected Scrivener's claim by suggesting "to focus less on genre as a formal object and more on genre as a rhetorical site, a place where rhetorical activity is directed to a particular audience for a particular purpose" (p. 77). Thus, Scrivener's charge against the use of 'I' seems inappropriate when genre is seen as a rhetorical site where different writers contact an audience for a particular purpose. In such conditions the use of 'I' is essential. Similarly, Caesar sees genre as the sketching of a small society in which knowledge is set (1992). This is another implied favour of the use of 'I'. 'Sketching a small society' means actually a small world of living humans in which they will contact each other using 'I' and 'we'. Same is the case with acknowledgement texts. Acknowledgements also sketch a small society of a writer and contributors (e.g., teachers, supervisors, financiers, parents, friends, family members etc.). In contacting with contributors, mostly with informal relations like friends, the writers are prone to use 'I'. Moreover, Giannoni's (2002) statement "generic framework implies a certain degree of freedom" (p. 3) also shows that genre gives some freedom to the writers to use language. Thus, Scrivener's claim against the use of 'I' seems to have no value here. Actually, the use of first-person pronouns, in academic genres, has considerably increased. Resultantly, writers, from different discourse communities, have stopped following the convention of using third person pronouns and started using first person pronouns for different purposes i.e., for personal input (Kuo, 1999), for arguments and claims (Hyland, 2002), for self-promotion (Harwood, 2005), to maintain a relationship with readers (Sayah & Hashemi, 2014) and as "self-mention-markers" (Yasmin & Mahmood, 2017: 255). This deviation is convention, discipline and culture bound (Yasmin & Mahmood, 2017).

## 3. Research Methodology

Data comprise of 100 acknowledgement texts written by Pakistani candidates of master of philosophy in applied linguistics (equal to 18 years of education) for their theses. The data were extracted initially in form of pictures (jpg) which were focused by a high-density camera from the hard copies of the theses submitted to the library of applied linguistics department of a Pakistani public sector university. The

pictures were then processed through an OCR Software to be converted into an editable form i.e., jpg into text. After that, the text was arranged into notepad files.

The said notepad files were then tagged through online 'Parts of Speech Tagger' for the purpose of analysis. After that the tagged data was processed through an AntConc 3.4.4.0 software. To having desirable results, a list of first-person pronouns was used as an instrument. In quite a similar way, another list of adjectives was also extracted through AntConc. Lastly, examples for different sub-steps of introductory and main moves were counted manually. The reason for manual processing was that the said examples could not be traced by AntConc. To study the schematic units of the acknowledgement texts, Bhatia's (1993) model was applied to study structural patterns/schematic units of the acknowledgement texts.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Lexis of Gratitude

Analysis of four-word level phrases shows that Pakistani master level theses writers have used different lexical items to express gratitude i.e., indebted to, grateful to, thankful and special thanks. Frequencies of the said gratitude markers have been given in the table below:

Table 1: Results of 4 Word Level Phrase/Lexis of Gratitude

Sr. No.	List of Expressions	Frequencies
1	av0 indebted_aj0 to	19
2	av0 grateful_aj0 to	112
3	av0 thanks_aj0 for	89
4	av0 special_aj0 thanks	26
5	av0 thank_aj0 to	98
6	av0 owe_aj0 to	25
7	av0 owes_aj0 to	17
8	av0 thankful_aj0 to	115

### 4.1 Use of Adjectives

Pakistani master level thesis writers have used different high-sounding adjectives to enhance the effect of their acknowledgement and gratitude. This signals that they are extreme level acknowledgers and highly thankful to all those who helped them. Some examples of the adjectives include: special, cordial, profound, immense, boundless, etc. Similarly, some extra respect, gratitude and glorification have been showed for the supervisors through other high-sounding adjectives. Such as professional, scholastic, valuable, loving, worthy, kind, guiding, inspiring, dynamic, courteous, supporting, loving, precious, intellectual, affectionate, supporting, etc. Complete list of adjectives is given in the table below:

Table 2: Results of Adjectives (aj0)

List of words	Tags	Frequencies	List of words	Tags	Frequencies
Almighty	_aj	56	enlightening	_aj	10
Applied	_aj	56	evident	_aj	10
Assistant	_aj	28	extraordinary	_aj	10
Able	_aj	21	Felt	_aj	10
continuous	_aj	21	friendly	_aj	10
countless	_aj	21	fruitful	_aj	10
grateful	_aj	21	Good	_aj	9
Guided	_aj	21	various	_aj	9
Immense	_aj	21	High	_aj	9
indebted	_aj	21	human	_aj	5
Lucky	_aj	21	humble	_aj	5
Other	_aj	21	intellectual	_aj	5
sincere	_aj	21	invaluable	_aj	5
thankful	_aj	21	involved	_aj	4
Deep	_aj	14	Joint	_aj	1
gracious	_aj	14	Kind	_aj	1
Great	_aj	14	willing	_aj	1
guiding	_aj	14	linguist	_aj	1
Hard	_aj	14	loving	_aj	1
Holy	_aj	14	manan	_aj	1
hussain	_aj	14	maximum	_aj	1
inspiring	_aj	14	merci	_aj	1
mental	_aj	14	moral	_aj	1
possible	_aj	14	necessary	_aj	1
respected	_aj	14	open	_aj	1
right	_aj	14	passionate	_aj	1
uphill	_aj	14	positive	_aj	1
Very	_aj	14	precious	_aj	1
worthy	_aj	14	present	_aj	1
accessible	_aj	12	professional	_aj	1
whole	_aj	12	profound	_aj	1
affectionate	_aj	12	prostrate	_aj	1
long	_aj	12	Rny	_aj	1
baked	_aj	11	San	_aj	1
beneficent	_aj	11	scholastic	_aj	1
boundless	_aj	11	sensitive	_aj	1
bright	_aj	11	Special	_aj	1
cordial	_aj	11	Staunch	_aj	1
courteous	_aj	11	supervisory	_aj	1
critical	_aj	11	supporting	_aj	1
devoted	_aj	11	Tortuous	_aj	1
dynamic	_aj	11	Unfailing	_aj	1

earnest	_aj	11	Supporting	_aj	1
encouraging	_aj	11	valuable	_aj	1
English	_aj	10	various	_aj	1

#### 4.2 Use of First-Person Pronouns

First person pronouns have frequently been used in the corpora in considerable numbers, i.e. I 82 times, my 46 times, me 38 times, we and our 6 times each and us frequented 4 times. 'I' has been found to be used in maximum frequency.

Table 3: Results of First-Person Pronoun

Sr. No.	First Person Pronoun	Frequency
1	I	82
2	My	46
3	Me	38
4	We	6
5	Our	6
6	Us	4

#### 4.3 Identification of the Moves

Sample results show that the frequency of step-1 of introductory move is 0 and the frequency of step-2 is 193. In this way, step-2 of introductory move is found in maximum frequency. Similarly, the frequency of step-1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the main moves are 76, 0, 124, 0 and 0 respectively. Here, step-3 has been found in maximum frequency. Frequency of steps-2, 3 and 5 is 0. Moreover, an additional two additional steps have also been identified which have been named by the researchers as 'praising/thanking God as well as The Holy Prophet (peace be upon Him)' and 'praying'. The frequencies of these steps are 133 and 57 respectively. For further understanding refer to the table below:

Table 4: Frequencies of Move Steps

Move	Steps	Frequency
Introductory	1. Citing Parent Texts and Events	0
	2. Acknowledging the Concerned People	193
Main	1. Acknowledging Institutional Support	76
	2. Acknowledging the Individual Contributors	0
	3. Acknowledging Family Member's/Teacher's Support	124
	4. Accepting Responsibility	0
	5. Welcoming Comments and Suggestions from the Readers	0
Other/Additional	1. Praising/Thanking God and The Holy Prophet (peace be upon Him)	133
	2. Pray	57
	<b>Total</b>	<b>583</b>

#### 5. Discussion

Aim of the study was to explore different elements in the acknowledgement texts written by Pakistani theses writers. The first element to be investigated about was concerned with the lexis of gratitude. In fact, expressing gratitude through acknowledgements has become a common practice in academia (Yang, 2012). For, through the text of an acknowledgment the writers convey warm feelings of gratitude in a formal way (Dunams, 2010). For this purpose, the acknowledgers write appreciation remarks to acknowledge the extraordinary efforts (Williams, 2017). In this regard, they use different linguistic features (Hyland & Tse, 2004). Lexis is one of such features as is used to realize the significance of thanking acts (Afful & Mwinlarrur, 2010; Hyland & Tse, 2004). In this concern, it has come to know that Pakistani master level writers make an extravagant use of indebted to, thankful, thanks, thank and grateful to acknowledge the efforts of those who have helped them in the research process. To increase the effect of gratitude, Pakistani acknowledgers make an exaggerated use of different adjectives such as immense, cordial, sincere, profound, deep, earnest etc. In addition, high sounding adjectives are used for the acknowledgees such as Almighty, Holy, kind, guiding, professional, scholastic, intellectual, valuable, friendly inspiring, encouraging, enlightening, worthy, dynamic, loving, courteous, affectionate. All of these adjectives, in a way or the other, seem to glorify the people being acknowledged.

Acknowledgement writers tend to involve more and more people in the texts to thank to. Moreover, the acknowledgers have dramatically shifted to 'I' from the use of third person pronouns (Scrivener, 2009). Same is evident from the acknowledgements written by Pakistani theses writers. They have been observed to frequently use first person pronouns with their respective cases such as 'I', 'my', 'me', 'we', 'our' and 'us'. Such a frequent use of first-person pronouns, in the view of Scrivener has made acknowledgements less formal (2009).

However, it is also true that the use of first-person pronouns has considerably increased in academic writings. Writers have stopped following the old tradition of 'I avoidance' and are using 'I' more than the other pronouns. Huckin's suggestion to focus "less on genre as a formal object and more on genre as a rhetorical site, a place where rhetorical activity is directed to a particular audience for a particular purpose" (1996: 77) is the main reason behind the said avoidance. The shift (from the use of third person to the first one) is culture, convention and discipline bound (Yasmin & Mahmood, 2017). Different writers use first person pronouns for different purposes i.e., for personal input (Kuo, 1999), for claims and arguments (Hyland, 2002), for self-promotion (Harwood, 2005), to maintain a relationship with readers (Sayah & Hashemi, 2014) and as "self-mention markers" (Yasmin & Mahmood, 2017, p. 255). So far as the case of Pakistani acknowledgement writers is concerned, it cannot be said that for which reason they have used the said pronouns. Anyhow, personal pronouns are present in the acknowledgements written by them. On this ground it can partially be said that Pakistani theses acknowledgement texts are personal. No other final judgement can be made here. For this purpose, another more focused study is required.

Moreover, according to Hyland and Tse (2004) acknowledgers use nominal expressions whereas in the view of Nkemleke, the acknowledgers use nominal as well as titular phrases with deferential strategies to acknowledge their superiors, advisors and supervisors (2006). Pakistani acknowledgers, in this concern, use both nominal as well as titular expressions to pay gratitude. A great number of examples were observed in the acknowledgement text written by Pakistani theses writers e.g., sir, professor, Mr., miss, madam. Similarly, names of the acknowledgees were also present (names cannot be mentioned due to privacy concerns). Actually, writing of acknowledgements is an excited reaction (Dunams, 2010) which is the matter of a very serious concern for the Pakistani writers (Rofess & Mahmood, 2015). Therefore, like Taiwanese students, who express gratitude explicitly (Cheng & Kuo, 2011) using direct, emotional, precise and rhetorical language (Yang, 2012), Pakistani acknowledgers also express gratitude warmly, openly, directly and emotionally by making a skillful use of core lexical items as gratitude markers and great number of high-sounding adjectives to enhance the effect of thankfulness as well as for the glorification of the acknowledged persons.

Similarly, the study also aimed to analyze the structural as well as cultural element of the acknowledgement texts. In fact, the acknowledgements, which have become a vital part of research writings (Rofess & Mahmood, 2015), do not mean simply the listing of acknowledgees (Yang, 2012) rather, in the view of Hyland (2003), “are sophisticated and complex contextual constructs which bridge the personal and the public, the social and the professional and the academic and the lay” (p. 256). In these acknowledgements, acknowledgers use what Bhatia called ‘structural constraints like moves and lexes’ to involve the community members in communication process (1993). Moves mean the structural patterns of a text (Atai, 2012; Lim, 2006; Nwogu, 1997; Pho, 2008; Salager-Mayer, 1992; Samraj, 2002, 2005; Swales, 1990, 2004; Yang & Allison, 2003) and move analysis means the identification of schematic units in the texts.

The schematic units, in Pakistani theses’ acknowledgement texts, are concerned with acknowledging the concerned persons, institutional support, family members/teachers’ support, praising/thanking God and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon Him) and praying for the longevity, success and happiness of the acknowledged persons. Praising/thanking God and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon Him) and praying for the longevity, success and happiness of the acknowledged persons are the new steps in the said acknowledgement texts. The presence of the new steps has also been reported by other researchers. For example, Al-Ali (2006, 2010) reported to find a new step, ‘Thanking ALLAH’ in the corpora from Muslim cultures written by Arabic EFL writers. Likewise, Goulpour (2011) reported the presence of the same step to which he named ‘Thanking God’ which formed the maxim part of texts in his study. Similarly, Yang (2012), in his study, observed the presence of a new step which was called a ‘unique step’ through which the acknowledgers had made confessions to those who had helped them (2012a).

Such distinctive features as are reflected due to the variations in the writers’ unequal use of language (Kaplan, 1987; Nkemleke, 2006), education, culture and mind (Zhao & Jiang, 2010), socio-cultural factors (Lasaki, 2011), personal identity, context, convention, social and cultural values and different intellectual and rhetorical patterns (Rofess & Mahmood, 2015; Yang, 2012). These personal as well as socio-cultural differences are also present in acknowledgement texts which influence the thanking expressions (Cheng, 2012; Rofess & Mahmood, 2015; Yang, 2012). Same is the case with Pakistani theses’ acknowledgement texts which have such a pattern as is a unique blend of the patterns introduced by Al-Ali (2010) and Hyland (2004a) characterized by personal as well as socio-cultural factors among which religion is very significant (Rofess & Mahmood, 2015).

## 6. Conclusion

Pakistani acknowledgement writers use different lexical items i.e., indebted to, thankful, thanks, thank and grateful extravagantly to thank the contributors. To increase the effect of thankfulness and glorify the contributors, they exaggeratedly use different high-sounding adjectives such as immense, cordial, sincere, profound, deep, earnest, high, Almighty, Holy, kind, guiding, professional, scholastic, intellectual, valuable, friendly inspiring, encouraging, enlightening, worthy, dynamic, loving, courteous, affectionate. Use of first-person pronouns with relative cases and nominal as well as titular phrases is very common. Pakistanis write an acknowledgement as the excited reaction to the contribution of the acknowledged persons and hence, is a serious matter for them. Therefore, they use a direct, precise, rhetorical and emotional language to thank warmly, openly, directly and emotionally. They structure their acknowledgement as a blend of varied structural aspects. Thus, Pakistani acknowledgements are unique in themselves and are the example of their own. They are affected by a number of personal, social and cultural factors among which the religion seems to have greater significance.

## References

- Afful, J., & Mwinlaaru, I. (2010). Commonality and individuality in academic writing: An analysis of conference paper titles of four scholars. *English for Specific Purposes World*, 27(1), 1-32.
- Ahmad, M., Ismail, M. K. A., & Aqeel, M. (2018). Genre based analysis of acknowledgement texts written by Pakistani writers. *European Online Journal of Natural and Social Sciences*, 7(3), 594-604.
- Al-Ali, M. N. (2006). Conveying academic and social identity in graduate dissertation acknowledgments. *Fifth International Conference of European Association of Language for Specific Purposes* (pp. 35-42). Zaragoza, Spain.
- Al-Ali, M. N. (2010). Generic patterns and socio-cultural resources in acknowledgements accompanying Arabic PhD dissertations. *Pragmatics*, 20(1), 1-26. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1075/prag.20.1.01ali>.
- Atai, M. R. (2012). Genre analysis: An investigation of the structure of research article results & discussion and collocation frameworks in medical research articles. *Proceedings of the 6<sup>th</sup> International AELFE Conference: Teaching and Learning LSP: Blurring the Boundaries*. ISCAL, Lisboa, Portugal.
- Behnam, B., & Golpour, F. (2014). A genre analysis of English and Iranian research articles abstracts in applied linguistics and mathematics. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, 3(5), 173-179. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.3n.5p.173>.
- Ben-Ari, E. (1987). On acknowledgements in ethnographies. *Journal of Anthropological Research*, 43(1), 63-84. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1086/jar.43.1.3630467>.
- Bhatia, V. K. (1993). *Analyzing genre language use in professional settings*. London and New York: Longman.
- Caesar, T. (1995). On acknowledgements. *New Orleans Review*, 19(1), 85-94.
- Cheng, S. W. (2012). A contrastive study of master thesis acknowledgements by Taiwanese and North American students. *Open Journal of Modern Linguistics*, 2(1), 8-17.
- Cheng, W., & Kuo, C. (2011). A pragmatics analysis of MA thesis acknowledgements. *Asian ESP Journal*, 7(3), 29-58.
- Cronin, B. (1995). *The scholar’s courtesy: The role of acknowledgement in the primary communication process*. London: Taylor Graham.
- Dunams, A. (2010). *What is an acknowledgement page and why your book needs one?* Retrieved February 11, 2018 from <http://www.aliciadunams.com/what-is-an-acknowledgement-page-and-why-your-book-needs-one/>.
- Farukh, A. (2005). *Genre analysis of acknowledgement texts across disciplines* (unpublished master thesis). Department of English, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan, Pakistan.
- Giannoni, D. S. (2002). Words of gratitude: A contrastive study of acknowledgement texts in English and Italian research articles. *Applied Linguistics*, 23(1), 1-31. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/23.1.1>.
- Greenleaf. (2018). *How to write an acknowledgement page*. Retrieved February 11, 2018 from <https://greenleafbookgroup.com/learning-center/book-creation/how-to-write-an-acknowledgementpage>.

- Halliday, M. A. K. (1964). *The linguistics science and language teaching*. London: Longman.
- Harwood, N. (2005). We do not seem to have a theory ... The theory I present here attempts to fill this gap: Inclusive and exclusive pronouns in academic writing. *Applied Linguistics*, 26(3), 343-375. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/ami012>.
- Huckin, T. (1997). Cultural aspects of genre knowledge. *AILA Review*, 12(6), 68-78.
- Hyland, K. (2002). Authority and invisibility: Authorial identity in academic writing. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 34(8), 1091-1112. doi: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0378-2166\(02\)00035-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0378-2166(02)00035-8).
- Hyland, K. (2003). Dissertation acknowledgements: The anatomy of a Cinderella genre. *Written Communication*, 20(3), 242-268. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088303257276>.
- Hyland, K. (2004a). Graduates'gratitude: The generic structure of dissertation acknowledgements. *English for Specific Purposes*, 23(3), 303-324. doi: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906\(03\)00051-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906(03)00051-6).
- Hyland, K. (2004b). *Genre and second language writing*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Hyland, K., & Tse, P. (2004). I would like to thank my supervisor: Acknowledgements in graduate dissertations. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 14(2), 259-275. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1473-4192.2004.00062.x>.
- Kaplan, R. B. (1987). Cultural thought patterns revisited. In U. Connor & R. B. Kaplan (Eds.), *Writing across Languages: Analysis of L2 Texts* (pp. 9-21). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Kuo, C. (1999). The use of personal pronouns: Role relationships in scientific journal articles. *English for Specific Purposes*, 18(2), 121-138. doi: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906\(97\)00058-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906(97)00058-6).
- Lackstrom, J., Selinker, L., & Trimble, L. (1973). Technical rhetorical principles and grammatical choice. *TESOL Quarterly*, 7(2), 127-136. doi: <https://doi.org/10.2307/3585556>.
- Lasaky, F. G. (2011). A contrastive study of generic organisation of doctoral dissertation acknowledgements written by native and non-native (Iranian) students in applied linguistics. *The Modern Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 3(2), 175-199.
- Lee, D. Y. W. (2001). Genres, registers, text types, domains, and styles: Clarifying the concepts and navigating a path through the BNC jungle. *Language Learning & Technology*, 5(3), 37-72. doi: <https://dx.doi.org/10125/44565>.
- Nkemleke, D. A. (2006). Nativization of dissertation acknowledgements and private letters in Cameroon. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 15(2), 166-184.
- Nwogu, K. N. (1997). The medical research paper: structure and function. *English for Specific Purposes*, 16(2), 119-137. doi: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906\(97\)85388-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906(97)85388-4).
- Pho, P. D. (2008). Research article abstracts in applied linguistics and educational technology: A study of linguistic realizations-of rhetorical structure- and authorial stance. *Discourse Studies*, 10(2), 231-250. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461445607087010>.
- Ragsdale, M. (2016). *7 Reasons the 'acknowledgements' section of the book is an essential read*. Retrieved February 11, 2018 from <https://www.bustle.com/articles/177727-7-reasons-the-acknowledgements-section-of-the-book-is-an-essential-read>
- Rofess, S., & Mahmood, M. A (2015). An investigation of generic structures of Pakistani doctoral thesis acknowledgements. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 6(28), 128-143.
- Sayah, L., & Hashemi, M. R. (2014). Exploring stance and engagement features in discourse analysis papers. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 4(3), 593-601. doi: <https://doi.org/10.4304/tpls.4.3.593-601>.
- Scrivener, L. (2009). An exploratory analysis of history students'dissertation acknowledgements. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 35(3), 241-251. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2009.03.004>.
- Shuttleworth, M. (2009). *Writing acknowledgements*. Retrieved January 8, 2019 from <https://explorable.com/writing-acknowledgements>.
- Salager-Meyer, F. (1992). A text type and move analysis study- of verb tense a modality distribution in medical English abstracts. *English for Specific Purposes*, 11(2), 93-113. doi: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906\(05\)80002-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906(05)80002-X).
- Samraj, B. (2002). Disciplinary variation in abstracts: The case of wildlife behavior and conservation biology. In J. Flowerdew (Ed.), *Academic Discourse* (pp. 105 120). New York: Longman.
- Samraj, B. (2005). An exploration- of a genre set: Research article abstracts and introduction in two disciplines. *English for Specific Purposes*, 24(2), 141 156. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2002.10.001>.
- Swales, J. M. (1987). *Aspects of article introductions*. Birmingham: Language Studies Unit, University of Aston.
- Swales, J. M. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Swales, J. M. (2004). *Research genres: Explorations and applications*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Williams, M. (2018). *Thesis acknowledgement & dissertation dedication help*. Retrieved February 8, 2019 from <https://www.essaytown.com/writing/thesis-acknowledgment-dissertation-dedication>.
- Yang, W. (2012). Comparison of gratitude across context variations: A generic analysis of dissertation acknowledgements written by Taiwanese authors in EFL and ESL contexts. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, 1(5), 130-146. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7575/ijalel.v.1n.5p.130>.
- Yang, R. Y., & Allison, D. (2003). Research articles in applied linguistics: Moving from results to conclusions. *English for Specific Purposes*, 22(4), 365 385. doi: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906\(02\)00026-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906(02)00026-1).

- 
- Yasmin, T., & Mahmood, M. A. (2017). A comparative analysis of writer's identity in Pakistani research theses of English and psychology. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 7(6), 255-260. doi: <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v7n6p255>.
- Zhao, M., & Jiang, Y. (2010). Dissertation acknowledgement: Generic structure and linguistic features. *Chinese Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 33(1), 94-109.