Examining Moves and Steps in Discussion Chapters of TEFL Master's Theses by Indonesian Postgraduates: A Genre Analysis

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ABSTRACT

The discussion chapter holds a paramount position in a thesis, being regarded as the most crucial and challenging part to compose, particularly for university students. The present genre investigation highlighted the focus on language use and communicative practices. This research seeks to investigate the rhetorical organization, moves, and steps, employed by Indonesian postgraduates while writing the discussion chapter of their theses within the field of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). We examined five theses from postgraduate students whose data were obtained from the university repository. Data were analyzed with the framework proposed by Chen and Kuo (2012). The overall word count is 9204 words. From the analysis conducted, it was found that *Move 2 Step 1: Reporting major findings* (41.4%)*, Move 4 Step 2: comparing the results with literature* (21.9%), and *Move 4 Step 3: accounting for results* (20.7%) were highly used in the data. However, two steps were least used in the data; namely, *Move 3 Step 1: making conclusions of results* and *Move 6 Step 2: indicating the significance of the study*. Our findings provide insights into how postgraduates structure their arguments, present findings, and interact with existing literature.

Keywords: academic writing, discussion section, genre analysis, Indonesian postgraduates, TEFL master's theses

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

Thesis writing for postgraduate students is crucial and unarguably demanded in the development of students' knowledge (Wagener, 2018). Thesis writing is not only a routine academic assignment but also a window to intellect that opens new perspectives of knowledge (Simandan, 2019). In the postgraduate context, writing a thesis is not just a final paper, but also an in-depth scientific journey. Postgraduate students have the opportunity to explore, analyse and

contribute to existing knowledge. By writing theses, they showcase their research skills, explore relevant topics, and formulate insightful views on complex issues (Wagener, 2018). Through the theses writing process, postgraduate students not only hone their academic skills, but also develop a sense of research methodology and an in-depth understanding of a particular academic discipline. In addition, theses also prepare students to contribute to the scientific and professional community by contributing thoughts and discoveries that can advance their field of study (Carter-Thomas & Rowley-Jolivet, 2020). As such, theses writing in graduate students is not only a formal task, but a critical step in the scholarly journey that shapes and changes knowledge paradigms.

The field of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) requires proficiency in teaching English. The significance of proficiency in the English language as a crucial tool for communication on a global scale and a gateway to educational and professional opportunities cannot be overstated (Maschio, 2006). Therefore, universities in Indonesia have made an important commitment to developing educators who have the skills needed to convey the intricacies of English effectively. The centerpiece of this academic journey is the completion of a master's theses, a substantial endeavor that requires not just a profound grasp of the topic but also the skill to express findings and insights in a clear and cohesive manner (Xu, 2015).

In the tapestry of theses, one of the main chapters serve important role: discussion chapter. The section serves as a focal point for graduate students to consider the results of their research, make connections to the existing scientific literature, draw well-considered conclusions, and create charts potential avenues for future research. Discussion chapter is important because it reflects graduate students' capacity to engage deeply with course material, evaluate its implications, and make thoughtful contributions to academic discourse in their particular domain (Redaksi, 2021).

In the Indonesian higher educational context, TEFL holds strategic position where English language proficiency is an indispensable skill for future educators, particularly TEFL master's students. Thus, it becomes important to explore how graduate students in this field structure the "discussion" chapter of the theses. By doing this, we not only gain insight into emerging academic practices and conventions within the TEFL landscape in Indonesia, but we also provide valuable knowledge that can inform pedagogical strategies, curriculum development, and training for future educators.

Crafting the discussion section of a research paper is acknowledged as the most challenging task in the research endeavor (Holmes, 1997). This section not only requires a comprehensive

recapitulation of the findings, but also involves analysing, interpreting, and synthesizing the research results with the existing literature (Basturkmen, 2012). The difficulty is arising from the need to build a coherent argument, drawing connections between the research objectives and empirical data, while highlighting the significance of the research (Balakumar et al., 2023).

The discussion section requires a sharp ability to delve into more than just the facts or just the bare data. Authors must interpret the meaning of their findings, identify patterns or trends, and relate the research results to relevant conceptual frameworks or theories. In addition, discussion writing requires synthesising different elements of the research to create a persuasive and cohesive narrative (Martella et al., 2013).

An additional challenge in structuring the discussion section lies in maintaining a balance between providing in-depth interpretation and making sure it is clear to the reader. Often, researchers must convey complex information in a manner that is understandable for an audience with varying levels of expertise in the area being researched (Swales, 1990).

By adopting a genre analysis approach by Chen & Kuo (2012), the present research endeavors to examine the diverse linguistic features, structures, and elements employed by postgraduate students in organizing the discussion chapter of their theses. Through this investigation, the study seeks to uncover writing patterns that might exhibit uniqueness within the Indonesian context and the field of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). The primary aim is to offer profound insights into the ways graduate students construct arguments, present findings, and formulate interpretations within their discussion sections. By discerning the distinctions and similarities in writing strategies, the research anticipates providing a more comprehensive understanding of academic writing practices within the TEFL context in Indonesia.

Devira et al., (2021) conducted a study focusing on the rhetorical structure, specifically the move of the introduction section in the theses produced by a cohort of students at the Department of Education for English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The primary objective was to assess whether the introductions adhered to a standardized model. Employing a qualitative approach, the research meticulously examined the theses of all students who had received a relative grade A. The analysis of the data yielded significant findings, notably revealing deficiencies in the construction of steps in Move 2. Conversely, a relatively higher proportion of steps were identified in Move 1 and Move 3. This discrepancy strongly indicates that the introduction section of the theses created by the students exhibited a misguided and unstructured nature.

In an extensive inquiry, Linuwih et al., (2021) explored the difficulties encountered by students in composing the results and discussion sections of their theses. The research methodology involved in-depth interviews with a carefully selected sample of three students and three supervisors. The aim was to get an insight into the nuanced interaction dynamics of students and supervisors, which explains the complexities of thesis writing. The results of this research underscored a notable disparity in the comprehension of the outcome and discussion sections between students and their supervisors. It became apparent that students exhibited a more restricted understanding of the functions and requisites of this section in comparison to their more seasoned counterparts, the supervisors. In addition, the study also revealed significant differences in terms of perceptions regarding the nature and causes of difficulties encountered by students - supervisors demonstrated a more comprehensive understanding in this area. An important insight from this research was the identification of a problem prevalent among students: the struggle to fulfil the genre requirements associated with the results and discussion sections. This insight provides an important perspective on the challenges faced by students in the process of navigating the specific expectations of this academic content. Furthermore, this research underlines the importance of recognising that mentors have a deeper and more nuanced understanding of these challenges, which further serves to highlight the potential for improving guidance and mentoring.

Pieketaleyee & Bazargani (2018) investigated the approaches and methods utilized by M.A. students in TEFL when constructing the introductory and literature review sections during the delivery of their M.A. theses through PowerPoint presentations. Their findings indicated that the organizational framework for structuring PowerPoint presentations aligns with the five fundamental components of M.A. theses: Introduction, Literature review, Method, Results, and Discussion. The implications of their study were valuable for students, educators, content developers, curriculum designers, and individuals seeking to apply genre theory in a practical context.

Loan & Pramoolsook (2015) undertook a similar investigation, exploring the structural aspects of the introduction and conclusion sections in 24 Master's theses composed by Vietnamese postgraduate students. Utilizing the framework developed by Chen & Kuo (2012) and incorporating interviews focused on discourse with actual thesis writers and their supervisors, the research unveiled that these writers structured their work in alignment with perceived communicative objectives for these chapters. Additionally, the recurrent patterns of section or chapter introductions followed by subsequent section or chapter introductions and concluding with

a section or chapter summary seem to reflect the distinctive composition of these documents within the TESOL discourse community in Vietnam. Their findings emphasize the necessity for explicit guidance on the rhetorical structures of these two genres for non-native English writers and underscore the significance of comprehending and practicing genre composition specific to a particular discourse community.

The lack of prior research examining the way Indonesian postgraduate students compose discussion sections within the field of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) through a genre analysis approach highlights a notable gap in the existing academic literature. Although many studies have explored various aspects of theses writing, a specific focus on discussion sections in the TEFL field and in the Indonesian academic context is still relatively unexplored. The present research dearth provides an opportunity to investigate the unique challenges and patterns that may appear in the writing practices of Indonesian postgraduate students as they navigate the tricky waters of discussing their research findings in the TEFL field.

As we delve further into this subject area, we explore the findings that emerge. By comprehensively examining the conventions and practices in discussions of TEFL master's theses written by Indonesian graduate students, we attempt to contribute to the broader discussion regarding on academic writing in the TEFL field, both within the national landscape and the wider global academic sphere.

Therefore, we aim to conduct a genre-based investigation on examining moves and steps in the discussion section of TEFL master's theses written by Indonesian postgraduates. Genre analysis, as a well-established approach, has been applied widely to uncover the discourse characteristics of various academic genres. In this regard, we began an investigation using a move analysis to reveal the rhetorical moves and steps adopted by Indonesian graduate students when they compose the discussion chapter in their master's theses.

1.2. Research questions

Based on the rationale outlined above, the present study was carried out to address the following question: how are discussion chapters of master's thesis written and organized by Indonesian students?

1.3. Significance of the study

This study carries significant implications for students pursuing TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) master's theses, providing a comprehensive exploration of the moves and steps within the discussion chapters. By employing a genre analysis approach, the research offers valuable insights into effective writing strategies, enhancing students' understanding of structuring discussions in academic theses. The findings are expected to contribute to improved academic performance in TEFL courses and related linguistic disciplines. This research lays the groundwork for future investigations into the discussion chapters of TEFL master's theses. Researchers in linguistics and education can build upon the genre analysis approach employed in this study, further exploring nuances in linguistic features and structural elements. This study opens avenues for future research to delve deeper into the intricacies of academic writing practices in TEFL contexts, thereby contributing to the existing body of knowledge in the field.

2. METHOD

2.1. Research Design

Our study utilizes the analytical framework of Chen & Kuo (2012) due to its comprehensive step-by-step approach for analyzing the discussion section in theses. The decision to use this model is based on its relevance to Applied Linguistics and TEFL. The model is also proven to comprehensively explain thesis elements, as demonstrated in Loan & Pramoolsook's (2015) study on TESOL in Vietnam.

2.2. Samples

The samples of this research are presented in Table 1

Table 1. Description of Data Corpus

Analysed chapter	Title of the thesis Thesis	Word count
Discussion 1 of thesis 1	Challenges And Strategies In Writing Research Articles For Publication: A Case Study Of Indonesian Efl Undergraduate Students	2961 words
Discussion 2 of thesis 2	Artificial Intelligence-Integrated Language Learning: An Investigation Of Quillbot Utilization In EFL Students' Academic Writing	1303 words
		1487 words

Discussion 3 of thesis 3	The Effect Of Duolingo Utilization On Indonesian Adolescent Efl Learners' Vocabulary Mastery And Academic Self-Efficacy	
Discussion 4 of thesis 4	Utilizing Computer-Mediated Corrective Feedback In Academic Writing: A Focus On EFL Master Students' Preferences And Perceptions	1646 words
Discussion 5 of thesis 5	Teaching Higher-Order Thinking Skills (Hots) In English Classrooms For Junior High Schools Students: Exploring Teachers' Perspectives And Practices	1807 words

We performed an in-depth analysis of the discussion sections in five master's theses authored by Indonesian students. These theses covered diverse subject areas within English Language Teaching (ELT) and Applied Linguistics, encompassing topics such as academic writing, teaching methods, and higher-order thinking skills. The discussion chapters presented in these theses exhibited variations in word counts, collectively amounting to a total of 9204 words.

2.3. Data collection

To collect data of the present study, we carried out these following stages. First, we accessed the University Repository by navigating to the UINSU repository website or database. Second, we searched for English Language Education Theses. We used the search feature on the repository website to find theses related to the field of English language education. We used keywords such as "English language education", "language teaching", and any related terms. Third, we reviewed and selected any relevant theses. We read the abstracts and titles of the theses to identify those that align with our research focus. We selected five theses that are most relevant to our search. Next, we downloaded the five selected theses. We ensured a download or access option on the repository platform. We downloaded the full text of the five selected theses particularly the Discussion chapters due to their relevance to our research focus to analyse the discussion chapters. Finally, we organized and managed the sections to enable us for further steps in the analysis stage. We also ensured that the downloaded files contained necessary information for bibliographic purposes such as author names, publication dates, and thesis titles. Table 1 describes details of the present data corpus of the discussion chapters.

2.4. Data analysis

The analytical framework of the present study is adopted from Chen and Kuo (2012) consisting of introducing the discussion chapter, reporting results, summarising results, commenting on results, summarising the study, evaluating the study, and deductions from the research study. Table 1 exhibits the moves and steps in Chen and Kuo (2012) model.

Table 1. Analysis framework adopted from Chen and Kuo (2012)

Move 1: Introducing the Discussion chapter
Providing background information and how discussions are presented
Move 2: Reporting results
Reporting major findings
Move 3: Summarising results
Making conclusions of results
Move 4: Commenting on results
Interpreting results
Comparing results with literature
Accounting for results (giving reasons)
Evaluating results (including strengths, limitations, etc. of results)
Move 5: Summarising the study
Summarising the study briefly
Move 6: Evaluating the study
Indicating limitations
Indicating significance/advantage
Evaluating methodology
Move 7: Deductions from the (research) study
Making suggestions

Thus, in the present study, Chen and Kuo (2012) is considered to be sufficient to analyze the discussion chapters of the thesis in the Indonesian context. The success of this model in elaborating the steps of analysis in the fields of applied linguistics and TEFL gives confidence that it can assist the present study in uncovering the key elements and presentation of quality argumentation in theses in those fields.

3.FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Findings

This research begins a thorough exploration through the lens of genre analysis, which seeks to uncover the different rhetorical strategies, patterns, and procedural elements employed by Indonesian graduate students when structuring the discussion chapter of their master's thesis. By examining move and step, the primary objective of this study is to make a contribution not only to the comprehension of the writing approaches employed by Indonesian university students, but also to the discourse more generally on the effective scholarly written communication in academic contexts.

Table 3. Frequency of occurrence of Move and Steps in Master's Theses

Moves and steps	Total	Percentage
Move 1: Introducing the Discussion chapter	-	-
Providing background information and how discussions are presented	8	9.7%
Move 2: Reporting results	-	-
Reporting major findings	34	41.4%
Move 3: Summarising results	-	-
Making conclusions of results	1	1.2%
Move 4: Commenting on results	-	-
Interpreting results	-	-
Comparing results with literature	18	21.9%
Accounting for results (giving reasons)	17	20.7%
Evaluating results (including strengths, limitations, etc. of results)	3	3.6%
Move 5: Summarising the study	-	-
Summarising the study briefly	-	-
Move 6: Evaluating the study	-	-
Indicating limitations	-	-
Indicating significance/advantage	1	1.2%
Evaluating methodology	-	
Move 7: Deductions from the (research) study	-	
Making suggestions	-	
Recommending further research	-	
Drawing pedagogic implications	-	
Referring to other studies	-	
Providing support or justification	-	
Total	**82**	**100%**

Move-steps in the Discussion Chapters of Master's Theses

In our present analysis focusing on the move and steps employed by Indonesian postgraduate TEFL students in crafting the discussion chapters of their theses, we found that *Move 2 Step 1* (Reporting major findings) emerged as the most prevalent, constituting 41.4% of occurrences. Following closely was *Move 4 Step 2*, representing the second most prevalent move-

step, with a total percentage of 34.6. *Move 4 Step 3* (Accounting for results) appeared with a frequency of 20.7%. However, we also found several least prevalent move-steps in the corpus of discussion chapters of the thesis. *Move 1 Step 1* was utilized eight times, contributing to 9.7% of the total. Next, *Move 4 Step 4* (evaluating results, including strengths, limitations, etc.) accounted for 3.6% in total. *Move 3 Step 1* jointly occurred once, representing 1.2% of the data. Similarly, *Move 6 Step 2* had a 1.2% occurrence in the overall distribution. In the detailed presentation of our findings below, our corpus-based evidences are signaled by the bolded words to indicate how each of the move-steps was used by the indonesian postgraduate writers.

Move 2, Step 1: Reporting Major Findings

The most frequent move that we found in this analysis is *Move 2 Step 1* with 41.4 percent of occurrences in all of the discussion chapters. Our analysis reveals that this move step is presented respectively in Thesis 2, Thesis 3, and Thesis 4 as shown in Excerpt 1, Excerpt 2, and Excerpt 3.

Excerpt 1

"**The result showed that Artificial Intelligence technology can be used as a means of developing academic writing for students. The artifacts and interview results showed that** the AI-based application that is *QuillBot* can assist students (Thesis 2)

Excerpt 2

"**The results showed statistically significant difference in academic self-efficacy between** students who were taught with gamification (like Duolingo learning) and those who were taught the traditional way, face-to-face". (Thesis 3)

Excerpt 3

"**In this study, the majority of EFL master students' preferred to** receive direct feedback on their academic writing**. The analysis of the data from the questionnaire indicates that**….(Thesis 4)

Move 4, Step 2: comparing results with literature

The second most frequent move in this analysis was *Move 4 Step 2* where the total percentage was 34.69%. *Move 4 Step 2* is found in all of discussion chapters. As indicated in Excerpt 4, Excerpt 5, and Excerpt 6, Thesis 1, Thesis 3 and Thesis 5 incorporated this step.

Excerpt 4

"**This finding was consistent with earlier studies,** which claimed that writing …..**(Bitchener & Basturkmen, 2006; Ling, 2013; Parkinson, 2011)".** (Thesis 1)

Excerpt 5

 "**The same result also found by Ajisoko (2020). Based on his research ….. (Ajisoko, 2020)".** (Thesis 3)

Excerpt 6

This finding is in line with Seman et al. (2017) Aziz et al. (2017), Fakhomah and Utami, (2019)…. **This finding is supported by** Mursyid and Kurniawati (2019). (Thesis 5)

To compare current results with literature, our evidences show that many literature citations are used, especially previous research relevant to the current research context. Through the analysis, we considered that *Move 4 Step 2* emerged as indispensable move-step within the discussion sections of master's theses. A thorough scrutiny of our corpus consistently demonstrated the incorporation of *Move 4 Step 2* in each of the master's thesis. This step plays important role to show the consistencies across the studies in the areas of the research conducted by the postgraduate students.

Move 4 Step 3: Accounting for Results (Giving Reasons)

Our findings also show *Move 4 Step 3 (Accounting for results)* appeared with 20.7%. Its emergences are indicated in Thesis 1 (Excerpt 7), Thesis 2 (Excerpt 8), and Thesis 5 (Excerpt 9).

Excerpt 7

"**There is little evidence that the causes and factors contributing to the establishment of various writing challenges cannot be separated from those issues themselves. There are nine reasons** of difficulty in …each of them was categorized into two factors**, they are internal and external factors**. **The study discovered three internal factors** that influence... **The study discovered six elements that have nothing to do with** a student's aptitude, such as…" (Thesis 1)

Excerpt 8

" Effective use of technology assists EFL/ESL students in…. (Dudeney & Hockly, 2008). **The use of technology offers several advantages** …**which improves the lesson's productivity and effectiveness**". (Thesis 2)

Excerpt 9

 "**Students in private junior high school are allowed to** use smartphones in learning activities**. Students are allowed to** access the internet and use digital dictionaries**. Meanwhile, students at**

public Junior High School are prohibited from using smartphones during learning activities".
(Thesis 5)

Move 1 Step 1: providing background information and how discussions are presented

In all of the data, *Move 1 step 1* was used eight times or 9.7% of the total. Based on our analysis, this step is found in Thesis 1, Thesis , and Thesis 4 as presented in Excerpt 10, Excerpt 11, and Excerpt 12 respectively.

Excerpt 10

"**This study focused on the challenges and strategies** faced by undergraduate students when..**based on the research findings discussed above**". (Thesis 1)

Excerpt 11

"**The purpose of this study was to address ….. In particular, the purpose of this study was to describe the effect of using**…".(Thesis 3)

Excerpt 12

"**The discussion of this research was collected from the document study, questionnaire, and interview that has been done by the researcher...**" (Thesis 4).

Move 4 Step 4: evaluating results including strengths, limitations, etc. of the results

Our next finding reveals that *Move 4 step 4* is the least prevalent move-step that has 3.6% of total data. This move step is incorporated only in Thesis 2 as evidenced in Excerpt 13.

Excerpt 13

"**Therefore, students should be proficient in their language knowledge because they cannot depend on nor have full hopes for *QuillBot* or other AI assistance.** If students become overly dependent on AI, …". (Thesis 2)

Move 3, Step 1: making conclusions of the results

Our analysis also reveals that *Move 1 step 1* is one of the least prevalent move-step in our data. This move-step only occurred in Thesis 5 as shown in Excerpt 14. The given evidence shows how the postgraduate student-writer summarized his/her findings.

Excerpt 14

"**From the results of observations,** collaboration and communication activities can be seen when…**. Both public and private junior high schools teachers** stimulate students to participate in discussions**."** (Thesis 5)

Excerpt 14 indicates how a concise yet comprehensive summary serves to distill the main results of the study in the discussion chapter of Thesis 5.

Move 6 Step 2: indicating significance/advantage of the study

Our analysis also indicated the least emergence of *move 6 step 2* with 1.2% percentage in total. This move is only found in Thesis 1 as expressed in Excerpt 15 as following

Excerpt 15

This study is important since it allows the researcher to reveal how tough it is for students to write an essay based on participant impressions. The participants candidly shared their struggles…. (Thesis 1)

3.2. Discussion

The present research focuses on exploring the structures and move-steps applied by postgraduate students when structuring in the discussion chapter of their theses. The present exploration also provides a fresh insight into the communication strategies used in presenting, analysing and interpreting the research findings. Using analysis framework adopted from Chen & Kuo (2012), our focus on genre aspects enable us to better understand the ways in which postgraduate students applied certain linguistic features with the aim of achieving effective communication in their discussion chapter.

The data of the present study were five postgraduate theses taken from the repository of the North Sumatra State Islamic University. We selected the theses because they were in accordance with the disciplines to be discussed which discussed teaching methods, academic writing and higher-order thinking skills (hots). The cumulative word count for the entire discussion chapter analyzed amounted to 9.204 words. Each of the sentences and paragraphs within the corpus was meticulously examined by the researchers and subsequently interpreted in the results section of this study.

Upon data analysis, several moves and steps mostly emerged within the corpus of discussion chapters of the thesis; namely, *Move 2 Step 1* (Reporting major findings), *Move 4 Step 2* (Comparing results with literature), and *Move 4 Step 3* (Accounting for results). However, several moves and steps are found to be least used in the discussion chapters: *Move 1 Step 1*

(providing background information), *Move 4 Step 4* (evaluating results), *Move 3 Step 1* (making conclusions of the result), *Move 6 Step 2* (indicating significance).

The predominant emergences of *Move 4 Step 2* (Making comparisons with existing literature) suggests that *Move 4 step 2* is critical in master's thesis. This is because discussion chapter is a valuable part to review previous research. By including this element, in-depth comparison between the findings of the present study and those of previous studies signal any consistencies across the studies. Anwar (2010) highlighted the importance of this move step, especially among Indonesian authors who considered the presence of Move 4 very important in their research articles. His findings suggested that the existence of a cultural preference or academic tradition prioritizes this move.

Move 2: Reporting Results is expressed to present the ongoing reporting of the results, uncovering the gaps found during the research process. The presentation of set of evidences in the corpus of master's thesis demonstrates their intention to articulate and discussing their key results in a structured manner to ease readers' comprehension. Our findings are in line with Warsito et al. (2017) who examined the rhetorical move-steps of discussion sections in 20 English master's theses written by Indonesian EFL graduate students. They found that *Move 2* (reporting the results) and *Move 4* (commenting on the results) appeared the most in all of the data making them as compulsory moves. Our findings are also supported by Rahayu et al., (2023) who explored the communicative moves and the series of move cycles in the discussion section of the final project report written by EFL vocational students in one public polytechnics in Indonesia. Their results showed that Move 2, Move 4, and Move 1 were frequently used in all of the discussion sections.

Similar research can be observed in Peacock (2002) who investigated the move and step structures within the discussion section of research articles. The study encompassed a total corpus of 252 research articles, with 36 articles sampled from each discipline, amounting to 1.4 million words. It was found that one of the mandatory moves is a reference to previous research. Furthermore, it can also be seen in Asari et al., (2018) who examined moves and steps of research articles. Their results indicated a consistent utilization of four out of eight moves by RA writers in constructing the discussion section within the realm of English language teaching and learning. Their findings included the statement of research results (Move 2), explanation (Move 5), references to previous research (Move 4), and deduction or hypothesis (Move 7). Irawati et al.

(2018) who analyzed moves and step in RA showed that referencing to previous research is frequent move found in the articles.

One move analysis by Lubis (2019) uncovered the complexities of academic argumentation within the findings and discussion segments of research conducted by 113 English education students in Indonesia. His exploration revealed an important emphasis on the manifestation of congruence in the commentary step of the argumentation process. In particular, the students demonstrated this congruence through their proficiency in interpreting research results and comparing these findings with existing previous research. This nuanced approach not only highlighted their analytical prowess, but also underlined a conscious effort to contextualize their research results within previous research.

The least move-steps in our study are *Move 3 step 1*, and *Move 6 step 2*. *Move 3, step 1* was identified in only one piece of evidence among the five discussion chapters. The percentage of the move-step is 1.02% which leads us to consider it unnecessary. This may be because the habits of Indonesian student-writers that making a conclusion by summarizing their findings is not in the discussion chapter. In this context, student-writers likely see that making conclusions can be done in other sections of their thesis such as in the conclusion one. The least occurrence of *Move 6 step 2* in the analysis suggests that this step can be categorized as optional one in the TEFL master's thesis genre. Given their notable absence in most of the discussions, it becomes clear that this move-step is not an essential component universally embraced by the students. Their presence particularly highlights this rarity in only one thesis (Thesis 1) and their conspicuous absence in all other discussions subjected to analysis.

Our interpretation of the key findings may reflect a tradition of academic writing where making conclusions is not always considered a central part of the argumentation process in the discussion. The student-writers may focus more on the interpretation of the results and comparison with previous literature, considering that these aspects are more substantial in supporting and strengthening their research findings. Our findings align with a previous study by Arsyad (2013) investigating the genre of the discussion section in research articles (RAs) written in Indonesian by Indonesian authors. His findings showed that discussion writing by Indonesian writers raises a high frequency of move 4 (reference to previous research findings).

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1. Conclusion

The present study explores discussion chapters of master's theses were written and organized by Indonesian postgraduates by examining the common moves and steps based on genre analysis approach. Discussion chapter holds a pivotal role, serving as a platform to succinctly encapsulate, analyze, and draw conclusions from the research findings. We found Moving 2 Step 1 (reporting major findings), Moving 4 Step 2 (comparing results with literature), and Moving 4 Step 3 (Accounting for results) are the main moves and steps that occurred in the thesis' corpus of discussion chapters. Nonetheless, the discussion chapters exhibit a lower use of a few moves and steps: *Move 1 Step 1* (providing background information), *Move 4 Step 4* (evaluating results), *Move 3 Step 1* (making conclusions of the result), *Move 6 Step 2* (indicating significance) respectively. This research offers a crucial perspective for scholars, particularly those in the field of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), aiming to comprehend the effective structuring and organization of arguments and research findings within the discussion section. The findings of this study have the potential to serve as a valuable reference for researchers and students seeking to enhance their proficiency in analyzing academic literature. By understanding genre conventions in TEFL thesis writing, writers can more effectively incorporate previous literature and integrate it into their arguments in a coherent and structured way. Through this approach, our study enriches insights into how future social scientists and educators in the field of TEFL can approach and analyze academic writing more systematically and contextually. As such, our study is not only a valuable reference source for TEFL researchers and students, but also makes a substantial contribution to enriching practice and knowledge in the field of academic writing.

4.2. Suggestions

Although the present study provides important information about academic writing, we need to acknowledge that the data size is limited. Only five theses from graduate students were the focus of the analysis. The generated results may not represent all viewpoints in the academic world regarding academic writing. For future researchers interested in the same topic, it is recommended to expand the number of theses analyzed. By involving more theses, future can be more comprehensive in representing various viewpoints and scholarly contributions on academic writing. This will enable future researchers a more profound comprehension of the subject, fostering a thorough exploration of discussions and perspectives put forth by researchers, particularly those in the student phase. In order to make future research more powerful and

extensively applied, future researchers are advised to collect data from different educational stages encompassing bachelor's, master's, and doctoral theses. In addition, exploring various research methods and considering perspectives from different disciplines can provide a more comprehensive understanding of this topic. With such steps, researchers can overcome the limitations mentioned in this study and facilitate the path towards an enhanced comprehension of academic writing.

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