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A GENRE STUDY OF UNDERGRADUATE DISSERTATION ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS IN A GHANAIAN UNIVERSITY

Abstract

In recent times, scholars and researchers in Applied Linguistics have increasingly shown interest in dissertation acknowledgements/thesis acknowledgements (DAs/TAs) in various settings (Anglo-American, Arabic, and Asian), leaving those from Sub-Saharan Africa under-researched. The present study seeks to examine the DAs of undergraduate students at a Ghanaian university, following Hyland (2003, 2004). A data set of 200 DAs was obtained from two departments, English and Entomology & Wild Life. The qualitative research design was used as the main approach, supplemented by some descriptive statistics, to analyze the schematic structure and lexico-grammatical choices in the data set. Two key findings were observed in the study. First, the analysis showed a three-move pattern across the two sets of data and a slight differentiation in terms of text length across the exemplars. Secondly, the DAs from both departments deployed gratitude-related terms and socio-culturally conditioned names, while hybridized forms (realized in sociolinguistic terms as code-mixing) were preferably used in the DAs from the Department of English. These findings have implications for research on DAs/TAs, genre studies, and undergraduate research writing pedagogy.

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Key words

dissertation acknowledgement, Ghana, undergraduate students, writing pedagogy.

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