

## **INTERNATIONALIZING RESEARCH: THE DIFFERENT USES OF THE ALTERNATIVE FORMAT OF THESES AND DISSERTATIONS AT UFMG**

Nara Nília Marques Nogueira  
IFMG  
nara.nogueira@ifmg.edu.br

The discussion about the use of the alternative format of theses and dissertations in academia came into sight during the course of an investigation carried out with professors of the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG). The aim of the mentioned research was to analyze academic literacy practices and their impact on the internationalization of this Brazilian institution of higher education. Data collection took place during the Researcher Connect Workshop, which was offered in a partnership between the British Council, UFMG, the International Affairs Office (DRI) and the School of Languages and Linguistics (FALE). The workshop periodically occurs at universities in order to assist members of the academic community who need to communicate in English in international and multicultural settings become more prepared to do so. Seventeen participants were present at the workshop. Questionnaires were applied to professors, prior to the workshop, and interviews were conducted with nine participants after the event. The analysis of the data obtained from the interviews pointed to recent academic changes, such as the alternative format of theses and dissertations. Higher education institutions have been adjusting some writing norms since 2000 and the alternative format is one of such adjustments (MELLO, 2014): it consists in enabling the final work of *stricto sensu* postgraduate courses to be written in the form of scientific articles. The requirements of each program differ, some demand the articles have already been published by the time the student completes his course; others allow the articles to be submitted to journals after the completion of the course, valuing the collaboration of the professors who are going to read and discuss the study. Some schools require that the articles are written in English. The number of articles vary from three to five, being possible, in some cases, to publish them as book chapters as well. One of the participants, who had already used such format with one of his advisees, highlighted the potential that this new organization of academic texts has to promote the internationalization of higher education. His perspective calls attention to the necessity to discuss the topic with scholars, who are often mistakenly seen as fully prepared in respect to the learning and use of academic literacies (STREET, 2009; LILLIS, MAGYAR, ROBINSON-PANT, 2010) and who will lead students in that process. In the course of the research, a list was compiled of UFMG graduate programs and a few other institutions that have regulations authorizing the alternative format. The results point to the need to reformulate academic literacy practices in order to adapt to new social realities and thus contribute more directly to internationalization processes. In addition, the results trigger reflections on differences in the regulations; on the criticisms that the alternative format has received from the scientific community that classifies it as Salami

Science; on productivity publication requirements; and on the use of languages other than Portuguese in the writing of theses and dissertations.

**Palavras-chave:** alternative format of theses and dissertations; academic literacies; internationalization.

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