

## **An Investigation of the Structure and Themes of Relationship Advice Columns in Two English Language Malaysian Women's Magazines**

**Reem Adib Lulu**

Universiti Brunei Darussalam  
sailant\_girl@windowslive.com

This study aims to investigate the structure and the themes found in relationship advice columns in two English language Malaysian women's magazines, namely, *Female* and *Her World*. Twenty texts, ten from each magazine, were analysed using van Leeuwen and Machin's (2003) 'problem-solution' discourse schema. The findings from the study revealed that in the majority of the texts, the problem(s) is implied from the title but the solution(s) is often stated explicitly, either in the text or in the title itself. In addition, the study found that relationship advice columns in these magazines are often very brief with some texts utilising a bullet point format. With regard to the themes, the study also found that the data matches the problem and the solution categories in van Leeuwen and Machin's research. However, two new problem categories were observed from the Malaysian data: Lack of Skill and Lack of Knowledge. And, three solution categories were observed: Acquiring Knowledge, Pleasing Yourself and Taking Responsibility.