

Genre Analysis in ESP

Part of seeking to know more about the type of texts ESP learners *need* to master -genre analysis here is a direct method of researching language needs- ESP practitioners as researchers have to examine the structure of specialist texts or genres, then turn them into teachable elements (teach the grammar, vocabulary, lexis and sentence types that are used in the target situation). According to Hyland (2004: 4), genre is '*a term for grouping texts together, representing how writers typically use language to respond to recurring situations*'.

What is Genre Analysis?

Genre analysis, according to Halliday (1973) is the study of how the contextual parameters, discourse structures and language interrelate. 1980's genre analysis approach considers text as a total entity, rather than a collection of unrelated units (unlike register analysis). It came to replace early linguistic analyses of the 1960's that were under the banner of 'register analysis' focused on language structures and specialist vocabulary in isolation (see Halliday, McIntosh and Stevens, 1964, cited in Upton, 2012). Without taking account of the context (author's communicative purpose, target audience, etc.), the language features of specialist texts were limited to the sentence level, hence, devoid of any communicative purpose (i.e., information about how or for which purpose the word is used in that target specialist domain). By the 1970's, the shift of focus towards the importance of communication paved the way to discourse analysis as a primary tool for ESP to study language, or specialist texts, above the sentence level. While discourse analysis examines the key structures and patterns of texts that define their communicative purposes, they help understand how language structures are deployed to fulfill different communicative or rhetorical purposes (Upton, 2012; Hyland, 2007). In the 1980's genre analysis emerged as a type of discourse analysis that focuses on language functions and key structures and patterns that distinguish specific text types or 'genres' from others. In the same way, it is of note that genre analysis does not assume absolute separateness from register analysis. highlighting the organization of particular texts, it also draws on register analysis to stop at the key language forms and vocabulary.

How do Genres (Text Types) Differ?

Brown and Yule (1983) argue that genres may differ in their formal characteristics such as paragraph structures, thematic sequences, the conventional ordering of events in time and the distribution of sentence types.

Genre Analysis: The ESP School

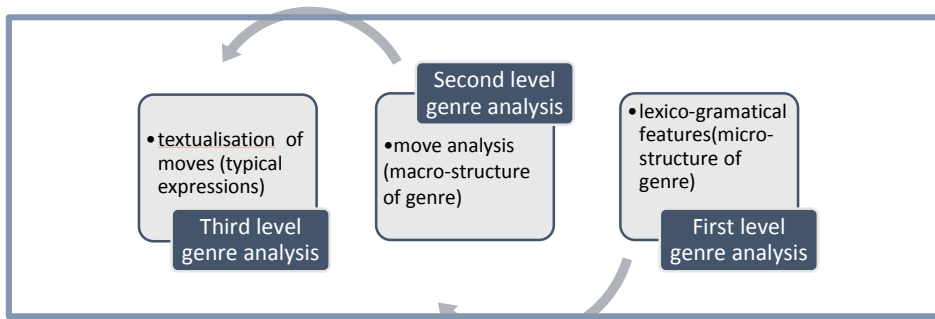
The ESP school of genre analysis was started by Swales' (1990) investigation of academic genres, namely research articles. Swales (1990: 58) views that 'a genre comprises a set of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes'. These purposes are recognized by the expert members

of the parent discourse community and constitute the rationale of the genre. Then, Bhatia (1993) followed his lead. But he was interested in business and legal genres. The principle in genre analysis is hence to identify the communicative purposes that are expressed in a sequenced manner (**stages**). These stages appear in the way a text is built up through a series of **moves (the second level of genre analysis)**.

A **move**: a text unit that relates to the writer’s purpose and the content that s/he wishes to communicate

The first level of genre analysis, i.e., **micro-organisation (lexico-grammar) of genres**, is often

revealed via computational analysis (corpus linguistics (CL) uncovering high frequency (specific-general) terms to reveal patterns of form and use in particular genres that are difficult to identify manually. CL also allows for the identification of textualisations of both professional and academic genres (which is the third level of genre analysis).



Examples of Genre Analyses: There is a regular pattern of ‘**moves and steps**’ that appear in the majority of genres as shown in the models below.

1)Dudley-Evans’ (1994) macro-level Genre analysis of Results Discussion in research articles

- Move1:** Information move
- Move2:** Statement of the result
- Move3:** Finding
- Move4:** (Un)expected outcome
- Move5:** Reference to previous research
- Move6:** Explanation
- Move7:** Claim
- Move8:** Limitation
- Move9:** Recommendation

2) Bhatia’s (1993) Genre Analysis of Job Application Letter

- Move1:** Establishing credentials
- Move 2:** Introducing the candidature
- Move 3:** Offering incentives
- Move 4:** Enclosing documents
- Move 5:** Using pressure tactics
- Move 6:** Soliciting response
- Move7:** Ending politely

Implications for ESP Teaching

Many ESP specialists contend that move analysis should be taught to ESP learners as it might lead to the production of texts that better meet readers' expectations.

Dudley-Evans (1987) state that *"If we are to teach the writing of certain very specific texts such as ... the business or technical report, we need a system analysis that shows how each type of text differs from other types"* which helps identify the structure of specialist text via a sequence of phases or moves. Research has demonstrated that genre analysis can help ESP learners outlines that assist them in understanding/producing specialist texts (Swales, 1991)

TD Task

What is the overall (Macro-/move) and micro (lexico-grammar) structure of the genres below?

Santiago Posteguillo and Juan C. Palmer(2000). Reflective Teaching in EFL: Integrating Theory and Practice (<http://www.tesl-ej.org/ej15/cf1.html>)

Abstract1

There is a tendency--at least within Spanish Universities--to separate linguistic theory from methodology in language teaching. Our understanding is that linguistic theoretical input should not be taught independently of pedagogical considerations. This is especially the case in applied linguistics, where both discourse and genre analysis (Swales, 1990; Fairclough, 1992; Bhatia, 1993; Fortanet et al., 1998), represent an important tool for linguists in their efforts to comprehend the variation of language across different types of texts. Our aim is to overcome some of the problems based on the existing gap between theoretical input and pedagogical teacher training by means of a thorough reflective process on language teaching (Bartlett, 1990; Korthagen, 1993; Hatton & Smith, 1995; James, 1996; Farrell, 1999).

José Carlos Núñez, Rebeca Cerezo, Ana Bernardo, Pedro Rosário, Antonio Valle, Estrella Fernández and Natalia Suárez (2011). Implementation of training programs in self-regulated learning strategies in Moodle format: Results of an experience in higher education

Abstract2

This paper tests the efficacy of an intervention program in virtual format intended to train studying and self-regulation strategies in university students. The aim of this intervention is to promote a series of strategies which allow students to manage their learning processes in a more profi cient and autonomous way. The program has been developed in Moodle format and hosted by the Virtual Campus of the University of Oviedo. The present study had a semi-experimental design, included an experimental group (n=167) and a control one (n=206), and used pre-test and post-test measures (self-regulated learning strategies' declarative knowledge, self-regulated learning macro-strategy planning execution-assessment, self-regulated learning strategies on text, surface and deep learning approaches, and academic

achievement). Data suggest that the students enrolled in the training program, comparing with students in the control group, showed a significant improvement in their declarative knowledge, general and on text use of learning strategies, increased their deep approach to learning, decreased their use of a surface approach and, in what concerns to academic achievement, statistically significant differences have been found in favour of the experimental group.