In The Name Of

GOD

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Thematization Patterns Across Generic Moves

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To My kind Parents and Sisters

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Abstract

Definitions of 'Genre' as provided by the authorities are far from unanimous, and the scholars take different positions on the conceptualization of this slippery notion. Despite the heterogeneity of ideas, there are also common instances shared among scholars who are interested in different aspects of the concept. Swales (1990) is primarily interested in this sociological aspects of genres' functioning, and Bhatia (1993) mainly explores the psychological aspects of its construction. Swales analyzes the genre of ' article introduction', into four generic moves on the basis of the communicative intentions they serve, and Bhatia investigates the tactical aspects of their construction. The present paper, focusing on Swalesian characterization of the generic moves in the article introduction, has attempted to study the patterns of thematic development in such generic moves. For this purpose it has selected 12 academic papers and analyzed them for their constituents generic moves structure, comparing and contrasting the internal structures of the moves from separate articles with respect to their thematic choices and progression inside these moves. The results indicated that each move had characteristic patterns of thematic selection and progression, which were argued to be motivated by the communicative intention of these moves, since moves of dissimilar communicative intentions had different and more or less predictable patterns of thematic selections. On the basis of our analyses of the texts, and the result of

the experiment conducted on the teachability of the generic moves, it is believed that the study can have insightful implications for writing and reading pedagogy.

Acknowledgements i

Abstract ii

-Chapter one: Introduction
1.1)-Background 1
1.2)-The aim of the research 1
1.3)-The outline of the research 2

-Chapter two: Review of literature:
A historical review of 'theme' and some related notions 4
2.1)-Thematic progression 7
2.2)-Theme and systemic functional linguistics 10
2.3)-Systemic functional grammar 10
2.3.1)-The notion of systemic 11
2.4)-Systemic linguistics from metafunctional perspective 14
2.4.1)-Ideational metafunction 14
2.4.2)-Interpersonal metafunction 15
2.4.3)-Textual metafunction 16
2.4.4)-The relationship among the metafunctions 17
2.5)- Theme defined in systemic functional grammar 19
2.5.1)-Ideational (topical themes) 21
2.5.2)-Interpersonal themes 21
2.5.3)-Textual themes 21
2.6)-The framework adopted in the research 23
2.7)-Genre analysis 25
2.7.1)-Introduction 25
2.8)-Register analysis and context of situation 25
2.8.1)-Field 26
2.8.2)-Tenor 27
2.8.3)-Mode 28
2.9)-Register and Genre 29
2.10)-Genre analysis 32
2.10.1)-New rhetoric study 33
2.10.2)-Australian genre theories 36

2.10.3)-ESP analysis 38
2.11)-Swales research space model 42
2.12)-Bahatia's psycholinguistic model 43
2.13)-The aim of the present research 44

-Chapter three : Methodology
3.1)-Introduction 46
3.1)-Research hypothesis 46
3.2)-Data collection 46

-Chapter four: Results and discussion
4.1) Move one 49
4.2) Move two 57
4.3) Move three 68
4.4) Move four 74
4.5)An experiment on the teachability of the generic moves 82
4.5.1) The statement of the hypothesis 82
4.5.2) Data collection procedure 82
4.5.3) Conclusion 83

- Chapter five: Implications
5.1)-Introduction 84
5.2)-Implications for writing pedagogy 84
5.3)-Implications for reading 85

Refrences 87

Appendixes 101

List of Figures and Tables

Figure 1 ---------- *18*

Figure 2 ---------- *28*

Figure 3 ---------- *30*

Table 1 ---------- *49*

Table 2 ---------- *58*

Table 3 ---------- *68*

Table 4 ---------- *75*

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1) Background

The present work is mainly based on Swales' (1990) proposal that article introductions consist of four moves which he calls the 'Research Space Model' for article introductions. Bhatia (1993) elaborated on the proposed model suggesting that each rhetorical move itself has a communicative purpose of its own which is subservient to the overall communicative purpose of the genre of introduction. Both these authors are mainly interested in the generic features of the particular texts and their discussions concern that generic properties that texts of different genres exhibit .

1.2)The aim of the research

Drawing on the discussion presented by Bhatia, the present study focuses on the four constituent moves of the article introductions from a textual point of view, and explores the internal structure of the individual moves for thematic selection and their patterns of progression inside the moves. This textual focus is inspired by the patterns of thematic progression proposed by Daneš (1978) and aims to investigate whether each move has a characteristic thematic selection motivated by its particular communicative intention. The hypothesis behind this investigation is ;

"different generic moves in article introductions are also characterized by variations in thematic development patterns". In other words, considering the different communicative intentions of the moves, we hypothesize that these moves would opt for characteristic patterns of thematic selection /progression different from the other moves.

The primary implication to be drawn from this analytical investigation can be insightful for writing purposes. One speculates that by raising the writing students' awareness and academic literacy about the generic structure of various sections of article introductions and the pattern of thematization strategies employed therein would certainly enhance their writing competence.

In order to have a firmer basis for our claim, we also conducted an experiment in which members of particular academic communities who had already had the experience of writing introductions, be it for their dissertations or foreign journals, were asked to rewrite the same introductions, having been exposed to the instruction on the generic structure of the article introductions. In this way, we hoped to be able to investigate the effect of consciousness raising about the generic structure of articles on the writings of the members of particular academic communities.

1.3)The outline of the research

The thesis consists of 5 chapters. The first chapter relates to an introduction in which the general background and purpose of the study are presented. The second chapter which reviews the related literature consists of two sections : The first section starts with a historical review and different

conceptualizations of the concept of theme. Having discussed the status of 'theme' in 'functional linguistics' , it states the reason of trying to conform to the conceptualization of theme in Hallidayan model in this thesis. The second one begins with an introduction on genre analysis and deals with different definitions and schools of genre analysis. The third chapter is about the methodology and deals with the methods of data collection and the framework of the study together with the statement of the research hypothesis. Chapter four also consists of two sections: the first section is devoted to the discussion of our analysis and takes up the discussion of each generic move separately including the illustration of the patterns of thematic progression inside each move together with a table showing the necessary information. The second section deals with an experiment which was conducted on the effect of consciousness-raising about the move structure of article introductions and entails the method of data collection and analysis in the experiment together with the conclusion of data analysis. And finally in the last chapter the conclusions and implications of the present research are presented.

Chapter Two

A Historical Review of Theme and Some Related Notions

Theme contrasted with **Rheme** is one of the basic concepts associated with the rhetorical framework of 'Functional Sentence Perspective', which is a theory of linguistic analysis, wherein sentence analysis is seen as a complex of functionally contrastive constituents.

Early works on ESP date back to 1844 when the old works in the ancient languages were compared with the works in modern languages. In such comparisons, it was proposed that the movement of ideas from initial notion to the goal discourse is reflected in the word order and reveals the movement of the mind itself (Firbus 1978). According to Maynard (1986) in this conceptualization two different orders are distinguished that must interact as we speak, namely the syntactic march and the march of ideas present at any utterance. Accordingly, Maynard believes this view of word-order reflects the fact that language is structured not only in syntax, but also in terms of the communicative needs of its speakers, which is in line with the basic philosophy of Prague school that a structure contains not only logical relations of information motivated by but also a structure built in terms psychological

needs; that is, any utterance exists only because it contributes to the communicative process, responding to psychological needs.

Inspired by the aforementioned theorization ,a second binary distinction was made among sentential elements. Two new terms "foundation" & "core" were coined to refer to 'known information' or the starting point of the sentence and what is said about the starting point, respectively. The terms 'foundation' & 'core' were replaced by 'theme' & 'rheme' and the intervening elements between them were called 'transition' which referred to the words which in fact were parts of rheme but occurred at its periphery (Daneš 1978).

Firbus (1974) found this definition of theme inadequate on the ground that what is known and what is talked bout need not coincide in all instances. He introduced the notion of communicative dynamism, "the extent to which sentential elements contribute to the development of communication", which in written texts is conveyed through the interaction of context, linear modification and semantics. Context affects the CD of linguistic items on the basis of their recoverability from it; "context-independent items have greater CD". With linear modification Firbus notes a general trend for communicatively dynamic items to occur later in the sentence and finally with regard to semantic function Firbus proposes a set of communicative functions for the various elements of the clause which relate to their CD. In short, Firbus (1974) proposes that the basic distribution of CD is completed by a series of elements carrying the lowest and gradually passing on the elements carrying the highest degree of CD. As Baker (1992) observes Firbus views a clause consisting of different types of elements , some laying a foundation on which other clausal elements