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**EVOLUTIONARY NATURE OF GENRE:
INTRODUCTIONS IN PSYCHOLOGY
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE**

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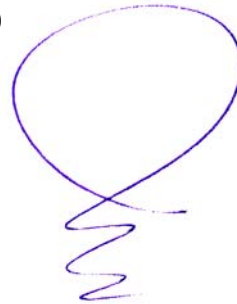
Dr. N. Rashidi

October 2009

In the Name of God

Declaration Form

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DEDICATED TO

MY PARENTS & MY BROTHER WITH LOVE AND GRATITUDE

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ABSTRACT

Evolutionary Nature of Genre: Introductions In Psychology And Environmental Science

By

Samaneh Zangenehmadar

The present study investigated the evolutionary nature of research article genres from two disciplines, Environmental Science and Psychology. The corpus of the study consisted of 160 research article introductions of four journals (*Educational Psychology*, *Journal of Personality* and *Social Psychology, Building and Environment, Energy and Buildings Journal)* form 1976 to 2008. Moreover, this study analyzed syntactic, pragmatic features, and rhetorical move. Based on CARS model of Swales (1990), the rhetorical structure of introductions was analyzed, and then the move and introduction length was estimated. Additionally, by using Wordsmith tools, the syntactic and pragmatic features of the introduction, the amount of pronoun application, different aspects of tense , voice , conjunction , and citation usage were probed .The results showed that the average length of introductions in Environmental Science (5998 words) was less than in Psychology (6124). The longest and shortest moves in both fields were move A and B, respectively. The use of first person plural was more than other pronouns and there were few number of second person markers. Amount and the number of introductions with pronouns, in Psychology exceeded those of the Environmental Science and there was a specific evolutionary pattern in the use of Present and Past tense in Psychology, increasing application of Present vs., decreasing use of Past tense from 1976 to 2006. The analysis of conjunction application revealed that, the use of conjunctions was changing in both fields, and no specific pattern was found between two fields and in 2006 the highest percentage of conjunction application was observed in both fields. Finally, the kind of citation use in Environmental Science was totally different from Psychology in which we didn't see any year just the numbers which show the reference.

Table of Contents

Title   **Page**

List of tables

List of figures and graphs

Title   **Page**

Chapter one
Introduction

1.0   Introduction

In this chapter an introduction to genre analysis is given, the genre is defined and the significance of its analysis is provided. Then, the importance of genre and some methods for its analysis, the most prominent of which is move analysis, is presented. Finally, the objectives of the present study, research questions, and the significance of the study are mentioned.

1.1 Definitions of Genre

Most dictionaries apply the term genre exclusively to the fields of art, music and literature. *The 2001 New American Oxford Dictionary* defines genre as: "a category of artistic composition, as in music and literature, characterized by similarities in form, style or subject matter" (Jewell & Abate 2001: 707).

Traditionally, genre has been viewed as a way of classifying texts with common features (e.g., novel, poem, and essay). In academic or professional settings, widely discussed text types include research articles grant proposals, promotional letters, or job applications. New ways of looking at genre have emerged in the field of teaching English for Specific Purposes.

Genre has been defined in various ways, but most definitions share a concern for social function and form. Moreover, genre is viewed not as a tool for classifying text types but as a dynamic activity in social contexts. The key characteristic feature of a genre is its communicative purpose (Swales, 1990; Hyon, 1996).

The most cited definition of genre in the literature is provided by Swales (1990):

> A genre comprises a class 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 thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style.
>
> Communicative purpose is both a privileged criterion and one that operates to keep the scope of a genre as here conceived narrowly focused on comparable rhetorical action. In addition to purpose, exemplars of a genre exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience. If all high probability expectations are realized, the exemplar will be viewed as prototypical by the parent discourse community. (p. 58).

Genre, therefore, works as a medium that serves the communicative purposes of specific discourse communities. Swales (1990) defines the concept of discourse

community and makes it distinct from the concept of speech community. He mentions six characteristics that help recognize for a group of people to be identified as a discourse community:

1. A discourse community has a broadly agreed set of common public goals.
2. A discourse community has mechanisms of intercommunication among its members.
3. A discourse community uses its participatory mechanisms primarily to provide information and feedback.
4. A discourse community utilizes and hence possesses one or more genres in the communicative furtherance of its aims.
5. In addition to owning genres, a discourse community has acquired some specific lexis.
6. A discourse community has a threshold level of members with a suitable degree of relevant   content and discoursal expertise (Swales, 1990, pp. 24-27).

Besides, Swales (1990) states five criterial observations with regard to genres:
1.   A genre is a class of communicative events.
2.   The principal criterial feature that turns a collection of communicative events into a genre is some shared set of communicative purposes.
3.   Instances of genres vary in their prototypicality.
4.   The rationale behind a genre establishes constraints on allowable contributions in terms of their content, positioning and form.
5.   A discourse community's nomenclature for genres is an important source of insight.

According to Mauranen (1993: 4), "genre is a social activity of a typical recognizable kind in a community, which is realized in language. Genres can be distinguished by reference to social rather than linguistic parameters". Generic constraints on academic papers regulate the activities of its members.

Moreover, Coe (2002) suggests that Critical Rhetorical theorists view genre as:

> A motivated, functional relationship between text type and rhetorical situation, that is to say, a genre is neither a text type nor a situation, but rather the functional relationship between a type of text and a type of situation. Genres survive because they work, because they respond effectively to recurring situations. (p.197)

Coe (2002)'s definition points toward a fluid relationship between rhetorical devices and the ongoing discussion of the corresponding discourse community. In other words, discourse communities use various rhetorical elements to meet their specific purposes, and as the purposes evolve over time, so does the rhetorical structure of the writing. In this way, the language and rhetoric of a certain genre reflects the nature of the ongoing discussion at any point in time.

Brian Paltridge (as cited in Johns, Bawarshi, Coe, Hyland, Paltridge, Reiff, Tardy, 2006) likewise defines genres as ways in which people get things done by using language within socially-approved contexts. "Writers use language in particular ways according to the aim and purpose of the genre and the relationship between the writer and the audience…. Writers also draw on their previous experiences with the genre to produce a new text" (p. 235).This definition suggests the historical interaction between a genre and the discourse community. Writers must use certain linguistic and rhetorical elements found in previous texts from the genre in order to be understood and accepted in

the present; then, future writers will use present writers, particular linguistic and rhetorical elements, so long as the evolution in language is approved by the discourse community.

Finally Bhatia (1993) contributes the following:

> Genre is a recognizable communicative event characterized by a set of communicative purpose(s) identified and mutually understood by the members of the professional or academic community in which it regularly occurs. Most often it is highly structured and conventionalized with constraints on allowable contributions in terms of their intent, positioning, form and functional value. These constraints, however, are often exploited by the expert members of the discourse community to achieve private intentions within the framework of socially recognized purpose(s) (p. 13).

Similar to that of Swales (1990), Bhatia's definition captures the essential features of the genre: a set of communicative purposes and conventionalized structure of the discourse with constraints. In his definition, Bhatia focuses on discourse within the academic community and on the genre characteristics, conventions and constraints that are recognized and understood by its professional members.

These definitions demonstrate that linguistic experts and authorities differ in some essentials about the nature of genres. Swales (1990) appears to imply that unless the participants in a communicative activity share a common focus on narrow rhetorical action and are similar in structure, style, content and intended audience, their activity does not represent a genre; in contrast, Bhatia is even more restrictive. He appears to suggest that a communicative activity can only be called a genre if the participants acknowledge and understand its purposes and accept its governing conventions and constraints as their communicative modus operandi.

Theories of Swales and Bhatia seem to preclude categorizing, less highly structured, forms of communicative activities as genres. As a result, genre studies can be seen as an explanation for how discourse functions within a specific community at a certain point in time. Certain academic disciplines and professional fields come together to define their own unique objects of study, methods of inquiry, and models for formatting and communicating that material.

In spite of all different definitions of genre, we need to develop a better understanding of contrastive rhetorical structures or styles preferred by members of various communities to help learners raise awareness of their writing and to assist teachers in advising the learners accordingly.

1.2 Contrastive rhetoric

Contrastive rhetoric is defined as "an area of research in second language acquisition that identifies problems in composition encountered by second language writers and, by referring to the rhetorical strategies of the first language, attempts to explain them." (Connor, 1996, p. 5).

For better understanding of various types of contrastive rhetorical structures, we consider first the source of contrastive rhetoric.

1.2.1 Origin of contrastive rhetoric

The notion of contrastive rhetoric was introduced by Kaplan (1966) in his article, "Cultural thought patterns in inter-cultural education" published in *Language Learning*. His pioneering study analyzes the organization of paragraphs in ESL student essays and identifies five types of paragraph development. As shown in the following figure, he claims that:

"Anglo-European expository essays follow a linear development; Semitic languages use parallel coordinate clauses; Oriental languages prefer an indirect approach and come to the point at the end; in Romance languages and in Russian, essays employ a degree of digressiveness and extraneous material that would seem excessive to a writer of English" (p. 15-16).

Types of Rhetorical Structure
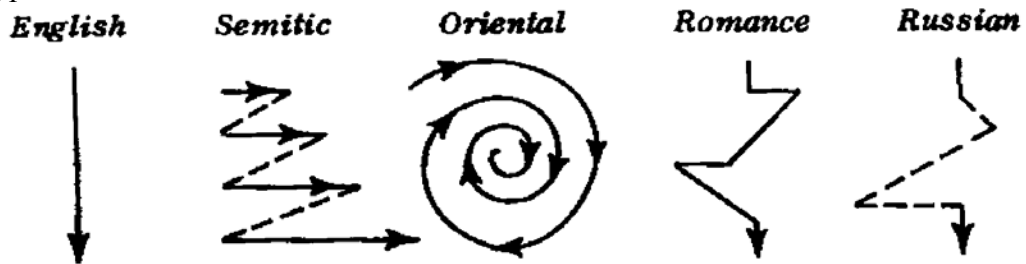
Figure1.1 Types of rhetorical structures (Kaplan, 1966, p. 21)

He attempts to explain the primary non-native English writers' problems with cross-cultural differences in writing styles by referring to the rhetorical structure of their native languages. However, Kaplan's study has been criticized as being too ethnocentric and as privileging the writing of native English speakers, as well as for dismissing linguistic and cultural differences in writing among different languages: The Oriental group, for example, includes Chinese, Korean, Thai, and Japanese, but Kaplan makes no distinction between them. Another criticism is that the claims are made on the basis of text samples written by developmental writers, and that the study deals only with paragraph organization. In spite of the criticisms, the idea of examining written texts from a contrastive rhetoric perspective has certainly provided specific insights into the complex relationship between languages and cultures in L2 writing research and instruction.

1.2.2 Historical development of contrastive rhetoric studies

As was indicated above, the root of contrastive rhetoric lies in a comparative study of how L2 writers from different cultures organize written texts in English differently from native English writers. The assumption is that there are preferred rhetorical structures across languages and cultures and L2 writers may produce different rhetorical texts (e.g., Kaplan, 1966; Connor, 1996). Since Kaplan's pioneering work, a number of studies have produced evidence of differing rhetorical patterns across languages (e.g., Leki, 1991; Martin, 2003) and significant changes have taken place in the field of contrastive rhetoric. Connor (2002, p. 498) divides this field into four domains: "text linguistics, the analysis of writing as a cultural

and educational activity, classroom-based studies of writing, and contrastive genre-specific studies".

Table 1.1: Historical development of contrastive rhetoric studies (Connor, 2002. p. 498)

Domain	Purpose
1.Contrastive text linguistic studies	Examine, compare, and contrast how texts are formed and interpreted in different languages and cultures using methods of written discourse analysis.
2. Studies of writing as a cultural and educational activity	Investigate literacy development on native language (L1) and culture and examine effects on the development of second language literacy (L2).
3. Classroom based studies of writing	Examine cross-cultural patterns in process writing, collaborative revisions, and student-teacher conferences.
4. Contrastive genre-specific studies:(Swales,1990)	Examine academic and professional writings.

As shown in the Table 1.1, earlier contrastive rhetoric studies attempted to examine general rhetorical patterns of various languages based on the investigation of expository prose or student compositions. Recently, there has been a great interest in studies of writing in academic and research situations for specific purposes. The genre-specific contrastive approach has extended its scope to "include a diversification of the genres of writing studies: newspaper writing: both news stories and editorials; academic writing; and professional writing" (Connor, 1996, p. 55). Contrastive rhetoric researchers attempt to explore texts as social activities. The goal in such studies is to uncover the cultural dimension of textual organization and the sequencing of specific rhetorical patterns within the context of each culture and specific context.

Connor (1996) identified four major areas of research in contrastive rhetoric which are as follows:

1. Research in contrastive text linguistics: research in this domain emphasizes linguistic comparisons

2. Studies of writing as a cultural activity: this domain is concerned with the study of L1 developmental writings and how a given culture is embedded in the writings of its members. Then findings in one culture could be compared with others

3. Classroom-based research: this domain deals with research based on classroom observations of process writing. This is done usually through observing different cultures as they deal with each other in collaborative projects in addition to their individual products.

4. Genre-specific research: this area deals with professional and academic writings like the research article (RA). This area is best exemplified by the work of Swales (1990).

Genre-specific studies in contrastive rhetoric comprise a whole research area that is growing rapidly. The area was a natural expansion of the field to respond to the needs of researchers who are nonnative speakers of English. The area helps them read, write, and interact with research that is dominantly written in English (Swales, 1990; Duszak, 1994; Connor, 1996, 2004). The basic task of contrastive rhetoric in this domain is to compare production of one specific genre (e.g., RA) that was written in one or more languages and to see how they differ and for what reasons. In practice thus far, most of the studies in this domain were done by examining English texts that were written by nonnative speakers of English (e.g. Shim, 2005) and only very few studies were conducted by examining L1 texts from a given genre and comparing them to their English counterparts (Lee, 2001; Jogthong, 2001).

Genre-specific contrastive studies can reveal explicit textual and rhetorical differences about the characteristics of written texts for specific purposes: How writers produce texts and how readers interpret texts. Information from these studies can help guide L2 writing teachers by providing information about the expectations of native English-speaking readers and the cross-cultural differences in linguistic and rhetorical features between English and students' native languages. Lack of awareness of such cross-cultural differences is likely to prevent non-native English writers' success in the international community (Connor, 1996).

Contrastive rhetoric has had an impact on the teaching of ESL and EFL writing. Concerned about EFL, Atkinson (2000, p.319) writes:

> The contrastive rhetoric hypothesis has held perhaps its greatest allure for those in nonnative-English-speaking contexts abroad, forced as they are to look EFL writing in the eye to try to understand why it at least sometimes looks 'different'-often subtly out of sync with what one might expect from a 'native' perspective.

Considering the basic task of contrastive rhetoric in comparing the production of one specific genre in different languages, genre analysis in this domain can help to understand the reasons of differences of one specific genre in one or more languages.

1.3 Genre analysis

There has been a great concern with the genre-centered approaches to the analysis of discourse in the last decades. Genre analysis, a new approach to analyzing a text, has been given increased attention in second/foreign writing research and instruction because it provides a broader, more complex explanation of the texts and how they are linked to the social contexts in which the writings are produced.

Hyon (1996) identifies three main traditions in contemporary genre studies, which we see as complementary, rather than competing approaches: ESP genre

analyses, New Rhetoric studies, and a distinctive Australian approach that draws extensively on systemic functional linguistics.

Genre analysis studies attempt to identify the commonly used rhetorical structure and linguistic features of academic or professional genres, and have resulted in the publication of teaching materials in ESP, for example Academic writing for graduate students: A course for non-native speakers of English by Swales and Feak (1994).

From a pedagogical perspective, Hyland (2003) writes:

> Genre knowledge is important to students' understanding of their L2 environment, and crucial to their life chances in those environments. The teaching of key genres is, therefore, a means of helping learners gain access to ways of communicating that have accrued cultural capital in particular professional, academic, and occupational communities. By making the genres of power visible and attainable through explicit instruction, genre pedagogies seek to demystify the kinds of life choices. (p. 24).

As Hyland points out, teaching genres explicitly can provide students with rhetorical structures and linguistic features commonly used in particular contexts.

Bhatia (1993) believes that discourse analysis in all these three approaches appears to have steadily moved from surface-level analysis to deep description of language use in three respects: 1. the values that features of language were assigned in specialist discourse; 2. the way the discourse was seen as underlying interaction between writers and readers; 3. the attention that was given to structuring in discourse. Nevertheless, there was no systematic handling of conventionalized aspects of discourse structure in many of the studies performed according to these three approaches. In order to move toward a thicker description, discourse analysis needs a model which is rich in socio-cultural, institutional and applied linguistics rather than to grammatical theories. One such model has been proposed by Swales (1981). Genre analysis is an insightful and deep description of academic and professional texts.

Dudley-Evans (2000) also believes that the findings of genre analysis not only bring together the insights of these earlier approaches to text analysis, but also renders a greater sophistication in the examination of writers' purpose. The Moves and Steps that Swales (1990) suggests for article introduction combines the textual awareness of the register analysts with a much broader view of how rhetorical considerations govern grammatical choice.

According to Henry and Roseberry (1998), the aim of genre analysis is to identify how these moves and steps come to be organized in a given genre (rhetorical organization), to mark the linguistic features that expert users of the genre employ to establish individual moves, and to explain the obligatory or optional nature of moves in relation to social and cultural contexts.

The basic principle that underlies genre analysis then is that specific moves and structures within a text can be isolated and examined to discover the structure of certain genres with reference to their allowable move order, move construction, and linguistic features.

The ability to identify these key linguistic structures allows for a greater understanding of genres and further allows for this understanding to be passed on to others outside of the genre in order to assist in their understanding and eventual assimilation into the genre (Crossley, 2007).

1.4 Genre analysis approach

Genre analysis investigates discourse patterns and lexico-grammatical features in the context of communicative events characterized by communicative purposes, and it provides the rationale for the use of discourse patterns and linguistic features according to authors' intentions and institutional conventions (Ruiying and Allison, 2004).

Genre analysis has become of growing interest because it offers a system for observing the repeated communicative functions that are present in genres and the linguistic features of these functions. Thus, it has turn into one of the major influences on the current practices in the teaching and learning of languages, in general, and in the teaching and learning of ESP, in particular (Bhatia, 2005). "ESP …is a linguistic approach applying theories of functional grammar and discourse and concentrating on the lexico-grammatical and rhetorical realization of the communicative purposes embodied in a genre…with an additional interest in organizational patterns at the discourse level" (Flowerdew, in Johns, 2002, p.91). A central issue in ESP has been to explore the accepted conventions of certain genres as regards how the content is presented, in which order and the rhetorical elements used to achieve its communicative goal.

As regards the pedagogical application, this approach is concerned with the "…teaching of the formal staged qualities of genres…" (Hyon, 1996, p.701) and the particular functions and linguistic features involved in them because the knowledge of these elements can help students understand the text.

According to Ji-yu (2007) the scholars in different fields have their own point of view on what genre is. Those in the field of English for Specific Purpose (ESP) put emphasis on analyzing the usage of English in academic and professional settings, while the scholars in the field of New Rhetoric perspectives has treated genre as a formalistic classification of types of texts. In the ESP tradition, genre is often defined as ''structured communicative events engaged in by specific discourse communities whose members share broad communicative purposes'' (Swales, 1990, pp. 45–47), and Functional Systematic (FS) studies on genre are exploring the relationship between languages and their functions in social context.

Although the scholars in these three fields have different ideas on genre, they share some similarities. That is, most of them realizing the importance of communicative purpose and genre are dynamic; the research focuses on clarification and is finally realized through lexical-grammatical devices.

According to Swales (1990), texts are conventionally constructed with a series of moves that serve functions for both a writer and discourse community. The focus of genre analysis is on a prototypical rhetorical structure and the linguistic components of an academic or professional genre. In doing genre analysis, Bhatia (1993, p. 18) provides explicit steps in order to analyze a genre:

1. Placing the given genre-text in a situational context;
2. Surveying existing literature;
3. Refining the situational/contextual analysis;
4. Selecting corpus;
5. Studying the institutional context;