

Annotated Bibliography

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Bakhtin, Mikhail M. "The Problem of Speech Genres." *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*. Trans. Vern W. McGee. Eds. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin: U of Texas P, 1986. 60-102.

Written in 1952-53, the essay offers an early move toward an understanding of genre as socially-situated and relevant to discourse in all spheres of activity. Bakhtin describes genres as "relatively stable thematic, compositional, and stylistic types of utterances" (64) that emerge from particular functions and conditions of communication. He distinguishes between primary (simple) genres, which form in the course of everyday communication, and secondary (complex) genres, such as the novel, which form from an assemblage of primary genres re-contextualized in relationship to one another within the symbolic world of the secondary genre. Emphasis throughout is on the responsive and dialogic nature of discourse.

Bazerman, Charles. *Shaping Written Knowledge: The Genre and Activity of the Experimental Article in Science*. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1988.

A historical study of the evolution of the experimental article in science from its beginnings in correspondence reports read at Royal Society of London meetings. Bazerman collected a corpus of 1,000 articles from the first scientific journal in English, *Philosophical Transactions*. Analyzing one hundred articles from this corpus, in addition to 40 articles from *Physical Review* and scientific writings by Newton and Compton, he explores how changes in the generic features and structure of scientific articles from 1665 to 1800 are tied to changes in the social structures of the discipline, shifts in the theoretical composition of arguments, and changes in material practices within the sciences.

Bazerman, Charles, Adair Bonini, and Débora Figueiredo, eds. *Genre in a Changing World*. Fort Collins, CO: The WAC Clearinghouse and Parlor Press, 2009.

A collection of essays selected from presentations at the 2007 SIGET IV (the Fourth International Symposium on Genre Studies) in Tubarão, Santa Catarina, Brazil. The book includes international perspective synthesizing multiple genre traditions (North American genre theory, English for Specific Purposes, Systemic Functional Linguistics, Socio-Discursive Interactionism) and covering advances in genre theories, genre and the professions, genre and media, genre in teaching and learning, and genre in writing across the curriculum.

Beebee, Thomas O. *The Ideology of Genre: A Comparative Study of Generic Instability*. University Park: Pennsylvania State UP, 1994.

Beebee argues that literary genres can reveal cultural ideologies by denaturalizing and reconfiguring relations between everyday genres and their use values. Because genre provides the ideological context in which a text and its users function, relate to other genres and texts, and attain cultural value: “Genre gives us not understanding in the abstract and passive sense but use in the pragmatic and active sense” (14). It is within this social and rhetorical economy that a genre attains its use-value, making genre one of the bearers, articulators, and reproducers of culture—in short, ideological. In turn, genres are what make texts ideological, endowing them with a social use-value.

Berkenkotter, Carol, and Thomas N. Huckin. “Rethinking Genre from a Sociocognitive Perspective.” *Written Communication* 10. 4 (1993): 475-509.

An examination of the socio-cognitive work that genres perform within academic disciplinary contexts. Berkenkotter and Huckin take as their starting point the notion that genres dynamically embody a community’s ways of knowing, being, and acting and are “best conceptualized as a form of situated cognition” (477). Genres normalize activities and practices, enabling community members to participate in these activities and practices in fairly predictable, familiar ways in order to get things done. At the same time, though, genres are dynam-

ic because they change as their conditions of use change. For genres to function effectively over time, Berkenkotter and Huckin surmise, they “must accommodate both stability and change” (481).

Bhatia, Vijay. *Analysing Genre: Language Use in Professional Settings*. London: Longman, 1993.

Bhatia presents genre analysis in relation to other methods of text and discourse analysis and offers a seven-step process for analyzing genres that follows a trajectory common to ESP genre approaches, moving from attention to context to textual analysis. There is a strong emphasis on examining a given genre-text in its professional context by attending to discourse community, communicative purpose, material conditions, and institutional context, in addition to lexico-grammatical features, language patterns, and larger structural patterns. In the final section of the book, Bhatia explores applications of this model to the teaching of languages and English for Specific Purposes.

Bitzer, Lloyd F. “The Rhetorical Situation.” *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 1.1 (1968): 1-14.

Bitzer identifies “the nature of those contexts in which speakers or writers create rhetorical discourse” as an explicit concern of rhetorical theory (1). The essay marks a move to attend to the ways that discourse responds recursively to the exigence of a rhetorical situation rather than being determined by speaker, audience, or subject matter. Bitzer concludes by acknowledging that the discourse formations that develop in response to recurring situations join the set of constraints for that situation, and he thus raises questions about the social conditions of recurrence and typification that are foundational to rhetorical genre theory.

Campbell, Karlyn Kohrs, and Kathleen Hall Jamieson, eds. *Form and Genre: Shaping Rhetorical Action*. Falls Church, VA: Speech Communication Association, 1978.

Describing genres as “stylistic and substantive responses to perceived situational demands” (19), Campbell and Jamieson argue that situational demands (not theoretical, apriori categories) should serve as

the basis for how we identify and define genres. What gives a genre its character is the “fusion” or “constellation” of substantive and stylistic forms that emerge in response to a recurring situation. It is this “dynamic constellation of forms” (24) within a genre that functions to produce a particular rhetorical effect in a recurrent situation.

Coe, Richard, Lorelei Lingard, and Tatiana Teslenko, eds. *The Rhetoric and Ideology of Genre: Strategies for Stability and Change*. New Jersey: Hampton Press, 2002.

A collection of essays exploring the ideological nature and power of genres through discussion of genre theory, professional discourses, educational discourses, and social and political discourses. Contributors include: Charles Bazerman, Anne Freadman, Anthony Paré, Catherine Schryer, JoAnne Yates and Wanda Orlikowski, Peter Medway, Lorelei Lingard, Janet Giltrow, David Russell, and Ryan Knighton.

Devitt, Amy J. *Writing Genres*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 2004.

Devitt reviews and extends a rhetorical theory of genre that “sees genres as types of rhetorical actions that people perform in their everyday interactions with their worlds” (2). Moving easily between genre theory, pedagogy, and research, Devitt offers a range of perspectives on genre and power, genre change, genre and linguistic standardization, literary genre, and the teaching of genre awareness. The book concludes with a call for further research on genre, including cognitive studies, historical studies, and collaborative research between sociologists and genre theorists (218).

Freedman, Aviva and Peter Medway, eds. *Genre and the New Rhetoric*. Bristol: Taylor and Francis, 1994.

A collection of essays from genre scholars working in North America and Australia addressing issues in genre theory, research on public and professional genres, and applications of genre in education. The introduction (Freedman and Medway) offers a historical overview of major theories and theorists to situate rhetorical genre studies. Reprints Carolyn Miller’s “Genre as Social Action” and Anne Freadman’s

“Anyone for Tennis?” and includes chapters by Charles Bazerman, Catherine Schryer, A.D. Van Nostrand, Anthony Paré and Graham Smart, Janet Giltrow, Richard Coe, and Aviva Freedman.

Frye, Northrop. *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1957.

Frye proposes a transhistorical system of categories (modes, archetypes, and genres) to describe literary texts and their relations. Frye offers a total of four distinct genres—epos, fiction, drama and lyric—defined neither by subject matter nor form but on the basis of the relation between author and audience. As Frye explains of Neoclassical approaches, “the purpose of criticism by genre is not so much to classify as to clarify such traditions and affinities, thereby bringing out a larger number of literary relationships that would not be noticed as long as there were no context established for them” (247-48).

Genette, Gérard. *The Architext: An Introduction*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1992.

Genette describes how Neoclassical literary taxonomies, which take as their basis the familiar literary triad of lyric, epic, and dramatic, mistakenly attribute to Aristotle what is actually the product of Romantic and post-Romantic poetics. He argues that this “all too seductive” triad has distorted and impeded the development of coherent classifications of literature and theories of genre.

Halliday, Michael. *Language as Social Semiotic: The Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning*. London: Edward Arnold, 1978.

Describes how the “social semiotic” of a culture is encoded in and maintained by its discourse-semantic system, which represents the culture’s “meaning potential” (100, 13). Halliday argues that language is a form of socialization. He introduces the term *register* to refer to the “clustering of semantic features according to situation types” (68). By linking a situation type with particular semantic and lexicogrammatic patterns, register describes what actually takes place (the “field”), how participants relate to one another (the “tenor”), and what role language is playing (the “mode”). What happens at the level of context

of situation in terms of field, tenor, and mode corresponds to what happens at the linguistic level in terms of what Halliday refers to as the three language “metafunctions”: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. Halliday’s work has served as a foundation for systemic functional approaches to genre.

Miller, Carolyn R. “Genre as Social Action.” *Genre and the New Rhetoric*. Ed. Aviva Freedman and Peter Medway. Bristol: Taylor and Francis, 1994. 23-42.

Argues that genre is most usefully defined in terms of typified rhetorical action rather than conventional features of form or content. Miller proposes a conception of rhetorical genre based on social motives mediated by genre in recurrent situations, observing that “situations . . . are the result, not of ‘perception,’ but of ‘definition’” (156). Rhetorical situations are thus socially constructed and exigence is reconceptualized as a form of social knowledge. It is our shared interpretation of a situation, through available typifications such as genres, that makes it recognizable as recurrent and that gives it meaning and value.

Russell, David. “Rethinking Genre in School and Society: An Activity Theory Analysis.” *Written Communication* 14.4 (1997): 504-54.

Turns to activity systems as a way to account for dynamic, ecological interactions between genres and their contexts of use. Russell draws on Engestrom’s systems version of Vygotskian activity theory and Bazerman’s theory of genre systems to understand the relationship between classroom writing and wider social practices. He defines an activity system as “any ongoing, object-directed, historically conditioned, dialectically structured, tool-mediated human interaction” (510) with rules/norms, community, and division of labor supporting and informing the interaction between subjects, mediational means, and objects/motives.

Swales, John M. *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990.

Identifies two key characteristics of English for Specific Purposes genre approaches: a focus on academic and research English and the

use of genre analysis toward applied ends. Swales presents detailed explanations of three key, inter-related concepts—*discourse community*, *genre*, and *language-learning task*. Proposing that “a genre is a class of communicative events” joined by “some shared set of communicative purposes” (45-46), Swales defines genres first and foremost as linguistic and rhetorical actions belonging to communities rather than individuals. The book offers an ESP analysis of the research paper and ideas for genre-based teaching.

Todorov, Tzvetan. “The Origin of Genres.” *Modern Genre Theory*. Ed. David Duff. London: Longman, 2000. 193-209.

Todorov addresses issues of the relationship between text and genre, the formation of new genres out of older genres, and the relationship of literary genres and other speech acts. He defines genre as “nothing other than the codification of discursive properties” (18), distinguishing the descriptions of genre that can be given from perspectives of abstract analysis and empirical observation. Todorov proposes the word ‘genre’ designate only those genres that have a historical basis as evidenced by discourse on the genre.