

Notes

¹ Responding to Plato in the *Poetics*, Aristotle offers a defense of artistic representations on the grounds that such representations are not imitations of appearances, mere copies, but rather contain their own organic integrity and principles of order. He begins the *Poetics* by explaining: “I propose to treat of poetry in itself and its various kinds, noting the essential quality of each” (50). Operating from this premise, Aristotle then proceeds to categorize epic, tragedy, and comedy as “modes of imitation” on the basis of their structure and function, particularly in terms of their medium, object, and manner of imitation (50). The *medium* of imitation can be rhythm, melody, or verse; the *object* of imitation involves human action, particularly high or low character; and *manner* of imitation can be presented either through narration or drama. On the basis of these distinctions, Aristotle describes epic, tragedy, and comedy as representing different kinds of poetic actions, classified according to how each configures particular relations between medium, object, and manner of imitation.

² Spatially, within the lyric, the writer is said to exist in spatial proximity to his or her text, being in the text, so to speak, whereas in the dramatic, the action takes place in its own spatial context that determines the interaction between two or more independent actors. Temporally, lyric is often associated with the present, dramatic with the future, and epic with the past (Genette 47-49), so that each represents a particular way of conceiving of literary temporality that affects literary actions. So the lyric, dramatic, and epic orient the way that time, space, and the activities that occur within them are configured and enacted in different literary texts. John Frow describes how, in Hegel’s formulation, the triad also becomes connected with human development, so that, for instance, epic is an “objective disclosure of the exterior universe” that “corresponds to the childhood of the human race,” while lyric is a “subjective disclosure of the inner world of particularized individuals, and it has to do with the separation of the personal self from the community,” and drama is “the synthesis of the two, the objectification of subjectivities in dialogue and action” (Frow 60).

³ For example, both Genette and Todorov have argued that what Neoclassical approaches refer to as “genres” are actually not genres but rather “types” (Todorov, “Origin” 208) or “modes” (Genette 64)—abstract theo-

retical/analytical categories that classify genres, which are themselves more historically and culturally contingent, literary phenomena (Genette 74).

⁴ As Beebee explains, “It is only in the deformations and contradictions of writing and thinking that we can recognize ideology; genre is one of those observable deformations, a pattern in the iron filing of cultural products that reveals the force of ideology” (18).

⁵ Halliday’s work did not specifically focus on genre. When he briefly refers to genre, Halliday locates genre as a mode or conduit of communication, one of the textual and linguistic means available within register that helps communicants realize the situation type. Functioning at the level of *mode*, within the field, tenor and mode complex, genre represents the vehicle through which communicants interact within a situation type. In Halliday’s model, genres are thus relegated to typified tools communicants use within registers to enact and interact within a particular type of situation. It is this situation, Halliday explains, “that generates the semiotic tensions and the rhetorical styles and genres that express them” (113).

⁶ For a helpful example of analysis based in generic structure potential, see Brian Paltridge’s *Genre, Frames and Writing in Research Settings* (66-71). As Paltridge explains, an analysis based on generic structure potential should “demonstrate what elements *must* occur; what elements *can* occur; where elements *must* occur; where elements *can* occur; and *how often* elements can occur” (66).

⁷ In his later work, Biber substitutes the term “register” for “genre,” using register “as a general cover term for all language varieties associated with different situations and purposes” (“An Analytical Framework” 32).

⁸ As Tardy and Swales note in their recent review of genre in writing research, while the twentieth century will be known as the era of large corpora, there are signs that “the first decade of the new century will turn out to be the decade of fairly small, genre-specific or multi-genre-specific corpora, such as a collection of 50 medical research articles” (574). Such smaller, genre-defined corpora can help make genre a significant variable in corpus linguistics, but while they will allow researchers to determine how often certain linguistic patterns appear in genres, they will still not be able to account for *why* these patterns appear, a subject that requires deeper rhetorical analysis.

⁹ J.R. Martin has referred to such pre-genres as “instructional genres” (“A Contextual Theory”) while William Grabe has called them “macro-genres” (“Narrative and Expository Macro-genres”). As Tardy and Swales explain, “what these schemes share is a relative independence from context, so that a macro-genre like exposition might encompass text types as diverse as research papers, textbooks, and pamphlets. Nevertheless, proponents of such classification schemes argue that their value lies in differentiating the functions and purposes of text forms on a broad level. . . . [Grabe] and others argue that these higher level structures have great value for raising writers’

awareness of discourse structure and for enhancing metalinguistic reflection” (566).

¹⁰ An Cheng describes the range of existing ESP genre-based writing courses: from those targeting a specific audience, such as advanced Asian doctoral students in social psychology, to more general courses for advanced nonnative-speaking “junior scholars” learning to write literature reviews. The most typical “ESP genre-based writing class for international graduate students often involves guiding students from various disciplinary fields to explore the generic features and the disciplinary practices in research articles (RAs) that they themselves have collected. It also involves learners engaging in discipline-specific writing tasks” (Cheng 85).

¹¹ For a discussion of other recent trends in ESP genre approaches, including the use of community partnership models that enable students to analyze, write, and intervene in genres within contexts of their use, as well as the use of video technology to enable access to on-site genre analysis, see Diane Belcher’s “Trends in Teaching English for Specific Purposes.”

¹² Such calls for a critical approach to genre within ESP are presaged to some extent by Swales (1990), who warns:

At the end of the day, we may come to see that genres as instruments of rhetorical action can have generative power . . . ; they not only provide maps of new territories but also provide the means for their exploration. Yet the empowerment they provide needs to be accompanied by critical reflection in order to ensure that our students, as they journey forward, are not blind to the social consequences of their own actions and of those who have been there before them. (*Genre Analysis* 92)

Yet earlier in the same book, Swales explains why he has chosen to avoid ideological discussions of genre: “A specific reason for this exclusion is that the proposed approach is not activated by a wish to make a contribution to intellectual history or to construct a schematic version of disciplinary cultures, but rests on a pragmatic concern to help people, both non-native and native speakers, to develop their academic communicative competence” (9).

¹³ For example, in a recent article in the *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, Bronia P.C. So reinforces the “necessity of a genre-based pedagogy that helps learners realize how schematic structure and linguistic features are related to social context and purpose” (68). Yet for So, social context and purpose are used to inform/explicate/understand schematic structure and linguistic features, not the other way around. In this case, the attention given in So’s analysis to “context of situation” is much briefer compared to the analysis of schematic structure and linguistic features (see So 71-73).

¹⁴ The literary critic Tzvetan Todorov makes a similar argument, distinguishing between theoretically-based and historically-based genre categorizations. The former begin with apriori categories and proceed deductively,

while the latter begin with actual, historically-situated texts and proceed inductively. See Chapter 2 for a more detailed discussion of Todorov and other approaches to literary genre studies.

¹⁵ As Sokolowski explains, our intentions are not only of physical objects, present or absent; we can also intend perceptions, memories, imagination, anticipation, judgment, etc. (191-92).

¹⁶ As Miller explains, “this approach insists that the ‘*de facto*’ genres, the types we have names for in everyday language, tell us something theoretically important about discourse. To consider as potential genres such homely discourse as the letter of recommendation, the user manual, the progress report, the ransom note . . . as well as the eulogy, the apologia, the inaugural, the public proceeding, and the sermon, is not to trivialize the study of genres; it is to take seriously the rhetoric in which we are immersed and the situations in which we find ourselves” (27).

¹⁷ In her 1994 chapter “Rhetorical Community: The Cultural Basis of Genre,” Carolyn Miller likewise turns to Giddens’ theory of structuration. Prior to Berkenkotter and Huckin, Yates and Orlikowski had also used Giddens’ work to study organizational genres in their 1992 “Genres of Organizational Communication: A Structural Approach.”

¹⁸ Amy Devitt was one of the first scholars to consider the implications of a RGS-based approach to genre teaching. In “Generalizing about Genre: New Conceptions of an Old Concept,” Devitt advocates an approach to genre teaching that is based not in textual explication but in an understanding of how genres work within situations and how genres orient textual production. She describes, for instance, how genres can help students learn about the communities that construct and use them (581), thereby developing in students a more complex understanding of situations and their relationship to texts. Also, a genre approach to teaching can help student writers “understand generic goals: what they are . . . how writers learn them, and how writers use them” (581). Such an understanding of generic goals can then enable students to make more effective, situated decisions during prewriting and revision processes (584). Finally, a genre approach can help teachers more effectively diagnose students’ difficulties with writing for different situations. Devitt’s approach to genre-based teaching represents more of an orientation towards how and why texts are made, as opposed to an approach based in explicating textual features. In Chapter 10, we will describe in more detail RGS approaches to genre teaching, including Devitt’s later work, as well as her work with Reiff and Bawarshi, that promotes teaching genre awareness.

¹⁹ At the heart of Bakhtin’s dialogic view of genres, outlined in “The Problem of Speech Genres,” is the distinction he makes between a sentence and an utterance. Bakhtin defines a *sentence* as “a unit of language” that is bounded grammatically and exists in isolation, outside of a sphere of communication. A sentence is a grammatical unit that does not evoke a responsive

reaction (74). An *utterance*, on the other hand, is “a unit of speech communication” (73) that is inherently responsive and that is bounded by a change in speaking subjects: “its beginning is preceded by the utterances of others, and its end is followed by the responsive utterances of others (or, although it may be silent, others’ active responsive understanding, or, finally, a responsive action based on this understanding” (71). The key point for Bakhtin is that utterances are dialogically related to other utterances. And because genres are typified utterances, they are likewise dialogically related to other genres.

²⁰ Freadman’s characterization of strategies and tactics here resembles Derrida’s understanding of texts as participating in (not belonging to) genres. In Chapter 2, we describe in more detail Derrida’s theory that every textual performance repeats, mixes, stretches, and potentially reconstitutes the genres it participates in.

²¹ While the concept of genre systems has appeared in prior scholarship—Todorov (“Origin”), Fairclough (*Discourse and Social Change*)—and been anticipated by Latour and Woolgar in *Laboratory Life* (see Berkenkotter, “Genre Systems” for a brief history), Bazerman was the first to elaborate on it within RGS, and to connect it to typified actions, social intentions, and consequential relations.

²² In “Genre and Identity,” Paré describes the cultural tensions (what Russell refers to as the “double bind” [“Rethinking Genre in School and Society 519]) Inuit social workers experience when using social work genres in their native communities: “The Inuit workers were being forced to employ rhetorical strategies developed in the urban south, where workers and clients live apart and have no relationship outside the interview, the office, the courtroom. Transporting textual practices to the north meant transporting as well the elements of context and culture that had created and sustained them: the impersonal, detached persona of professional life, the anticipated narratives of southern social worker clients, the categories, lifestyles, values, beliefs, and power relations of the urban welfare state. As a result, the Inuit workers were forced into a position between cultures and into the role of professional representatives of the colonial power” (Paré, “Genre and Identity” 63). Working within this double bind, Inuit social workers “have created alternative methods of practice—methods developed within their own cultural and rhetorical traditions,” although there are limits to their ability to resist or subvert the dominant genres (68–69).