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MODELING THE RELATION BETWEEN GENRE CONSTRAINTS AND REGISTERIAL OPTIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

Investigations into the nature of genre and register and the relation between them have been of growing interest in language teaching. This interest has been driven by a desire to understand the relationship between a given text and the context giving rise to this text. Despite a general agreement on this relationship, discourse analysts differ in the emphasis they give to either the genre or the register of the text. The former relates a text to other texts like it, in terms of the social purpose and the recurrent conventionalized schematic structures. The latter, on the other hand, rests on notions that groups of texts are similar or different in terms of content together with the patterns of lexical, grammatical, and cohesive choices that construct these texts.

Over the last thirty years, there have been an increasing number of register studies undertaken by linguists to develop models which relate a text to the notion of register, the most influential of which is that of Halliday (1978). More recently, other models have been developed to focus more strongly on the relation between text and the broader context of situation. It has been the province of the theory of genre to describe this relation (Martin 1985; Swales 1990). So close is the bond between register and genre, but little has been done to develop a model that relates text simultaneously to the notions of register and genre and to relate these notions to one another. As a consequence, the purpose of this article is to shed light on genre and register in an attempt to present a modification that shows how a text is related to both notions. The modification I propose in this paper is to rationalize genre as a category of register at a high level of generality, whereas genre subsumes similar group of texts having similar purpose, form, and situated social action although each of these texts may belong to a different register. On the other hand, a highly specified register, at a low level of generality, affects the schematic structure of genre text. This in turn will involve developing an understanding of how academic texts are generically and registerially produced simultaneously and how each notion shapes and is reshaped by the other.

2. NOTIONS OF REGISTER AND GENRE

The notion of register has been approached differently by various scholars in linguistics/sociolinguistic literature putting forward several models of categorization. Most of the regis-
ters mainly include three contextual variables, namely, field, style and mode which are roughly equivalent to Halliday et al.'s (1964) values of register: field of discourse (topic, what is happening), tenor of discourse (the statuses and roles of the participants who are taking part in the discourse) and mode of discourse (written or spoken or some combination).

A number of definitions of register have been influential in the area of register analysis. One way of describing register is that which Halliday/Hasan (1989: 38f.) explain as follows:

"A register is a semantic concept ... a configuration of meanings that are typically associated with a particular situational configuration of field, mode and tenor. ... a register must also, of course, include the expressions, the lexico-grammatical and phonological features, that typically accompany or REALISE these meanings."

For Halliday (1978) and Halliday/Hasan (1989), the three dimensions of register combine the ideational, textual and interpersonal constraints of the context upon a text. The values of field relate a particular topic to the subject area of the topic and its technicalities. Further, field encapsulates a kind of purposive social action and specifies the writer/speaker's aims and the co-occurring linguistic forms used to express these aims. Given two texts drawn from the same field of discourse but addressed to different audiences we see that the same content and the same set of social activities of these texts are related to two very different lexical and syntactic forms according to whether we are writing a research article for a prestigious journal or for a popularized science article. What has immediate significant impact on the two texts is the type of lexical items used in each situation and the technical details that accompany the texts. In the situation of the research article, the reader expects to encounter a high density of specialized technical items, abbreviations, technical acronyms, and fine details that are only well known to experts in the field. Not only is this markedness in lexico-grammatical choices related to subject specific knowledge, but also it is simultaneously tied to tenor, i.e. the nature of the personal relationships among the participants. These linguistic resources or options, according to Bhatia (1997: 364),

"create a kind of social distance between the legitimate members of the discourse community and those who are considered outsiders. Although this creates conditions of homogeneity between the insiders, at the same time it also increases social distance between them and the outsiders, sometimes resulting in disastrous consequences for the one who does not have access to such shared knowledge."

The variable of mode includes the medium of the topic. A given text usually reflects the impact of mode on language use and rhetorical structure. The effect of this situational variable is reflected through the organizational structural patterns and the linguistic choices found in a certain text as opposed to those found in another. Given an example of an essay and another of a teacher-pupil (T-P) talk in classroom discourse, we can make predictions about the mode dimension of each text type and characterize the basic contrast between them in terms of distance (Martin 1985): spatial/interpersonal distance which reflects how immediate the feedback is between the participants. In the teacher-pupil talk, the language is being used in an interactive
situation to accompany a spontaneous and face-to-face social activity, as opposed to a writer sitting on his/her own planning, drafting, editing, rewriting, and recopying the essay. We also expect to encounter difference in the rhetorical organization that corresponds to the two social activities. It is expected that the language of the teacher-pupil talk will be structured according to 'Initiation – Response – Evaluation' sequencing since it is context dependent whereas the essay is supposed to be organized into 'Thesis Statement – Body – Conclusion'.

In sum the variables of field – tenor – mode describe the immediate context of situation in which a text is produced. These three main aspects of situation have an impact on how we use language and explain why a particular text is more likely to occur in a certain situation than in others.

The problem with registers is that they descend from social context to text. They cannot be thought of as linking a group of texts belonging to the same given category. Instead register is a combination of factors that act simultaneously to shape each textual example. To consider how each type of text differs from other types and how a group of texts belong to the same text type, the notion of genre is particularly helpful. The notion of genre which comes from Latin genus, meaning 'type' has its roots in classical literary criticism. In most general sense, genre was employed in classical literature to refer to different types of literary texts such as lyrics, epics, drama, short stories, autobiographies, etc. Genre recognition has been adapted by scholarships to refer to non-literary texts in related fields such as linguistics and socio-linguistics. Hymes (1974) holds a view similar to that of the earlier literary interpretations of genre and sees genres as formal categories such as tales, poems, drama, etc. He points out that "the notion of genre implies the possibility of identifying formal characteristics, traditionally recognized" (Hymes 1974: 61).

The notion of genre has been conceived differently by various scholarly trends. They have sparked substantial debate in ideological and theoretical issues, which have given rise to various approaches to genre and genre-based pedagogies. As Hyon (1996) notes, approaches to genre can be essentially divided into three traditions each of which has taken a different path: (a) English for specific purposes (ESP), (b) New Rhetoric movement and other North American scholars, and (c) Australian systemic functional linguists. The details of these traditions are discussed in Hyon (1996) and reviewed in Yunick (1997) and in such volumes as Swales (1990), Freedman/Medway (1994), Berkenkotter/Huckin (1995), Johns (1997) and Hyland (2002).

Martin (1985), and Swales (1990) see genres as features of purposeful culturally ritualized repeated practices. Martin/Christie (1984: 25) describe genre as "a staged, goal oriented, purposeful activity in which speakers engaged as members of our culture". Martin (1985) sees genre as possessing the three variables of register and their equivalent functions but as features of culturally ritualized practices which in turn constrain the possible
combination of register variables. These schematized social purposes of genres have the
effect to organize each social activity into stages and each stage selects for particular field,
mode and tenor choices. Unlike Martin who hooks up the lexico-grammatical features real-
izing the three variables of register to the social function, Swales (1990: 58) distances reg-
ister analysis from the notion of genre as the former is without value and reveals very little
about how a social genre is articulated. He views genre as:

"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 the discourse and
influences and constrains choice of content and style."

Thus genre is put forward as a socio-linguistic and cultural construct whose own individual
features reflect the communicative purpose of a social activity. The commonality of goal of
participants in a ritualized social interaction gives birth to genre structure and distinguishes
it from other types of genre. Since the communicative purpose is posited by Swales as a
vital criterion in identifying genre regardless of field differences, texts associated with dif-
f erent academic and professional settings are regarded as belonging to the same genre. On
the other hand, texts of the same subject area but do not share the same communicative
purpose are identified as belonging to different genres.

On the other hand, Halliday (1976, 1978), Hasan (1977), Kress (1989) and Halliday/
Hasan (1989) do not think of genre as having an independent status. For them genre is in-
volved as an aspect of 'mode'. In other words, it is a dimension of register. Register has con-
tinued to be used as Halliday's central construct, while genre is employed in a limited sense to
refer only to the organizational structure of a text "outside the linguist system" (Halliday
1978: 145). Halliday appears to have never accepted the notion of genre as equivalent in
status to register. Further, in a number of instances the terms genre and register seem to have
been conflated with the two terms being used interchangeably (Ventola 1989).

Since Swales has been associated genre with the commonality of purpose, this seems
not to be radically different from the Hallidayan conception of register which is also driven
by the notion of purpose. That is because Swales has promoted the communicative purpose
as an organizing and identifying criterion of genre text type. In doing so, this entails that
we have to refer to the systemic tradition to borrow functional categories from the three
strands of meanings: the experiential, the interpersonal, and the textual to realize the over-
all purpose of a text type as a semantic unit. Leckie-Tarry (1993: 39) points out that the
primary distinction Hallidayan register and the notion of genre in ESP

"lies less in intent than in emphasis. While definitions of register attempt to relate situational factors,
from which communicative purpose or function is assumed or recognized, with linguistic structure,
Swales' position seems to interpret genre as referring to socially recognized communicative events where
communicative purpose appears to be explicit."
The difference between the model outlined about the nature of genre by Swales and Halliday's notion of register is that register is context specific in terms of purpose, in some sense, whereas the communicative purpose of genre would cross-cut aspects of context. If the purpose cuts "across subject-matter differences so that it will no longer be necessary to devise textual material for each subject discipline" (Bhatia 1993: 99). Bhatia (1997: 362) has slightly modified his view of genre control and indicated that 'preferred generic forms show a subtle degree of variation for what could be seen as 'tactical advantage'. However, the problem with Swales' model concerns the difficulty of specifying a menu of relatively stable structural organizational forms to articulate the communicative purposes of a particular social interaction then of giving this specification some kind of objective existence in an agreed menu of linguistic forms.

4. TEXT BETWEEN GENRE CONSTRAINTS AND REGISTER OPTIONS

So far, we have noticed that genre and register can be considered as useful complementary determinants of a text. That is to say, the meaning of a text resides not only in the immediate context of situation represented by register (Martin 1985) but it is also derived from the wider 'context of culture' which gives birth to culturally repeated practices executed in stages and realized through register (Martin 1992: 505). Ventola (1984) and Martin (1985) refer to genre as the 'content-plane' of register, and register, on the other hand, as the expression-plane' of genre. In describing the nature of texts, Kress (1985: 18) sees that

"Texts arise in specific social situations and they are constructed with specific purposes by one or more speakers or writers. Meanings find their expression in texts – though their origins of meanings are outside the text – and are negotiated (about) in texts, in concrete situations of social exchange."

So far, in constructing or understanding a complete purposive text representing a social activity, two perspectives can be offered: one that identifies the text's generic structure based on its genre category membership, which involves reference to the context of culture, and the other that describes the immediate contextual minor functions based on its register, which is brought into existence by the lexical and syntactic linguistic structures. Generic forms "are socially constructed and are even more intimately controlled by social practices" (Bhatia 1997: 360). They are selected and developed over centuries by participants in a particular community to codify their repeated social practices as these are closely related to their culture. Over time these social coding templates acquire the power of generic norms and conventions that guide the participants to the extent that they will find it strange if these norms are violated or mixed up.

Since these social genres initially emerged out of activities of individuals to accomplish their goals (Bazerman 1988), generic conventions are always refined, modified, developed and sometimes changed so as to accommodate the new or modified communicative purposes.
In this regard, Bhatia (1997: 360) points out "Although genres are products of conventional knowledge embedded in disciplinary cultures, they are dynamic constructs". He characterizes genre as having a "propensity for innovation". What supports this conception is that the commonality of purpose of Swales cannot be reflected in unified intellectual programmatic procedures. For example, a set of texts belonging to an essay genre cannot be represented by a common identifiable structure reflected in sections, each of which is built up of recognizable move structures. Such perspectives remove genre from its context, as there is no one-to-one relationships in socially and culturally produced genres. That is because writers have to write in a way that is appropriate to their audience, taking into account the contextual variables. Genre analysts are 'increasingly aware of the dangers of oversimplifying by assuming blocks of texts to be mono-functional and ignoring writers' complex purposes' (Hyland 2002: 116) and 'private intentions' (Bhatia 1999). Sometimes variations in organization are also influenced by epistemological factors. Anson (1988) points out, in this regard, that although different disciplines have similar educational contexts and general goals, "they often embody quite different assumptions about the nature of written discourse-assumptions of audience, purpose, and the conventions of style and format" (Anson 1988: 3).

To further illustrate how register mediates and affects the realization of genre, I surveyed the organization of formal essay introductions and conclusions in College writing Skills by Langan (1997). It was found that writers could exploit particular individual stylistic choices in structuring the sections of their essays so as to reflect registerial dimensions of the immediate context of situation. An English academic essay tends to have certain common features. It has a common schematic structure that differentiates it from any other genre type. An English essay may consist of three main sections, namely, Introduction, Body and Conclusion. Because of the specifics relevant to a particular situation of use of that genre, either in sociology, medicine, psychology or linguistics, essays occasionally vary in the type and number of communicative options incorporated in the sections of each essay. The survey revealed that essay writers employ one method or a combination of the following options to introduce the subject in the introductory paragraph. Essays tend to begin with a Background Information and proceed to a Thesis Statement; or with a Background Information, proceed to a Thesis Statement, followed by a Plan of Development; or with a Question Raising, and proceed to a Thesis Statement; or with Explaining the importance of the topic, followed by a Thesis Statement; or with Using a Quotation followed by a Thesis Statement; or with Telling an Anecdote or a Brief story followed by a 'Thesis Statement'. Likewise, to round off an essay, writers can employ one or more of the following options: a summary, a thought-provoking question, a prediction or a recommendation that suggests what should be done about the problem stated in the introduction. Similarly, in an analysis of the research article introduction sections selected randomly from various disciplines, Al-Ali (1999) found that research
article (RA) writers show a preference for using Swales' (1990) model of the introduction section. However, the study also identified other rhetorical moves expressing various functions. Research article writers would employ these functions either to justify the research value, or to provide background information, or to highlight the methodology used.

It should be also clear that different disciplines base their approaches to the world upon radically different methodological assumptions. These range broadly from the empirical to the deductive to the intuitive. Further, a catch-all term such as empirical, will itself entail very different forms of approach. A historian's notion of empiricism or of the fact, for example, may not coincide with that of an electrical engineer researcher. An extreme example is how data is collected and presented in the methodology section in a discipline such as psychology, because this section is critical to the validity of the RA. The psychology RA may thus require an extensive methodology section. By contrast, mathematicians do not need to describe their methodology, since this is written into the subject itself. The communicative purposes which are articulated by different genres of a given discipline are thus to some extent written into their epistemology. Clearly, the more extreme the division between disciplines the greater the difference in their rhetorical constructs. Our discussion lends some support to Hansen's argument (1988: 167) that "the rhetorical conventions of each text reflect some of the epistemological assumptions of the dominant research model in its authors' discipline".

Thus it could be argued that the variation in the rhetorical structure of the introductory section of an essay genre and in that of an RA genre is attributed to the variation in the options adopted by writers to approach the real world. This is because the epistemological nature of the content to be presented in order to convince the reader is different. Similarly, each researcher, according to Hansen's (1988: 181) view, "represents invention in a way consistent with the genres' epistemological bases". For this reason, writers show a tendency to include different communicative components so as to meet the new communicative functions required by disciplinary variations or to fulfill rhetorical purposes specific to the communicative needs of the discourse at hand.

However, genre analysis cannot be conducted without the constituent values of field, tenor or mode because move structures of each individual essay section have nothing to say about the linguistic components used by writers to realize the communicative functions articulated by these generic moves. A reference to registerial dimensions is also needed to rationalize the choice of particular rhetorical organizational options rather than others to express the moves constituting a genre text. That is because texts reflect the personal purposes of writers and construe different situational contexts. They also reveal how writers make use of a range of different linguistic resources in order to reflect the features of field specific genre texts. Following Martin's view, our notion whether texts are similar or different need to be modeled through register and genre theory. That is to say, a text is pro-
duced out of register with its sense of field as a pattern of linguistic choices as much as of genre with its sense of cross-disciplinary type. Neither of these categories can be conceived as boxed and altogether unlike others. Field can be seen as pulling genre towards its particular needs and options and genre pulling register towards its obligatory sense of type.

5. THEORETICAL MODELING

I have argued so far that a group of heterogeneous texts brought together under the unity of purpose operates a generic form with reference to ritualized, constrained, and organized social practices. However, genre obligatory sense of type cannot be separated from register choices. Following Halliday (1988: 162) who points out that registers "can be identified at any delicacy of focus", and Biber (1995) who also indicates that registers can be defined at different levels of generality, it can be argued, accordingly that registers furnish us with text categories at different levels of generality. At a high level of generality, academic literary prose can be considered as a very general register subsuming different types of genre, while an essay in a branch of sociology or psychology is a much more highly specified register, at a specific level of generality. While different genres, such as, an essay, a proposal, a research article, or a case study may inhabit the same general academic context, the activities and goals of participants who are thought to occupy the same general register may differ. The question, which rises here, is how we integrate the two notions, register and genre, into a model which shows that a text is a production of genre conventions and is fashioned at different levels of generality by the discipline specific register needs.

To represent this relation between the two notions, we need a model through which we can rationalize genre as organizing the constituents of register at a certain level of generality and register, on the other hand, furnishes us with text categories that operate at different levels of generality. The model which attempts this relation is Rosch et al.'s (1976) tri-levelled structure hierarchy, as expound in their framework of prototype approach. Figure 1 below shows this model, as will become clear when I explain it. The authors perceive human conceptual hierarchies have three levels. In biological categories, the first level, superordinate, tends to correspond to 'bird' in (bird – sparrow – song sparrow); 'sparrow' tends to represent the basic level for the bird category, and 'song sparrow' stands for the subordinate level of specific birds. This adjunct theory provides levels of hierarchy for exemplar texts and features at each level that we may or may not map on to these texts.

As stated earlier, the difference between register and genre is that the former configures the contextual dimensions that shape each individual text, but it cannot configure a group of texts belonging to a given genre type. Instead the latter has the power to link texts from different registers as belonging to the same generic category.
The reference to the prototype theory allows us to consider how categories exist at different levels of generality, and whether these levels can also be applied to text. This model also reflects the role of hierarchy in constituting our notion of genre and register within the framework of the prototype approach and how a genre text is a category subsumed within the general sense of register at the higher level of generality and how it is also shaped by register variables (field, mode and tenor) at the sub-ordinate level.

Describing a particular text, one would probably focus on the basic level categories which are characterized as being neutral (Cruse 1977) and are first learned (Brown 1958, 1965). The basic level offers the largest bundle of features that are accumulated in the prototype (Ungerer/Schmid 1996) and expressed by the basic generic category (e.g. proposal genre, essay genre, research article genre or report genre). Not only do the attributes shared inside the basic category unite the category members but they also distinguish them from the members of other basic level categories (Roch 1977, 1978). In contrast, categories at the super-ordinate level, the literary register vs. scientific register, for example, carry very few attributes that apply to members of each category.

Figure 1: A tri-level hierarchical relation between Genre and Register

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<tr>
<th>Super-ordinate Level</th>
<th>Basic Level</th>
<th>Sub-ordinate Level</th>
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F: Field  
M: Mode  
T: Tenor
As is shown in Figure 1, register at the super-ordinate level furnishes a text with features that operate at a high level of generality. For example, the very general registers of texts such as scientific and literary are defined only by reference to their field. Thus, at one extreme, register distinctions are defined by differences in field. However, academic scientific texts and academic literary texts share some contextual similarities featured in terms of being written, planned and addressed to a large audience of academics. Register similarities at this level of generality are defined in non-linguistic terms, by similarities in purpose (i.e. to present information), relation among academics and production constraints. As is shown in Figure 1, the registers, at the super-ordinate level, are different in terms of field, scientific vs. literary. However, both of these opposed registers subsume similar genres at the level below, such as, a case study genre, a proposal genre, and an essay genre, each of which has different rhetorical organisations.

At the basic level, the cognitive categories tend to show the generic structure of a prototype which is more typical of the texts belonging to a particular genre. Each member of the basic level categories such as a case study, an essay, or a proposal commands a number of attributes that would apply to most members of each category. For example, the conventions of the case study genre would to certain degrees draw upon certain prototypical structures regardless of register differences to produce a medical case study, business case study, biology case study, or psychology case study. Likewise, ritualized norms of the proposal genre tend to give the following structure (Abstract – Introduction – Background – Description of Proposal Research – List of References – Personnel – Budget) to proposals written in different subjects but with a few variations. Yet genres are still shaped at a very general level by their purely literary or scientific registers which resound through all the members of each text categories.

At the third level of the hierarchy lie the subordinate categories reflecting specific structures in addition to some features acquired from the two levels above. One can arguably say that the additional features obtained by a text at the third level of hierarchy represent the detailed specific attributes reflecting registers' specificities which in turn explain subject matter variations. These additional specific characteristic features are added to those features mapped from the basic categories to distinguish individual exemplar texts.

It has been argued so far that knowledge of a text's generic structure represented by the basic level prototype is not enough to produce or understand a particular exemplar text. Rather these structures need to be fleshed out by reference to dual registerial properties found at the lowest and the highest levels of generality. The high level shades the selected genre text with a very general sense of register which distinguishes for example a scientific case study genre text of a literary case study genre text though both of them belong to the same genre. Then the basic level provides prototypical patterns that we map most of which
to the text to be produced. Later, the sub-ordinate level accommodates the text with additional structural features which in turn rework the basic prototypical patterns around the specific needs of the topic under investigation. In other words the topic at issue will also be reconfigured by the specific attributes of the registerial demands. This process results in producing a generic text having specific structural attributes that reflect its subject, i.e. its highly specified register.

6. GENRE, REGISTER, AND LANGUAGE TEACHING

The proposed model implicates that this tri-level hierarchical relationship between genre and register may be exploited in language teaching. In the process of teaching writing to graduate or undergraduate students, we approach hierarchies from the basic level since the other two level categories are anchored in the generic level. Genre-based techniques for teaching writing reside in analyzing genre texts belonging to the basic level into sections, moves and steps. The sections, moves and steps are expressed as the writer's communicative purpose at a given point in the text. This purpose rationalizes the choice of particular rhetorical organizational moves of genre. To realize these moves, the writer supposedly selects some linguistic forms more frequently than others. Novice writers, for example, will benefit from this knowledge by introducing them to prototypical moves that tend to occur in a research article genre, a proposal genre, a report genre or an essay genre. Students could be taught that an English essay, for example, may consist of three main sections (Introduction, Body and Conclusion). A given exemplar essay typically begins with an introductory paragraph initiated by a background information move, followed by a thesis statement move. However, the introductory paragraph may include other moves such as a plan of development move, which previews the major points that will support the thesis. Likewise, a research article introduction, according to Swales' (1990) model, will have the following constituent moves (establishing a territory, establishing a niche, and occupying the niche). Each of these moves can be further analyzed into its constituent steps, each of which stands for a minor function. Students could next be taught the grammar and lexis that tend to realize these particular moves and steps. Ideally this would set novice writers on the road to successfully manipulating a given genre. We expect that generic knowledge will provide these writers with the first building blocks in developing their writing skill.

Instead of having a monolithic generic level view of writing, the present proposed model suggests three phases that students of writing go through in constructing a piece of writing. First, the writing students are supposed to recognize that writing involves knowledge of the superordinate general academic context in which a piece of writing happens. This phase involves providing students with sets of knowledge and expectations about the
wider contextual constraints which govern academic writing in general. I suggest that students be exposed to academic conventions, the different genres produced, especially the purposes of writing, the audience of each genre, and academic community’s practices. One of the central insights of such knowledge is that any text genre is embedded in an academic super-ordinate context. For example, academics from various disciplines share social values, beliefs, and some general practices and conventions of academic writing that work collectively to determine the acceptability of a scientific or literary genre regardless of discipline specificity. However, ‘a discussion of what are considered to be general academic languages and textual practices is a good place [for students] to start their analyses—although not a good place to finish’ (Johns 1997: 57). Within this superordinate academic context, writers are exposed then to a range of genres, such as reports, case studies, essays, proposals, and research articles, each of which is linked with a different situation and tied to a different social communicative purpose.

The second phase would cover knowledge of the prototypical generic structures that are more representative of a particular genre and that would apply to most members belonging to the basic generic level. However, if the instructor stops at this point, i.e. providing knowledge about writing genre texts out of rigid patterns, this would not be effective. Learners also need to know that although there are sets of structural patterns that operate in broadly similar ways in members of a particular genre, these generic patterns are not typical of what is really going on in all texts drawn from various disciplines. Thus learners at the third phase may require input about the disciplinary context in which texts are produced to establish a kind of balanced knowledge of genre and its discipline particular needs. They need to consider that a genre text should ‘appeal to a certain group of people (tenor), that it must include certain information (field), and that there are ways in which [a particular genre] is presented (mode)’ (Badger/White 2000: 158). Because of these register constraints, students may find genre moves that tend to occur across different disciplinary texts and others that have a low frequency of occurrence. Learners are introduced to the variations in the use of communicative moves to structure different texts in the same genre and the various linguistic exponents used to signal these moves. This phase is very important in that learners are prepared to explore the reasons for the similarities and the differences behind such variations in generic patterns at the subordinate level of hierarchy and to be aware of how the potential specific discourse community constrains what is written. They are also exposed to the fact that the generic models are not static but flexible and susceptible to variation due to discipline specific communicative purposes. Although texts at the subordinate level are constructed round prototypical genres that belong to the basic level, we find exemplar texts that conform to the prototype and extreme examples that embody marked differences or additional elements. However, these text generic structure variations
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are not drastic; they are guided by "cognitive discoursal frames against which actual textual realisations can be matched and adapted' (Sengupta/Forey/Hamp-Lyons 1999: S17).

7. Conclusion

In this paper I have discussed the distinction between genre and register and the theoretical developments that have taken place in these notions. One effect of this distinction is to bring some understanding to the roles of these notions which have been conflated in a number of instances. We have noticed how each notion is able to affect the configuration of a text in ways through which these different views may be exploited in text production and understanding. This article has illustrated how a text is a product of ritualized cultural conventions as a text generic category and yet is fashioned to the needs of the topic under scrutiny. Although the suggested model portrays how a text is fashioned by both notions, these theoretical suggestions require empirical data to validate the pedagogical application and usefulness of this model in actual practice.

Unlike Kress (1993) who prioritizes register and recognizes genre as a constituent of register having only a part of textual structuring and Swales (1990), on the other hand, who downgrades register and sees genre as distinct from register, and Martin (1985) who perceives genre as having a superior layer in the rank-constituent hierarchy over register, this paper has put forward an arguably more flexible notion of prototypes that operates with different levels and allows text categories to configure register at the higher and lower levels in a rank-constituent hierarchy, while genre, as belonging to the basic mid level of hierarchy, is perhaps configured by all the attributes of the super-ordinate level and the very specific characteristics of the sub-ordinate level of register.

Students of language need a model that shows how a text is related to both notions. This model attempts to rationalize genre as organizing the constituents of register at various levels of generality; however, register affects schematic structure of genre text. This in turn will involve developing an understanding of how academic texts are generically and registerially produced simultaneously and how each notion is shaped and reshaped by the other.

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