



THE INFLUENCE OF GENRE THEORY ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONTEMPORARY ACADEMIC TEXTS

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of genre theory on the development of contemporary academic texts through a literature review approach. By reviewing various sources and previous studies, this article identifies how understanding genre theory helps academic writers in composing texts that are in accordance with the expectations and conventions that apply in the academic community. This study shows that genre, as a social construction, provides important structural and functional guidance in academic writing. In addition, this study also reveals the challenges and opportunities faced by writers, especially those who use a second language, in understanding and applying the right genre in an academic context. The application of a genre-based approach in writing education has proven effective in improving the cohesion and coherence of academic texts. The findings also highlight the importance of innovation in academic genres, by using digital technology and multimodality elements that are increasingly relevant in scientific communication. Based on this literature review, it is recommended that genre-based approaches be strengthened in higher education curricula to support the development of more effective writing skills and in accordance with the demands of globalization of science.

Keywords : Genre Theory, Academic Text, Technology

Introduction

Academic texts play a central role in education and research, not only as a medium for conveying information but also as a means of developing critical and analytical thinking skills for students and researchers. (Woodward-Kron, 2005). At the tertiary level, these texts help students master the material of a discipline while also being a communication tool for sharing ideas and research results within the wider academic community, fostering the development of science. (Hyland, 2008). However, writing modern academic texts presents its own challenges, one of which is understanding and adhering to the different genre conventions in each discipline. Academic genres have unique structures and characteristics that must be followed in order to be accepted by the academic community. In addition, students often struggle to master hidden or non-explicit genres, which are rarely accompanied by clear guidelines. This difficulty is further compounded by varying language abilities and genre understandings, especially for learners writing in a second language. (Gardner, 2012). Genre theory is an important tool for understanding the structure and function of academic texts. As social constructions, genres are designed to serve specific purposes within a particular discursive community. By understanding genres, writers can adapt their work to the expectations of the academic community. For example, the systemic functional linguistics approach explains genres through the stages and goals they seek to achieve. Genre theory also helps identify and address students' difficulties in writing academic texts, such as difficulties in using transitions, tense, and lexical cohesion. By making genre characteristics more explicit, teachers can explain the relationship between text structure and its function in a given context. This can improve students' ability to write effectively and in accordance with academic genre standards. In addition, genre theory can support the development of more effective writing teaching methods.

Genre-based approaches, for example, can increase students' awareness of their audience and the purpose of their writing. They also help understand the disciplinary thinking patterns relevant to a particular genre, such as analytical exposition in history or literature. Genre theory thus not only helps understand academic texts but also strengthens writing skills essential to academic success. Overall, the importance of academic texts in education and research cannot be overstated. While there are many challenges in composing contemporary academic texts, genre theory offers a useful framework for understanding and addressing these challenges. By understanding the structure and purpose of academic texts through the lens of genre theory, writers can be more effective in conveying knowledge and contributing to their academic communities.

Research Methodology

This study was conducted using a literature review method to analyze the influence of genre theory on the development of contemporary academic texts. This approach aims to collect, evaluate, and synthesize relevant sources, both in the form of journal articles, books, and academic guides, in order to understand the contribution of genre theory in the formation and teaching of academic texts.

Result & Discussion

Genre theory has long been used to understand the structure of academic texts, including scientific papers, dissertations, and journal articles. Swales (1990) through the CARS (Create a Research Space) model emphasized that academic texts should follow distinctive rhetorical patterns to introduce, frame, and convey research. This model continues to be updated, adapting to the needs of contemporary, more interdisciplinary disciplines. Recent studies highlight significant changes in academic texts with the development of digital technology. Walter & Moxley (2022) note that authors are increasingly using visual elements and multimodality to enhance the appeal and clarity of texts. In addition, online platforms allow for more flexible distribution of scientific papers, potentially transforming academic genres into more dynamic and inclusive ones. Recent research has shown that genre structures in contemporary academic texts vary widely depending on the discipline and writing purpose. For example, education students tend to use exposition and discussion genres, but also incorporate descriptive genres such as examples to strengthen their arguments and build disciplinary knowledge. In addition, multidimensional analyses of student writing show that more personal genres such as creative writing and evaluations have different patterns than more objective genres such as research papers and reports. Genre theory helps to understand how academic texts are structured to convey messages effectively. Genres reflect how writers use language to respond to recurring situations, and texts are considered most successful when they follow conventions recognized by the academic community. Research also suggests that understanding genres can help educators design more effective and relevant learning materials for students.

Findings from various studies suggest that genre theory needs to continue to evolve to encompass variations and dynamics in genre use. For example, an analysis of suicide notes as a genre suggests that not all genres can be characterized by mandatory and optional steps, and that co-occurrence patterns can occur even when no linear sequence can be identified. This suggests that genre theory needs to be flexible and adaptive to different contexts and text types. Genre-based pedagogy has been shown to be highly effective in improving students' ability to comprehend and write academic texts. Gao & Pramoolsook (2021) emphasize the importance of adapting this approach to the context of the discipline. For example, genres in the natural sciences differ significantly from those in the humanities in terms of their structure and rhetorical purposes. A deeper understanding of genre can provide practical benefits in teaching and training academic writing. For example, teachers can use genre analysis to help students understand writing conventions in their discipline and develop better writing skills. (Beck & Jeffery, 2009). The application of genre theory in academic writing education has had a significant impact, especially on curriculum development. Genre-based curricula enable students to systematically study the relationship between text structure and its communicative function. This helps students build writing competencies that are relevant to professional and academic needs. Furthermore, research suggests that the integration of genres in academic writing can help students develop stronger arguments and build disciplinary knowledge. Contemporary academic texts often face challenges in maintaining cohesion and coherence, especially when written by second language (L2) writers.

The use of transitions, logical connectors, and idea management are the main focus of genre-based approaches to help writers overcome these obstacles. In some disciplines, innovation in the structure of academic texts has become a necessity to address the development of global issues. Researchers such as Hyland (2022) argue that academic texts must now be able to reach cross-cultural audiences. Thus, adaptation in text structure is needed to

meet the expectations of global audiences without sacrificing academic integrity. Genre theory helps shape the identity of academic writers through the texts they produce. This identity includes competence in a particular genre, which directly influences how writers position themselves in the academic community. (Devrim, 2009) Recent research suggests that a strong understanding of genre gives authors the confidence to navigate the expectations of the scholarly community. The application of genre theory to Q1 journal articles shows that academic genres are often not static but dynamic and complex. For example, introductions in academic books often mix different genre values to achieve promotional and utilitarian goals. In addition, hidden genres such as MBA thought essays (Loudermilk, 2007) shows that writers often have to rely on other genres to structure their texts due to the lack of prototypical models. Based on these findings, genre-based approaches must continue to be adapted to the needs of academic disciplines and technological developments. The use of digital tools, such as text analysis software, can help writers understand genres more comprehensively. In addition, writing training that integrates genre theory and multimodality practices will be increasingly relevant in the era of academic globalization.

Conclusion

This study reveals that genre theory plays a crucial role in the development of contemporary academic texts. By understanding genre theory, writers can more effectively construct academic texts that conform to conventions accepted by the scholarly community. Genre is not just about the structure of a text, but also about understanding the social and cultural contexts that shape how texts are received and understood by audiences. Genre-based approaches to teaching writing have been shown to be effective in improving students' ability to comprehend and write academic texts, particularly in helping them address the challenges of cohesion, coherence, and structural variation across disciplines. Genre theory also provides important insights into how genres are used to shape writers' academic identities, reflecting their expertise and position within the scholarly community. By understanding genre, writers can tailor their writing to be more relevant and in line with the expectations of academic audiences. Digital transformation and multimodality are further enriching academic writing practices, opening up opportunities for innovation in genre and its application.

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