

Media Discourse

Analysing Discourse

Chapter 4

Genres and Generic Structure

Outline of Textbook

- ◆ This textbook has four main parts:-
- ◆ Part 1. **Social** analysis, **discourse** analysis, **text** analysis
- ◆ Part 2. **Genres and Action** 
- ◆ Part 3. **Discourses** and Representations
- ◆ Part 4. **Styles** and identities

Chapter 4 Outline

- ◆ 1. Introduction
- ◆ 2. Genres and texts
- ◆ 3. *Pre-genres, disembedded & situated* genres
- ◆ 4. Analysing individual genres
 - Activity (+ Generic structure)
 - Social Relations
 - Communication Technologies
- ◆ 5. Dialogue and the public sphere
- ◆ 6. Arguments, assumptions and ideologies
- ◆ 7. Narrative

1. Introduction

◆ Genre

= “The specifically discoursal aspect of ways of acting and interacting in the course of social events”

(Norman

Fairclough)

= “a particular type or style of literature, art, film or music that you can recognize because of its special features”

(Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary)

2. Genres and texts

- ◆ There are various **levels** of text organization.
- ◆ Text-makers **choose** what **meanings** they want to express.
- ◆ These meanings are **realized** at the level of genres, discourses and styles.
- ◆ These get realized at the lower levels of **semantics**, **grammar** and **vocabulary**.

Levels of Text Analysis

External

Social Structures

Social Practices

Social Events

Actions and Social Relations
Identification of Persons
Representations of the world

BOTH !!

Discourse (**Genres**, Discourses, Styles)

Semantics

Internal

Grammar and Vocabulary

Phonology (of speech) & **Graphology** (of writing)

Realization



2. Genres and texts

◆ Genres

Realized by: **Actional** meanings and forms.

Examples: interview, news report, comedy, love letter.

◆ Discourses

Realized by: **Representational** meanings and forms.

Examples: police, counselling, omiai, news.

◆ Styles

Realized by: **Identificational** meanings and forms.

Examples: reporter: veteran/junior/male/female/free.

2. Genres and texts

- ◆ Genre is *primarily realized* by the following features of texts:
- ◆ **Text Level**
 - ◆ The overall ‘**generic**’ **pattern** of organization of the text. [Ch4]
 - ◆ The **intertextuality** of a text: how other ‘voices’ are included. [Ch4]
- ◆ **Above Clause (= 節) Level**
 - ◆ **Semantic relations** between clauses, sentences and paragraphs. [Ch5]
 - ◆ Formal **grammatical relations** between clauses and sentences. [Ch5]
- ◆ **Clause Level**

Types of **exchange**, **speech function**, **grammatical mood** [Ch6]

Genres and Research Themes

- ◆ **Dialogue** + Public Sphere
- ◆ **Argument** + Citizenship
- ◆ **Narrative** + Ideology of the **News Media**

3. *Pre-genres, disembedded genres and situated genres*

Types of Genre		
Abstract  Specific	Pre-genre	narrative, argument, description
	Disembedded genre	interview, civic self-publishing infomercial
	Situated genre	ethnographic interview

4. Analysing individual genres

Genres can be analysed in three ways:

- ◆ 1. **Activity**

What are people **doing** (discoursally)?

- ◆ 2. **Social Relations**

What are their social relations?

- ◆ 3. **Communication Technology**

What technology does the activity depend on?

4.1 Activity

- ◆ Genres are often defined (and named) according to the **purpose** of the activity.
- ◆ Some genres may have **more than one** purpose.
- ◆ Different purposes may be **hierarchically** ordered.

4.1.1 Generic structure

Scientific Paper

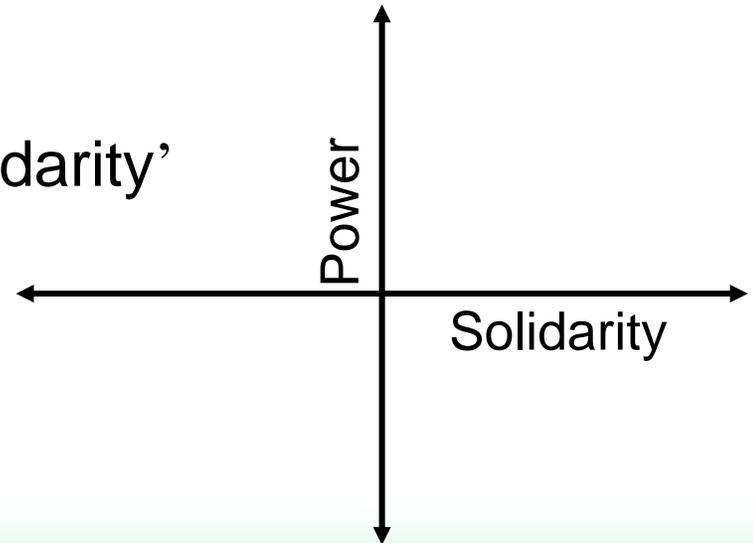
- Title
- +
- Abstract
- +
- Introduction
- +
- Methods
- +
- Results
- +
- Conclusion
- +
- References.

Accident Report

- Headline (summary)
- +
- Lead Paragraph (summary)
- +
- Satellites (details)
- +
- Wrap Up (outcome)

4.2 Social relations

- ◆ Genres, as forms of interaction, constitute social relations between interactants (social agents) such as organizations, groups or individuals.
- ◆ Brown & Gilman (1960)
‘The pronouns of power and solidarity’
- ◆ Example: Ethnographic Interview



4.3 Communication technologies

- ◆ The development of new communications technologies goes along with the development of new genres.
- ◆ New technology and **multimodal** texts.
- ◆ There is a close relationship between:
 - (i) the economic, political and social changes of new capitalism
 - (ii) technological change (mediation via new communication technology)
 - (iii) changes of genre / new genres.

5. Dialogue and the Public Sphere

- ◆ **Ideal:** Dialogue should be free and equal.
- ◆ **Reality:** Even informal chat is not equal.

Public Sphere (公共圏) =

- ◆ ‘the domain of social life in which people can engage as citizens in deliberating (= thinking carefully) about issues of social and political concern, in a way which can feed into policy making’

- ◆ ‘an effective public sphere can be defined in terms of the quality of dialogue which takes place within it’

6. Arguments, assumptions, and ideologies

- ◆ **Stephen Toulmin** defined arguments as having four parts:
- ◆ **Grounds**: the premises of the argument.
- ◆ **Warrants**: the things that justify the inference from the Grounds to the Claim.
- ◆ **Backing**: something that gives support to a warrant.
- ◆ **Claim**: the conclusion of the argument.

6. Arguments, assumptions, and ideologies

- ◆ When we try to analyse arguments, a common problem is that parts of the argument may be only **assumed, implied, taken for granted**.
- ◆ Assumptions in texts are often **questionable** or doubtful.
- ◆ Such assumptions are often **ideological** and are related to specific discourses which try to make their view of the world seem like just **‘common sense’**.

7. Narrative

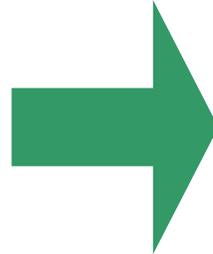
Bal's theory of narrative

- ◆ **Fabula** = the 'material or content that is worked into the story', a 'series of *logically* and *chronologically* related events'
- ◆ **Story** = a fabula that is 'presented in a certain manner' (time, characters, focalization, point of view)
- ◆ **Narrative text** = The same story can appear in various texts, with various narrators, using various different media.

‘Firemen tackle blaze’ report

Fabula

1. *First*, a fire broke out, (which caused damage until it was put out)
2. *and then* ...workers were evacuated from the building,
3. *and then* ...firemen tackled the flames, (and successfully put out the fire)
4. *and then* ...the department was running again the next morning.



Story

1. Headline (3 – 1)
2. Lead Paragraph (2 – 1)
3. Second Paragraph (3 – 1)
4. Third Paragraph (Damage)
5. Wrap-Up Paragraph (4)

News and Ideology

- ◆ **News** = creating **stories** out of **fabula**
- ◆ News is a form of **social regulation**
- ◆ News imposes **narrative order** on fuzzy reality
- ◆ Making news is not just a matter of reporting ‘the facts’.

News Intentions

- ◆ **Referential Intention**

= trying to make an accurate connection between the story and the real events.

- ◆ **Explanatory Intention**

= trying to make sense of the events by *focalizing* them according to a certain point of view.

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