

Communicative Purpose in Student Genres: Evidence from Authors and texts

Abstract

Academic writing, including in English as an Academic Lingua Franca, has become a central feature for the majority of European university students. Despite a large body of research, we find that conceptualisations of student writing still tend to assume a direct link to expert academic genres, which are often explicitly evoked as models. Within a genre analytic paradigm, however, the importance of communicative purpose for the identification of genres suggests a need for a different conceptualisation, namely one where student genres are viewed as independent genres.

Following such an argumentation, this paper investigates the communicative purposes that are represented in L2 academic student papers, with a focus on introductions and conclusions. Altogether 56 papers were analysed in terms of their genre structures, and all student authors provided questionnaire data about their communicative purposes. Findings suggest a clear set of shared communicative purposes, with, however, some interesting mismatches in student writing. Firstly, communicative purposes are identified and realised which are not deemed appropriate by expert members of the discourse community and, secondly, despite overtly identifying appropriate communicative purposes, textual realisations do not match these. Both of these mismatches have clear pedagogic implications related to fostering students' genre awareness and genre competence.

1. Introduction

With the unprecedented spread of English as an academic lingua franca (Björkman 2013), the reality of an increasing number of university students is that academic writing in English is a required skill for speakers of all languages and in most disciplines. While many institutions, especially in the Anglophone world, have been accustomed to providing specialised teaching in response to the widening participation in Higher Education, many continental European universities have only recently begun to offer L1 support for academic writing and are now being faced with additional pressure to provide relevant support in the L2 English. For many teachers and students, this involves first pinning down the elusive nature of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and then directing students towards the specific requirements of writing in their disciplines.

In this context, it is noticeable that an institutional, overt awareness of the types of texts, or genres, required of student authors is often lacking, and university teachers assume that students will be capable of producing the required texts, provided students have sufficient knowledge of the content areas. Moreover, the implicit assumption made, often by both students and lecturers, is that student writing is a weaker copy of its expert counterpart, and that EAP constitutes a homogeneous whole of writing practices, rather than a complex cluster of individual genres.

Taking the premise of genre studies in an ESP framework (Swales 1990, 2004, Bhatia 1993, 2004), this paper is premised on the existence of independent student genres, identified by specific clusters of communicative purposes. The more specific focus taken here lies on the pedagogic implications to be found in the interaction between the communicative purposes overtly reported by the novice student authors and the textual enactment of those in genre-based move structures. Didactic implications from these relationships will be discussed based on findings from introductions and conclusions to student papers.

2. Genre Studies

2.1 Analysing Genres

Arriving at a shared definition of genre is a fraught endeavour, given its "historical baggage" (Kress 1993: 31) and contested nature (Nesi & Gardner 2012: 24). My own position is to follow what has been termed the 'ESP approach' to genre analysis (Hyon 1996), with John Swales and Vijay Bhatia as its most prominent figureheads (cf. Bhatia, 1993, 2004; Swales, 1990, 2004). This approach places emphasis on the unique sets of

communicative purposes that are fulfilled by distinct academic genres and the central position of this criterion is underlined in the definition of 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 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. (Swales 1990: 58)

While central to the conceptualisation of genre here, the need for prolonged fieldwork in the difficult process of unambiguously identifying communicative purpose has been acknowledged (Askehave & Swales 2001). Overall, however, the focus of a genre-based view of academic writing on purpose has provided a clear challenge to any conceptualisation of EAP as a homogeneous whole, positing it instead as consisting of a variety of individual genres, partly clustered in 'genre-colonies' (Bhatia 2004: 57-58) related by similarities in purpose or by disciplinary affiliation. As I have argued elsewhere (Hüttner 2007, 2008), this conceptualisation of genre of necessity implies a distinction between expert and student genres, given the difference in communicative purpose between, for instance, a research article and student essay.

Following on from an identification of communicative purpose which the genre should achieve, the analysis aims to identify a move structure. Moves in this framework signal functional parts with specific communicative intentions which together constitute the overall communicative purpose of the genre, or, more precisely, a move is "a discoursal or rhetorical unit that performs a coherent communicative function in a written or spoken discourse" (Swales 2004: 228). Bhatia (1993) developed a 7-step procedure of analysing genres, which combined textual analyses with an identification of communicative purposes and genre re

Most research attention in this framework has been devoted to the research article, and in his insightful analysis of introductions, Swales (1990: 137-166; 2004: 226-234) exemplifies how authors include important persuasive and 'territorial' purposes in trying to "create a research space" by showing the value of their research through making it rhetorically fill a gap left open by previous research. The research findings of Swales (1981, 1990, 2004) were essentially confirmed in other studies (e.g., Anthony 1999; Hirano, 2009, Kwan 1996; Lewin, Fine & Young 2001; Nwogu 1990; Samraj 2002, 2008) and show conclusively how academic writers use a 'Create-a-Research-Space' move structure to position themselves and their research discursively and how a successful research article is much more than a mere objective recount of a particular research activity.

2.2 Genres in Student Writing

The overall importance of genre studies in informing the teaching of academic writing has been highlighted by Nesi and Gardner (2012: 4), who state that

writing classes need to teach students about genres of writing, and writing teachers need to be able to discern what the key features of these genres are.

In more specific terms, there would seem to be two questions related to the teaching of genres of writing to students. Firstly, the 'what' question, i.e. which genres to teach students, and, secondly, the 'how' question, i.e. the means and methods of genre-based instruction.

If we turn first to the 'what' question, I would argue that there are decided differences between expert and student writing in that the respective genres are intended for a different audience and serve a different communicative purpose. Few student papers report original research, and even fewer can realistically claim that this research had been noticeably missing from the field earlier, which would, however, be expected purposes of expert writing. On the other hand, there are communicative purposes that student papers need to fulfil which are not or less required from expert papers; first of all, showing familiarity with previous research and the ability to evaluate this research is much more pronounced in student writing. Additionally, showing the reader familiarity with the methods of arguing a case and the ability of logical reasoning are also in the foreground. If we remember that communicative purpose is the overriding distinctive feature of genres, we might reasonably

expect that student papers show a higher level of difference from expert papers than if they were merely weaker copies of it.

In earlier work (Hüttner 2008) I have presented a methodology of analysing student genres with a view towards taking into account the position of students as ‘legitimate peripheral members’ (Lave & Wenger 1991) of the academic discourse community and the role as gatekeepers of expert members of this community. This analytic process leading to a move structure of student genres includes an account of, firstly, the moves occurring in the specific genres and, secondly, a refined move structure, consisting of the sub-set of the recurring moves that has been ratified as appropriate for the given genre by expert members of the discourse community. In the process of analysis, interesting information is also gleaned about moves that are frequently produced by student authors, but deemed inappropriate by experts. (Hüttner 2008)

The resulting genre models are, I would argue,

- realistic, i.e. they reflect students’ communicative purposes for this genre;
- achievable, i.e. they reflect students’ linguistic and communicative abilities and experience;
- acceptable, i.e. they assessed favourably by the gatekeepers at the respective institutions.

Nesi and Gardner (2012) present a comprehensive overview of student genres across various disciplines, based on textual analyses of successful student writing and on interviews with both students and lecturers. However, not all genre analysts share the notion of distinct student genres; Hyland (2013: 144 *passim*), for instance, appears to imply that expert genres are suitable models for student writers.

With regard to the ‘how’ question, there have been numerous activities devoted to providing genre-sensitive teaching. Such genre-sensitive teaching approaches aim most fundamentally at enabling learners to become accepted members of a specific discourse community. As this requires proficiency in specific genres, learners need to discover the communicative purposes of these genres, and thus raise their genre awareness. Secondly, learners need to understand the relationships between these purposes and the rhetorical strategies employed. The latter is often arrived at by encouraging student writers’ discovery learning with the aid of linguistic corpora. (cf. Paltridge 2001; Skulstad 2002: 45-46) Extant research into the effects of genre-informed approaches has been conducted, suggests that there is some benefit in using the concepts of both genre and discourse community to further students’ abilities as independent producers of specific genres. (cf. Dudley-Evans 2002; Guleff 2002; Johns 1995; Johns 2002, Paltridge 2002; Swales & Lindemann 2002)

The study presented here addresses diverse types of relationship between student genre models, overt communicative purposes of student writers and specific textualisations with the aim of outlining a range of didactic challenges.

3. Empirical Study

3.1. Data Set

The study presented here was conducted with 66 second year students at the Department of English and American Studies of the University of Vienna. Students attended the ‘Proseminar’ in linguistics, the first course in the curriculum where they are required to produce a longer piece of academic writing, more specifically a 3,000 word essay on a topic in linguistics.

The data set for this study consists of 66 student questionnaires, 6 in-depth interviews with students, 56 student paper introductions and 56 student paper conclusions. Questionnaires and interviews aimed to tap into students’ genre awareness, their writing objective and attitudes towards and practices of academic writing. In addition, questionnaires were used to establish background information, including previous academic writing experience (in any language).

Data Source	Number
Student Questionnaire	66
Semi-Structured Student Interview	6
Student paper introduction	56
Student paper conclusion	56
Lecturer Interviews	2?

Table 1: Overview of Data Set

The student introductions and conclusions were analysed following ‘extended genre analysis’ (Hüttner 2008, 2010), an adaptation of genre analysis in the ESP tradition (Bhatia 1993, 2004, Swales 1990, 2004), which takes the special status of student genres into full account. Descriptive statistics of the questionnaire data were arrived at with the help of SPSS, and a qualitative content analysis was conducted of the semi-structured interviews..

3.2. Findings

3.2.1 Student views on communicative purposes of academic genres

Interviews on the conceptualisation of student writing, both in terms of the genres produced and the differences to personal or school writing, were conducted with six students who were deemed highly successful academic writers by both their academic teachers and in their self-assessment. Analyses suggest that these student writers viewed the main communicative purpose of their papers as ‘informing the reader’. Prompting revealed that this was partly considered as providing a clear account of a particular phenomenon, akin to the type of writing found in textbooks. One participant highlighted the informative purpose also in the need to take the reader into account by noting:

Ja, man muss schauen, dass [...] das Gegenüber das dann auch versteht und [...] viele Beispiele reinbringen

Well, you have to make sure that [...] the other (the reader) understands this [...] and bring lots of examples

This links in with one of the overall communicative purposes of student academic writing identified by Nesi and Gardner (2012: 27), namely “to demonstrate disciplinary knowledge and understanding”. An additional aspect of this in my data was the focus on students on “displaying their learning”. Unlike authors of textbooks or research articles, student writers are very aware that the information they related was still fairly new to themselves, having been acquired through their reading on the topic and/or their individual small-scale empirical projects. I would therefore argue for identifying the overall communicative purpose as “displaying disciplinary knowledge as acquired through recent learning”. The self-image of student authors as having disciplinary knowledge is at times slightly ironic, as the following extract of an answer to the question of what constitutes academic writing highlights

Dass es halt – unter Anführungszeichen - gescheit klingt

So that it sounds – under inverted commas - clever

In terms of the constraints of style that the students identified, students mentioned two aspects; firstly, what was termed as ‘academic style’ and secondly, what students related as ‘objective stance’. For the former, features that were highlighted were the use of particular items of Latinate vocabulary and of connective devices (e.g. *however*) and for the latter, the focus was on, firstly, using and quoting adequate source materials and, secondly, using the passive voice and avoiding the use of the first person personal pronoun. These stylistic features were – in addition to the increased length – the areas highlighted as the most different from previous, largely personal, writing tasks in English language classes. In terms of structural constraints, the overall frame of ‘introduction / body / conclusion’ was highlighted with some comments relating to overall clarity. The question of where these notions of stylistic and structural constraints originate from cannot be addressed in full here, but it is worth noting that the academic writing materials in use devote a lot of space to instructions on how to quote source material and on the need of using cohesive devices. Textual analyses of the student paper suggest, however, that despite the frequent use of cohesive devices, these seem to be at times ‘sprinkled’ over the text with scant regard to their underlying function of structuring the text according to particular logical links. As an example, both the connectors *therefore* and *however* were frequently used to indicate additive (rather than causal or concessive) relationships.

In addition to this general conceptualisation of academic writing, my analysis focused on two essential parts of the student papers, i.e. the introduction and conclusion. Both of these constituents of the larger paper are essential, as evidenced in the comments of lecturers and of students themselves, and are considered as rather

difficult by the student writers themselves. In the following, the move structures established for these genre constituents will be brought into a relationship with the communicative purposes identified by the students for said textual elements. Matches and mismatches in this area, I would argue, foreground specific didactic needs with regard to academic writing.

3.2.2 Genre structure and conceptualisations of student paper introductions

The extended genre analysis of student paper introductions gave rise to the following overall move structure. Note that in addition to the obligatory moves, there are also sub-ordinate strategies (identified here by letters a-f) and steps (shown in *italics*). Both of these are sub-ordinate to moves, with strategies indicating alternative ways or realising the over-arching move and hence indicate choice. Steps are dependent on a particular strategy being realised, so that, for instance, the step *narrowing down aim* would only be realised if the strategy of ‘presenting aim’ is realised as well.

Move 1: LEADING INTO THE TOPIC	
a.	provide background (general/other discipline)
b.	provide background (language-related/linguistics)
c.	provide background in form of personal narrative
d.	teasers
e.	show problem and possible solution
Move 2: STATING PURPOSE	
a.	presenting aim
	<i>limitations</i>
	<i>narrowing down aim</i>
b.	presenting hypothesis/expectations
	<i>reason for hypothesis/expectations</i>
c.	presenting topic
	<i>reason for choice</i>
	<i>limitations in topic</i>
	<i>narrowing down topic</i>
	<i>expanding topic</i>
	<i>explanation of topic</i>
Move 3: PREVIEW PAPER	
a.	outline of entire paper
b.	preview theoretical aspects
c.	preview results
d.	preview method/data (collection)
	<i>reason for choice</i>
	<i>evaluation of method</i>

Figure 1: Genre structure of student paper introductions

This structure bears some similarity to the established CARS (Create-A-Research-Space) structure of expert research article introductions, especially in Moves 1, ‘establishing a territory’, and 3, ‘outlining the present work’. Nevertheless, there is one notable exception to these similarities in the absence in the student genre of a self-promotional element. This purpose is realised by experts in Move 2, which creates or highlights an existing gap in extant research, to be filled by Move 3. (Swales 2004: 230, 232) This focus on displaying knowledge and learning, without vying for readership, resonates with the needs of student writers.

In the student questionnaires, participants were asked to identify the three most relevant communicative purposes in both the introduction and the conclusion of their paper. The four most frequently given communicative objectives for student paper introductions are as follows:

Rank	Communicative Objective	Number (N=66)	Percentage
1	Saying what the topic of the paper is	46	69.7
2	Saying what the main points of the paper are	41	62.1
3	Trying to get the reader interested	40	60.6
4	Presenting the structure of the paper	23	34.8

Table 2: Communicative objectives in student paper introductions

This list suggests that students identify a clear cluster of the three top communicative purposes, which is, however, not entirely borne out in the overall genre textualisations produced. The purpose of “trying to get the reader interested”, cited by 60.6% of authors, features in instructions given to students by their university lecturers; similarly, some of the guidelines for academic writing used in the courses stipulate that merely giving the purpose of a paper is not enough, and that similarly to expert research articles, there ought to be an appeal to the prospective readership. (Swales & Feak 2012: 329) In the student paper introductions analysed there are, however, no move realisations that appear to directly represent this purpose. The closest we get are authors who highlight their own interest in the topic, with the implicit assumption that this interest will be shared by the readers. This is, to some extent, in line with expert research article introductions that focus on the general interest extant in the issues to be explored in the article. An example of this common practice is the following first line of a Research Article, published in the journal *English for Specific Purposes*.

Recent years have seen much interest in the phenomenon of formulaic (Durrant & Mathews-Aydinli 2011)

A mismatch of a different nature exists in the move ‘leading into the topic’, which found textual realisation in 60.7% of all student introductions, but only 24% of participants listed communicative purposes that relate to this move, e.g. ‘providing background to the topic’. The reasons for this are not entirely clear, but arguably the fact that Leading into the Topic is often realised in very short textual passage might create an impression of less salience on the part of the student authors. Overall, however, we can note that student authors show some genre awareness in terms of appropriate communicative purposes and move realisations in their paper introductions.

3.2.3 Genre structure and conceptualisations of student paper conclusions

The extended genre analysis of student paper conclusions led to the following overall move structure:

1. PROVIDE A SUMMARY STATEMENT OR REVIEW
 - a. Summarise results
 - i. *Give reason for results*
 - b. Review paper/parts of paper
 2. QUALIFY AND EVALUATE THE PAPER/RESULTS
 - a. Emphasise importance of results/topic/effect of results
 - b. Present limitations of results/topic
 - i. *Reasons for limitations*
 3. PROVIDE A WIDER OUTLOOK/EMBED THE PAPER
 - a. presenting aspects (negative) of theory
 - b. presenting aspects (positive or negative) of empirical work
 - c. reflecting on personal growth/development
 - d. explaining personal interest in topic
 - e. presenting personal opinion on topic/results

Figure 2: Genre Structure of Student Paper Conclusions

In addition there were two further moves, i.e. ‘appeal to the reader’ and ‘acknowledge gratitude’, which both in terms of frequency of occurrence and expert evaluations were considered possible, but not core features of the genre. Of greater interest are the two moves which were realised comparatively frequently in the student texts, but considered inappropriate by experts. These two moves were ‘provide a personal reflection’, realised in 32.7% of texts, and ‘present new information’, realised in 23.6% of texts.

This overall move structure quite clearly differs from the one that could be established for expert research article conclusions (cf. Hüttner 2007; Lewin et al., 2001). Noticeable differences lie in the fact that expert conclusions have a fully obligatory move of ‘report accomplishments’ to focus on the significance of the results and, in a sense, draw a real conclusion. Student conclusions, on the other hand, combined this communicative purpose with a more neutral review. While this might seem rather minimal, it does show that even if it is acceptable for students to simply run through what has been presented in the paper again, for experts it is vital to draw a clear conclusion. Additionally, the strategic importance for experts of placing their research and, in a way, of defending their future research space, is evidenced in the ‘state implications’ and additionally in the ‘ward off counterclaims’ move, which addresses any potential criticism by emphasizing the value of their results despite – minor – limitations. (cf. Lewin et al. 2001: 65ff).

Thus, we can see that similarly to introductions, experts need to address a communicative purpose which is additional to the overarching one of bringing the paper to a close, and that is self-promotional and in a sense follows from creating a research niche in the introduction to defending this research space in the conclusion. This purpose is clearly not shared by the student writers, whose group responses regarding the communicative purposes of their paper conclusions are shown in Table 3.

Rank	Objectives	Total number (N=63)	Percentage
1	saying what the main points of the paper were	59	93.7
2	continuing with some aspects raised earlier in the paper	23	36.5
3	apologising for any limitations of the paper	23	36.5
4	showing the relevance of the topic for myself	21	33.3

Table 3: Communicative objectives in student paper conclusions

What is evident from this list is a much clearer agreement on the single most important objective, i.e. ‘saying what the main points of the paper were’ than could be established for the paper introductions. The next group of purposes are, however, much more problematic. Firstly, we can see that in position two and position four arguably relate to genre moves that are not deemed as appropriate by gatekeepers. Thus, the purpose of ‘continuing with some aspects raised earlier in the paper’ might be realised as the move ‘present new information’, and the purpose ‘showing the relevance of the topic for myself’ might lead to a ‘reflection’ move. The latter is clearly in line with the overarching communicative purpose identified for student academic writing earlier of showing learning, in this case by reflecting on a completed learning experience in academic research.

In sum, the findings of this study suggest that learners have some genre awareness, noticeably in identifying part of the core moves of student genres, e.g. introductions and conclusions of academic papers. However, there is also some confusion in terms of acceptable moves, especially in the conclusion, with a sizeable proportion of student authors viewing a continuation of presenting new information as well as a reflection section as appropriate, in contrast to expert gatekeepers. Apart from this level of genre awareness, we also find that the realisation of purposes in text can be fraught with difficulties. In the following, I will present three cases and discuss the pedagogical implications of the problems encountered by the student authors.

3.3 Illustrative Examples

The use of identifiers (names or matched pseudonyms) in the questionnaires enabled a link between overt communicative purposes identified by individual authors and their specific texts. In the following I shall present three text extracts to highlight diverse pedagogic issues.

3.3.1 Example 1: Identification and realisation of inappropriate communicative purposes

The author in this case gave as her communicative purposes the following three points; firstly, continuing with some aspects of the paper, secondly, saying what action should be taken regarding the topic, and finally, presenting her own opinion. The paper itself, written in a sociolinguistics class, focused on language mixing and borrowing in Austria and France. In the following, one move of the conclusion is presented.

Extract 1: Student Paper Conclusion

- 1 I think the use of anglicisms is, above all, due to the cultural influence of those countries in which
- 2 English is spoken. The English language has not only a great effect on the field of music, but also
- 3 on the one of films, sports and science. The majority of films that are released each month are
- 4 produced in the United States - in France again, there come out more homemade films than in
- 5 Austria. To prove this statement, I compared the film releases of January in both countries and
- 6 found out that in France 44.4% are originally in English and 30.5% are in French, whereas in
- 7 Austria 66.6% are English films and 16.6% were shot in German.

We can note that this extract, which presents information not previously discussed in the paper, would typically be found in a results section, rather than a conclusion. It does, however, very clearly match the author's purpose of continuing with aspects of her paper.

The problem of this author, then, seems to be a lack of genre awareness. She is clearly able to turn her communicative purpose into academic text, but the purpose itself is not appropriate for the genre that she is producing. Arguably, the kind of intervention needed for this student would address her explicit knowledge of which communicative purposes are appropriate for which genre (or genre sections) and thus address overt genre awareness.

3.3.2 Example 2: Absent textualisation of appropriate communicative purposes

The author of this text identified these three communicative purposes for her introduction: firstly, raise interest of reader, secondly, present the topic and finally, present the structure of the paper. These purposes are highly appropriate for a student paper introduction and, indeed, many students who quoted similar communicative purposes produced highly successful texts.

This introduction, however, was less successful as can be shown below

Extract 2: Student Paper Introduction

- 1 This topic was chosen regarding my own families experiences as immigrants to Australia. Both of my
- 2 parents emigrated to Australia but independent of family background and age. My mother's family left
- 3 [...] in [...] when my mother was [...] years of age. It was my grandfather's decision because he expected
- 4 better living conditions in Australia and he was simply adventurous.
- 5 My father left [...] in [...] at the age of [...] and his decision to move was personal and also because at this
- 6 time it was a real boom to go abroad. The newspapers were full of big advertising campaigns and
- 7 advertising pillars on the streets tempted people too, to emigrate.

[continues with 16 more lines of family history]

An analysis shows that the genre structure of this introduction consists of only two moves, i.e. 'give reason for topic choice' and 'provide background as personal narrative'. The former is a step and would typically only be realised in conjunction with the strategy of 'presenting topic', which is absent in this text. The latter move is a strategy to the overarching 'leading into the topic' move.

While this student showed fairly good genre awareness in identifying the overall communicative purposes of a student paper introduction in her overt statements of what she planned to achieve in her text, her textual

3 ~~talk with each other they need to take turns to make sure that only one person speaks at a time~~
 4 ~~and a speakers change recurs.~~ More precisely, I will look at the differences in the application of the
 5 turn-taking activity between cultures and individuals.
 6 *This paper, however, will leave aside aspects such as adjacency pairs, insertion sequences and the*
 7 *principle of repair and I will ~~not neither~~ be concerned with conversations in which the*
 8 *turn-taking activity is already pre-allocated, as e.g. in courtrooms.*
 9 Chapter 1 gives a short description of how turn-taking works and talks about the rules that are
 10 involved in the mechanism. I will then move on to the more practical aspects of my research and
 11 will be concerned with the interviews I have conducted. The reason for talking with the
 12 interviewees about the various aspects of turn-taking, as presented in the guidelines for the
 13 interview in section 3, was my particular interest in showing that shy individuals are often
 14 disadvantaged in conversation

This version was deemed much more appropriate by expert markers, even though the alterations are, in fact, minimal. This would suggest that pedagogical practices involving re-writing of existing student texts have some potential of improving textualisation practices by increasing the awareness of the benefits of avoiding disjointed move realisations and of adhering to a specific order of moves.

4. Implications for Practice

This contribution has highlighted the need to conceptualise student academic writing as consisting of specific genres that have student-specific communicative purposes and genre structure. I have suggested a means of arriving at student genre structures by analysing actual student productions, as well as eliciting expert information to ensure that the final structure is acceptable, achievable and appropriate. I would also argue strongly for the use of these student genres structures as teaching models as these, firstly, correspond to the actual communicative purposes that student writers have at this stage in their academic development, such as showing their learning, which are unlike those of experienced researchers writing articles. The still prevalent use of expert genres as student models will, I would argue, makes student writers less able to see the correspondence between communicative purpose, genre structure and actual textualisation. Such a practice arguably leads students to copy written structures without being able to relate these to their reality – to which, indeed, they do not relate – and might well turn students into insecure writers or even disengaged copiers. On the other hand, showing students how genre structures relate to and support their own communicative purposes should lead to the development of transferable skills as accomplished writers.

The examples discussed here highlight three distinct areas of difficulty for student writers, which call for diverse pedagogic interventions. On the one hand, we have students who seem unaware of the communicative purposes that should be addressed in specific genres (see example 1), and so realise textualise purposes that experts deem inappropriate. In my own practice, I have found that for this type of problem overt genre awareness-raising tasks are reasonably effective. In these, students are led to a discussion of which purposes might be aimed at in which texts and – if necessary – challenged or even corrected. Ideally, this involves mostly peer-interaction with some teacher guidance. A study with 21 participants showed that the use of inappropriate moves was dramatically reduced by raising awareness in this manner, even though the intervention consisted only of a three hour genre-based workshop. (Hüttner 2007)

The second example showed a very different problem as the student had a good awareness of the purposes that her introduction should address, but seemed incapable of turning theses purposes into text. Didactic activities I conducted with colleagues that ask students to identify communicative purposes in other authors' texts have provided some help to students in establishing a link between purpose and text (Smit & Hüttner 2006, Hüttner & Smit 2012). This process is typically less immediately effective, but an engagement with texts, either individual texts or even collections of texts in corpora, leads to discover-based learning and thus to a deeper understanding of the means by which purpose can become text. The final example is, in a way, a continuation of the issues in the second one. Here the author has started on the journey of textualising her communicative intentions, but appears unaware of the means of improving texts. Again, an engagement with texts, both originals and amended

copies, on the part of the students will help gain a deeper understanding of the need for editing with a view towards avoiding too disjointed a move structure.

Overall, I would argue that spending time in both content and language classes on raising genre awareness and on addressing the link between communicative purposes and text patterns is well invested. While many students seem able to acquire the structures and formal features of academic writing without such intervention, the number of those who benefit from a more explicit teaching is rising. It is also worth noting that even experienced academic teachers seem to draw deeper insights into their own and their students' practices by bringing their often implicit knowledge about requirements and appropriacy of student genres into the foreground.

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