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Chapter 2 Genre

1. GENRE AND TEXT TYPE

Genre: classification/categories of texts (research article, column, review, professional report)

Text type: form of text (narration, description, instruction, argumentation, etc.)

2. DETERMINATION OF GENRE/GENRE ANALYSIS

In this framework, a text analysis means that we should determine the genre – and thus the purpose of a text - on the basis of an analysis of the move structure/text pattern, the form of text (description, narration, instruction etc.) and rhetorical strategies.

Communicative purpose (see chapter 3)

The most important key word in connection with genre is communicative purpose: what was the purpose of producing a particular text?

If a number of texts share the same communicative purpose, they belong to the same genre.

Move structure (see chapter 4)

With most genres, both sender and receiver have certain expectations as to how a text is/should be structured. This means that:

- 1) When we produce a text within a given genre, we will (almost) automatically follow the structure that is specific for this particular genre.
- 2) When we read a text and get an impression of what genre it belongs to, we will automatically expect that the text follows a given structure.

The communicative purpose determines the move structure, and the move structure in turn determines which rhetorical strategies would be appropriate for obtaining what the sender wants to achieve.

Text types/modes of writing (see chapter 5)

Move structures and text types (modes of writing) are closely related since a specific move structure also determines what or which text types should be used.

For instance, the news-report move structure always includes a background move. And providing background typically involves story telling: what happened in the past that led to the event? When we 'tell a story', we use the text type narration (*Once a upon a time, there was an old king...*).

Similarly, for relating an event, we use the text type description.

Rhetorical strategies (see chapters 6-9)

These include an analysis of e.g.:

- Some of the most important characteristics of an expressive text are that they express **attitudes, evaluations, judgements**, etc.
- Therefore, they are often highly **emotive**.
- Because attitudes and evaluations are expressed, they tend to be **subjective** rather than objective and are typically – but not always - of a **personal** rather than public nature.
- With this function, language is used with the purpose of saying something about **the sender**, so here his **sincerity** (oprightighed) can be questioned. Therefore, what is important here is the attitude and evaluation of the sender.
- The expressive text function is typically seen in **genres** such as advertising, letters-to-the-Editor, reviews, etc. It is generally believed to be absent in academic writing. This, however, seems to be a myth.

The directive text function

- When the function of a text is directive, focus is on the **receiver**.
- Language is used to **affect** the receiver (by getting him to do (or not do) something or by changing his opinions).
- Therefore, in terms of grammar, **imperatives** are highly frequent (hyppig)kjå .
- The communicative acts performed are typically **order, persuasion and argumentation**.
- In this way, the sender's **right** to use language the way he does can be questioned.
- Purely directive texts attempt to **regulate the receiver's behaviour**, as is seen in rules and regulations (NO TRESPASSING"). Directive genres which are seen as **beneficial** for the receiver are characterised by imperatives or certain modal verbs as in instructions and cookbooks or contracts.
- Instructions are, by their very nature, found more often in technical writing than in scientific discourse. Furthermore, they tend to be found almost exclusively in '**non-peer' writing**, i.e. in expert to non-expert communication.
- Instructions can be divided into **direct and indirect instructions**. Direct instructions are characterised by the use of the **imperative** form of the verb, whereas the predominant features of indirect instructions are **modal verbs and passives**.

The phatic text function

- Phatic communication puts focus on the **channel**.

Chapter 5 TEXT TYPES

TEXT TYPES

Genre: categories of text (external feature)

Text type: forms of text (internal feature)

1. Exposition (writing that informs, explains and/or describes) – goes hand in hand with the expository move structure
2. Description (facts and figures) – included in most moves structures
 - Objective description (neutral, not coloured – is generally used with the informative text function)
 - Subjective description (coloured – is generally used with the expressive text function)
3. Narration (writing that unfolds in time) – combines with narrative move structure and all move structures where background is included - **+ VERBS IN THE PAST TENSE!**
4. Instruction (writing that guides or orders) – combines with the DIRECT directive text function and DIRECT directive speech acts only

Instruction without option

- the receiver has no choice, very often it's for his own good
- the imperative is usually predominant
- in contexts other than manuals etc., this text types is not considered polite (very 'order-like')

Instruction with option

- the receiver has a choice whether he/she wants to follow the instruction or not
- structures that are considered more 'polite' are typically used (modals, passives etc.)