

Needs Analysis: ESP Perspective on Genre

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Abstract

A great deal about the origin of ESP could be written. Notably, there are three reasons common to the emergence of all ESP: the demands of a Brave New World, a revolution in linguistics, and focus on the learner (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). The author started this paper with the short review of needs analysis, giving a brief explanation about the approaches to needs analysis, with a particular attention to genre analysis. Bhatia (2004) maintains, "Language is power, and the power of language is the 'power of genre' (p. 189). Accordingly, power of genre is not only to construct, use, interpret and exploit genres, but also to innovate novel generic forms (Bhatia, 2004). The writer argued genre analysis gives teachers a more central role in preparing the learners to learn. The blame, in the writer's opinion, does not rest with the learners but with the teachers and genre analysts who treat genre analysis as simply textual artifacts. As Bakhtin (1986) points out genre must be fully mastered to be used creatively (cited in Bhatia, 2004). This paper has established that ESP students need to be scaffolded by teachers in order to understand the construct of any professional genre to enable them to produce these genres effectively. Also, this approach is recommended not only as a basis for teaching ESP but also for the teachers' professional development. In the same line, genre analysis can enable instructors to become aware of the hidden assumptions and gain insight into pedagogical implications. The main purpose of this article is to elucidate the power of genre in the analysis of students' needs.

Index items: needs analysis, ESP, genre

I. INTRODUCTION

The idea of focusing on learners' needs originated in the 1970s resulting from the interest in the design of language courses that could satisfy individual and social needs (Palacios, 1992); its development evolved in association with the teaching of languages for specific purposes. The term needs analysis has been the principal method for determining what to include in ESP/EAP curricula (Bensch, 1999). Richards (2001) defines the term needs analysis, "as procedures used to collect information about learners' needs" (p. 51). Along the same line, the term needs analysis refers to the activities that are involved in collecting information that will serve as the basis for developing a curriculum that will meet the needs of a particular group of students (Iwai, Kondo, Limm, Ray, Shimizu & Brown, 2008, cited in Haseli Songhori, 2008, p.2).

Johns and Dudley-Evans (1991) present needs analysis as the neutral discovery of elements of the target situation. In contrast, Robinson (1991, as cited in Benesch, 1996) believes that needs analysis is "influenced by the ideological preconceptions of the analysts" (p. 724) and that needs "do not have of themselves an objective reality" (Brindley, 1989, as cited in Robinson, 1991, p.7). However, according to Benesch (1996), though Robinson acknowledges the political and subjective nature of needs analysis, she neglects to explain her own ideology when offering taxonomy of needs. Instead she presents that taxonomy as unproblematic aspects of the target situation and students' educational backgrounds: "study or job requirements," "what the user-institution or society at large regards as necessary," "what the learner needs to do to actually acquire the language," "what the students themselves would like to gain from the language course," "what the students do not know or cannot do in English (cited in Benesch, 1996, p. 725). Along the same line, Benesch (1996) argues: Taxonomies of needs not only hide their ideological basis but also disregard the unequal social positions of the different parties involved and the possible effects of such inequality on curriculum development. Employers, academic institutions, instructors, and learners are presented as occupants of a level playing field rather than as players whose differing access to power must be considered.... The lack of attention in needs analysis to sociopolitical issues and their effects on curriculum is due in part to the way social context is delineated in the EAP literature. (p. 724)

Social context is what takes place outside our classrooms but not very far outside. It includes linguistic expectations of the course and excludes the political and economic forces that influence life inside and outside academic institutions. According to Benesch (1996), needs analysis has not considered social issues affecting students' current academic lives, such as ambivalence toward studying English or budget cuts, and those that may affect their future professional lives, such as deteriorating job opportunities. Yet students may need to examine these issues to understand the difficulties of pursuing a degree or getting a job or to participate in political processes that could improve their lives.

However, to have a critical look at the concept of needs analysis, one can readily claim that decisions about what to teach and how to teach it are, therefore, not neutral professional questions but involve issues of authority in decision-making with important consequences for learners. In fact, treating needs as something existing and measurable is itself an ideological stance, and teachers should be encouraged to reflect on whether students' needs are best served by adopting exclusively pragmatic and instrumental goals, or whether they should assist them to a more participatory and critical stance.

A. Needs analysis in the realm of ESP

Clearly, the role of needs analysis in any ESP course is indisputable. Language Needs Analysis (LNA) has traditionally been a pillar of ESP course design. As Hyland (2007) argues the use of systematic means to define the specific sets of skills, texts, linguistic forms, and communicative practices that a particular group of learners must acquire is central to ESP, informing its curricula and materials and underlining its pragmatic engagement with occupational, academic, and professional realities.

Needs analysis is an inseparable part of any ESP programs. In fact, ESP is defined as an approach to course design which starts with the question 'Why do these learners need to learn English?' But what courses? Hutchinson and Waters (1987) argue, "What distinguishes ESP from General English is not from the existence of a need as such but rather an awareness of the need" (P. 53). Accordingly, "if learners, sponsors and teachers know why the learners need English, that awareness will have an influence on what will be acceptable as reasonable content in the language course and, on the positive side what potential can be exploited" (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 53). Thus, needs analysis is associated with ESP. This means that any ESP program scaffolds on needs analysis of learner (Abu-Zahra & Shayeb, 2011). In effect, it is part and parcel of any ESP project in order to specify these needs and accordingly to design the curricula that meet these needs. For Johns (1991), needs analysis is the first step in course design and it provides validity and relevancy for all subsequent course design activities (cited in Haseli, 2007). Needs analysis, further, enables the teacher to discover the abilities the learners bring to the class and what they can not do in English.

Different scholars used different labels to denote needs analysis: target situation analysis, present situation analysis, pedagogic needs analysis, deficiency analysis, means analysis, register analysis, discourse analysis and genre analysis. For Hutchinson and Waters (1987) needs analysis or "target situation needs analysis" is "in essence a matter of asking questions about the target situation and the attitudes towards that situation of various participants in the learning process" (p. 59) Jordan (1997) thinks that the sources of information in the needs analysis are: the students themselves, the academic institution and the prospective employer. Their needs will be obtained through questionnaires to be filled up by learners. To better appreciate the concept of needs, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) make a distinction between 'target needs' and 'learning needs'. The former refers to what the learner needs to do in the target situation and the latter, learning needs, to what the learner needs to do in order to learn. (p. 54). Besides, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) look at the target situation in terms of *necessities*, *lacks* and *wants*. Accordingly, necessities refer to the type of need determined by the demands of the target situation; that is, what the learner has to know in order to function effectively. You also need to know what the learners already know in order that you can decide what necessities the learner lacks. Furthermore, a need does not exist independent of a person. But the learner has a view as to what his or her need is. Since awareness of the need is a matter of perception, and perception may vary according to one's standpoint. It is quite possible that the learners' views might conflict with the perceptions of other interested parties. However, they have a clear view about the necessities of the target situation and of their lacks (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Accordingly, Hutchinson and Waters, in an analogy, consider this very tripartite (i.e., lacks, necessities and wants) as a journey:

...what we have done so far is to consider the starting points (lacks) and the destination (necessities), although we have also seen that there might be some dispute as to what the destination should be. (wants). What we have not considered yet is the route. (p. 60)

But the question raised is that “How will we travel from our starting point to the destination?” This indicates another need: learning need. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) hold the whole ESP is not concerned with knowing or doing but with learning. Learning needs refer to the skills, strategies, etc that learners need in order to achieve their goals. Hutchinson and Waters’ (1987) definition of wants (perceived or subjective needs of learners) corresponds to learning needs (Haseli, 2007). West (1994) elaborates on this by saying that it was Allwright who made a distinction between needs (the skills which a student sees as being relevant to himself or herself), wants (those needs on which students put a high priority in the available, limited time), and lacks (the difference between the student’s present competence and the desired competence) (cited in Abu-Zahra & Shayeb, 2011) What Hutchinson and Waters (1987) define as *lacks* can be matched with deficiency analysis (to be briefly elaborated). According to West (1994), the shortcomings of target needs analysis should be compensated for by collecting data about the learner and the learning environment. West’s (1994) Pedagogic Needs Analysis is an umbrella term to describe the following three elements of needs analysis. He states the fact that shortcomings of target needs analysis should be compensated for by collecting data about the learner and the learning environment (Haseli, 2007).

Deficiency Analysis

According to Allwright (1982, cited in West, 1994), the approaches to needs analysis developed to consider learners’ present needs or wants may be called analysis of learners’ *deficiencies* or *lacks*. Deficiency analysis is the route to cover from point A (present situation) to point B (target situation). Therefore, deficiency analysis can form the basis of the language syllabus (Jordan, 1997) because it should provide data about both the gap between present and target extralinguistic knowledge, mastery of general English, language skills, and learning strategies (Haseli, 2007).

Strategy Analysis or Learning Needs Analysis

This type of needs analysis has to do with the strategies that learners employ in order to learn another language. This tries to establish how the learners wish to learn rather than what they need to learn (West, 1998, cited in Haseli Songhori, 2007, p. 12) As it was discussed earlier, Allwright was the first to make a distinction between *needs* (the skills which a student sees as being relevant to himself or herself), *wants* (those needs on which students put a high priority in the available, limited time), and *lacks* (the difference between the student’s present competence and the desired competence). His ideas were adopted later by Hutchinson and Waters (1987), who advocate a learning-centered approach in which learners’ learning needs play a vital role. Obviously, they advocate a process-oriented approach, not a product- or goal-oriented one. What learners should be taught are skills that enable them to reach the target, the process of learning and motivation should be considered as well as the fact that different learners learn in different ways (Dudley-Evans and St. John, 1998).

Means Analysis

Means analysis tries to investigate those considerations that Munby’s (1978) Communicative Syllabus Design excludes (West, 1998, cited in Haseli Songhori, 2007, p. 15); that is, matters of logistics and pedagogy that led to debate about practicalities and constraints in implementing needs-based language courses (West, 1994, cited in Haseli Songhori, 2007, p.15). Swales (1989, as cited in Haseli, 2007, p. 15) list five factors which relate to the learning environment and should be considered by curriculum specialists if the course is to be successful. These considerations are:

- Classroom culture
- EAP staff
- Pilot target situation analysis
- Status of service operations
- Study of change agents

To direct the orientation of the words toward the cornerstone of the article (i.e., genre analysis) let the writer first makes a distinction between register analysis and discourse analysis.

B. Register analysis

Register analysis or frequency analysis called by Robinson (1991) operated almost entirely at word and sentence level. The main motive behind register analysis was the pedagogic one of making the ESP course more relevant to learners' needs (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). The assumption behind register analysis was that, while the grammar of scientific and technical writing does not differ from that of general English, certain grammatical and lexical forms are used much more frequently (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998). However, according to West (1998), it restricts the analysis of texts to the word and sentence level (cited in Saheli Songhori, 2007, p. 16). Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) also argue that most materials produced under the banner of register analysis follow a similar pattern, which begins with a long specialist reading passage which lacks authenticity.

C. Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis also called rhetorical or textual analysis shifted attention to the level above the sentence and tried to find out how sentences were combined into discourse (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Also, West (1998, cited in Saheli Songhori, 2007, p. 17) says that the reaction against register analysis in the early 1970s concentrated on the communicative values of discourse rather than the lexical and grammatical properties of register. West (1998) also maintains this approach tended to concentrate on how sentences are used in the performance of acts of communication and to generate materials based on functions (cited Saheli Songhori, 2007, p. 17). One of the shortcomings of the discourse analysis is that its treatment remains fragmentary, identifying the functional units of which discourse was composed at sentence/utterance level but offering limited guidance on how functions and sentences/utterances fit together to form text (West, 1998, cited in Saheli Songhori, 2007, p. 18). There is also the danger that the findings of discourse analysis, which are concerned with texts and how they work as pieces of discourse, fail to take sufficient account of the academic or business context in which communication takes place (Dudley-Evans & Johns, 1998, cited in Saheli Songhori, 2007, p. 18).

Discourse analysis may overlap with genre analysis. Dudley-Evans and John (1998) give a clear distinction between the two terms: Any text at a level above that of sentence is a discourse study. This may involve the study of cohesive links between sentences, of paragraphs, or the structure of the whole text. The results of this type of analysis make statements about how texts — any text-work. This is applied discourse analysis. Where, however, genre analysis refers to the focus of text analysis on the regularities of structures that distinguish one type of text from another. This is genre analysis and the results focus on the differences between text types, or genres.

D. Genre Analysis

The term 'genre' was first used by Swales (1981). His definition of genre is: "a more or less standardized communicative event with a goal or set of goals mutually understood by the participants in that event and occurring within a functional rather than a personal or social setting" (cited in Robinson, 1991, pp. 11-12). Bhatia (2004) maintains, "Language is power, and the power of language is the 'power of genre' (p. 189). Accordingly, power of genre is not only to construct, use, interpret and exploit genres, but also to innovate novel generic forms (Bhatia, 2004). Thus, genre analysis gives teachers a more central role in preparing the learners to learn. For this purpose, As Bakhtin (1986) points out genre must be fully mastered to be used creatively (cited in Bhatia, 2004).

Hyland (2007) asserts, "Genre refers to abstract, socially recognized ways of using language." (p. 149). Along the same line, the idea that members of a community usually have little difficulty in recognizing similarities in the texts gives rise to the reason that they use frequently and are able to draw on their repeated experiences with such texts to read, understand, and perhaps write them relatively easily. Meanwhile, Hyland (2007) claims sometimes, for example, genres follow each other in a predictable chronological order, and these event sequences can be helpful and provide learners with expectations and with the language resources they require to communicate. However, according to Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995), there must be genre knowledge: an individual's repertoire of situationally appropriate

responses to recurrent situations (cited in Hyland, 2007, p. 154). By teaching these genres in the sequences they occur in target contexts, teachers not only help students to develop an understanding of context but also the ways texts can be employed to realize situated purposes.

A word of caution by Benesch (2001) states that "...genres are not simply texts to be analyzed for their grammatical and discursal features; rather it is "a social activity of a typical recognizable kind in a community, which is realized in language" (p. 18). Bhatia (updated) asserts, "Genre analysis is the study of how language is used in a particular setting. It focuses on such issues as rhetorical styles, discourse styles, discourse types and relates research in socio-linguistics, text-linguistics and discourse analysis to the study of specialist areas of language (p. 172). From a critical perspective, genre analysis can be viewed from two different perspectives: it may be seen as a reflection of the complex realities of the world of institutionalized communication, or it may be seen as a pedagogically effective and convenient tool for the design of language teaching programs (Bhatia, 2002). As Bhatia (undated) states the main benefit of a genre-based approach to the teaching and learning of specialist English is that the learner does not learn language in isolation from specialist contexts, but is encouraged to make the relevant connection between the use of language on the one hand and the purpose of communication on the other, always aware of the question, why do members of the specialist discourse community use the language in this way? Accordingly, Bhatia (updated) distinguished four areas of competence that an ESP learner needs to develop so as to get over his/her lack of confidence in dealing with specialist discourse:

1. *Knowledge of the Code* (a pre-requisite for developing communicative expertise in specialist or even everyday discourse);
2. *Acquisition of Genre Knowledge* (familiarity with and awareness of appropriate rhetorical process)
3. *Sensitivity to Cognitive Structures* (that is since certain lexical items have specialist meanings in specific professional genres, it is imperative that the specialist learner become aware of restricted aspects of linguistic code in addition to the general competence he or she requires in the language.)
4. *Exploitation of Generic Knowledge* (that is, it is only after learners have developed some acquaintance or expertise at levels discussed above, that they can confidently interpret, use or even take liberties with specialist discourse.) (Haseli Songhori, 2007) Accordingly, Bhatia (1933) points out that exploiting rules and conventions for the sake of creativity and innovation is good but it is much better to do so after one has developed at least a good awareness of, if not a good mastery over such conventions.

Furthermore, most ESP practitioners view genre as action, as staged, purposeful, communicative events (Flowerdew, 2011). This conception resonates Bhatia's (2004) views of genre as the study of situated linguistic behavior in institutionalized academic or professional settings whether defined in terms of typification of social and rhetorical action, as regulation of staged, goal-oriented social process or as consistency of communicative purposes. Considering genre in terms of communicative purpose, we get concerned with language as an action.

As Flowerdew (2011) insists the consideration of content in genre analysis is essential. He claims the most complete system of analyzing content—from a linguistic perspective—is that of Martin and Rose (2003), who incorporates a level they refer to as discourse semantics into their model of genre. This model has four dimensions to do with content, rather than the individual sentence or utterance:

- **Ideation:** deals with the activities and how the participants in these activities are described. It realizes the field, or content of the text.
- **Conjunction:** considers the interconnection between the activities. It is concerned with logical relations which form temporal, causal and other kinds of connectivity.
- **Identification:** is concerned with how participants are tracked through the discourse, with introducing people, places and things and keeping track of them.
- **Periodicity:** focuses on the rhythm of discourse, how the discourse predicts what is to come next and how what has already occurred is consolidated. (cited in Flowerdew, 2011, p. 521)

In another part, Swale's (1990) CARS (Creating A Research Space) model has a tremendous influence on genre analysis in ESP and on the teaching of academic writing. His model is very well known, but for the sake of clarity and comprehensiveness, the writer outlines it here. The model captures the ways in which academic writers justify and highlight their own contribution to the ongoing research profile of the field by first establishing a topic for the research and summarizing the key features of the previous research, then establishing a gap or possible extension of that work that will form the basis of the writers' claims. The model proposes three main Moves for the introduction and a number of Steps used to express each move:

Move 1: Establishing a Territory

- Step 1: Claiming Centrality and/or
- Step 2: Making Topic Generalisations and/or
- Step 3: Reviewing Items of Previous Research

Move 2: Establishing a Niche

- Step 1A: Counter-claiming or
- Step 1B: Indicating a Gap or
- Step 1C: Question Raising or
- Step 1D: Continuing a Tradition

Move 3: Occupying the Niche

- Step 1A: Outlining Purposes or
- Step 1B: Announcing Present Research
- Step 2: Announcing Principal Findings
- Step 3: Indicating Research Article Structure

A fundamental assumption of all these move-based models is that they are common to all academic disciplines. Swales (1990) notes that different steps may be used in different disciplines, but also suggests that many of these steps will be widely distributed across the disciplinary area.

E. Chaotic concept of genre

Genre analysis seems to marry the textual awareness of the register analysts with a much broader view of how theoretical considerations govern grammatical choice. In the same line, Bhati (2002) points out:

analyzing genre means investigating instances of conventionalized or institutionalized textual artifacts in the context of specific institutional and disciplinary practices, procedures and cultures in order to understand how members of specific discourse communities construct, interpret and use these genres to achieve their community goals and why they write them the way they do (p.6).

Accordingly, there are four contributors, according to Bhatia (1999), to this view of language use:

- Purposes: Institutionalized community goals and communicative purposes
- Products: Textual artifacts or genres
- Practices: Discursive practices, procedures and processes
- Players: Discourse community membership

To Bahati, (2002), it is more than necessary to offer a framework which integrates these four aspects of genre theory in an interactive and integrative manner to get a thorough understanding of the genre as is possible. To better appreciate the chaotic concept of genre analysis, Bahati (2002) argues that

one of the main objectives of genre analysis is to understand and to account for the realities of the world of texts. The real world is not only complex but dynamic too; complex in the sense that it incorporates texts of various kinds, serving often overlapping and at the same time, conflicting communicative purposes. In fact, to be complex does not have the same meaning as being complicated. The term complex is the opposite of independent. However, complexity may sometimes imply complicatedness (Baofu, 2007). Recent literature will convince us of the complexities and dynamicity involved in the generic view of language. Putting another way, although genres are identified on the basis of conventionalized features, yet we know they are constantly developing. Accordingly, we often find typical textualization patterns, yet we know expert members of professional communities exploit them to create novel patterns. To better appreciate the systematic view of genre analysis, Bahati (2002) outlines four different but interacting perspectives on discourse, each of which seems to offer a different view of the world, as it were: (1) the real world perspective, (2) the writer's socio-cognitive perspective, (3) the discourse analyst's perspective, and (4) The pedagogical perspective. In the following they are briefly elaborated:

1. The real world perspective

The real world of discourse is chaotic because it is complex, dynamic and fluid in the sense it is constantly developing. Harshbarger (2007) holds that in a complex system, there are numerous independent elements that are continuously interacting with each other, thereby simultaneously organizing themselves into more multifaceted system. In line with the sensitivity to initial condition which is the cornerstone of Chaos theory (de Bot, 2008; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008, cited in Ahmadi, 2011), Larsen-Freeman (2000) sees complexity as “metaphorical lens through which diverse perspectives can be accommodate, indeed incorporated. (p.173) Thus, complexity in genre analysis includes a set of factors, some of which are listed here as Bahati, (2002) claims:

(a) Register variation

Register is a semantic concept. Halliday and Hassan (1996) define it as a configuration of meanings that is typically associated with a particular situational configuration of field, mode, and tenor. This definition seems to imply that registers constrain the meanings that are likely to be made in situational contexts in society. Accordingly, in different situations people tend to use different registers: legal, medical, scientific and many more... In Martin's (2001, as cited in Figueiredo, 2010, p. 128) views, register and genre are semiotic systems distinct from other semiotic systems such as language, music, dance, images, etc., in the sense that register and genre are kinds of ‘parasites’. That is, they do not have a phonology of their own, and the only way they can create meaning is by using words and structures from the semiotic system that we call language — a system able to generate its own meanings without making use of resources from another one. In making a distinction between genre and register, Figueiredo (2010) holds, register corresponds to the context of situation, but genre to the context of culture. For Martin (2001, cited in Figueirdo, 2010), “a genre is a staged, goal-oriented, purposeful activity in which speakers engage as members of our culture” (p. 128).

(b) Disciplinary variation

Disciplinary discourse is increasingly regarded as situated in social practice, and shaped by the social actions through which it is produced (Myers 1985, cited in North, 2005, 431). Bazerman (1988) showed, for example, that articles from different disciplines varied in their representation of the subject matter, the literature, the audience, and the authors themselves, to the extent that ‘each text seems to be making a different kind of move in a different kind of game’ (cited in North, 2005, p.431) North (2005) concludes that students’ writing is shaped by their disciplinary background, suggesting that success in writing for one course may be affected by writing experiences in previous courses. Such variations exist not simply because they are established by convention, but because they arise out of different epistemologies and social practices. In line with what North (2005) brings, Bahati (2002) also argues that strong boundaries defining membership and initiation, variations in knowledge structures and norms of inquiry, different vocabularies and discourses, differing standards for rhetorical intimacy and modes of expression and distinctions in typical approaches to teaching often define discourses along disciplinary boundaries. Accordingly, Bhatia (2002, p. 9) maintains there

are specific parameters along which we distinguish such a variation and some striking instances of such distinctions include:

Theory and application

Formal Linguistics	v.	Applied Linguists
Mathematics	v.	Applied Mathematics
Economics	v.	Marketing

Interdisciplinarity in academic programmes

Law	v.	Business
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Modes of thinking and research

Economics	v.	Accounting
Philosophy	v.	Psychology

(c) Generic systems within professional communities

A generic system has basic rules designed to handle the wide variety of situations that can arise in the spectrum of settings. The advantage of a generic rule system is that players only need to buy and learn from one main rule book, saving money and time. Since most settings share a large set of features, such as the way characters move and fight, players would not have to re-learn such basics when starting in a new setting using those generic rules. This eases players in the move from one setting to another (Wikipedia, 2001). Such readership(s) may be from one or several discourse domains: System of genres in Law (e.g., cases, judgements, ordinances, contracts, agreements etc.), system of genres in business (e.g., memos, reports, case studies, letters etc.), system of genres in public administration (e.g., government documents, political communication, news reports, policy statements etc.), and system of genres in mass media (editorials, News reports, review articles, advertisements, sports reports, letters to the editor, etc. (Bhatia, 2002)

(d) Colonies of Genres

Often across, but sometimes within discourse communities we may have genres overlapping each other which may include, promotional genres, reporting genres introductory genres, academic genres, and many more. Hyland (2007) maintains, "Genres are almost never found in isolation in the real world." (p.156) Accordingly, the key feature of ESP pedagogy is that considerable attention tends to be given to the context in which genres are employed, and particularly to how genres form "constellations" (Swales, 2004) or "colonies" (Bhatia, 2004) for users in particular areas.

(e) Mixed and embedded genres

Although in much of genre analysis, we identify textual artefacts in terms of pure genres, in practice, we often find them in mixed or embedded forms, either because they are designed to achieve a mix of communicative purposes, or to communicate private intentions within the context of 'socially recognized communicative purposes' (Bhatia, 2002). Woodward (2005) concluded, "Successful writers embed genres to support not only their written arguments but to review and build up their developing disciplinary knowledge (p.24) A good example of such embedded genres is an annual report, which often conveys not only the annual performance of the company but also in a very subtle manner incorporate promotional elements, one of which is a typical selection and interpretation of positive aspects of the performance figures. In the case of some others, there is an explicit attempt to mix two genres, such as infotainment, advertorials, and advertorial features, and many others. (Bhatia, 2002)

(f) Cross-cultural Variation

And, finally we find intercultural variations in generic realizations, especially in the use lexico-grammatical and discourse organisational patterns.

2.1.2 The writer's socio-cognitive perspective

The goals of genre-based analysis of written discourse can be realized in terms of the three concepts of space: textual, social and socio-cognitive which incorporates tactical and professional. This framework allows for different analytical perspectives to be applied to the same set of texts; that is a textual perspective (genre as a reflection of discursive practices in disciplinary communities), an ethnographic perspective (genre in action, grounded in narrated insightful experiences of expert members of the community), a socio-cognitive and a socio-critical perspective (historically and structurally grounded accounts of the conditions under which genres are constructed and interpreted by members of the discipline to achieve their typical goals). Bhatia (2002) argues that:

Genres are also notorious for encouraging expert genre writers to appropriate rhetorical resources and other generic conventions across genres. This kind of appropriation of generic resources is best seen in areas of discourse in which promotional concerns are often incorporated, especially in those that have been traditionally non promotional or informational. Primary forms of promotional genres have often been regarded as advertisements, and sales promotion letters. However, we do find a number of appropriated and mixed forms such as the following. (p.11)

2.1.3. The analytical perspective

Analysis of discourse as genre often involves diverse methods. Within each method, the analyst takes advantage of rather different perspectives These perspective commence with a textual analysis and extend to the socio-cognitive an socio-critical space, emphasizing intertextuality and interdiscursivity in order to go beyond from intra-text levels to inter-text levels which entails the use of text in real life context. To achieve this goal, from a textual perspective, linguistic analytical tools from systemic functional linguistics and new rhetoric genre studies are employed to investigate the genre, which is considered as a reflection of discursive practices. In this analytical process, special attention has been given to interpersonal and intertextual practices of the texts. From a socio-critical perspective, the conditions under which the genre under investigation is constructed and interpreted to achieve its typical social goals are explored.

2.1.4 The pedagogical perspective

The most clearly articulated approach to genre both theoretically and pedagogically, with its basis in Hallidayan functional linguistics (Halliday, 1994) and sociocultural theories of learning (Vygotsky, 1978; Bruner, 1990). These perspectives are complementary in that both language and learning are seen as social phenomena embedded in specific cultural, historical, and institutional contexts. (Hyland, 2007) For these writers (Vygostky and Bruner), the notion of scaffolding emphasizes the role of interaction with peers and experienced others in moving learners from their existing level of performance, what they can do now, to a level of potential performance, what they are able to do without assistance. Research shows that students are able to reach much higher levels of performance by working together and with an expert than they might have achieved working on their own. The degree of teacher intervention and the selection of tasks therefore play a key role in scaffolding writing, representing a cline of support from closely controlled activities to autonomous extended communication, reducing direct instruction as the learner gradually assimilates the task demands and procedures for constructing the genre effectively.

Scaffolding takes many forms but typically includes modelling and discussion of texts, explicit instruction, and teacher input. One way of providing this kind of support, for instance, is through the use of “writing frames” (e.g. Wray & Lewis, 1997), which are simply skeletal outlines used to scaffold and prompt students’ writing. According to Hyland (2007) these provide a genre template which enables students to start, connect, and develop their texts appropriately while concentrating on they want to say.

Bhatia (2002) states, “Pedagogical practices and procedures, often used to sensitize and prepare students to meet the communicative demands of disciplinary communication, provide necessary understanding of the concerns that determine the nature of discourse and genre analyses.” (p. 14)

2.1.4. Importance of genre pedagogy

For teacher educators, genre pedagogies not only address the needs of ESL writers but also draw teachers into considering how texts actually work as communication. Genres are therefore the property of the communities. For Swales (1998), “Genres orchestrate verbal life” (cited in Hyland, 2007, p. (p.20). That is these genres play the role of a connecting link between the past and the present, between tradition and innovation. Hyland (2007) claims knowledge of genres has an important consciousness-raising potential for teachers. Knowledge of genres offers a lens for categorizing and analyzing the texts they ask their students to do, furthermore, teachers become more attuned to the ways meanings are created and more sensitive to the specific communicative needs of their students. Teachers are thus in a better position to reflect. A reflective teacher is, then, a more effective teacher. A person who understands how texts are typically structured, understood, and used is in a better position to intervene successfully in the writing of his or her students, to provide more informed feedback on writing, to make decisions about the teaching methods and materials to use, and to approach current instructional paradigms with a more critical eye.

3. Conclusion

This paper has attempted, albeit briefly, to review the approaches to needs analysis in one way, and the influence of genre in ESP from another side. Until recently genre theory had not been developed exclusively as an educational tool, even though the insights it provides into language structure and function have many useful educational applications. It goes without saying genre knowledge plays an important role in the packing and unpacking of texts used in wide-ranging institutional and professional contexts. Also, it allows an experienced writer of the genre to exploit conventions to create new forms to suit specific contexts. Due to the unpredictable and variable nature of genre, there is a particular danger in dealing with the linguistic patterning and genre. Thus, the teachers have a duty—in addition to making students aware of the social and variable aspects of genre—at the same time to provide linguistic input. As Flowerdew (2011) claims by providing input for students, they can develop hypotheses about what might be said by whom, to whom, when, where and how in the performance of a given genre.

Genres are socially authorized through conventions which in turn are embedded in the discursive practices of members of specific disciplinary cultures. These discursive practices reflect not only conventions used by disciplinary communities, but also social conventions, including social changes, social institutions and social knowledge, all of which, in a way, could be seen as significantly contributing to what in genre theory is regarded as genre knowledge. The author has argued that an understanding of the ways language is used to create meanings empowers teachers by offering them ways to analyze texts, to reflect on the workings of language, and to provide more robust and targeted support for learners. Because they emphasize the importance of making known what is to be learnt and assessed, genre theory and research give teacher educators a more central role in preparing individuals to teach second language writing and to confidently advise them on the development of curriculum materials and activities for writing classes. The writers believe L2 teachers may feel daunted at the prospect of reinventing themselves as genre teachers. We may not usually see ourselves as applied linguists or discourse analysts and may regard analysis as “research,” an activity removed from the everyday business of “teaching.” The increasingly varied students we find in our classrooms, however, offer a persuasive argument for bringing knowledge of language to an understanding of writing. We have come to recognize that we can no longer subordinate the ways meanings are conventionally constructed to an emphasis on individual creativity and that part of what it means to teach writing is to meet students’ social, political, and cultural needs beyond the classroom. To accomplish these goals, we require a systematic means of describing texts and of making our students’ control over them more achievable

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