

A GENRE ANALYSIS IN ENGLISH EDITORIALS REGARDING HARD NEWS IN BROADSHEET NEWSPAPER

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Abstract

This study presents a genre analysis of English editorials regarding hard news in broadsheet newspaper focusing on move analysis. It aims to investigate structural organization of those editorials through examination of common move structures, and communicating intentions of the genre. The data consist of 30 English editorial texts of broadsheet newspaper. In analyzing move of those editorials, it reveals that there is one common move structure in broadsheet newspaper's editorials which consists of four moves: 1) presenting case, 2) offering case, 3) reaching the verdict, and 4) recommending action. In addition, the study discovered that the communicating intentions of the English editorials genre mainly aim to motivate and persuade readers to consider ideas or to give opinions that oppose or support the information provided in those editorials as well as to express strong opinions in order to stimulate some reaction from readers.

Keywords: Genre Analysis, Move Analysis, Common Move Structures, English Editorials Regarding Hard News, Broadsheet Newspaper

Introduction

Recently, discourse and genre analysis are increasingly interested in the field of linguistics, having implications for applied linguistics, particularly in the teaching and learning of languages, mass communication, writing research, language reform and other areas within the scope of professional and academic communication [1]. According to the notion of genres introduced by Swales [2], it is described that genres present the organizational structures of written communication which belong to discourse communities, and contradictory, genres facilitate to define those communities. From the notion of Swales [2], it leads to the studies of genre in many discourse communities such as academic discourse, business discourse, and legal discourse. Particularly, Bhatia [3] conducts genre analysis in many kinds of texts within professional setting focusing on these discourse communities. Moreover Bhatia [3] also studies genre in typical persuasive academic essays such as lead articles and editorials. Therefore these genre analysts introduce a term of genre analysis in various kinds of discourse as well as motivate the researcher to contribute this study in a field of genre analysis.

Nowadays, information technology and mass communication is rapidly growing; moreover, the current practices in the use of languages are mainly dominated by genre analysis [4]. Consequently, the use of English in professional setting and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is also affected [4], particularly

English used in editorial pages. It is sensitive and persuasive for readers. It may cause favorable or unfavorable bias to readers in making decision and expressing their opinions about the events [3]. According to these reasons, the present study is constructed in the area of genre analysis aiming to reveals common move structures of English editorials regarding hard news in a broadsheet newspaper, The Washington Post.

Research Questions

1. What are the common move structures of English editorials regarding hard news in broadsheet newspaper?
2. What is the communicating intention of genre discovered in those English editorials of broadsheet newspaper?

Methodology

This study was a qualitative study of texts in a context of newspaper's English editorials regarding hard news with descriptive and interpretive analysis. English editorials regarding hard news were gathered in order to analyze their common move structures as well as demonstrate the communicating intention of the genre discovered in those editorials. Consequently, this part provides 1) data collection and 2) data analysis.

1) Data Collection

The corpus of this study was collected as a purposive sampling. Totally, 30 English editorials regarding hard news were collected from The Washington Post (henceforth WP) which is a broadsheet newspaper. The data were searched from

website <http://www.washingtonpost.com> from January 2013 to March 2013. The 30 editorial articles used in this analysis were listed by their titles as below:

- 1) A bright future for Hispanics
- 2) A breakthrough on fracking
- 3) Mission accomplished in Mali?
- 4) A central nuclear waste repository is years away
- 5) A permanent financial fix
- 6) A respite in the euro zone
- 7) Americans' mental health
- 8) Arizona voter ID law should be overturned
- 9) D.C. children in shelter must get real homes
- 10) Climate change and the president
- 11) The U.S. is not ready for a cyberwar
- 12) Bullet overkill
- 13) Saving Egypt from anarchy
- 14) Environmentalists are fighting the wrong battles
- 15) FDA should do more with its authority over tobacco products
- 16) Flood policies should be reconsidered
- 17) A lengthy weather report again affirms global warming
- 18) GOP's immigration plan is no plan
- 19) Health premiums for smokers should be tweaked
- 20) Is the U.S. kowtowing to Iran in nuclear talks?
- 21) Making Washington green
- 22) Md. lawmakers need to stand firm on reforming gun laws
- 23) North Korea's nuclear test demands an aggressive U.S. response

- 24) Splitting up the spectrum
- 25) The case for a national ID card
- 26) The U.S. needs to tame the cyber-dragon
- 27) TSA's new rules on knives are safe and reasonable
- 28) Congress must act on violence against women
- 29) Washington's last chance to help Syria
- 30) Restore the ability to unlock cellphones

These editorials were selected randomly, downloaded, and printed out to analyze moves and steps. This study investigated only the editorial texts excluded editorial cartoons. In this study, the definitions and characteristics of news types play an important role in setting criteria for data selection because good criteria can result in credible and correct data. Therefore, the analyst chose the definitions provided by Patterson [5] and Bennett [6] as a standard for selecting English editorials regarding hard news. Patterson [5] defines hard news as the news comprising some public policy content or other information that is beneficial for the public and influences the routines of daily life. Similarly, Bennett [6] suggests hard news should contain the information that people in society should know. This information contains many government activities, such as international developments, policies, emerging social problems, environmental and hazards.

2) Data Analysis

This study emphasized the rhetorical move analysis of those editorial texts concerning the use of English in a

professional setting and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). There were two steps to analyze the data. The first step was identifying moves and summarizing moves and steps in order to reveal structural organization of genre as well as to answer research question 1. In this step, the frameworks of genre analysis and move analysis proposed by Swales [2] and Bhatia [3] were employed to define moves and find out the common move structures of those 30 English editorials. Also, this genre analysis emphasized the use of language in a conventionalized communicative setting of English editorials. The study was conducted to investigate three interrelated features of convention: 1) frequency of rhetorical situations or moves, 2) shared communicative purposes, and 3) stability of structural organization. According to the investigation of the three features of convention, the move analysis approach was employed to define moves and steps as well as to reveal the structural organization of the overall message in those editorial texts.

In order to classify move and step, Swales [2] identifies a step in terms of a small unit of move. Swales [2] explains that a move is a semantic unit concerning the function it performs in relation to the overall functions of the article. Similarly, McKinlay [7] states that a semantic unit associated to the writer's purposes is considered as a move. Thus, the move structures are the socio-cognitive structures used by members of a discourse community to "construct and interpret

discourses specific to their professional cultures" [8]. In addition, to identify the common moves and optional, the researcher applied the criteria of move occurrences introduced by Boonchayaanant [9] to show frequency of rhetorical moves. Boonchayaanant [9] proposes that the moves that gain 50% and higher of frequency of occurrences are considered as common moves. Consequently, the optional moves are the moves that are less frequently occurrence in the overall text and less than 50%.

After defining common move and optional moves, a cognitive structure of persuasive academic essays discovered by Bhatia [3] was used as a model in move analysis of those English editorials in order to name common moves of this study. Bhatia's [3] cognitive structure consists of four moves: 1) presenting the case, 2) offering the argument, 3) reaching the verdict, and 4) recommending action. Second, common move structures and the relevant ideas concerning the functions of the information in each move and between moves were interpreted under the discourse community of journalists to provide communicative intentions of those editorials through examining interrelated features of convention. Thus, it could answer research question 2.

However, in analyzing a genre, there were some difficulties in defining moves or steps as well as interpreting communicative intentions of the genre found in those editorials because each analyst may identify the function of a particular move by using his

or her own knowledge. It seems that these analysts may be in different discourse communities and have different background knowledge or experience. This means that these differences may cause difficulties to name moves or steps in this study. Thereby, the notion of discourse community and schema proposed by Swales [2] were also applied in this genre analysis to overcome these difficulties.

Swales [2] states that discourse communities are groups sharing goals or purposes and using communication as a tool in order to achieve these goals. He also adds that genres present the organizational structures of written communication which belong to discourse communities and, define those communities. Swales [2] describes schema as a psychological concept used to attain the organization of knowledge which is dominated by previous experiences and prior texts.

Content schema and formal schema are conducive to identify genre. Previous experience and prior texts are conducive to our knowledge of facts, concepts and procedures [10]. Prior texts also increase our knowledge of structure, rhetoric, and style. Content schema is developed by knowledge of facts and concepts, conversely, genres facilitate to whereas formal schema is formed by knowledge of text structure, rhetoric, style, and procedures [2]. Thus, to understand genre, it is essential to comprehend content and formal schema.

Results

All 30 English editorials regarding hard news in broadsheet newspaper were analyzed to name moves and steps. The example below is shown for clearly understand of how a text in English editorials is analyzed.

Table 1: WP1

Broadsheet's editorial 1	Move Analysis
<p>A bright future for Hispanics By Editorial Board, Published: February 10</p> <p>A LITTLE MORE than one-third of the adult children of immigrants in this country are Hispanics, and it turns out that like previous generations of immigrants, they are generally doing well. That's good news, and further evidence that the descendants of millions of undocumented immigrants, currently in the cross hairs of the national debate over immigration reform, will assimilate and become productive citizens.</p> <p>A new study by the Pew Research Center, examining census data for millions of second-generation immigrants, throws cold water on suggestions that Hispanics are somehow different from past immigrant</p>	<p>Presenting Case</p>

communities — a permanent underclass in the making, wedded to government handouts.

To the contrary: A staggering 78 percent of second-generation Hispanic adults say that they believe hard work pays off in success. That’s a higher percentage than the 72 percent of their Asian American counterparts who profess such faith in hard work or indeed the 58 percent of all American adults

To be sure, second-generation Hispanic immigrants have a way to go to catch up to their non-Hispanic white and Asian American counterparts. Both those groups have higher median household incomes and lower poverty rates than adult Americans as a whole.

But the gap is not as large as some might assume. The median household income for second-generation Hispanic immigrants (\$48,400), is only slightly lower than the overall national figure (about \$50,000). And the poverty rate for that group of Hispanics (16 percent) is virtually the same as the nation’s (15 percent).

One area where second-generation Hispanics badly lag comparable immigrant groups is in educational attainment. Just one-fifth of them have completed college, compared to two-fifths of white second-generation immigrants and more than half of Asian Americans. But the percentage of second-generation Hispanics with college degrees is double that of foreign-born Hispanic immigrants — a sharply favorable trend that suggests steadily rising future prosperity.

That progress is mirrored in other areas of the Pew report, which shows that compared to first-generation Hispanics, second-generation Hispanics are much more likely to speak English; have friends and spouses from outside their own ethnic group; and consider themselves as “typical Americans.” That, along with improving economic circumstances, suggests a promising path toward assimilation for the country’s largest and fastest-growing minority.

None of that should be particularly surprising — except perhaps to ardent fans of conservative talk radio and other media that like to portray Hispanic immigrants as imminent perils to American’s demographic integrity and public health.

Offering
Argument

Elucidating Case

Table 1 (Continued)

Broadsheet's editorial 1	Move Analysis
About 44 million immigrants have arrived in America since the mid-1960s, and about half of them are Hispanic. The Pew study is further proof that their children — children like Sen. Marco Rubio, the Florida Republican who is nudging his party toward immigration reform — will make a critical contribution to the nation's future.	Reaching the Verdict

After analyzing moves of all 30 English editorials as an example in Table 1, a total number of five moves are indicated by different communicative purposes in describing views and opinions of the newspaper. These moves comprise of presenting case (P), offering argument (O), elucidating case (E), reaching the verdict (RV),

and recommending action (RA). However, all of them are not common moves. To reach the common moves of English editorial regarding hard news in broadsheet newspaper, it is a must to identify sequence of moves and occurrences frequency of moves. Table 2 presents the sequence of move

Note: Each initial indicates the communicating intention of each move:

P = Presenting Case

O = Offering Argument

E = Elucidating Case

RV = Reaching the Verdict

RA = Recommending Action

Table 2 Sequence of Moves in English Editorials Regarding Hard News of Broadsheet Newspaper

Number of broadsheet newspaper's editorial	Sequence of Moves				
	Move 1	Move 2	Move 3	Move 4	Move 5
WP1	P	O	E	RV	-
WP2	P	O	E	RV	-
WP3	P	O	E	RV	RA
WP4	P	O	RV	RA	-
WP5	P	O	RV	RA	-
WP6	P	E	O	RV	RA

Table 2 (continued)

Number of broadsheet newspaper's editorial	Sequence of Moves				
	Move 1	Move 2	Move 3	Move 4	Move 5
WP7	P	E	O	RV	-
WP8	P	O	RV	RA	-
WP9	O	P	E	RV	RA
WP10	P	O	RV	RA	-
WP11	P	O	RV	RA	-
WP12	P	O	RV	RA	-
WP13	P	O	RV	-	-
WP14	P	O	RV	RA	-
WP15	P	E	O	RV	RA
WP16	P	O	RV	RA	-
WP17	P	O	RA	RV	-
WP18	P	O	E	RV	RA
WP19	P	O	RV	RA	-
WP20	P	O	RV	-	-
WP21	P	E	O	RV	RA
WP22	P	E	O	RV	RA
WP23	P	E	O	RV	RA
WP24	P	O	RV	RA	-
WP25	P	O	RA	RV	-
WP26	P	E	O	RA	RV
WP27	P	O	RV	RA	-
WP28	P	O	RV	-	-
WP29	P	O	RV	RA	-
WP30	P	E	O	RV	-

After the sequences of move are provided, then the occurrence frequency of moves is calculated in a percentage.

Therefore, Table 3 will show the occurrence frequency of moves which indicates common moves and optional moves.

Table 3 Occurrence Frequency of Moves in English Editorials Regarding Hard News of Broadsheet Newspaper

Number of moves found in broadsheet newspaper's editorials	Name of the Moves	Number of Occurrence	Percentage (100%=Move occurred in all editorials)	Corpus (Total of Editorial)
1	Presenting Case	30	**100%	30
2	Offering Argument	30	**100%	30
3	Elucidating Case	13	*43.33%	30
4	Reaching the Verdict	30	**100%	30
5	Recommending Action	23	**76.67%	30

Note: Items with** = common moves. Items with* = optional moves

From 30 editorial texts, presenting case (P), offering argument (O) and reaching the verdict (RV) have been found 30 times (100%). The move of elucidating case (E) occurs 13 times (43.33%). The move of recommending action (RA) occurs 23 times (76.67%). Thus, the move of presenting case, offering argument and reaching the verdict gain the highest percentage of occurrence

frequency. Then, it is followed by the move of recommending action that places at the second rank of occurrence frequency. Finally, the move of elucidating case gains the lowest percentage of occurrence frequency. Table 4 below summarizes the common move and optional move found in English editorials regarding hard news of broadsheet newspaper.

Table 4 Summary of Common Moves and Optional Moves Found in English Editorials Regarding Hard News of Broadsheet Newspaper

Common Moves	Optional Moves
Presenting Case Offering Argument Reaching the Verdict Recommending Action	Elucidating Case

However, it is noted that the structure of all four common moves does not

appear in all broadsheet newspaper's editorials. It also reveals that different move

structures may occur among those editorials. structures of move that may happen:
The following table demonstrates the

Table 5 Occurrence Frequency of Move Structures in English Editorials
Regarding Hard News of Broadsheet Newspaper

Broadsheet newspaper				
Number	Move structures	Number of Occurrence	Percentage (100% = move structure occurred in all editorials)	Corpus (Total of Editorials)
1	P-O-E-RV	4	13.33	30
2	P-O-E-RV-RA	2	6.67	30
3	P-O-RV-RA	12	40	30
4	P-E-O-RV-RA	5	16.67	30
5	O-P-E-RV-RA	1	3.33	30
6	P-O-RV	3	10	30
7	P-O-RA-RV	2	6.67	30
8	P-E-O-RA-RV	1	3.33	30

Note: Each initial indicates the communicating intention of each move:

P = Presenting Case

O = Offering Argument

E = Elucidating Case

RV = Reaching the Verdict

RA = Recommending Action

According to 30 editorial texts, there are eight move structures that occur in texts of English editorials regarding hard news of broadsheet newspaper. The move structure of P-O-E-RV occurs 4 times (13.33%). The move structure of P-O-E-RV-RA and P-O-RA-RV appear 2 times (6.67%). The move structure of P-O-RV-RA has been found 12 occurrences (40%). The move structure of P-E-O-RV-RA is

discovered 5 times (16.67%). The move structure of O-P-E-RV-RA and P-E-O-RA-RV happen in an only 1 occurrence (3.33%). The move structure of P-O-RV occurs 3 times (10%). From the results shown in Table 5, it is clear that only one of these move structures is a structure of common moves. The structure of common moves gains the highest percentage of occurrence frequency of move

structures. Therefore, the common move structure which is P-O-RV-RA (presenting case, offering argument, reaching the verdict, and recommending action) is orderly organized in English editorials of broadsheet newspaper regarding hard news. It can be concluded that a few different move structures can occur as the results shown in Table 5. Nonetheless, they are not considered as a common move structure because an optional move appears in those structures. Furthermore, to illustrate how communicative purposes in each common move of English editorials from broadsheet newspaper are conveyed, more details are provided in the following parts.

Move 1: Presenting Case

This move aims to present actual events and to scope concerned issues.

Move 2: Offering the Argument

This move provides discussion about possible choices of events or alternative solutions.

Move 3: Reaching the Verdict

This move aims to give opinions and to convey writers' desired events.

Move 4: Recommending Action

The communicative purpose of this move is to suggest or recommend what should be done in actual events.

Regarding to communicating intention of genre discovered in English editorials regarding hard news of broadsheet newspaper, it can be concluded that genre of English editorials regarding hard news of broadsheet newspaper aims to motivate and persuade readers to consider ideas or propose opinions that against or support the

information provided in those editorials. In other words, this genre also intends to express strong opinions in order to stimulate some reaction of readers.

Discussion and Conclusion

From the data analysis, it reveals that there are four common moves in editorial texts of broadsheet newspaper: 1) presenting case 2) offering argument 3) reaching the verdict and 4) recommending action. Therefore, it can be noted that common move structure of English editorials regarding hard news in broadsheet newspaper is stable in an only one pattern.

It can be implied that the structure of editorial texts is specifically characteristic, repeated of rhetorical moves, shared communicative purposes, and consistent in structural organization. Thus, the structure of those texts is conventionalized and can be regarded as a genre. This genre which is systematically sequent in narrative introduces editorial discourse to readers and language learners. This genre analysis also reminds that changes in chronological sequence of moves may occur in the move structure of English editorial writing if writers or journalists disregard genre specificity. The changes in chronological sequence of moves can be seen in Table 2. Thus, this phenomenon provides the awareness of using appropriate newspaper language to genre specificity in editorial pages of newspapers in order to avoid misleading of the use of language for different

communicative purposes. Moreover, it also promotes an awareness of genre specificity of English in writing, reading, teaching, and learning the language not only in area of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), and English for Occupational Purposes but also English for Academic Purposes (EAP). Thus, it can be concluded that the four moves found in this text structure of English editorials regarding hard news of broadsheet newspaper are similar to four moves of persuasive academic essays discovered by Bhatia [3].

Issue of validity

In this study, the interpretation of moves in move analysis practice was based on the use of language in editorial pages of the researcher. While this study provided gratifying findings, the validity of findings might be questioned. The move analysis in this study might not provide complete explanation why the common move structures discovered were appropriate in the context of those English editorials. Thus, the implication of these findings suggests that the inter-raters of move analysis strengthen validation of the rhetorical moves found. The researcher recommends that the study be replicated using a survey with a questionnaire of move analysis practice to evaluate accuracy of rhetorical moves. The questionnaire should mainly aim to identify rhetorical moves of all English editorial texts used as the sampling corpus of the present study. To further formalize common move structures of those English editorials regarding

hard news in broadsheet newspaper, the questionnaire will be distributed to a number of inter-raters. After the inter-raters complete the questionnaire, their results will be compared with the common move structure of the present study. This comparison will establish the validation of findings in this study.

In addition, the present study examined the common move structure of an only one newspaper: The Washington Post. The results of common move structure in the study may not be as same as results in others newspapers. This research primarily used a qualitative research methodology. Whereas the data were collected and analyzed as a small sample of English editorials, it may be not easy to conclude that the rhetorical move structures found in this study are representative of English editorials in all newspapers. The 30 samples of the present study are not enough to summarize results in terms of quantitative analysis. Thus, the quantitative analysis is recommended for the further study.

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