

Exploring some major concepts in academic writing
with focus on genre analysis

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- Humboldt Application statistics for linguistics, literature, History in 19 years
- Humboldt Application statistics in the Humanities + Social sciences in 19 years
- Humboldt statistics in ALL Disciplines in 19 years

1. Overview of the concept of genre and its analysis

What is genre analysis?

- A “term for grouping texts together, representing how writers typically use language to respond to recurring situations” (Hyland 2006:45)
- “Stabilized for now, forms of action which are open to change and subject to negotiation” (New Rhetoric School)
- “A distinctive category of discourses of any type, spoken or written, with or without literary aspirations” (Swales 1990:13)

Genre motivation

- It is driven by a desire to understand the **communicative character** of discourse by looking at how individuals use language to engage in particular **communicative situations**

Function of Genre Analysis

- Genre analysis is a powerful tool to uncover connections between **language** and **types of texts**, and between **forms** and **functions**
- Genre analysis attempts to **explain regularities in texts in terms of shared communicative purposes within discourse communities**

Some Academic Genres (cf. Schmied 2015 for a comprehensive list)

Term papers (essays)

Grant Proposals

Theses and dissertations

Books and Monographs

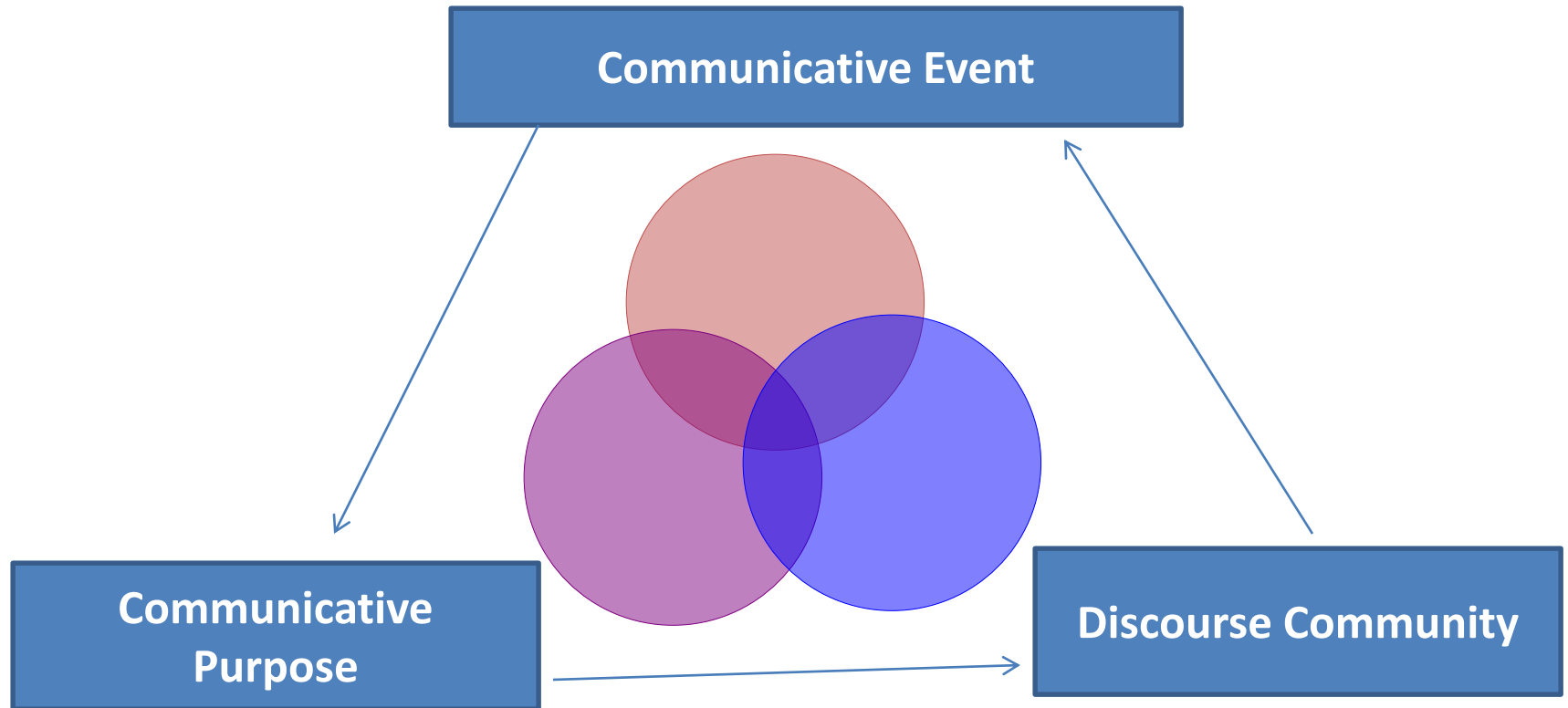
Research proposals

Reviews

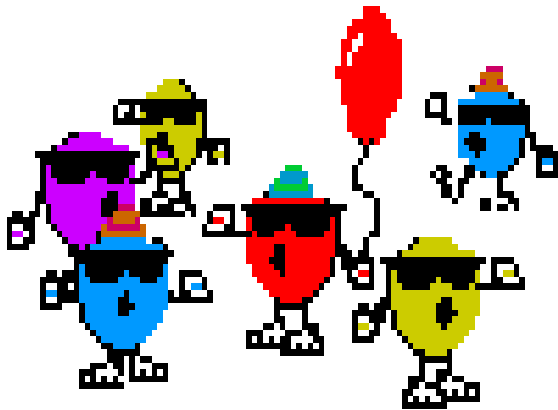
Research articles

Acknowledgements

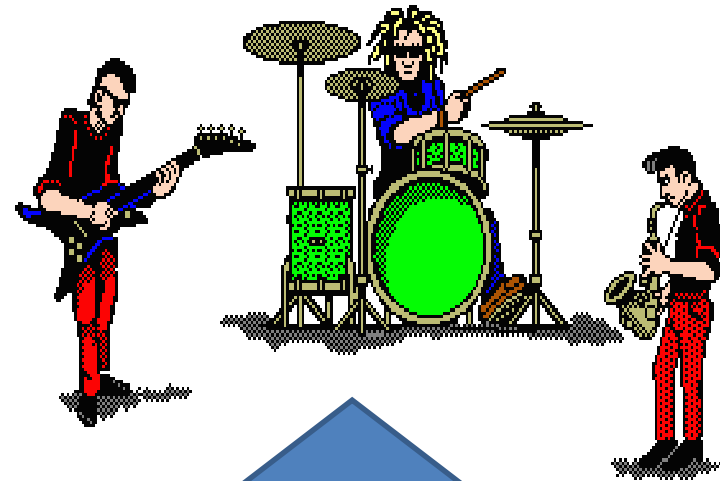
Conceptualizing Genre



Communicative event , Communicative purpose, Discourse community



This
activity



Respond
to
this
event

Disciplinary Differences

- The writing tasks that students have to do at the university are specific to discipline and level
- Therefore three genres can be identified as being pivotal to each of the three main domains of knowledge:
 - lab reports in the sciences
 - essays & project proposals in the humanities
 - reports and case studies in the social sciences

Constellations of Genres

- The genres of the academy represent an enormous range, which Swales refers to as **constellation**
- All of these genres help create an hierarchy of texts **which vary in their importance to different practitioners in different disciplines**
 - **For Postdocs**, the project proposal, the research article
 - **For MA students**, the seminar paper, the PhD theses

Genre Sets

➤ The concept of genre sets refer to **the part of the entire genre constellation that a particular individual or group engages in either or both receptively and productively**

✓ **E.g. Graduate students acculturation process(cf. Swales 1990:20)**

■ **Speech genre:**

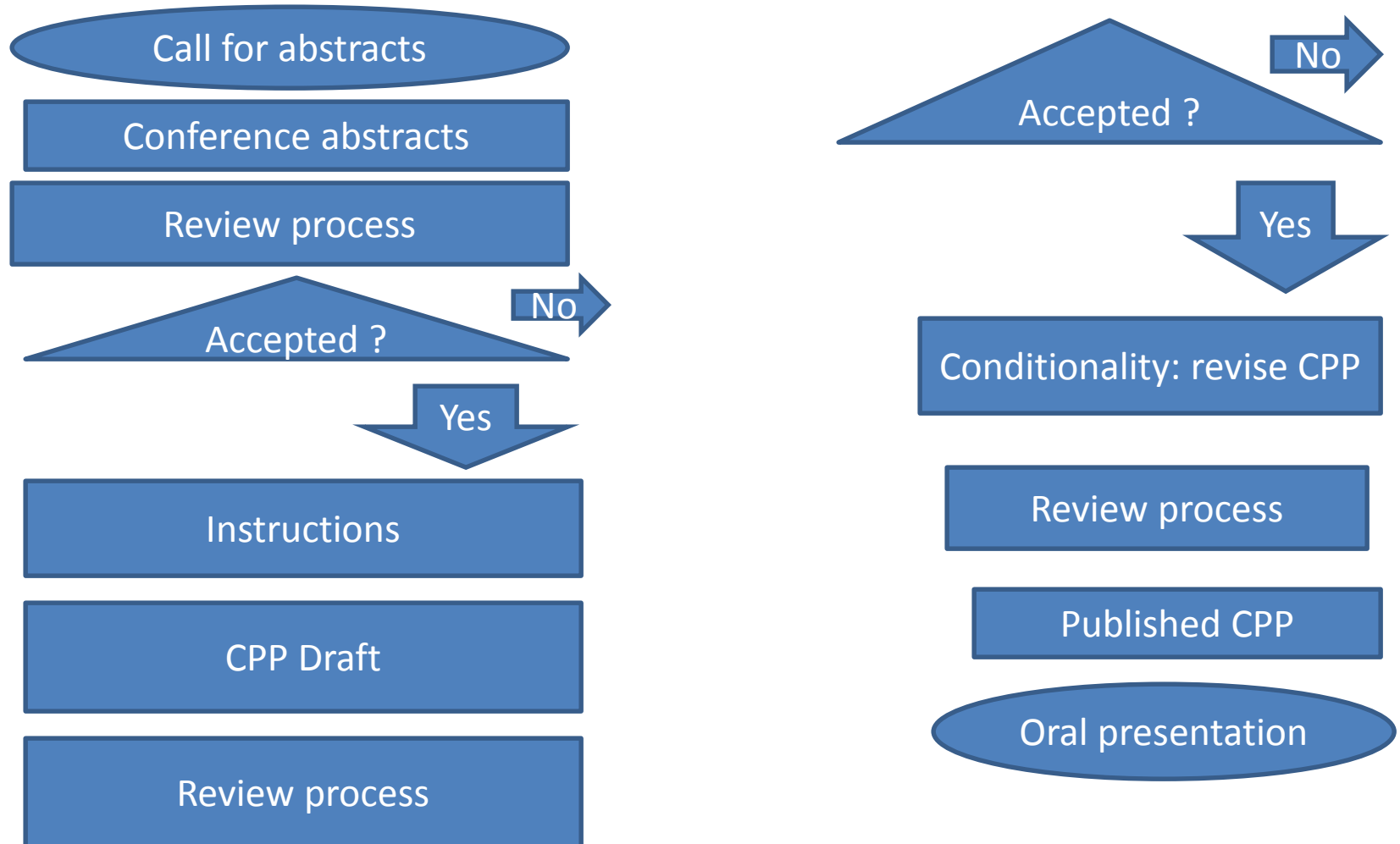
class participation→teaching a discussion section→giving seminal presentation→having independent control of a class→giving conference presentations

■ **Written genre:**

course assignments→term papers→seminar research papers→posters→the dissertation→research papers

Genre Chain

- The concept of genre chain refers to how spoken and written texts cluster together in a given social context (e.g. CPP cf. Swales 1990:19)

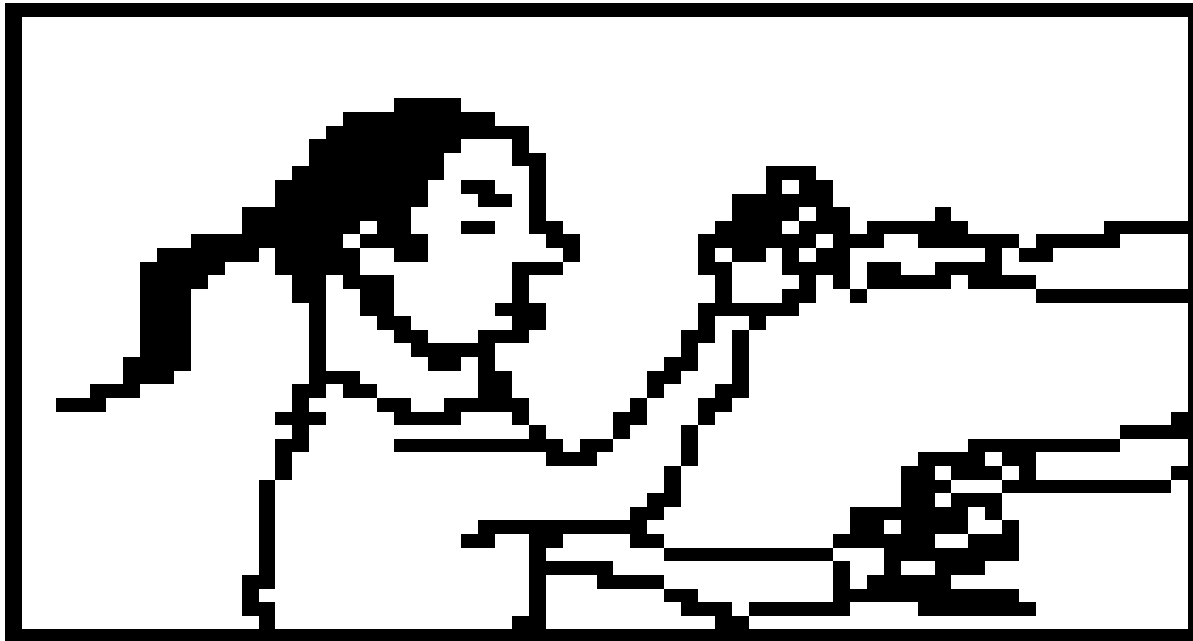


Genre Networks

- Genre networks are the totality of genres employed in a particular domain at any one time. Bakhtin's (1986) **notion of intertextuality**
- Genre networks link texts users to a network of prior texts according to their group membership, and provides a system of coding options for making meanings
- **Scholar's activity as network**
 - overt traces of an earlier text on a latter one via quotation, citation, paraphrase, and replication of rhetorical structure
 - Intertextual relationship with other genres: e.g. presentations can lead to a research articles and vice versa, published articles can both precede and follow dissertations, articles, presentations, and essays can be reworked to form material for a book, or shorter sections of a book can later be developed into a full article etc.

Purpose of Genre Analysis (1)

Identify How Texts Are Structured In Terms Of Functional Stages Or Moves



The 4 Moves of Academic Article Introductions (Swales 1990)

1. Establishes the field in which the writer of the study is working.
2. Summarizes the related research or interpretations on one aspect of the field.
3. Creates a research space or interpretive space (a "niche") for the present study by indicating a gap in current knowledge or by raising questions.
4. Introduces the study by indicating what the investigation being reported will accomplish for the field.

Rhetorical realization of the 4 moves: Create A Research Space (CARS Model)

Move I. Establishing a territory

Step 1: Claiming centrality (and/or)

Step 2: Making topic generalization(s) (and/or)

Step 3: Reviewing items of previous research

Move II. 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 III: Occupying the niche

Step 1A. Outlining purposes (or)

Step 1B. Announcing present research

Step 2. Announcing particular findings

Step 3. Indicating research article structure

Declining rhetorical effect

Weakening knowledge claims

Increasing explicitness

A text example of RA introduction from Cameroon English (5 constituents)

Title of article: **The English of Francophone users in Cameroon: A phonological appraisal**

Introduction

[Move III Step 1: outlining purpose] This paper deals with the segmental features of Francophone English, abbreviated to FrancoE. **[Move 2 Step 1B: indicating gap]** This variety of English has received very little attention over the years, unlike the L2 English of Anglophone speakers (abbreviated to CamE), which has been analysed by various researchers including Todd (1982), Massanga (1983), Mbangwana (1987), Kouega (1991,1999), Simo Bobda (1994), Simo Bobda and Chumbow (1999) etc. **[Move I Step 2: making topic generalization]** FrancoE is a variety spoken by Cameroonian users who have had English as a compulsory school subject and a compulsory examination subject for a number of years. **[Move 3 Step 4]** The data come from informal discussion, tape-recorded radio and TV interviews, contributions in work sessions, political speeches and debates, question-answer sessions in theses defences, oral sessions of competitive examinations, to name only these. The framework underlying the analysis is mainly the structural theoretical frame, with occasional incursions into the error analysis approach. The reference models for analysis are both RP and the Cameroon L2 English accent, as the work is contrastive in nature. **[Move 3 Step 7]** The work is divided into three sections, with the first overviewing English in the Francophone educational system in Cameroon (1). This is followed in turn by an analysis of the consonantal features of FrancoE (2) and its vocalic features (3).

Source: *Annals of the Faculty of Arts, Letters and Social Sciences* (Special Edition) June, 2008, pp. 109-10

Australia		
Type of PhD thesis	Function	Typical Macro-structure
Simple traditional Format	Report on a single study	Introduction→Review of the literature→Materials and Methods→Results→Discussion→Conclusion
Complex traditional Format	Report on more than one study	Introduction→Review of the literature→General Methods (optional) →Individual studies→General conclusions
Topic-based Format	Uses topics or themes to structure chapters	Introduction→Review of the literature(optional) →Theory (optional) →Sub-topics→Conclusions
Compilation Format	Series of research articles	Introduction→Review of the literature→General Methods (optional) →Individual studies→General conclusions
Cameroon (Topic-based format only)		
Thesis no. 1	General Introduction→Theory, Literature Review, and Methodology→Topic:Analysis-Discussion→Topic:Analysis-Discussion→ Topic:Analysis-Discussion→ Topic:Analysis-Discussion→ Topic:Analysis-Discussion→General Conclusion	
Thesis no. 2	General Introduction→Theoretical Frame and Literature Review→Methodology→Presentation, Interpretation and Analysis of Results→General Conclusion	
Thesis no. 3	Preliminary Considerations→Review of Literature→Methodology→ Topic:Analysis-Discussion→Topic:Analysis-Discussion→Discussion of Findings and Conclusion	
Thesis no. 4	General Introduction, Background and Methodology→ Literature Review→ Topic:Analysis-Discussion→ Topic:Analysis-Discussion→ Topic:Analysis-Discussion→ Topic:Analysis-Discussion→General Conclusion	

A text example of RA introduction from Cameroon English (3 constituents)

Title of article: **Official bilingualism at tertiary level in Cameroon: The case of the University of Yaoundé II(Soa)**

Introduction

[Move 3 Step 1] This study examines one type of bilingual education (see Garcia 1997 for an overview of types of bilingual education) involving the use of French and English at tertiary level in Cameroon. **[Move 3 Step 7]** The study is broken down into six sections, entitled overview of official bilingualism in Cameroon (1), practice of bilingualism in tertiary education in Cameroon (2), research design (3), practice of bilingualism at the University of Yaoundé II (4), discussion and recommendations (5). These are considered in turn.

Source: *KALIAO: Revue pluridisciplinaire de l'Ecole Normale Supérieure de Maroua (Cameroon)* vol. 2 (4) of Dec. 2010, p. 194.

A text example of RA introduction from EURO English

Title of article: **Content and Wording of Academic Course Descriptions**

Introduction

[Move I Step 3: reviewing previous research] Academic discourse studies mainly comprise three research domains: analysis of how scholars represent, validate and disseminate their research findings (e.g. Swales 1990, Bhatia 1993, Myers 2000, Bondi 2004, Diani 2004, Römer 2005, Soler 2007, D'Angelo 2009, Grazzi 2009), examination of how novices are socialized into the interactional practices of academic communities (e.g. Swales & Feak 1994/2004, 2000, Tognini-Bonelli & Del Lungo Camiciotti 2005, Hyland & Bondi 2006, Flottum, Dahl & Kinn 2006, Bruce 2008, Gotti 2009, Hyland 2009, Hyland & Diani 2009), and also description of how academics develop communicative practices in handling professional and social relationships, and in carrying out administrative tasks (e.g. Swales 1988, Fairclough 1993, Räisänen 1999, Trix & Psenka 2003, Giannoni 2006, Gesuato 2008, Gea Valor & Inigo Ros 2009, Bernardini, Ferraresi & Gaspari 2009). **[Move II Step 1D: continue a tradition? Or Move III Step 1A: outlining purpose?]** This paper is meant to contribute to the third above-mentioned line of research by examining academic course descriptions (ACDs). **[Move III Step 2: announcing particular findings]** These texts qualify as a hybrid institutional genre, partly housekeeping and partly gatekeeping (Srikant Sarangi, personal communication 2009). They serve two communicative purposes: a logistical-informational one (i.e. conveying information to prospective attendees about the contents and structure of courses) and a pedagogical-regulatory one (i.e. imposing requirements that regulate access to and participation in courses). The analysis focuses on how content, structure and wording of ACDs are influenced by their twofold goal, partly orientation and partly directive.

Source: *Research in English and Applied Linguistics, REAL 5*, Göttingen: Cuvillier, 2011, pp.79-80

Purpose of Genre Analysis (2)

Identify The Features That Characterize Texts And That Help Realize Their Communicative Purposes

- **Hedging** (Jacinta's presentation)
- **Authorial presence in text** (Alexandra's presentation)
- **Cohesion** (Ladifatou's presentation)
- **Modality** (see volumes)
- **Metadiscourse** (see volumes)
- **Lexical bundles** (see volumes)
- **Evaluation** (see Volumes)
- **Other issues** (presentations by Comfort)

Texts exhibit certain characteristic features which Biber (1988:72) classifies **under sixteen major grammatical categories.**

These sixteen grammatical categories include

- ✓ (A) tense and aspect markers,
- ✓ (B) place and time adverbials,
- ✓ (C) pronouns and pro-verbs,
- ✓ (D) questions,
- ✓ (E) nominal forms,
- ✓ (F) passives,
- ✓ (G) stative forms,
- ✓ (H) subordination features,
- ✓ (I) prepositional phrases, adjectives and adverbs,
- ✓ (J) lexical specificity,
- ✓ (K) lexical classes,
- ✓ (L) modals,
- ✓ (M) specialized verb classes,
- ✓ (N) reduced forms and dispreferred structures,
- ✓ (O) coordination,
- ✓ (P) negation

When a group of features consistently co-occur in text, those Features define a linguistic dimension, marking as well underlying functional dimensions. Thus, features do not randomly co-occur in texts. If a certain Feature consistently occur in a particular text, then it is reasonable to look for underlying functional influences that encourages such occurrences. **E.g. Characteristically modals + Nominal forms will occur in academic texts etc.**

Assessing complexity: the case of nominalization in Cameroon English

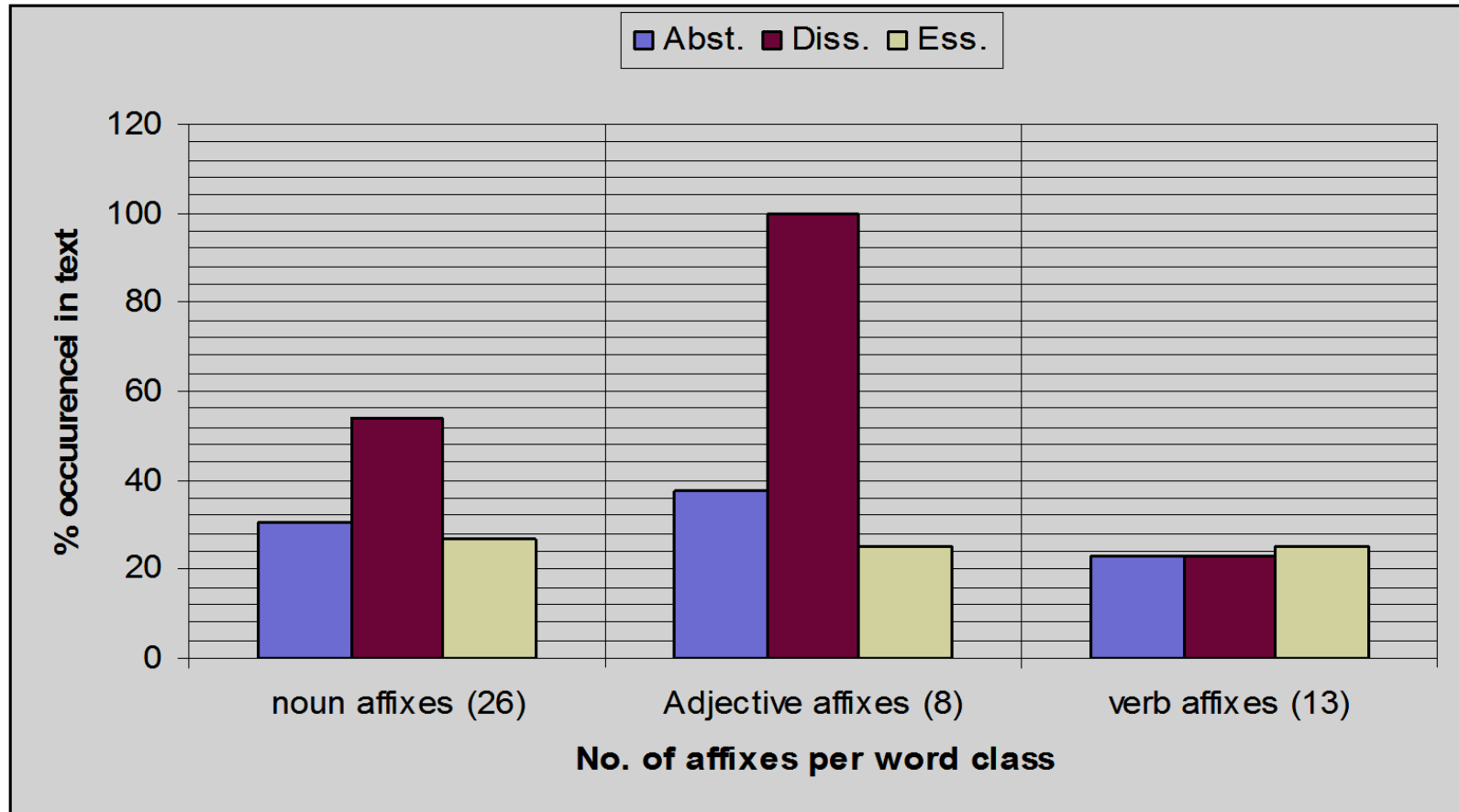
Category	Type	Frequency	Freq. per 1,000 words
Prepositions*	19	153,161	116.27
Nominalization	6	45,470	34.52
Passives	57	2,371	1.80
Amplifiers	16	2,111	1.60
Downtoners	11	688	0.52

*** Note:** By virtue of their frequencies, prepositions are not a defining objective class of words contributing to any valuable assessment of text variation

Frequency of nominalization in the corpus of CamE

Text/affix	Abstracts (%)	Dissertations (%)	Essays (%)	Total (%)
- tion(s)	1,542(61.39)	17,407(48.97)	5,280(71.24)	24,229(53.29)
- ity (ies)	409(16.28)	6,666(18.75)	990(13.36)	8,065(17.74)
- ment (s)	205(8.16)	4,192(11.79)	681(9.19)	5,078(11.18)
- sion (s)	200(7.98)	3,210(9.03)	249(3.36)	3,659(8.04)
- ism (s)	98(3.90)	2,192(6.17)	83(1.12)	2,373(5.21)
- ness	58(2.29)	1,879(5.29)	129(1.73)	2,066(4.54)
Total	2,512(100.00)	35,546(100.00)	7,412(100.00)	45,470(100.00)
Total no. of words	30,405	1,032,380	254,549	1,317,334
Occur per 1,000 words	8.21	3.44	2.91	3.45

Summary assessment of textual complexity



Comparative frequency figures of modals in students' essays from Cameroon, Kenya, and Germany

Modals	CCE	ICE-EA	CCSEs (actual)	CCSEs (extrapolated)
will	282	242	42	378
can	443	399	40	360
may	105	241	10	90
shall	34	17	1	9
would	302	162	33	297
could	127	99	20	180
might	20	36	13	117
should	143	257	32	288
must	55	160	4	36
certainly	3	1	2	18
possibly	-	7	2	18
probably	8	14	7	63
perhaps	5	9	2	18
maybe	-	-	5	45
No. of modals in corpus	1,527	1,644	213	1,917
No. of words in corpus	137,399	103,301	14,293	128,637

Purpose of Genre Analysis (3)

Examine The Understanding Of Those Who Write And Read The Genre

- There has to be evidence of “reason” and not “emotions” in the presentation of information
- Western intellectual tradition conceptualizes a writer as a thinker and user of reason
- The writer has to write with the potential reader in mind, who is coolly rational, reading for information, and intending to formulate a reasoned response
- When the writer writes s/he should imagine the reader looking for possible flaws in logic or interpretation, for possible gaps in research and observation, and so tries to anticipate the cool reader's objections and address them

Purpose of Genre Analysis (4)

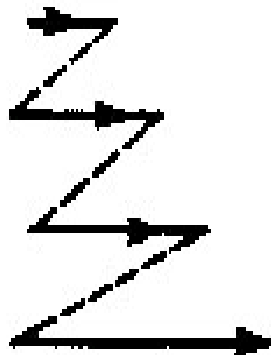
Explain Language Choices In Terms Of Social, Cultural And Psychological Contexts

- How do national rhetorical styles (if any??) affect strategic choices in writing

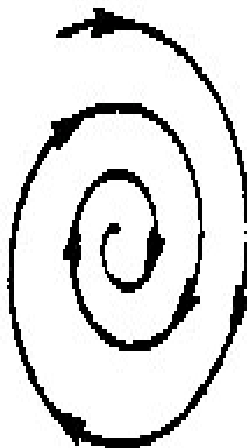
English



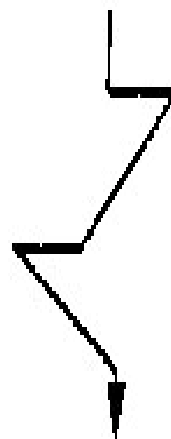
Semitic



Oriental



Romance



Russian



2. Our African-German Network for Academic Writing Excellence

WHO ARE WE?

academicwriting-network4africa.org

Early start

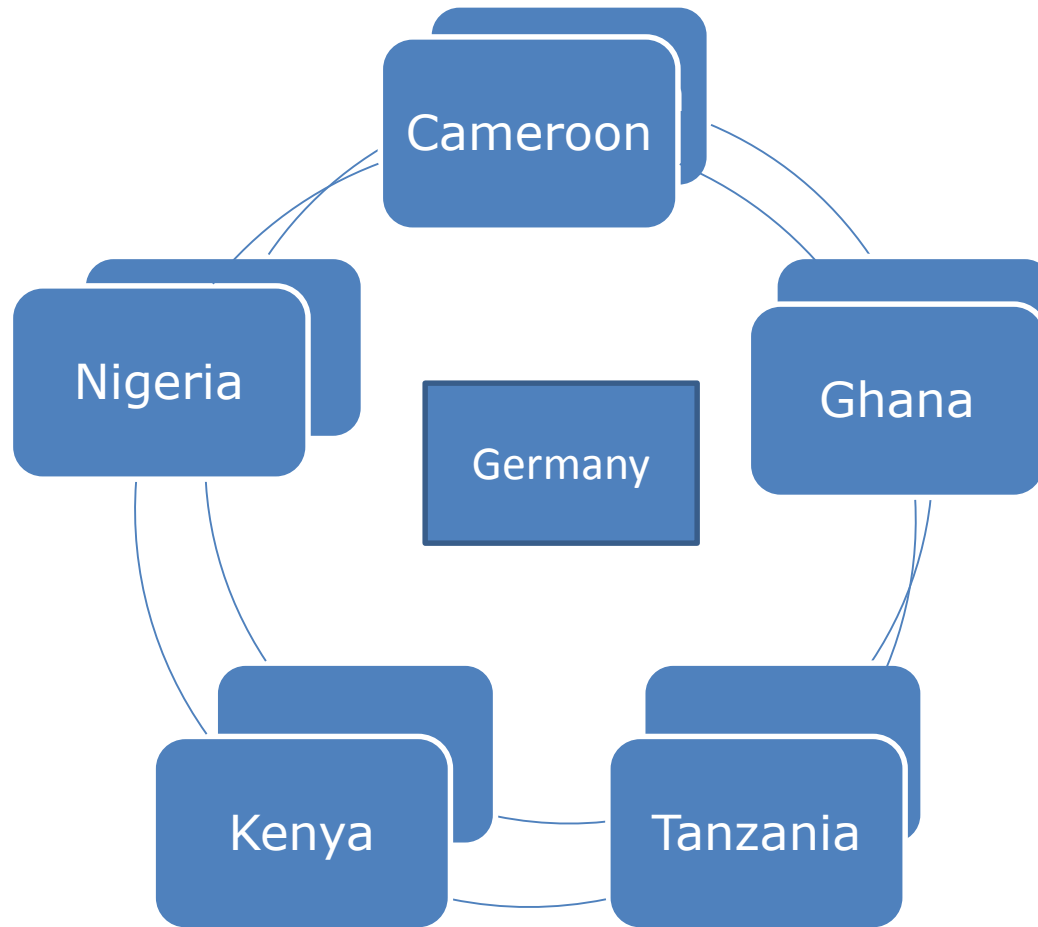
Photograph taken at the Humboldt Foundation head office
in Berlin, August 2007





TU-Chemnitz represents the academic/technical side of the network, providing expertise and counsel since 2006, but foundation work had started as far back as 1999 (**Prof. Dr. Josef Schmied**)

Scholars in 5 +1 countries collaborate to help junior scientists optimize their text and compete favorably in the Humboldt scholarships



3. Statistics on the Humboldt Sponsorship for Cameroon & Nigeria

WHAT MOTIVATED OUR INITIATIVE?

Low Humboldt Application Statistics: Linguistics, Literature and History in 19 years for Cameroon and Nigeria

All programs	1993-1997		1998-2002		2003-2007		2008-2012	
	Appl	Appr	Appl	Appr	Appl	Appr	Appl	Appr
Linguistics								
Cameroon : Men			2		5	4	6	2
Cam : Women			2		5	4	5	2
Nigeria : Men	1	1	3	2	2	2	8	2
Nigeria : Women	1	1	1	1	2	2	7	2
Literature								
Cameroon : Men			1		3	1	1	
Cam : Women			1		3	1	1	
Nigeria : Men	4	3	4	2	1	1	4	1
Nigeria : Women	4	3	4	2	1	1	4	1
History								
Cameroon : Men							1	1
Cam : Women							1	1
Nigeria : Men			2	1	5	2		
Nigeria : Women			2	1	4	1		
TOTAL	10	8	22	9	31	19	38	12

HUMBOLDT APPLICATION STATISTICS IN THE HUMANITIES (SOCIAL SCIENCES INCL.) FOR CAMEROON AND NIGERIA IN 19 YEARS

	1993-1997		1998-2002		2003-2007		2008-2012	
	Appl	Appr	Appl	Appr	Appl	Appr	Appl	Appr
Cameroon	8	6	20	2	38	19	35	14
Nigeria	19	9	30	12	36	10	49	18
TOTAL	27	15	50	14	71	29	84	32

TOTAL APPLICATIONS: 232

APPROVALS: 90 (38.8%)

REJECTIONS: 142 (61.2%)

HUMBOLDT APPLICATION STATISTICS : ALL DISCIPLINES FOR CAMEROON AND NIGERIA IN 19 YEARS

	1993-1997		1998-2002		2003-2007		2008-2012	
	Appl	Appr	Appl	Appr	Appl	Appr	Appl	Appr
Cameroon	9	6	29	9	43	19	62	24
Nigeria	74	34	152	45	158	43	146	43
TOTAL	83	41	181	54	201	62	208	67

TOTAL APPLICATIONS: 673
APPROVALS: 224 (33.3%)
REJECTIONS: 449 (66.7%)

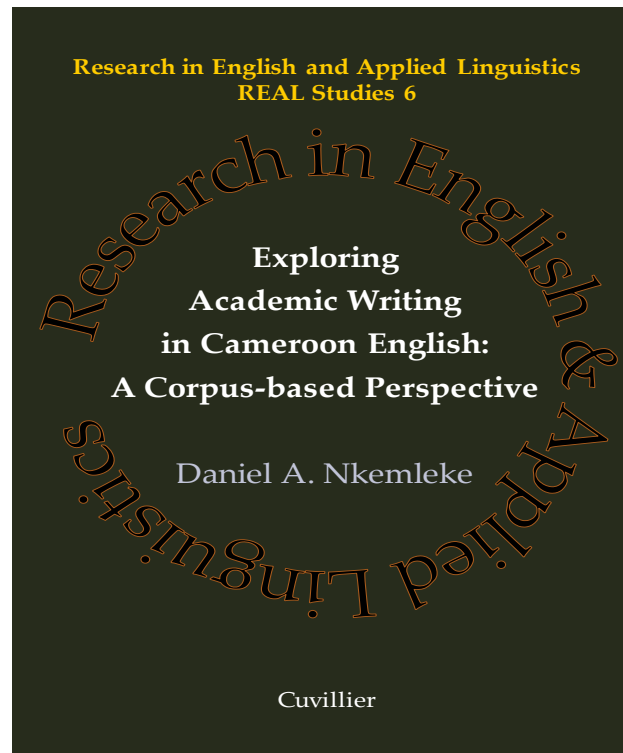


Why this state of affairs?

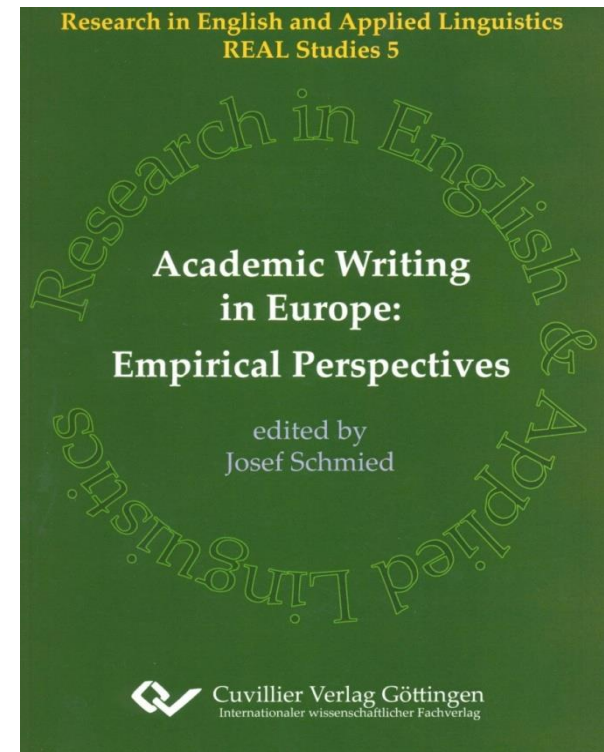
03 working hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Differences in academic writing practices in Cameroon/Nigeria and elsewhere?

NOTE: Europe as 'Centre' and Africa as 'Periphery' but not ideological



VS



Hypothesis 2: Lacking academic network of mutual support ?

- Given the number of communities that scholars are seeking to publish for, alongside the increasing pressure to publish in English, meeting the range of demands represents a considerable challenge and struggle (Lillis & Curry 2010, p.61)
- Participation in academic research networks seems to offer a key way for scholars to manage their writing for publication... **Indeed, success in English-medium publishing seems to depend largely on the extent to which scholars can mobilize relevant resources via network activities** (Lillis & Curry 2010, p.61)
- Academic networking is a feature of global scholarship, and can impact development and cross-cultural ties between countries (Nkemleke, Alumni Network Project 2014)

Hypothesis 3: Lacking institutional support ?

- Sub-Saharan Africa scholarship continues to operate under conditions that are seriously under-resourced. The fact that there is still sustained and vibrant research in countries which, with a few exceptions, have little government support, poor institutional facilities and many other challenges **says a great deal about the resilience and resolve of the scholars concerned** (*UNESCO World Science Report*, 2010, p.63)
- Sub-Saharan Africa has fallen dramatically behind in its share of world science production – from 1 % in 1987 to 0.7 % in 1996 – with no sign of recovery. This diminishing share of African science overall does not reflect a decrease in the absolute number of papers, but rather an increase in output below the global growth rate. Africa has lost 11 % of its share in global science since its peak in 1987; **sub-Saharan science has lost almost a third (31 %)** (*UNESCO World Science Report*, 2010, p.63)

Our Objectives

- Identify junior scientists in target countries (universities), and link them in a mentoring group forum via email, telephone, and web portal
- Achieve a reasonable increase in successful applications for the Humboldt scholarship in the Humanities from these countries in the long run
- Sustain academic link with TU-Chemnitz, and other partners in Germany, on research and publication opportunities in Germany, for the benefit of junior scientists, in view of preparing them for the Humboldt scholarship in the long run

Methodology

- **Organize an international Symposium in 2015:**
 - ✓ to launch the network initiative
 - ✓ to discuss academic issues related to students's projects
 - ✓ to define the manner of interaction and feedback on junior scientists' work
 - ✓ to explore opprtunities, with German partner, for junior scientists to travel to Germany for library work, if necessary

Thank You For Your Attention

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