

剑桥应用语言学丛书
CAMBRIDGE APPLIED LINGUISTICS

Genre Analysis

English in academic
and research settings

体裁分析

—— 学术与科研英语

John M. Swales



上海外语教育出版社

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English for academic
and research writings

林麗卿編

—— 學術寫作與研究 ——

John M. Swales



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The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor



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出版前言

1999年5月至2000年6月间,上海外语教育出版社先后出版了从牛津大学出版社引进的“牛津应用语言学丛书”19种、“牛津语言学入门丛书”6种和“牛津应用语言学丛书续编”10种,受到了外语界师生的一致好评和欢迎。为了向我国的外语教学与研究人员提供更多的有关专著,帮助读者了解近年来国外应用语言学和外语教学研究的理论,促进我国外语教学研究水平的提高,上海外语教育出版社又精心挑选了剑桥大学出版社的应用语言学丛书10种,形成与“牛津应用语言学丛书”相辅相成的“剑桥应用语言学丛书”。相信这套丛书也同样能开阔我国学者的视野,通过借鉴国外研究成果,进一步总结我国自己的外语教学经验,形成具有中国特色的外语教学理论。

《体裁分析:学术与科研英语》由密歇根大学语言学教授、英语语言学院院长约翰·斯韦尔斯(John M. Swales)撰写。该书初版于1990年,至1999年已经重印了六次。

《体裁分析:学术与科研英语》一书为解读学术性语篇提供了一种方法,为高级写作和学术英语的教学等实际应用环境提供了一个理论框架。该书充分显示了体裁分析在研究口语和书面语中的价值,并提倡从体裁分析的角度来进行语言教学,发展语言技能。

作者在该书的第一和第二部分中追溯了话语社团、体裁和语言学习任务三个主要概念在语言学研究著作中出现的过程和内涵,并提出作者本人对这三个概念的补充界定。在对有关概念作了比较深入的探讨后,在第三部分中作者对学术论文,论文概要,学位论文等多种学术性语篇进行了比较详细的分析。在本书的第四部分中,作者通过分析母语为非英语的学生的学术英语写作,指出他们在学术论文撰写中经常出现的问题,并介绍了一些以话语

分析为基础的教学材料,旨在提高学生在学术研究环境中的交际能力。

本书作者在语言学理论与教学实践相结合方面所作的尝试对于与学术英语教学有关的人员,无论是教师还是学生,都有重要参考价值。

Series Editors' Preface

The role of language in academic settings is of vital interest to all those concerned with tertiary education, including students, teachers, researchers, employers, and publishers. Recurring concerns focus on such issues as the rhetorical styles and discourse types employed in such settings – whether these are unique to a given language or culture or reflect universal modes of academic discourse – and how such norms can be effectively taught, both to native and non-native language users.

In order to investigate these and related issues, however, a theoretical framework is required which defines the scope and nature of academic discourse and which offers an approach to how it can be described and investigated. This is the goal of the present book, in which John Swales provides an approach to the understanding of academic discourse. Central to his book are the concepts of discourse community, genre, and language-learning task. Discourse communities, such as academic groupings of various kinds, are recognized by the specific genres that they employ, which include both speech events and written text types. The work that members of the discourse community are engaged in involves the processing of tasks which reflect specific linguistic, discursual and rhetoric skills.

With this framework, Swales is able to offer a model which is both descriptively powerful but, at the same time, applicable to practical situations, such as the teaching of advanced composition and the teaching of English for Academic Purposes. Swales selects for particular analysis, a number of text types which are problematic in tertiary education, namely the academic research paper and other research related genres. He notes that since English is the world's major language for the communication of research findings, the ability to write research papers is a major goal of tertiary education. He describes a number of options for addressing the pedagogic issues involved, and sets his discussion against a description of how the field of genre analysis has evolved, drawing on work from several different disciplines.

Genre Analysis thus adds to our understanding of how language is used within an important discourse community, and is a model of applied linguistics in its best sense – it draws on linguistic and sociolinguistic

theory to clarify the nature of language use and language learning in an educational setting.

Michael H. Long
Jack C. Richards

Thanks

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I would also like here to acknowledge the valuable commentaries provided by the two anonymous reviewers of Cambridge University Press and to thank the series co-editor Jack Richards for his forbearance and counsel. I owe the greatest debt, however, to Liz Hamp-Lyons, Ann Johns and Dennis Preston, who each took the considerable trouble to give the draft manuscript a very close and very educated reading.

While I believe that all of those mentioned have contributed to an improved final manuscript, none is, of course, responsible for remaining weaknesses.

I also owe much to my students. A first debt is to those on the M.Sc in Teaching English for Specific Purposes at the University of Aston, UK, with whom I first began working out my ideas on applied genre analysis in 1983–4. Since then I have gained much from the observations, comments and papers of students on both undergraduate and graduate courses in discourse analysis at The University of Michigan. Of at least equal importance has been the willing participation over many years of students taking experimental courses in English for Academic Purposes. Among these shaping experiences a particularly significant one has been the recent opportunity to teach a course in dissertation and proposal writing for non-native speakers.

I am also very grateful to Patricia Aldridge and Eva Stahlheber of the English Language Institute Library for their help in tracking down references, and to my secretary, Rosemary Tackabery, for her patience and her professionalism in the long process of creating the final manuscript.

Finally, I am deeply beholden to Vi Benner – for her encouragement, especially in times of uncertainty, for her continued belief in the value of the enterprise, and for her acceptance of the disruptions and distractions that writing a book in a small house has entailed.

John Swales
Ann Arbor, June 1989.

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PART I PRELIMINARIES

1 *Genre analysis – setting the scene*

1.1 Aims and purposes

The main aim of this book is to offer an approach to the teaching of academic and research English. The approach develops and makes use of three key concepts: discourse community, genre and language-learning task. While all three terms have extensive contemporary currency, all three suffer from variable and uncertain usage. One of the book's purposes therefore is to discuss these concepts in sufficient detail to reach a clearer understanding of how they have been and may be employed. Additionally, the book attempts to demonstrate the general value of genre analysis as a means of studying spoken and written discourse for applied ends. In particular, it tries to show that a genre-centered approach offers a workable way of making sense of the myriad communicative events that occur in the contemporary English-speaking academy – a sense-making directly relevant to those concerned with devising English courses and, by extension, to those participating in such courses.

I have, for the most part, restricted both discussion and illustration to post-secondary academic English. The rapid growth of discursial studies on the English language makes wider coverage impossible in a book of this length. For example, the literature in areas such as international business communication and the processing and production of technical manuals has rapidly become so large as to require, for adequate treatment, volumes of their own. Meanwhile there have appeared a number of major surveys of key professional areas such as those by Maher (1986) on medical English and Bhatia (1987) on legal English.

There are, in fact, good reasons for this particular restriction. First, the training of people to process and produce academic and research English remains a major international endeavor, whether in contexts where English is a first language, a second language (as in much of the 'new' Commonwealth) or a foreign language (as in Europe or Latin America). Secondly, this endeavor tends to be an institutionalized public-sector responsibility. It thus interfaces with national language planning and manpower training policies in ways that are much less obviously true of

company training programs or private sector initiatives. Thirdly, even within this limited scope, the number and variety of unanswered research questions is dauntingly large, while issues of curriculum and pedagogy remain bafflingly complex. Finally, academic English training has typically had to compete for resources – and typically unsuccessfully – against other interest groups which usually have more campus prestige and power. Whatever the language policy, and whether the endeavor is categorized as Composition, Study Skills, Writing Across the Curriculum, or English for Academic Purposes, contact hours rarely seem enough and are often only available at the wrong times in the educational development of the students. Further, instructor conditions of service are typically below the institutional norm, and the viability of the operation itself is characteristically subject to recurring institutional scrutiny. Given all these circumstances, there is arguably something to be said for a book that concentrates on academic English, perhaps particularly for one that emphasizes the *seriousness* of the challenge imposed upon us if we are to understand the forces which variously shape the language of the academy, and for one which stands against the view that our teaching of academic English is at bottom nothing more than remedial. For if there is one factor that has debilitated academic English programs more than any other around the world, it has been the concept of *remediation* – that we have nothing to teach but that which should have been learnt before.

The foregoing paragraphs have already hinted at a further aim. I have taken the opportunity to try and build a bridge between English for Specific Purposes / Applied Discourse Analysis on the one side and L1 writing/composition on the other. However, in order to see why taking up this challenge may be both timely and useful, it is first necessary to review briefly developments in these two areas.

Historically, language analyses for specific purposes began in quantitative studies of the linguistic properties of functional varieties or *registers* of a language (Barber, 1962; Halliday, McIntosh and Stevens, 1964). A prototypical study of this kind would involve investigating the occurrence of verb forms in scientific English, such as in Huddleston (1971). The motivations for such studies were respectable enough in the sense that they were designed to provide (within their limitations) a descriptively-adequate account of distributional frequencies in the target language variety and thus offer a basis for prioritizing teaching items in specialized ESL* materials. Barber (1962), for instance, was able to show that continuous tenses were so rare in scientific prose that they could be virtually discounted. Whatever the value of these ground-breaking

* I have in this book adopted the standard American usage of using ESL to cover situations that may elsewhere be divided into English as a *Second Language* and English as a *Foreign Language*.