Philip Shaw*

Stockholm University, Sweden
philip.shaw@english.su.se

INTERTEXTUALITY, INTERGENERICITY, AND INTERDISCURSIVITY IN THE MANAGEMENT SUMMARIES AND CLIENT RESPONSIBILITIES SECTIONS OF SOFTWARE DESIGN PROPOSALS

Abstract

Workplaces are characterized by a particular assemblage of genres and particular composing practices. These are usually very local, in the sense that they are different in different workplaces, and also very different from the genres and practices to be found in academia. In this article an account is given of text analysis and interviews which focus on the interrrelations of genres and discourses in the writing practices in a software company in England. The emphasis is on the function and re-use of formulaic text, using the example of two parts of the software design proposal: the Management Summary and Client Responsibilities. The aim is to examine how the composing practices in the company compare with those familiar from academic writing. The design proposals are shown to be texts characterized by multiple authorship, discourse which varies across sections, and above all by strategic re-use of text. Since none of these are characteristics of academic writing, ESP teaching has to ensure that it does not impose misleading requirements on students, and pedagogic applications are suggested.

134

Key words

genre, workplace, intertextuality, intergenericity, interdiscursivity, proposal.

* Corresponding address: Philip Shaw, Engelska institutionen, Stockholms universitet, 106 91 Stockholm.