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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 characterised 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 characterised 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.

Key words

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

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

Sažetak

U profesionalnom okruženju se koristi poseban splet žanrova koji se kombinuju na posebne načine. Ti žanrovi su obično vrlo lokalnog karaktera, u smislu da se na različitim radnim mestima koriste različiti žanrovi, koji se, s druge strane, razlikuju od žanrova u akademskom okruženju. U ovom radu predstavljamo analizu teksta i intervjue koji se bave međusobnim preplitanjem žanrova i diskursa u praksi pisanja u jednoj softverskoj kompaniji u Engleskoj. Akcenat je na funkciji i korišćenju već poznatog formulaičnog teksta, i to na primeru dva dela ponude za izradu softvera: “rezimeu za rukovodstvo” i “odgovornosti klijenta”. Cilj nam je da istražimo sličnosti i razlike između pisanih žanrova u kompaniji, s jedne, i onih koji se predaju u akademskom okruženju, s druge strane. Analiza je pokazala da se ponude za izradu softvera odlikuju višestrukim autorstvom, diskursima koji se razlikuju u zavisnosti od odeljka, a iznad svega, strateškom upotrebom već poznatog teksta. Pošto nijedna ova osobina ne odlikuje akademsko pisanje, neophodno je da se na nastavi engleskog jezika nauke i struke ne pružaju pogrešne smernice studentima, zbog čega navodimo i pedagoške implikacije istraživanja.

Ključne reči

žanr, radno mesto, intertekstualnost, interžanrovsko preplitanje, interdiskurzivnost, ponuda.

1. INTRODUCTION

A text can be analysed as an instance of an identifiable discourse, in the sense that it displays certain sorts of writer identities and constructed reader identities (Fairclough, 1992). For example, ‘To switch the set on, press one of the channel selection keys on the local control panel or remote control unit’ is an instance of the discourse of instructions, characterised by features such as presupposed knowledge on the part of the writer and ignorance on that of the ‘constructed reader’, presumed presence of the object discussed, direct address forms, unhedged imperatives, and concrete vocabulary.

If a text has some features or sections which imply one discourse and some which imply another, one can say that it displays interdiscursivity. Interdiscursivity can in fact be a regular feature of some genres. Thus, the company annual report (Skulstad, 2002) typically combines features of accounting discourse with others which derive from corporate advertising or promotion.

At the same time, the text can be analysed in a different dimension as an instance of a certain genre. Genre determination implies asking what the text’s specific purposes are, what its writers would call it (for example, if it is a newspaper article would they call it a feature, hard news, a leader, or something else?), who its audience is, and, crucially, how it is structured rhetorically (Swales, 1990; Bhatia, 1993; Askehave & Swales, 2001).

A feature of business genres is that they are often members of genre systems (Devitt, 2004). An example is given by Pilegaard (1997) with the sequence sales letter-order-reply-delivery note, etc. Genres are forms of social action (Miller, 1984), and it is typical of professional or business writing that the whole system is expressive and formative of real-world purposes and plans (Winsor, 1999).

If a text has some rhetorical structures or features which imply one well-established genre and some which imply another, one can say that it is generically hybrid (Fairclough, 1995). Hybridity is actually a subcategory of intergenericity, which presumably also includes features of one non-hybrid genre, which are derived from or related to those of another. Thus, many analyses of academic article abstracts (such as Martin, 2003) find that they can make use of categories derived from the analysis of the articles themselves, which makes the two genres intergenerically related, but not hybrid. In the case of the abstract and the article there is, generally speaking, intergenericity without interdiscursivity, in that both are written relatively purely in the same discourse. A different type of intergenericity is seen among the members of a sequenced genre system like Pilegaard's (1997), where the content and structure of a genre is partly determined by the content and structure of the preceding one.

Interdiscursivity and intergenericity are examples of what Kristeva (1980) and Bakhtin (1986) call intertextuality, using a broad sense of the word. But, it is frequently emphasised that neither genre nor discourse are essentially linguistic categories (Miller, 1984; Martin, 1985; Bhatia, 1999). Therefore, it is also necessary to use 'intertextuality' more narrowly to refer to a particular text's linguistic relationships with other particular texts, which may or may not be generically and discursively related to it. A company report which said 'This turned out to be much ado about nothing' would not be using the discourse of verse drama to any significant extent, and would not have features of the genre 'comedy', but would nonetheless establish an intertextual link both to a specific text and to a whole range of re-uses of the phrase quoted.

Intertextuality in this narrower sense is discussed by Fairclough (1992), who gives various ways of representing the 'voice' of another speaker or writer in the text. One form of this intertextuality is reference, the explicit mention of other texts in one's own, with or without some element of quotation (Swales, 1990). Another is plagiarism, the unattributed use of material from texts 'belonging' to others as if it was one's own (Pecorari, 2010; Pecorari & Shaw, 2012). A third form is re-use of text segments 'belonging' to one's own group. Text that has been produced by an organisation for a particular purpose is available for re-use if the purpose recurs or if it can be used for a different purpose, and such re-use creates strong (invisible) intertextual links (Shaw & Pecorari, 2013).

Any particular case illuminates most of these issues, and raises some new ones. In this paper I aim to clarify the distinctions between the 'inter'-abstractions in the title, and to focus on the function and re-use of formulaic text, using the example of a hitherto undescribed genre, the software production proposal. The genres discussed here are local and only attested in the company I visited, so that the company is the discourse community in question. The value of this activity lies in what it tells us about the design of ESP courses at university such as those proposed by Hart-Davidson, Spinuzzi, & Zachryet (2007), Flowerdew (2010), and Carter et al. (2011). We need to understand how different writing in the workplace is from academic writing and make sure that we do not impose misleading requirements on our students.

2. LOCATION, METHOD AND CORPUS

The company examined is a fairly small software development company located in a small port town in the South of England. It is privately owned and managed by the owner. The aspect of its activities which is discussed here is the production of database applications based on Microsoft software for public institutions, such as the Nature Conservancy Council and private companies. It has some 38 employees, and those relevant here fall into three categories: on the 'sales side' account managers, who act as links with clients, and on the 'technical side',[1] team leaders, who arrange the production of software, and programmers, who share in this process.

The method which generated the information below was as follows. I had a personal contact with the company and wrote to request co-operation. Very generously, the company not only sent me a CD-ROM with individual examples of many of the genres they used, but also agreed to give me information in an interview. I read some of the documents and then spent some two and a half hours at the company's offices in interviews.

A two-hour interview was carried out with one senior figure on the 'sales side' and a shorter twenty-minute discussion with a systems designer somewhat lower in the hierarchy and on the 'technical side'. The sales manager had worked at the company for some five years, the systems designer for two. Both were graduates of British universities, the systems designer in natural sciences, the sales manager in business studies.

The purpose of the interview was to understand more about the genre repertoire of the workplace (Devitt, 2004), and the writing process and authorship of the texts. I wanted to know about issues such as house style, multiple authorship, text re-use, and text checking. Because I had had an opportunity to read a few texts in advance I was able to refer to specific cases in the interview and ask about the function and authorship of each section in the sample. These were essentially

[1] The issue of 'side' is highlighted because it was frequently referred to in the interviews.

unstructured interviews starting from this list of topics and going where they were taken by the discussion. No recording could be made and the limited report here is based on notes written during the interview.

On this basis, the text of the software design proposal genre was chosen for investigation in more detail. Four examples of the genre, each of about 8,000 words, were made available to me. Researchers familiar with in-company documentation will recognise that this was very generous access, but of course it is a small sample.

Each text was carefully read through at least ten times and analysed first on the functional level into moves and steps (that is, identifying text segments with apparently similar functions, cf. Bhatia, 1993), and then on the text level. On the text level the main method was underlining and marking stretches of text that were identical or similar in wording. Of course, four examples is too few for any generalisability; what is of interest here is the characteristics of these cases.

3. GENRES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE SOFTWARE PRODUCTION PROCESS

Figure 1 gives a simplified view of the documentation surrounding the production of every new piece of software.[2] These are the main components of the company's genre repertoire as presented by the sales manager. The first contact comes from outside, in the form of an advertised invitation to tender or a letter from a known client describing a requirement. This receives some kind of initial response, here illustrated by the genre 'expression of interest', which is comparable to the company brochure, as described by Askehave (1998) – it "describes various aspects of the company such as its history, production facilities, markets, employees, etc.", as the main informant said.[3] We shall see below that other initial responses are possible, depending on the nature of the contact. There is then typically, but not always, one or more meetings between the client and the production company, in the course of which requirements are established. My informants regarded this as a very important stage in which the client's requirements could be modified and reformulated to represent their real needs. Bad software companies, they said, simply supply clients with what they think they want, however impractical it may be. The phase of requirements analysis enables them to find out what the client really needs, to 'educate' the client to see these 'real' needs, and to formulate the requirements in a way that makes sense for their own programmers. The proposal itself is described in detail below. After the

[2] The following acronyms are used in this article: TSD (Technical System Design), SDP (Software Design Proposal), and PF (proposal to a funding body). The four texts examined are referred to as XY, EA, PV and DE. The local technical computing term COM Interfaces Requirements is also used; I have not been able to find out what COM stands for.

[3] However, the actual equivalent of the company brochure – the website – has different wording and is much more visual in effect.

proposal has been accepted by the client there is a period of consultation leading to the production of the definitive document, called the Technical System Design (TSD), which defines the product to be delivered for the price agreed. Other genres associated with the process include the Change Control Note, often originating with the client, which defines an alteration in the TSD, COM Interfaces Requirements directed to potential future extenders of the system, etc.

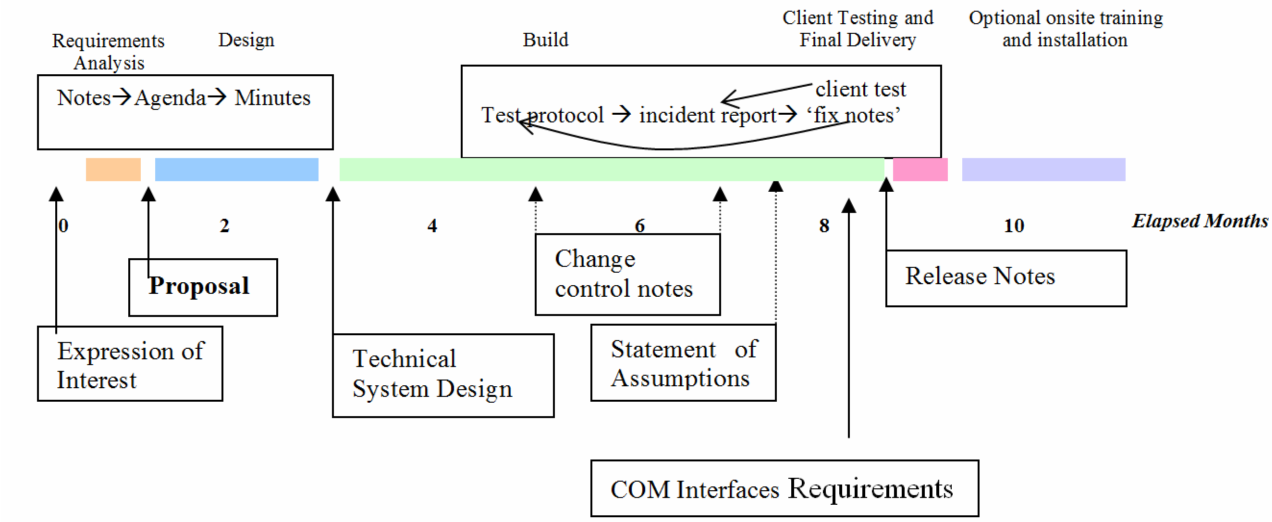

Figure 1. Selected genres in the software production process
(based on company diagram of the software production process)

All the genres described so far in the present text form part of a genre system (Devitt, 2004). This is a set of genres involved in a particular discipline or specialism, which may be unordered or only partly ordered (lecture, textbook, essay, seminar, exam) or, as in this case, quite rigorously ordered (in which case they can be called a generic chain [Swales, 1990]).

4. THE PROPOSAL GENRE

4.1. Framework

The classic definitions of genres (Swales, 1990; Bhatia, 1993; Askehave & Swales, 2001) state that texts which are members of the same genre have shared purposes recognised by their producers and determining their schematic structure. The texts stand in a fixed relation to other texts which are members of other genres in the genre system, their common features, and their relations to the audience. They also show some degree of shared style and content, and much attention has been paid to the features of text structure that they may share. These formal features may approach a prototype recognisable to users to a greater or lesser extent. A genre typically has a name used by the parent 'discourse community', but such a name may cover what the analyst finds to be two or more analytical genres.

The genre in question here is called *a proposal*. Huckin and Olsen (1991) give an outline for a 'proposal' addressed to a funding body (see also Beaufort, 1997). We can characterise the *software design proposal* (SDP) examined here by comparing it with this *proposal to a funding body* (PF), using the dimensions in the definitions referred to in the previous paragraph.

4.2. Socio-cognitive setting

Both types of proposal have an outside body as audience and the basic general purpose of securing approval for the proposers to do something at the outside body's expense. However, the details and other purposes differ. The funding proposal is aimed almost exclusively at expert referees and well-informed decision makers in the funding body and has the relatively simple dual aim of defining a problem and a proposed solution, and promoting the importance of the problem and the efficacy of the solution (Huckin & Olsen, 1991: 321). By contrast, the software development proposal exemplifies the diverse audiences and purposes which characterise business genres (Bhatia, 1999: 25). The informants mentioned in the Method and Corpus section above said that proposals were difficult to write because they are aimed at three or more audiences: decision makers in the client organisation, who have to approve the purchase, the project manager and possibly users in the client organisation, and programmers in the software company, who have to know what they are designing. Similarly, they have several purposes. One is persuasive or promotional – to persuade the client to buy the package. Another, as we shall see, is regulatory – to ensure that both sides have the same understanding of the bargain, and in particular that the client will provide the access required for successful design. Another might be considered simple information, but is more precisely the more interesting function of knowledge transformation. The informants said that the client typically comes with initial requirements which are both ill-formed and incomplete in the sense that simply constructing a program to meet them will not achieve the client's real aims, so that they are not organised in a way that makes sense to the programmers. It is therefore necessary to negotiate a reformulation of the requirements into a form that is meaningful to both partners, which an informant described as "what they told us but in our own words". The composition of the proposal involves knowledge transformation and the document records it. As Miller (1984: 165) says, in learning a genre "we learn what ends we may have". Elements of the presentation of this transformed knowledge are pedagogical, in that the client has to learn to view the problem in a new way.

The relation between the proposal genre and other genres in the same system also distinguishes the two types of proposal. While the proposal for funding is often the first in its genre chain, or is a response to a rather general announcement of potential funding, the software design proposal always responds to some text originating from the client which outlines perceived requirements, and has often been preceded both by a more promotional expression of interest giving details of the company, its stability, expertise, track record, etc., and by minutes of requirements meetings. This produces some types of intertextuality and intergenericity specified below.

Texts in both genres are in competition with unknown parallel texts from other sources, but the competitors of a proposal for funding are probably projects solving other problems, while those of a software development proposal are other solutions to the same problem. Hence the PF only has to show that the "proposed activity will alleviate" the problem (Huckin & Olsen, 1991: 321), while the SDP has to show that this company's solution is the best, in relation to unknown competition.

Because of the competitive nature of both genres, they have in common that access to parallel texts can be limited. Informants on the SDP said that they believed some aspects of the content and layout of their proposals to be unique, but that they very rarely saw texts from other companies in what is presumably the same genre. Consequently, proposals produced by this company have some degree of autonomy, and the relevant discourse community, at one level, is the company.

The relations of readers and writers are similar in that in both cases expertise rests with the writer, and money and decision-making power with the reader. Similarly, in both cases the discourse community seems to be asymmetrically structured, in that the primary receivers of the genre are not habitual producers (unlike the ideal discourse community described in Swales [1990], but like that in Beaufort, [1997]). However, the only action required by the PF writer is financial support, and the conditions are those laid down by the outside body. By contrast, the SDP sets out the co-operation required of the outside body, and the conditions that the proposer is willing to offer (or has negotiated).

While Huckin and Olsen (1991) assume a default individual author for the PF, the SDP text is written by a lead author in the sales department, but includes sections written by the technical team leader and, in accordance with ISO 9000, has been independently checked. This is not a particularly high degree of collective authorship in business terms (Bhatia, 1993), but authorship is not simply individual.

4.3. Style, content, structure

Regulation of the format of a proposal for funding, if any, is likely to come from the funding body, but the software design proposals examined here are subject to quite detailed regulation from their own company. The writers work from a template which specifies layout and format completely, makes certain stylistic demands discussed in section 4.4, and to some extent specifies sections and their headings (cf. Bhatia, 1999: 27).

In terms of content, both types of proposal have to specify timings and costs. However, the PF gives fully specified costs (to show there is no profit), while the SDP gives a global price, only broken down to the extent required by the outside body (to conceal the profit margin). Both give references, but the PF uses previous work to support its analysis of the need and solution, while those in the SDP support the credibility and financial stability of the company. Similarly, the history given in the PF describes previous solutions to this and parallel problems (Huckin & Olsen, 1991: 316), while that in the SDP gives the company's track record. According to Huckin and Olsen, the PF should specify personnel (to show that the proposers are "qualified to do the proposed work", 1991: 321), and the institutional resources available to the proposers, but this content is not part of the prototypical SDP because it has been given in a previous genre in the chain – the expression of interest.

The structure of the funding proposal given by Huckin and Olsen (1991) is composed of the following sections: Abstract, Contents, Introduction, Background, Description of proposed activity, Institutional resources and commitments, References, Personnel, Budget and Appendices. The structure found for the software design proposal is comparable, but quite complex.[4]

Figure 2 shows a hierarchy with four levels, which enables us to describe structural features of a genre. At the top there are a number of genre systems (here presented as unrelated, though obviously there are other levels of structure (Van Nus, 1999). Each of these consists of a number of genres. A genre may be structured at any number of levels – the proposals in question seem to have three levels: section, move, and step/component. The section names given are terms devised by the analyst, and may not correspond with the headings chosen by the writer of a particular text. In particular, the term 'description' is not a heading found in the texts, but a category defined to cover several orthographic sections in the texts which have similar functions and contents. Each section is divided into moves, which usually occur more or less in the same sequence and can be identified by their content and function, and also by typical linguistic features. Here we only specify *moves* for the management summary as an example. Some of the moves have no internal structure, some consist of sequenced parts called *steps*, and some consist of unsequenced parts called *components*. These are only specified

[4] A potential simplification for pedagogic purposes is discussed in Section 6.

for the Solution move. One or more of the moves or components occur in all the examples found and these are called 'obligatory'. Others occur in some examples but not others, and these are called 'optional'.

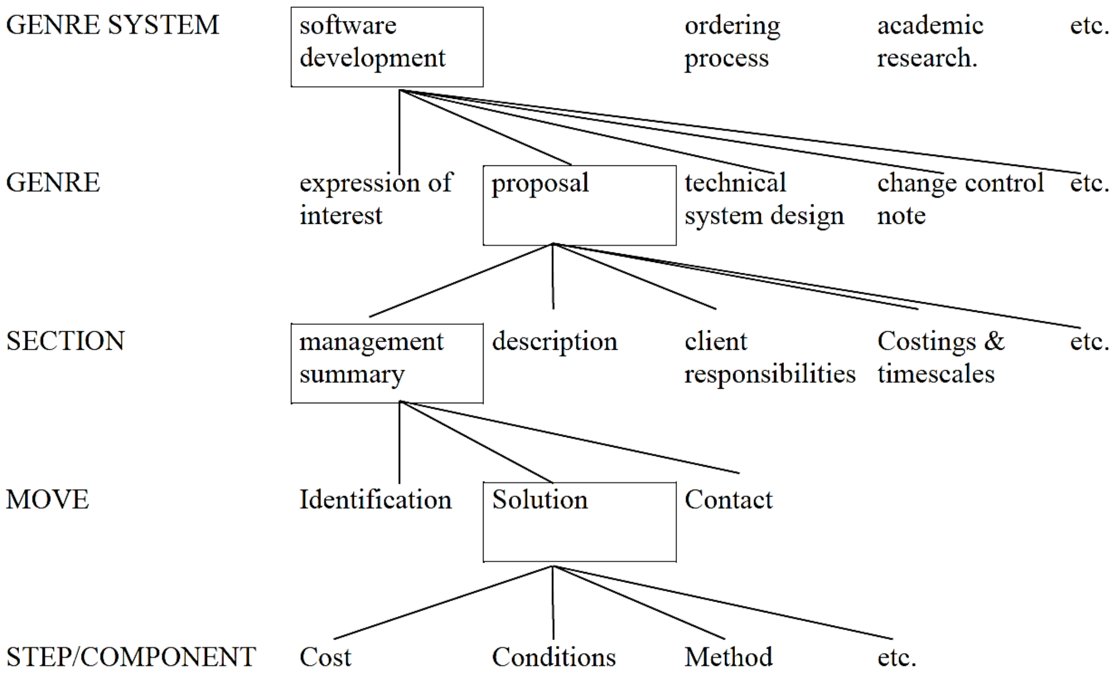

Figure 2. The management summary of the proposal in its generic context

Figure 2 summarises the most frequent moves in a proposal. Table 1 compares the actual move structure of four proposals. The names of these sections below are the analyst's and do not correspond with the headings in a given document. Three of the proposal have a fairly uniform structure with minor variations in content and sequencing. The fourth includes, for intergeneric reasons discussed below, three moves (B, X, and Y) representing several sections which are absent in the others.

Section A, the *Management Summary*, has a clear repeated generic structure mostly consisting of freshly-composed text. Informants said it was 'a real management summary, everything we want to say to them, both sales and technical. We assume it's all they would read'. C, *Description*, is the analyst's term for the section or sections which describe(s) individual features of the software. It has a varied structure, determined largely by the structure of the software which has been arrived at. It starts with an overview, often called Scope, and continues at some length with the necessary details. D, *Client Responsibilities*, has a clear repeated generic structure, but consists almost entirely of re-used text. E, *Costings and Timescales*, is fairly standardised text with a good deal of variation because of varied content, while F, *Standard terms and Conditions*, is largely identical wherever it appears. G, *Software Development Methodology*, was said by the sales manager to exist in 'long versions, short versions, there are 10 versions of this – a menu of standard versions'.

There is not space here to look at the detailed structure of each section, and focus will be placed only on Management Summary and Client Responsibilities, which contrast with one another in interesting ways.

XY*	EA*	PV*	DE*
Contents	Contents	Contents	Contents
A Management Summary	A Management Summary	A Management Summary	A Management Summary
			B Introduction
			X General Promotion
			G1 Software Development Methodology
C. Description	C. Description	C. Description	
	D Client Responsibilities	D Client Responsibilities	
		C. Description	C. Description
E Costings and Timescales	E Costings and Timescales	E Costings and Timescales	E1 Costings
D Client Responsibilities			C Description
			E2 Timescales
			C Description
	F Standard Terms and Conditions	F Standard Terms and Conditions	F Standard Terms and Conditions
			Y Policy Issues
G Software Development Methodology (formulaic)	G Software Development Methodology (formulaic)	G Software Development Methodology (formulaic)	G2 Software Development Methodology
			C Description (?)
			D Client Responsibilities

Table 1. Move structure of four proposals

*These four letter pairs identify the texts and the – anonymised – clients for whom they were produced.

The Management Summary section is obligatory in a proposal and the few examples I examined had a fairly intricate internal structure, exemplified by that of text XY (see Table 2). Table 2 shows that the paragraph structure only approximately follows the move structure, as is common in such analyses.

Move 1 of the Management Summary deals with the document. It consists of an obligatory Identification step followed by optional further information on the current document: its aim, who wrote it, how it is structured, etc.

Move 2 deals with the project. It has two obligatory components: Process and Price. Exponents of these two appear interwoven and in any order. Process steps refer to the production of the software, Cost ones to its conditions of sale. Process has an obligatory and standardised step: 2c Method Formulaic and optional steps 2f Accreditation and 2g Specific Process. Cost has an obligatory step 2b Cost and optional steps 2a Cost Type Introduction and 2d Conditions.

Move 3 consists of a single obligatory and uniform step: CONTACT.

Text XY: Management Summary Structure		
§	**Move + Step**	**Text**
1	move 1step 1a: IDENTIFICATION	*Contained within this document is our proposal for developing a bespoke solution to meet the requirements of Corporate Recorder 2002.*
	move 1 steps 1b PEOPLE + 1d OUTLINE	*This proposal is split into 2 sections. The first section details all of the requirements that are mandatory in order to move onto SQL Server and MSDE platforms. The second section details a list of costed options that were determined in James Martins analysis document.*
2	move 2 step 2c METHOD FORMULAIC	*The cost of all development is based on completing the project using a proven phased development method. This methodology brings together LymeLyme Software and the client in an interactive learning partnership, which encourages discussion. It is designed to achieve best value and past experience has proven that the system is delivered on time and to budget.*
3	move 2 step 2b COST	*The total cost of the development is X.*
	move 2 step 2d SOLUTION TYPE CONDITIONS	*This provides all functionality on a fixed price basis and includes full system documentation, testing and a six-month support contract.*
4	step 3 CONTACT	*For further information on this proposal please contact:*

Table 2. Move structure of a Management Summary

Text EA: Client Responsibilities section	
Moves	
A Introduction	*This section details the responsibilities of [client name].*
B Testing	Testing *It is essential that [client name] carries out extensive user acceptance testing within **three** weeks of the beta delivery, as allowed for within the project plan. To this end, [client name] must provide at least two users, and allocate sufficient time and resources to ensure that the testing is carried out to a satisfactory level. Testing must be carried out methodically, to the extent that it uncovers any errors or omissions that that would otherwise stop the day-to-day use of the system in the live environment. If tolerances are not tested to a sufficient degree, the live environment might be compromised after final delivery.*
D Design Sessions (optional)	Design Sessions *It is expected 2 sessions are required of 1-day duration, to be held at the Lyme Software site. Representatives are provided with an agenda upon arrival, which is updated if necessary. The session begins with a brief overview of the prototype, presenting the general look and feel, and identifying key functionality. The remainder of the session follows the agenda proposed. We provide a moderator, to ensure the agenda is followed and that the necessary decisions are made.* *Attendance at design sessions is mandatory ...25 LINES OMITTED*
F Sign Off	Sign Off *The final prototype and Technical Systems Document (TSD) present a blueprint of the final system, and [client name] must agree that they are satisfied by signing off the prototype and TSD delivered.*
C Proviso	*Any subsequent changes or modifications are not covered in the price quoted and are likely to require an increase in cost and delivery date.*
G Final Delivery	*In addition, after the final delivery, [client name] must agree that the system matches the agreed specifications in the TSD by signing off the build phase of the project.*

Table 3. Move structure of the Client Responsibilities section

Table 3 above illustrates the Client Responsibilities section from text EA. Each move is completely formulaic with no rhetorical variation, merely the insertion of appropriate names and numbers, but the selection, and to some extent ordering, of moves varies between documents. Thus Proviso is assigned letter C because it often comes after B Testing, but here it occurs, equally logically, after F Sign Off. In a regulative section such as this one may expect a set of components rather than a sequence of steps, given that the section essentially consists of conditions that must be set – things that have to be said – rather than a logical sequence or argument.

4.4. Interdiscursivity

Writers in this company are aware of one type of interdiscursivity which is hardly apparent to the text analyst, the influence of antecedent genres (Rounsaville, Goldberg, & Bawarshi, 2008). Those on the 'technical' side, they say, bring with them from their university studies a passivised 'positivist' discourse associated with natural science, while others bring a more personal discourse.

What strikes the text analyst, though, is the interdiscursivity built into the proposal genre. At least two distinct discourses can be identified (see also discussion in Shaw, 2006). One is deliberately promotional, choosing words to create a favourable impression; the other is regulative, designed to ensure that the client is aware of their responsibilities and will fulfil them. In the promotional discourse words are chosen to put a positive gloss on content, and this is often the result of conscious policy. Thus the company's price for the project is usually referred to as 'cost', producing some slightly odd collocations like *total cost payable* and *a lower more accurate cost may then be provided*. This usage increases rapport (Spencer-Oatey & Xing, 2004) by appearing to adopt the client's point of view rather than the company's, and makes the sum referred to appear as a factual cost rather than a negotiable price. In reality, a price is the seller's cost plus a profit after all. This discourse also includes typical promotional devices like self-praise (examples 1 and 3), uninformative intensifiers (example 2), relatively uninformative text apparently inserted to carry positive evaluation (example 3), and kind of feelgood psychobabble intended to raise the discourse above the merely commercial (example 4).

> (1) Our history spans fifteen years as a limited company with **continued excellence in providing value-for-money, client-focused** IT and business services.

> (2) The design of the **entire** user interface is **fully** considered with input from representatives of **all** types of user during the development process SD.

(3) We have built our business around quality management concepts incorporating **rigorous** processes and **robust** project management controls and techniques that ensure the delivery of the **highest quality results** to our clients.

(4) This methodology brings together Dorset Software and the client **in an interactive learning partnership, which encourages discussion**.

In other cases there is exclusion of certain features to achieve a promotional tone. In fact, there is in this company a strict requirement, often commented on by both informants, that markers of epistemic modality[5] and plain futurity (described as 'words like *may*, *can*, *will*, *probably*, etc.') be avoided in released texts. The rule is in general followed and produces a characteristic promotional discourse in which one-off procedures and future events are represented as repeated and factual. This is illustrated in Step 2b in Table 2: *The total cost of the development is (=*'The total price for this development will be...'). This example stands out because a "forbidden" *will* seems to be required and its absence creates some oddity, but in general the regulation is very effective in creating an impression of solidity and routine.

Such promotional discourse achieves one of the genre's aims, persuasion, but in other sections other aims are more prominent. Nevertheless, the ban on epistemic modality applies overall, even where the discourse has informative and pedagogic rather than promotional functions. It has an odd effect in sections like the ones here called 'Description', as in these oddly-formed conditionals referring to a specific hypothetical future situation in text DE:

(5) If MSDE is chosen to be the database platform, a feasibility study **is needed** during the design phase to evaluate the performance of the database with ten concurrent users. If the performance is unsatisfactory, a new database platform **is selected**.

In other sections still a very different discourse appears. Here the aim is regulative. To make it clear when alterations can be made, what co-operation is essential, etc., the genre adopts a different tone, which is prominent in the Client Responsibilities section. It would be possible to state these requirements in the unmodalised language of the promotional discourse. Step B of text EA in Table 3 could read *[The client]carries out extensive ...[The client] provides at least two users*. But in fact another discourse is used, in which deontic modality[6] is prominent and things are satisfactory rather than excellent:

(6) **It is essential that** [client name] carries out extensive user acceptance testing within **three** weeks of the beta delivery, as allowed for within the project plan. To this end, [client

[5] Epistemic modality refers to the function of words like *may*, *perhaps*, or *possible*, which limit the extent to which the speaker or writer guarantees the truth of the utterance.
[6] Deontic modality refers to the function of words like *must*, *have to*, *should*, *ought, required*, which impose obligations on the recipient.

name] **must** provide at least two users, and allocate sufficient time and resources to ensure that the testing is carried out to a **satisfactory** level.

While the ban on epistemic modality still applies in the Client Responsibilities section and related sections, the discourse reflects a different purpose and, in fact, a different power balance. Pilegaard (1997) notes how the tone of politeness alters along the chain of correspondence genres he examines as power shifts from customer to supplier, and a similar phenomenon can be seen here, in that the initial expression of interest is written entirely in the promotional discourse. The proportion of the two discourses in a genre depends on the degree of commitment of the client – there is no point in saying what someone "must" do before there is any commitment to do anything.

It would not be sensible to say that the software design proposal is a hybrid genre. It is not a hybrid of any two or more recognisable genres. Instead, it is a unitary genre whose various aims require it to use different discourses, and this is very common where a genre functions to initiate a high-stakes relationship which can only succeed if both sides act in good faith. Shaw (2006) shows that house-agents' particulars are interdiscursive in the same way. An advertisement for a product can be purely promotional but promotional material involving a long-term relation must include regulative elements.

4.5. Intergenericity

One possible type of intergenericity is illustrated by an informant's comment: "There might be a prequalification questionnaire, for example. The public sector is paranoid about previous relevant experience, commercial organisations are more adventurous, more interested in how you work." One might expect that the generic structure of a proposal would be determined by the demands of the document it is responding to. But in practice the form of uptake (Freadman, 2002) found is the giving of information required by previous texts in the chain, without allowing it to affect the generic integrity of the proposal being written. The writers embrace intertextuality (see below), so that the reader can find the answers to the questions posed easily, but avoid intergenericity, retaining the generic form of the company's own proposal rather than reshaping it to match the client's requirements. This recalls the knowledge-transforming function of the genre and the informant's description of 'what they want, but in our own words'.

However, text DE also contains the major example of intergenericity in the proposals examined. While most proposals are produced after submission of an expression of interest and discussion of requirements, this one works directly from the client's Invitation to Tender and the client has not received the material generally in the expression of interest. The writer has therefore chosen to include a long section which is derived from an Expression of Interest alongside other typically Proposal material, as illustrated in Table 4 (which also shows some intertextuality discussed below).

Text DE	Intertextual to Invitation to Tender	Parallel to Expression of Interest	Parallel to other proposals
A Management Summary			X
B Introduction	X		
X General Promotion		X	
G1 Software Development Methodology			X
C. Description			(X)
E1 Costings			X
C Description			(X)
E2 Timescales			X
C Description			(X)
F Standard Terms and Conditions			X
Y Policy Issues	X?		
G2 Software Development Methodology			X
C Description	X		
D Client Responsibilities			X

Table 4. Intertextual and intergeneric features of text DE

Section X 'General Promotion' is relatively long and in fact consists of a somewhat reordered version of an Expression of Interest, a purely promotional document giving detailed general background on the company. Thus it gives a brief history of the company, potted biographies of personnel, details of previous related or prestigious contracts, etc. Text DE is therefore intergeneric in that it combines moves and content from two genres, as well as, like all proposals, interdiscursive in that it combines promotional and regulative discourses.

4.6. Intertextuality

All texts have intertextual features. The writers of these proposals are very aware that different texts have shared features, and they see their task as maintaining uniformity without losing appropriacy and spontaneity. Informants cited remarks like 'I remember you wrote something about this. Who was the client, so I can find it?' They said 'you take a sentence from this and one from that', but on the other hand 'If things are too standard you lose appropriacy. There is a need to tailor, write blurbs to what the client wants'. In any case, they said, it is hard to mechanise or automatise the composition process. It is hard to retrieve phraseology other than from one's own memory.

Above we noted four types of intertextuality: quotation of another voice, explicit reference, plagiarism (not relevant here), and re-use of institutional text.

Quotation and explicit reference combine in the 'Introduction' of proposal DE (Table 4).

> (7) This document is our proposal for the DE System. The format of this document has been prepared in accordance with Section 2.3 of the Invitation to Tender provided by the [client]. Questions listed in Section 2.1 are answered within the proposal. The table below matches the question number to the appropriate section in this proposal where the answer is provided.

As noted above, the proposal does not adopt the generic structure of the invitation and therefore needs this explicit reference and the table mentioned to allow cross-reference from one document to the other. The software company needs to impose its own text structure on the client as part of its pedagogical programme. But it also needs to refer, of course.

Section Y Policy Issues from DE is also an intertextual reference, but it seems to be an illustration of the intertextuality inherent in negation – it reads in its entirety:

> (8) LymeLyme Software does not have any contractual alliance with any supplier of equipment and software.We do not envisage any potential conflicts with any third parties.

This is an intertextual response to an inquiry in the Invitation to Tender and only makes sense as an independent section in that context.

Explicit reference to previous documents in the chain is not uncommon as in this cross-reference in the document in Table 2:

> (9) The second section details a list of costed options that were determined in James Martins analysis document.

The most striking type of intertextuality, however, is the re-use of text segments 'belonging' to the company, what is sometimes called 'boilerplate' (Shaw & Pecorari, 2013). As the remark quoted above indicated, these may be the writer's own formulations or those borrowed from a general or standard stock. Very much of the prose in some sections of the proposals is re-used.

One might expect that regulative discourse, which has a quasi-legal function, would be uniform in order to ensure that no loopholes are accidentally created, but it is interesting that sections like Systems Design Methodology, with a promotional or persuasive function, are equally often based on re-used text. There is no correlation between discourse type and formulaicness, even though uniformity is functional in the regulative discourse and not necessarily so in other discourses.

5. CONTRAST WITH ACADEMIC WRITING

This case study makes it possible to set the writing practices in a small technically-oriented company in the context of general features of text production and structure. Many features of the texts examined are universal: their function in constituting the work process (Bazerman, 1994), their multiple purposes, and their enmeshment in a web of intertextuality. The texts produced in this workplace in response to a particular Invitation to Tender 'take up' (Freadman, 2002) other texts both syntagmatically and paradigmatically. While there seems to be some resistance to taking over structural patterns from external syntagmatically related texts, there is frequent re-use of text within genres at levels from the move to the section.

There are stronger elements of standardisation than in academic writing, but there is also what appears to be unmotivated variation in such features as ordering of moves. As in academic writing, there are patchily but in principle rigidly enforced requirements on word choice and style. While such regulation in academic writing is often based on a tacit consensus, here there is overt and slightly unsophisticated language regulation.

Alongside the intertextuality just mentioned, there is interdiscursivity in the sense that the documents contain contrasting discourses in sections realising different purposes. There is also intergenericity in the sense that at least one of the proposals uses material from another genre because this other genre has been skipped in the syntagmatic sequence.

The writing practices and products are sometimes very different from those normal in academic writing and in a number of cases directly opposed to them. For example, textual uniformity is a highly-valued characteristic and direct text borrowing the norm; new text is only written as a response to new requirements. In academic writing even 'self-plagiarism' (re-using one's own text) is frowned on and employing colleague's words is often represented as a crime.

Interestingly, however, this text re-use does not make notions of text ownership and plagiarism meaningless, it merely raises the level of ownership from the individual to the company. While no comparisons with other companies' texts were made here, another investigation (Shaw & Pecorari, 2013) showed great textual similarities among company reports from different years within the same company, but very much less among reports from different companies. No mention was made by any informant in this study of consultation of rival proposals (which are not easy to obtain in any case).

As for interdiscursivity, academic writing generally resists the highly promotional discourse developed here, and also the sharp differences in discoursal tone produced by the multiple purposes of the texts. The proposal aims to set up a deal involving a long-term relationship and must therefore both attract the reader and define obligations. While the first can be compared with the persuasive function of many academic texts, the second has no real parallel in our field. The third function, that of 'educating' the reader to think in appropriate ways must be handled very differently from the discourse of instruction in textbooks or lectures, as power relations and authority status are different.

6. PEDAGOGIC IMPLICATIONS

From the point of view of the ESP teacher, these observations raise a number of issues. University writing is often envisaged as preparation for research writing, but most students go on to workplaces. There they will find that text is a collective property of the company, not an individual possession, that if you want to say the same thing you might as well use the same words, that the accurate word may not be the appropriate one. Variation in the text of the responsibilities assigned to clients will be assumed to imply variation in the responsibilities, and is therefore to be avoided. For example, it may seem weird to use *cost* for 'price', but that is company discourse. These considerations are taken into account in pedagogic proposals such as those mentioned in the Introduction.

ESP classes cannot teach how to write a company-specific, and perhaps not even an industry-specific design proposal, but they can prepare students for writing proposals in a business environment. The evidence of this case suggests that workplace-oriented writing teaching needs to include tasks directed at awareness of intergenericity, interdiscursivity and intertextuality. Some of the suggestions below are normal good practice, others may be a little more innovative.

- Creation of simplified models of the proposal situation in the form of packs of sample texts (marked 'in-house' and 'external') and company information.
- Tasks requiring the recognition of multiple readerships and multiple purposes; the normal situation is for readership to include a technical, a managerial, and often a marketing audience.
- Tasks requiring the identification of the degree of demand of different types placed on the addressee and the textual or discursive consequences of these. In particular, this is a matter of balancing promotion and obligation.
- Work in structured teams with different members responsible for different sections and an overall editor.
- Adaptation of an existing document to a new client. Learners could be provided with a well-defined reader and a complete standard offer document (or, more practically perhaps, certain sections of such a document). The points at issues would be which sections must be adapted, and how, and which sections must be left as they are.
- Adaptation of an existing document to a new function. It was shown above how a 'missing link' in a genre chain had necessitated the recycling of text normally used in the Expression of Interest in software design proposal.

- Discussion of the impact of the writer's genre repertoire on newly created documents in new genres. If the class members are heterogeneous this could be done by means of class wikis (Kuteeva, 2011), otherwise the idea of disciplinary discourse will have to be introduced by the teacher.
- Use of an arbitrary 'company discourse' list. This would be intended to create awareness of the likelihood of such standardisation within an organisation and of its advantages and disadvantages.

7. CONCLUSION

Workplaces are worth studying because each has a characteristic assemblage of genres and particular composing practices. Despite being local and different in different workplaces, these practices have similarities across sites because the demands of situations are repetitive. In this article an account has been given of text analysis and interviews about the writing practices and products in a software company in England. A rather wide range of genres regulate, record, and represent the activities of the company and two parts of what practitioners call the Software Design Proposal: the Management Summary and Client Responsibilities were chosen for analysis.

The texts are of course linked intergenerically in a variety of ways. For example, they have features which can be related to the functionally similar academic research proposal, and they show uptake of the invitation to tender they respond to. They show interdiscursivity in the mixture of discourses that arise from their multiple aims. Most strikingly, there is a high degree of intertextuality on the verbal level, in the (not wholly consistent and principled) use of the same words for the same function in all texts. The intergenericity is familiar from academic writing, but the interdiscursivity and intertextuality are very different. ESP teaching has to ensure that it does not impose misleading requirements on students, and pedagogic applications have been suggested.

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PHILIP SHAW is a professor in the Department of English at Stockholm University. He is co-author (with Gunnel Melchers) of *World Englishes: An Introduction* (Hodder, 2011), and has recently published (with Diane Pecorari) on student reading in *TESOL Quarterly* and on source use in *Journal of Second Language Writing.* He is interested in uses of English, mainly in business and academic settings, from both a genre-analytic and reception-process standpoint and currently in reading in a second language in the parallel-language university.