

RESEÑA

NEW APPLICATIONS OF GENRE ANALYSIS TO TECHNICAL MANUALS: THE PERSPECTIVE OF BHATIAN AND LASSEN MODEL

(2012, A. FELICES LAGO AND D. FERNÁNDEZ LLORET)

PILAR RODRÍGUEZ ARANCÓN
UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE EDUCACIÓN A DISTANCIA

New Applications of Genre Analysis to Technical Manuals can be classified as a novel and thought-provoking study in the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and more particularly within English for Technical Purposes. In its pages, the authors, Felices Lago and Fernández Lloret, carry out a thorough analysis of specialised technical English written texts with the main focus on the genre analysis of technical manuals. Genre analysis moves beyond the text to look into the linguistic, rhetorical and contextual features that make it unique. The book intends to breach a gap in this theory by applying it to different specialized texts.

In a total of 156 pages divided in four sections, the authors firstly examine the relevant literature in Genre Analysis theories and give a historical perspective of language and communication in professional and specialised settings. Although the most salient approaches to genre are reviewed, the contributions of Swales, Bhatia and Lassen are presented as the basis of the study. This first section also includes the main characteristics of different genres with special attention paid to the specific type which will be the object of study: technical manuals.

In the second section, the objectives of the study are presented. First, as a search for the way in which moves and steps are developed in technical texts from different areas of specialisation, in order to establish whether Lassen's model can be applied to all different types of technical manuals. A model seeks the pattern of the text in order to integrate it into a category, it is never imposing. As a second objective, the similarities and differences found in the analysed texts might highlight the need for some adjustments in the genre model in order to adapt it to current and evolving technical texts.

In section three a theoretical framework of Genre Analysis and the state of the art of Genre Studies are presented, followed by the corpus formed by a selection of technical manuals compiled and organised according to Lassen's classification. Within the corpus analysis, only the three *Silestone* technical manuals are examined in detail and this is followed by the main analysis. However, a brief explanation of the remaining seventeen manuals from several other fields, such as the energy sector, or electric devices, is also presented as background information for the subsequent data shown. The final part of this section contains parallel and contrasting tables which show the results of the analysis and display a general overview of how moves and steps occur in

manuals as the communicative purpose develops. Bhatia's moves analysis is the starting point, although Lassen's analysis of technical manuals serves as a more precise model. Section four starts in the form of a Discussion and it puts forward a more thorough explanation of the results which have emerged according to the data obtained from both the genre analysis of *Silestone* technical manuals and the others. In the following part, a general interpretation of the results is discussed as Conclusion and an evaluation of the whole study is also presented. Although the main objective of this research is originally the exploration of how moves shape the communicative purposes of texts; the thorough analysis carried out highlights how steps and sub-steps seem to vary from manual to manual. Therefore, the authors conclude that Bathian's model and Lassen's application model should both be adapted in order to accommodate variation in structure following Bhatia's prediction that genres would be influenced by the changing demands of society.

This very interesting and thorough piece of research offers didactic hints and it is therefore clear that it can be useful for students, linguists and professionals working in the field, as it can help them to understand how different text types use resources in order to reinforce their communicative structures, how they are constructed and how they convey their communicative purposes. The way in which these messages are coded might affect, at least to some extent, the success of companies, the satisfaction of its clients, or even the difficulties encountered by their engineers at the time of installation or assembly of the products. It is important to bear in mind that ESP is a linguistic field in a permanent state of evolution in order to cope with the new demands of society and the new products and services made available to consumers. Consequently, it is necessary to create new linguistic models and methods of analysis such as those presented in this book that can reflect this evolution and help us to understand these specialised texts.