Understanding Genre in Use

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The past fifteen years have witnessed a dramatic re-conceptualization of genre and its role in the production and interpretation of discourse in which genre analysis has been transformed from a descriptive to an explanatory activity. Bhatia’s (1993) cognitive structuring model integrates sociology, psychology and linguistics with genre study. According to Bhatia, cognitive structuring is composed of moves, which are in turn realized through strategies. The present study, taking prepared public speeches (PPS) as data, conducts a genre analysis within Bhatia’s framework. This paper aims to investigate the cognitive structuring of English PPS, examine typical strategies which speakers choose to convey their communicative purpose and explore the factors that influence speakers’ choices, and uncover linguistic realizations of moves and strategies. This study reveals that: (1) a strategy does not solely belong to a definite move; it may appear in other moves as well; however, the function differs, (2) the choice of strategy is principally determined by a speaker’s communicative purpose and influenced by the subject of the speech, the audience, the place, and the occasion, (3) sequencing of moves displays a great flexibility, which to some degree reflects the dynamic nature of genre. The research findings are assumed to promote understanding of how writers/speakers select strategies to achieve their communicative purposes within the constraints imposed by the genre to which that discourse belongs.

Key words: genre, cognitive structuring, strategy, public speech

1. Introduction

Traditionally, genre research focused almost exclusively on literary texts. However, since the 1970s, genre has become a powerful tool for the analysis of both literary and non-literary discourse, attracting great attention from various disciplines in that it does not merely describe surface features of a discourse, but more importantly, reveals the rationale behind it. Sociological, psychological, and linguistic fields have all shown interest in genre study, though with differing focus. Bhatia (1993) proposes an analyzing model—cognitive structuring, which incorporates sociological, psychological, and linguistic assumptions in genre study—and thus shows strong explanatory power over discourse. This article takes prepared public speeches (PPS) as data and conducts analyses within Bhatia’s cognitive structuring.

PPS allow for a careful choice of language for “precision of meaning and beauty and economy of expression” (Capp 1971:175) for the manuscripts can be edited and polished until a speaker is satisfied. Therefore, through investigating linguistic realizations in PPS, we may learn how speakers try to achieve their private intentions.

* Great thanks are given to the staff of Concentric: Studies in Linguistics, who have helped make this article published. Without their constant support and careful revisions, the paper could not have been published.
within generic constraints, namely the cognitive structuring. The article investigates not only text types and classification systems, but also the linguistic, sociological, and psychological assumptions underlying and shaping these text types. I hope, in this way, to raise English language users’ awareness in how to manipulate language within generic confines to achieve their communicative purpose and at the same time to provide an example of how to analyze and appreciate a text from the perspective of genre.

2. Genre studies

At present, the sociological, psychological, and linguistic approaches to genre are the three dominant trends in studying genre. Sociology is “the study of how social life is enacted and organized, how social activity is defined and related to other social activity in time-space” (Barwarshi 2000:345). Fairclough (1995) believes that genres have social origins; that is, they are generated under given social circumstances, possessed by certain social groups, i.e. discourse communities, transmitted from generation to generation, and utilized in particular social contexts. Miller (1984:151) holds that genre is defined by “the action that it is used to accomplish”. Barwarshi (2000:345) goes a step further to argue that genres also play a key role “in reproducing the very situations to which they in turn respond”. The sociological approach to genre mainly focuses on how a particular genre defines, organizes, and finally communicates social reality. Systemic-functional (SF) linguists (Ventola 1983, Hasan 1984, Martin 1984, Martin & Rothery 1986, Eggins 1994, Painter 2001) stress the social nature of genre more than other schools. Martin (1984:25) describes genre as “a staged goal-oriented purposeful activity in which speakers engage as members of our culture”. Painter (2001) holds that genres are social processes that pertain to a particular culture and its social institutions.

The psychological or cognitive aspect of genre lies in emphasizing that people store and retrieve information of a particular genre in context to construct and understand the discourse of that genre. According to Swales (1990), knowledge through formal and content schemata contributes to production and interpretation of instances of particular genres. Paltridge (1997), basing his studies on Fillmore’s (1976) frame semantics, aims to reflect how people utilize stored genre knowledge to construct and perceive exemplars of particular genres. Miller (1984), in her influential article “Genre as Social Action”, builds her interpretation of genre (genres are typified rhetorical actions based on recurrent situations) on Schutz & Luckmann’s (1973) conception of typification, which states that people draw upon a stock of knowledge to relate new experiences to familiar ones through a shared likeness, and those
similarities become constituted as a type. However, not all genre researchers care about the cognitive respect of genre; SF linguists seem unconcerned with the role of cognition. Hasan (1978:240) in the article “Text in the Systemic-functional Model” claims that “Hopefully this example (an imaginary text, in fact) shows how the order of the elements in the structural formula may be affected by such ‘non-cognitive’ values.” As Paltridge (1997) points out, most SF linguists consider that meaning does not involve cognitive process of production, perception and interpretation, but is interaction between text and context. Additionally, Paltridge suggests that the description of linguistic features should focus on the lexical items which trigger and recall particular frames; in other words, linguistic description should focus on those expressions which function cognitively.

Language makes social reality and human mental behavior recognizable and enables one to experience them, but then language is shaped by social events and an acquired knowledge of genre. Hasan (1984), the most influential SF linguist engaged in genre study, proposes the generic structural potential (GSP) model to describe the total range of textual structures available within a genre. The GSP must specify obligatory elements of a genre, its optional elements, their ordering, and recursion. GSP is pinned down as actual generic structure through contextual configuration (CC). Other SF linguists (Ventola 1983, Martin 1984, Martin & Rothery 1986, Eggins 1994) discuss genre in terms of schematic structure and register configuration which roughly correspond to Hasan’s GSP and CC respectively. In addition, SF linguists are also concerned with investigating lexicogrammatical patterns of generic elements/stages: “…relating stages of schematic structure to their linguistic realizations as the central procedure in generic analysis” (Eggins 1994:34). Genre analysis in ESP resembles that of SF linguists in that there is an emphasis on generic structure and linguistic realizations, except for the fact that genre analysis in the ESP tradition, predominantly concentrating on academic and professional writing, specially focuses on descriptions in light of move-structure composed of steps (Swales 1986, 1990, 1996, Hopkins & Dudley-Evans 1988, Bhatia 1993).

3. Bhatia’s approach to genre analysis—cognitive structuring

Among genre researchers, Bhatia (1993) stands out due to the fusion of social, cognitive and linguistic factors in his interpretation of genre. He builds his definition of genre on that of Swales (1990), though at the same time extends Swales’ definition by bringing in cognitive elements:
Genre is a recognizable communicative event characterized by a set of communicative purpose(s) identified and mutually understood by the members of the professional or academic community in which it regularly occurs. Most often it is highly structured and conventionalized with constraints on allowable contributions in terms of their intent, positioning, form and functional value. These constraints, however, are often exploited by the expert members of the discourse community to achieve private intentions within the framework of socially recognized purpose(s). (Bhatia 1993:13)

The first part of Bhatia’s definition (Genre is a recognizable communicative event … in terms of their intent, positioning, form and functional value) reflects the commonly accepted perspective on genre, recognizing it as a communicative event, considering that a shared communicative purpose is the principal criteria of classifying a collection of texts into a genre and acknowledging that a genre possesses a historically evolved stable textual structure. The novelty of Bhatia’s interpretation of genre lies in the introduction of a cognitive orientation. This means that genre users may manipulate the conventions of a genre to achieve their intentions, though they cannot break away from the constraints imposed by that genre. Bhatia is fairly original in emphasizing the individual person’s specific purpose (Li 1998).

According to Bhatia, communicative purpose is realized through cognitive structuring which is composed of moves, their sequencing, and the strategies which realize them. A move is assigned a label only when it fulfills a function; collaborative efforts of the moves help to achieve the purpose of the whole discourse. Under each move, there are a number of strategies for writers/speakers to select from to realize the purpose of the move. Just as each genre has a communicative purpose that it tends to serve, each move also serves a communicative goal, although this is subordinate to the overall communicative purpose of the genre. In order to achieve a particular communicative purpose of each move, the author may employ certain strategies. The author decides which strategy to adopt in accordance with factors such as the nature of topic, the features of the occasion, and the implied and actual readers.

Cognitive structuring shows typical regularities of how a particular genre is organized. Anyone who aims to communicate successfully and effectively has to conform to generic constraints. Berkenkotter & Huckin (1995) hold that genres are intellectual scaffolds in which community-based knowledge is constructed. These organizational regularities are cognitive in that they reflect accumulated and conventionalized knowledge available to a particular discourse community. Such knowledge is an acquired response to the discourse conventions which arise from preferred ways of creating and communicating information within particular
communities. Since genres are cultural sediments, when people are settled in a particular culture, they abide by generic conventions in social interaction to avoid communication breakdowns. In short, people internalize socially constructed, transmitted and utilized knowledge, which help ensure continuity and comprehensibility in the transfer of information within and across discourse communities (Ramanathan & Kaplan 2000).

However, it should be noted that constraints do not imply eradication of choice. In fact, within conventional frameworks writers/speakers are still allowed considerable freedom to choose specific ways to fulfill communicative goals. Bhatia believes that such factors as the nature of readership, choice of medium, and constraints required by an organization may influence the layout and appearance of discourse. He asserts that constraints of genres are often exploited by expert members of a discourse community to achieve private intentions. The strategies that expert members select could make their writing more effective. Furthermore, that realization of genre through language is mostly probabilistic also allows individuals considerable freedom in determining how genres are to be realized. However, Bhatia does not seem to elaborate upon the functions of the factors contributing to the varieties of genre-texts in his actual sample analyses of professional writing as much as he does when discussing generic regularities (cognitive structuring). This partly gives rise to the criticism that Bhatia stresses conventionality over variety, and it is probably due to such understatement of generic variation that Bhatia’s model is at times criticized for its tendency towards prescription and its failure to explain the rationale behind each particular text. Taking the genre of prepared public speeches (PPS) as data, this paper hopes to justify the variation as well as regularity found in this particular genre within Bhatia’s analyzing model.

4. Data

Today’s communication density leads to the wide use and frequent practice of public speaking. Prepared public speeches (PPS) are a kind of social activity where a speaker, with the help of a manuscript, sets forth and elaborates upon his/her opinions or beliefs before an audience. PPS can provide “a sense of control, of pre-thought ideas as suited as possible to a particular need, and can be refined, honed, and often cut to this end” (Crampton 1980:75). As a polished genre, PPS is worthy of study and investigation.

For this paper, 28 PPS from the last ten years were collected. These PPS were delivered by experts in the fields of economics, politics, law, and education; seven on each topic were collected from each of the above fields. Besides, the length of the
speech was also taken into consideration. Both short and long PPS are covered in order to show the diversity of data, but the shortest is no less than 1105 words and the longest no more than 3900 words. Furthermore, speeches on different subjects given by different speakers were picked so as to ensure the validity of the research.

5. Data analysis

5.1 General discussion

Analysis of the selected data suggests that the cognitive structuring of PPS can be assigned as:

Move 1 Establishing a favorable rapport
Move 2 Orienting to the speech
Move 3 Announcing the thesis
Move 4 Developing the thesis
Move 5 Drawing a conclusion

In order to demonstrate how moves of cognitive structuring are identified and realized in practice, a typical text containing all the above moves has been selected as a sample for the convenience of analysis, but due to the space limit, this speech cannot be presented in full (this sample speech will be referred to several times in the following section for different analytical purposes). The speech, “Global Trade in New Millennium”, was delivered by James Kelly, CEO of United Parcel Service (UPS) at the 1998 gathering of European Union Committee members of the American Chamber of Commerce.

Good morning! What a pleasure to be among our friends and allies …. I can’t imagine a more exciting time to be promoting the interests of business and free trade in Europe than right now. … … …

I commend your work in the EU Committee to ensure that good, common business sense plays a lead role in this revolution of ideas. …

But still there is so much work to be done, … While the Europe Union has helped tear down a lot of walls … I have to note that there are still some walls remaining,…
And that’s what I’d like to talk about in the next few minutes: tearing down a few of the remaining trade walls between Europe and the rest of the world, and bringing us all together under the same common roof. …

… …

…I’d like to use Sir Leon’s bold proposal as a platform from which to launch three specific reforms in the area of …

But before I talk about these three areas, it might be helpful to explain why Europe is so important to UPS, and how we came to be here.

… …

No doubt it: We’ve made great progress in Europe…. But we’ve also run smack headlong into some formidable international trade barriers, man-made walls, really. One of the most imposing walls is the restrictive regulation of air transport.

… …

… Another link in the chain to achieving free trade is customs modernization. …

… …

In addition to air transport liberalization and customs streamlining, the third area of reform I’d like to talk about today is international competition policy.

… …

If time permitted there are several other key issues we could talk about today, …

… …

But my concerns are much broader than any single point of policy. I’ve come here today specifically to ask you a favor. …

I’d like to close with a quote from …

There’s only one way to make sure money continues to be treated well in Europe: Help tear down the few remaining trade walls …

Thank you very much for your time and attention this morning.

The above structural interpretation clearly shows that moves do not necessarily coincide with paragraphs; there may be two or more moves in one paragraph. For example, we get portions of two moves in the first paragraph. On the other hand, Move 3, announcing the thesis, takes seven paragraphs. Occasionally two moves overlap; establishing a favorable rapport partly overlaps with orienting to the speech. This is because, in GSP, the strategy which realizes the move is very likely to be multi-functional. The division between moves is sometimes not clear-cut. Therefore it seems natural to find two moves intertwined.

As noted earlier, the selected sample speech is an instance of prototype in that the number and sequencing of its moves correspond exactly to what is presented in the cognitive structuring of the PPS genre. However, in reality it is not obligatory for a
speaker to use all of the moves in a speech and arrange them in the same order. Just as there is a degree of flexibility in the number of moves used, some moves being more essential than others, there is a certain degree of freedom in this sequencing. In conclusion, variation as well as regularity is an inherent generic feature. The following table shows distribution of the moves among the collected PPS data.

Table 1. General distribution of moves in the data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Move No.</th>
<th>Move</th>
<th>Occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Move 1</td>
<td>Establishing a favorable rapport</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move 2</td>
<td>Orienting to the speech</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>67.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move 3</td>
<td>Announcing the thesis</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move 4</td>
<td>Developing the thesis</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move 5</td>
<td>Drawing a conclusion</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>96.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the table is quite simple, we still can get a glimpse of the cognitive structuring of PPS, its distribution, and variation. Of the five moves, announcing the thesis and developing the thesis occur in all the selected 28 PPS, and thus seem to be obligatory, whereas the other three are optional.

Move 1, establishing a favorable rapport, is optional but appears to occur in most PPS, especially in speeches which aim to bring about change in an audience’s knowledge or belief, and certainly so when the speaker is likely to confront a number of inhospitable audience members. So far as the positioning is concerned, it is generally assigned to the opening position, followed by orienting to the speech. Under most circumstances, Move 1 and Move 2 are put in that order, but not always. For example in (1):

(1) We are at a critical juncture in the creation of the next great technological revolution. Actions we take today to ensure that software—the written and spoken language of the digital age—remains as innovative tomorrow as it has been in the past will have a profound effect on our lives and our economy in the 21st century.

Here the speaker is giving a speech in favor of the U.S. government’s decision to challenge Microsoft’s business practices. In this speech, the speaker doesn’t spend any time on establishing a favorable rapport with the audience. Instead, he starts directly by orienting the audience to his speech, thus creating a sense of emergency—just as the speaker himself says: “We are at a critical juncture...”. However, another factor may have led to the absence of Move 1—the length should not be neglected. This speech is the most concise one in the data.
Move 2, **orienting to the speech**, occurs in 19 of the 28 PPS, thus is not obligatory. This move usually occurs after the friendliness-establishing move. But the border with **establishing a favorable rapport** is fuzzy. As shown in the sample speech (Section 5.1), these two moves overlap. As stated previously, this probably results from the fact that one of the strategies which realizes these two moves takes the same syntactic form but functions differently.

**Move 3, announcing the thesis**, is an obligatory element. Thesis announcement is needed when a speaker intends to inform an audience of what s/he is going to talk about. It may not necessarily be stated clearly, though this is frequently the case. Sometimes the thesis is implied, but the speaker always tries to make sure that it can be understood. The most prominent position of Move 3 is immediately after the speech-orienting move. However, it can skip the speech-orienting move and appear directly after the friendliness-establishing move, particularly in speeches delivered at official and formal conferences or forums, as in the following speech taken from the annual Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC):

(2) Thank you, Bill Pascoe, for that warm introduction. And, David, thank you for all that you and the American Conservative Union have done for movement politics. Let me begin by welcoming you Washington, I want to welcome you not just in terms of hospitality, but also in terms of what you represent, and the values that you bring: the values of industry and commerce, integrity and faith, love of family and of country. And perhaps most of all, a recognition that America’s best days lie ahead.

All too often, the Congress thinks there is no end to the good they can do with your money and their brains. It is time for us to put an end to this misguided belief. The Founding Father’s vision was for a constitutional republic where the will of the people would be imposed on Washington, not the views of Washington imposed on the people.

Every so often, a speaker may skip rapport-establishing and speech-orienting altogether and move to the opening move:

(3) Criminal codes have changed radically since I started out as a lawyer 35 years ago. Many criminal laws that once defined what society will not tolerate and anchored social order, have been rescinded, reversed, revised or go unenforced. Hundreds of millions of individual acts no longer considered “criminal,” along with excused criminal conduct, and transgressions that simply are unenforced vastly understate statistical measures of unlawful conduct when compared to
earlier years. Now, hundreds of millions of what formerly were criminal violations do not show up in crime statistics. Contributing to criminal behavior is the slow and steady withering of institutional support systems that previously provided a bastion of restraint and deterrence of a social behavior.

Move 4, *developing the thesis*, appears in all the selected PPS. The thesis-development is essential: it constitutes the heart of a speech. It is composed of cells of information, although the organizational patterns and techniques of development depend on the speaker’s purpose, composition of the audience, and the nature of the topic.

Move 5, *drawing a conclusion*, is extensively used in PPS but is not obligatory. In our selected PPS, all are finished with a conclusion except one. That speech just comes to a stop after the speaker finishes the development of the thesis. This unique phenomenon probably results from the nature of that speech itself, a report, and the speaker has mentioned that there are four aspects in the report. Thus, after the last point has been elaborated, the audience is expected to realize that it is time for the speaker to bring the speech to the end.

5.2 In-depth discussion

5.2.1 Establishing a favorable rapport

It is generally believed that the first impression matters significantly during social interaction. Though such a conclusion may seem to be exaggerating the power of first impressions and underplay the role of subsequent contact in forming or modifying people’s opinions and state of knowledge, the beginning of a prepared public speech does matter a great deal to the success of the whole speech.

Phatic language, which is devoid of content, is a safe and an effective way to establish a favorable rapport and a friendly atmosphere in speechmaking. The oft-employed phatic strategies in the data are listed as follows:
It is a privilege…
indeed a(n) (high/special) honor…
a (sincere/special) pleasure …

I am happy…
delighted…
(particularly) honored…
very/especially pleased…

Let me welcome…
extend a warm welcome…
I’d like to thank…
welcome…

Good afternoon! Ladies and gentlemen.
evening! Everyone.
morning! What a pleasure…

Thanks to…
Thank you (very much) for…
… I feel profoundly the enormity of the honor that you are bestowing upon me.

Table 2. Phatic expressions

Due to the convenience and readiness of phatic expressions, most speakers use them to create a friendly atmosphere. It is therefore not surprising to find the piling of the phatic phrases in a speech such as:

(4) Thank you for the invitation to be here this evening. It is always a pleasure to be in New York and it is a privilege for me to contribute to the policy discussions sponsored by the National Committee on American Foreign Policy. I am particularly honored to have such a distinguished audience for my address tonight.

Phatic expressions are not the only means to establish a favorable rapport. The speaker can become acquainted with the audience via giving information, particularly perceived or known information.

Dr. Curris, president of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), delivered his speech on the campus of Marshall University. He relates the speech to the audience and location by recounting the history of Marshall University. In this way, he shows his familiarity with the university and succeeds in making a favorable impression.

(5) In the midst of the Civil War, Congress enacted and President Lincoln signed the Morrill Act, legislation that was truly revolutionary in extending higher education to the common people…. Public universities in Georgia and North Carolina had
been established at the end of the 19th century, and closer to home the Virginia General Assembly had chartered the Marshall Academy in the 1830s. …
It was during this time that the newly created West Virginia legislature resuscitated the Marshall Academy, transforming it into the Marshall Normal School.

5.2.2 Orienting to the speech

In a typical speech, the speaker, after establishing a favorable relationship with the audience, relates what he is talking about to the focus of the speech and leads the audience into the body of the speech. Generally speaking, the speaker is likely to orient the audience to the speech through one or a combination of the following two strategies:

a. Making a compliment
b. Empathizing with the audience

Complimenting, occurring in 15 of the selected PPS, serves as a significant strategy in leading the audience into the specific subject that the speech is going to deal with. The power of complimenting lies partly in the fact that it takes into consideration people’s needs—the need for esteem in Maslow’s (1954) term. The need for esteem, located in the second highest position in the priority pyramid, indicates that human beings covet recognition and respect and seek status. Undoubtedly, when an audience is delighted, they will be more willing to pay attention to the speaker. In addition to complimenting the audience, the speaker may also choose to commend the occasion, the topic, or the location where the speech is delivered. For example:

(6) I can’t imagine a more exciting time to be promoting the interests of business and free trade in Europe than right now. In recent years, we’ve witnessed Europe breaking free of the economic straightjackets of high tariffs, regulations and other man-made, counter-productive trade barriers.
Today’s Europe is becoming the most vibrant free trade zone the world has ever known. …
I commend your work in the EU Committee to ensure that good, …

In the cited speech, the speaker first compliments the occasion of the gathering and the great achievement made by Europe, saying “I can’t imagine a more exciting
In addition to complimenting, speakers may choose to empathize with the audience: 9 PPS use this strategy to realize **orienting to the speech**. Empathizing with the audience is one way to “interact with heterophilous yet homophilous audience” (Whitman & Boase 1983:85), which means that audiences resemble one another in certain ways, but differ in others. In the following excerpt, the speaker empathizes with the audience and achieves optimal heterophily via seeking psychological identity with the listeners and thus paves the way for his subsequent talk.

(7) I understand there are people in England besides you who celebrate Thanksgiving. They do it in their own way, and a little earlier—September 6th, the day the Pilgrims finally left England. The Pilgrims and England were not on the best of terms when the Mayflower set sail. Fortunately, our nations moved past that point and today we are strong partners. …

… Simply put, the Pilgrims’ voyage was about freedom. And freedom is the foremost principle that binds together America and Great Britain. Freedom makes us strong.

The speaker makes use of the similarity he shares with the audience as the lead-in. He employs the fact that the founders of America, the Pilgrim fathers, came from England and that their journey to America was to seek freedom to introduce the message of his speech “Freedom is a Foreign Policy”. In this way, the speaker identifies himself with the audience and leads the audience naturally into the topic of the speech.

15 PPS realize **orienting to the speech** through paying a compliment, 9 through empathizing with the audiences, and 5 blend the complimenting and empathizing strategies. In the sample speech cited in Section 5.1, after making a series of compliments (“In recent years, we’ve witnessed Europe breaking free of the economic straightjackets of high tariffs…”, “Today’s Europe is becoming the most vibrant free trade zone the world has ever known”, and “I commend your work in the EU Committee…” and developing empathy with the audience by admitting the hardship of work (“Although I know it hasn’t been easy, getting 15 proud, sovereign nations to forgo immediate national interests for long-term gain never is. That’s particularly impressive when you consider that, just nine short years ago, a long dividing wall split
Europe in half.”), the speaker orients the audience to the speech subject via a topic shift “But still there is much work to be done...” to point out the existing problem and declares his stance “So too must all of us be relentless in our efforts to tear down unnecessary barriers to progress” by quoting Winston Churchill’s celebrated dictum “Progress must be relentless”. By means of paying compliments and showing empathy, the speaker makes it easier for the audience to accept the problem and mentally prepares them for the topic.

The foregoing analysis shows that the speaker utilizes the concept of proximity, which means the use of nearness in time or space, by closely associating the topic with the audience. According to Whitman & Boase (1983), proximity is one factor of attention in that it helps create and reinforce a link with an audience, to grasp and hold their attention.

5.2.3 Announcing the thesis

The volatility of spoken words and complexity of subjects may create difficulty for an audience’s understanding and memorization of PPS. Most speakers state the thesis of their speech openly to give the audience a clear idea of what it is about. The thesis statement of a speech is “an expression, direct or implied, of the basic idea to be developed by the speaker” (Strother & Huckleberry 1968:61). Since the thesis statement is designed to aid the audience’s immediate understanding, it is normally a single sentence which is relatively short, easily understood and precisely worded. Typical formulaic expressions used in thesis statements as revealed in the data are listed in Table 3.

Again, let’s take an excerpt from the sample speech as an example. What is shown below is part of Move 2 orienting to the speech and part of Move 3 announcing the thesis.

(8) But still there is so much work to be done, not just here in Europe but around the world. I believe it was the great Winston Churchill who said, “Progress must be relentless.” So too must all of us be relentless in our efforts to tear down unnecessary barriers to progress....

And that’s what I’d like to talk about in the next few minutes: tearing down a few of the remaining trade walls between Europe and the rest of the world, and bringing us all together under the same common roof. As chairman of UPS, I’m not going to pretend that the proposals I’m about to make are not a little self-serving. After all, that’s my job, scouting out new business opportunities and figuring out how to overcome impediments to business growth.
The speaker has in fact touched upon the thesis of the speech in Move 2 (“So too must all of us be relentless in our efforts to tear down unnecessary barriers to progress”) before formally announcing it; nevertheless, he still makes a restatement of the thesis in a formulaic form in Move 3 (“And that’s what I’d like to talk about in the next few minutes…”).

Table 3. Thesis statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I would like to share with you …</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That’s what I’d like to talk in the next few minutes…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir Peter and I want to give you …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That’s the single point I want to make here today …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m here to speak on …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am honored to be here to share my thoughts with you on …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What I’d like to offer is…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>These are… that is being inaugurated this evening.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will focus on…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I shall do my best tonight to convey my opinion on …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The perspective I bring to this occasion is…. There are several which I present for your reflection.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, there is the possibility that a thesis will not be stated, but implied or suggested. When speakers are to refute and correct one viewpoint and to propose and confirm their own stance, they tend to juxtapose two opposing perspectives while trying to make their point of view conspicuous. The following excerpt is a good illustration of how a speaker presents two opposing phenomena: good-performance and booming of higher education on the one hand, and heated and unfair criticism of higher education on the other. The speaker gives prominence to his point of view by negating the critics’ assertions.

(9) For higher education the recent years have been good years. Our campuses are academically stronger, enrollments are thriving …
Yet public education is encountering innumerable problems and receiving heated—and at times, unfair—criticism. That criticism is now extending to the academy, as teacher education programs are bashed and campuses are blamed for the quality of K-12 instruction. …
I do not believe that our colleges and universities are responsible for underperforming schools… Contrary to our critics’ assertions, the quality of teacher education programs today is higher than anytime in my professional career. What are we doing right? Plenty.
When dealing with a rather obscure and complicated issue, a speaker may opt for citing a familiar example and presenting the thesis in the form of something like a conclusion or summary. For example:

(10) Every day, hundreds of thousands of Americans engage in the most massive expression of civil disobedience this country has ever seen. They face arrest, fines, and even imprisonment as result of their action. You won’t find these people on picket lines or being hauled away in paddy wagons after raucous demonstrations. Instead, you will find that through countless activities and with tireless energy, they all seek the same goal—to earn an honest living for themselves and their families. Tragically, they do so under the laws and regulations of cities and states across the nation that make them outlaws. That those hard working men and women should be treated as pariahs under the laws of this land is the legacy of The Slaughterhouse Cases and its total evisceration of constitutional protection for economic liberty.

By introducing a frequently occurring social phenomenon—demonstrations, the speaker concludes that it is the legacy of The Slaughterhouse Case where slaughtering acts happen with the protection of economic liberty.

5.2.4 Developing the thesis

The development of the thesis statement is the most essential move of a speech; it supports and elaborates upon the thesis statement by presenting reasons, examples, and other supporting material. As this move is the longest and most informative, it is usually divided into a number of sections. These can further be divided into sub-sections if necessary, with each section or sub-section normally introduced by a topic sentence or a heading. The move employs connectives to shift from one section to another and connect them.

I will here borrow Whitman and Boase’s (1983) term “cells of information” to refer to the sections mentioned above. A cell of information, according to them, consists of a controlling statement and the supporting materials that explain and develop it. The size of a cell of information may vary, the shortest being a paragraph and the longest probably being a whole speech. When several cells of information are linked to one controlling statement, they are not regarded as parallel to the leading statement; instead, they are supporting materials used to develop the predominant controlling statement. And at the same time, the size of each cell should be taken into consideration. Each cell is kept at roughly the same size. Usually, a cell of information
Not only do we deliver packages in Europe, but we’re one of the new breed of full-service delivery carriers known as integrators. …

No doubt it: We’ve made great progress in Europe, and Europe is very important to us. But we’ve also run smack headlong into some formidable international trade barriers, man-made walls, really. One of the most imposing walls is …. Reforms springing from GATT and the World Trade Organization have opened up areas such as financial services and telecommunications…. …

Traditional bi-lateral agreements are outdated and ill suited to the new lines of business offered by the air transport industry. For example, …

I’m pragmatic enough to understand that comprehensive liberalization of air transportation might take a long time to complete. In the meantime, I’d like to propose a stopgap initiative. I’d like to propose a separate air agreement covering air cargo services. The U.S. government has considered the separate liberalization of air cargo services …

UPS calls on all interested parties to… An effective first step would be to…

We believe the Trans-Atlantic Business Dialogue could play an active role on this issue. Another link in the chain to achieving free trade is customs modernization. …

Here in Europe, customs modernization is absolutely essential to creating a true, continent-wide transportation system.

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the multi-lateral trading system, the biggest non-tariff barriers remaining are …

This is even more pressing considering the revolution of electronic commerce. …

…..

It’s imperative that national administrations …. We’ve certainly seen this in the past.

UPS is committed to expediting this process. We have to be: Our Business relies on a seamless flow of trade.

For instance, …. Quite frankly, we feel we’re doing our part. Customs modernization, however, must also
become a priority for the World Trade Organization. …

We believe that in this area as well, progress can be made through the Trans-Atlantic Business Dialogue as a catalyst to worldwide reform.

In addition to air transport liberalization and customs streamlining, the third area of reform I’d like to talk about today is international competition policy.

Here’s the problem. …

Furthermore, governments which used to support domestic monopolies have been curtailed by international rules. … Fortunately, in the European Union and the United States we have effective mechanisms in place to restrict anti-competitive behavior. …

Let me give you a case in point: Back in July of 1994, …

Our complaint was based on two articles from the EC Treaty: Article 86,…

In other parts of the world, however, similar complaints too often aren’t heard at all.

That’s largely because …. 

This is why it is necessary to consider negotiating a set of international principles and rules addressing anti-competitive behavior in a multilateral forum.

It’s should not come as a surprise to anyone in this room that UPS is very concerned about competition policy in the postal market…. 

At UPS, we welcome and encourage competition, provided it is fair to all players. …

……

In addition to postal issues, governments not just here in Europe but around the world need to …. 

A first step could be for governments to …. 

A commitment to enact such domestic legislation would itself be a major step forward. …

Existing WTO dispute settlement mechanisms could be applied on an intergovernmental level. …. 

The thesis statement in this speech is developed via two cells of information, of which the second cell is composed of three parallel sub-cells. What should be noted is that the speaker, after announcing the thesis, doesn’t develop it directly; he enters a wedge (Cell 1) between the thesis statement and its development. This is probably determined by the speech objective, which calls on European trade partners to tear down the remaining trade walls existing between Europe and the rest of the world, especially those between Europe and UPS, where the speaker works as a CEO. It may be safe to say that the speaker is striving for the good of his own company. Thus it can be understood why the speaker inserts the wedge, which talks of how Europe and UPS come together. In this cell of information, the speaker is trying to advertise UPS to some extent via statistics showing the power of his company: “UPS is a 91-year-old company that delivers about 12 million packages a day in more than 200 countries
and territories. About ten percent of our 332,000 employees and about 15 percent of our revenue...”. Basically, the speaker organizes the cell in chronological order: “Until 1976 … After more than 20 years … In recent years … Today …”. Finally, the speaker ends the cell by restating its controlling statement (“Not only do we deliver packages in Europe, but we’re one of the new breed of full-service delivery carriers known as integrators….”), thus presenting a miniature speech and giving a sense of completeness.

Cell One, the cell of the wedge, gets linked to Cell Two through the adversative sentence “But we’ve also run smack headlong into some formidable international trade barriers, man-made walls, really”, which at the same time serves as the controlling statement of Cell Two. The supporting materials of Cell Two are constituted of three sub-cells, each of which possesses its own controlling statement and supporting materials.

Overall, the speaker develops each sub-cell on a problem-solution pattern to achieve his goal: to propose reforms to obliterate the trade barriers. The problem-solution sequence, sometimes called the disease-remedy plan, is a logical form of organization which begins with a description of a problem, the situation to be dealt with and its importance, followed by the presentation of a solution or solutions. In the sub-cells, the controlling statements specify the existing problems, namely three trade obstacles, and the supporting materials elaborate the controlling statements: pointing out the importance, the nature and the causes of the problems through examples marked by “for example”, “for instance”, “let me give you a case in point” and comparison and contrast, e.g. “In other parts of the world, however…”. Finally, the speaker proposes solutions, states their potential benefits, and warns of the consequences if the solutions are not taken. The three sub-cells are of equal status, and all bear the same relation to the super-ordinate controlling statement “But we’ve also run smack headlong into some formidable international trade barriers, man-made walls, really” which they conjointly cover and expand. Thus Cell Two arranges the supporting materials according to different topics, in which information gets organized on the basis of a system of classification arising from the subject matter itself. As for the development of the sub-topics, an order of importance is involved. The three sub-cells of Cell Two are arrayed in anti-climatic order, in which information is structured in terms of descending importance: the speaker first deals with the most imposing trade wall, then the biggest non-tariff barrier, and ultimately the third barrier, the fundamental one.

The organizational patterns and developmental techniques of developing the thesis in the sample speech can be summarized as shown in Table 4.
### Table 4. Developing the thesis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cell No.</th>
<th>Organizational Pattern</th>
<th>Techniques of Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cell 1</td>
<td>Chronological Pattern</td>
<td>Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-cell 1</td>
<td>Problem-solution</td>
<td>Topical Pattern (anti-climatic order)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-cell 2</td>
<td>Problem-solution</td>
<td>Examples, Comparison and Contrast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-cell 3</td>
<td>Problem-solution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, it should be noted that choices regarding organizational patterns and developmental techniques must be made based on what is mostly likely to aid the speaker in achieving his purpose and catering to the audience. It is not necessary to adhere to a single pattern throughout the whole speech. A combination of different organizational patterns might well be conducive to clarity and forcefulness, and variety may enhance an audience’s interest and concentration.

#### 5.2.5 Drawing a conclusion

Ending a speech is as important as beginning one in that the closing remarks are the last opportunity for a speaker to have the speech understood and responded to. The conclusion completes the speech as a unity and may help strengthen the audience’s memory of its theme, and inspire them to think or act as the speaker wishes. Ma (1998:98) says “an exquisite conclusion always leaves the audience with a lingering, pleasant impression”. In short, whatever the purpose of a speech is, its conclusion should always be forceful and provide a climatic last impression. A speech which has been impressive is very likely to be nullified by a weak ending. The expressions that are used to signal the end of a speech in the selected data are presented as follows:

### Table 5. Drawing a conclusion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>So in conclusion …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’d like to close with…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My concluding remarks are …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You may be tired of hearing me talk about … so I’ll stop soon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… lead me to the main point that I want to leave with you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will conclude this talk by …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In this speech, I have touched on …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finally, I want to say…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In closing, I’d like to turn again to …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lastly, my thoughts today return as they…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A conclusion has at least three functions: firstly, it informs the audience that the speech is approaching an end and gives a sense of unified whole. Secondly, it summarizes the content of a speech, either by reiterating the theme or reviewing the main points. Thirdly, it stresses again the specific response the speaker intends to seek from the audience, particularly when a speaker desires the audience’s support.

The concluding section cited below is that of the sample speech which has been referred to several times in this paper.

(11) I’d like to close with a quote from a former CEO of one of the world’s largest multinational banks. He really put the issues of free trade in perspective. “Money goes where it is wanted,” he said, “and stays where it is well-treated. This annoys governments to no end.”

Money comes to Europe, and it stays here, thanks to the fact you’re cooperated to build an economic structure for the continent of Europe. There’s only one way to make sure money continues to be treated well in Europe: Help tear down the few remaining trade walls between Europe and the rest of the world and extend your remarkable model of free trade around the world. Then just watch the global community come together to create an unprecedented economic force.

Thank you very much for your time and attention this morning.

The speaker first uses the formulaic expression “I’d like to close…” to signal the end of his speech, then pushes the speech to a climax by using the quotation “Money goes where it is wanted…”, which reflects the essence of his speech and helps hold the attention and interest of the audience, who come from the business field and can be assumed to be concerned with making profits. After that, the speaker makes use of a compliment in the form of thanks-giving “thanks to the fact you’re cooperated to build an economic structure for the continent of Europe” to connect to restating of the central idea “Help tear down the few remaining trade walls between Europe and the rest of the world and extend your remarkable model of free trade around the world”. Meanwhile, the speaker voices the action he expects from the audience when restating his speech theme—tear down the few remaining trade walls. Such a motivating conclusion fits the speaker’s purpose, which is to convince the audience of the existence of trade walls and to call on them to tear them down. Finally, James Kelly, the speaker, expresses his gratitude to the audience, thus completing his speech gracefully. From the above, we can see that the speaker ends his speech by using a combination of the following strategies: quotation, summary, statement of action, and thanks-expressing.
Though a motivating conclusion can be forceful and impressive, it does not necessarily suit every speech. In an informative speech, a speaker is not likely to need a conclusion designed to inspire or motivate the audience and probably uses more often a summarizing conclusion, restating the main points or giving the speech in miniature to reinforce what has been said. Just as Aristotle (1954) suggests, the major purpose of the conclusion is to help retain the memory.

6. Conclusion

Genre, traditionally a literary product, has become a popular framework for analyzing both literary and non-literary discourse. Prepared public speeches (PPS) have been taken in this paper as data to investigate genre in use. The constraints of PPS as a genre is explored through the cognitive structuring and the socially recognized communicative purpose it aims to achieve. In terms of variation, the individual speechmakers’ choices of strategies, linguistic expressions, and the flexibility of move-structure in specific speeches have been investigated.

The cognitive structuring of PPS involves rapport-establishing, speech-orienting, thesis-announcing, thesis-developing, and concluding, of which thesis-announcing and thesis-developing are obligatory and the rest are optional. Strategies employed in each move also show great diversity. The rapport-establishing move is largely accomplished through formulaic phatic expressions including greetings, addressing, and gratitude/pleasure-expressing. The thesis-announcing move is probably thought to be fulfilled in just one sentence; however, this is not always the case. In order to make sure that the audience understands the focus of the speech clearly, a speaker usually provides a series of explanations until the proposed thesis has been pinned down. Among the five moves, thesis-developing is the most crucial. It consists of cell(s) of information, the number of which depends on the speech objective, the complexity of the subject, and configuration of the audience. Normally, a cell of information progresses in a particular organizational pattern and develops according to certain techniques of a development. Finally comes the concluding move, the final chance for a speaker to impress the audience.

Through this research, it is hoped that awareness will be raised of significance of choosing appropriate strategies to realize one’s communicative purpose, taking into consideration the potential audiences’ goals, the degree of complexity of the writing/speaking, and other factors of this kind. Besides, it is hoped that the study can function as a sample to understand discourse from the perspective of genre.
However, due to space limit, some of the exemplar speeches can only be presented elliptically. Although priority has been given to meaning, full understanding of the speech is unavoidably hindered.

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[Received January 30, 2012; revised May 15, 2012; accepted August 15, 2012]

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理解語類的使用

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在過去的十五年裏，人們對語類進行了重新界定，語類對語篇生成及語篇理解的作用從描述性轉變為解釋性。其中 Bhatia (1993) 提出的認知模式語類分析框架將社會學、心理學、語言學與語類研究融為一體。Bhatia 認為，語類認知模式由語步組成，每個語步又通過特定的策略來實現。本文以英文專題演講為語料，運用 Bhatia 的分析框架對其展開分析，旨在調查英文演講語類的認知模式，揭示演講者為實現其演講目的所選擇的策略並試析影響演講者進行策略選擇的因素，以及分析各語步和策略的語言實現形式。研究表明：(1) 某一（些）策略並非專門為某一語步服務，它（們）也可以出現在其他語步中，這時該策略的功能將發生變化；(2) 策略的選擇除了受演講目的制約之外，還受演講主題、聽眾、演講的場合與時間等因素的影響；(3) 各個語步之間的次序不是一成不變的，而是具有很大的靈活性，這體現了語類動態性的特點。本研究希望以英文專題演講語篇為例，從語類分析角度解析篇章建構者在建造語篇時是如何在該語篇所屬語類框架的限制內，為實現其創作目的而選擇某一（些）策略。

關鍵詞：語類、認知結構、策略、公共演講