

Series Foreword

Since the publication of John Swales's groundbreaking book-length look at genre analysis in 1990, it is safe to say that there has been increasing interest in the pedagogical potential of genre among language educators, whether teachers of first, second, or third language speakers. Recent publications such as Paltridge's (2001) *Genre and the Language Learning Classroom* and Johns's (2002) edited volume *Genre in the Classroom* certainly attest to the ongoing interest in the pedagogical implications of genre research and theory. Growing interest in genre, however, has not brought with it agreement on the immediate value of genre analysis for the classroom, as opposed to other more "authentic" environments such as the workplace. Perceptions of the teachability of genre, in fact, have run the gamut from a conviction that genres are so complex, varied, and unstable as to be virtually unteachable in a classroom setting, to a view of them as fixed and transparent enough to be straightforwardly, even formulaically taught as relatively easy to notice textual conventions.

Ken Hyland aims for more of a happy medium: a text-oriented yet at the same time highly socially situated view of genre. Hyland's approach to genre, derived from his experience with it both as a researcher (see, for example, *Disciplinary Discourses*) and as an EAP teacher for the past 25 years, makes it possible for him to present the potential pedagogical power of genre in persuasively practitioner-centered terms. Through Hyland's window on genre studies, genre appears capable not only of enabling comprehension and generation of a multitude of text types that may be quite new to many multilingual writers (and sometimes to teachers as well) but also of facilitating their entry into seemingly and in effect exclusive discourse communities. It is this nuanced textual and

socially sensitive perspective on genre that readers will find throughout *Genre and Second Language Writing*.

Those familiar with many of the publications on genre will easily recognize the novelty of Hyland's latest contribution to the literature. In *Genre and Second Language Writing*, readers are provided with a wealth of practical pedagogical information but also with the theory and research that should serve as the motivation and guiding principles of genre use in the writing classroom. Hyland's book begins with an overview of the major theoretical perspectives on genre and steadily moves toward more concrete classroom-oriented concerns, such as how to determine students' genre-knowledge needs, how to design a genre-consciousness-raising syllabus, how to select sample texts, how to develop genre scaffolding tasks and writing assignments, and how to assess writing with the help of genre awareness. Perhaps most unique is the final chapter, which encourages teacher and student autonomy by guiding teachers and their students toward their own investigations of genre, empowering them as discourse analysts and, as a result, as writing teachers and writers.

Almost 40 years ago, Robert Kaplan (1966) ushered in the new field of second language writing by pointing out the need for teachers of multilingual writers to look and hence teach beyond the bounds of their students' sentences. Accomplishing this pedagogical feat, however, has always been more easily advised than done. Genre analysis, perhaps more than any other pedagogical approach, offers us a research- and theory-based, text- and community-aware means of teaching beyond the sentence, and Ken Hyland, with his extensive and intimate knowledge as a researcher and teacher of the value of genre, has given us a book that will take teachers and their students well beyond the sentence.

References

Hyland, K. (2000). *Disciplinary discourses: Social interactions in academic writing*. London: Longman.

Johns, A. (Ed.). (2002). *Genre in the classroom: Multiple perspectives*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Kaplan, R. (1966). "Cultural thought patterns in intercultural education." *Language Learning*, 16(1), 1–20.

Paltridge, B. (2001). *Genre and the language learning classroom*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Swales, J. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Diane Belcher,
Georgia State University

Jun Liu,
University of Arizona