

# The Dialogization of Genres in Teaching Narrative: Theorizing Hybrid Genres in Classroom Discourse

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The agency of individuals, in relationship to "spheres of communication" or "speech communities" remains an important problem in sociocultural genre studies. As Freedman and Medway (1994) discuss, social constructionist formulations of genre too often reify "discourse community" into a monolithic entity (akin to Hymes' [1972] notion of "speech community") and leave no room for the actions of outsiders, novices, or minorities to affect change in the discourse (cf. Sharlin).

For example, this problem is evident in Williams' and Colomb's (1993) disagreement with Freedman's (1993) argument against (most) explicit genre pedagogies. While Williams and Colomb (1993) suggest that "explicit teaching is a necessary step in the process of empowering students to choose how they participate in the communities they encounter and to what degree they will let that participation define who and what they are" (p. 262), they do not acknowledge that individual participation might change the boundaries of communities or creatively manipulate the genres through which they participate. This formulation suggests that the boundaries of a community of practice such as the classroom and the genres therein are stable and unchanging, to be participated in by students (and teachers), but not to be challenged or creatively manipulated by these agents.

In the debate about explicit versus tacit genre pedagogy, and in much recent genre study (e.g., Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995), genres are often treated as *instantiations* of practices, activities, and values of discourse communities and therefore as entities to be merely reproduced in the classroom. Such perspectives do not sufficiently account for the agency of individuals in classrooms and other contexts who use, manipulate, and transform genres in contexts. One such problematic formulation of genre, which has influenced constructionist or "sociocognitive" studies of academic literacy, is Bakhtin's (1986) distinction between primary and secondary genres.

Although a discussion of this issue has broader implications for the study of talk and texts in classrooms, this article is primarily motivated as a response to one particular study that has relied upon this primary/secondary binary: Berkenkotter and Huckin's (1995) *Genre knowledge in disciplinary communication: Cognition/culture/power*. This work has influentially theorized academic literacy development in such terms to understand academic literacy practices in the university. For example, these authors draw on the primary/secondary genre distinction in order to treat learning to write as a graduate student researcher as the acquisition of a "culturally complex" secondary genre. Meanwhile, they uphold, classroom genres such as sharing time are more "simple" primary genres (p. 8).

This article also responds to assumptions that linger in narrative theory. For example, a recent empirically grounded study of conversational narrative by Ochs & Capps (2001) draws upon—albeit

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*Across the Disciplines*

A Journal of Language, Learning and Academic Writing

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37514/ATD-J.2004.1.1.07>

wac.colostate.edu/atd

ISSN 554-8244

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in passing—Bakhtin's binary distinction in order to formulate the scope of their study. The researchers differentiate between the conversational narratives (primary genres) that they study and the more literary forms of narrative (secondary genres) that are *not* the focus of their study (pp. 3-4). They explicitly cite Bakhtin's primary/secondary distinction in order to situate their work.

My study of teacher narratives in a middle school unit about the Holocaust challenges these rigid and overly deterministic genre distinctions. In questioning this primary/secondary binary, this article particularly asks, what more agent-centered conceptualization of genre-in-practice might drive studies of classroom talk and texts? In pursuing this question, I draw on data from my study of teaching as performance to suggest what a hybrid theory of classroom genres can offer to literacy educators and researchers.

A hybrid perspective on genre draws attention to the inventive and agentic maneuvers of teachers and students, in everyday rhetorical practices that impact learning. Specifically, I show how narrative genre emerges in everyday interaction about the course topic in one classroom context. Further, I highlight the responsive artfulness of one teacher who dialogizes classroom genres through narrative form. While focusing on a particular performance of narrative genre in teaching, I also discuss some implications for classroom genres and pedagogy beyond oral teacher narratives.

## A Rhetorical Approach: Understanding Genres from a Performance Perspective

In studying teacher discourse, I have been pursuing such an agent-centered approach to school-based genre analysis. The performance approach that I develop draws on the work of Burke (1945, 1969, 1973), Goffman (1974, 1981), Jakobson (1966, 1968, 1971), and Bauman (1986, 1990; Bauman & Briggs, 1990) to better understand how teachers and students artfully employ narrative genres in unfolding classroom interaction. This interdisciplinary approach is rhetorical in that it is interested in everyday persuasion and the persuasive means available in the given classroom situation (Burke, 1969). In the logic of Burke's (1945) pentad, my immediate project has involved analyzing narrative performances (acts) to see how a teacher and students (as agents) interact with cultural forms (particularly genres) in order to teach and learn (purpose) in the classroom (scene). This is a more dramatic approach to genre, and rather than being tied to Hymes' (1972) notion of "communicative competence," it is more interested in how genres *emerge* interactionally, how genres position performers as authoritative, how genres are creatively and dramatically used, embedded, and dialogized by artful speakers. This approach focuses on the creativity of individuals more than it does on their socialization into a speech community through using and reproducing its appropriate genres.

Identity issues are crucial to this performance perspective. Therefore, central to my agent-centered understanding of "teaching as performance" has been the rhetorical notion of *ethos*, defined as the rhetorical construction and transformation of one's identity for persuasive purposes (Aristotle, 1990; Burke, 1969). This follows Burke's emphasis on identification as a central mechanism of rhetorical persuasion: "You persuade a man only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his" (p. 55). This rhetorical approach to genres entails considering "teaching as performance," by which I mean the socially situated, yet rhetorically constructed, emergence of *ethos* in aesthetically framed discourse genres. This performative lens has enabled deep analysis of how narrative genres emerge in everyday classroom interaction about the course topic of the Holocaust. It has further enabled documentation of the artfulness of one teacher who dialogizes classroom genres in ways that likely impact student learning.

My grounded study leads me to propose a hybrid theory of classroom genres that builds on Bauman's conceptualization of the "dialogization of genres." This perspective foregrounds Bakhtin's earlier and more literary work (e.g., Bakhtin, 1981), while backgrounding, and possibly even rejecting, Bakhtin's later, more social scientific perspectives on genre (Bakhtin, 1986). In particular, this article considers problems with Bakhtin's (1986) distinctions between primary and secondary genres as they have been understood by researchers conducting genre analysis in academic contexts.

## Data

To ground this theoretical discussion, I will consider a single exemplary teaching narrative, which emerged during a Holocaust unit in a middle school literacy classroom.

I do not here have space to fully contextualize this narrative in the bigger empirical project from which it comes (but see Juzwik, in press, for a more thorough explanation); however what follows is a cursory overview of that study.

I generated video and audio data of all classroom discourse during a six-week literacy unit about the Holocaust at a middle school in a medium-sized Midwestern city. The teacher was a young white woman whom I call Jane Conner, who was in her third year of teaching reading and writing at that level. Students in the class were seventh and eighth graders who had elected to take this course instead of their usual language arts course. In the bigger study, I was seeking to understand the performative dimensions of teaching, as theorized through the mutually illuminating lenses of rhetoric and sociolinguistics.

This led to a method of narrative analysis through which I identified, transcribed, and analyzed seventy-five narratives in the classroom discourse over the entirety of the unit. Sixty-five of those were performed by the teacher, and ten by students, mostly near the end of that unit. The division of lines and stanzas presented in the narrative below follows the methodology of Tedlock (1999) and Scollon and Scollon (1982), where the line divisions are made according to breath units: each line represents a single breath unit (for more detail, see Juzwik, 2003, ch. 2).

The narrative to be discussed in this article emerged during a class lesson about *Kristallnacht*, in which a teacher-centered pattern of student note-taking and teacher reading and explanation obtained. Students took notes on a historical timeline of the events of 1938, while Jane read aloud, explaining, or performing for students what the timeline meant in the context of their unit. In this particular class period about the event of *Kristallnacht*, seven narratives were performed by the teacher. In the following narrative, Jane elaborated for students the significance of *Kristallnacht*, framing it as an event that changed the Nazi pursuit of a plan for "forced immigration"

1. The whole forced immigration
2. I think it was John who
3. Pretty early in the,
4. In the unit,
5. Said,
6. Well why didn't he just have them all leave?
7. Why didn't he just kick â€~em all out?
8. Why did he have to kill all of â€~em?
  
9. Well in 1938,
10. After this event,

11. He couldn't.
12. There was nowhere to kick â€œem to.
13. They tried to go to Cuba,
14. Cuba didn't want â€œem.
15. They tried to go to America,
16. Americans didn't want â€œem.
17. Tried to go to Poland,
18. Poland didn't want â€œem.
  
19. They tried to go to Palestine,
20. Their homeland,
21. But,
22. Britain owned Palestine,
23. And
24. The Arabs who lived there,
25. Didn't want Jews there either.
  
26. So the Arabs in Palestine said,
27. What are you doing
28. Letting all these Jews in here?
29. Huh-uh!
30. That's not happening!
31. If you do that,
32. We're going to just
33. You know,
34. We're going to create chaos,
35. We're going to do violence.
  
36. So Britain had to say,
37. Okay, we can't let all of you in here,
38. We can only let some of you in here.
  
39. There was nowhere for them to go.
40. So we're talking millions of Jews,
41. well,
42. in Germany only hundreds of thousands of Jews,
43. with absolutely nowhere to go.

This narrative genre from everyday teaching discourse in a middle school classroom not only highlights the deficiencies of a primary/secondary binary in studying genre; it moreover well demonstrates how a performance perspective on narrative genres leads to an agent-centered understanding of hybridity in classroom genres.

## One Approach to Classroom Narrative Analysis: Primary/Secondary Genres

This narrative example offers a challenge to the theory of primary and secondary genres in academic contexts that is proposed in Berkenkotter & Huckin (1995). These researchers, in large part, ground their genre approach to academic literacy in Bakhtin's (1986) distinction between primary and secondary genres. They interpret the distinction largely in spatial terms:

[the] distinction between 'primary' and 'secondary' speech genres is a useful framework for helping us to distinguish between those forms of response that we use in daily communicative activities . . . and those that are removed from the contexts of activities in which 'primary genres' are embedded . . . 'secondary genres' codify activities (such as scientists' lab experiments) by transforming them into seamless accounts of scientific activity. Thus Bakhtin's notion of secondary genres as forms of organized cultural communication helps us to see a basic and major difference between the *genres of everyday life* and their more *culturally complex cousins* (p. 10, emphases added)

This distinction suggests that while primary genres are embedded in contexts of daily communicative activities, secondary genres represent more decontextualized forms of "organized cultural communication." Because it defines "genres of the everyday" in juxtaposition to "cultural complexity," the primary/secondary distinction implies that primary genres are *not* organized cultural communication. Further, in suggesting that secondary genres "are removed from the contexts of activities in which 'primary genres' are embedded," Berkenkotter and Huckin also imply that secondary genres are "decontextualized" from everyday life. Both of these assumptions invite critique from a cultural and dialogical perspective.

Berkenkotter and Huckin's (1995) reading of Bakhtin (1986) focuses on one aspect of Bakhtin's definition, the place—or "sphere of communication"—where secondary, as opposed to simple primary genres arise: "Secondary (complex) speech genres—novels, dramas, all kinds of scientific research, major genres of commentary, and so forth—arise in cultural communication (primarily written) that is artistic, scientific, sociopolitical, and so on (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 62)." They argue that while time and space configurations are "an intrinsic part of primary speech genres," secondary genres are removed from their instantiation (pp. 8-9). This is to say that, according to Berkenkotter & Huckin (1995), while primary genres are bound to contexts of activity, secondary genres are somehow severed from activities. The genre of show and tell in elementary classrooms is an example of what they call primary genre (e.g., Cazden, 2001; Michaels, 1981), while an example of its "culturally complex cousin" is the research writing that graduate students must learn to do while in a Ph.D. program (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995, ch. 7). The two appear to be differentiated because a genre such as show and tell occurs in local settings and activities of the classroom, and in that genre, mastery does not occur through legitimate peripheral participation in communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998), as it does with a secondary genre (Berkenkotter & Huckin, p. 152). Following this logic, they argue that institutions such as universities (but apparently not primary schools) involve language users in transitions from "naturalistic" discourse to "extended and monological" discourse.

This binary perspective is problematic, from a performance perspective, when considering the corpus of teacher narratives I have studied, and the above narrative in particular. It would first seem plausible that on this reading of Bakhtin, the narrative would be a primary genre, an "everyday

narrative," a patterned event in classroom teaching that is akin to sharing time. The speech genre emerges in the activity of the classroom: students are taking notes on a historical timeline of the events of 1938, while the teacher is spending most of her time reading aloud or explaining to students what the timeline means. Moreover, the narrative utterance is bound to the context by numerous indexicals: for example, there is a reference to John's prior questions about the Holocaust (lines 6-9), to "the unit," and to "the event."<sup>[1]</sup>

However, this reading by Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) neglects what is perhaps the more illuminating criteria of Bakhtin's primary/secondary distinction:

During the process of their formation, [secondary genres] absorb and digest various primary (simple) genres that have taken form in unmediated speech communication. These primary genres are altered and assume a special character when they enter into complex ones. They lose their immediate relation to actual reality and to the real utterances of others (Bakhtin 1986, p. 62).

If we follow this emphasis, secondary genres are linguistically defined by their incorporation of primary genres. Primary genres, on the other hand, are "unmediated" and simple, immediately related to "actual reality."

The diagnostic of "primary genre" falls apart upon further examination of the text of the narrative itself, for numerous embeddings and appropriations become evident. In the first line is a term—"forced immigration"—that the teacher is almost certainly appropriating from the discipline of history (one thinks of Raul Hilberg's [1985] "machinery of destruction" and other functionalist accounts of the Holocaust). In lines 2-8, a student's question is introduced as what might be called the reportability criteria (Labov, 1982) of the story. In these first three stanzas, the multiplicity of voices, and the interplay of closeness (John, who is in the classroom right now) and distance (historians of the Holocaust, the more teacherly explanation of lines 9-11) is striking. Also striking is the highly poetic artistry of the following four stanzas.<sup>[2]</sup> In rhetorical terms, this text reveals a process of absorption and digestion that, on Berkenkotter and Huckin's reading, would characterize a secondary genre. Yet, they would not treat it as secondary, because of its everydayness. It seems evident from this impasse that conceptualizing this performative narrative genre as either a secondary or primary genre would be an uneasy compromise. It is neither, or it is both.

## Hybridity and the Dialogization of Genres

An alternative hybrid conceptualization considerably complicates Bakhtin's distinction of primary/secondary, and describes how verbal creativity can negotiate, and in part construct, the social/institutional classroom world. It instead invokes Bakhtin's more literary, and less social scientific, work on the novel, and in particular his understanding of "intentional stylistic hybrids":

Every type of intentional stylistic hybrid is more or less dialogized. . . the languages that are crossed in it relate to each other as do rejoinders in a dialogue; there is an argument between languages, an argument between styles of language. . . it is a dialogue between points of view, each with its own concrete language that cannot be translated into the other (Bakhtin 1981, p. 76).

Therefore, to account for the *agency* through which Jane rhetorically interacts with the social world of the classroom and with the content she is teaching, it would seem that we must be unwilling to separate out the agentive conversational moves that are local and situationally oriented (primary

genres) from the institutionally-informed discourse requirements (secondary genres). In the words of Kamberelis (1995), we must adopt a comprehensive theory of genre as "institutionally informed social action."

The two are integrated in the performative dimensions of teaching, and this example reveals that it is more accurate to assume that all genres are culturally complex and are therefore situated in relation to complex systems of social activities and social identities. As Linnell (1992) argues, we must recognize that "decontextualization is context bound" (p. 253) and that educational settings such as this Holocaust class as well as the Ph.D. program described by Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) are "situated decontextualizing practices." So-called secondary genres are highly contextualized, and primary genres are in fact culturally complex. To adopt this alternative perspective is to reject Bakhtin's distinction between primary/secondary genres, and to instead embrace his more literary work on generic hybridity (e.g., Bakhtin, 1981). This provides a useful vantage point for considering narratives in teacher discourse, and perhaps also for considering other generic forms in the classroom.

In his analysis of Icelandic narratives, Bauman (1990) conceptualizes the "dialogization of genres" as a way of understanding how individuals manipulate genres in narrative performances through "the interpenetration of multiple voices and forms of utterance" (p. 138). Bauman analyzes the performance of legends in which narrators recount stories about poems, in which "the narrator . . . contextualizes the narrative itself, weaving a complex web or verbal anchorings for his discourse that link it to a range of other situations and other discourses, endowing it with traditional authority in the process" (p. 131). This notion of dialogization offers a more hybrid understanding of genre, one that may be more useful for understanding spoken discourse in classrooms than the primary/secondary binary.

We can see this same process at work in the narrative example from this study of teaching as performance. First there is the genre of student question,<sup>[3]</sup>evident in lines 6-8, most will recognize as an important genre expectation in progressively-oriented North American classroom discourse. Not only do student questions signal engagement with the class material, but also as an indication of their Zone of Proximal development such questions provide information to teachers, who can then respond to a student's current understanding, and bridge the gap between that understanding and whatever practice is to be learned (Vygotsky, 1978).

This genre is used as a frame (Goffman, 1974) for what follows. In lines 26-35, then in 36-38, we find the genre of dialogue, a personalized (and somewhat disturbing) dramatization of conversations between Arabs and colonial British rulers, referring to the land of Palestine. And as already mentioned, the first line of the narrative bears a trace of the terminology found in the genre of the academic historical article. If we consider further the broader context of classroom activity and discourse within which this narrative emerges, it becomes clear that this narrative genre is embedded within other discourse genres well-known in schools: historical timelines, student notes, historical texts, lesson plans, and so on.

This example reveals that expressive narrative performances do not always fit neatly into the taxonomic categories of ethnographers of performance (or classroom researchers, for that matter). What is produced instead is a blended form that defies rigid classification: this blending and even clash of genres within narrative performance is what Bauman refers to as the "dialogization of genres." I want to suggest that the insights from Bauman's analysis need to be extended into our understandings of genres and genre pedagogy in classrooms. The narrative analysis that I have alternatively suggested reveals the kinds of understandings that follow from a reconceptualization

of teaching as performance through the lens of generic hybridity. The creative manner in which genres are dialogized by agents in classrooms is highlighted from such a perspective.

## Discussion

I have shown how it is possible and productive to view Jane's narrative as a kind of intentional stylistic hybrid, as it dialogizes the genres of student question, timeline, dramatic animation of historical figures and groups, and historical article. This process of overlapping and embedding genres suggests an artful discursive hybridity at work in everyday teaching performance: as Bauman and Briggs (1990) suggest, "pursuit of a particular interactive focus (teaching, exhorting, befriending, confronting, etc.) generally involves negotiated changes of genre in which features of one genre are embedded within a token of another" (p. 233). Recognizing this hybridity is an important goal for genre analyses of oral language in classrooms.

It is possible and productive to view Jane's narrative as a kind of intentional stylistic hybrid, as it dialogizes the genres of student question, timeline, dramatic animation of historical figures and groups, and historical article. Lensmire's (2000) metaphor of the "teacher as Dostoyevskian novelist" may be appropriate in this narrative performance, for Jane certainly does orchestrate a range of voices, and a great many perspectives, in an artful way. With Jane as the aesthetic agent—the author—of the narrative performance, the events of the Holocaust do, in a sense, become a dialogue of points of view—at multiple levels—that come into contact with one another in this and other narratives. In particular, we can see how the levels of narrative event and narrated event interact (Bauman, 1986, 1990; Wortham, 2001). The classroom interaction itself (the *narrative event*, involving perspectives and utterances of the teacher and her students, in the context of school) and the level of the course content (*narrated event*, the events of the Holocaust, involving perspectives and utterances of nations, individuals, and groups in history), intermingle in complex ways through the culturally complex "genre space" of narrative form.

I anticipate two critiques of genre analysis, such as this one, focused on hybridity. The first is this: isn't narrative a particular case that cannot be generalized to genre studies more broadly? Critics who follow such lines of reasoning might suggest, for example, that narrative is a more universal genre than, for example, academic genres such as the essay. This line is taken to an extreme in the work of Swales (1990), for example, who believes that everyday narrative shouldn't even be considered a genre. He maintains that narratives are an example of "pre-generic dialogic activity" because they are "too persuasive and too fundamental to be usefully considered a genre" (p. 59). While articulating genre as a learned competence within academic settings, Swales claims that "casual conversation [including narrative] presumably occurred early in the evolution of the human race, as it does in a child's acquisition of first language" (*ibid*). Here Swales relies on an outdated assumption with origins in the field of biology, that "ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny," a notion that has been repudiated for some time (e.g., see <http://www.ucmp.berkeley.edu/history/haeckel.html> for more information on the origins of this claim and its refutation in the sciences). Making this mistake, Swales dismisses conversational narrative by situating it on a trajectory of natural or biological development, rather than as a socially embedded and culturally learned practice. Like the learning of most linguistic practices, narratives are more accurately seen as a function of *both* biological development and sociocultural influences.

While narrative may be a more universal genre of communication—across many different cultural groups—it serves educators poorly to bracket it off into the category of "natural development" rather than "cultural development. Indeed, critiques such as Swales' seem to throw up their hands at the artful powers wielded by wily human agents within institutional settings. The kind of study of teacher

narrative that I have discussed may reveal that narrative is an extreme, and therefore illuminating case, of a more widespread phenomena in the use agents make of genre. The very artful persuasiveness of narratives in teaching needs to be examined more closely, if only for a better understanding of teacher practice, but perhaps also—as I argue through this analysis—for a better understanding of speech genres in everyday interaction.

Secondly, the more difficult critique arises, does an emphasis on hybridity lead to a position that renders "genre" quite useless? This seems to me a much more important, and challenging, question with respect to genre analysis that emphasizes hybridity. Medway (2002), addresses this question—at least indirectly—as he explores "what genres are *for* and what they *do*" (p. 124). Medway tentatively concludes that "maybe the notion of genre needs to be fuzzy" [that] perhaps there are degrees of genre-ness" (p. 141). This view—very much in keeping with my interest in ethos—focuses on what kinds of *identities* individuals are assuming, developing, and reinforcing, as they take up and adapt genres as social action. Medway suggests that knowing and using genres involves "an entire process of converting educational experience into a personal resource from which original and individuated utterances . . . may be creatively generated" (p. 148). Medway's conclusions point out tentative directions for approaching this complex problem, which may be the central question opened up by generic theories of hybridity. The recent volume edited by Coe, Lingard, & Teslenko (2002) forges exploration along these lines through a variety of studies, including Medway's.

Despite new questions and problems that generic hybridity may raise, it certainly has a great deal to offer to studies of literacy learning contexts. A theoretical perspective of hybridity allows documentation of the populist aesthetic of a skilled rhetor/teacher, illuminating the dialogization of genres that constitutes "teaching as performance" in the context I have discussed. This notion of "populist aesthetic" (a term coined by Bourdieu [1998], for critique, which I reclaim for more constructive aims) has been traced in other domains of narrative study as well: by Labov (1972) among African-American urban youth, by Dyson (1993, 1997) among primary-aged children, by Gee (1986) in one child's storytelling practices during sharing time. These studies all explore the artful use that agents make of language in order to expressively communicate with others. This body of sociolinguistic and ethnographically-informed work suggests that narratives are indeed culturally complex genres and that this reality has important consequences for educators. For example, if we believe that sharing time narratives are "simple" or "natural," then we may miss the significant consequences that this forum may have for the academic literacy development of school children who participate in this practice (Michaels, 1981).

A more explicit Bakhtinian theory of hybridization, as offered in Bauman's understanding of the "dialogization of genres" may furthermore be helpful for advancing work focused on articulating the artful logic of otherwise unappreciated populist aesthetics. As Grossman (2003) points out, teaching seems recently to have become a "profession left behind." This hybrid perspective enables us to appreciate the complexity of what teachers accomplish through the intricacies of language to affect everyday persuasion in their classrooms. Finally, this perspective provides a way to consider how genres of outsiders, minorities, and newcomers might be instrumental in changing so-called "genres of power" (Luke, 1994) such that schools develop more permeable boundaries between those genres that belong "inside" and those that belong "outside."<sup>[4]</sup>

This suggestive analysis of narrative performances in Jane's classroom supports Bauman's (1990) prediction that "the exploration of how such generic blendings are accomplished in performance will highlight a creative dimension of human verbal expression that has tended to be obscured by established notions of genre, revealing more closely how people use verbal art in the conduct of their social lives" (p. 140). Such a perspective also provides a reminder that social units—such as classrooms—exist in dialogical relationship with genres, texts, and discourse performed by agents

therein. Thus, just as discourse genres emerge from the social situation of the classroom, so that social situation emerges from the patterned language use of individuals therein. This view of genre highlights the creativity and agency of teachers (and potentially of students) and deserves a significant place in classroom-based genre studies of both teaching and learning.

## Conclusion: Implications for Genre Analysis of Literacy Teaching and Learning

A central implication of this theory affords progress on a difficult question raised by Berkenkotter and Huckin: is it only the most prestigious members of a culture that may take the liberty of "bending the genre"? (Berkenkotter & Huckin, p. 159). One problem with the configuration of the implicit/explicit debate about genre pedagogy that I have alluded to already (e.g. Freedman 1993; Williams & Colomb, 1993) is that it fails even to reach this important ideological question.<sup>[5]</sup> Critical literacy theorists such as Kress (1987) point out that successful generic innovation must be supported by a stable social situation and authority within that situation (Berkenkotter & Huckin, p. 158). One line of reasoning, focused on the latter, might suggest that because students and in extreme accounts, school teachers, generally do not possess this kind of authority within a "real" community of practice, such as a disciplinary community, they must forever reproduce "genres of power" over which they have no authority, in order to win access into "academic discourse" sometime in the distant future (if ever). Another, more compelling, line of reasoning involves considering classrooms in terms of what Gutierrez and her colleagues (1995, 1997, 1999) have called third spaces, where the social situation is not accurately described as "stable" and where, moreover, the genres of various "communities of practice" must intermingle in order for learning and motivation to occur. The kinds of hybrid narratives performed by Jane provide just one example of how genres can be "bended" and dialogized in order to promote or practice learning.

Indeed, a theory of hybridity challenges the elitist notion that only graduate or professional school learning environments can be considered legitimate "communities of practice." Teachers at all levels have presumably obtained a professional and/or disciplinary discourse that they mediate every day for their students through complex and hybrid forms of language. It seems only to follow that students should further negotiate new forms of language by creating hybrid forms that incorporate those newly encountered "ways with words" of the classroom with those of their life worlds. Such generic hybridity can be nurtured in writing as well as speaking.

This is not necessarily to insist that hybrid genres are the end goal of education, but rather the *means* through which many classrooms involve students in culturally complex activity that involves generic patterning. If this complexity is described and systematically examined, educators may be better able to negotiate it and teach students to negotiate it through the kinds of intentional stylistic hybrid that I have analyzed above. Such practices will involve students in moving beyond generic reproduction or mere critique into producing genres and generic practices that have been changed by their encounter(s) with other cultural worlds. It may be the case, as Stone (2003) has argued, that such generic innovation displays the final stage of mastery in genre learning.

## Acknowledgements

An earlier draft of this article was presented at the National Reading Conference, in Scottsdale, Arizona, USA in December 2003. I am grateful to Sharon Quiroz for her thoughtful revision suggestions and to David Jolliffe and an anonymous reviewer for their insightful feedback on the manuscript in progress.

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## Notes

[1] Also called "deictics" or "shifters" (e.g., Jakobson, 1971; Silverstein, 1976), indexicals are terms which point to features of the surrounding context. Referents of such expressions are constantly shifting, as the relationship between context and utterance changes. Indexical expressions have been extensively studied in conjunction with Mayan language and culture by Hanks (1984, 1990).

[2] Note, for example, the stylized tropes of interlacement (lines 13-18), parallelism (lines 13/14, 15/16, 17/18), climax (lines 13-1), repetition ("nowhere," lines 12, 39, 43); and rhetorical question (lines 6-8).

[3] An authentic question, in Nystrand's (1997) terms.

[4] Dyson's (1993, 1997, 2002) work on how primary-aged children appropriate popular media genres in school-based writing particularly supports this notion of permeable curricula.

[5] cf. Coe et al. (2002), in which many studies do grapple with this question.

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## Complete APA Citation

Juzwik, Mary M. (2004, June 25). The dialogization of genres in teaching narrative: Theorizing hybrid genres in classroom discourse. *Across the Disciplines*, 1. Retrieved from <https://wac.colostate.edu/docs/atd/articles/juzwik2004.pdf>