Exploring theories related to multilingual writers’ uptake of research genres

Tracy Volz and Linda Driskill
Changes in Research Publishing

• Switch to publishing in English (Montgomery, 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author origin</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>&lt; 30,000</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>400%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>265,000</td>
<td>340,000</td>
<td>30%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

• Countries (India, China, etc.) intending to field “world-class” universities
  – Rate them by no. of publications in English

• Imperative to publish in English
  – Brazilian SIGET Conference 2015
    – What processes occur in SL research writing?
“Uptake Intention”: Made Explicit

- Would you try to make this?
- Intentions link
  - histories
  - present context
  - roles
  - abilities
- Uptake intention only implicit in many theories
Uptake Intention Helps Answer

- How do writers with different experiences and languages meet genre challenges?
- What influences intersect in uptake?
- What theories can be combined to explain differences?
The Uptake Intention and the Interface between Theories

UPTAKE INTENTION
The Uptake Intention and the Interface between Theories

North American Rhetorical Genre Theory

Interdisciplinary Foundation Genre Systems

Context and Individual

UPTAKE INTENTION
The Uptake Intention and the Interface of Theories

- North American Rhetorical Genre Theory
- Interdisciplinary Foundation Genre Systems
- Systemic Functional Linguistics Genre Theory
- Context and Individual
- UPTAKE INTENTION
- Uptake as Shots Between “Players”
- Template, Semiotics
The Uptake Intention and the Interface of Theories
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North American Rhetorical Genre Theory

Systemic Functional Linguistics Genre Theory

Interdisciplinary Foundation Genre Systems

Template, Semiotics

Community of Practice Theory

Positive & Negative Experience

Differences in Acquisition

Context and Individual

Individual and Group Identities

Uptake as Shots Between “Players”

Second Language Articulation in Conventions

Second Language Studies Theories

UPTAKE INTENTION
WID Collaboration Opportunity

• Research group funded by industry consortium
• Directors’ goals: communication effectiveness, efficiency, publication success
• 12 members
  – 2 research directors
  – 6 Post-docs
  – 4 Ph.D. candidates
• All had undergraduate degrees from Chinese universities (except 1 director, 1 post-doc with undergrad from India)
Two Uptake Intentions Stories

**POST-DOC: Bingwen**
- Showed long-term imagination, engagement, and alignment with a future in academic research
- Took classes in English, audited courses, tutoring
- Learned from models
- Taught large intro courses in English

**Ph.D. CANDIDATE: Huan**
- Studied English as subject throughout schooling
- In college studied sciences and math, read scientific articles, all in Chinese
- Reads articles in graduate school in English for “news he can use”
- Now prepares conference papers and presentations in English
## The Surprising Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bingwen</th>
<th>Huan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Expected prosperity</td>
<td>• Tackles mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Prestige</td>
<td>• Succeeds over others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community of Practice</td>
<td>• Unprepared in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Engaged rhetorically</td>
<td>• Community of Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identification changed</td>
<td>• Engaged technically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Alignment shifts</td>
<td>• Increased identification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accepts industry offer</td>
<td>• Aligned to use of English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• New goal: Academic fame</td>
<td>• New goal: Academic fame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Intends to write, read, and</td>
<td>• Intends to write, read, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>improve English</td>
<td>improve English</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Uptake Intention Critical to Identity

“... modern linguistic consciousness entertains multiple indications of self... [it] induces awareness of speech norms and of one’s own speech in relation to others—and also a sense of one’s own speech not occupying those norms... And it encourages the intuition that self is available to be discovered and redeemed in language” (Giltrow, 2010, p. 388)
A Few Selected References


Galaxy of Research Issues, Perspectives

ISSUES
- Pedagogies
- Testing
- K-12, College English Language Instruction
- Instruction in Grad Courses
- Writing for Publication
- Institutional Responses: $$$, programs

THOSE INVOLVED
- Grad Students in U.S.
- WID/WAC Faculty, SL Faculty
- Scholars in other countries
- Writing Centers, On-line aid

ISSUES
- Individuals’ Motivation
- Faculty Preparation
- Research Methods
- Political Dominance
- Cultural Practices
- Social Justice
- Ideology of Research

Where to focus research?
Future Work with Uptake

- Non-trivial differences in theories
  - Assumptions and definitions
  - Types of evidence used
  - Inclusion of second-language activity
- Differences in focus affect conclusions, applicability
- Intersections of theories crucial to future of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary projects
### CoP: Identity Formation Processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identities of participation</th>
<th>mode of belonging</th>
<th>Identities of participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Circle of friends doing everything together</td>
<td>engagement</td>
<td>Having one’s ideas adopted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affinity felt by readers of a newspaper</td>
<td>imagination</td>
<td>Vicarious experience through stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allegiance to a group</td>
<td>alignment</td>
<td>Persuasion through directed experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Social Ecology of Identity

From *Communities of Practice: Learning Meaning, and Identity*, p. 190
Benefits of “Uptake Intention” Concept

• Can represent convergence of influences in multilingual composing for research genres, publication

• Can be used to link theories for investigations
  - Interdisciplinary: overarching framework unites assumptions, definitions

• “Uptake Intention” concept creates interface among theories