Do genre and context shape writers' identity in scientific English texts?

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InterGedi

Universidad Zaragoza
1542

Content/Outline

1.- Introduction: warming up

First official royal tour as a married couple

Image 1. Source: www.Hello.com

1.- Introduction

Duchess of Sussex

Image 2: www.elle.com
mages 3 & 4 : https://www.iheart.com/content/2018-10-19-meghan-markle-says-pregnancy-feels-like-jet-lag-on-australian-tour/
Image 5: https://www.townandcountrymag.com/society/tradition/g23897940/meghan-markle-prince-harry-royal-tour-sydney-australia-day-4-photos/?slide=7

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1.- Introduction

➢ **Why is she using different outfits?**

➢ Who is she? What does she represent?

➢ What is the message?

➢ What is the purpose?

➢ Who is the potetial receiver/addresee?

➢ What is the channel/medium?

➢ Does all the above depend on the communicative situation?

1.- Introduction

- Why is using different outfits?

- Who is she? What does she represent?

- What is the purpose?
- What is the message?

- Who is the potetial receiver/addresee?
- What is the channel?

- Does all the above depend on the communicative situation?

Does **context of situation** affect our performance/behaviour?

Should we concern about audience/readers/addressees' expectations?

*How are we **communicatively effective**?*

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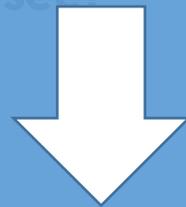
2.- Key concepts
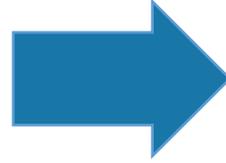
Communicatively successful → Master discourse practices (conventions)

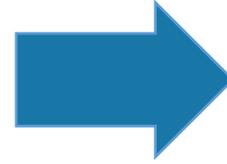How does the **context of situation**

Addresser

Addressee

Textual function

shape texts?
(Identity: voice)

2.- Key concepts

Communicatively successful ➡️ Master discourse practices (conventions)

2.1 Key concepts: **Context of situation**

Communicatively successful ➡️ How discourse and information are adapted into the different texts (1-3)

Askehave and Nielsen's (2005) approach to electronic/digital genres and genre relations:

- Communicative purpose
- Moves (information structure)
- Rhetorical strategies

Lexico-grammatical features potentially associated with the **writers' presence**

Screen capture 1: https://www.sainsburys.co.uk

2.1 Key concepts: **Context of situation**

Communicatively successful ➡️ **How discourse and information are adapted into the different texts (1-3)**

-How is the writer represented?

-What is the purpose of each text?

-How is the receiver represented?

-What is the genre?

Lexico-grammatical features potentially associated with the **writers' presence**

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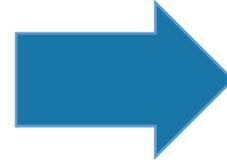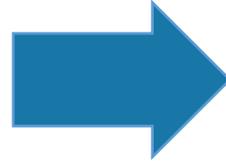**Enjoy the regular products you love at surprisingly good regular prices**

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Tags: Fairtrade, Fish

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Does the context of situation shape how addresser and addressee are represented?

- ➢ Text1

  Our approach, **We**'re committed to helping / **You** can be sure

  Purpose:

  Home page

- ➢ Text 2

  Our passion, **We** / **customers…**their weekly shop, **people**…they

  Purpose:

  Annual Report

- ➢ Text 3

  (…) **our** help section, **us** / **your** order, **you, imperatives**

  Purpose:

  Terms and conditions

The context/communicative purpose shapes how interlocutors are represented

2.2 Genre, Genre Studies and Genre Relations

➢ Inspired by Halliday's studies, Martin (1985: 25) defines **genre** as: "[…] a staged, goal oriented, purposeful activity in which speakers engage as members of our culture. […] context both of situation and of culture are important if we are to fully interpret the meaning of a text".

➢ **Genre analysis** approaches this "complicated notion" (Bhatia 1993: 130) by deducing that it is their situational and social contexts that identify a group of texts.

➢ Different approaches to **genre studies**—New Rhetoric School, Sydney Genre School and the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) tradition—should be considered the most important ones in the field of applied linguistics.

Swales (1990, 2004)

Genres tend to occur as constellations

Bhatia (1993, 2004)

Genre colonies

Devitt (1991, 1994)

The set of genres

Tardy (2003)

Networks are part of a system of interactive genres.

Bazerman (1994)

A system of genres

Orlikowski and Yates (1994)

Genre repertoires

2.3 Scientific Knowledge Transfer

➢ **The internet** enables a new communication setting which reconfigures the

conditions to which pragmatic features of language respond.

(Giltrow & Stein, 2009)

➢ **Transferring scientific knowledge** (i.e within Academic and Institutional Contexts)

How is this knowledge exchange being coded?

How are we/*they* moving ideas from the source to the users (Hyland, 2018)?

Who are the users? Who are de readers? Who are the writers?

2.3 Scientific Knowledge Transfer

➤ **New spaces (scenario)** for researchers to share information, communicate about their research and reach an "**unstable" audience with blurred or fuzzy boundaries** (Puschmann 2013).

❖ *Fundación Dr Antoni Estevez* **(de la Torre, 2017)**

❖ **(i.e. HOUSE: Epic fail 6th season, Episode 3)**

Medicine in Television Series

Editor: Toni de la Torre

Medicine in Television Series
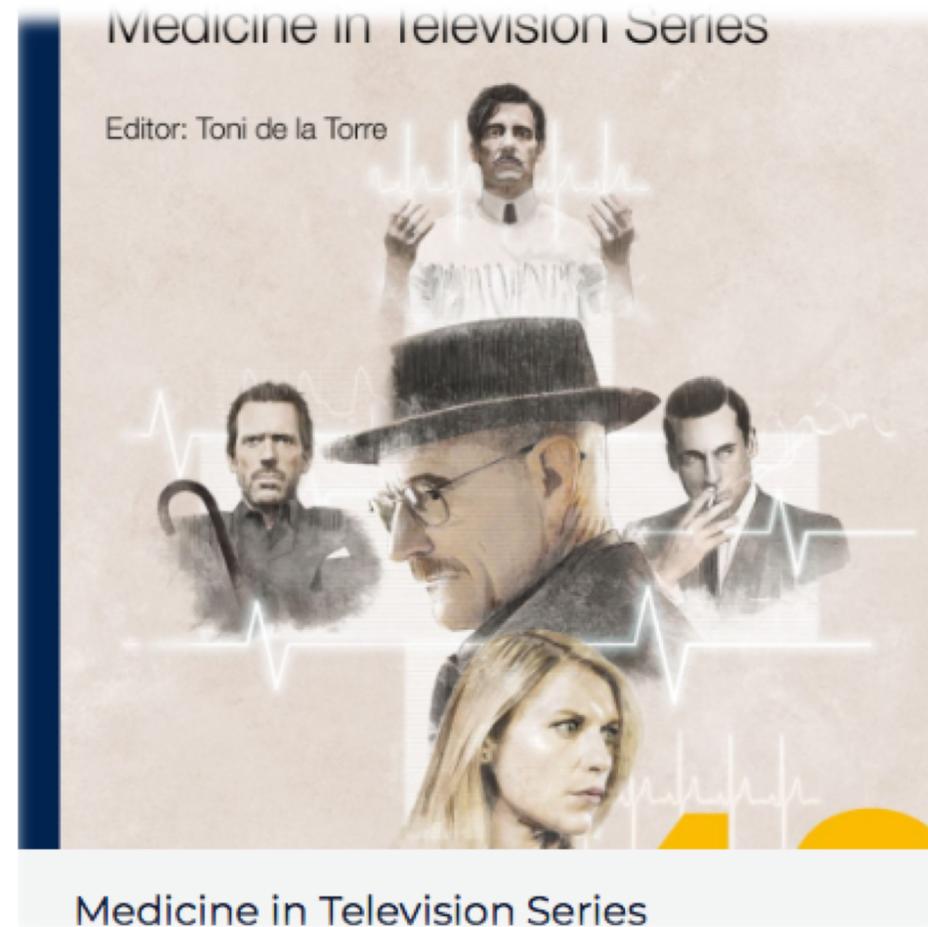
2.3 Scientific Knowledge Transfer

Loffler-Laurian (1983) was pioneer insisting on the fact that the type of discourse, in this case scientific discourse, must vary depending on the potential readers or recipients (or layer of specialisation):

Type of discourse	Issuer	Message (source)	Recipient
Specialised scientific discourse	Scientific researcher	Journal (RA)	Researchers
Pseudo-scientific dissemination discourse	Scientific researcher or reviewer (e.g. specialised journalist)	Pseudo-scientific publications	Non-disciplinary research members
Scientific dissemination discourse	Specialised journalist	Pseudo-scientific publications	Lay audience
Pedagogic scientific discourse	Teacher	Broad topics	Secondary students, undergraduates, etc.
Scientific academic discourse (e.g. PhD)	Student	Specific documents	Specialised board
Official scientific discourse	Research team or even civil servant	Reports	Official institutions

Table 1. Classification of types of scientific discourse taken from Loffer-Laurian (1983: 11)

2.4 Writers' Identity, Visibility

➢ How researchers and textual mediators craft their identity (presence, voice, visibility) to make trustworthy texts.

➢ Ivanič (1998) observes that some **linguistic and textual choices** made by writers in their texts—being these choices imposed or even expected by the generic conventions of the texts (Swales & Feak, 2004; Matsuda & Tardy, 2007), should be interpreted as **realizations of the writers' self**.

2.4 Writers' Identity, Visibility, Voice

IDENTITY: *persona, ethos, individualism, self, ownership, stance, voice* or *authority*

The individuality of the writer: *ethos, individualism* and *self*

The actions of the writer:

His or her *persona, stance* and *authority*

VOICE: writer seems to own something; a process, ideas, knowledge
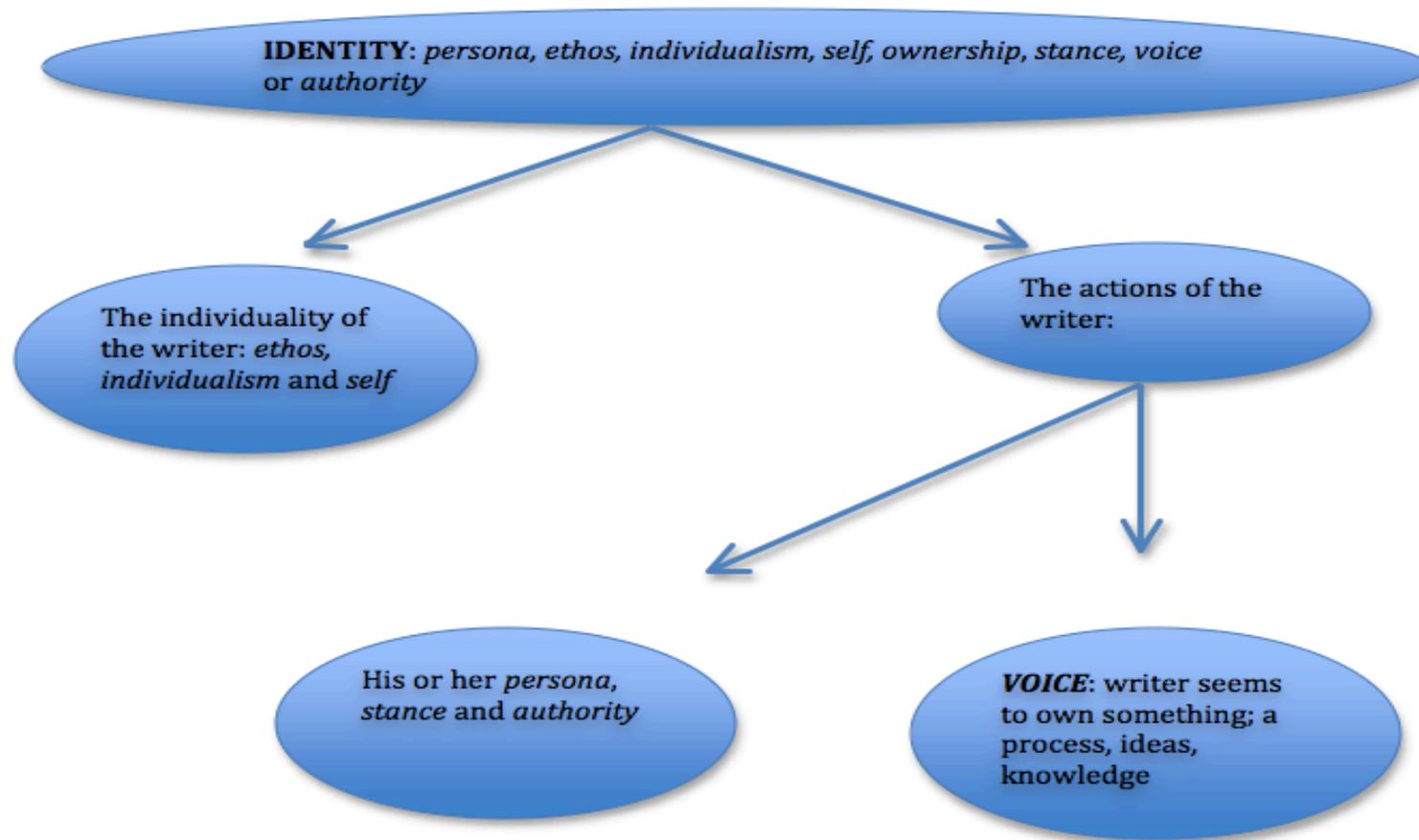
Graph 1. Graph based on John´s (2005) concept of writers´ identity.

2.4 Writers' Identity, Visibility, Voice

- ✓ Elbow, 1994: a unique voice, modulate our voice in different contexts.
- ✓ Bowden, 1995: metaphor of spoken voice that could be heard while reading a text.
- ✓ Butler, 1990: the 'real' self and 'artificial imposed identities' adopted in writing.
- ✓ Matsuda, 2001: broad concept/amalgamative effect of discursive and non-discursive features.
- ✓ Prior, 2001; Pétric, 2010: social dimension
- ✓ Burguess and Ivanič, 2010: voice is inevitable in written texts.
- ✓ Tardy, 2012: "(…) all texts have a voice, expressed or perceived, is not property of the author but constructed by the social worlds that the author works within" (2012: 39)

Rhetorical attenuation
Salager-Meyers (1998)

Transitivity approach to SFG
Martínez (2001), Marín-Arrese (2002), Oliver (2004)

Self-representation
Burgess & Ivanic (2010)

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2.4 Writers' Identity, Visibility, Voice

Discrepancy in the conceptualisation of voice and stance:

Hunston & Thompson (2000): *Evaluation*

Goffman (1981): *Footing*

Biber &Finegan (2009): *Stance*

Hyland (1998): *Hedging*

Martin & White (2005): *Appraisal*

Metadiscourse approaches the study of the notion of voice through interpersonal markers which are mainly personal pronouns:
Self-mentions (Hyland 1998, 2005)

But are there other lexico-grammatical realisations different from self-mentions (e.g. pronouns) giving shape to the writers' voice?

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Medical electronic popularizations

The urgent need to find out medical information has led **institutions** and **mass media publications to craft a new digital genre** of expert / non-expert communication, without any previous agreement on either its rhetorical or discursive features. This genre, Med-E-Pops, which is embedded in the medical colony, has been identified as a blurred genre with hybrid functions and understood as a **reshaping and repurposing of medical research articles (Med-RAs),** in an attempt to facilitate understanding by a heterogeneous audience, the Internet community (Crowston and Williams, 2000)

Hands on!: Medical Research Article

Association of paternal age with perinatal outcomes between 2007 and 2016 in the United States: population based cohort study

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ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVE
To evaluate the impact of advanced paternal age on maternal and perinatal outcomes in the United States.

DESIGN
Retrospective, population based cohort study.

SETTING
US.

POPULATION
40 529 905 documented live births between 2007 and 2016.

MAIN OUTCOME MEASURES
Primary perinatal outcomes were gestational age, birth weight, Apgar score at five minutes, admission to a neonatal intensive care unit, need for postpartum antibiotics, and seizures. Primary maternal outcomes were gestational diabetes and pre-eclampsia. Secondary outcome was the number of preventable perinatal events.

RESULTS
Higher paternal age was associated with an increased the oldest partners. 13.2% (95% confidence interval 12.5% to 13.9%) of premature births and 18.2% (17.5% to 18.9%) of gestational diabetes in births associated with older fathers were estimated to be attributable to advanced paternal age.

CONCLUSIONS
Advanced paternal age is associated with negative effects on both mothers and offspring. Given the relatively low prevalence of advanced paternal age in the US, population level impacts are currently modest. Nevertheless, as advanced paternal age has doubled in the US over the past generation, further investigation is warranted of the impact on birth outcomes and public health.

Introduction
The age at which couples have children in the United States continues to increase.[1][2] The number of first births to women older than 35 years has risen by about 2% annually since the 1970s, and the percentage of all births in the US to fathers aged more than 40 has

Table 2. Move relationship between Med-RAs and Med-E-Pops according to the information structure and communicative purpose of each move

Askehave and Nielse's (2005) approach to electronic genres based on Swales' (1990) model:

✓The **role of writers** as *"entrepreneurs of science"* (Myers 1986, Adam-Smith 1987)
✓**Discourse community**: lay readers and medical personnel
✓**Purpose:** to disseminate trustworthy medical information outside the academia.

Med-E-RAs structure	MED-E-Pops structure
Introduction	**MOVE 1 *Introduction*** Summarises the Med-E-RA conclusions (some results) and names the authors, date and journal of publication
Methods (and patients)	**MOVE 2 *Contextualisation of the research process*** Methods; What researchers did
Results	**MOVE 3 *Further results***
Discussion	**MOVE 4 *Conclusions*** We can find sub-moves "a" or the sum of "a" and "b" a) Reflection and/or evaluation of the research done by related or unrelated researchers b) Advice (with further implications); recommendations related to the research findings

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Text 4: Older fathers more likely to have babies with health problems.

- -How is the writer represented?

- -What is the purpose of the text?

- -How is the receiver represented?

- - Lexico-grammatical features potentially associated with the **writers' presence**

- ✓ (…), **a new study reports** (…)
- ✓ **The** study, published in BMJ, **used data** gathered by (…)
- ✓ **The study** controlled (…)
- ✓ **The lead author**, Dr. Michael L. Eisenberg, director of male reproductive medicine and surgery at Stanford, said that (…)
- ✓ Still, **he** said, "Men should no longer think (…)

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Figure 1. Cline of (in)visibility designed for the interpretation of writers' visibility

[- visible Med-E-Pop writers]

Animate agents +verb
(We were able to separate the ancestral sex chromosome branch…)[only in Med-E-RAs]

Passive contructions+agent
(The research was financed by the World Health Organisation)

Agentless passive constructions
(Infection with the H1N1 virus has been reported)

Active verbs with inanimate subjects
(The study found that obese pregnant women …)

Reporting sequences
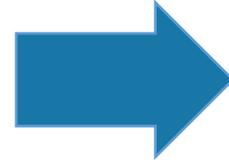*(Dr. De-Kun Li, the lead author, said that…)*

[+ visible Med-E-Pop writers]

Do genre and context shape writers' identity in scientific English texts?

4. Final remarks

The anwers is; YES, it does

- Context, discipline

- How digital genres constrain content

- (De)Voicing mechanism

Knowledge dissemination strategies (Turnbull, 2015)

✓The voice of the Med-E-Pops writers is effaced from their texts and, as a result, the Med-RAs writers' visibility is enhanced and reinforced so as to convey trustworthy texts, thus **complying with the Med-E-Pops readers' needs and expectations**.

✓Rise awareness around the notion of voice and disciplinary voice: How voice could be constrained by the discipline (Dressen-Hammouda, 2014), textual genre in use (Dressen-Hammouda, 2008).

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5.3 Other sources

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- Picture 6: https://www.townandcountrymag.com/society/tradition/g23897940/meghan-markle-prince-harry-royal-tour-sydney-australia-day-4-photos/?slide=7

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Thank you

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