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An exploration of the impact of students' prior genre knowledge on their constructions of 'audience' in a Marketing course at a postgraduate level.

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the development of audience awareness for two English additional language (EAL) graduate students making the transition from undergraduate Social Science disciplines into the professional discipline of Marketing at a South African university. The article examines the ways in which their conceptualisations of 'audience' shape their negotiation of the generic move structure informing a dominant genre within the discipline; the written case analysis. I argue that the students' struggle with realising the communicative purposes of the genre in their analyses has implications for how they engage with disciplinary theory within crucial moves. Data yielded by semi-structured interviews, reflection papers, as well as selected case analyses written by the students in the initial months of their postgraduate year illustrate how this struggle can be traced to a mismatch between their embodied understandings of the concept of 'audience' which are transported from undergraduate learning contexts, and 'audience' as prescribed by the communicative purpose of the written case analysis within a professional discipline. In making this argument, the article examines the ways in which an antecedent genre, the Social Science argumentative essay, contributes to this mismatch. The article concludes by outlining the pedagogical implications of the findings from an ESP perspective.

Keywords: Audience awareness; written case analysis; disciplinarity; antecedent genre; prior genre knowledge; transition

1. Introduction

Research conducted over the past twenty years has illustrated that, in the induction of novice writers into a new social context, the development of an awareness of the audience for which one writes is paramount as it reflects the writer's acknowledgement of the social practices shaping the genres therein (see for example, Herrington, 1985; Bazerman, 1988; Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995; Johns, 1997; Freedman *et al.*, 1994, Ramanathan & Kaplan, 1996; Hyland, 2004a, 2004b; Piretti, 2006; Hollis-Turner & Scholtz, 2010, Trimbur, 2010). As expounded by the tenets of genre analysis from an English for Specific Purpose (ESP) approach, the communicative purpose of a genre intrinsically informs its structure and content (Swales, 1990a; Bhatia, 1993), both of which are shaped by the values and expectations of the discipline and its members. Besides characterising writing as a social practice, this brings into focus the notion of a 'discourse community'. This term has been broadly used to refer to "a group of people who share certain language-using practices" (Bizzell, 1992: 222). As such, academic disciplines have been conceptualised as discourse communities in their own right (Swales, 1990a). This implies that the socially-situated act of acquiring genre knowledge is one which typically takes place within a disciplinary discourse community for a specific audience. The ESP approach focuses on the rhetorical organisation of genres, that is, the moves constituting a genre, where each move is seen to have a distinct communicative purpose (see Swales, 1990b; Swales & Feak, 2000; Hyland, 2004a). The envisaged audience thus informs the ways in which knowledge is presented within each of these moves (Harris, 1989; Bizzell, 1992).

Within professional disciplines such as Marketing, however, the development of audience awareness becomes complicated by the use of classroom genres for the simulation of workplace practices. Here, the primary objective is the practical socialisation of student writers into management discourse through "the depiction of actual business situations in the classroom" (Forman & Rymer, 1999:378); a process which trains them to apply disciplinary theory to real-world contexts. The written case analysis (also known as the case write-up) is one such genre. Its overall communicative purpose is the provision of workable recommendations for the addressing of a specific problem within an organisation by applying the discipline's body of knowledge to the facts of the business organisation. Fulfilling this social purpose entails the negotiation of three roles or personae; that of problem-solver;

practical manager as well as the disciplinary thinker, whose objective is to ‘perform knowledge’ (Paretti, 2006: 189) for the lecturer. Taking up these roles then has implications for the audience which the student is seen to address; the ‘simulated audience’ which is represented by imagined clients and the ‘real audience’ as represented by the lecturers (Hollis-Turner & Scholtz, 2010: 242; see also Zhu, 2004).

The benefits of using simulated genres within business courses have been questioned by writing scholars such as Freedman *et al.*, (1994). Based on a comprehensive empirical investigation into the teaching of professional genres within academic contexts, these scholars argue that the literacy practices these genres seek to teach are typically decontextualised as the production of the corresponding genres in professional contexts is embedded within a significantly different set of literacy practices and ideologies (see for example, Huettman’s (1996) article which illustrates some of the factors affecting audience concerns in the writing of a business report within a professional setting). This inability of academic contexts to capture the authenticity of professional contexts then, in Freedman *et al.*’s (1994) view, implies that the ultimate audience for whom the student writes is the lecturer (p.203) and that the analysis produced in the writing of these genres is one which foregrounds the display of disciplinary knowledge at the expense of the social practices which shape individuals’ actions in workplace contexts.

Notwithstanding this lack of authenticity in business academic genres, the discursive practices embedded within the moves constituting the case analysis still require the negotiation of the professional and academic personae referred to earlier. It is therefore important to understand the ways in which disciplinary novices attempt to make meaning as they write from these subject positions and the implications of their conceptualisations of audience for this process. This is especially important at a time when higher education is increasingly moving away from an elite educational system in which knowledge is important for its own sake to a focus on professional degrees for “work-based knowledge competencies” (Kraak, 2000:10).

In the next section, I present the generic move structure of the genre of the case analysis so as to illustrate the extent to which the communicative purpose underlying each move

dictates the audience to be addressed and therefore the role which the student writer is expected to inhabit.

2. The generic move structure of the written case analysis

The case analysis prepares students for the decision-making process which characterises the professional field of Marketing. Typically, students produce the genre with the aim of presenting it orally in class, hence the distinction between ‘written’ and ‘oral’. The student is expected to formulate a strategy for a selected profit-making business / case study by answering a set of case questions. In answering these, their response takes the form of a report as the questions are linked; building up to a question that requires the student to either provide a marketing strategy for a business organisation or to solve a specific problem that the organisation is facing by providing recommendations. Below are the moves which constitute the written case analysis.

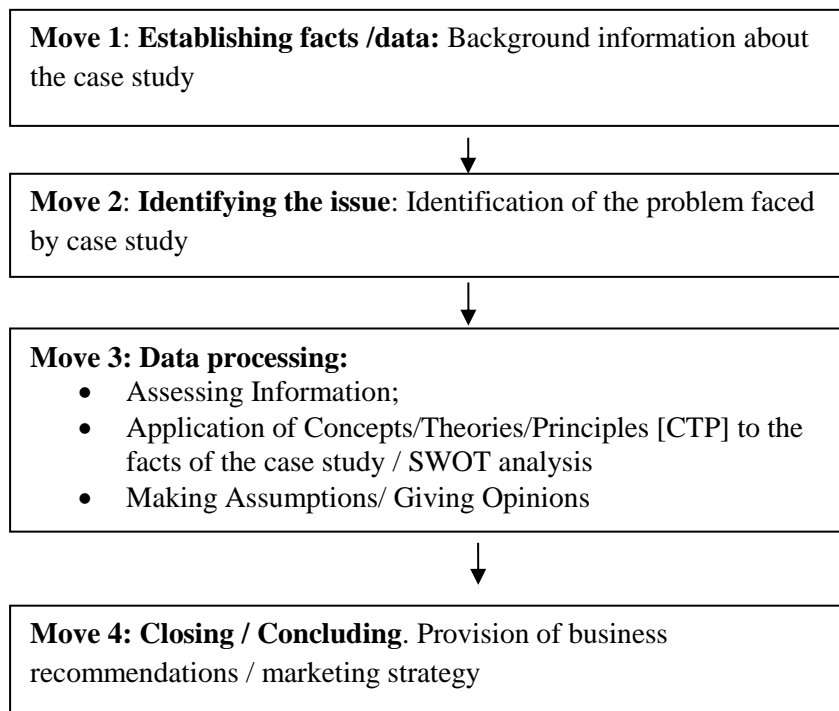


Figure 1: Generic structure of Marketing cases (adapted from Lung 2008)

As is illustrated in Figure 1, move 1 establishes the facts/data about the business which are presented to the student. In move 2, the issue or problem emanating from the data is established. The student achieves this by firstly conducting a macro and micro-environmental analysis as well as a SWOT analysis which considers the case study's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The macro-environment includes external factors such as the political environment in which the business operates while the micro-environment would consider internal factors such as the business organisation's marketing mix or four Ps: pricing, promotion, place and product. The Data Processing move (move 3) is essentially made up of three sub-moves as outlined in Figure 1. Firstly, the relevant data presented in move 1 are assessed. These are usually in the form of background information of the company such as its daily operations and marketing strategies. The second sub-move, a crucial one in the production of the genre, entails an application of the discipline's concepts, theories and principles (CTP) to the facts of the case. In executing this sub-move, the student is required to demonstrate an understanding of the CTP which are appropriate for the addressing of the problems faced by the organisation, thus effectively assuming the disciplinary thinker role. The third sub-move, which is optional, is where opinions, counter-arguments and assumptions regarding the issues of the case are offered. In the Closing move, the student takes on the role of manager as he / she draws on the insights gained from the data processing move to present the claim which comes in the form of recommendations or a marketing strategy for the business organization. The interconnectedness of these moves is evident in Forman and Rymer's (1999:107) statement: "... each move, reflecting specific cognitive structures for organizing the text, carries out part of the overall purpose of the genre". A successful negotiation of these moves requires an awareness of how disciplinary theory functions within each move, as well as the extent to which one can draw on it in addressing the communicative purpose therein.

3. The role of theory within business genres in professional disciplines

Yeung (2007:162) alludes to the role of theory in her description of the overall communicative purpose of business case reports within the workplace: "When a ground survey on the topic is conducted in business reports, it is carried out not to review existing literature theoretically but to identify best practices in industry in order to arrive at the best solution for the problem concerned" therefore "conceptual models are examined not for their

theoretical significance, but for their practical value of application” (p. 162). However, while the written case analysis allows for an effective simulation of the business report, the student has to take into consideration its disciplinary context where the imparting of disciplinary knowledge remains one of its important objectives alongside the more practical concerns of the discipline. This is evident in Muller’s (2009) distinction between the knowledge forms guiding different disciplines.

In accounting for differences in disciplinary practice, Muller (2009) makes the distinction between conceptual and contextual knowledge. He places these forms of knowledge on a continuum to make the important point that while all disciplinary curricula value both contextual and conceptual knowledge, “they differ in the mix” (p. 217). Professional disciplines such as Marketing are characterised by a strong emphasis on contextual knowledge which places emphasis on the application of theory to professional contexts as well as practical experience. On the other hand, disciplines such as Sociology, classified as ‘soft pure’ disciplines (see Becher, 1989), prioritise an understanding and interpretation of disciplinary theory and the discipline’s key concepts. The ‘mix’ alluded to by Muller implies that while professional disciplines prioritise application, an understanding of the theory which sustains them remains important.

In attempting to understand the implications of these differences for student writers, it is instructive to comprehend the epistemologies linked to these knowledge forms. In applied professional disciplines, for instance, the dominance of contextual knowledge in the curriculum shapes the ways in which knowledge is created, viewed and validated. In Marketing the application of a set of given facts within a specific context takes priority over the consideration of the role of the social environment in giving rise to these issues. On the other hand, the changes in approaches to knowledge which have occurred within Psychology and Sociology over the years have seen a shift from modernist to interpretivist epistemologies. Interpretivist approaches to knowledge critiqued the notion of the “self-contained individual” and instead afforded more space to relations between social structures and individual agency. Therefore, the context within which the individual operates, along with the key concepts within it, is prioritised in the various analyses produced by members within these disciplines.

4. The study and its methodology

4.1. Contextual background and methods

This article considers the complexities involved in the development of audience awareness for two graduate students making the transition from theory-driven Social Science disciplines into the professional Marketing diploma at a South African higher education institution. The students' embodied views of audience which are largely shaped by the writing they did within their undergraduate majors are considered alongside the process of reconciling the multiple roles / identities circumscribed for them by the written case analysis in their graduate learning context. In exploring this, I illustrate the ways in which the students' prior genre knowledge impacts on this process.

The article is derived from data yielded by two research projects. The first is a three-year longitudinal study in which a colleague and I tracked the ways in which twenty Social Science students negotiated the literacy practices of their various undergraduate disciplines (see Kapp & Bangeni, 2009 for a detailed description of this study). The second study, my doctoral research project, focuses on six students from this group who proceeded to register for postgraduate studies. In their final year of undergraduate studies, the students had written reflection papers in which they reflected on their writing practices in the course of their three years in the Social Sciences and the shifts which they had observed in their writing within this time. One of the aspects of their writing which we had asked them to consider in their undergraduate reflection was their sense of audience in the writing they did within their various undergraduate disciplines. They had also submitted marked essays from their courses and we had conducted semi-structured interviews with them at least twice a year during the three years. In their postgraduate year, I conducted semi-structured interviews with the students and they wrote reflection papers in which they described their transition into the professional disciplines of Marketing and Law and their engagement with the discipline-specific literacy practices therein. The semi-structured interviews which I conducted with them, one in the first semester and the other in the second, sought their views on their transition into their new disciplines and their engagement with the literacy practices shaping these disciplines (see Appendices 1 and 2 for the interview schedules).

Two of the students who proceeded to postgraduate studies, Susan and Sizwe (pseudonyms), registered for the Marketing diploma within the Commerce faculty's School of Management Studies. Susan, a second language speaker of English from Taiwan, had been in South Africa for ten years at the time when this research was conducted. Sizwe, on the other hand, was a local, having grown up and received his education in a township school situated on the outskirts of the city. Both students had Sociology as one of their undergraduate majors.

In describing their transition into Marketing, the students spoke about their challenges with the case analysis, a genre which they identified as being the most difficult to produce due to the fact that it is markedly different to the argumentative essays they wrote for Sociology. Using Stephen Toulmin's (1958) model of argumentation, I then analysed case analyses which they had submitted with the intention of exploring the extent to which the challenges they spoke about appeared in their writing. Toulmin's (1958) model of argumentation is advocated not only as a model for constructing credible arguments within certain disciplines, but is also utilized as a tool for their analysis (see for example Yeh, 1998). While his model is largely applicable to legal arguments, convincing cases have been made for its applicability to business writing (Rogers, 1992). Rogers (1992) specifically discusses the relevance of Toulmin's model for evaluating argument structure in "documents intended to promote or defend specific conclusions or recommendations regarding an action such as a proposal for a new product marketing strategy" (p.5). At its most basic, his model illustrates how the writer arrives at a claim / recommendations through drawing on a set of established data which are moved through relevant warrants / disciplinary theory or CTP. These warrants then become the foundation of the claim, serving to support and strengthen it. It is, therefore, a relevant tool with which to analyse my research participants' argumentation processes within the Marketing case analysis as the generic move structure of the written case analysis follows the pattern of argumentation advocated by this model (see Appendices 3 and 4 for an illustration of how I analysed the students' case analyses using Toulmin's model of argumentation).

5. Findings

5.1. Students' perceptions of their struggles with the case analysis

Susan and Sizwe's responses to my interview question regarding their challenges with producing the written case analysis were mainly in relation to achieving a coherent analysis. Both students cited this as one of their main challenges in writing for Marketing:

I would say coherence is more important when you are writing the case analysis in my new discipline. I start by pulling out important facts about the business, I then do a lot of readings and when I'm going to put my work together, like incorporating different views from different people while trying to focus on the business, I kind of struggle to structure it coherently. It is a lot of things which one needs to consider and that makes it more complicated to write than the Humanities essays. So for me it's all about coherence [Sizwe, postgraduate interview 2].

Sizwe's concern around synthesising information into a coherent text was also evident in Susan's lengthy comment on her new discipline's discourse conventions:

You know they ask you to do the SWOT analysis, the environmental analysis, the micro and the macro analysis and as you do this you are being guided by the questions. Doing the analysis is good because it highlights everything for you. So when you answer the questions you can say because of the analysis therefore this. So I can see the logic of doing that but at the same time it is difficult putting all the parts together to form a coherent argument as there is a lot to consider. Even though we wrote long essays in the Humanities it was much simpler to put my argument together as one had to mainly make sure they didn't contradict their thesis statement in the different sections of the essay [Postgraduate interview 2].

The above statements illustrate how both students found argumentation in Marketing not only different but more complex than the argument construction required in their argumentative essays. The students' struggles with presenting a coherent argument can be explained in terms of the differences between the key actions required in the case analysis and the

argumentative essay respectively. Lung (2006: 180) uses the term “lexical signals” to refer to action words denoting the kind of action required of the student writer in academic writing tasks. The differences in the communicative purpose of the argumentative essay and the case analysis are visible in the lexical signals deployed within these genres. While the key actions within the argumentative essays which students wrote in their undergraduate disciplines were typically formed around a single action, usually requiring an *analysis* or an *evaluation*, the case analysis is more demanding in terms of the cognitive moves the student is expected to execute in arriving at the claim. The genre constitutes moves for which the student is required to ‘*identify*’ (move 1), ‘*analyse*’ (move 2) and ‘*evaluate*’ (move 3) respectively in order to come up with a marketing strategy or recommendations in the concluding move. This contributes to the cognitive load to which the two students referred when they attempted to explain the breakdown in coherence in their argument.

Johns’ (1986) definition of coherence allows one to move beyond a focus on its structural aspect which both students emphasised in describing their challenges. Johns maintains that coherence should be defined in terms of the reader as well as the text. Given this, she defines the term in the following way:

Coherence is text-based and consists of the ordering and interlinking of propositions within a text by use of appropriate information structure. At the same time coherence is reader-based; the audience and the assignment must be consistently considered as the discourse is produced and revised (p. 251).

While students perceived their struggles to be mainly centred on achieving structural coherence, my analysis of their case analyses mainly pointed to a struggle with achieving reader-based coherence. In the next section, I illustrate how this struggle can be traced to their understandings of ‘audience’ which they transported from their undergraduate disciplines, particularly that of their major, Sociology.

5.2. *The problem of 'audience': transferring notions from undergraduate learning contexts*

In the second postgraduate interview I asked the students to describe the differences in the literacy practices and argumentation evident in their undergraduate and postgraduate contexts. Susan responded to this question in the following way:

If looking back from undergraduate writing style and practices, and having changed from Humanities to Commerce, I found that Humanities largely focuses on theory whereas Commerce places emphasis on application. For instance, the Sociology assignments and essays need to reflect an understanding of the relevant theories and evidence of the prescribed readings. For the Commerce courses, the books and theories are still needed but now the main thing is how we apply these theories (Postgraduate Interview 2).

Susan's statement indicates that she was aware of the need to take one's audience into consideration in constructing her argument. While her statement reflects an understanding of the differences in argumentation between the two learning contexts and the centrality of application in Marketing, both students' writing was reflective of struggles with reconciling these differences as their analyses fell short of accommodating the various needs of their audience(s) in engaging with the written case analysis in their new learning context. Zhu (2004:124) explains the significance of 'audience' within Marketing:

Congruent to their assuming business roles, students are instructed to target the intended business audience in their assignments. The business audience is often described by faculty as highly critical people who [need] specific information to make business decisions, such as clients, supervisors, investors, members of boards of directors and owners of business. When working on a particular business assignment, students [are] urged to keep a specific audience in mind and to address issues particularly relevant for the chosen audience.

The quote from Zhu points to the specificity of 'audience' in business writing. It illustrates how this notion is not a straight-forward one but is determined by the social role the student is expected to assume. In their undergraduate studies in the Social Sciences, however, the students were operating with a significantly generalised notion of the term. In his final-year undergraduate reflection paper, Sizwe presented his understanding of 'audience' in his

response to the following question, “*What changes have you noticed in your writing in the past three years (think around structure, sense of audience, referencing, argument construction (coherence and cohesion))*”:

In writing my essays, I regard the audience as a person who does not understand the topic being dealt with. Therefore, I always define the concepts being used in the essay. This makes the reader to clearly understand my argument mainly because it is being clearly explained and therefore simplified as the concepts are clearly defined for them [Undergraduate reflection paper].

Sizwe’s conceptualisation of this notion positions the audience as a non-expert on the topic, with his role being that of facilitating an understanding of the content for the reader. Susan’s reference to ‘audience’ in her response to the same question in her reflection paper suggested a similar understanding. She wrote: “In second year I started writing with the thought of the reader in mind. I thought of the audience as any reader and therefore all terms that need to be explained should be explained and the reader needs to understand the essay”. In addition to perceiving the reader as a non-expert in the same way that Sizwe did, her statement also reflected how she thought of ‘audience’ in terms of a random reader. It is obvious from both statements that Sizwe’s and Susan’s understandings of ‘audience’ were markedly different from the understanding their new discipline required them to have.

A significant factor in Susan’s conceptualisation of audience was that for her, the notion of ‘audience’ on which she drew extended to include a friend who had edited her writing in her undergraduate years, whom I shall call ‘Andrea’. This is obvious from the number of times she referred to Andrea in her reflection paper, illustrating the ways in which Andrea’s input had come to shape her views of herself as a writer: “At the end of first year my writing had improved, but there were still many errors – as Andrea frequently asked me what I was trying to say”. In the same reflection paper under her description of her writing in her second and third year she continued to construct her writer identity around Andrea’s feedback:

Starting from second year, under the influence of Andrea’s style of writing, my essays were not only aimed to pass but to get a high mark. I can also see that my style of writing is similar to Andrea’s style of writing, but at the same time, my writing was

aimed to include ‘quality’ – feelings, insights, analyses and so forth and to explain them in a way that Andrea would understand [UG reflection paper, 2004].

Judging from the above extract, Susan’s notion of audience was strongly shaped by her interactions with Andrea. When she wrote, she mimicked Andrea’s writing style and the content she included was informed by the advice given to her by Andrea and was clarified to facilitate understanding for her. The transition into the Marketing discourse community, however, required a mental shift from viewing the audience as a non- expert to a view of audience as a reader who is an expert in the discourse of the discipline and who therefore plays a regulatory function in terms of the nature of the content that constitutes one’s analysis.

While both students described their Marketing audience as one which valued application which would lead to a set of recommendations, it was evident from my analysis of their writing that their undergraduate conceptualisations of audience persisted at the postgraduate level. In the next section I illustrate the ways in which this is reflected in case analyses which both students wrote in the first semester of their Marketing diploma. My analysis reflects that an aspect of argument construction which posed a challenge for the students and one which was evident in most of the case analyses I analysed had to do with the *application* of the discipline’s concepts, theories and principles (CTP) to the data of the case study. The students’ challenges with application manifested in two ways in their writing. Firstly, their analyses were characterised by a detailed engagement with the CTP which they were required to link to the issues arising out of the case study’s facts. This resulted in them ‘getting lost’ in the theory, which then compromised their ability to effectively execute the application phase of their analysis. The other manifestation of this challenge was in the ways in which students approached and utilised the data or given facts in their analyses of the organisation in question. In describing these challenges, I illustrate how an antecedent genre, the Social Science argumentative essay, impacted on their engagement with the various moves within the genre.

5.3. Getting lost in the theory

The data indicate that the majority of the challenges that the Marketing students described broadly as ‘struggles with coherence’ in their interviews can be traced to a struggle with engaging appropriately with the discipline’s CTP in executing the data processing stage of their argumentation which entails applying these CTP to the problem faced by the organisation. This challenge then had implications for their ability to negotiate the last move of the genre where they were required to provide recommendation for the business. The two students explained this by pointing to the ways of engaging with theory within the argumentative essay which they produced within most of their Social Science disciplines.

In attempting to account for the above challenge, I look to the move structure of the argumentative essay. Hyland (1990) offers a detailed representation of the moves which the student writer negotiates in producing this genre. Even though the structure of the argumentative essay is not as settled as Hyland’s illustration suggests, his illustration captures the genre’s typical structure in the three main stages or moves he presents. The first of these is the introduction where the writer presents background material in order to contextualise the topic. The claim is then presented immediately at the beginning of move 2 along with its supporting statements, leading to move 3, the conclusion where the propositions presented in move 2 are summarised.

MOVE 1

Thesis. Introduces the proposition to be argued. Controversial statement or dramatic illustration.

(Information) – presents background material for topic contextualisation.

(Evaluation) – Positive gloss – brief support of Proposition

(Marker) – Introduces and / or identifies a list.

MOVE 2

Argument. Discusses grounds for thesis:

Marker – signals the introduction of a claim and relates it to the text.

Restatement – Rephrasing or repetition of proposition

Claim – states reason for acceptance of the Proposition. Typically based on:

- a. Strength of perceived shared assumptions
- b. A generalization based on data or evidence.
- c. Force of conviction

Support

States the grounds which underpin the claim.

Typically:

- a. Explicating assumptions used to make claim.
- b. Providing data or citing references

(This four move argument sequence can be repeated indefinitely)

MOVE 3

Conclusion. Synthesizes **Marker** –signals conclusion boundary

Discussion and affirms the validity of the thesis.

Consolidation – presents the significance of the argument stage to the proposition.

(Affirmation) – restates proposition

(Close) – widens context or perspective of proposition.

Figure 2: Elements of structure of the argumentative essay (Hyland 1990)

The students' struggles with engaging with disciplinary theory can be explained by considering the structural elements of move 2 within the argumentative essay. This move consists of a number of mini-arguments, where each proposition which is put forward is addressed fully within this stage and is supported with the relevant CTP. Move 2 thus represents the core of the argument. The conclusion (move 3) merely serves to consolidate the argument and to restate what the writer has already proposed in the second move. In the Marketing case analysis however, engagement with the CTP remains important but constitutes one of a number of moves which work towards fulfilling a more central aspect of

the genre's objectives, that of application. This is done in order to produce the recommendations or marketing strategy for the case study, a move which occurs in the last stage in the conclusion. This structural difference is what came to influence students' argument construction within their case analyses, as they tended to 'get lost' in a detailed engagement with the theory.

One of the case analyses which students had to produce was based on a case study of Pages, a clothing store which operated during the apartheid era in South Africa and which had black people as its main target market. In this case analysis, they were required to analyse Pages in terms of its marketing mix to consider Pages' product, its place, its pricing and promotional strategies in order to understand the factors which initially made it prosper and those which eventually led to its demise. The end objective of the analysis was to provide recommendations for Pages.

Sizwe's difficulty with engaging with the relevant CTP was evident in his move 3 where he should have been applying the relevant theory to the problems faced by Pages which would have been established in move 2. However, move 3 was characterised by a heavy focus on theoretical principles (see the shaded section in Appendix 3). In this move, he was considering the relevance of the relationship marketing principle for Pages:

The aim of marketing relationship is to build a mutually satisfying long-term relation with key parties such as consumers, suppliers and distributors (Kotler, 2003). Kotler argues that if a company is to increase earnings and retain business, "marketers should deliver high-quality products and services at fair prices to the other parties over time". Here, what Kotler means is that the company must be strategic in terms of what it sells. Additionally, he argues that a company must understand that relationship marketing is one of the major contributors towards marketing strategies of the company (Kotler, 2003).

According to Kotler (2003), "relationship marketing builds strong economic, technical and social ties among the parties". Furthermore, "the ultimate outcome of relationship marketing is the building of a unique company asset called a marketing network" (Kotler, 2003). According to Kotler (2003), "the operating principle is simple, just build an effective network of relationships with key stakeholders, and profits will follow".

Looking at Kotler's principle of building a mutual relationship with key stakeholders, Pages failed to follow the necessary approach in that it did not build a future-oriented

relationship marketing that would maintain customers even if there is emergence of the new potential competitors.

As illustrated by the underlined sections, Sizwe concentrated on the explication of Kotler's principles for his reader rather than on an active application of the CTP to the particular issues of the case study. The result is that the crucial facts of the case study against which he needed to consider these CTP were tagged on in the last paragraph of his data processing move in what seemed like an afterthought. His tutor responded to this with the following comment: "You are quoting way too much! You aren't applying it to the case study very well". Most of his paragraphs within the data processing move followed the same format; an over-detailed engagement with the CTP, leaving very little room to illustrate how these could be applied to the problem faced by Pages. In her overall comments at the end of his case analysis the tutor cautioned, "It is great that you know the theory, but the key with a case study is to apply it – you need to get that part right". Sizwe's response to this feedback in our interview pointed to his assumption of an audience as one which needs to be persuaded intellectually through the display of adequate theoretical knowledge. He stated: "well, like we did in Sociology, one has to ensure that they are on top of the theory so that the reader can be convinced". The marker's feedback, however, signalled how this happened at the expense of the more practical concerns of the analysis. The students' attempts to do the theory justice meant that they often overlooked the important step of applying the CTP in order to realise the main communicative purpose of the genre; the *evaluation* of the case study's marketing strategy.

5.4. Contextualisation of data in the genres

It is also significant that within the argumentative essay, argument construction occurs partly through careful contextualisation. Hyland's (1990) presentation of the genre's move structure illustrates that move 1 includes a presentation of background material for contextualisation of the topic (see figure 2). The background material presented as part of this context-building within the Social Science essay constitutes knowledge which is largely contested within the discipline as opposed to established company facts within the Marketing case analysis. In the argumentative essay, therefore, this contextualisation is seen to

constitute a crucial part of the analysis as it typically reflects the position advocated by the author.

The manner in which Susan engaged with the Pages data in move 2 illustrates how the typical manner of presenting background material in the argumentative essay shaped her actions within this move. In her analysis, Susan began by giving the contextual facts about Pages such as its target audience, and the political environment within which it had been established in move 1. As part of move 2, in considering the issues which needed attention within the business, she identified the role of credit therein as constituting one of the factors which had led to its demise:

Impact and the role of credit until 1998

The credit account system was introduced, allowing the customers to use the product while paying for the item. For stores such as Pages, well established with recognised 'store status', credit provides creditability for the consumers to further open accounts at other stores (Simpson & Dore, 2004). Credit can be seen as a tool for the customers to increase their buying power, but not necessarily the power to settle their debts. The credit systems work in the favour of the customers, which can increase their satisfaction and gets them to continue shopping at a store.

An adequate utilisation of the background material, in this case, the role of credit within the case study, entailed drawing out the relevant facts about credit which would give the reader insight into the demise of Pages as a business organisation. This information on the use of credit by Pages would then be addressed in the application phase of the analysis. Susan, however, saw the need to provide the reader with as much context as possible in discussing the role of credit in Pages stores in her move 2. The underlined statements illustrate how she offered explanations of the concept of credit as well as its role in retaining consumers. Her marker responded to the above information by cautioning: "Don't waffle – give just the relevant facts". Susan's explanation for this 'waffling' again emphasised her need to contextualise the principles of credit for her audience before proceeding to consider the facts of the case study in relation to marketing principles, which is what she would have done in Sociology. However, in her new context, her notion of what was important seemed to override the need to consider these principles in relation to the relevant facts for the case study which would be in keeping with the genre's communicative purpose.

This focus on contextualising the notion of credit in her move 2 had negative consequences for the subsequent moves in her analysis (see shaded sections in Appendix 4 where I illustrate my analysis of her argument). Her inability to clearly identify the problematic areas regarding credit resulted in an omission of the relevant theory which could be used to address these problems in move 3. This then had dire consequences for her attempts to provide recommendations in the conclusion:

Pages was a thoughtful and well-strategised business. It hit the target market and had its period of glory. However, as it basked in this glory and pride, it neglected the upcoming changes in the country to be able to adjust itself before the problem occurs. Nevertheless, the change of name from Pages to ‘Exact’ kindles a new ray of hope. Hopefully, ‘Exact’ will exactly answer the needs of the consumers.

Susan’s recommendations move was characterised by sentimental statements instead of concrete recommendations for Pages. Instead, she restated the reason which led to Pages’ demise, which was that it failed to anticipate the implications of the political changes in the country. An effective conclusion would have broken this broad statement down to focus on the various ways in which Pages did indeed neglect these upcoming political changes; one of which would have been its use of credit. Her focus on explaining the theoretical principles of credit instead of focusing on how these could be applied to Pages’ situation then resulted in her losing sight of the recommendations which could be drawn from this application.

The position of the claim in the two genres could also assist in explaining the above struggle. As is evident in the generic move structure of the written case analysis, the student works systematically and logically toward the presentation of the claim at the end of the argument. However, the form taken by their Social Science argumentative essays mostly requires that students state the claim in move 1, in the introductory paragraph, as well as in subsequent paragraphs of move 2. There is, therefore, a constant reminder of the thesis around which the student as author shapes his or her argument. This difference seems to have contributed to how students perceived the ‘real work’ as occurring at the beginning of the case analysis, which would explain their detailed contextualisation of background material.

6. Discussion and conclusion

The findings discussed in the previous sections highlight how, in producing the claim within the case analysis in Marketing, the student is required to take on a professional identity more so than their undergraduate disciplines required. This necessitates a balancing of the needs and expectations of ‘real’ as well as ‘imagined’ audiences. At the postgraduate level of study, the assumption is that students are able to successfully anticipate their audience through a consideration of the generic conventions they deploy in their argument construction as they have done in prior learning contexts. This article illustrates the ways in which the process of arriving at this understanding can be complicated by the interference of the multi-layered understandings of ‘audience’ which the postgraduate student brings to the act of writing. The findings also illustrate how the audiences which student-writers invoke in the writing process are informed by a variety of factors which do not necessarily form part of the immediate disciplinary space. While the centrality of the lecturer or ‘real’ audience cannot be overlooked, the students’ struggles point to the concrete ways in which the need to take on the professional identity of problem-solver and manager can be problematic for the disciplinary novice. The process of applying the CTP to the specificities of the case study invokes the roles of problem-solver and practical manager as it is through this application that the provision of relevant recommendations for the business can be made. For the two students however, the disciplinary thinker role served to eclipse the professional personae they were required to adopt as their approach to theory was more aligned with the communicative purpose of the argumentative essay; which is to persuade intellectually. Due to this, they struggled to adjust to the practical purpose of theory within a professional context.

In considering the pedagogical implications of these findings from an ESP perspective, the nature of the support provided for disciplinary novices needs to highlight the centrality of form and function in the writing of the discipline’s key genres, namely, the ways in which a genre’s key function is realized in its form. The findings highlight the importance of providing student writers with some kind of map of the structural moves informing these genres accompanied by discussions of how the communicative purpose of a genre intimately shapes the manner and extent to which one draws on disciplinary theory in each move. As part of this induction, the applied professional nature of the discipline which informs the structure of these genres would be emphasised to disciplinary novices. In this regard,

disciplinary experts could facilitate tasks which encourage the student to engage critically with the principles underlying the form of the discipline's genres.

The ways in which students described the intrinsic values of Marketing in their interviews indicated that they were aware of the differences between these and those shaping their undergraduate discourse communities. Despite this awareness, students' constructions of 'audience' in writing the case analysis continued to be shaped by their understandings of audience as shaped by their Social Science disciplines, particularly by the argumentative essay. Reiff and Bawarshi's (2011) recent study examines how students access prior genre knowledge in new writing contexts. Their notion of 'repurposing' (p. 314) prior genre knowledge to facilitate engagement with new genres entails questioning the extent to which they can(not) draw on this knowledge in new learning contexts. When applied to postgraduate students entering professional disciplines, this repurposing would include sensitizing them to audience expectations and the implications thereof for their analyses, while taking into account the ways in which prior genre knowledge potentially impacts on this process. This repurposing could also go some way in addressing the mismatch between students' and disciplinary experts' conceptualizations of the notion of audience. The findings underscore the need for a dialogue between disciplinary experts and novices on the appropriate uses and understandings of 'audience' within professional disciplines, so as to address the assumption that there is a shared understanding between the novice and the disciplinary insider.

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Appendix 1: Interview schedule for 1st postgraduate interview

This interview seeks to understand your transition into Marketing as well as how you perceive yourself as a postgraduate student.

- 1. What factors contributed to your graduation?**
- 2. Are there any support structures within the university which you regard as having contributed to you graduating?**
- 3. What influenced your decision to register for postgraduate studies?**
- 4. How are you finding postgraduate studies?**
- 5. Do you still feel that language is an issue for you at the postgraduate level?**
- 6. Are you enjoying writing for the courses for which you are registered?**
- 7. Do you personally feel that you have changed as a person?**
- 8. Where to from here? What are your plans for next year?**

Appendix 2: Interview schedule for 2nd postgraduate interview on writing

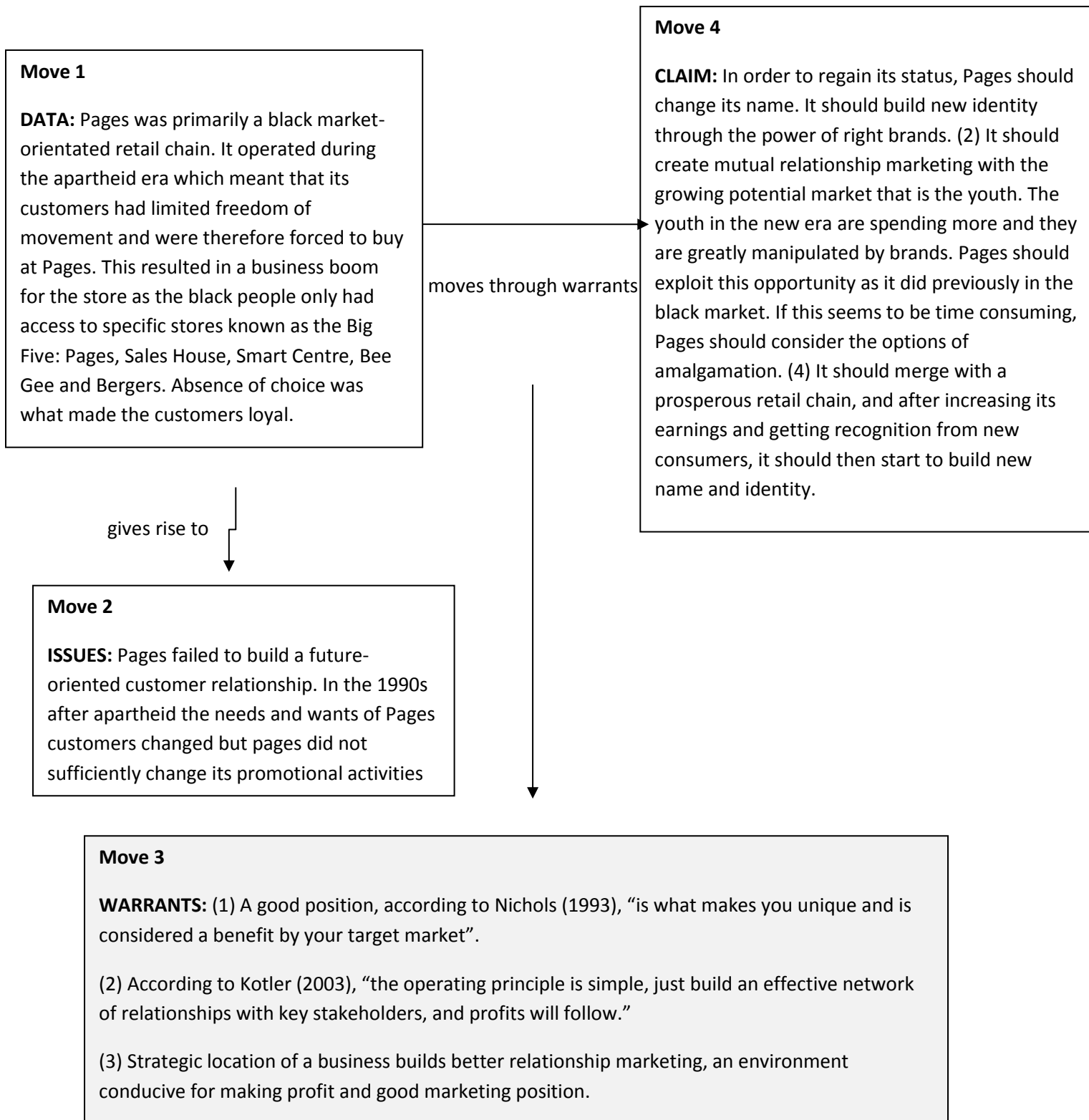
Thank you so much for agreeing to be interviewed again. While the first interview sought to gain a general view of your transition into your new discipline, this interview will focus on your writing.

- 1. How would you define your academic discipline?**
- 2. How would you compare your current discipline with your undergraduate majors?**
- 3. How are the writing practices different at the postgraduate level?**
- 4. What ways of arguing / producing knowledge are valued by your lecturers in your discipline?**
- 5. What constitutes a good essay in your new discipline?**
- 6. Is there any genre which you find particularly difficult to write? Explain your answer**
- 7. What is your understanding of audience in your new discipline?**
- 8. What strategies have you used to achieve coherence in your writing? Do you feel that these strategies are effective for your discipline? Explain your answer.**

Appendix 3: Illustration of Sizwe's argument using Toulmin's (1958) model of argumentation

Write a report in which you provide an analysis of Pages store by focusing on the following:

- A background of Pages
- A SWOT analysis of the Marketing environment in which Pages functioned
- How the marketing mix applies to the information in the previous bullet
- The changes which impacted on Pages as a business
- The responses of Pages to those changes
- Based on the insights from all these steps, you need to provide recommendations for Pages as a business.



Appendix 4: Illustration of Susan's argument using Toulmin's (1958) model of argumentation

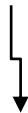
Move 1

Data: Pages targeted the medium to low income groups and located in the areas near the transport nodes for convenience (Simpson & Dore, 2004).

This line of chain also aims to provide the target consumers varieties of acceptable quality products at a reasonable price (Simpson & Dore, 2004).

Pages was aware of the importance of brands and design their merchandise mix accordingly to meet their customers' needs.

After apartheid: Level of bad debt on increase, many customers do not have the power to settle their debts, and reach the state of written off their account and been black listed (Simpson & Dore, 2004).



Move 2

Issues:

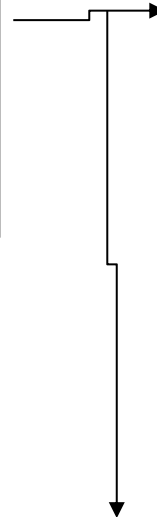
For stores such as Pages, well established with recognised 'store status', credit provides creditability for the consumers to further open accounts at other stores (Simpson & Dore, 2004). Credit can be seen as a tool for the customers to increase their buying power, but not necessarily the power to settle their debts. The credit systems work in the favour of the customers, which can increase their satisfaction and gets them to continue shopping at a store.

Move 4

Claim:

Conclusion and Recommendations

Pages was a thoughtful and well-strategised business. It hit the target market and had its period of glory. However, as it basked in this glory and pride, it neglected the upcoming changes in the country to be able to adjust itself before the problem occurs. Nevertheless, the change of name from Pages to 'Exact' kindles a new ray of hope. Hopefully, 'Exact' will exactly answer the needs of the consumers.



Move 3

Warrants: no warrants provided