

Writing for academic and occupational purposes: The case of the builders' diary genre



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Context

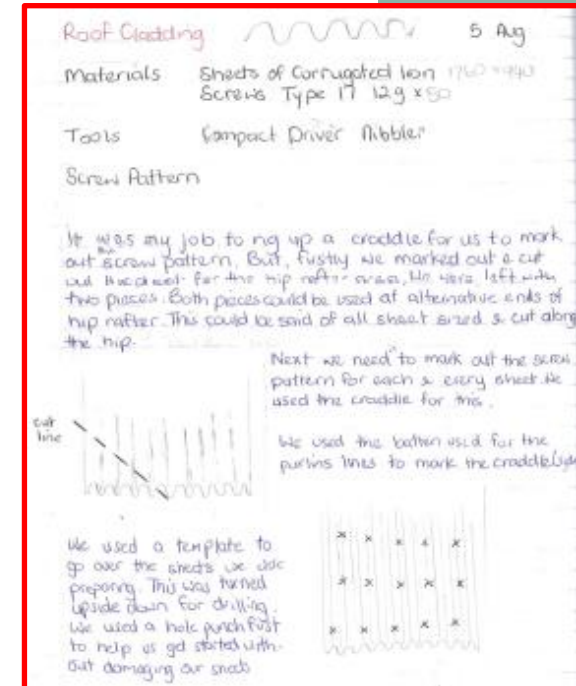
- A polytechnic institution in Wellington, NZ

Maori	Pakeha	Pasifika	Asian	European	Other
14%	52%	10%	15%	5%	4%

- Carpentry Diploma
- Assessed using Industry Unit Standards
- Students can be:
 - On-campus trainees
 - Cadets
 - Pacific Trades stream

The data set

- 53 diaries
- Total 213 000 words
- 52 male writers, 1 female
- 19 NNS (largely Samoan); 34 NS
- 19 Cadets; 34 on campus trainees



My talk today

- The genre features/rhetorical moves of builders' diaries
- (The linguistic features of builders' diaries)

What are genres?

- Martin (1984, p.25) genres are “**staged**, goal-oriented purposeful activities in which speakers engage as **members of their culture**”
- Lingard et al (2003, p. 603) Genre is “inherently ideological” - it “embodies unexamined or tacit ways of performing some **social action**”. “Standardized ways of communicating that users take to be common sense are motivated by and **responsive to particular audiences, purposes**, occasions, and contexts of situation.
- “Genres are typified forms of discourse – that is, forms that arise when responses to a specific need ... become regularised. **With repeated use, responses begin to conform to prior uses until the shape of these responses become expected by the users.**” (Tardy 2011, p. 54)

Stages

Culture

Social action

Purpose

Audience

Regularised
through
repeated use

Genres are staged: Move analysis

Moves are “semantic and functional units of text” that have specific communicative purposes (Biber et al 2007, p. 24).



Research article introductions (Swales, 1990)

❑ Move 1 Establishing a territory

Step 1 Claiming centrality ‘*Many investigators have recently turned to...*’

Step 2 Making topic generalisations ‘*A standard procedure for assessing...has been...*’

Step 3 Reviewing items of previous research ‘*Smith (1989) found a clear relationship between...*’

❑ Move 2 Establishing a niche

❑ Move 3 Occupying a niche

Members of a **culture**

- “I reckon, like, you know, you look like a builder, you walk like a builder, you might as well talk like a builder, you know what I mean, and that way we can have a conversation, we can get into the conversation, how builders talk [...] it’s the building terminology, builders have their own sort of language, and I try and get the guys to talk to me in that sort of language, similar language, you know the size of nails, the size of the timber, the grade of the timber, the treatment of the timber” (Carpentry tutor)

Multiple purposes, varied audience

1. Acquiring the habit of writing the diary – a genre important for a qualified carpenter;
“Teach them now and they'll have to do it in their working lives.”
2. Keeping a record for future reference:
“in 5 or 10 years’ time they can go back to that diary and say ‘how did I do it then?’”
3. Job prospects - the carpenter can prove the kinds of jobs he’s worked on:
“it gives an employer a better idea of what that student has been up to”
4. The possibility of having to give evidence in court in the case of a dispute:
“they are legally bound for 10 years [...] they can go back to their diary and say no sorry I wasn't on that wall I was on the north wall [...] if you stuffed up a wall before the leaky buildings they didn't chase down the individual builders, now it's all down to the individual builder who has worked on those particular walls.”
5. A record of hours worked for billing
6. Student assessment

??

Regularised through repeated use? Form & instruction

- "What we also encourage them to do is to attach photos or drawings of certain areas they've been working on as well as writing comments."
- "We don't actually have a teaching class for them to learn how to write in their diaries. We teach the diary on site. I say you just need to tell me what you've done for the day and where you've done it. So that's the basics. And then it gets more detailed as time goes on."
- "I have copies that I've taken of one of my students that I take that I keep with me. [...] you've got photos and descriptions to go with them. [...] Now not that I'm showing them how to do it but I give them the examples to have a look at so that's the only form of teaching I can give them on the spot 'cos I don't have the time to do it."

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Regularised through repeated use?: A partially 'occluded' genre

- No 'expert' diaries as examples
- Limited access to good student examples
- In the Pacific Trades stream, some initial diary entries were identical – tutor provided examples?
- How does the analyst find out the expected form and features of the diary?

Establishing criteria 'indigenous to the culture' for what constitutes a good diary entry

- Five Carpentry tutors were interviewed about the diaries
- Criteria for what constitutes a good diary entry were workshopped by 4 experienced Carpentry tutors

A rubric developed for assessment of diaries

CRITERIA	Fulfil the criterion
Materials, product information, tools and fixings	Mentions (lists) materials used, product information, appropriate tools used and appropriate fixings.
How the job was done. Issues and problems	Describes how the job was done including most key elements. Describes how the fixings were used
Drawings, photographs and text	Shows work done through photographs and/or drawings. Uses text to explain the photographs.
Language level and use of terminology	Shows appropriate understanding of all terms used.

'Fix' has a special meaning in construction. Fix means attaching something. The term 'fixings' is the bolts, screws etc." (tutor interview)

Photographs are evidence of work done

Language?
Limited to vocabulary use?

Identifying proficient diary writers

1. Workshopping criteria with tutors

- A rubric of 4 criteria was established through discussion amongst tutors
- 4 pages (\pm 600 words) of each of 5 diaries were graded independently by each tutor
- Tutors discussed differences in grading
- The rubric was adjusted to fine-tune the criteria

2. Grading the full data set

- 4 pages (\pm 600 words) of each of the 53 diaries in the data set was graded independently by each tutor
- This enabled us to grade the diaries on a scale from the most proficient writer to the least proficient writer

Analysing Moves

- Each move has its own purpose and contributes to the overall purposes of the text.
- Move length varies from less than a sentence to much longer stretches (Biber et al, 2007, p.31).
- Moves are identified both rhetorically (by attending to the move's purpose) and linguistically (e.g. by attending to use of sentence connectors, tense, mood etc.).

Move analysis: steps taken in doing the move analysis

- The 10 most proficient diaries (20%) were selected for analysis
- 1500 word section was selected (includes section rated by the tutors)
- Two raters
- Moves were distinguished as
 - Obligatory (>80% of texts)
 - Optional (<80% of texts)

	% of moves	Found in N diaries	
Move 1: Detailing time	17.5	8	obligatory
Move 1 Step 1: Detailing date	13.0	7	
Move 1 Step 2: Detailing time spent	4.4	3	
Move 2: Detailing Where the work was done	4.6	7	
Move 3: Listing materials	6.5	10	obligatory
Move 4: Referring to use of equipment	3.4	8	obligatory
Move 5: Detailing building work	59.9	10	obligatory
Move 5, Step 1: Detailing What was done	34.2	10	obligatory
Move 5, Step 2: Detailing How it was done	2.3	8	obligatory
Move 5, Step 3: Detailing Why it was done	6.2	9	obligatory
Move 5, Step 4: Detailing work with diagram	4.7	6	
Move 5, Step 5: Detailing work with photograph	10.4	8	obligatory
Move 5, Step 6: Referring to diagram/photograph	2.0	5	
Move 5, Step 7: Detailing dimensions	4.5	9	obligatory
Move 5, Step 8: Detailing Problems and limitations	0.3	3	
Move 5, Step 9: Detailing terms used	0.4	3	
Move 6: Noting instructions for future building work	1.7	3	
Move 7: Detailing cost	0.3	1	
Move 8: Detailing weather conditions	0.5	2	
Move 9: (Personal) comment unrelated to building	0.4	4	

Purpose in Builders' diaries

1. Listing materials and equipment

MOVES IN BUILDERS' DIARY

Move 1: Detailing date + time spent

Move 2: Detailing Where work was done

Move 3: Listing materials/fixtures

**Move 4: Referring to use of
equipment**

Move 5: Detailing building work

M5, S1: Detailing What was done

M5, S2: Detailing How it was done

M5, S3: Detailing Why it was done

M5, S4: Detailing work with diagram

M5, S5: Detailing work with photograph

M5, S6: Referring to diagram/photograph

M5, S7: Detailing dimensions

M5, S8: Problems and limitations

M5, S9: Detailing abbreviations/terms

Move 6: Noting instructions for future

Move 7: Making Personal comments

Move 8: Detailing cost

Move 9: Detailing weather conditions

Skylight frames
were gib 10mm
standard.

32mm gib screws &
gib glue.(Diary 51)

Weatherboards were
cut to length using a
drop-saw and joint
with beveled cuts
where necessary.
(Diary 49)

Purpose in Builders' diaries

2. Detailing building work



PINK BATS
(Diary 49)

MOVES IN BUILDERS' DIARY

Move 1: Detailing date + time spent

Move 2: Detailing Where work was done

Move 3: Listing materials/fixings

Move 4: Referring to use of equipment

Move 5: Detailing building work

M5, S1: Detailing What was done

M5, S2: Detailing How it was done

M5, S3: Detailing Why it was done

M5, S4: Detailing work with diagram

M5, S5: Detailing work - photograph

M5, S6: Refer to diagram/photograph

M5, S7: Detailing dimensions

M5, S8: Problems and limitations

M5, S9: Detailing abbreviations/terms

Move 6: Noting instructions for future

Move 7: Making Personal comments

Move 8: Detailing cost

Move 9: Detailing weather conditions

Once we had put up the end trusses and intermediate trusses, we began to apply the purlins which ran across the trusses (Diary 47)

The bats had to be carefully positioned around piping and wiring so that nothing was covered up which needed to be located later on eg. Lighting wires. (Diary 49)

How big our length of the piles are depends on ground of the site. Our site goes up and down, it is not a flat surface. (Diary 52)

Purposes served by moves in Builders' diaries

3. Professional purposes

MOVES IN BUILDERS' DIARY

Move 1: Detailing date + time spent

Move 2: Where work was done

Move 3: Listing materials/fixings

Move 4: Referring to use of equipment

Move 5: Detailing building work

M5, S1: Detailing What was done

M5, S2: Detailing How it was done

M5, S3: Detailing Why it was done

M5, S4: Detailing work with diagram

M5, S5: Detailing work with photograph

M5, S6: Referring to diagram/photograph

M5, S7: Detailing dimensions

M5, S8: Problems and limitations

M5, S9: Detailing abbreviations/terms

Move 6: Noting instructions for future

Move 7: Making Personal comments

Move 8: Detailing cost

Move 9: Detailing weather conditions

6/6/138:30 to
10:30pm – 2hrs
(Diary 50)

96 XXX street
Khandallah
(Diary 51)

Facing 90x18 3/1200
1/600 50x50 H3
cleats 1/2.3m
Matai 150x25 1/212
window sill 250x25
pine cleats 2/900
book shelves (Diary 50)

Stayed home
– kids sick

Sleety rain, very
cold (Diary 50)

Professional purposes: the diary of an experienced professional

Tuesday

King Island Show (TAS)

6.30

7.00 100 DG Double hung

7.30 Window frame and

8.00 sashes, PQ

8.30

9.00

9.30

10.00

10.30

11.00

11.30

12.00

12.30

1.00

1.30 Materials:

Cedar 150x50	4.1m	127.92
Painting 150x25 PP	6.7m	53.40
Jamb 150x40 H3	5.2m	76.64
Exsill 250x50 H3	2.1m	33.53
2x Brass/Alu pulleys	20.85	\$ 21.70
Sash cord		\$ 28.11
Screws/Nails/Primer/Glue		26.00
35x18 Bullnose Bead	5m 2.87	14.35
27x15 Bullnose Parting Bead	5m 2.80	11.00
DGU x2 / glazing		\$ 320.00
Tape		\$ 30.00
		<u>\$ 762.65</u>

2.00

2.30

3.00

3.30

4.00

4.30

5.00

5.30

6.00

6.30

7.00

7.30

MARCH

3.00 Labors:

5/3/13 8.5

6/3/13 10.5

7/3/13 2

pick up, machine timbers for frame & put together / D/G cedar for sashes
cont machine profiles for DG sashes put together / machine all beads, facing
etc prime and fit / sand and fit sashes. prime
pick up window from wishol deliver to milnes glass / fit sash cord.

Detailing dimensions

Detailing work with diagram

Detailing cost

Detailing what was done

Detailing date
Detailing time spent

Purpose in Builders' diaries

4. Learning purposes

Use a storey rod.
(it's a clean
straight timber
that fit to height of
what it is going to
be lining)

MOVES IN BUILDERS' DIARY

Move 1: Detailing date + time spent

Move 2: Detailing Where work was done

Move 3: Listing materials/fixings

Move 4: Referring to use of equipment

Move 5: Detailing building work

M5, S1: Detailing What was done

M5, S2: Detailing How it was done

M5, S3: Detailing Why it was done

M5, S4: Detailing work with diagram

M5, S5: Detailing work with photograph

M5, S6: Referring to diagram/photograph

M5, S7: Detailing dimensions

M5, S8: Problems and limitations

M5, S9: Detailing terms

**Move 6: Noting instructions for
future**

Move 7: Making Personal comments

Move 8: Detailing cost

Move 9: Detailing weather conditions

This is finishing work, so need to be careful, no permanent marking or scratch. Neat and tidy. For start you can sort out what tools you need. Any hazards around. So when the task begin it will flow and finish safe. Need a bench or saw stools for screws. All the information for install in the manufacturer instruction so **follow** the instructions then won't get lost. Measure the opening, how wide the frame is, and cut the aluminium track to the length, **follow** the guide

Social purpose

- Purpose varies depending on
 - Experience of writer
 - Context of writer
 - Professional
 - Learner (on-campus trainee or cadet)
 - Writer's intended readership – is future self or tutor prominent?

Pedagogical implications

- Tutors are using the rubric for peer review to sensitise learners to rhetorical features of diary
- Teaching materials reflecting moves with typical realisations of moves and indication range of ways of realizing moves linguistically