The Mixed Discourse Genre as a Social Resource for Participants
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Proceedings of the Nineteenth Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society: General Session and Parasession on Semantic Typology and Semantic Universals (1993), pp. 40-51

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Introduction: Intertextuality in a theory of genre

This paper examines an under-explored area of genre studies, the mixed discourse genre, as a social resource for participants in discourse. I take as the starting point for my discussion the recent work of Richard Bauman and Charles Briggs (Bauman & Briggs 1990; Briggs & Bauman 1992), which, although it is rooted in performance studies within folklore and anthropology, offers valuable insights for the understanding of the mixed genre in a more interactional-sociolinguistic approach.

Previous work on genre typology has tended to align itself either with a formal or a functional model of discourse types. Researchers such as Hymes (1974) and Virtanen (1992) privilege a genre's formal characteristics, while others, like Swales (1990), argue for function as the central criterion in the classification of genres, and still others, for example Biber (1988), take an intermediate position by associating formal features with functional properties. Yet formal and functional taxonomies, whether taken separately or in combination, are unsatisfactory for several reasons. First, both typologies are constructed in an a prioristic manner. Even when categories are based on local description by informants rather than on analysis imposed from the outside by the researcher, they are generally presented ahistorically and removed from their conditions of production. Second, in traditional typologies the characteristics of particular genres are often reified either as necessary and sufficient properties or as prototypical features (Swales 1990; Virtanen 1992), thereby ignoring the possibilities of genre change or imposing theoretical limitations on innovation that may not be borne out by empirical study (cp. Hanks 1987). Finally, the typologizing urge may itself obstruct advances in the analysis of genre; in this arena as elsewhere, the discourse level appears to require a different heuristic than do other levels of language (Stubbs 1983).

The approach that Briggs and Bauman (1992) take, on the other hand, grants primacy to the situated context of discourse over abstract generalizations. They propose that genres are not merely configurations of formal or functional characteristics that are given a priori; instead generic types are emergent from their relationships with previous (and subsequent) discourses. This relationship, which Bakhtin thought of as "dialogic contact between texts" (1986:162), or intertextuality, must be considered an additional dimension of genre construction. Briggs and Bauman demonstrate that an analysis of the intertextual relations of a given genre offers the possibility of a rapprochement between researchers concerned with strictly linguistic data and those whose orientation is more socially

based, for it is in the relationship between texts that social values are constructed, values such as the social meaning of a particular genre and the subject positions of its participants. It is through intertextuality that norms such as formal and functional categories are produced and sustained or challenged. Hence formal and functional analyses of language are necessary but not sufficient for an understanding of genre; social issues of ideology, power, and identity also crucially pertain to its workings. Genre, then, is a culturally recognizable form of linguistic interaction that is achieved through prior texts on the one hand and current discursive acts on the other, and has associated with it a collection of knowledge about its norms, formal, functional, and social.

How genres leak

Central to an intertextual model of discourse is an understanding of the dynamic nature of texts. Intertextuality accounts for how genres are created, sustained, and changed over time, while formal and functional analyses tend to view generic categories as static and unshifting. This fluidity suggests that the realization of generic convention in a specific discursive setting is always contingent: although formal and functional norms established in the patterning of prior discourse inevitably influence subsequent talk, the former does not determine the shape of the latter. Indeed, it is the unsettled nature of genre that leads Briggs and Bauman (1992) to incorporate intertextuality into their analysis. The researchers' commitment to bringing what they call the "fuzzy fringes of genres" (1992:145) from the margin to the center of genre analysis is linked to their recognition that particular discourses are as likely to violate generic conventions as to conform to them. But transgression of generic norms is only one way in which genres may "leak," to use Bauman's (1992) term. For example, some genres are more open-ended than others. These are variously referred to in the literature as blended or mixed genres, boundary works, or secondary or dialogic genres, among other labels. The mixed genre, as I shall call it in this paper, following Schiffrin (forthcoming) and others, is the intersection between two or more discourse types, in which norms of each type of talk are drawn upon as resources for constructing interaction. This hybridization may be a transitional stage in the historical development of a new, socially recognizable discourse form, as Hanks (1987) has shown for Mayan colonial discourse, or it may stabilize as a conventionally ambiguous type of talk. A final way in which genres may leak is through the conflicting strategies of multiple participants, but this issue is not highlighted in the work of either Briggs and Bauman or Hanks, for they restrict the examination of genre primarily to so-called monologic discourse forms, with the consequence that genres are inevitably seen as unitary. Discourses that are dialogic (in a strict rather than Bakhtinian sense), however, are not authored by a single speaker and hence are potentially fragmented; rival and contradictory or complementary genres may emerge from the discursive efforts of multiple authors. Acknowledgment of genre

construction as an area of contention among participants enriches functional generic typologies such as that offered by Biber (1988): he defines genre categories on the basis of speaker purpose, but this is clearly inadequate when different speakers have divergent goals.

The panel discussion

The discourse type under consideration in this paper, the panel discussion, brings together these three sites of generic leakage: it is instantiated, in the specific data under consideration here, through repeated transgression of discourse norms; it belongs to the class of genres that are more open-ended and ambiguous; and its construction necessarily involves multiple authorship. As a mixed genre, the panel discussion has elements of both conversation and news interviews. These elements are often in conflict. Conversation is a normatively egalitarian type of talk, in which topic, turntaking, and participant roles are fluid and unplanned (Goffman 1981). It is prototypically sensitive to physical and temporal setting and shared background knowledge, and its goal is assumed to be the maintenance of pre-existing relationships among participants (Biber 1988). Media interviews, in contrast, normatively have a fixed topic that is determined in advance, a turntaking system that allows some participants but not others to select next speaker (a constraint that is not present in conversation; see Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson 1974), and asymmetrical participant roles that limit question-asking to the interviewer and question-answering to the interviewee (Heritage & Greatbatch 1991). Although they are generally highly interactive, interviews are not usually highly contextualized with regard to either setting or temporality (Biber 1988). A further convention associated with interviews is their mediated nature, whereby talk is performed not only for the benefit of copresent participants but also for an overhearing audience (Heritage & Greatbatch 1991; Bell 1991), and in this sense the purpose of interviews is to create an "imagined community" (Anderson [1983] 1991) that includes both the interview participants and the audience members. For instance, talk in radio interviews is generally constructed in recognition of the fact that the listening audience is unable to see the speakers, with the consequence that nonverbal information is replaced or supplemented by a verbal gloss. Interviewers, then, are generally seen as facilitators rather than as bona fide interactants; they serve as surrogate interlocutors on behalf of the wider audience.

The norms of the panel discussion are intermediate between those of the above-described discourse types: speaker roles and turn-taking rights may be relaxed in comparison to the interview, but the interview system is held to be normative; and participants usually orient to an overhearing audience. Speakers' footing in the panel discussion thus may take one of three forms from moment to moment: primarily conversation-like, primarily interview-like, or more or less equally balanced between the two. Creative adaptation of the norms allows participants with less institutionalized power in the discourse—the panelists—to

reduce the imbalance of power. Specifically, panelists are able to highlight the conversational component of the panel-discussion genre, thereby gaining an interactional advantage in the discourse, not only because conversation permits a more egalitarian turn-taking system, as discussed above, but also because the introduction of a contradictory genre into the ongoing interaction may be deployed as a strategy of dissent, whereby speakers may mark their resistance to the institutional discourse norms. Finally, by embedding conversational aspects of discourse into the norms of an already ambiguous generic type, participants are assured that their strategies will not attract sanctions from the moderator, as would generally be the case if their departures from convention were unequivocal violations (Heritage & Greatbatch 1991). Indeed, the fact that conversation is an element of the genre is of additional benefit to the panelists, since they are operating in a camaraderie-based culture (Lakoff 1973) that cannot fault them for increasing the level of involvement (Chafe 1982; Tannen 1984) among participants. Less-powerful interactants may additionally exploit the on-record character of public discourse. As noted by Morgan (1993), speakers whose language goes on-record through, e.g., electronic recording, are ambivalently located. On the one hand, their talk is subject to surveillance, in the Foucauldian sense, from those who hold institutional power (in her study, the academic researcher; in the present paper, the discussion moderator). On the other hand, those under scrutiny may take advantage of their position to bring the powerful and relatively invisible monitor of their language into the foreground, by introducing this individual into their discourse either as an overt or covert topic or as a participant.

To say that panelists have less power in the discourse relative to the moderator, however, is not to imply that they necessarily have less expertise. Indeed, in my own data just the opposite appears to be the case. The three participants with the greatest experience in the media, as verified by research on their public activities apart from the discussion, are those who draw most heavily upon the conversational component of the discourse. In fact, one panelist hosts his own talk-radio program. Conversely, the moderator is a print journalist who does not regularly participate in electronic-media events. These facts suggest that media savvy brings with it not acquiescence to the norms of the genre as set out by those who control it, but instead a heightened ability to exploit the discourse for one's own ends.

The data

The data under analysis are taken from a two-hour radio panel discussion on U.S. race relations convened by a local newspaper (*the Chronicle* in the data) in response to the Los Angeles riots of 1992. The participants are the newspaper's managing editor, a European American male (BG); the moderator, a white South African journalist (LF); three African American civil rights activists, one male (JM)

and two female (EH, EP); two African American male professors (TD, CC) who not appear in the data below; and one European American male professor (GF).

Speaker orientation

Although participants in a panel discussion normatively orient primarily to an overhearing audience rather than to one another, numerous occasions arise in the data in which participants orient themselves instead to co-present others. This change in footing is overwhelmingly associated with the introduction of a "problem-solving" frame, in which a panelist offers advice to the editor and the journalist from the newspaper sponsoring the event. Example (1) is taken from an extended excerpt dominated by a single speaker, EP, who repeatedly orients to these individuals during her turn at talk.

(1)a.　We n- we- we'll- (.) we black people will do what we have to do.
　　→　You're the ones who really have the responsibili(ty) to really take care of some business and give me just a couple minutes here. (.h)

　b.　→　You need to have some <u>white</u> leaders in this room and say,
　　　　Look folks, (.h)
　　　　<u>we</u> know we're racist,
　　　　what are <u>we</u> gonna do about it.

　c.　→　And you Bill German look them in the eye and say (.) e<u>nough</u> of this (.) it's gotta <u>stop</u>,
　　　　they will listen.

　d.　→　If the Chronicle says Geo:rge,
　　　　this is a <u>c</u>rossroads for America-
　　　　are you gonna lead?
　　　　or are you gonna (.) take the sh- take the low roa:d,
　　　　and go for re-elec(tion.)

This passage is striking in several ways. First, the speaker's re-orientation is made increasingly explicit as the turn develops. The referent of *you're* in (1a) is 'white people', contrasted with *we black people* in the line above. In (1b) EP restricts the group she is concerned with to *white leaders*, and in (1c) she implicates one of the participants, BG, as a member of that group. Finally, (1d) names the source of BG's power and highlights a single "white leader," *George* (Bush), whom BG can reach as a newspaper editor. The effect is to reframe the discourse as a personal and unmediated dialogue between the speaker and her addressee. This effect is reinforced by the deictic highlighting of the physical setting in line (1b) (*in this room*), which Biber (1988) finds to be characteristic of conversation but not of interviews. Paradoxically, the re-orientation heightens awareness of the institutional context of the interaction as well, for it is justified by the speaker on the grounds that she herself is powerless to instigate social change (this stretch of talk is given as a response to the moderator's question, *Eva, what good can come of*

this?). The effectiveness of this strategy is seen in the moderator's reply, *I think you over(h)estimate our uh (.) our (h) influence in Washington*, which brings him into the discourse not as a neutral party, the idealized position of media interviewers (Heritage & Greatbatch 1991), but as a participant with specific institutional interests, for he aligns himself with the newspaper and assesses its power.

EP is not the only panelist to restructure the panel discussion through orientation to other participants and the physical setting, as shown in (2).

> (2) EH: It's up to (.) people (.) you know,
> → really (.) open-hearted (.) and well-intentioned people <u>like</u> you to—
> → and <u>you</u> (.) and <u>you</u> to go <u>do</u> something <u>act</u>ively (.) beyond the microphone.

Once again, the speaker personalizes her general referent *people* to include *you ... and <u>you</u> (.) and <u>you</u>* (designating the three white people—LF, BG, and GF—who are involved in the discussion), and she also invokes the material context in a way that shows her sustained awareness of the institutional frame of the discourse (*go <u>do</u> something <u>act</u>ively (.) beyond the microphone*). That is, her introduction of the physical setting into the discourse cannot be explained as simple forgetfulness that leads her to interact in a more conversation-like manner, but instead must be seen as a strategy of dissent from the institutional goal of creating a seamless "imagined community" with the audience by omitting references to context that highlight the barriers between panel participants and audience members. This strategy echoes a motif introduced by EP earlier in the discussion when she remarks, *And sitting around tables like <u>this</u> (1.5) is a <u>cert</u>ain kind of beginning. But we need to take it out into the streets.*

The sensitivity of participants to each other's contributions is part of the mechanism that enables the reshaping of the discourse genre. Conversation analysts make the claim that the realization of a discourse type is a joint production of interactants (e.g., Heritage 1984), and although this is an overstatement given the resistance of certain participants to others' attempts to restructure the interaction, there is evidence in the data that at least some members collaborate to reinforce each other's moves and build a coherent alternative discourse. Example (3) illustrates this relationship among three of the participants.

> (3) EP: The multicultural issue must be <u>brought home</u> to <u>you</u> all.
> I've met with your editorial board a couple of times to my knowledge there are no people of color on that board.
> Is <u>that</u> correct? (.)
> On <u>your</u> editorial board.
> If you wanna talk multiculturalism,⌐
> → JM: ⌐Case. In. Point. ((taps at each word)) ⌐
> → EP: ⌐bring
> it here.⌐
> → EH: ⌐ Go::d.

What is remarkable about this exchange is the flawless timing of the participants who construct the sequence. Throughout the discussion the three speakers have manifested an alignment of solidarity with one another: they are all activists, as opposed to the three other panelists, who are academics, and they frequently use formal and stylistic markers of African American English, while the two other African American panelists (TD and CC) use them very little or not at all. Their repeatedly latched turns in (3) do not only contribute to the alternative genre but actually constitute it. Supportive and evaluative comments like those of JM and EH are common in conversation but are normatively withheld in radio interviews and discussions, not only by the interviewer (Heritage & Greatbatch 1991) but also by other participants, since it is difficult for the audience to identify the voice associated with such backchanneled remarks. The speakers must be well aware of this fact, since not only are they experienced in broadcast-media discourse, but in addition in the course of the larger interaction they have witnessed the moderator's interjected identifications of each speaker. The ostensible absence here of orientation to the audience reinforces the conversational element of the genre and challenges the institution through which it is realized while simultaneously strengthening the authority of EP's statement: by resisting the discursive norms the speakers create a chorus of moral indignation whose multivocality is likely to enhance its effect on listeners. Hence what superficially appears to be a failure to orient to the audience may in fact be a strategic realignment to accrue discursive power both among the immediate participants and with the listening audience; it may be, in effect, the construction of an alternate imagined community.

Asking questions

A second general strategy that participants utilize in reshaping the panel discussion is to refuse the normative turntaking system. This system limits the asking of information-seeking questions (Schiffrin forthcoming) to the role of the moderator. Other features of the panel discussion, as an interview-based form, are the moderator's control of turn-taking allocation by selecting next speaker and permitting self-selection of next speaker (Schiffrin forthcoming). The lack of clearly defined participant roles, which is characteristic of the mixed genre, however, allows participants to "try to redefine those roles by adopting the mode of questioning conventionally associated with the other's position" (Schiffrin forthcoming ch. 5). Again, unrestricted access to all types of turns is a marker of conversation, and the exploitation of question-asking shifts the frame of the discourse from more interview-like to more conversation-like. Example (4) represents an early attempt by a panelist to challenge the turntaking norms.

(4) EH: How did we get here?   [Did we walk. (1.0)
    JM: [h.
    EH: I mean,
       → how did we get here George Frederickson.

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        (1.0)
GF:  Well,    [see <I might > agree with you < >]
EH:          [In barges                           ] [[smashed  [like sar[[dines.
GF:                                                  [[Yeah.    [Yeah. [[Yeah.  Yeah.
        Yeah.
```

EH here transforms her earlier, seemingly rhetorical question—*How did we get here?* ('How did African Americans get to the United States?') *Did we walk.*—into one that is apparently information-seeking: *how did we get here, George Frederickson.* Here the speaker demonstrates her understanding of the moderator's participant role by exploiting its central characteristics, the use of information-seeking questions and the right to select next speaker. EH returns to this strategy several pages later in the transcript, inquiring, *Now how can you answer—(.) anybody in this room how would you answer a seventeen-year-old African American man. (1.3) And give him the guidance that will lead him forward in his life. (1.0)* The second time, she receives no response; presumably the other participants have learned from GF's experience. That EH's behavior is indeed marked for participants is indicated in the pause following her question in example (4), which violates the no-gap, no-overlap constraint on turn-taking (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson 1974). The question differs from a true information-seeking question, however, in that the act sequence in which it occurs does not match that required by such a question type. For when the selected next speaker begins his turn by providing the information that was presumably requested of him, EH interrupts him and provides a response to her own question. Remarkably, EH's question seems instead to be of the information-checking type. Evidence for this hypothesis may be found in the brief chuckle that JM gives in response to EH's first question, which does not provide information but instead signals recognition and understanding of EH's point, the very goal of information-checking questions. Further, EH's retaking of the floor is more in keeping with Schiffrin's sequencing rules for information-checking questions than for the information-seeking kind: if EH were truly requesting information she would wait for GF to finish his turn. But if she is expecting instead an acknowledgment of her position then at the first sign that it is not forthcoming (after *Well*, since this particle cannot mark acknowledgment *per se*) she goes on with her turn, as would be predicted in an information-checking sequence. It must be recognized, of course, that EH does not innocently assume that GF will understand her speech act in the way that JM did; the selection of next speaker—which here is done in the formal manner compatible only with the information-seeking question type used by the moderator—confounds such a straightforward analysis. EH's strategy gains her power in the discourse by systematically undercutting the authority of the moderator and of GF, a European American professor who acquiesces to the discourse conventions. Her challenge to the turntaking norms is therefore part of a larger challenge to the conventions of the discourse as a whole.

EH's model is followed by the other participants who have aligned themselves with her, as shown in (5) and (6).

<pre>
(5) EP: You all probably hear white friends saying nigger,
          chink,
          beaner, (.)
          do you call em on it? (.h)
→   Are you in <u>all</u>-white clubs,
→   do you n:ail people on this stuff? (.h)

(6) JM: Y- yeah- I gotta-- maybe this is off the subject (.) so since I gotcha I gotta ask
          you (.) and <u>you</u> can tell <u>me</u>.
→   W(h)y(h)?
          W-m- my- Again I'm- like Erika said earl- earlier,
→   Why <u>are</u> white people so incredibly naïve.
</pre>

Here again, white participants are targeted as recipients of apparent information-seeking questions (*Are you in <u>all</u>-white clubs,* (5); *since I gotcha I gotta ask you ... Why <u>are</u> white people so incredibly naïve,* (6)). In these examples as elsewhere in the transcript in which this strategy is employed after the exchange between EH and GF, the participant nominated as next speaker (usually the moderator, as here) does not respond to the question. Although this lack of cooperation with the restructuring of the genre shows that the strategy is not fully successful, participants are not discouraged from drawing upon question-asking as a resource throughout the discussion. Indeed, they seem to anticipate this reaction and frequently continue their turn after asking a question, thereby diminishing the effect that the moderator's refusal to answer would have on power relations within the discourse. In addition, panelists cope with the moderator's resistance to their strategy by responding to his queries with questions of their own; this process is illustrated in (7).

<pre>
(7) LF: I mean how many people actually <u>know</u> what happens in (.8) South Central (.7)
          LA,
          or East Oakland,
          or (1.1) or uh Bay View Hunters Point? (.)
          How do we break down some of those (.) those divisions.
→ EH: Well why <u>don't</u> they know.
</pre>

Although question-asking by panelists never fully shifts the balance of power away from the moderator, it does have influence in a surprising quarter: toward the end of the discussion GF, who was himself a target of EH's questioning, asks a question of his own for the first time in the discourse (example (8)).

<pre>
(8) GF: What would it <u>mean</u> for (.) for white people to do something uh constructive
          here?
          Well one thing <u>every</u>body would have to do:,
          there's no question <u>about</u> this,
</pre>

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            is pay higher taxes.
      EH:   (Thank you.)
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GF is not fully committed to the questioning method employed by other participants; his question does not select a next speaker, and he not only continues talking after issuing his question but goes on to answer it himself. Nevertheless, his effort is rewarded with an appreciation token from EH, which suggests that she too recognizes the changes in the discourse that have taken place since her last exchange with GF.

Conclusion

The structuring of the panel discussion through the "recurrent and pervasive" (Heritage & Greatbatch 1991) use of features of conversation as shown in (1) through (8) systematically shifts the participant framework, although the dialogic form of the genre permits the moderator to resist its reconstruction in this direction. By electing to use the more "equitable" turntaking system offered by conversation, less-powerful participants effectively erode the powerful institutional role of the moderator. In addition, the orientation to the immediate interactants serves to highlight the institutional context of the discourse and to implicate all participants, including the moderator and the sponsor of the discussion, in the interaction. The result of such strategies is to net panelists greater control of the discourse and to level the power differences that inhere in institutional roles.

It is the multivalence of the mixed genre that allows participants to transgress the limitations of formal and functional discourse norms with relative freedom. But speakers' decisions to deviate from or conform to the conventions established by prior discourse highlight the emergent and intertextual nature of any genre. Hence, the mixed discourse genre is not merely a marginal case of category ambiguity; rather, it exemplifies with especial clarity what necessarily occurs when any genre is realized in interaction. As such, the mixed genre offers new insights into the relationships among formal, functional, and social norms in the analysis of discourse.

Appendix: Transcription conventions

The following transcription conventions have been observed:
Each intonational unit appears on a separate line.

.	falling intonation
,	fall-rise intonation
?	rising intonation
—	self-interruption; break in the intonational unit
-	self-interruption; break in the word, sound abruptly cut off
:	length
...	text omitted
<u>underline</u>	emphatic stress
(.)	pause of 0.5 seconds or less
(n.n)	pause of greater than 0.5 seconds, measured by a stopwatch
h	laughter; each token marks one pulse
.h	inhalation
( )	decreased amplitude as compared to surrounding speech
(( ))	transcriber comment or nonvocal noise
< >	uncertain transcription
[ ]	overlap beginning and end
[[ ]]	second overlap in proximity to first
Z	latching
→	data under discussion

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