
The Notions of Genre and Micro-genre in Contrastive Rhetoric Research: Newspapers Commentaries on the Events of September 11th

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ABSTRACT

The aims of this paper are: (1) to discuss the usefulness of demarcation of genre and micro-genre in contrastive rhetoric research; and (2) to illustrate the usefulness of the notions of genre and micro-genre in a contrastive genre study of newspaper commentaries on terrorism in China and Australia. In order to construct a comparable platform to examine the genre-newspaper commentaries on terrorism in this study, three months after the events of 11 September 2001 was set as the timeframe for data collection. Consequently, 43 newspaper commentaries were found in the core Chinese newspapers and 221 pieces were found in seven key Australian newspapers. As for investigating the micro-genres employed by the writers, two sets of 25 newspaper commentaries on terrorism respectively in China and Australia were selected and analysed. It was found

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University of Sydney Papers in TESOL, 2, 83-117.

©2007 ISSN: 1834-3198 (Print) & 1834-4712 (Online)

that generally the Chinese writers tended to employ the micro-genre of 'media explanatory exposition' more often than other micro-genres, and in terms of rhetorical structures, the Chinese writers tended to show diversity and individual characteristics. The Australian writers tended to use the 'media argumentative exposition' as the dominant micro-genre, while the rhetorical structures that they used tended to be convergent and follow certain stable patterns.

THE NOTION OF GENRE IN CONTRASTIVE RHETORIC

In previous contrastive rhetorical research, most genre-specific investigations have dealt with expository prose, including journal articles, business reports, letters of application, grant proposals, and newspaper commentaries. These studies include Connor *et al.*'s (1995) cross-cultural analysis of U.S. and Flemish job applications; Jenkins and Hinds's (1987) contrastive study of business letter writing in English, French and Japanese; Mauranen's (1993) contrastive study of Finnish and English writing; Tirkkonen-Condit's (1988; 1996; Tirkkonen-Condit & Lieflander-Koistinen, 1989) study of editorials in Finnish and English; and Ventola and Mauranen's (1991) 'non-native writing and native revising of scientific articles.'

These studies produced findings that explain some characteristics of processes and products of specific genres. The findings indicate, for example, that Japanese and Chinese people tend to be more indirect than Americans in their writing; Finns and English speakers tend to have different coherence conventions; and Koreans students tend not to want to take a strong position in defending business decisions. The major focus of the studies is on textual or structural regularity in relation to different genres. Contrastive rhetoric research has found that rhetorical patterns are an essential component of language. These rhetorical patterns are arbitrary yet rule-governed, and they are also socially constructed and transmitted. Contrastive rhetoric research also shows that rhetorical structures differ between languages and cultures, and these dif-

ferences are dynamic and change as the society changes (Ostler, 2001).

According to Miller (1984/1994), genre in its broadest sense refers to social action. More specifically, genre also:

refers to language use in a conventionalised communicative setting in order to give expression to a specific set of communicative goals of a disciplinary or social institution, which give rise to stable structural forms by imposing constraints on the use of lexico-grammatical as well as discursive resources (Bhatia, 2004: 23).

This view of genre attempts to capture how writers achieve their social purposes by using various structural forms, constructing different focuses and manipulating topics and readers by using various linguistic devices, all of which are aspects of the dynamic and 'stabilised-for-now' (Schryer, 1993: 208) status of genres.

In this sense, genre is a descriptive and analytical tool rather than a prescriptive one. Genre analysis should thus not only include descriptions of the characteristics of actual texts, especially organizational structures, but also needs to include a contextualised perspective on genre which includes consideration of how the texts were produced (Connor, 2004; Devitt, 2004; Kress & Threadgold, 1988; Threadgold, 1989, 1994). This perspective on genre suggests that generic meanings are construed between and across texts in both reading and writing.

As for the conceptualisation of genre in empirical contrastive rhetoric studies, a crucial concern is how genre can be analysed and described by using various linguistic and non-linguistic techniques developed in different schools of genre analysis. Martin's demarcation of genre (or macro-genre) and elemental genre (micro-genre) (Martin, 1994, 1995, 1997), for example, may be a relevant framework for genre studies in contrastive rhetoric.

As a key figure in the 'Sydney School' of genre studies (Hyon, 1996), Martin proposes a definition of genre from the perspective of systemic functional linguistics (Halliday, 1994; Halliday & Matthie-

ssen, 2004; Halliday & Hasan 1985; Martin, 1984, 1992). Martin (1984: 25) describes genre as “a staged, goal-orientated, and purposeful social activity that people engage in as members of their culture.” While advocating that genre is a ‘social activity,’ Martin’s study of genre focuses predominantly on the analysis of ‘staged and goal oriented’ aspects of genre (see e.g., Martin, 1994, 1997). However, Martin’s idea of micro-genre can be used as an analytical tool in contrastive rhetoric studies. Martin’s micro-genre is in line with what Biber (1989) calls ‘text type.’ Micro-genres characterize texts in terms of rhetorical functions such as exposition, discussion and problem-solution. For further explications of the differences between genre, micro-genres and text type see Martin (1997), Lee (2001) and Paltridge (1996).

In this sense, the concept of genre could be used for capturing contextual and intertextual related factors that mediate and influence the construction of texts in different socio-cultural settings, while micro-genre could be employed to examine the textual features of the texts. To illustrate the usefulness of this demarcation of genre and micro-genre, a contrastive genre study of newspaper commentaries on terrorism in China and Australia is outlined here.

NEWSPAPER COMMENTARIES ON 9/11 AS A GENRE IN CHINA AND AUSTRALIA

To establish a baseline for comparison, it is important to clarify the term ‘newspaper commentary.’ Newspaper commentary in this paper refers to all the opinion articles (but not editorials or letters to the editor) written by expert writers or other journalists (but not editors) published in newspapers in China (in Chinese) and Australia (in English).

To account for the nature of the genre in these two languages and cultures, it was essential to establish a comparable set of data, drawing on a set of basic criteria. First, a time limit for the data collection was set on papers published during the first three months after September 11, 2001, aiming to capture the most immediate res-

ponses to the events of September 11. Second, the commentaries collected were ones which focused on responses to the events of September 11. Third, special attention was given to establish a *tertium comparationis* (a common platform of comparison or shared similarity; Connor, 2004; Connor & Moreno, 2005) at the various levels of data collection and analysis. For Connor and Moreno (2005), the concept of *tertium comparationis*, is important at all levels of research: in identifying texts for corpora, selecting textual concepts to be studied in the sets of data, and identifying linguistic features that realize these concepts.

Commentaries on terrorism in China do not seem to be as common as in Australia. The collection of Chinese data began by an exploration of a newly developed database in China named China Core Newspaper Database (CCND), which is a part of the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) Project initiated by the State Council of China. Altogether, 43 newspaper commentaries on the events of September 11, published from 12/09/2001 to 31/12/2001, were found across the 440 core newspapers in China covered in the CCND. Taking account of geographic and demographic features of the newspapers in China and Australia covered in the paper, the newspapers were categorized into 'National General,' 'National Specialist,' and 'State/Provincial' newspapers (i.e., the principal administrative division in China is a province, while in Australia it is a state) in order to establish a *tertium comparationis* at the newspaper level. The Chinese newspapers examined in the paper are presented in Figure 1. To find a balance with these categories, seven newspapers in Australia were included in the data collection. These were *The Australian*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Age*, *The Courier Mail*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Herald Sun* and *The Australian Financial Review*. 221 commentaries on terrorism were found in these seven news-papers within the same time frame in Australia.

To establish a balance between these two sets of data, 50 newspaper commentaries on terrorism from a range of Chinese and English newspapers, which focused on responses to the events of September 11, were selected. 25 Chinese newspaper commentaries

published during the first three months after September 11, 2001 were selected from Mainland China's newspapers and 25 English newspaper commentaries published during the same period of time were selected from the Australian data. The newspaper commentaries shown in Figure 1 from Chinese and Australian newspapers formed the data used in this paper.

FIGURE 1
Newspaper Commentaries Examined in the Paper

Chinese Newspapers		No. of texts	Australian Newspapers		No. of texts
Chinese national general newspaper	<i>People's Daily (Overseas edition)</i>	2	Australian national general newspaper	<i>The Australian</i>	10
	<i>People's Daily</i>	3			
	<i>Guangmin Daily</i>	1			
	<i>Xinhua Daily Telegraph</i>	2			
	<i>China Youth Daily</i>	1			
	<i>Economic Daily</i>	1			
	Subtotal	10			
Chinese national specialist newspaper	<i>International Financial Daily</i>	1	Australian national specialist newspaper	<i>Australian Financial Review</i>	5
	<i>Security Times</i>	2			
	<i>China's Economic Times</i>	1			
	<i>China's Defence Post</i>	1			
	Subtotal	5			

FIGURE 1

Newspaper Commentaries Examined in the Paper (continued)

Chinese Newspapers		No. of texts	Australian Newspapers		No. of texts
Chinese provincial news-paper	Hubei Daily	1	Australian state newspaper	<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i>	2
	<i>Wenhui Daily</i>	2		<i>The Age</i>	2
	<i>Hebei Daily</i>	1		<i>The Courier Mail</i>	2
	<i>Jiefang Daily</i>	2		<i>Herald Sun</i>	2
	<i>Huaxia Times</i>	3		<i>Daily Telegraph</i>	2
	<i>Study Times</i>	1			
	Subtotal	10		Subtotal	10

As shown in this table, 25 Chinese newspaper commentaries published in 16 newspapers at three different levels of circulation in China, namely national general, national specialist and state or provincial, are covered in this paper. For the English language data, 25 English newspaper commentaries in 7 Australian newspapers at these three levels of circulations were included. These comprised the 50 texts chosen for detailed textual analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS

Based on a rough reading of the texts and, more importantly, on the categorization of expositions and media commentaries set forth by Martin and Peters (1985), Hoey (1983) and White (2002), this paper proposed a classification of the newspaper commentaries that aimed to capture basic micro-genres and social functions of the texts under examination. Figure 2 shows the micro-genres and social functions of the commentaries that were examined in this paper.

FIGURE 2

Micro-genres and Functions of Newspaper Commentaries in Chinese and English (based on Martin & Peters, 1985; Hoey, 1983; and White, 2002)

Micro-genres		Functions
Media exposition	Explanatory exposition	To explain what/how/why
	Argumentative exposition	To persuade that something is the case
	Hortatory exposition	To persuade that something should be the case or should be done
Problem/solution		To illustrate a problem and propose solutions to it
Media challenge		To question, argue against, or challenge an existing opinion on an issue of public interest
Media discussion		To survey, or present (at least) two points of view about an issue of public interest

After the micro-genre of each text was identified, the generic structure and rhetorical structures of each text were analysed in order to understand the basic textual patterns that the writers employed to develop their texts. 'Generic structure' in this paper refers to the way that particular texts develop typical and recognizable textual structures; that is, the stages the texts move through in order to achieve their particular goal. Generic structure in this paper is aligned with 'genre,' which is defined as a category assigned on the basis of external criteria such as social purpose, intended audience and activity type rather than lexical or grammatical features (Biber, 1988, 1989; Lee, 2001). 'Rhetorical structure' used in this paper is a term that refers to internal textual patterns and which describes the stages or steps which realize rhetorical functions, such as thesis statement, arguments, evidence, and conclusion. Figure 3 illustrates the demarcation of these two terms used in this paper.

FIGURE 3
Generic Structure and Rhetorical Structure of a Letter to the Editor
(Wang, W., 2004: 78)

<u>The Daily Telegraph</u>	09/08/ 2002	
Text	Generic structure	Rhetorical structure
<p style="text-align: center;">Guests don't feel welcome</p> <p>Gary Taylor seems to think that the facilities that City-Rail provides to its customers are badly abused and mistreated ("Guests show no respect," Letters, August 8). He seems to miss the point that I am the paying customer who deserves proper service.</p> <p>If there is too much rubbish on the trains, use some revenue to employ more cleaners, or place a bin near all doors. Or maybe have the guards enforce the prohibitions on eating and smoking.</p> <p>Perhaps if City-Rail provided an improved and adequate service there would be minimal letters of complaint.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Mark Brazier, Bradbury</i></p>	<p>Title</p> <p>Body of the letter</p> <p>Sign-off</p>	<p>Situation</p> <p>Problem</p> <p>Solution</p> <p>Evaluation</p>

Following the analytical framework described above, the two sets of data in Chinese and English were examined to identify the micro-genre, generic structure and rhetorical structure of each text. What follows are summaries of the analytical findings in each of the two sets of data.

The Chinese Texts

The Chinese set of data comprised 25 newspaper commentaries collected from three types of newspapers published in China, namely, Chinese national general newspapers, Chinese national specialist newspapers and Chinese provincial newspapers. The micro-genres found in the Chinese data are summarised in Figure 4.

FIGURE 4
Summary of Micro-genres of the Chinese Data

Micro-genre Newspaper	Media exposition			Problem / solu- tion	Media chal- lenge	Media discus- sion
	Explan- atory expos- ition	Argument -ative expos- ition	Hortat- ory expos- ition			
CN (10)	7		2	1		
CS (5)	5					
CR (10)	8			1	1	
Total	20	0	2	2	1	0

Note: CN refers to Chinese national general newspapers. CS refers to Chinese national specialist newspapers, and CR refers to Chinese provincial newspapers. The numbers in the table indicate the numbers of texts in the specific types of micro-genres.

Most of the commentaries (20 out of 25 texts) in the Chinese data were categorised as ‘media explanatory exposition’ micro-genres. Two texts were identified as ‘media hortatory exposition’, another two texts were identified as ‘media problem/solution’ and one text was categorised as ‘media challenge.’ No text was categorised as ‘argumentative exposition’ or ‘media discussion.’

The Chinese explanatory expositions were those texts that aimed to explain what terrorism is, what the terrorists did and why they did it. Appendix A provides a typical example of an explanatory exposition text found in the Chinese data. Figure 5 is a summary of the generic and rhetorical structure used in this text.

The intention of this text seemed to be to explain to the public the serious threats and challenges that terrorism has brought to the world, the reasons behind the increase in terrorism and actions taken to solve the problem and specific solutions proposed by the Chinese government. The thesis statement in this text is ‘terrorism threatens modern society.’

FIGURE 5

Generic Structure and Rhetorical Structure of a Chinese Text

Generic structure	Rhetorical structure
Headline Byline	Thesis
Introduction Body	Orientation Thesis reiteration Facts Reasons Solutions of the world Solutions of the Chinese government
Conclusion	Conclusion

The writer adopts a tripartite generic structure, which is comprised of an introduction, a body and a conclusion. In terms of rhetorical structure, this text followed the structure shown above, foregrounding the harmfulness of terrorism and the standpoint of the Chinese government. The text starts with an orientation, referring to terrorism as a kind of “‘ragged noise’ in our harmonious and civilised world.” Then, it goes on to explain the harm that terrorism has brought to the world. It explores possible reasons that have led to the emergence of terrorism and finally, illustrates how the world has responded to terrorism and the standpoint of the Chinese government. Rather than making any controversial or radical statements that might give rise to debate, this text takes an explanatory position, providing information that may be well known to their audience.

Most of the texts in the Chinese data (20 out of 25 texts) fall into the explanatory exposition type of micro-genre, which explains to the public what terrorism is and what the terrorists did on September 11. At the end of these texts, quite often a strong proposition put forward by the Chinese government informs the public of the stance of the government on this matter. In these texts, the writers simply state facts and end by stating the government’s position on the matter. The writers’ personal voices do not appear

widely within the texts, giving a sense of non-involvement in the topics under discussion.

Other micro-genres were also found in the Chinese data, such as 'hortatory exposition,' 'problem/solution' and 'media challenge' (see details in Figure 6). In 'hortatory expositions,' the writers usually argue for a position and persuade their readership that something should be the case or that something should be done. For instance, in the Chinese text entitled 'The United Nations should play the key role in the global anti-terrorism battle,' the writer closely followed the rhetorical structure of an exposition. This text develops around the thesis of legitimating the role of the UN in the anti-terrorism battle. Reasoning and factual examples are interwoven to illustrate the importance of the UN in dealing with terrorism in the world. Personal pronouns are not present in the text, and facts and outside sources are widely used to support the claim. This illustrates that the writers do not involve themselves in the controversy nor present the argument as their own. They try to keep a distance from the topic under discussion.

A large variety of rhetorical structures were found in the Chinese texts. It is not possible to generalise one or two models from the data that fit all the Chinese texts. Although the two Chinese texts showed above illustrate the two widely used micro-genres found in the Chinese set of texts, looking at only these two texts is insufficient to provide a general overview of the rhetorical structures adopted in the Chinese texts examined in this paper. Figure 6 provides a summary of the micro-genres and rhetorical structures found in the Chinese texts.

FIGURE 6

Summary of the Textual Analysis on the Chinese Texts

TEXT	MICRO-GENRE	RHETORICAL STRUCTURE
CN01	Problem-solution	Thesis ^ Situation ^ Problem ^ Reasons of the problem ^ Solution ^ Standpoint of the Chinese government
CN02	Media exposition (Hortatory)	Thesis ^ Orientation ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Argument 1 (Example) ^ Argument 2 (Example) ^ Argument 3 (Reason) ^ Argument 4 (Reason) ^ Argument 5 (Example) ^ Argument 6 (reason) ^ Conclusion
CN03	Media exposition (Explanatory)	Thesis ^ Orientation ^ Situation ^ Opinion ^ Conclusion
CN04	Media exposition (Explanatory)	Orientation ^ Thesis ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Argument 3 ^ Recommendation 1 ^ Recommendation 2
CN05	Media exposition (Explanatory)	Thesis ^ Argument 1 (challenges) ^ Argument 2 (opportunities) ^ Conclusion
CN06	Media exposition (Explanatory)	Orientation ^ Situation ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Conclusion
CN07	Media exposition (Explanatory)	Thesis ^ Orientation ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Argument 3 ^ Argument 4 ^ Conclusion
CN08	Media exposition (Hortatory)	Thesis ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Argument 1 (Example) ^ Argument 2 (Reason) ^ Argument 3 ^ Argument 4 ^ Argument 5 ^ Argument 6 ^ Conclusion
CN09	Media exposition (Explanatory)	Thesis ^ Orientation ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Argument 1 (Facts) ^ Argument 2 (Facts) ^ Argument 3 (Facts) ^ Conclusion

(NB: ^ = followed by)

FIGURE 6

Summary of the Textual Analysis on the Chinese Texts (continued)

TEXT	MICRO-GENRE	RHETORICAL STRUCTURE
CN10	Media exposition (Explanatory)	Thesis ^ Orientation ^ Situation 1 ^ Situation 2 ^ Situation 3 ^ Situation 4 ^ Wrap-up
CS01	Media exposition (Explanatory)	Thesis ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Situation 1 ^ Situation 2 ^ Situation 3 ^ Situation 4 ^ Conclusion
CS02	Media exposition (Explanatory)	Thesis ^ Elaboration 1 ^ Elaboration 2 ^ Elaboration 3
CS03	Media exposition (Explanatory)	Thesis ^ Orientation 1 ^ Elaboration ^ Point 1 ^ Point 1.1 ^ Point 1.2 ^ Point 1.3 ^ Point 1.4 ^ Point 1.5 ^ Point 2 ^ Point 3
CS04	Media exposition (Explanatory)	Thesis ^ Orientation ^ Elaboration 1 ^ Elaboration 2 ^ Elaboration 3
CS05	Media exposition (Explanatory)	Thesis ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Elaboration 1 ^ Elaboration 2 ^ Elaboration 3 ^ Elaboration 4 ^ Elaboration 5 ^ Conclusion
CR01	Media exposition (Explanatory)	Orientation ^ Fact 1 ^ Fact 2 ^ Fact 3 ^ Thesis ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Conclusion
CR02	Media exposition (Explanatory)	Thesis ^ Situation 1 (before 9/11) ^ Situation 2 (after 9/11, positive) ^ Situation 3 (after 9/11, positive) ^ Situation 4 (after 9/11, negative) ^ Conclusion
CR03	Media exposition (Explanatory)	Thesis ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Situation 1 ^ Situation 2 ^ Situation 3
CR04	Media exposition (Explanatory)	Thesis ^ Orientation ^ Situation 1 ^ Situation 2 ^ Situation 3 ^ Situation 4 ^ Situation 5 ^ Situation 6 ^ Situation 7 ^ Situation 8 ^ Situation 9

(NB: ^ = followed by)

FIGURE 6

Summary of the Textual Analysis on the Chinese Texts (continued)

TEXT	MICRO-GENRE	RHETORICAL STRUCTURE
CR05	Media exposition (Explanatory)	Thesis ^ Orientation ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Facts ^ Reasons ^ Solutions of the world ^ Proposition of the Chinese government ^ Conclusion
CR06	Media exposition (Explanatory)	Thesis ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Elaboration 1 ^ Elaboration 2 ^ Elaboration 3 ^ Elaboration 4 ^ Elaboration 5 ^ Summary 1 ^ Summary 2 ^ Conclusion
CR07	Problem-solution	Situation (raising the issue) ^ Problem (what is the issue?) ^ Solution (how to address the issue?) ^ Recommendation
CR08	Media challenge	Thesis ^ Position challenged ^ Rebuttal 1 ^ Rebuttal 2 ^ Rebuttal 3 ^ Thesis reiteration
CR09	Media exposition (Explanatory)	Thesis ^ Orientation ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Elaboration 1 ^ Elaboration 2 ^ Elaboration 3
CR10	Media exposition (Explanatory)	Thesis ^ Orientation ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Elaboration 1 ^ Elaboration 2 ^ Elaboration 3 ^ Elaboration 4 ^ Conclusion

(NB: ^ = followed by)

From the table above, we can clearly see that the rhetorical structures found in the Chinese texts show a great diversity, even within the same micro-genre. For instance, with 'explanatory expositions,' there can be different structures such as Thesis ^ Orientation ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Elaborations ^ Conclusion, or Thesis ^ Orientation ^ Situation ^ Opinion ^ Conclusion, or others. Similarly, other micro-genres show diversity and individuality in the use of rhetorical structures.

To summarise, the predominant micro-genre found in the Chinese texts is 'media explanatory exposition'. In terms of generic structure, most of the texts follow the pattern of 'headline,' 'byline,'

‘introduction,’ ‘body’ and ‘conclusion.’ However, with regard to rhetorical structures, a variety of diverse structures was found in the texts.

The Australian Texts

The 25 Australian newspaper commentaries were analysed to identify the micro-genres that occurred in the texts. Figure 7 is a summary of this analysis.

FIGURE 7

Summary of Micro-genres of the Australian Data

Micro-genre Newspaper	Media exposition			Problem / solu- tion	Media chall- enge	Media discus- sion
	Explan- atory expos- ition	Argument -ative expos- ition	Hortat- ory expos- ition			
EN (10)		6	1		2	1
ES (5)		5				
ER (10)		7		2	1	
Total		18	1	2	3	1

Note: EN refers to Australian national general newspaper. ES refers to Australian national specialist newspapers, and ER refers to Australian state newspapers. The numbers in the table indicate the numbers of texts of the specific types.

As can be seen in the above table, the analysis showed that the predominant micro-genres used in these Australian commentaries are ‘argumentative expositions’ (18 out of 25 texts), and ‘media challenges’ (3 texts). Other texts were found employing ‘hortatory exposition’ (1 text), ‘problem/solution’ (2 texts) and ‘media discussion’ (1 text) micro-genres. In these Australian commentaries, the writers usually attempt to convert the readers to follow a proposition that they argue for. No text was categorised as ‘explanatory exposition.’ Appendix B is an example of the typical Australian argumentative expositions found. Figure 8 is a summary of the generic and rhetorical structure used in this text.

FIGURE 8

Generic Structure, Rhetorical Structure of an Australian Text

Generic structure	Rhetorical structure
Headline Sub-heading Byline	Thesis
Introduction Body	Orientation 1 Orientation 2 Argument 1 Point 1 Point 2 Point 3 Argument 2 Argument 3
Conclusion	Conclusion
The author	

This text argues that ‘punishing bin Laden will not stop extremists.’ It analyses the ideology behind the extremist action and appeals to the West and the international community to wage an ideological war against terrorism. The text starts with a brief orientation to contemporary terrorism and terrorists, then proceeds to outline the steps that the West should take to combat terrorism. When it comes to the argument of waging a longer-term strategy against terrorism, the writer begins to wrestle with the focus of his thesis, that is; that the West needs to wage an ideological war, beyond just ‘the extradition and punishment of bin Laden.’

The text follows the conventional way of establishing an argument: *Thesis ^ Orientation ^ Arguments ^ Conclusion*. The writer’s ‘I’ appears in this text, making predictions about what steps are likely to be taken by the US and the Western world after September 11. The thesis that the writer attempts to argue for is a moral one that concerns itself with whether there is something political to be done about the anti-terrorism battle. The writer involves himself in the

discussion of the topic and presents his own point of view in this text.

The Australian commentaries follow similar patterns of rhetorical structures for arguing for the propositions they wish to convince readers of. Figure 9 provides a summary of the micro-genres and rhetorical structures found in the Australian texts.

FIGURE 9

Summary of the Textual Analysis on the Australian Texts

TEXT	MICRO-GENRE	RHETORICAL STRUCTURE
EN01	Media exposition (Argumentative)	Thesis ^ Orientation 1 ^ Orientation 2 ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Reorientation ^ Prediction 1 ^ Prediction 2 ^ Prediction 3 ^ Prediction 4 ^ Prediction 5 ^ Prediction 6 ^ Prediction 7 ^ Prediction 8 ^ Prediction 9 ^ Conclusion
EN02	Media exposition (Hortatory)	Thesis ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Argument 3 ^ Argument 4 ^ Argument 5 ^ Argument 6 ^ Argument 7 ^ Conclusion
EN03	Media exposition (Argumentative)	Thesis ^ Orientation 1 ^ Orientation 2 ^ Argument 1 ^ (Point 1 ^ Point 2 ^ Point 3) ^ Argument 2 ^ Argument 3 ^ Conclusion
EN04	Media exposition (Argumentative)	Thesis ^ Orientation 1 ^ Orientation 2 ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Argument 3 ^ Conclusion
EN05	Media exposition (Argumentative)	Thesis ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Conclusion 1 ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Argument 3 ^ Conclusion 2

(NB: ^ = followed by)

FIGURE 9

**Summary of the Textual Analysis on the Australian Texts
(continued)**

TEXT	MICRO-GENRE	RHETORICAL STRUCTURE
EN06	Media discussion	Orientation 1 ^ Orientation 2 ^ Orientation 3 ^ Orientation 4 ^ Position challenged 1 ^ (Rebuttal 1 ^ Rebuttal 2) ^ Position argued for ^ (Argument 1 ^ Argument 2) ^ Position challenged 2 ^ (Rebuttal) ^ Conclusion
EN07	Media exposition (Argumentative)	Thesis ^ Orientation 1 ^ Orientation 2 ^ Orientation 3 ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Argument 3 ^ Argument 4 ^ Argument 5 ^ Argument 6 ^ Argument 7 ^ Argument 8 ^ Conclusion ^ Standpoint of the author
EN08	Media challenge	Thesis ^ Orientation 1 ^ Orientation 2 ^ Position challenged ^ (Rebuttal 1 ^ Rebuttal 2 ^ Rebuttal 3 ^ Rebuttal 4 ^ Rebuttal 5 ^ Rebuttal 6) ^ Anti-thesis ^ Conclusion
EN09	Media challenge	Thesis ^ Position challenged ^ (Rebuttal 1 ^ Rebuttal 2 ^ Rebuttal 3 ^ Rebuttal 4 ^ Rebuttal 5 ^ Anti-thesis
EN10	Media exposition (Argumentative)	Thesis ^ Orientation ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Argument 3 ^ Conclusion
ES01	Media exposition (Argumentative)	Thesis ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Argument 3 ^ Argument 4 ^ Conclusion
ES02	Media exposition (Argumentative)	Thesis ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Argument 3 ^ Argument 4 ^ Argument 5 ^ Conclusion

(NB: ^ = followed by)

FIGURE 9
Summary of the Textual Analysis on the Australian Texts
(continued)

TEXT	MICRO-GENRE	RHETORICAL STRUCTURE
ES03	Media exposition (Argumentative)	Thesis ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Argument 3 ^ Argument 4 ^ Argument 5 ^ Recommendation ^ Conclusion
ES04	Media exposition (Argumentative)	Thesis ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Argument 3 ^ Argument 4 ^ Argument 5 ^ Conclusion
ES05	Media exposition (Argumentative)	Thesis ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Recommendation
ER01	Problem-solution	Thesis ^ Situation ^ Problem ^ Solution 1 ^ Solution 2 ^ Conclusion
ER02	Media exposition (Argumentative)	Orientation ^ Thesis ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Argument 3 ^ Argument 4 ^ Argument 5 ^ Argument 6 ^ Argument 7 ^ Conclusion
ER03	Media exposition (Argumentative)	Thesis ^ Orientation ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Argument 3 ^ Argument 4 ^ Argument 5 ^ Argument 6 ^ Conclusion
ER04	Media exposition (Argumentative)	Thesis ^ Orientation ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Argument 3 ^ Argument 4 ^ Argument 5 ^ (Point 1 ^ Point 2 ^ Point 3) ^ Conclusion ^ Recommendation
ER05	Media exposition (Argumentative)	Thesis ^ Orientation ^ Situation 1 ^ Situation 2 ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Argument 3 ^ Argument 4 ^ Conclusion
ER06	Media exposition (Argumentative)	Thesis ^ Orientation ^ Situation ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Argument 3 ^ Argument 4 ^ Argument 5 ^ Argument 6 ^ Conclusion

(NB: ^ = followed by)

FIGURE 9
Summary of the Textual Analysis on the Australian Texts
(continued)

TEXT	MICRO-GENRE	RHETORICAL STRUCTURE
ER07	Media exposition (Argumentative)	Thesis ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Argument 3 ^ Argument 4 ^ Argument 5 ^ Conclusion
ER08	Problem/solution	Thesis ^ Situation ^ Problem ^ Solution 1 ^ Solution 2 ^ Reflection ^ Conclusion ^ Recommendation
ER09	Media exposition (Argumentative)	Thesis ^ Orientation ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Argument 1 ^ Argument 2 ^ Argument 3 ^ Argument 4 ^ Argument 5 ^ Argument 6 ^ Conclusion
ER10	Media challenge	Thesis ^ Orientation ^ Thesis challenged ^ Rebuttal 1 ^ Rebuttal 2 ^ Rebuttal 3 ^ Anti- thesis

(NB: ^ = followed by)

In the Australian media expositions (argumentative and hortatory), the writers mostly follow the rhetorical structure of *Thesis ^ Orientation ^ Thesis reiteration ^ Arguments ^ Conclusion* as a basic pattern, with little variation. In other micro-genres, the writers use rhetorical structures that could be generally summarised as follows. For problem/solution micro-genres, the writers follow the structure of *Thesis ^ Situation ^ Problem ^ Solution ^ Conclusion*. For media challenge, the writers follow *Thesis ^ Orientation ^ Thesis challenged ^ Rebuttal ^ Anti-thesis*. In media discussion (EN 06), the writer follows *Orientation ^ Position challenged 1 ^ Rebuttal ^ Position argued for ^ Argument ^ Position challenged 2 ^ Rebuttal ^ Conclusion*. The media discussion texts show much more complexity and variation than the other Australian texts. However, as shown above, the rhetorical structures that the Australian writers used tended to be convergent and follow certain stable patterns.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

On analysing the genre – newspaper commentaries on terrorism in these two social settings – it was found that four micro-genres occurred in the Chinese data, namely, explanatory exposition, hortatory exposition, problem/solution and media challenge. No examples of argumentative exposition and media discussion were found in the Chinese data. Of these, explanatory exposition is the dominant micro-genre. However, in the Australian data, five micro-genres were found. These were argumentative exposition, hortatory exposition, problem/solution, media challenge, and media discussion. No explanatory exposition was found in the Australian texts. The most frequent micro-genre in the Australian data was argumentative exposition.

The Australian texts in this paper show some regularity in the use of the rhetorical structures in relation to the micro-genres that occur in each text. The majority of the Australian texts followed a rhetorical structure which aligned with the micro-genre of the text. This is in contrast with the Chinese texts, which showed greater diversity and variation in rhetorical structures in relation to the micro-genres used.

The different rhetorical structures encountered in the Chinese and Australian texts may be attributed to the different linguistic and cultural perspectives employed by the writers from either country. Epistemological, political and cultural differences may also have contributed to these differences. While western language scholars aim to be precise and accountable in describing and analysing language use, the Chinese tradition of language study seems to focus more on content and clarity rather than on form and structure (Wang, K., 1991; Wang, X., 1994). As observed by Cahill (2003), the tenet of the classical Chinese phrase “*wen wu dingfa*”, meaning “no single certain method in writing,” is widely prevalent in Chinese scholars of rhetoric and writing pedagogy. Liang (1968:3) stresses “no matter how you arrange an essay’s structure, the purpose is to make the essay clear to the reader.” While encouraging personal

invention and originality in using various forms to 'get ideas across,' Chinese language educators provide little explicit instruction in how to construct a piece of writing in a structured way (Kirkpatrick, 1995, 1997). This may partially explain why the Chinese textual structures demonstrated more dynamic and unstructured characteristics than the English textual structures.

In summary, after analysing micro-genres and the generic and rhetorical structures used in the newspaper commentaries on terrorism in China and Australia, the study found that generally the Chinese writers tended to employ the micro-genre of 'media explanatory exposition' more often than other micro-genres. In terms of the rhetorical structures, however, the Chinese writers tended to show diversity and individual characteristics. In contrast, the Australian writers tended to use the 'media argumentative exposition' as the dominant micro-genre in constructing the commentaries, while the rhetorical structures that they used tended to be convergent and to follow more stable patterns than those observed in the Chinese texts.

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APPENDIX A: A CHINESE MEDIA EXPOSITION

<u>Generic structure</u>	河北日报/2001年/12月/30日/003版/国际新闻·世界纵横 HEBEI DAILY Page3 30/12/2001	<u>Rhetorical structure</u>
<u>Headline</u>	恐怖主义威胁现代社会[Terrorism threatens modern society]	<u>Thesis</u>
<u>Byline</u>	李会欣 Huixin Li	
<u>Introduction</u>	1. 自人类步入现代社会以来,人们正越来越多地沐浴着现代文明的光辉 [Since the mankind entered modern society, people have been bathed in the rays of modern civilisations.] 2. 然而,与此相伴的并不总是美妙的和弦,还	<u>Orientation</u>

<p>Body</p>	<p>有一些不协调的杂音,恐怖主义就是其中之一 [However, with the civilisations, there are not always the wonderful harmonies, but some ragged noises as well, in which terrorism is one of those.]</p> <p>3. 恐怖主义已对国际安全与世界发展构成了严重威胁与挑战 [Terrorism has formed serious threats and challenges to the world security and development.]</p> <p>4. 在经济方面,恐怖主义不但会造成巨大的经济损失,还会动摇消费者和投资者的信心,对地区经济合作和世界经济的发展构成严峻挑战;在政治方面,恐怖主义则会造成国家与世界政治局势的动荡,不利于公正合理的世界政治秩序的形成;更有甚者,恐怖主义常常伤害无辜,给广大无辜群众造成巨大生命财产损失 [In the economic aspect, terrorism does not only bring about huge economic loss, but also shakes the confidence of consumers and investors. It constructs severe challenges to regional economic cooperation and the world economic development. In the political aspect, terrorism causes turbulences of state and world political conditions, which go against the formations of a fair and rational world political order. Moreover, terrorism often hurts the innocent and causes huge casualty and property damage for the innocent masses.]</p> <p>5. 恐怖主义对人类文明和人权已经造成严重的践踏与侵犯,已经成为人类社会发展的天敌 [Terrorism has seriously trampled and impinged human civilisations and human rights, and it has become a big foe in human social development.]</p>	<p>Thesis reiteration</p>
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<p><u>Conclusion</u></p>	<p>effective measures for fulfilling the international obligations carefully. Combating international terrorism should respect the acknowledged principles of international laws such as national sovereignty, territory integrity and non-intervention of interior policies.]</p> <p>17. 国际舆论认为,恐怖主义是世界上国家、民族、阶级、宗教间各种尖锐复杂矛盾的反映,是世界范围内南北经济、政治发展不平衡生成的毒瘤 [The international public opinions think that terrorism is the reflection of sharp and complex conflicts among nations, ethnic groups, classes and religions in the world, and it is the cancer brought out by the unbalanced South-North economic and political development.]</p> <p>18. 因此,国际社会应作出努力,根据《联合国宪章》的宗旨和原则,公正、合理地解决地区冲突,并大力解决发展问题 [Therefore, the international community should make efforts to solve regional conflicts fairly and rationally in accordance with the Charter of the UN and solve the developmental problems as well.]</p> <p>19. 只有如此,反对恐怖主义的斗争才能取得成效 [Only thus, the anti-terrorist battle could be successful.]</p>	<p><u>Conclusion</u></p>
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APPENDIX B: AN AUSTRALIAN MEDIA EXPOSITION

<u>Generic structure</u>	<u>THE AUSTRALIAN OPINION</u> Page17 17/09/2001	<u>Rhetorical structure</u>
<u>Headline</u>	<u>Punishing bin Laden won't stop extremists</u>	<u>Thesis</u>
<u>Subheadline</u> <u>Byline</u>	The West must wage an ideological war against terror and eliminate fanaticism at its source, <u>Hossein Esmaeili</u> writes	
<u>Introduction</u>	<p>The measures taken following the 1993 terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre (long prison terms for the perpetrators) did not deter terrorists from this week's horrific attacks in New York and Washington, nor did it solve the problem of international terrorism.</p> <p>The finger is being directed at Osama bin Laden, a Saudi-born millionaire who left his country to join Mujaheddin fighting the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s.</p> <p>Tens of thousands of young men from Saudi Arabia, the Gulf countries, Egypt and Algeria joined fighters who finally pushed the Soviet Union out of Afghanistan.</p> <p>These well-trained and mainly extremist warriors are now spread around the world, with their base in Afghanistan and Pakistan.</p>	<u>Orientation</u> 1 <u>Orientation</u> 2
<u>Body</u>	I believe that the US, the West and the rest of the international community should take several steps to combat terrorism originating in the Middle East and western Asia.	<u>Argument 1</u>

	<p>against the terrorism that originates in the Middle East.</p> <p>In this step, the West and the rest of the world – including Islamic nations – should find the real source of the growing destructive terrorism in the Middle East and western Asia. They have to find where the ideology and financial support behind bin Laden, his 20,000 trained Arab militia and associated groups comes from.</p> <p>The ideology comes from within Saudi Arabia (nor directly related to the Saudi Government).</p> <p>Traditional clergies who have isolated themselves from the rest of the Islamic world, arrogantly claiming the sole authority to interpret Islam, have a simplistic view of religion.</p> <p>They have influenced elements of Islamic societies in Egypt, Algeria, Pakistan and Afghanistan.</p> <p>The financial support comes from within Saudi Arabia and other rich Arab states of the Gulf.</p> <p>Again, governments of those small oil-rich countries are not involved.</p> <p>However, the Saudi Government and those Arab states in the Gulf should co-operate in combating the extremist ideology that is not shared by the overwhelming majority of Muslims and Arabs in the Middle East and around the World.</p> <p>That extremist ideology is attractive in countries where poverty makes many</p>	<p><u>Argument 2</u></p>
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	<p>people desperate and provides quick solutions to their problems.</p> <p>So Afghanistan, almost-bankrupt Pakistan and perhaps in the near future Iraq are the places where the extremist ideology behind the terrorism can easily attract people.</p> <p>The danger is that no country in the world is prepared to be involved in any activities that could offend the Saudi authorities and other oil-rich Arab states.</p> <p>More than 60 per cent of the world's main energy source, oil, comes from Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf states.</p> <p>A long-term solution must consider these factors carefully.</p>	<p><u>Argument 3</u></p>
<p><u>Conclusion</u></p>	<p>The extradition and punishment of bin Laden and destruction of his military and training bases in Afghanistan and Pakistan, though necessary, are not enough to break the back of those narrow-minded followers of death and destruction.</p> <p>Not only have they killed thousands of innocent people and disrupted the life of many Americans, they have also shamed the reputation of Islam and its civilisation.</p> <p><i>Dr Hossein Esmaili is a lecturer in International Law at the University of New England in Armidale, NSW</i></p>	<p><u>Conclusion</u></p>