Genre writing in teaching materials in English B

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Abstract

This essay explores genre pedagogy with a main focus on an analysis of teaching material used in upper secondary school in the B-course in English. The aim of the analysis is to determine if the writing exercises in the books, which are not specifically designed for genre pedagogy, can be used genre pedagogically as they are presented in the books. The result shows that they are not well suited for this; two of the books are poorly designed for genre pedagogy and they do not show any thoughts or links to genre pedagogy while the other two show some links to genre pedagogy. This essay also explores the field of genre pedagogy. This exploration shows that genre pedagogy fans out and is not unitary, and especially not in its definition of genre.

Keywords: genre pedagogy, genres, text type, pedagogy, writing, student material, textual analysis.
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1 Introduction

Very few teachers would, we imagine, claim that students are generally more proficient at writing than speaking. Indeed, during our practice periods at schools we have noticed that student’s writing skills are not as good as one might wish. The reason for this is, of course, that spoken language is primary to written, and that pupils in their everyday lives have had much more time to practice the former than the latter.

Teaching students to efficiently write clearly structured and well-crafted texts is by no means an easy task; understanding how texts work and how one might go about composing them takes both time and energy. Yet the skills required for writing are becoming more and more vital in the world we live in; more texts of various kinds are produced today than ever before, and more and more working places demand that their workers can create texts such as reports, explanations and so on. Knowing how to write is, in other words, becoming more important than ever before. So, it is important for students to know how to do this, which, of course, is also why it is important for teachers to know how to teach it.

So how is this knowledge gained? A possible solution can be found in genre pedagogy, which deals with learning language and composition through working with texts of various kinds. A more detailed excursion of genre pedagogy will be presented later, but one might already now point out that this pedagogical didactic project is also known as the Sydney School (Hedeboe & Polias 2008:7). Though it has mostly been used within first- and second language teaching, a general discussion regarding using genre pedagogy in other subjects is taking place (Perme 2007:13-15).

The main purpose of this essay is to analyse the writing exercises in student material for the B course in English, if taken precisely as worded in the books, and to see whether they promote a genre pedagogical way of working. A more detailed plan over what we are going to examine, as well as our secondary questions, are presented in the section ‘Aim’ below. Note that these books which we are analyzing have not been explicitly designed with genre pedagogy in mind; however, we do not consider this to be a problem since, as we have already stated, our aim here is to examine to what extent these books might be used in this way. In connection to the analysis we will give a general presentation of the chosen student material and their respective teacher’s guides.

We have had many reasons for doing this examination. First of all, genre pedagogy is – one might say – a rapidly growing field within pedagogy. As of today, a teacher in a Swedish school who wishes to use genre pedagogy when teaching English probably lacks teaching material specifically designed for this purpose. However, in our experience students’ books
are still the primary tool used in English classes in Sweden. Therefore, we choose to examine to what extent already existing teaching materials might be used in relation to genre pedagogy. The best way to do this is, in our opinion, to look for elements of genre pedagogy within the teaching material itself via textual analyses, and not by conducting any interviews.

Secondly, we are both interested in using texts as the basis for teaching of language, which is an element which most definitely can be found in genre pedagogy. Thirdly, based on what little we knew about genre pedagogy when starting this essay, we found it intriguing and thought it would be useful for students to get to know how to structure different texts depending on what genre they belong to. Finally, we both believe that students might feel that it is more interesting to work in this way.

Below follows detailed sections about aim, method, definitions and information on the method of genre pedagogy.

2 Theory

In this chapter we will present a definition of genre and an overview of the development of genre pedagogy. The book which mainly will be used as reference in this essay is *Genre, text and grammar* (2005) by Peter Knapp and Megan Watkins. We choose this to be our main book since it is the one which – in our opinion – is the most detailed and straightforward we have come across in describing genre pedagogy.

2.1 What is a genre?

It is vital at this point that we understand what a genre is; the term has been discussed for a long time (Skoglund 2008:12, see also Paltridge (Johns (ed.)) 2002:73-77). Initially, one might therefore point out what it is not; a genre is not a text type. Text types, as the term is described by Lennart Hellspong and Per Ledin in *Vägar genom texten* (2006), are recognizable by non-linguistic characteristics. One can, in this respect, for instance consider the instruction manual to be a text type since it might be defined by its function, and not by any linguistic features; it is designed to help people install perhaps a TV or a computer. Similarly, an advertisement is recognized by its purpose - to sell something – rather than a particular choice of words or any particular grammatical feature.

In *Genrebyrån*, Bodil Hedeboe and John Polias write that “a genre is a social process with recognizable steps and with a certain social purpose” (*our own translation*, 2008:13). This is a definition which suits our purpose here quite well. All of the books and texts which we have studied on the subject propose that a genre is a social phenomenon. It is a text,
spoken or written, which has a sender and a receiver, meaning two or more people are involved in an act of communication. There are social processes at work when a text is being composed; one person is purposefully trying to communicate something, be it a narrative, a description, an argument or something else, and uses various linguistic structures to attain this goal. Note that a person may be more or less aware of how he or she manipulates language due to these factors; people are not necessarily aware of their genre competence. It is in this light that one understands what Knapp & Watkins mean when they claim in *Genre, text and grammar* that we perceive genres as “a sense of what is appropriate in certain circumstances and what is not” (2005:26). Genres guide us as to what can be said and how it can - and sometimes must - be said.

Given this social dimension, it is quite obvious that genres are culture-bound, and that they arise, evolve and disappear at different moments in history (Hellspelong & Ledin 2006:24). Thus, not all cultures share the same genres, or look at them in the same way. Also, as members of particular cultures, we have access to various genres, but not all have access to the same genres; most of us know how to chat with a cashier, but not all know how to give a concluding speech in court. So, recognizing the various steps and linguistic structures of a genre most certainly requires certain cultural knowledge.

Knapp & Watkins define genres by their governing processes. This is not done by all; for instance, Hellspelong & Ledin claim that a genre is a text which “has been named by its users and which is rooted in a particular field” (*our own translation*, 2006:24). However, since Knapp & Watkins is our main book, we will abide by their division of genres into these five categories: describing, explaining, instructing, arguing and narrating. Briefly, one might describe them as follows: the genre of describing deals with classifying things and experiences, and putting their characteristics and behaviour into words (Knapp & Watkins 2005:97). The genre of explaining deals with understanding how the world and various phenomena in it works (2005:125). The genre of instructing is used when telling people what to do and how to do it (2005:153). The genre of arguing is concerned with discussions and how to reason, evaluate and persuade (2005:187). Finally, the genre of narrating deals with telling stories (2005:222-223).

These genres, of course, may be fused in various ways to create so called *multi generic products* (2005:27), which are texts which do not belong exclusively to just one genre, but which instead are mixed endeavours. However, going back to the basic genres: each of these has a certain set of linguistic characteristics; one might exemplify this by briefly looking closer at one of them. Since the genre of describing is the first one to be examined by Knapp
& Watkins, it is the one which will be looked closer upon here. Grammatically, a descriptive text is characterized by such things as its use of relational verbs, information-packed adjectives, adverbial phrases which point out when and where and, of course, the tendency to use the present tense. Structurally, a descriptive account “generally names the thing, then it classifies it, and then it deals with its attributes, behaviours, functions and so on” (Knapp & Watkins 2005:100). This might, of course, be compared to narratives, which mainly use action verbs, rely on temporal connectives and are mostly written in the past tense (Knapp & Watkins 2005: 221). Structurally, most stories require some sort of initial orientation, after which events are mostly told in chronological order.

2.2 The development of genre pedagogy

The evolution of genre pedagogy is described by Knapp & Watkins (2005), and also in Anniqa Sandell Ring’s thesis “Genrepedagogik: en explicit modell för språk- och ämnesundervisning” (2008).

Genre pedagogy, as we know it, is based on the Australian Sydney school’s model of genres (Perme, 2007:14). During the 1970’s and 1980’s, a dominant trend in language teaching in Australia and many other countries was that there “seemed no real need to teach grammar and the variabilities of textual form as appropriate usage would result from verbal interaction in the classroom leading onto a seamless engagement in the writing process” (Knapp & Watkins: 2005:77). In other words, it was believed that the act of using language verbally would also help pupils develop their skills concerning written language.

Spoken and written language are, however, two different things, and this way of teaching language was criticized by various linguists and education researchers, who claimed that grammar and writing needed be taught more explicitly (Knapp & Watkins 2005:77). Genre pedagogy, based on Michael Halliday’s systemic functional linguistics and Vygotsky’s ideas about interaction, scaffolding and the proximal development zone, emerged as a result (Sandell 2008:19-20). Knapp & Watkins (2005) argue that seeing and using grammar primarily as a set of rules is probably not the best way of understanding grammar and language, instead this knowledge needs to be functionalized.

1 ‘grammar’, here, is defined as Knapp & Watkins define it. They do not only define grammar as it has been traditionally, i.e. syntactically and classifying words into various groups depending on its meaning, they also define grammar as being different depending on what kind of text it is and to what genre it belongs to. Simply put, grammar is also about using styles and rearranging words to make a point or writing differently simply because the genre requires it (Knapp & Watkins 2005:32)). From here on, when we use the term ‘grammar’ we use it in the way that Knapp & Watkins (2005) defines it, unless we state otherwise.
In genre pedagogy, which started gaining ground towards the latter parts of the 1980’s and the early 1990’s (Sandell Ring 2008:19), language is seen as a resource for creating meaning, and “grammar is the organizing system for these resources” (author’s translation, Hedeboe & Polias 2008:11). The benefit of basing the teaching of language and grammar on genres is thought to be that genres can highlight how these resources are used in different ways in different contexts, in other words how certain contexts and purposes call for certain uses of language. Hopefully, this will then lead to pupils understanding both texts and language better.

The most commonly-used model for genre-based teaching is called the curriculum cycle (Knapp & Watkins 2005:78, see Appendix 2), which is sometimes also called the curriculum circle (Sandell Ring 2008:20). They may differ a bit from each other in the sense that one may have an extra step within the cycle than the other and they may use different terminology; however, the contents and the goals are roughly the same. It consists of four steps, and is described in Hedeboe & Polias (2008:17-20): in the first step, a subject of interest, for example the features of film noir, is studied by teachers and pupils alike. In the second step, “model texts” are examined; how are they constructed, what is the language like and how do these things fit in with the texts’ purposes? During this step, a meta-language for describing linguistic processes is developed. In the third step, pupils and teachers write one or more texts together, sharing knowledge and opinions with each other. Finally, in the fourth step, pupils move towards being more and more independent, needing less and less guidance and feedback from teachers and comrades when writing. Writing is here seen as a process. During all of these steps in the cycle, evaluation and communication are integral parts of the process; pupils’ voices should be heard. It is also important to point out that in spite of using model texts in order to deconstruct and understand genres, the actual writing process must not become an act of simply replicating certain text types (Knapp & Watkins 2005:79).

Within pedagogy there is, or certainly has been, an intense debate about product- and process writing (see Tornberg (1997) and Dysthe (2007)). Knapp & Watkins (2005) promote process writing (for a short description on product writing, see chapter 2.4: “Pros and cons of genre pedagogy”). Firstly, they see writing overall as a process: “Learning to write is difficult and complex series of processes that require a range of explicit teaching methodologies throughout all the stages of writing”; secondly, if writing is a process, then it is possible to work with genres from quite an early age where the student can build upon previously acquired knowledge as the demands get higher; thirdly, process writing is a cycle where the teacher works together with the students in various ways leading to a text which has gone
through several stages of revising, this cycle is referred to as the curriculum cycle (Knapp & Watkins 2005:14, 28, 78).

However, genre pedagogy focuses not only on language and grammar, but also on learning in general, which should be evident from the curriculum circle. It stresses the relationship between form and content, and is therefore not only of value to teachers of language, but also teachers of all subjects where written texts are produced (Hedeboe & Polias 2008:8).

2.3 Course plans

Initially, however, when considering using genre pedagogy, and any other pedagogy for that matter, one must seek support for using it, in one way or another, specifically or less specifically, in the course plans. In our opinion, one can find support for using genre pedagogy in the following excerpts from the course plan for English B; these quotes clearly state that students should:

- be able to orally and in writing summarise and comment on different types of texts, especially those related to the area of interest or study orientation
- be able to read, summarise and comment on the contents of longer literary texts
- have the ability to present contents in writing in a clear and well-structured way, as well as be able to express themselves in a varied and personal manner with respect to the audience and situation
- be able to evaluate their work in order to change and enhance their learning
- be able to critically examine and analyse information from different sources (www.skolverket.se, see also Appendix 1)

In our opinion, much of this can be seen in what Knapp & Watkins write. In the end, students will hopefully acquire the skill of combining different grammars (genres), creating a colourful and personal touch (Knapp & Watkins 2005:82).

2.4 Pros and cons of genre pedagogy

Here, we are going to present some arguments for and against the use of genre pedagogy.

To understand different texts, one could argue that the student must be aware of texts having different uses and therefore are structured differently as well as using different sets of grammar. This alone motivates using genre pedagogy as a teaching method because the student might not only get to know different texts (i.e. genres) but also, at least, some of their grammar as well as their structure.
Tornberg (1997) is thinking along the same lines as Knapp & Watkins (2005). Although she refers ‘grammar’ to syntax, word classes etc, she believes that grammar should be used in process orientated activities which is more rewarding than the traditional way of acquiring language skills (i.e. the grammar- and translation method, which means that you translate sentences from your mother tongue into the language you are studying) which is by Tornberg and Knapp & Watkins seen as product orientated (Tornberg 1997:106f). Tornberg (1997:106f) argues that grammar, as a set of rules, is more or less constant and is there whether you like it or not, and therefore it is not defendable to use the grammar- and translation method as a primary tool for language acquisition.

Communication is another important aspect of learning a new language. What you primarily associate ‘communication’ with is speaking, however, seeing communication by speaking as the only way to communicate is, of course, wrong, since it can also be done through writing. Dysthe (1996) studied this by working with three different schools in two different countries (USA and Norway). Although her study did not specifically involve written communication as such, she studied how teachers used it as a tool for learning and what consequences it had on the students. Written communication is a useful tool. With it you can lay the basis for discussion, it is process orientated, you can write within many different genres and students can also learn to organize their thoughts and reflect on them at a later stage which is not as easy when it comes to spoken language.

Is there anything negative to say about genre pedagogy? First of all, it might be tedious and very time consuming work to go in-depth if you want to study grammar and genre specific conventions, and there is also the question of how important it really is to do that as well as if students are mature enough to understand them. Some theorists argue whether genres can be taught at all, others that genres are changing all the time which would mean that it would be incautious to build a curriculum around them (Johns (ed.) 2002:4). Also, teachers might not be skilled enough to know enough about different genres to educate students.

There is also the question of time; genre pedagogy is quite time consuming since it is heavily process orientated, and, as mentioned earlier, course plans require practising of other skills as well. There is also the discussion of which and when to introduce grammatical terms (Tornberg 1997:109f). Genre pedagogy demands quite a lot of both students and teachers since it concentrates on genre specific conventions which include grammatical terms such as action- and mental verbs.
3 Aim
Our aim is to find out if student’s books promote a genre oriented way of working; we intend to do this by looking at what types of writing exercises that are present in these books, and how genre bound these are when considering certain criteria (which are presented below). To guide us in our analysis we have these three questions:

1. To what extent are different genres present in the student’s books?
2. In what ways, if any, do the tasks make the students aware of that the texts and exercises belong to genres?
3. To what extent can the tasks be used to practise the student’s knowledge of and skills in writing in different genres?

4 Method
The method employed in the analysis of the student material is what most literature on how to structure a scientific paper call document analysis or text- or content analysis (see for instance Bell, Judith, 1999:97; Johansson & Svedner, 2006:64-66; and Stukát, Staffan, 2005:53). At this point, we would like to point out that our analysis will be qualitative and not quantitative; it will not contain any statistics.

How do you go about using textual analysis? Document analysis employs a close reading or a critical close reading (or both), the former meaning a mapping of the contents, the latter involves the same as close reading but here you employ questions to help you in the process of mapping the contents (for example: “what is the author’s opinion about the development in the Sudan?”, Johansson & Svedner, 2006:65). You could also study different books on the same issues and then make a qualitative comparison – you compare the authors’ opinions (Johansson & Svedner, 2006:65). Bell (1999:98-99) defines document analysis in a slightly different way. Bell uses the term external examination for finding out information on, for example, whether the source is authentic, and if the author is the true author. Internal examination means finding out, for example: what kind of source is it?; has the source been manipulated in any way?; and what is the purpose of the text? We will employ both close reading and close critical reading as we will explore and map the contents as well as exploring the purpose/s of the texts and if something is more explicitly expressed than something else. As Johansson & Svedner (2006:65) point out, one danger in employing text analysis is that it tends to get quite subjective depending on the fact that you almost always have a specific
angle ready before you start. Regarding the ethical aspects of our examination, nothing we examine is of a private nature, thus no moral dilemmas present themselves.

4.1 Method of selection
We have chosen the following books: Blueprint B (2007), Master Plan II (2005), Realtime 2 (2003) and Short Cuts 2 (2003). With the exception of Blueprint B (2007), we have managed to get a hold of their respective teacher’s guides, which – as previously mentioned – will also be presented.

The chosen student materials are all used in English on B-level which is, in this study, a foreign language. This choice has been made consciously because the course plan for the B-level may be interpreted as promoting writing on a larger scale than in the course plan for the A-level (see appendix 1 and 2), and since we are examining the presence of different genres in the books as well as to what extent students are working with them and how, this choice is sound. All of the examined books were published after year 2000 to be as updated as possible as well as being in compliance with the current course plan. The student books are either to be used in any upper secondary school program (for example Real Time 2) or in study preliminary programs (for example Blueprint B)

The particular books analysed here were chosen simply due to the fact that they met the needs mentioned above and since they were made available to us by our partner schools.

4.2 Procedure
Our first step will be to give a description of each student book to get a general overview of their contents and structures and specifically the exercises. Here, the teacher’s guides will also be touched upon. As Knapp & Watkins (2005) point out, many texts contain traces of more than one genre; however, in order to make our presentations of the texts found within the students’ materials easier to grasp, we have concentrated on what might be considered their main genre. In determining which genre one might consider being the main one of a text, we have – of course – observed the features touched upon in Knapp & Watkins (2005). In the section “What is a genre?”, we touched upon what these features are like.

Step two will be to analyze the exercises by connecting them to some of the major features of genre pedagogy found in Knapp & Watkins (2005). We do this in order to achieve more substance when presenting the exercises; this part will include excerpts from the books thus making it a qualitative analysis. These features are as follows: tenor (i.e. what roles the students are asked to enter and/or imagine in the communication act); if the exercises contain explanations of words and phrases that are typical of a genre; instructions on what segments a
specific genre should contain; instructions on the structure of specific genres; and if the exercises are process- or product orientated. We chose these aspects since they are key elements within genre pedagogy.

To make this step more reader friendly we have decided to give a more detailed description of these features in connection to the analysis. Step three of the analysis will be to put the exercises against the questions formulated in section “Aim”.

Final note: we are fully aware of the fact that many aspects of genre pedagogy might be the subjects of essays such as this one, meaning there are many aspects which deserve to be examined in detail. Due to restraints concerning both time and space, however, this essay cannot go into depth in all areas. Therefore, we consider this essay to be, in a sense, a pilot examination.

5 Analysis

Before our actual analysis of the writing exercises, the descriptive analysis of each of the student books will be given.

Also, each analysis of the books (except for Blueprint B) is accompanied by an examination of their respective teacher’s guide, and a brief recount of each guide will also be presented in connection to each book. Although a teacher is free to use these books as he or she sees fit, it is of interest, from a genre pedagogical point of view as well as to this paper, what these guides have to say about how the books should or could be used. These descriptions of the books will also address what genres the students are asked to write within. Note that many of the texts and exercises may include several different genre elements, to make the presentation comprehensible and lucid. The exercises and the texts will be divided into the genres that Knapp & Watkins (2005) use, i.e. a text or exercise will be classified on the basis of what genre is the most prominent in the text or exercise.

The books that we are examining are as follows: Blueprint B (2007), Masterplan 2 (2005), Realtime 2 (2003) and Short Cuts 2 (2002).

5.1 Realtime 2

There is no explicit purpose present in the foreword of Realtime 2 (2003:3) regarding the contents and structure of it other than “Realtime 2 Language will give you plenty of opportunities to practise your English”. Beginning with the structure, Realtime 2 is structured around different themes (for example spare time and science) and further divided into separate chapters for each theme. The chapters tell of the themes from different angles and include
both literary- and non-literary texts. Regarding the contents of the texts, *Realtime 2* does offer texts of various kinds.

However, the majority of the texts are of narrative nature regardless of the contents or if they are of scientific or literary nature. Even though a few texts have a stronger focus on explaining a phenomenon or a social occurrence, i.e. the text belongs more obviously to the genre of explaining than to the genre of narrative, the texts’ forms are still narrative. There is no clear progression towards more difficult texts, nor any shifts towards other forms of texts – the narrative form is almost always favoured. The texts are of various lengths, they can range from examples of advertisements to longer stories or scientific articles.

Most teachers, nowadays, would agree on the need for students to practise their skills in speaking, listening, writing and reading to achieve a good skill in language. The course plan may also promote such a view (see appendix 1). *Realtime 2* does comply with that way of thinking and quite obviously too. However, much attention is paid to reading comprehension, all but one text have at least one or more exercises that practises reading skills. Listening comprehension occurs regularly and grammar exercises accompany all but two texts (here, ‘grammar’ refers to its traditional meaning).

*Realtime 2* mostly offers narrative texts with few exceptions, and so are the exercises. Like the texts, the exercises may have features from different genres, but most of them could still be classified as narratives or descriptive, these two genres are also the most prominent kinds. There are a few exercises, however, where the student is asked to write an argumentative paper as well as explaining a scientific occurrence. The variation of the exercises is also quite sparse, focus is on diary, letters and continuing or rewriting a story. The issue here is that the exercises, no matter what genre they would be classified as, tend, in the end, to be of narrative nature, i.e. the task of writing a letter should be seen more as a heading than a different kind of text. Rarely are the exercises connected to the texts, i.e. the texts are rarely used as examples or help when doing the tasks.

The teacher’s guide belonging to *Realtime 2* contains no explicit genre-related exercises, instructions or ideas. This might be due to the fact that it does not actually have any instructions asking students to compose longer texts; it simply consists of more minor tasks – most of them vocabulary exercises. It does contain some biographical material dealing with the various authors represented in the student material itself, but since these are intended for use by the teacher and the teacher alone, they probably should not be considered important concerning this essay.
Summary: the most prominent genres in *Realtime 2* are those of narrating and describing. The tasks mostly practice reading and listening skills. Grammar exercises are also present. The teacher’s guide contains no genre related material which is of importance to this essay.

### 5.2 Blueprint 2

The authors of *Blueprint 2* present a clear purpose of their work. Different literary texts have the purpose of giving the student an insight to English literature, and the exercises as well as the separate sections about writing and speaking are there to help the student to learn how to write and speak in different areas (2007:Foreword).

*Blueprint 2* differs quite a lot from a traditional book like *Realtime 2* above (i.e. structured around the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing). Reading comprehension as well as discussion exercises are always present, grammar (traditional meaning) exercises appears regularly, but listening comprehension is sparse. Although practising of all the four skills are present, the book centres on writing. Thematically, though, it is quite the same as the other books investigated. Although it is divided into chapters with different themes like *Realtime 2*, for instance, the contents are of another character. *Blueprint 2* focuses on literary texts, for better or for worse, which in turn means they have almost always a narrative form. Like *Realtime 2* some of the texts have elements of other genres, but the most prominent form is the narrative. The literary texts are mostly from novels, but some excerpts from poems, sonnets and diaries are present. Some examples of the themes are horror and suspense, culture and working life. Occasionally, some narrative texts contain elements which are strongly explanatory or descriptive.

Writing exercises in direct connection to each of the texts are almost absent, and so are writing exercises of more literary nature although the texts are mostly of the literary kind. Instead the writing exercises are placed at the end of each chapter, and instructions on how to write, i.e. contents, structure and, occasionally, how to use specific words for a specific text, are placed at the end of each chapter and at the end of the book, much like *Masterplan II*. Most of the exercises concern formal writing, i.e. CV, argumentative papers, reviews and reportage, thus the variation of different writing tasks is quite limited as well as repetitive. The literary exercises consist of writing a short story or a poem.

Summary: the texts in *Blueprint 2* are mostly literary, and are therefore narratives. The exercises emphasize writing, though the exercises – which mostly deal with formal writing – are not particularly varied.
5.3 Master Plan II

*Master Plan II*, is, like the other books which we study, an all-in-one book containing both texts intended for reading and various tasks for working with. No clear purpose with the book is stated, nor is there any mentioning of it adhering to any particular didactic mindset.

The book is divided into six so-called *units*, which consist of various texts revolving around certain subjects. The first unit is called *Flicks*, and the recurring theme is, of course, movies; the second unit is called *Me, Myself and I*, and deals with what sort of person one could be and the choices we make in life. Thus the first five units are organized. Some of the texts are authentic, whereas others have been specially prepared for *Master Plan II*. From a genre perspective, we find both narrative and non-narrative texts, though the former is the most prevalent.

Each unit contains multiple texts, and in relation to each text there are various tasks which should be performed. For instance, while reading “Popcorn”, which is the first text in *Flicks*, one encounters reading checkpoints which ask questions about the text, making sure the reader has understood what is going on. After the text, there are subjects to be discussed verbally, and a variety of words which one can work with. The next “text” is a listening exercise, which is followed by writing and speaking tasks.

*Master Plan II* has an even distribution of genres for writing in, and it quite clearly informs students of what genres they are presently working with. First of all, above every segment describing the writing exercises that are to be worked with, there are key words; so if students are asked to write letters or summaries, then the phrase *formal letter* or the word *summary* can clearly be seen. Secondly, narratives are, of course, present (*Master Plan II* 2005:22, 108, 182), but they are not dominant; more space is definitely given to argumentative essays (*Master Plan II* 2005:22, 65, 112, etc).

The sixth and last unit in the book is a bit different from the others. It is called *Tricks of the Trade* and is considered a reference chapter. Throughout the book when there are tasks asking students to produce written texts or speeches, a reference is made to some particular part of this chapter. Considering various written genres, which is what concerns us in this essay, it gives instructions for how to compose articles, reviews, letters, summaries, curriculum vitaes and argumentative essays. There is also a chapter dealing with formal and informal language.

Overall, the teacher’s guide belonging to *Master Plan II* does not promote any particular method of teaching/learning, although its texts and exercises focus on creating grounds for classroom discussions. Some of the exercises do promote a genre pedagogy point of view. In
one exercise the students are asked to read a text within the genre of horror. The purpose of the exercise is to make the student aware of the horror genre, what ‘genre’ is and that there are many different genres although the main purpose is to increase the student’s understanding of texts of a reasoning character. Another exercise is designed to get a notion of a kind of text that is common in summaries, essays and reviews but the tasks are designed to train the student to find specific facts. Most of the tasks are like the latter, but the texts are of various kinds, however not overtly used to study genres and their grammar.

Summary: the texts for reading in Master Plan II are mostly narratives, whereas there is a more even distribution for genres to write in. The “Tricks of the Trade” unit is quite extensive.

5.4 Short Cuts 2
In the foreword to Short Cuts 2, its authors claim that the book has been produced while paying attention to demands on speaking and writing (2002:3). Short Cuts 2 is similar to most other books of this type in that it is divided into several overarching chapters which all, in turn, contain thematically linked texts. For instance, the first overarching chapter is named Suspense, and contains a variety of supposedly suspenseful texts. Some of these, such as “The Footsteps” by Rosie Thomas, are fabricated narratives, whereas others, such as “Highway Inferno”, are non-fictional descriptions of actual events. For the most part, the book contains literary texts, which is especially obvious in the central, and largest, chapter: Classics; here one finds fragments of classic novels, poems and plays from the last 400 years of the English language. Interspersed with these are minor descriptive texts of the authors of the texts, dealing with people such as William Shakespeare and Charlotte Brontë. In relation to each text there are various tasks, such as reading checks, vocabulary exercises, topics for discussion and so on.

However, there are also instances of argumentative texts, such as in the chapter Burning Issue, where the subject of animal rights is discussed. The final chapter of the book is called Big Cities, and it mainly deals with descriptive accounts of certain cities.

Considering genre-writing in Short Cuts 2, one finds that the writing exercises are not always worded in such a way that they are explicitly related to genres. Often there are exercises which could be described as narratives or descriptions, but which are not labelled that way; an example of this we find on page 37, where students are told to “write about” an everyday hero, a task which could clearly contain, for instance, both descriptive and narrative elements; however, any mentioning of the text to be belonging to any of these genres is left
out. Sometimes the instructions become rather vague: “Write a prose passage, or a poem, seen from the point of view of an immigrant from another culture” (Short Cuts 2 2002:77).

Otherwise, students are for the most part asked to partake in the creation of narratives. Many a time are they instructed to simply continue a story found in the chapter text (Short Cuts 2 2002:14, 45, 61, 130, etc.) or to come up with one of their own (2002:15, 139, etc.). Interestingly, these instructions for creating narratives are amongst the most detailed in the book: “Imagine your own suspense story, or retell one that you have read, heard or seen. Do not only tell what happens. Also try to build up suspense by slowing the story down through descriptions of people, places, atmosphere, etc. Remember to describe feelings, and people’s reactions to what happens. Try to mix descriptive passages with dialogues” (2002:15). Such detailed instructions are not given when it comes to the other writing exercises, which students might need more help with.

Apart from narratives, descriptive accounts seem to be the most prominent genre (Short Cuts 2 2002:37, 61, 86, 127, etc.), though a form of the word describe is not always used. Other genres are, of course, also present in Short Cuts 2, but they are not as prominent. Students are occasionally encouraged to write argumentative texts (Short Cuts 2 2002:118, 152), or to create newspaper articles (2002:170, 86, etc.) or compose letters and diaries.

In the presentation of this book’s teacher’s guide, it is mentioned that its intentions are for students to be given a “language shower” (our own translation, Short Cuts 2 Teacher’s Guide 2002:7) with a great variety of exercises. Concerning producing texts, however – there are not many exercises, ideas or instructions at all. In fact, there is only one; on page 46, one finds a “checklist of things to consider when doing written work” (2002:46). The various points on this list are quite good; it seems to consider writing a process since it points out that writing needs to be planned and that various drafts should be produced. It also points to such things as connectors and dividing texts into paragraphs. However, it does not really state how any of these things are actually done. For the rest of the guide, instructions for writing – and definitely any genre-related exercises – are absent.

Summary: students are mostly asked to write in the narrative genre in Short Cuts 2, but the texts for reading are of various kinds. The teacher’s guide has some interesting features.

5.5 Analysis of the exercises
As mentioned in the method section, the exercises will be put against the following major features of genre pedagogy, found in Knapp & Watkins (2005): tenor (i.e. what roles the students are asked to enter and/or imagine in the communication act); if the exercises contain
explanations of words and phrases that are typical of a genre; instructions on what segments a specific genre should contain; instructions on the structure of specific genres; and if the exercises are process- or product orientated.

5.5.1 Contents
Knowing what a particular text of a genre should contain is just as important as any other element of writing. In a suspense story, most of us would probably have some sort of villain, or an environmental element such as a volcano, in order to make things suspenseful. In other cases, it is important to have particular segments; for example, in an argumentative text it is important to have a thesis and arguments, without which the text might be difficult to grasp.

Knapp & Watkins (2005) note that it is important to choose texts for reading that are suitable for a particular genre when studying it; for example, if the students are to practise describing, then it might be a good idea to study texts about animals since these typically have a descriptive language as well as having segments typical of that genre. Knapp and Watkins (2005) propose, initially, that students study and learn one genre at a time before reading other genres or even try to mix several different genres. They argue that many of the books that the students use blend narrative, descriptive, argumentative grammar into a potpourri that will “make heavy language demands on the reader” (2005:89).

Blueprint B puts a lot of effort into instructing the student what to put into a text that he or she is going to write. All exercises have a clear section about contents as well as how to present it in correct order. Some exercises are, of course, more free and up to the student to decide what to write, for example, writing a poem (2007:135). Some subjects do not require much input, such as when the student is asked to write a cause and effect essay; here the student is basically just told what a cause and effect essay is and that it contains a cause of something which in turn has an effect (2007:271-272). Writing a literary analysis can be quite a tedious task, but Blueprint B gives quite good instructions: “Start your interpretation with an introduction”, the instructions also tell what it contains and a few examples of how the student can catch the interest of the reader, which quite important in all genres; “In the body you will support and illustrate your interpretation”, among others things the students are given the tip how to support their ideas with quotes from the text they have read; “The conclusion very briefly summarizes your interpretations”, the students is advised to mention his strongest arguments again in order to reinforce his analysis (2007:263).

In Real Time 2, many of the exercises are quite straightforward and do not require lengthy instructions, for example answering a letter telling about how parents deal with
childcare in Sweden or rewrite or continue the story (2003:148, 158, 16). Some of the exercises give fairly good information on the contents: “Write about the pet you prefer. Try to tell your readers a little about this animal’s background, country of origin, how it should be looked after, why it is nice or interesting etc.” (2003:170).

Descriptive exercises are often quite straightforward; the previous mentioned exercises are examples of that, but although Realtime 2 succeeds in some of these exercises it fails in other exercises of a descriptive nature: “Choose one of the other planets and write a description of it” (2003:176), this type of exercise is quite common in Realtime 2.

Concerning argumentative texts, Realtime 2 does not provide ample instructions; for example, the student is asked to take a stand on keeping or setting animals free, the instruction says: “What is your opinion?” (2003:170). Writing a portrait is an exercise that is repeated often, here, too, does Realtime 2 fail: only on one occasion out of three does the student get any information on what to include in a portrait and that one occasion it is quite vague: “Use the information in the text and use your imagination to make the portrait more rounded” (2003:24). Writing a portrait is not something that is done easily, and it may look differently depending on what the student wants to tell the reader as well.

Concerning contents, Short Cuts 2 often asks students to continue stories started in the earlier chapter texts. Seemingly, the book takes students’ knowledge of the elements that make up a narrative for granted. Students are asked to focus on various imaginative elements – such as what is going to happen (Short Cuts 2 2002:45), and how one creates tension (2002:15). Similarly, knowledge of the elements that make out a descriptive account is taken for granted (Short Cuts 2 2002: 161, 185). In fact, the only genres which are given lengthier treatments in this respect are CVs (Short Cuts 2 2002:196-197), letters (2002:198) and argumentative essays (2002:200). For instance, when it comes to essays it is pointed out that these contain a topic introduction, opinions which are supported by examples and arguments, and a summarizing conclusion.

In Master Plan II, the “Tricks of the Trade” unit provides ample instructions contents-wise when it comes to articles, reviews, letters, summaries and argumentative essays (Master Plan II 2005:197-207). For instance, when it comes to articles it is pointed out that they should contain an introductory summary, a background, a description of the events having taken place, a “round-off” and a catchy headline. Students are also encouraged to examine authentic articles and compare these with the layout presented in the book. Similarly, when it comes to, for instance, a review, its constituents are described, and the students are then provided with a lengthy sample review, which they are asked to study and deconstruct.
Conclusively, the result is of a mixed nature. Narratives get most of the attention, and argumentative essays do also get quite a lot of room, beyond that other genres do not get as much attention. More specifically, advice on contents are uneven depending both on the books in question as well as regarding what kind of text the student is asked to write.

5.5.2 Words, phrases and grammar
As mentioned earlier, Knapp & Watkins (2005:32-33) connect grammar to genre, and thus not only refer grammar to a set of indisputable rules but also to specific words, phrases, syntax and the structure of the text, in short, everything from words to the text as a whole; to be able to express yourself as well as possible in a particular context you should be aware of the "rules" for that context. Making the students aware of genre bound features is something that is not obvious in the books; sometimes they are clear and sometimes they are quite vague and insufficient. A couple of them tries and succeeds partially, others fail completely.

Occasionally, *Blueprint B* is quite specific; for example, in one exercise where the student is asked to write an argumentative essay and is advised like this “A very effective thesis statement is an although-because sentence”, an example of such a sentence follows (2007:270)), on other occasions they are more elaborate as when the student is asked to write a poem: “**Reduction** of unnecessary words, such as and, or and various prepositions, is common in poetry”, furthermore, students are also advised to use a lot of descriptive words like adjectives and adverbs as well as trying to create a rhythm (2007:261). Sometimes advice on specific words and phrases are quite sparse and vague: when writing a book review the student should “Use the present tense. The book or film continues to exist now and in the future!” (2007:265) or minimally, as when the student is writing a literary analysis, write titles in italics or underline them (2007:263).

*Real Time 2* practically lacks these sorts of instructions altogether. In one exercise, the student is asked to write a letter and the only tip is how to start and end a letter to a friend which might just as well be an instruction on how to structure a letter, thus not specifically a tip on words or phrases to be used (2003:111). Overall *Realtime 2* offers the student no insight in genre specific words or phrases at all.

When examining *Short Cuts 2* for words, phrases and grammar typical of certain genres, it quickly becomes obvious that these are not priorities in the book. In fact, there are only four instances when any of these things seem to be an issue: when the temporal difference between a story told after the facts in a newspaper and one told live on TV is considered (2002:170), what sort of greetings that might be used in formal letters (2002:198) and how one introduces
a topic or key point in an argumentative essay (2002:200). Note that the last two instances are found in the resource pages towards the end of *Short Cuts 2*, which are surprisingly seldom referenced in the main parts of the book.

Interestingly, in these resource pages one also finds a list of “Linking words” (*Short Cuts 2* 2002:201-202). These words and phrases are undoubtedly recognizable as ones used in the genre of arguing: *however, in addition, in spite of, on the contrary, on the one hand*, and so on. However, this list, though placed on the opposite page of the instructions for how to write an essay, is never referenced in any writing exercise in the book, nor in the instructions for how to write an essay.

Turning to *Master Plan II* in our search for words, phrases and grammar typical of genres, one does not find much more. On the same page as some writing exercises asking students to describe Dracula and other vampires, one finds a chart of “useful phrases” (*Master Plan II* 2005:31) which illustrates perhaps a dozen spatial adverbial phrases such as *to the left, in front of* and *in the left corner*. Most of them, however, do not seem particularly useful in connection to the act of describing facial features and such. A bit later in the book, on page 56, there is an exercise asking students to examine a text and look for informal phrases in it and re-write these to become more formal elements in a letter.

In the “Tricks of the Trade” unit, one finds instructions for letter-writing connected with various words and phrases for starting and ending these (*Master Plan II* 2005:202). Letter-writing is also the only genre mentioned in the chapter dealing with formal and informal English (*Master Plan II* 2005:232-237). Concerning reviews, *Master Plan II* points out the convention that these are written in the present tense (*Master Plan II* 2005:199).

As we can see, genre specific words and phrases are not given much room in the books examined. This is unfortunate because for some genres, like the argumentative genre, this is essential. It is important for the student to know and be able to use such words like *however; although; because; but; consequently*. In some ways certain words are the most distinct features of some genres.

5.5.3 Structure
Syntax, words and phrases get a lot of attention within genre pedagogy, but structure is of great importance as well. Knapp & Watkins are quite adamant about this; they stress their point of view by saying: “Remember that the aim here is to build students’ confidence in producing functionally coherent texts” (2005:90-92). Furthermore, they stress, practising structure is not something that you do once, but on many and different occasions; students
should learn to write within a genre and then work structurally with the texts they produce. This idea is of course debatable, structure and grammar is quite dependant on each other; perhaps it is a better idea to work with a genre’s grammar and its structure simultaneously.

As in the case of process writing, the books differ quite a bit, and here too Blueprint B and Master Plan II are in the frontlines while Realtime 2 is the worst and Short Cuts 2 is in the middle and somewhat vague.

Structure gets quite a lot of room, and is perhaps the strongest point of Blueprint B. Almost all exercises have a relatively detailed guidelines section. Each genre’s structure is explained thoroughly, for example, the guidelines for an essay says that it should contain an introductory, a body and a summary, and, furthermore, it is explained what each section comprises of. Another example would be that of writing a news story, similarly the students get information about the structure and what each part should contain:

The lead is the first paragraph. In many newspapers and magazines it is printed with bigger letters than the rest of the article. It contains most of the story’s vital information […] (Blueprint B 2007:266)

Master Plan II is structured much in the same way as Blueprint B: an introduction to the exercise with a short or no description at all of structure or contents etc, often in the manner exemplified below:

Write a short text about vampires, where you tell the reader what they look like, what they are like and how to defend oneself against them (Master Plan II 2005:31)

Master Plan II, as previously mentioned, has a guidelines section just like Blueprint B, and it is to this section the students have to turn when to look for detailed information on structure etc. The information on structure is fairly good, for example, the parts which deal with composing a newspaper article (pp. 197-198) are quite detailed. Not only does it give a relatively good idea of the overall structure of an article and what the various beats should contain, it also gives advice on in which order the student might want to compose the text. Students are then asked to examine authentic articles and compare these with the layout described in Master Plan II. Finally, after all of these steps, students are asked to write an article of their own (p. 198).
Short Cuts 2 is uneven and vague, it also mixes exercises with no information on structure with exercises with information. At one point the student is asked to:

write a description of any interesting city [and] divide your composition into four paragraphs (Short Cuts 2:178)

This exercise is one of the more detailed ones and the student is given information on what each paragraph should contain: 1) when the student visited the city and why, 2) a description of the city, 3) something interesting that happened there (made up or real) and 4) an opinion about the place.

Realtime 2 has a lot of written exercises, but they lack, however, any description of how students should structure their texts. When the exercises say something about structure the student is only told how to start and end a letter for example. A letter is perhaps not a difficult genre, but Realtime 2 lacks any information about structure even in more difficult genres like writing an argumentative paper. Another type exercise involves writing a book review, here the student is told what it should contain but not how to structure it other than:

Structure your material so that the text becomes interesting and easy to read (Realtime 2 2003:124)

This advice is of course quite obvious, but nothing is told about how to achieve this which makes it quite pointless.

As Knapp & Watkins (2005) noted, a proper structure is important to the text, a proper structure makes the text coherent. For instance, it would be confusing to read a solution to a problem first in an argumentative paper without knowing anything about the problem. As seen above in the examples, the books vary widely in this respect.

5.5.4 Process writing

As previously mentioned, process writing is an important feature within genre pedagogy and is also held in high regards within other pedagogies. Although Knapp & Watkins (2005) mention the curriculum cycle and recognize its usefulness, they do not see this model as complete. In Addition to this cycle they promote a more deconstructional point of view. Knapp & Watkins (2005) argue that students practise and are made aware of the whole spectra of writing: grammar (obviously both in its traditional meaning and the argument that
grammar being genre bound), structure, contents, specific words and doing it iteratively. If students repeat the different steps of writing they will get familiar with it and then they will have more time left to reflect on the process of writing which in turn will make them skilled in making their texts somewhat original (Knapp & Watkins 2005:84). Each part of the writing process is important to study and practise; Knapp & Watkins (2005:85) exemplify this by saying that you cannot ask a student to write more descriptively unless you give the student the tools to do so.

The books investigated cannot be said to be completely process orientated; they range from being completely product orientated to being close to being process orientated. *Realtime 2* is an example of the former, *Master Plan II* and *Blueprint B* belongs to the latter while *Short Cuts 2* is somewhere in the middle. An exercise leaning towards product writing could look like this: “Write a portrait of one of the characters in the story. Try to use 100 to 200 words” (*Realtime 2* 2003:32). *Realtime 2* lacks any kind of process writing thinking. In all exercises the student is asked to write something, but they lack any kind of revision instruction. Sometimes the student is also confined to a particular number of words.

*Short Cuts 2* is a bit better, although it is quite vague it is still possible to see an underlying thought towards process writing. The exercises tend to mention what should ultimately end up in a text, and sometimes even show samples which basically could be used as guides (*Short Cuts 2* 2002:197, 199). In relation to the instructions for how to write an essay, it is also mentioned that “if possible” students could read each others scripts and ask for positive criticism (*Short Cuts 2* 2002:200).

*Master Plan II* and *Blueprint B* are quite alike although the latter is somewhat more orientated towards process writing. Both have exercises where the students are asked to write, but to get some information as to how and what to think about when writing the students have to look at specific chapters at the end of the book. *Master Plan II*’s guidelines, which are called “Tricks of the Trade”, do, however, lean somewhat more in favour of a product oriented attitude. The instructions for creating an argumentative essay illustrate this (*Master Plan II* 2005:205-206); even the step by step-guide for how to write such a text gives instructions which are concerned with what should eventually end up where in the essay, whereas the process of actually creating the text is not mentioned. This also goes for, for instance, the step by step-guide for writing reviews. *Blueprint B*, however, could be said to be the more process writing orientated of the two. At the end of all instructional segments the students is asked to revise his text before letting a fellow student to read it and finally handing it in to the teacher. The revision is twofold: there is one set of revision instructions that are of
general character that can be used on all kinds of texts where the student is asked, among other things, to go back and make sure that the text includes everything mentioned in the instructions. These revision instructions also contain a set of guidelines that fellow students can use when passing judgement on the text; the other set of revision instructions are specific for each of the writing exercises, the one for the argumentative exercise says:

a) Is my introduction so interesting that it catches the attention of my readers? b) Is there a background? Is it short? But does it nevertheless contain the facts my readers need to know? c) Is my main idea (my thesis statement) clearly formulated? \textit{(Blueprint B 2007:257-258, 271)}.

Most educators would probably agree on using process writing, however, it is debatable as to what grade process writing should be introduced and to what extent. Process writing might – if used thoroughly - be quite time consuming, and the course plans for language studies in secondary school are quite extensive as to what the student is to learn.

5.5.5 Tenor
Knapp & Watkins (2005:24-26) tell of two major views within the field of genre pedagogy: one school argues that genres have developed through formal- or non-formal requirements within different contexts (legal documents, newspaper articles, fairytales); another school argues that different ways of writing originate from social processes, i.e. the person writing a text should take notice of whom the text is for, for example, writing to the president or to your best friend are completely different matters. You might say that when you write to different people you always enter some sort of role. Therefore it is of some importance, from this point of view, to the students that they get an insight in how to nuance their language so that it suits the purpose and/or recipient.

On this matter the exercises in the books differ. \textit{Blueprint 2}, which is one of the books that is the most reminiscent of genre pedagogy, shows great lack in this area. Not only are there few opportunities for the student to practise writing similar tasks differently due to different receivers, but when they actually do get to enter a role it is one and the same, that of a reporter. For example: “Now select a person, real or fictitious – for example Milgram, your headmaster or your city’s mayor – to write a reportage about, and interview him/her in his/her natural surroundings” \textit{(Blueprint B 2007:200)}.
Realtime 2 has more exercises where the student must move into a role than Blueprint B, however, overall they are quite few. The most common role for the student to take is that of a character (ex. “Pretend you are Rita, Tom’s mother. Rewrite the story in the way she may have seen it” (Realtime 2 2003:32)).

Considering tenor in Master Plan II, one finds that there are many exercises asking students to take on a certain role and, via some form of written message, communicate with others. Sometimes, of course, the role they are explicitly asked to fill is simply that of “you”; an example of this is when the student is asked to write his or her own personal review of an episode of a television series (Master Plan II 2005:42). Other roles which students are asked to fill are, for instance, that of a shipmate on Captain Cook’s ship (writing exercise 1a on page 108) and a reporter (writing exercise 2 on page 112), just to mention a few.

More interesting are perhaps the people the students are supposedly writing their messages to, and why. In one case, the students – writing as themselves – need to contact a doctor about a friend who is slowly turning into a werewolf (Master Plan II 2005:42). The social structures in exercises such as these – asking someone with a highly esteemed profession for help – call for certain ways of expressing oneself.

Interestingly, the need to vary one’s language depending on the people supposedly sending/receiving the messages is never made explicit in direct relation to the exercises. However, in connection with just about every writing task in Master Plan II, one finds a page reference to the “Tricks of the Trade” unit, where the issue of sender/receiver is addressed more in detail. Here, much is made of the level of formality required for certain types of addressees, particularly when it comes to letter-writing (Master Plan II 2005:203) and applying for a job (Master Plan II 2005: 228). Considering letters, students are here – for instance - asked to rank certain scenarios for communicating from the most informal to the most formal, depending on who is receiving the messages. Considering job applications, a particular point is made about how every application should be “tailor-made” for the potential employer (Master Plan II 2005:228).

Considering tenor in Short Cuts 2, one discovers that not much is made of it. The writing exercises found therein sometimes ask students to write from certain perspectives. In some cases (Short Cuts 2 2002:36, 61, 65, 86, and so on) they are asked to write dialogues between various characters from the texts which the exercises accompany. Occasionally, they are also asked to write as if they are reporters (Short Cuts 2 2002:86), and – at one point - as Robinson Crusoe (Short Cuts 2 2002:110). The latter exercise is interesting solely because it
is one of few in the book which provide students with a clear purpose for writing; Robinson Crusoe is composing a desperate plea for help.

Considering the receiver aspect of the writing exercises in *Short Cuts 2*, the addressees of the various texts are never really focused upon. In most cases, no receiver is made explicit. This is, for instance, the case when the students are asked to write diaries (*Short Cuts 2* 2002:105), re-writing a poem (*Short Cuts 2* 2002:96), and so on.

All in all, the number of role taking exercises differs among the books as well as the number of different roles. Sometimes the roles are quite clear, occasionally they are more diffuse. Most importantly, perhaps, is the fact that the student is rarely told about the differences in language when addressing different people.

6 Summary

In this final chapter, we are going to summarize this essay this far and answer the questions posed in the section “Aim”. After that, we will have a discussion and present our thoughts on genre pedagogy.

We began this project with a keen interest in using texts as the basis for student working material. As we were trying to decide what we would study, we stumbled upon genre pedagogy, which we had only heard about incidentally and knew very little about.

*Genre* and *text types* are debated within genre pedagogy, some define them as being two separate things, others tend to categorize all texts as genres, and others use genre and text types indiscriminately. Initially, the main thing for us though, was to examine what genre pedagogy is and how it is used, and not whether a text is a genre on its own or a text type.

Researching genre pedagogy led us to our main book of reference, *Genre, Text, Grammar* by Knapp & Watkins (2005), which gives quite a detailed description of how to use texts and teach students of various ages to write within different genres. They promote the use of a curriculum cycle as a tool within genre pedagogy. Knapp & Watkins (2005) do not stop at defining genre pedagogy as structuring the text in a particular way, that a text depending on genre must hold certain segments etc, they also propose that the student must be made aware of the fact that different genres are using specific words and phrases more than others.

We continued by analysing four books used in primary school on level B, our aim was to find out if student’s books promote a genre oriented way of working; we intended to do this by looking at what types of writing exercises that are present in these books, and how genre bound these are when considering certain criteria.

In our examination we were guided by the following questions:
1. To what extent are different genres present in the student’s books?
2. In what ways, if any, do the tasks make the students aware of that the texts and exercises belong to genres?
3. To what extent can the tasks be used to practise the student’s knowledge of and skills in writing in different genres?

We used the method of textual analysis as we found it suited to our needs. Even in hindsight, we cannot quite imagine having performed our examination using any other method.

None of the books speak of genres explicitly, and very little of anything about texts having different structures, contents and grammar (Knapp & Watkins (2005) definition) depending on what you are writing about and to whom. The texts are hardly talked about at all as belonging to genres. Out of all the books, **Realtime 2** turns out to be the one that leaves out these elements the most. **Short Cuts 2** fares a bit better in this respect, but is still not very successful. **Blueprint B** and **Master Plan II** are at least hinting that different linguistic structures are needed depending on what you are writing about and to whom. Their writing resources “Writer’s Workshop” and “Tricks of the Trade” respectively are quite extensive; however, they are not explicitly making the students aware of the existence of different genres, and they most definitely do not seem to have taken to Knapp & Watkins (2005) division of genres into the five process-related ones. Nevertheless, these two books, as mentioned, do hint that texts differ depending on what you want to convey. Each kind of text, for example argumentative essays, book reviews and analysis, have a thorough guide on what parts each text should have and in turn what you should put in each part. On some occasions, specific words and phrases of particular genres are mentioned.

All the books are thematically organised, and most of the exercises do relate to the theme of the chapter. For example, if the student is to “continue the story” (**Realtime 2** 2003:52) the exercise is obviously connected to the chapter text. Similarly, if the student is to “write a cover letter based on an add” (**Blueprint B** 2007:226) the student must turn to and use the chapter text to be able to perform the exercise. However, rarely is the case that the exercises are designed in the way that the student really must use the chapter text to accomplish the exercise. Nor are the chapter texts deconstructed and commented on so that the students may learn that genres differ from each other and the students are therefore not made aware of how different genres operate. However, **Blueprint B** (2007) often refers to
literature both outside of the book as well as to specific chapter texts in the book. As have been put forward in the analysis above, a couple of the books are really good at explaining structure and contents as well as why some things are important to put in a text, but that is as close as they get to making the students aware of genre. To sum it up, students do write in different genres, but they are not made aware of this really, and they are definitely not making the student aware of genre specific grammars.

Are the exercises, as they are designed in the books, usable within genre pedagogy? As has been said earlier, if a teacher has skills in using genre pedagogy not much is needed to instruct the students and start using this pedagogy, and from that perspective the books investigated may be used as well as any source of working material. However, it would be to jump to conclusions as to whether the books investigated and the exercises specifically may be used as they are designed. With Knapp & Watkins (2005) in mind, along with their focus on structure, contents, tenor, grammar as well as having a deconstructional view on the study of different genres and writing, the books investigated immediately get into trouble. Although a couple of the books, mainly Masterplan II and Blueprint B, offer quite a good insight into structure and contents they do not connect the exercises to a specific genre other than by name, i.e. there is no mentioning of the existence of different genres and that they operate differently. In two of the books, Short Cuts 2 and Realtime 2, the finding was disappointing. The other two books, Blueprint B and Masterplan II, fared a bit better although they, in the end, cannot be said to be genre pedagogical. These ones may at least be said to have some genre pedagogical features at some levels. In the end we found that the books and especially the exercises investigated are not designed with genre pedagogy in mind, and that too great an emphasis is placed upon the narrative genre.

7 Discussion
We shall now give you our thoughts on genre pedagogy. Our initial reaction was twofold. On the one hand, we felt that this approach to texts and composition was very comprehensive; here, we had a pedagogy which looked upon the full spectrum of what texts consist of, from wording and grammar to structure and contents. A great possibility in relation to this was that all these aspects might be approached in a unified manner, that they can be discussed in relation to each other. On the other hand, we also felt that genre pedagogy might be very difficult for a teacher to start using, since it seemingly requires much time and energy - two elements which teachers are not spoiled with. Also, considering the complexity of genre pedagogy, teachers interested in using it probably need to get educated in it by professionals.
There might, however, be ways of getting around these problems. For instance, a teacher might not feel that it is necessary to use genre pedagogy in its entirety; he or she can easily lift out a certain idea from, for instance, Knapp & Watkins (2005), to shed a light on a particular aspect of writing in certain texts. In other words, one needs not turn genre pedagogy into the main method used in teaching writing.

We do feel that since genre pedagogy is quite time consuming, it might be best to introduce it to pupils as early as possible. That way, when students reach upper secondary school, their previous knowledge in these fields can be built upon and expanded, and not so much time will have to be spent laying the foundation for this kind of work. Further, it is our opinion that while knowledge of the various genres is important no matter what program you attend, we would argue that some genres might be more appropriate for certain programs. For instance, study preliminary programs might concentrate a bit more on argumentative texts, since these students will most definitely need this knowledge when they enter the world of higher education.

We imagine that the methods, thoughts and ideas expressed within genre pedagogy might be beneficial to teachers in the sense that they might make the process of assessing student writing much easier. Knapp & Watkins (2005), for instance, give much useful advice on how to evaluate how competently constructed a student’s text is. This is, in our opinion, the aspect of genre pedagogy which we are probably going to find the most useful in our future profession as teachers.

If we imagine ourselves in pupil’s shoes, we see both positive and negative things in genre pedagogy. One positive aspect of it is that it does not propose writing simply for the sake of writing; instead there is an emphasis on creating meaningful texts. Form and content go hand in hand in genre pedagogy, which might make the process of writing more rewarding. A negative aspect, however, might be that students experience a sense of repetitiveness, since for every genre the same steps are covered: structure, grammar, and so on. On the other hand, much can be learned from genre pedagogy which pupils will have use for in their future lives. Since, as was mentioned in the introduction, we are probably moving towards a world where more texts are produced than ever before, the knowledge gained from genre pedagogy is valuable. It can, for instance, help people understand how texts are constructed, which means that when pupils later in their lives are confronted with writing reports and such, they might be able to deconstruct existing texts quickly and therefore produce texts of their own which are up to the same standards.
As mentioned above, genre pedagogy in Sweden is quite new. Should a teacher be interested in introducing it in his or her classroom, it is not something that can be organised one hour prior to class or during the Christmas break. It also of quite importance for the educational department or the individual school, once the decision to implement genre pedagogy has been made, to consider the following: Where should it be used, in first or foreign language, or both?; If it is used in first language, is it worth the effort to use it in foreign language as well?; In what grade should in be introduced?; Is it too late to introduce genre pedagogy in upper secondary school?

During the writing of this essay, we have discovered that there are many things worth investigating within genre pedagogy, for instance traditional grammar and the kind of grammar Knapp & Watkins (2005) promotes or to go more in depth on things like structure, contents, process writing and tenor which we only have touched upon.

8 List of references


Web resources

[www.skolverket.se](http://www.skolverket.se) (081024)
Appendix 1

EN1202 - English B
100 points established 2000-07 SKOLFS: 2000:4

Goals
Goals that pupils should have attained on completion of the course
Pupils should:
understand longer sequences of connected oral discourse communicated directly, or via the media where the content may be unfamiliar, and of a relatively theoretical nature
be able to discuss in appropriate language, different subjects and keep a discussion going
be able to actively take part in discussions, and be able to present and deal with the merits of opposing arguments,
be able, after preparation, to provide coherent oral descriptions and explanations of phenomena, which are of general interest, and connected to the area of interest or study orientation
be able to orally and in writing summarise and comment on different types of texts, especially those related to the area of interest or study orientation
be able to read, summarise and comment on the contents of longer literary texts
have the ability to present contents in writing in a clear and well-structured way, as well as be able to express themselves in a varied and personal manner with respect to the audience and situation
have a basic orientation to English literature from different periods,
have a knowledge of current conditions, history and cultures of the countries where English is spoken
be able to present aspects of their own culture and country to persons from a different cultural background
be able to evaluate their work in order to change and enhance their learning
be able to critically examine and analyse information from different sources.
Appendix 2