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This study explores features of conference proposals submitted to the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) in 1989, 1990, and 1992. In total, 345 abstracts were examined for generic and formal features, discourse features, and topical features. These features were contrasted among high-rated and low-rated abstracts. Throughout this period (a) successful abstracts were more likely to follow generic qualities associated with “unsolicited proposals”; (b) foundational discourse remained prominent throughout the abstracts, but discourse associated with a nonfoundationalist epistemological stance appeared to increase among the proposals; and (c) abstracts appeared to be increasingly expansionary, discussing various rhetorical strategies in other disciplines or discursive sites. Results suggest that written communication can be seen as an important contributor to disciplinary formation within the CCCC. Results also suggest that text features like jargon, citations, acronyms, and nominalizations can be productively viewed as important carriers of “insider” or “privileged” discourse within organizations.

Rhetoric in Competition

The Formation of Organizational Discourse in Conference on College Composition and Communication Abstracts

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One of the principal sites of academic exchange within the field of rhetoric and composition is the annual Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC). This meeting of postsecondary writing instructors from throughout North America originated in 1949 and has grown to the point where currently more than one third of approximately 10,000 members regularly attend the conference.

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Each year, the conference is organized around the presentation of scholarly papers by members of the rhetoric and composition community. Approximately 10 months before the convention, people interested in participating in the conference submit one-page abstracts that act as proposals to present research findings, theory, pedagogical issues, administrative concerns, or new perspectives within the field. These proposals are reviewed by the annual program chair and a panel of roughly 150 to 200 external reviewers who represent different areas of interest within this interdisciplinary community. Although most submissions address issues pertinent to the study of rhetoric and composition, not all of these papers can be presented at a 4-day conference; in 1993, roughly 1,000 presentations were actually accepted from the approximately 4,000 proposals received.

THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

Following various theoretical discussions of organizational discourse (Burrell, 1988; Cooper, 1989), the writing that organizations produce, support, and legitimize can be seen as necessarily linked to forms of power within those organizations; as Cooper argues, writing "is the process by which human agents inscribe organization and order on their environments." In other words, writing, here, is concerned most directly "with the structure and organization of representations," or the reproduction and administration of power within institutional contexts (p. 484). Inasmuch as conference abstracts are a genre of writing that academic organizations produce, support, and legitimate (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995; Bhatia, 1993; Kaplan et al., 1994; Melander, Swales, & Fredrickson, 1994; Swales, 1993), CCCC abstracts, like any other form of writing that undergoes a disciplining process, can also be characterized in terms of organizational reproduction and "insider status."

I am borrowing the term insider status from Berkenkotter and Huckin's (1995) discussion of CCCC abstracts, where they argue that high-rated CCCC abstracts are able to demonstrate "interestingness" and "novelty" to reviewers. Berkenkotter and Huckin suggest that these abstracts "usually project more of an insider ethos" than do low-rated abstracts. This "insider" feature of high-rated abstracts would suggest that these written proposals carry significant currency within the field because of their ability to recognize and replicate the
field's organizational structures or because of their ability to address this community of scholars from within recognized and legitimated academic boundaries.

In their recent study of American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL) abstracts, Kaplan et al. (1994) note that "it is apparent that reading committees prefer certain kinds of texts over other kinds" (p. 423), asserting that abstracts as a genre are written "to convince... that (generally identifiable?) audience that the paper presented by the abstract should be accepted for conference presentation" (p. 404). Although Kaplan et al. offer a strong descriptive analysis of various structural characteristics of AAAL abstracts, their study, unlike Berkenkotter and Huckin's (1995) critical analysis, does not consider the social or ideological variables that may influence abstract selection (see, e.g., Kress & Hodge, 1979; Steiner, 1985; van Dijk, 1993). Instead, Kaplan et al. argue that many of the features present within abstracts are actually "counter intuitive" (p. 422) to effective abstract writing. Kaplan et al. write:

Abstracts are full of jargon, acronyms, repetitions, adjectival modifications, subordinate clauses, and nominalizations, and include occasional parenthetical citations and in some instances even modest bibliographies, all of which seems counter intuitive given the requirement for brevity. (p. 422)

In this study, I position Kaplan et al.'s apparently counterintuitive findings within Berkenkotter and Huckin's (1995) description of insider status to elaborate one way in which discursive variables within CCCC abstracts in 1989, 1990, and 1992 worked to continue to mold and shape the "discursive organization" of the CCCC. Rather than viewing textual features like jargon, citations, acronyms, and repetitions as counterintuitive, this study examines these discursive markings as important characteristics that position conference proposals within the apparently naturalized boundaries of this academic organization.

RESEARCH CONTEXT: PROFESSIONAL CURRENCY AND CCCC DISCOURSE

In a context in which the CCCC represents the largest and perhaps most diverse professional meeting place for an increasing number of practitioners within rhetoric and composition, a presentation at the
CCCC provides both members and nonmembers a privileged forum to present their work. Additionally, as Kaplan et al. (1994) note, there are "palpable rewards" associated with presenting a refereed paper at a national professional meeting (p. 404). Such presentations not only increase status and reputation within the larger disciplinary community, but presenters are more likely to have conference expenses defrayed by their home institution, and presenters are more likely to receive credit toward salary increases or tenure review for having delivered their work at a national conference (p. 404). Additionally, as Swales (1984) notes, publications and conference papers have become "rites of passage" along the road to professional advancement and promotion (p. 78) within most academic contexts.

Despite members of this academic community's growing interest in presenting at the CCCC, little advice or guidance is provided to abstract submitters. Each year, the program chair prepares a "theme statement" that will reflect the overall direction or intention of the conference, and, as a part of this theme, the following statement is typically included:

Insofar as possible, the chair will try to include sessions that focus on the current topics of interest and on critical issues in the profession. Proposals submitted will be chosen on the basis of clarity, organization, and potential interest to people attending the convention. (1992 Theme Statement)

However, abstract and referential terms like "clarity," "interest," "organization," and "critical issues" suggest very little in terms of defining audience features or in outlining the specific discursive context would-be presenters are hoping to address. In addition, until the 1995 convention where successful abstracts were posted on several electronic networks, successful proposals were never published, scored abstracts were not returned, and submissions were seen only by the program chair and the external reviewers.

Throughout the conference years studied here (1989, 1990, 1992) these generic "proposals" that members sent to the CCCC program chair were actually one-page abstracts of a paper, research project, or 20-minute presentation normally addressed to 1 of approximately 40 designated areas within the field. These abstracts were then reviewed by the chair and external judges who assigned marks on a 4-point scale wherein a score of 1 denoted a weak abstract and a score of 4 denoted an excellent abstract. Anne Ruggles Gere, 1992 program chair,
reported to me that she selected the external judges herself, choosing people who had reviewed abstracts for prior conventions as well as people she felt she "knew and trusted" (personal communication, August 16, 1995). Additionally, Gere said that she solicited volunteers for these positions, handing out flyers at the preceding convention. Lester Faigley, chair of the 1995 convention, reported to me that in an attempt to make the review process less "arbitrary," he selected fewer judges to read more proposals, attempting to ensure more consistency in the reviewing process (personal communication, August 16, 1995). Faigley also reported that he continued the tradition of selecting as judges scholars who specialized in the designated areas to which proposals were submitted.

Both Gere and Faigley reported that in most cases reviewers' reports were consistent, though neither chair completed reliability statistics for reviewers' ratings. In cases where reviewers reports disagreed significantly (a proposal rated both 1 and 4), the proposal was rated by a third reader. In these cases, Gere reported that she considered the proposal herself. Both Gere and Faigley noted that the conference Chair rarely discounts the reviewers' ratings.

As Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) note, although there remained a greater possibility of a high-rated abstract (usually a 4) appearing on the program, high ratings did not always guarantee program acceptance, because other factors may have been involved in the selection process. These "other factors" seem to represent more explicit institutional or organizational concerns, such as the maintenance of an overall balance of topics, the continued representation from particular interests within the field (2-year colleges, ESL, empirical research, faculty development issues, basic writing interests, geographical representation) as well as the program chair's personal interests. In addition, it is important to recall that the judges' ratings were used to create coherent panels from the individual submissions. As a result of this process, some high-rated abstracts that could not be grouped into "coherent sessions" were not selected for the conference. In the same way, some low-rated abstracts were selected to round-out a session or to create a full panel.

Insider discourse may be perceived as increasingly more relevant in the selection process in 1992. Before 1992, presenters could openly place their names, academic positions, and institutional affiliations on proposals. This format was changed in 1992, when, for the first time, CCCC proposals were subjected to blind review. This move to blind submission was taken to encourage the inclusion of less recognized
scholars and to attempt to eliminate judicial prejudice from the rating of abstracts. In describing this change, Anne Gere, 1992 program chair, offered the following statement on the call for papers:

*Proposals to Be Reviewed “Blind”*

Proposals will be sorted into groups according to the area of emphasis indicated on the proposal form. Reviewers with special expertise in the designated area will do “blind” reviews and advise the chair on which proposals to accept in that area. The proposal form has been revised to separate identifying information from the content of the proposal. The number of proposals received in each area will determine the percentage of the program devoted to that area. If, for example 100 (or 3 percent) of a total of 3,000 proposals received focus on technical communication, then 3 percent of the sessions in the final program will focus on technical communication. In an effort to provide information about proposals as early as possible for the fall, the deadline for receipt of proposals will be May 10, 1991. (Theme Statement, 1992)

In this statement, Gere highlights how the new feature of blind review was mapped onto the regular CCCC selection process wherein “reviewers with special expertise in the designated area” will “advise the chair on which proposals to accept in that area.” Secondly, Gere outlines an acceptance ratio that links the number of papers accepted in each area to the total percentage of papers submitted in all areas. These two features of the review process can be seen as an important part of the formalization of organizational boundaries or disciplinary standards within the CCCC community. By recognizing a group of reviewers with “special expertise” in the field, this group of scholars also established the potential for generally recognizable disciplinary standards, topics, and methods within the relatively new rhetoric and composition community. Unlike previous selection processes where submitters could benefit from name recognition or institutional prestige, the blind review process switched the disciplining focus of the reviewer solely onto the written language of the proposal. In so doing, the 1992 selection process was unique in that it relied exclusively on written academic discourse to construct disciplinary conventions within the field of rhetoric and composition.

Additionally, as Mouffe (1988) has argued about successful new social movements, a process of discipline construction within organizations like the CCCC creates various social tensions among participating members as the organization works to establish “relatively
stable social forms” (p. 90) within its boundaries. Although reviewers (i.e., the chair, the chair’s chosen team, the external judges) relied on academic discourse to identify and construct disciplinary boundaries, this review process was also accountable for establishing “reciprocal relations” among CCCC members as both groups (the raters and the submitters) worked to “provide each other with mutual conditions of existence” (p. 90). In other words, if a proposal’s discourse worked within acceptable disciplinary boundaries, the organizational forces acted reciprocally, providing a privileged space on the convention program—and reinforcing the power and authority of the rating criteria. If proposals did not fit within these established disciplinary boundaries, they were not accepted, thereby preserving the discipline’s organizational structures and displacing marginal texts toward other disciplinary sites.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

Research Assumptions

Recognizing that the establishment of organizational structures continues to be an always functioning, and perhaps necessary, process, a more significant task would be analyzing or reading privileged discourse within such institutional sites. Specifically, as Bourdieu (1991), Crowley (1989), and others have suggested, institutional legitimacy is often sustained by, and thus can be viewed through, linguistic practice. Bourdieu has argued that the creation of a linguistic standard allows for the formation of linguistic capital and an “imposition of legitimacy,” wherein certain discourses or linguistic practices gain power or privilege over others. This same process is recorded by Crowley, who suggests that language use enables the structuration of power within a society, enabling hierarchies to maintain economic and cultural dominance. Thus as Foucault (1972) has often indicated (Burrell, 1988; Kritzman, 1988), language use can be seen as an important bearer of ideological and social power delimiting both standards or norms and systems of exclusion or referral that regulate entry in and access to organizations.

Returning to the context of the academic discourse community that creates the organization CCCC, we may hypothesize that specific groups will use discursive strategies to maintain a powerful position
within the larger organization. As Althusser (1971) has noted, this power is then transferred through the "reproduction of the conditions of production," or, in Bourdieu's (1991) terms, the "symbolic capital" that, in a field that is concerned with the intricacies of language use, suggests a greater role for linguistic demarcations than what CCCC's program chairs' statements often indicate. Rather we may hypothesize that, especially with the development of blind reviews in 1992, successful members of the CCCC community must be able to manufacture insider discourse, reproducing the symbolic capital that is the currency of this professional organization. I would like to suggest that it is this insider discourse that Kaplan et al. (1994) mistakenly claim is counterintuitive to accepted norms of abstract writing. Given the apparent ways in which institutions and organizations use language to structure and formalize relations of power and privilege, it would seem that we may learn much from an examination of jargon, acronyms, repetitions, and occasional and explicit citational practices within academic discourse.

It was this hypothesis that I took to the texts of CCCC's abstracts from 1989, 1990, and 1992. To empirically examine text features of abstracts from this period, I studied anonymous abstracts submitted by individual authors and rated by the conference chair or that year's proposal-rating process.

Materials

The data sets for this study were identical to those used by Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) in their study of CCCC abstracts. Four abstracts from each convention subject area, each abstract representing one of the four scores given to the proposals (1 = weak; 2 = adequate; 3 = good; 4 = excellent) from the 1989 and 1990 convention, were randomly selected by that year's conference chair. Except in cases where the author's name was placed within the text of the abstract itself, any feature that could identify the author of the proposal (name, institutional affiliation, etc.) had been removed from the abstracts by the conference chair.

The data sets for the 1992 abstracts were randomly selected. To ensure that the abstracts I was evaluating were representative of the four possible evaluations, I intentionally limited the 1992 samples to those abstracts that received a unanimous rating from three or more judges. Because these abstracts were subject to blind review, few direct references to authorship or institutional affiliations were included in
Table 1
The Study Corpus, 1989-1992

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Areas</th>
<th>Number of Abstracts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

these abstracts. In total, this yielded a complete data set of 345 abstracts (see Table 1).1

Procedure

To identify general patterns in the corpus, I went through the entire study corpus analyzing each abstract several times for (a) formal and generic features associated with conference abstracts; (b) discourse features, specifically: jargon, often repeating expressions within the data set, or specific words that were used significantly throughout the data set; and (c) topical features used by the abstracts, including features associated with reoccurring topics, significant methodological features, or other features that seemed to indicate recognizable topical patterns among the abstracts. Once various features began to emerge from the data, I contrasted their occurrence in high-rated (3 and 4) and low-rated (1 and 2) abstracts.

After examining each abstract a number of times, I developed a three-tiered classification system to record prominent generic, epistemic, and topical features from the abstracts. The approach taken here was qualitative, interpretive, and, in some ways, theoretical. As the goal of this study was to examine and ultimately quantify various critical features of CCCC discourse at the time, I considered the patterns found in the abstracts as in some ways suggestive of several larger critical debates occurring within the field as a whole. In other words, I saw the abstracts as working dialectically within CCCC discourse—both responding to critical issues in the discipline and at the same time defining those issues.

In what follows, I will provide an extended definition and example of each of the features that emerged from the data as significant to critical debates within the discourse of CCCC abstracts and, as a consequence, within the structures of this organization as a whole.
Classification System

Formal and generic features. Initially, I found that a significant number of abstracts appeared to fit within a generic form best associated with "unsolicited proposals." This genre was helpful to account for various generic features present throughout the abstracts and for providing a useful way to highlight several distinguishing patterns among the high- (3 and 4) and low-rated (1 and 2) abstracts. This arrangement of generic features can be seen in the following 1992 abstract that was submitted to the category Theories of Composing and Communicating.

Contexts and Constraints of the Writing Process:
Is Drafting Empowering?

Among the composition community's contexts are our students' relations to the power structures of the classroom and the institution. We struggle with the contradiction between our pedagogical aim of facilitating our students' writing development and the institutional constraint incumbent on our position as faculty to evaluate and rank their products. One of the reasons that we have embraced process pedagogy has been that it appears to allow us to alter the traditional academic power relations between teacher and student, enabling us to act as facilitators rather than (as well as) judges.

However, my reading of Basil Bernstein's theories of classification and framing lead me to question whether process pedagogy actually allows such a shift in power relations. I will refer to Bernstein's suggestion that "control inheres in . . . a context where the maximum surveillance is possible" (Class and Pedagogies) and to Foucault's analysis of the role of surveillance in control to argue the following: contrary to our intentions, when process teaching requires students to submit drafts to the instructor, it requires them to reveal their interior processes to the gaze of authority, and thus positions the student even more fully within our control than product oriented grading did. This reading perhaps explains some of students' resistance to drafting requirements, and, in addition, forces us to question assumptions about the empowering effects of process methods.

This reading has important implications for process pedagogy. I will suggest that we explore possibilities for teaching processes that allow students more privacy, and I will begin that exploration with tentative suggestions.
After a rather lengthy introduction establishing the context of the paper, a problem statement is clearly introduced by the word "however," which starts the second paragraph. A product or solution is then offered indicating to reviewers that the 20-minute presentation will argue that process teaching “positions the student even more fully within our control than product grading did.” The proposal then delivers the presentation’s objectives, suggesting an exploration of “teaching processes that allow students more privacy,” an objective that is both interesting and potentially useful for the larger CCC community. The proposal then concludes by stating that the presenter will offer several “tentative suggestions” for achieving this objective.

The formal qualities of this abstract are consistent with those recorded by a number of studies of formal and generic conventions of academic article abstracts (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995; Bhatia, 1993; Kaplan et al., 1994; Knight, 1988; Swales, 1993). Although these models accurately portray the formal qualities of abstracts as roughly following the pattern problem → method → findings/conclusions, another rich description can also be found in Flower and Ackerman’s (1994) articulation of the “unsolicited proposal” genre, in which a proposal must “work even harder to establish a problem, since . . . readers will not consider [a] solution until they are convinced that a problem exists” (p. 309). This model, consisting of the features “introduction → problem → objectives → product → method → costs” (p. 311) would seem to be a more appropriate model for CCC abstracts, because the abstract largely serves as a proposal that must obtain credibility in the absence of a preestablished directive or a specific publicly distributed problem statement.

After developing this model, I returned again to the abstracts and coded each individual abstract according to whether it included a problem statement, a methods section, a clearly articulated product, and a statement outlining the objectives of the presentation. Because the CCC review process does not appear to consider the costs of a project to be a relevant issue, I omitted this category from the examination and instead included a “citations” section—recording whether an abstract used explicit citations within the text of its argument.

Epistemic voice. The second significant feature that appeared during my initial examination emerged as a struggle between various epistemic formulations throughout the abstracts. Put more simply, the
abstracts seemed to articulate differing views of knowledge, suggesting that an understanding of knowledge itself was being contested within this organization. For example, abstracts on the one hand would discuss "the real world," "representations of knowledge," "universal truths," and "natural" occurrences. These abstracts would use verbs like "reveal," "uncover," or "discover," and would describe the process of research as "possessing qualities," "exploring" data, or "arriving at" conclusions. On the other hand, other abstracts discussed "situated knowledge," "constructed views," "local" and "multiple" realities, and "contextual" occurrences. This second group used verbs like "pose," "create," or "construct" and would describe "knowledge formation" and "social construction" rather than a process of research. The appendix offers an initial indication of this apparent divide that emerged from my examination of the data.

A number of prominent writers within the field of rhetoric and composition have discussed this apparent "epistemic divide" within CCCC discourse. In her book Academic Discourse and Critical Consciousness, Bizzell (1992) describes a "paradigm shift" within the discourse of composition that has resulted in what she articulates as two explicit views of knowledge. In describing the first of these views, Bizzell argues that this paradigm "seems founded in a conception of language as a system of reference to a knowable reality external to it" (p. 45). In contrast to this view of "tacit knowledge" (p. 46), Bizzell writes of a "new paradigm" that considers "language as the product of a community, reflecting the community’s shared values, its historical situation, its cultural traditions" (p. 46).

These contrasting epistemological assumptions are also depicted by Berlin (1993) in his essay "Composition Studies and Cultural Studies: Collapsing Boundaries." Here, Berlin describes language that "regards itself as a disinterested and objective arbiter of competing ideological claims, occupying a neutral space above the fray of conflict" (p. 107), and that "continues to believe that a universal, ahistorical, rational discourse is possible" (p. 107). Berlin then juxtaposes this "universal, ahistorical" discourse with language that is "self-reflexive, acknowledging its own rhetoricity, its own discursive constitution and limitations" (p. 108). Further elaborating this self-reflexive discourse, Berlin asserts that this discourse:

argues that the writing subject is a discursive construction, the subject serving as a point of juncture for a plethora of discourses—a rich variety of texts inscribed in the persona of the individual. The subject
is thus a construction of the play of discourses that a culture provides.
(p. 108)

Faigley (1992), in his recent book *Fragments of Rationality* further elaborates this epistemological distinction, arguing that whereas some discourses "posited a tension between the transient and the eternal, between low culture and high culture," more recent stances have lost this tension—emphasizing rather the "fragmentary" and "the chaotic currents of change" (p. 4).

In a 1994 presentation at the International Reading Association, Tierney (1994) elaborated and expanded these apparent epistemological distinctions noted by Bizzell (1992), Berlin (1993), and Faigley (1992; see also Bruffee, 1986; Spellmeyer, 1993, pp. 155-192). Arguing that this apparent "shift" has "influenced our vista and how we equip ourselves to research" (p. 3), Tierney presented a continuum of some of these shifts, contrasting various ways in which "reading might be viewed and approached in research" (p. 4). Here, Tierney's continuum juxtaposes "observed behaviors and outcomes" with "introspective accounts and processes"; "fixed meanings" with "fluid, ongoing discussion"; "single perspectives" with "multiple perspectives"; and "single referents" with "multiple, interconnected referents" (p. 4). Following Tierney's continuum of terms and the epistemic discussions noted above, I returned again to this set of CCCC abstracts and recorded whether an abstract seemed to signify what could be considered a "foundational" or "anterior" view of knowledge or whether the abstract appeared to align itself with the view these authors have articulated as suggesting that knowledge is "constructed" or "situated" by individuals and communities. In other words, I reexamined each abstract, marking its epistemic stance as portraying a "foundational" or "nonsoundational" view of knowledge. I examined each abstract holistically, determining from both the language used and the arguments offered the best approximation of its epistemological argument.

Expansionary rhetoric. A third pattern that I saw emerging from the data concerned the topics that the abstracts discussed. I found that a number of abstracts appeared to expand into other disciplines or discursive sites and then discuss the rhetorical or discursive practices of those other sites. For example, abstracts would discuss topics like Native American story telling, medical discourse, the oral history of African Americans, Chinese rhetorical practices, or studies of disci-
plinary rhetorics such as philosophy, literary studies, history, science, and mathematics. These topics contrasted with other abstracts that seemed to stay "closer to home," discussing topics like classical rhetoric, studies of student writers, pedagogies of teaching writing, issues of reading and writing, the assessment of student writing, or institutional concerns like the duties of a writing program director or the training of writing instructors.

The following abstract, submitted to the 1990 conference in the History Of Rhetoric category and rated excellent by those judges, presents a good example of this process, whereby CCCC discourse was used to examine, and in some ways include, a textual site not immediately recognizable as a central aspect of composition studies.

Escaping from Pharaoh:
The Ethos of Rev. C. L. Franklin and the Black Folk Pulpit

By keeping hope alive during over three hundred years of slavery and segregation, the black folk pulpit made an incalculable contribution to the survival of black America. Yet, despite the enormous importance of black folk preaching, whites have consistently dismissed it as little more than an emotional circus and a pie-in-the-sky painkiller. Bruce Rosenberg's MLA award-winning study of black homiletics also profoundly distorts the folk pulpit by reducing it to a set of oral formulas lacking any rhetorical or political meaning.

Outstanding folk preachers like Rev. C. L. Franklin do not deserve such treatment. The father of Aretha Franklin, Rev. Franklin packed auditoriums around the country for three decades and received up to several thousand dollars a night for his preaching. He also recorded eighty albums of sermons.

Franklin creates a self by merging his voice with the authoritative, sanctified language of scripture and hymns. Repreaching "Moses at the Red Sea" and other traditional sermons, he reinvigorates the great theme of liberation by inserting black American experience within the story of Exodus. He narrates the struggles of United Auto Workers and civil rights activists as later chapters in the tale of Hebrew slaves straining against the manacles of Egyptian bondage. The recurring archetypal event of the Exodus offers a divine guarantee of freedom to blacks shackled by white Pharaohs in an American Egypt.

Mastering both the epistemology and the technique of voice merging, Franklin uses this distinctively black homiletic practice to prepare blacks for the parting of the waters, the drowning of Pharaoh's army, and the journey to a new and better America.
In performing the valuable task of presenting the folk preacher Rev. C. L. Franklin, the abstract not only reconstructs a "profoundly distorted" rhetorician and rhetorical practice ("black folk preaching"), but, at the same time, it successfully grafts another discursive site onto CCCC discourse, introducing new avenues of research and new ways in which the field can expand to include other areas of linguistic and textual production.

A number of recent depictions of the field of rhetoric and composition have discussed this way in which the field seems to expand into other disciplines or discursive sites. For example, Trimbur's (1993) description of composition practices as a "nomadic existence" can be seen as a useful, generative summary of this process of "rhetorical expansion."

The invention of composition studies, in this respect, results from poaching, from appropriating what is available. We have learned, as it were, to live off the land, hunting and gathering in a nomadic existence without a sedentary center. Composition studies has composed itself not by systematic engineering but by a kind of piecemeal bricolage, cutting and splicing elements from the intellectual landscape that seem useful. The result is that composition studies looks more like a collage—a postmodern pastiche of juxtaposed parts—than a unified field. (p. 117)

Trimbur's (1993) claim that rhetoric and composition often extend outward into other discursive spaces, generating topics and scholarly projects from within these external sites, is supported by Owens' (1993) description of the field as an "immense spider plant." Here, Owens depicts the field as centered within the study of composition and having "related but independent" plants growing out along various roots (p. 171), extending into new areas and thereby investigating other rhetorical approaches and discursive practices.

These discussions of "expansionary discourse" within composition and rhetoric scholarship are supported by a number of studies within the field that have investigated other discursive practices. For example, writers within the field have produced rich studies of scientific discourse (see, e.g., Bazerman, 1988; Haas, 1994; Myers, 1990; Nelson, Megill, & McCloskey, 1987), whereas others have investigated "disciplinary writing" or writing within specific academic environments (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995; Herrington & Moran, 1992; McCloskey, 1985; Swales, 1990) and others have studied the writing that takes place within professional communities and workplaces.
(Bhatia, 1993; Kogen, 1989; Odell & Goswami, 1985; Spilka, 1993). These few examples do not include literature discussing cross-cultural contrastive studies (Connor & Kaplan, 1987) or studies in the area of ESL/ESP.

Following this large body of literature that seems to signal an "expansive" move within CCCC discourse, and my own initial findings that appear to complement these writers, I returned to the data set to test the extent to which CCCC discourse could be seen as "expansionary" throughout this period. I recorded the topics of each of the abstracts and coded them as either "expansionary" or "nonexpansionary." Abstracts that introduced new sites of textual or linguistic practice, either within cultural communities, academic disciplines, or historical events, were coded expansionary. Those abstracts that did not appear to extend into other cultural, academic, or historical sites but dealt with more "local" issues such as the duties of a writing program director, teaching grammar in composition classrooms, assessing student teachers, rereading Aristotle's Rhetoric, or the professionalization of graduate students, were coded as "nonexpansionary."

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Interrater Agreements

After recording the findings from each of these three categories, a rater independently scored 10% of the data. These abstracts were randomly selected from the larger data set. After comparing our results, we found that in the "generic qualities" category, we achieved an interrater agreement of 92%. In scoring the "epistemological stance" of the abstracts, we agreed in 92% of the abstracts, and in examining abstracts as "expansionary" or "nonexpansionary," our interrater agreement was 88%.2

Generic and Formal Features

Table 2 outlines the number of abstracts that complied with features of the "unsolicited proposal" genre. For each year recorded, two sections are elaborated. Section 1 records abstracts rated weak and adequate—and most likely not to be accepted for presentation, and Section 2 records abstracts rated good or excellent—those more likely to be accepted for presentation.
Table 2

Generic Qualities Found in the Study Corpus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Abstracts</th>
<th>Problem n (%)</th>
<th>Method n (%)</th>
<th>Product n (%)</th>
<th>Objectives n (%)</th>
<th>Citations n (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989a</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>24 (46%)</td>
<td>7 (13%)</td>
<td>42 (81%)</td>
<td>33 (63%)</td>
<td>19 (36%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989b</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>30 (58%)</td>
<td>15 (29%)</td>
<td>49 (94%)</td>
<td>42 (81%)</td>
<td>29 (56%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990a</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>21 (39%)</td>
<td>7 (13%)</td>
<td>49 (91%)</td>
<td>29 (54%)</td>
<td>26 (48%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990b</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>26 (45%)</td>
<td>16 (28%)</td>
<td>56 (96%)</td>
<td>47 (81%)</td>
<td>41 (71%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992a</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>27 (43%)</td>
<td>9 (14%)</td>
<td>53 (85%)</td>
<td>29 (47%)</td>
<td>34 (55%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992b</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>42 (63%)</td>
<td>20 (30%)</td>
<td>66 (98%)</td>
<td>30 (45%)</td>
<td>38 (57%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Low-rated abstracts.
b. High-rated abstracts.

These results indicate that, generally, most abstracts described the "product" of the presentation, or what the presenter hoped to accomplish in the 20 minutes allotted to the paper. Additionally, between 35% and 40% of the abstracts linked this "product" to broader interests in the field through an "objectives" section. As Flower and Ackerman (1994) write, a proposal’s "objectives" usually state the purpose or value of an idea, solution, or problem, (p. 310) contextualizing issues raised by the proposal within a larger community. It is not surprising then to see that in the 1989 and 1990 data, a greater percentage of high-rated proposals (81%) outlined their project’s objectives, whereas a lesser number of low-rated proposals (63% and 54%) included this section. What is surprising is that in 1992 the percentage of high-rated abstracts that used an objectives statement dropped to 45%—even lower than the somewhat expected rate of the low-rated abstracts (47%). This seems to suggest that in 1992, the year blind reviews were instituted, other factors may have been more important in the writing and rating of abstracts. Additionally, this also seems to indicate that discursive norms within this organization are not static but are subject to continual modification and change.

Additionally, throughout all 3 years studied, 55% of all high-rated abstracts contained a "problem" statement—whereas 43% of low-rated abstracts included this feature. As Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995, p. 105) note, and these results support, the problem statement is an important component of the proposal genre, because it demonstrates the author’s ability to recognize an interesting and relevant problem within the field. Abstracts that were able to link their product and objective to an initial problem statement were more likely to
receive higher scores than those that did not establish these important components of the proposal.

Finally, these results suggest that, as a whole, methodological issues appear to play a smaller role (about 30% in high-rated abstracts; 13% in low-rated abstracts) within this discourse, whereas citations play a somewhat greater role (56%, 71%, and 57% in high-rated abstracts in 1989, 1990, and 1992, respectively). Whereas high-rated abstracts did have a greater percentage of citation use in 1989 and 1990, by 1992 this feature was not significantly different between the high-rated abstracts and those that received a lower rating (57% in high-rated, 55% in low-rated).

Although a clear majority of the high-rated abstracts fit within the formal characteristics usually associated with conference proposals, approximately 20% of the abstracts rated excellent deviated from this model by forgoing these formal features to make an explicit claim to "insider-ness" within this organization. For example, one excellent-rated 1989 abstract (submitted to the area Teacher Training/Retraining) did not include a problem statement but instead narrated a project the author worked on with a prominent member of the CCCC community. The abstract states that the work completed during this alliance was presented at the CCCC in 1986 and 1987 and that the 1989 paper will further apply this successful project to the area of teacher education. Another excellent-rated abstract (submitted in 1989 to the area Writing Across the Curriculum) states that the writer will "report on findings from an NCTE funded study," indicating close familiarity with the National Council of Teachers of English, the primary funding agent for the CCCC. This familiarity is suggested through both the use of the acronym NCTE and through a reported funding arrangement with this organization. Other successful abstracts that deviated from the generic conventions make explicit references to prominent institutional affiliations, significant academic or administrative positions, or prestigious external grants that funded the particular project.

Some may consider this deviation an adoption of what Knight (1988) describes as a common generic distinction more common within the humanities than the social sciences. According to Knight, this "humanistic model" requires writers to describe how they came to the project (i.e., a narrative description of the researcher's evolving scholarly interests), what they wish to study, what methods they will use to conduct the research, what they consider to be the project's important research questions, and what the final product of the project will be—to give reviewers "a clearly conceived, obviously
intelligent proposal whose author is present on the page” (Knight, p. 183). Whereas both Knight’s model and the successful CCCC abstracts that deviate from the generic conventions of the research article abstract focus on the author of the abstract, the CCCC abstracts do so in a way that highlights specific activities or positions that demonstrate the author’s insider status within this professional organization.

Perhaps this direct move toward insider status within this organization can be best seen as a type of hybrid genre that combines particular features of research proposals with those genres Bhatia (1993) describes as “sales promotion letters” (pp. 45-46) and “job applications” (pp. 59-60). As mentioned previously, Kaplan et al. (1994) have argued that the purpose of an abstract is to convince in very few words that the product being offered would make an exceptional conference presentation (p. 404). Similarly, Bhatia argues that the purpose of the sales letter is to convince by capturing the attention of potential customers who are known to have some need for the product or service being promoted and who need to make accurate choices within a limited time frame (p. 46). However, in a generic move more similar to the characteristics of the job applications Bhatia describes, CCCC proposals must also establish the credentials of the author, offering a “favorable, positive and relevant description” of the candidate (p. 60). By using hybrid genres containing elements of promotion and application, these authors are able to situate themselves within specific organizational contexts within the CCCC marking themselves as insiders or members of the organization who have already made significant contributions to the organization and thereby deserve to be recognized for these contributions.

Whereas the adoption of a common generic format, or in Cooper’s (1989) words, the common “structure and organization of representations,” demonstrates here a general, basic sense of disciplinary or organizational alliance, it is equally instructive to note the ways in which successful abstracts deviated from this generic norm. By promoting a special relationship to the CCCC, or a prestigious position within this organization, some submitters were able to more acutely indicate an insider ethos within this academic organization. Yet, as Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) are careful to note, it is important to remember that insider ethos cannot be sufficiently situated without the simultaneous development of an appropriate and current “discursive voice” and an obviously informed and topical way in which the writer situates the proposal’s discussion within the larger CCCC
context (p. 102). These other characteristics of insider ethos are developed in the following two sections, which discuss the "epistemic voice" of the abstracts and the topical features of the abstracts.

### Epistemic Voice

Table 3 illustrates the incidence of foundational views of knowledge (viewing knowledge as anterior or present) and nonfoundational views of knowledge (viewing knowledge as constructed by communities or individuals) as they emerged from the data sets.

Whereas foundational discourse remained prominent (> 50%) throughout these years, what is interesting about this feature of discursive voice is the extent to which nonfoundational discourse became more prominent in high-rated abstracts, whereas foundational discourse actually became more prominent in low-rated abstracts. In 1989, 24% of high-rated abstracts situated themselves within nonfoundational discourse, whereas, in 1992, this percentage increased to almost 50%. At the same time, the number of high-rated abstracts that were situated within foundational discourse decreased from 67% in 1989 to roughly 50% in 1992. However, low-rated abstracts that were situated within nonfoundational discourse actually decreased from 15% in 1989 to 8% in 1992, and low-rated abstracts that were situated within foundational discourse increased from 84% in 1989 to about 92% in 1992.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nonfoundational</th>
<th>Foundational</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n (%)</td>
<td>n (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year</strong></td>
<td><strong>Number of Abstracts</strong></td>
<td><strong>1989</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Low-rated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td></td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>High-rated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td></td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>High-rated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td></td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>High-rated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examples of this apparent shift at this time are well demonstrated by the 1992 conference category Cultural Studies, wherein one low-rated abstract portrayed "culture" as a homogeneous, essentialized entity, whereas one excellent-rated abstract, in the same category, described the "borders of culture," characterizing culture as "porous areas of intersections." This excellent-rated abstract also argued that students have "multi-cultural realities" that they "move between and among" as cultural participants. In another example, one poor-rated 1992 abstract submitted to the category Curriculum Design promised to discuss a project designed to evoke "clear, concise writing" from students, whereas one abstract in the same category rated as good promised to evoke "negotiation and agreement" among students.

The following excellent-rated abstract from the 1992 conference demonstrates several discursive choices that align the author within nonfoundational discursive frameworks. In doing so, the abstract serves as a good example of this type of "shifting" discourse from this period in the CCCC's history.

**Multiple Contexts and Plural Selves in Women's Autobiographical Writing**

Students' autobiographical writing has often been relegated to the same inferior status as women's literary autobiography. Some cultural critics argue that to encourage students to write about their own experience confirms students in the myth of a unified and autonomous selfhood and thus reproduces them as subjects of ideology. However, recent feminist critical theory of autobiography, including work by Shari Benstock and Bella Brodski, enlists feminist and psychoanalytic theory to extend our understanding of autobiography and, I believe, holds potential for extending our understanding of the personal narratives students write in composition classes.

This paper uses these theories to analyze the writing of two women students, a Chinese woman graduate student and a Malaysian women undergraduate in an American university. The writing of each demonstrates the problematic and multidimensional nature of the writing "self" as it emerges in autobiography. In different ways, each woman's writing illuminates her multiple and contradictory subject positions: as a woman, a woman in academia, and also as "native" and "other" in this culture. Their writing suggests the complexity of the act of writing about one's life and suggests how that articulation of selfhood(s) serves student's growth as writers and as subjects. Writing serves to differentiate self from other and to assert a relationship to others, to explore the
gaps and cultural and linguistic definitions of women. This students’ writing analyzed in this essay asserts, to borrow Julia Kristeva’s words, “No, this is not who I am, and no, that’s not me either.” Their writing allows these women students to construct an emerging representation of their lives within and against various cultural definitions, but that definition is never of an essentialist or falsely unified selfhood.

Finally the essay examines the position of the teacher as reader of student autobiographical writing; it acknowledges the potential pitfalls facing the Western woman academic who writes about “foreign” women’s writing, the potential to appropriate, sentimentalize, and colonize that writing, and it incorporates students’ comments which supplement and challenge the teacher’s analysis.

The author of this abstract writes about “expanding our understanding,” the “problematic and multidimensional nature of the writing ‘self’ as it emerges,” “multiple and contradictory subject positions,” and “construct[ing] an emerging representation of . . . lives within and against various cultural definitions.” The abstract uses citations from established nonfoundational texts, and it concludes with a self-conscious turn toward the role of the educator and the problematic positions instructors occupy as they read student writing. Unlike several other abstracts submitted to the subject areas Feminist Theory and Gender Issues that essentialized cognitive frameworks and argumentative strategies, this abstract complicates these women’s subjectivities and problematizes how “each woman’s writing illuminates her multiple and contradictory subject positions.” These epistemic turns and complicating discursive moves seem to position this abstract as part of the apparently growing discursive shift within the CCCC’s organizational writing.

This apparent increase in nonfoundational discourse among high-rated abstracts throughout this short period (from 33% to 49%) and the subsequent decrease in foundational discourse among high-rated abstracts (from 67% to 51%) would seem to support Barton’s (1993) claims that through the use of modality, sentential adverbs, sentence initial conjunctions, prepositional phrases, and predicates, academic writers demonstrate specific “attitudes towards knowledge” that mark them as valuable members of an academic community. Barton’s analysis demonstrates that these academic writers “adopt an epistemological stance that tacitly defines knowledge as the product of contrast and competition” (p. 754). In the same way, this study of CCCC abstracts suggests that within this period of 1989-1992, insider assumptions about knowledge within the CCCC community seemed
Table 4
Expansionary Abstracts, 1989-1992

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Expansionary n (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-rated</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>3 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-rated</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>12 (23%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>15 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-rated</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>3 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-rated</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>17 (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>20 (18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-rated</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>10 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-rated</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>22 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>32 (25%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

to be switching toward a characterization of knowledge as fluid, constituted, and constrained by situation and context, and as Barton suggests, always subject to contrasting views and competing notions.

Expansionary Rhetoric

Although expansionary rhetoric remained somewhat of a minor feature of abstracts throughout this time, as Table 4 demonstrates, this process of "rhetorical expansion" appeared to increase from 1989 to 1992.

Some examples of expansionary rhetoric throughout this period (1989-1992) included abstracts that situated their analysis within film studies (rated excellent, Freshman Composition, 1989), science (rated excellent, History of Rhetoric, 1989), biology (rated good, Writing Across the Curriculum, 1989), philosophy (rated excellent, Theories of Rhetoric, 1990), political science/urban development (rated excellent, Cultural Studies, 1992), and psychology (rated excellent, Theories of Composing and Communicating, 1992). However, as mentioned previously, this practice did not appear limited to investigations within academic disciplines. Several successful abstracts seemed to venture toward more personal contacts, suggesting that specific personal narratives were embodied aspects of current rhetorical theory, or that a particular group's discourse could be seen as functioning according to specific rhetorical texts (Aristotle, Ramus),
or that writers, theorists, or cultural icons could be seen to be operating within a nonfounding epistemology.

What seems to be significant in these examples is that the abstract endeavors to examine a specific feature within another discursive site, and then it uses the findings from that examination to form a new nexus for rhetorical practice and theory. In some cases, low-rated abstracts would venture to other discursive sites, however, they did not reformulate these sites in a CCCC context but seemed to become absorbed within the "othered" context.

In many ways, this practice of novelizing or examining other discursive sites through CCCC discourse can be best described in terms of Fairclough's (1992) notion of grafting or "hybridization," whereby "compromises are effected" (p. 222) between and among different forms of discourse—in this case, forms of rhetoric and composition and those of another disciplinary or discursive site. For example, the following abstract demonstrates the creation of an instructive hybrid between rhetoric and composition and philosophy. By examining the construction of metaphors and the ways in which these metaphors generate new meanings in philosophical discussions, the abstract successfully informs discursive practices in both disciplines.

Metaphoric Productivity vs. the Disciplinary Police

Since Max Black described his interactive theory of metaphor (1962), many theorists have argued that certain metaphors are elaborated into conceits and generate new knowledge within academic disciplines (i.e., Donald Schon, Richard Boyd, Mary Hesse), but they have not noted the constraints on metaphor elaboration. In this paper, I show how two metaphors from Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations generate discourse in philosophy, specifically discussing how diverging interpretations of these metaphors, by many scholars, contribute to disciplinary development. In addition, I examine the writings of philosophers who argue against new uses for the metaphors, "form of life" and "language games."

Though Wittgenstein borrowed these metaphors from earlier thinkers, he used them in new ways, and they have become productive in many disciplinary discourses. Four decades later, in the work of French philosopher Jean-Francois Lyotard ("language games") and the American Stanley Cavell ("forms of life"), each metaphor has taken on a new meaning, demonstrably different than Wittgenstein's one that reflects
the differences between their aims and Wittgenstein's. In each case, the new use has resulted in publications criticizing the extension of meaning (i.e., Newton Garver, Terry Eagleton).

As metaphors become disciplinary conceits, they are interpreted within radically different frames and used to support different positions. The discipline (and its publications system), often seen as rewarding creativity and innovators, also rewards stability and the "metaphor police" who control the direction and speed of knowledge creation. As teachers and disciples, it is important that we understand the double impetus in disciplinary practice and are complexly aware of disciplinary metaphors and the mechanisms of their elaboration and curtailment.

In addition to its ability to successfully frame the discourse of philosophy within a rhetoric and composition environment, this abstract is also successful on several other fronts. It begins with a brief introduction that immediately moves to the problem that the author wishes to discuss. Turning on the conjunction "but," the abstract proposes that theorists "have not noted the constraints on metaphor elaboration." The paper then demonstrates its product:

In this paper I show how two metaphors from Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* generate discourse in philosophy, specifically discussing how diverging interpretations of these metaphors, by many scholars, contribute to disciplinary development. In addition, I examine the writings of philosophers who argue against new uses for the metaphors, "form of life" and "language games."

The paper then turns its gaze inward toward the field of rhetoric and composition as the author delivers the objective: "As teachers and disciples it is important that we understand the double impetus in disciplinary practice and are complexly aware of disciplinary metaphors and the mechanisms of their elaboration and curtailment." The abstract's discussion is supported by a number of citations and it identifies a nonfoundational epistemological stance in both its topic and its use of discursive concepts like "generation of new knowledge," "constraints on metaphor," "diverging interpretations," "new meanings," "radically different frames," "different positions," and "knowledge creation."

However, at this point, what could appear somewhat controversial within this specific process of hybridization is the extent to which CCCC discourse remains privileged within a discursive hybrid. Although the above example is faithful to both philosophy and rhetori-
cal theory in its citations (Max Black, Donald Schon, Richard Boyd, Mary Hesse), subject matter, and in its recommendations for both fields, the CCCC seemed to reward other, more speculative, abstracts that explored an especially “exotic other” and then reinterpreted or recast the practices of that “other” as operating according to commonly held norms of rhetorical theory. In these cases, the apparently “foreign” discursive site seemed to be imported by an authoritative rhetorical narrative, and the eventual product seemed to do more to reassert contemporary rhetorical theory than to present or describe actual discursive practice within the visited discursive site.

For example, the discipline rewarded proposals that used the theories of both Kenneth Burke and classical rhetoric to reinterpret Native American discourse. Another successful abstract used overtly postmodern literary theory to reinterpret the writings of a 19th-century composition and literary theorist, and another successful proposal attempted to recast an ancient Chinese writer in terms of Bakhtinian theories of language. In each of these cases, traditional, or ongoing, discursive practices and interpretations within these sites seemed to be subsumed, or potentially “colonized” in an attempt to support and reify an existing theoretical practice within the discipline of rhetoric and composition. Although further research is needed to fully elaborate this particular type of “colonizing” discourse, its contribution and potential reification as a component of the discipline’s privileged discourse could be potentially problematic if this field continues to develop and reward “expansionary” moves into “other-ed” disciplinary sites.

**CONCLUSION: NATURALIZING DISCIPLINARY WRITING**

In her 1992 theme statement, Anne Ruggles Gere suggested that the CCCC is a site of “multiple and overlapping communities” that “eludes definition” but can “be best described as sites where multiple forces participate in mutually defining and shifting relationships.” Although this study does suggest some ways in which organizational forces within the CCCC participate in “mutually defining and shifting relationships,” Gere’s assumption that the discipline “eludes definition” should be further elaborated as a controversial and potentially contested assessment of this organization.
An attempt to fully denaturalize the disciplinary boundaries of rhetoric and composition is well beyond the parameters of this study. However, this study does suggest that there seem to be several distinguishing discursive features associated with the CCCC. Although future studies of CCCC discourse could elaborate on the findings in this study, as well as other potential indicators of "disciplinary discourse" such as citations (Bazerman, 1988; Gilbert 1977), research methods, or other forms of knowledge creation and dissemination, what should not be overlooked in any conception of this organization are the ways in which written communication negotiates for power, privilege, and responsibility within the CCCC community. Rather than naturalizing features like jargon, acronyms, citations, or nominalizations as counterintuitive to the purposes of abstract writing, these specific discursive practices need to be articulated as important signals of privileged discourse within this academic organization.

I would like to offer that by attempting to denaturalize aspects of CCCC discourse from the years 1989, 1990, and 1992, this study has also attempted to generate a more complex understanding of this unique and heterogeneous practice we call "rhetoric and composition." By indicating several ways in which written communication seems to influence and construct organizational norms at this important disciplinary convention, I hope to have also suggested how written discourse, here, is both professional and professionalizing: professional in the way it institutionalizes hierarchical community relations within organizations like the CCCC, and professionalizing in the way such discourse socializes or acculturates new voices within such organizational sites.

Finally, this study has also attempted to move discourse analysis further toward the study of ideology in organizational discourse. Despite the recent achievements of text-based discursive analysis, many avenues to the empirical study of ideology in language use remain largely unexplored. I hope that this study, as well as similar work in the area of critical discourse analysis, may help to refocus critical linguistic study through the practice of denaturalizing, or unpacking ideological discourse. Such work can offer significant contributions toward understanding the connections between language and organizational formation as these processes occur in actual texts in actual discursive sites.
APPENDIX
Terms Found in CCCC Abstracts From 1989, 1990, and 1992

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>View 1</th>
<th>View 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>real-world</td>
<td>situated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>representation</td>
<td>construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>universal</td>
<td>local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reveal, identify, discover</td>
<td>pose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>progress, transcend</td>
<td>local, situational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>possess, explore, arrive at</td>
<td>socially construct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>singular</td>
<td>multiple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>natural</td>
<td>contextual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTES

1. In 1990 and 1992, some subject areas lacked a full compliment of all four ratings (weak, adequate, good, excellent). For example, in 1990 there were no abstracts rated weak (1) in the Gender Issues subject area. In that same year, no abstracts were rated excellent (4) in the Freshman Composition subject area. This limited the 1990 data set by 16 abstracts, and limited the 1992 data set by 31 abstracts.

2. Maureen Mathison, an assistant professor of communication who works in the field of rhetoric and composition and who teaches courses in research methods, co-rated the data. In the category of Generic Qualities, reliability figures were determined as agreement on all five categories for each abstract. Thus 92% represents agreement on all five areas in 92% of the 36 abstracts examined.

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