

11. Arabic Summary

تحليل نوع لدعوات الزفاف العربية المصرية المكتوبة

يتمثل الفرض الرئيسى الذى تقوم عليه الدراسة الحالية فى أن دعوات الزفاف المصرية المكتوبة يمكن وصفها بأنها نوع. إن الدراسة الحالية محاولة للتعرف على النقلات المكونة لدعوات الزفاف المصرية المكتوبة وملاحظة كيف تم استخدام هذه النقلات الوظيفية بطريقة استراتيجية. ومن ثم قام الباحثان بتبنى مدخل سويلز Swale إلى تحليل نقلات النوع. واستخدمت فى هذه الدراسة عينة تضم ٣٠٠ دعوة زواج مكتوبة تم اختيارها من مختلف محافظات جمهورية مصر العربية. وأشار تحليل محتوى العينة إلى أنه بالإضافة إلى الوظيفة الرئيسية المتمثلة فى دعوة المتلقى لحضور حفل الزفاف المذكورة تفاصيله فى الدعوة، توصل دعوات الزفاف المصرية المكتوبة كثيراً من المعلومات عن المعايير والممارسات الاجتماعية والثقافية التى تشير إليها المكونات البلاغية والتنظيمية فى هذا النوع. ووجد أيضاً أن المعلومات التى توصلها دعوات الزفاف المصرية المكتوبة مفصلة. فهى تهدف إلى توصيل معلومات عن العلاقة المتبادلة بين أفراد العائلات فى المناسبات الاجتماعية فى المجتمع المصرى. وأشارت النتائج أيضاً إلى أن هناك أوجه تشابه كثيرة بين دعوات الزفاف المصرية المكتوبة لدى المسلمين والمسيحيين وذلك من حيث بنيتها وغرضها الاتصالي.

10. 2. Appendix II

A Sample of Christian EAWWIs

- (1) *نقد الخبثات والمفسدات عند صياحنا وابتغيت ان اتخذها لي عروسا وصارت لي عالما عاتقا*
(شهد الإنشاء ٧٠٧٠٧)
- (4) الابنة المباركة الابن المبارك
- (3) وبهذه المناسبة السعيدة يتشرف كل من
الاستاذ الاستاذ
- (2) و
- (5) بدعوة سيادتكم والعائلة لحضور صلاة الإكليل المبارك وذلك بمشيئة الرب
في تمام الساعة مساء يوم الموافق / /
- (6) والسدي وهبنا الفرح يهبه لكم
- (7)
- (8) _____
تلفرا فيا:

- (1) Opening
- (2) Identifying the inviters
- (3) Requesting the presence of the invitees
- (4) Identifying the couple to be married
- (5) Situating the wedding party
- (6) Closing
- (7) Appeals (optional)
- (8) Correspondence move

10. Appendices

10.1. Appendix I

A Sample of Muslim EAWWIs



(1)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 وَجِئْتُ بِكُمْ هُدًى وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ
 صدق الله العظيم

الأسستاذ

المهندس

(2)

.....

.....

بتقريفان بدعوة سيادتكم والعائلة لحضور

(3)

حفلة زفاف

(4)

كريمة الثاني

على

نجل الأول

.....

.....

(5)

وذلك بمشيئة الله تعالى

م

الموافق

مساء يوم

في تمام الساعة

(قاعة)

بنادي

(6)

اللهم بارك لهما وبارك عليهما واجمع بينهما في خير

(7)

.....

(8)

تقريفيا:

(1) Opening

(2) Identifying the inviters

(3) Requesting the presence of the invitees

(4) Identifying the couple to be married

(5) Situating the wedding party

(6) Closing

(7) Appeals (optional)

(8) Correspondence move

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The results of the present study indicate that, in addition to the primary function of inviting the receiver to attend the particular wedding party detailed in the invitation, EAWWIs communicate a lot of information about the sociocultural norms and practices encoded in the rhetorical and organizational components of these types of genre. These sociocultural features have been highlighted. It was found that EAWWIs are elaborate in the information they convey. They are intended to communicate information about the reciprocal relationship between members of the families on social occasions in the Egyptian society. Moreover, results indicate that religious affiliation not only constructs and shapes text component selection, but also colors the lexical choices and naming practices.

The researchers believe that this study may contribute to the understanding of the nature and function of EAWWIs genre. At least linguists now have a baseline against which further research can be measured.

7. 1. 8. Move 8: Correspondence Move

The Analysis of the corpus has indicated that all EAWWIs conclude with this move. This move is intended for those invitees who will not be able to attend the wedding. Here they are prompted to send congratulatory telegrams instead. In this move, the first names and mailing address of the inviters, in this case the guardians of the couple to be married, are given. An example of this move is given below:

21. *tillighrafiyyan (name of the groom's guardian) wa (name of the bride's guardian) (address of the inviters).*

(Telegrams are to be sent to (name of the husband's guardian) and (name of the wife's guardian) (address of the inviters)).

8. Summary and Conclusion

In this study, the researchers have identified and described the component features of EAWWIs. The researchers have presented a summary of the basic tactics and components used to achieve the communicative purpose of EAWWIs. The analysis has revealed that this purpose is straightforward and has been achieved clearly. Based on the notion of genre analysis and the sociocultural norms and beliefs that constrain the construction and interpretation of genre texts, the researchers have identified eight functional component moves in EAWWIs.

17. ?idaarat ?aSSaalah laa tasmaH bi iSTiHaab ?al?aTfaal

(The staff of the wedding hall do not permit accompanying children)

Covert appeals include:

18. ?aHlaam sa 'iidah li?aTfaalikum

(Happy dreams for your children)

19. nawman hanii?an li?aTfaalikum

(Pleasant sleeping for your children)

Furthermore, as some Egyptians tend to express their happiness by shooting into the sky, analysis of the corpus indicates that EAWWIs sometimes include an appeal to the invitees not to practice this habit. The following is a typical example:

20. yumna' ?iTlaaq ?al'iyaraat ?annaariyyah

(No shooting)

It is worth noting that factors such as the quality and weight of the cardboard used, the color of paper and inks, and the presence of embossing and golden leaf are indicative of social status. The quality of EAWWIs gives invitees a hint as to the quality of the party that they will attend and, therefore, might influence a decision to attend or not.

11. ?al'aaqibah 'indakum fii ?almasarraat

(May we visit you on similar subsequent happy occasions)

12. dumtum mas'alan lil?afraaH

(May you be always torchbearers of happiness)

13. lijamalaa?u ?alrrabbu Hayatakum bil?afraaH ?almuqaddasa

(May the Lord fill your life with holy joys)

14. wallaḍi wahabana ?alfaraH jahibuhu lakum

(May the Lord Who granted us joy grant it to you)

In addition, Christian EAWWIs most often conclude with an invitation to attend the wedding party to be held at a club or a hotel after finishing the wedding rituals performed at the church. Consider this example:

15. kama jus'iduna tashriifina ?alHafl ?almuqaam bi-naadi
?alquwwaat ?almusallaHa (qaa'at ?alfayruuz)

(It will also please us if you attend the party to be held at the Armed Forces Club (Al-Fayrouz Hall))

7. 1. 7. Move 7: Appeals

Concerning this move, the analysis of the corpus has shown that all EAWWIs contain covert or overt appeals to the invitees calling upon them not to bring their children to the wedding party. Overt appeals include:

16. ?arrajaa 'adam iSTiHaab ?al?aTfaal

(Please do not bring children)

*yawm ?alkhamiis ?almuwaafiq 23/4/ 2009 bi-katidraa?iyyit
raaisal malaikah mikhaiil bi ?asyuut*

(On this happy occasion, (names of inviters) have the honor to invite your Honors to attend the wedding prayer which will take place, if God wills, at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, 23/4/2009 at Arch-Angel Michael's Cathedral in Assiut.

7. 1. 6. Move 6: closing

The analysis of the corpus has shown that EAWWIs are usually closed with formulaic phrases in which the inviters either call upon Allah to bless the couple to be married, wish happiness to the invitees, or appeal for the invitees' presence and participation. These formulaic phrases occur throughout the whole corpus. Therefore, one can conclude that the existence of these phrases is an important move of EAWWIs. The analysis of the corpus also indicates that the most frequent favored formulaic instances are:

9. *daamat ?al?afraaH Haliifatu diyaarikum ?al'aamirah*

(May your inhabited homes be always full of happiness)

10. *biHuDuurikum taziidu sa'aadatunaa wa taktamilu
farHatunaa*

(Your presence will increase our happiness and complete our joy)

date. According to Muslim and Christian beliefs, these phrases are usually mentioned when one is making plans for the future, as Allah is the ultimate agent who can will future events to happen. The use of these phrases comes from what is stated explicitly in the Holy Qur'an:

6. *wa laa taquulanna lishay ?in ?innii faa'ilun thaalika Gaddaa (24) ?illaa ?any- yasha?a ?allah. (Surha Al-Kahf, v. 23-24)*

(And never say of anything, "I shall do such and such thing tomorrow". Except (with the saying), "If Allah wills!")

The following is an illustrative example of move (5):

7. *wa-thaalika bi-mashii?ati-allah fii tamaam ?asaa'ah ?athaaniyah min yawm ?aljum'ah ?almuwafiq 15/5/ 2008 bi-qaa'at*

(This [will take place] if Allah wills at two o'clock on Friday at)

As the following example shows, Christian EAWWIs usually combine moves 3 and 5 and situate the wedding most often at a church.

8. *wa-bihathihi ?almunasabiti ?issa'ida yatasharraf kullun min (names of inviters) bida'wat siyaadatikum wal'a?ilah liHuDuur Salaat ?alikliil ?almubaarak wa-thaalika bi-mashii?ati-alrab fii tamaam?assaa'ah?ssabi'ati massaa?an*

(i.e. relatives and friends of the families of the couple to be married) to attend and participate in the occasion. It is an obligatory move in both Muslim and Christian EAWWIs. It often includes the full address, the day of the week, the name of the month and the year as well as the exact time of the wedding party. Besides, the day of the week is often accompanied by a further specification, such as *masaa'an* (*evening*).

The corpus indicates that summer and early autumn are the most frequent times for wedding parties in Egypt. Moreover, Friday and Sunday are often chosen for wedding parties. This is due to the fact that the invitees who work are free on these two days and like to participate in the occasion. Also, Fridays and Sundays are traditional days to get married because, according to Islamic and Christian traditions, Friday is primarily a holiday for Muslims and Sunday for Christians. They are the days of assembly for both Christians and Muslims when they share in common public worship.

Besides, the analysis of the corpus indicates that this move includes the use of the phrase *bi-mashii?ati-allaah* in Muslim EAWWIs, and the phrase *bi-mashii?ati-alrab* in Christian EAWWIs. These two phrases mean 'if God permits'. They usually appear in the first position immediately before the

attached demonstrative reference pronoun *uh* (meaning 'his') refers to the 'bride's guardian', or by a kinship term, *shaqiiqatuh* (*his sister*) where the attached pronoun 'uh' refers to the bride's eldest brother. This tendency (i.e. the deletion of the feminine proper names) more likely indicates an inherent preference on the part of the groom's and the bride's families to avoid mentioning the names of females in the invitations for religious or personal preferences. This practice is often witnessed at rural wedding parties and in conservative urban circles as well as among religiously-minded men.

However, in Christian EAWWIs, this move usually comes before move 2, as the names of the groom and the bride are often mentioned earlier in the wedding invitation. Also, titles are rarely used before the bride's and the groom's names. Rather, the groom's name is usually preceded by the phrase *?al ?ibn almubaarak* (*the blessed son*) and that of the bride is preceded by the phrase *?al ?ibnah almubaaraka* (*the blessed daughter*) as shown in figure (2).

7. 1. 5. Move 5: situating the wedding party

This move gives an explicit information about the time, date, and place of the wedding party to enable the invitees



Fig. (1)

However, in Christian EAWWIs a picture of a cross surrounded by the initials of the bride and the groom (almost often written in English) and other symbols such as pigeons and hearts is sometimes enclosed between the names of the bride and the groom as shown in figure (2).

الابنة المباركة



الابن المبارك

Fig. (2)

The corpus also has revealed that, in Muslim EAWWIs, unlike the grooms who are always identified by their names and dignified with titles, the brides' names are sometimes not mentioned in the invitations. Sometimes, there is minimal reference to the bride's name. Instead, her name is subtitled by the honorific attribute, *kariimatuh* (*his honorable daughter*), where the qualifying attribute 'honorable' modifies the deleted proper noun (i.e. bride's name), and the

verb forms requesting the honor of others' presence or participation, such as *yatasharraafan bida'watikum liHuDuur* (*request the honor of your presence*). The following is a typical example of this move:

5. (*the names of the guardians*) *yatasharrafaan bida'watikum liHuDuur HafI zifaf*
(*X and Y request the honor of your presence to celebrate the wedding of their*)

7. 1. 4. Move 4: identifying the couple to be married

This move contains the groom and bride's names, which are centrally placed on a separate line, with a larger size font and different typeface. The corpus has shown that the names of the couple to be married are preceded by academic and/or professional titles (if any), which reflect their ranks, positions and academic degrees (e.g. 'Doctor', 'Pharmacist', 'Lawyer', 'Judge', or 'Engineer'). Moreover, the groom's name is placed on the right-hand side before that of the bride on the same line. Also, the bride's and the groom's initials (almost often written in English) are sometimes embossed inside one or two hearts that would appear between the bride and the groom's names on the same line as shown in figure (1).

name of the groom's father is placed on the right-hand side before that of the bride's father. Because of the right to left reading orientation in the Arabic language, there is a tendency to start with the right-hand words of print. Thus, when one is reading the wedding invitation, one would more likely begin on the right with the name of the groom's guardian, which might be more likely to catch the eye. Moreover, the corpus indicates that there is an excessive use of titles before the inviters' names (e.g., Hajj, Doctor, Engineer, etc.). These titles are usually printed in bold and a large size font. They are usually used to reflect the social status, profession, or the academic degree of the inviters. They are "cultural conventions learned by all adequate actors during socialization and thereby inculcated in the habitus" (Foley, 1997: 311).

7. 1. 3. Move 3: requesting the presence of the invitees

The corpus indicates that this move represents the core of EAWWIs. It occurs in all invitations. It enables the inviters, customarily the parents of the bride and the groom, to request others kindly and courteously to participate in a public gathering where the wedding party is to take place. It was found that all invitations explicitly use verbalized phrasal

(For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.)

4. *famarartu biki wa-ra?aytuki wa-?iza zamanuk zaman alHuubi fadakhaltu fii 'ahdi ma'aki faSirti li wa ?ana laki.*
(Ezekiel 16 : 8)

(Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; ... I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee ... and thou becamest mine.)

Since Christian marriage rituals are almost often held at churches, the religious character is predominant not only in the opening but also throughout the different moves of Christian EAWWIs.

7. 1. 2. Move 2: identifying the inviters

The purpose of this move is to name the inviters. EAWWIs are issued in the names of the fathers of the groom and bride or, if either of them is an orphan, in the name of the grandfather, then the eldest male brother, and afterwards the uncles. This move identifies a male of the groom's family and another from the bride's (i.e. the ones who request the presence of the invitees). The corpus has shown that the

quotations include ritualistic and formulaic verses promoting marriage.

1. *wa min ?aayaatihii ?an khalaaq lakum min ?anfusiikum ?azwaaJan litaskunuu ?ilayhaa wa-ja'ala baynakum mawaddatan wa-raHmah. ?inna fii thaalika la-?aayaatin liqawmin yatafakkaruun. (Surah Al Rūm, verse 21)*

(And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquility with them. And He has put love and mercy between your (hearts): verily in that are signs for those who reflect.)

The same can be said of Christian EAWWIs whose opening usually contains a direct quotation from the Holy Bible advising either the bride or the groom on how to treat his/her partner.

2. *liqad ?aHbataha wa-ltamastaha munthu Sibaaya wa-?ibaghaytu ?an ?attakhazuha lii 'arusan wa-Sirtu lijamaaliha 'aashiqaan. (The Wisdom of Solomon 8: 2)*

(I loved her, and sought her out from my youth, I desired to make her my spouse, and I was a lover of her beauty.)

3. *min ?ajl haḏa yatrūk ?alrajulu ?abah wa-ummahu wa jaltaSku bi ?imra?atih wa-jakuun ?al ?ithnan jasadān waHiddan ?iz layas ba'd ?ithnayen bal jasadun waHid. fallāḏy jamma'ahu ?allah la-jufarriqahu ?insaan. (Mark 10 : 7-9)*

the corpus has shown, the structure of EAWWIs has eight moves, which occur in the same order in a typical wedding invitation card (see Appendices I and II), only one of which is optional (7.1.7). These are:

1. Opening
2. Identifying the inviters
3. Requesting the presence of the invitees
4. Identifying the couple to be married
5. Situating the wedding party
6. Closing.
7. Appeals (optional)
8. Correspondence Move

We will look at each of these moves in turn. It should be noted here that Arabic adopts a right-left writing and reading orientation system, but the transliteration system adopted in the present study is the English left-right writing system. As a result of transliteration, what appears on the left hand is read from right to left in the original Arabic text (see Appendices I and II).

7.1.1. Move 1: Opening

This move is usually set apart on its own. In Muslim EAWWIs, it contains a direct quotation from the Holy Qur'an to bless the bride and the groom. These Qur'anic

have very similar structures. As these are repeated over and over, certain types of texts appear over and over again. They become recognized in a society by its members, and once recognized, they become conventionalized. When they become conventionalized, they appear to have an existence of their own, with recognizable rules.

A knowledge of how language works is an essential move of a thoroughly productive relation to one's own language, or to the language one needs to use. This knowledge is a means of gaining a full understanding of the range of things which it is possible to mean, to say, to write in a particular culture, and to do with its language. Beyond that the researchers see knowledge of language as one means of a detailed and critical understanding of the forms and meanings of a culture.

As this study lays most stress on the social and cultural factors, rather than on merely linguistic factors, a detailed analysis of EAWWIs is carried out not as abstract given texts, but as contextualized in a socio-cultural situation.

7.1. The Schematic Structure of EAWWIs

In this section, the researchers will describe and exemplify the schematic structure of EAWWIs which make up the corpus. It shows a schematic representation of what we posit as the prototypical structure of EAWWIs. As the analysis of

Egyptian community, and their adherence to both Muslim and Christian faith.

Other communicative purposes of EAWWIs include the situating of the wedding party as coming under the auspices of either the Islamic or Christian religion, and within the social structure and traditions of the Egyptian community. Other purposes include the invoking of Muslim and Christian faith to ensure the success of the wedding party, the expressing of happiness of the inviting families, and of their hope that the party will be successful.

EAWWIs are similar to wedding invitations in other cultures in having a set of secondary communicative purposes of fulfilling social obligations, demonstrating wealth or status, and announcing that a couple is getting married. While EAWWIs share those secondary purposes, they undoubtedly have their unique set.

7. Results and Discussion

The present study assumes that texts are produced in response to, and out of, particular social situations and their specific structures. Texts are always social objects, and the making of texts is always a social process. In any society there are types of texts of particular form because there are recurring types of social encounters, situations, events, which

EAWWIs. The adoption of this kind of analysis is motivated by the fact that it is “more powerful in interpreting the move structures of texts” (Kong, 1998: 104), and “in illustrating how the logical sequence of ideas is bound up by a set of writing conventions, and how these ideas are linguistically signaled” (Kong, 1998: 110). This analytical framework also provides a foundation for the investigation and identification of how communicative functions interact to form the genre system of EAWWIs.

6. The Communicative Purpose of EAWWIs

According to Swales (1990: 58), a genre is “a class of communicative events, the members of which share some sets of communicative purposes”. Swales believes that the schematic structure through which the communicative purpose is articulated is the result of social practices and conventions. Prominent in Swales’ definition is the communicative purpose, which shapes the component building blocks of the genre. As its name indicates, the communicative purpose of EAWWIs is to invite the receiver to attend the particular wedding party detailed in the invitation. In Egypt, carrying out a successful wedding party is a time for the organizing families (the bride's and the groom's families) to affirm their membership of the broader

identification of genres, “but these features do not constitute obligatory or definitory criteria for genres” (Mauranen, 1993: 18).

Linguists (e.g., Martin, 1985; Ventola, 1987; Swales, 1990; Bhatia, 1993) have used linguistic approaches to genre analysis which are based on the notion of schematic structure, or staging, in mapping the macro-structure of texts. According to these approaches, genres are analyzed in terms of the communicative purposes which they fulfill.

Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993) agree that the more conventional a genre is, the more predictable its schematic structure. As a genre with a clearly defined communicative purpose – to invite the receiver to attend the particular wedding party detailed in the invitation – EAWWIs are highly amenable to schematic structure analysis. One of the purposes of such analysis will be to examine to what extent EAWWIs comprising the corpus correspond to the prototype and to what degree the variation is.

This study is an attempt to identify the generic component moves of EAWWIs, and observing how such functional components were used strategically. So, the researchers adopted the Swalesian genre move analysis approach to identify and quantify structural and functional properties of

of Egypt. To collect this corpus, the researchers phoned and sent e-mails to their colleagues in other Egyptian universities, friends, acquaintances and relatives, requesting them to send all invitation cards available to them. The researchers received most of the invitation cards by e-mail. Quite a large number of the invitation cards were scanned copies sent to the researchers through e-mail. The researchers thus could collect the 300 invitation cards and use them as a corpus for the present study. These were analyzed in terms of (1) the discourse community; (2) the communicative purpose; (3) the moves structure; (4) the functions of the moves (4) in relation to the overall communicative purpose.

5. 2. The Analytical Model

Miller (1984), Martin (1985), Ventola (1987, 1989), and Swales (1990) maintain that a genre is a social, goal-oriented and cultural activity consisting of a sequence of moves. Each move has a minor function in the communicative goal embedded in the genre. Nwogu (1997: 122) defines the term *move* as “a text segment made up of a bundle of linguistic features which give the segment a uniform orientation and signal the content of discourse in it”. Therefore, the functional elements of a genre tend to display lexicogrammatical and textual features that facilitate the

addition, this study can contribute a more appropriate understanding of language use in invitation, which in turn will provide the theoretical and practical basic knowledge of the relationship between linguistic style and written wedding invitations. Furthermore, the researchers hope that this study will be worth to be an additional reference for those who want to make further studies in this field.

4. Research Questions

This study is an attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What is the schematic structure of EAWWIs?
2. What are the communicative purposes of EAWWIs and how are they achieved?
3. What discourse generic moves can be identified in the schematic structure of EAWWIs?
4. Is the schematic structure of Muslim EAWWIs wedding invitation the same as that of Christian EAWWIs?

5. The Methodological Framework

5. 1. The Corpus

A corpus of 300 written wedding invitations was used. To build up a clear picture of EAWWIs genre and to ensure that regional variations were taken into account, the corpus included written invitations drawn from all the governorates

The EAWWIs in Egypt have originated from oral invitations. They become widespread during the 1960s. Since then they have established their presence as an important homely genre. There are two justifications for this study. The first derives from the fact that the literature has revealed that there seems to have been virtually no systematic investigation of EAWWIs genre. No published studies approved to have focused specifically on EAWWIs in terms of their sequential moves organizational patterns, and the impact of the social norms and values on articulation of these ritual patterns. Therefore, this study is an attempt to fill in this gap and shed light on this common widespread socialization process.

The second justification is that this study provides interesting contrasts, necessary for cross-cultural communication because “such studies of patterns of speech behavior in a variety of languages would provide a solid basis for badly needed cross linguistic analysis; research which would greatly aid in efforts toward intercultural communication” (Wolfson, 1981: 21). Through this study the researchers hope to shed light on the importance of language style in EAWWIs. Such studies are of great importance in linguistics because they tend to associate certain specific features of language with certain types and styles. In

features in the context of communicative events characterized by communicative purposes.

Although different definitions may be found, the main goal of genre analysis is to identify certain subgroups within a set of given objects that share a common form of transmission, purpose, and discourse properties. Moreover, a number of different approaches to genre analysis have emerged. These approaches are based on either the work of systemic functional linguists such as Halliday (1985), Halliday and Hasan (1989), Martin (1985, 1992), Ventola (1987), Christie (1989), and Kress (1989), or the work of Swales (1990). The first of these is based on a social-semiotic perspective on language description (Halliday and Hasan, 1989) whereas the second is much more eclectic in its perception of the notion of genre. These approaches to genre analysis offer important perspectives on the notion of genre. The present study attempts to synthesise the insights deriving from these approaches by providing a detailed description of the generic structure of Egyptian Arabic written wedding invitations (henceforth EAWWIs).

3. Significance of the Study

The primary assumption underlying the present study is that EAWWIs can meaningfully be characterized as a genre.

particular discourse communities. Moreover, Kress (1987: 36) views genre as the term which “describes that aspect of the form of texts which is due to the effect of their production in particular social occasions”.

The above definitions of genre suggest that the key concept is that of purpose, function or goal. Therefore, a genre, we might say, is a purposive language event. Accordingly, one can conclude that Egyptian Arabic written wedding invitation is a good candidate for genre status. It tends to exhibit common structures and substances.

In recent years, genre analysis, as a type of discourse analysis, has received increased attention and has been of growing interest to linguists (e.g., Hopkins & Dudley-Evans 1988; Swales 1981, 1990; Yates & Orlikowski, 1992; Martin 1992). It offers a system of analysis which allows observations to be made on the repeated communicative functions found in genres and the linguistic exponents of these functions. Moreover, it tends to associate certain specific features of language with certain types of writings or styles. As Yates and Orlikowski (1992) put it, genre analysis is an exercise in classification of “typified acts of communication” based on their form and substance. It investigates discourse patterns and lexico-grammatical

conventionalized. By “conventionalized” he means that the communicative purposes of genres are constrained. He adds that in most genres, moves can be either obligatory or optional, they may be in a fixed or a variable sequence, they may be subject to embedding one within the other, and they may be recursive.

Consistent with Martin and Swale, Bhatia (1993: 13) believes that a genre is “a recognizable communicative event characterized by a set of communicative purpose(s)”. He proposed the following schematic structure of moves and steps for sales letters in business communication:

Establishing credentials

Introducing the offer

Offering the product or service

Essential detailing of the offer

Indicating value of the offer

Offering incentives

Enclosing documents

Socializing response

Using pressure tactics

Ending politely

Similarly, Miller’s (1984) describes *genre* as a recurrent social action taking place in recurrent rhetorical situations in

Establishing a territory

Claiming centrality

And/or

Making topic generalization(s)

And/or

Reviewing items of previous research

Establishing a niche

Counter-claiming

Or

Indicating a gap

Or

Question raising

Or

Continuing a tradition

Occupying the niche

Outlining purposes

Or

Announcing present research

Announcing principal findings

Indicating RA structure

Swales (1990) believes that schematic structures are prototypes which can be subject to different amounts of variation according to the degree of which the genre is

discussions of genre draw on the definitions given by Martin (1984) or Swales (1990).

A genre has been viewed as “a staged, goal-oriented, purposeful activity in which speakers engage as members of our culture” (Martin 1992: 25). For Swales (1990: 58), a genre “comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes”. That is, these communicative events have similar structures, stylistic features, content and intended audience. In addition, Swales (1990) believes that a genre is usually named and recognized by members of the culture in which it is found.

For both Swales and Martin, it is the communicative purpose which brings any genre into being, shaping the “schematic”, or “beginning-middle-end” structure of the discourse, and influencing choices of content and style (Martin 1984: 86; Swales 1990: 58).

For Swales, genre is exemplified by the Research Article Introduction (RAI), viewed in terms of 'moves', which represent the writer's social purpose, and comprising 'steps', which are optional textual elements. Thus, according to Swales (1990: 141), the structure of the RAI is considered to be as follows:

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Genre Analysis

The word *genre* comes from the French (and originally Latin) word for 'kind' or 'class'. Conventionally, 'genre' is associated with terms such as short stories, science fiction, novels of the 17th or 18th century, fiction, reports, satire, and many other. According to Nunan (1993:120) a *genre* is "a particular type of oral or written communication." He believes that different genres are typified by a particular structure and by specific grammatical forms that reflect the communicative purpose of the genre in question. Moreover, the term *genre* is widely used in rhetoric, literary theory, media theory, and more recently linguistics, to refer to 'a distinctive type of text' (Allen, 1989: 44). Therefore, genres may be illustrated by specific kinds of texts such as abstracts, job applications, tourism brochures, business letters, cartoons, classified announcements, memos, personal letters, news reports, novels, owner's manuals, research reports, short biographies, university calendars, etc.

The concept of *genre* has been much written about, even though – or perhaps because – it is considered to be 'a fuzzy concept' (Swales, 1990: 33) and a controversial one. It has been described differently by various scholars. Most

Being invited to someone's wedding in Egypt usually means an invitation to an evening dinner party. As is the case in many Arab countries, Egyptian wedding parties can be extremely elaborate and expensive. Tables are covered with so many dishes of food that there is hardly a place to set down your glass. The wedding will normally last many hours, and in countryside, wedding celebrations can continue up to several days.

The Egyptian wedding is a thrilling event. It makes everyone feel exultantly proud and joyful, enchanted, and young at heart. The first item to symbolize this spirit is the wedding invitation, printed in Standard Arabic. It is usually issued on behalf of the parents of the couple, who typically invite 150 to 300 guests, depending on their financial status. Close relatives and friends are usually invited by phone or in person, rather than by written invitation. Elderly relatives are often invited in person. Usually, the parents of the bride or the groom go to these relatives' house to invite them, as a way of showing them deep respect. Moreover, if acquaintances are not invited to the wedding party, it is not usual for them to seek out a written invitation, especially if they are close friends or relatives.

very rich and active traditions and many of these can be seen at Egyptian wedding parties. Usually, the entire affair is quite expensive. It starts with paying a dowry which is spent on household items and furniture for the bride. If the groom's parents are very wealthy, they will pay for these items themselves. The bride also receives golden jewellery and is sent presents of clothing and perfume from her groom every feast day. The courtship period can last from six months to two or three years.

This is what is common in both Muslim and Christian marriages. All traditions and arrangements are the same, except that in Christian marriages the groom does not pay a dowry to the bride's family. The bride's parents also help with the furnishing of the couple's apartment.

Egyptians are well known for their hospitality and are very spontaneous about inviting, even individuals they have met for the first time, to their homes. In this respect, the aim of this study is geared towards analyzing the patterns that Egyptians follow in terms of inviting guests to weddings.

Weddings are one of the most elaborate celebrations in the lives of Egyptian families. They can take place at any time of the year, except during fasting periods. This is traditional of both Muslim and Christian marriages.

Keywords: genre analysis, socio-cultural factors, wedding invitation, Egypt

1. Introduction

Marriage is a serious family matter in Egypt. There was a time when all marriages were arranged. Nowadays, many people marry of their own choice. A couple chooses each other, and their parents or elders are approached directly through the brother-in-law or sister-in-law or friends, who then intervene to arrange the marriage.

As a tradition in the Egyptian community, the marriage proposal comes from the man's side, i.e. the groom's side, and not from the bride's side. Once a proposal of marriage has been accepted, and the dowry has been decided upon, the wedding date is fixed. Then, members of both the bride's and the groom's families start to invite their guests to the wedding party.

Every culture values the wedding party in some way. Traditions and wedding parties differ from one society to another. Indeed, Egypt has its particular and characteristic wedding traditions. The traditional Egyptian wedding has an elaborate and meaningful process which can take up to several weeks and even several months. Egypt is a place with

Abstract

The primary assumption underlying the present study is that Egyptian Arabic Written Wedding Invitations (EAWWIs) can meaningfully be characterized as a genre. The present study is an attempt to identify the generic constituent moves of EAWWIs and observe how such functional moves are used strategically. So, the researchers adopted the Swalesian genre move analysis approach. A corpus of 300 written wedding invitations drawn from all the governorates of Egypt was used for this study. Genre analysis of the corpus indicated that, in addition to the primary function of inviting the receiver to attend the particular wedding party detailed in the invitation, the EAWWIs communicate a lot of information about the socio-cultural norms and practices encoded in the rhetorical and organizational components of this type of genre. It was also found that EAWWIs are elaborate in the information they convey. They are intended to communicate information about the reciprocal relationship between members of the families on social occasions in the Egyptian society. Results also indicated that Muslim and Christian EAWWIs have a lot in common in terms of their schematic structure and communicative purpose.

Contents

1. Introduction

2. Theoretical Background

2. 1. Genre Analysis

3. Significance of the Study

4. Research Questions

5. The Methodological Framework

5. 1. The Corpus

5. 2. The Analytical Model

6. The Communicative Purpose of EAWWIs

7. Results and Discussion

7. 1. The Schematic Structure of EAWWIs

7. 1. 1. Move 1: Opening

7. 1. 2. Move 2: identifying the inviters

7. 1. 3. Move 3: requesting the presence of the invitees

7. 1. 4. Move 4: identifying the couple to be married

7. 1. 5. Move 5: situating the wedding party

7. 1. 6. Move 6: closing

7. 1. 7. Move 7: Appeals

7. 1. 8. Move 8: Correspondence Move

8. Summary and Conclusion

9. References

10. Appendices

11. Arabic Summary

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