

Lauren Klersy

Heejin Kim

ENC 2135

19 September 2019

### Project 1: Global Warming Analysis

Genre is a term that is used to characterize varying subsections within a variety of fields such as music, film, and writing. For example, text can be produced in terms of an encyclopedia entry, a news article, and a peer-reviewed journal. Genre, otherwise referred to as discourse, is very crucial in understanding certain characteristics of that genre. Each genre has a specialized outcome they aim to achieve in terms of educating the reader; these genres have certain elements that pertain solely to that genre and differentiate them. In relation to any genre, “it is the language which speaks, not the author” (Barthes). This enforces the idea that the words used by the author inform or tell the story, not the author themselves. Although an author may provide endless text and resources for the reader, it is ultimately up to the interpretation of the reader and what they take from the material. Some may argue that “the author has disappeared” once they begin writing (Foucault). This supports the idea that the author and their opinions are irrelevant once they begin writing. Overall, differentiating between genres is important in understanding the author’s rhetorical end for the intended audience. This can be exemplified by analyzing two different genres, a news article and a peer-reviewed journal article.

The first artifact to be analyzed is a news article published by The Conservation entitled “Climate Explained: How Much of Climate Change Is Natural? How Much Is Man-made?” written by Mark New. The purpose of this news article is to present fair and true information on climate change. The author aims to briefly educate the audience. The target audience of this

article is any individual who wants to be informed about world issues and events, as well as keep up-to-date on current events. The structure of this news article is divided into subsections. The first three subheadings are questions with answers below them, whereas the last three subheadings are just basic descriptions followed by lots of text. This design allows for readers to easily scan the article and understand it. Also, the title of the article “Climate Explained: How Much of Climate Change Is Natural? How Much Is Man-made?” foreshadows the question and answer format of the article. Typical within news articles, the author places the information in order of most important to least important because readers often skim the first page or two of a news articles due to convenience. In addition, this article is not centered around a clear thesis. The mode of this article is in digital format which is easier to reach a broad audience. There is apparent media within this artifact such as the large picture on the top of the first page. This is due to the level of entertainment and complexity associated with news articles. For example, a peer-reviewed journal is formal and heavily researched which often has a lack of pictures, but news articles are brief and try to catch the audience’s eye. The style of this article is very understanding and informing.

The author uses mild language that is easy for the reader to understand and briefly gain knowledge on. This style creates an informative and sympathetic tone. The author tries to get the reader to understand how serious their actions impact the global climate which can have detrimental impacts on the environment; in doing so, the author appeals to pathos. Similar to pathos, the author appeals to logos and ethos. The reference of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and other reliable sources improves the reliability of the source known as ethos; whereas, logos are apparent through the authors’ reasonable claims being made. This

article does not have a labeled reference list. In addition, the author fails to use in-text citations of sources that were used. This shows that a news article lacks formality and additional research.

The author of this article could've chosen this genre due to his level of recognition on the topic of climate change, but the lack of depth. "As someone who has been working on climate change detection and its causes for over 20 years I was both surprised and not surprised that I was asked to write on this topic," this quote details the author's background on the subject and alludes to the fact that he is not a regular news article writer, this could be the reason he chose to write a news article, because a peer-reviewed is more formal and researched. Like most news articles, this article has built-in biases within the text, present information in order of its importance, and are aimed at a broad audience. This genre has benefits and costs. Although a news article is easy to read, readers tend to assume that news articles lack credibility compared to more formally researched papers. The author tries to avoid this common assumption by including data from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The author includes a section on adapting to a changing climate. This makes the artifact interesting because it is aiming to prepare readers to be proactive to the potential changes that may occur. It can be concluded that this article conforms to and deviates from the norm of the genre.

The second artifact to be analyzed is a peer-reviewed journal article entitled "Climate Change: Foreign Policy" by Bill McKibben. The purpose of this peer-reviewed journal is to inform the reader of the harmful impacts that humans have on climate change, and to persuade the audience to alter their actions. The target audience of this journal are researchers, professors, or other scholars in the environmental field or any individual who is genuinely interested on this topic or field of study. The structure of this journal is reliant on subsections. Each subsection is titled with a common misconception by society, in which the author addresses and corrects:

“Scientists Are Divided,” “We Have Time,” “Climate Change Will Help as Many Places as It Hurts,” “It’s China’s Fault,” “Climate Change Is an Environmental Problem,” “Solving It Will Be Painful,” and “We Can Reverse Climate Change.” Within each subheading, lots of information is provided pertaining to that certain assumption, as well as an argument. The author makes an argument that climate change is heavily due to human impacts and it is too late to reverse the damage that have been done. The use of subheadings is a part of the journals design. This allows the reader to navigate through the text quicker and makes it easier for them to understand. Uncommon of this genre, the title is in big bold font centered in the middle of the page; this attracts the viewer. Under the title, there is a brief extension of the title, “Act now, we’re told, if we want to save the planet from a climate catastrophe. Trouble is, it might be too late. The science is settled, and the damage has already begun. The only question now is whether we will stop playing political games and embrace the few imperfect options we have left.” This extension allows for a brief understanding of what the following paper entails and introduces the author’s main argument.

The mode of this journal can be described as text based, presented on a digital platform. Due to this artifact’s genre, it is common that there is a lack of media within the text because it is more scholarly based. Despite this common occurrence, the author does include an image in the journal. At the top of the second page, there is a photo of trees. This photo seamlessly breaks up the text and sparks the readers interest. The style of this journal is knowledgeable, passionate, and backed up by data. The author acknowledges the alternate argumentative side which only strengthens their argument. This style creates a persuasive and emotional tone. This uses an appeal to pathos in order to make the audience realize the damage their actions have on the environment, especially in terms of the temperature, “Solving this crisis is no longer an option.

Human beings have already raised the temperature of the planet about a degree Fahrenheit” (McKibben). The article also uses formal and precise language such as “Pentagon Forecast and Environmental Protection Agency” (McKibben). This language appeals to ethos by boosting the credibility of the article and it appeals to logos due to the authors reasonable claims. Specific pieces of information are included such as temperatures and dates, “2007...25 percent less ice” (McKibben). This use of detail acts as evidence to back up the assertions discussed in the article. The word “we” is often found within the article, this indicates a sense of urgency between the audience and the author. At the end of the journal article, there is an absence of a labeled reference list which is uncommon of this genre. This indicates that this article is heavily reliant on the author’s findings as opposed to other source, although he did briefly quote other sources.

The author of this journal could’ve chosen this genre due to his ability and background on the topic of climate change. Like most peer-reviewed journals, this text is based on the author’s findings, organized around a thesis, and uses formal language. This genre has multiple benefits and costs. Although a peer-reviewed journal is formal, readers often agree that these forms of text are difficult to digest due to their lack of media or individuality. McKibben tries to avoid this common assumption by including a picture on the second page and differing fonts throughout the journal. This makes the passage more interesting and gives it character. The author includes a section on disagreeing that climate change is merely an environmental problem, this makes the artifact interesting because it informs the reader that this problem has extended its reach and is not considered just an environmental problem now, but a larger issue. In addition, the author appeals to humor which is uncommon of this genre. This can be seen on page 2, the image pictured is of tall trees with a caption that curing climate change as a “tall order.” This play on words creates a comedic effect on the audience that may act as a break from

the formality of the paper. It can be concluded that this journal conforms to and deviates from the norm of the genre.

Evidently, both artifacts discuss the same issue at hand, climate change. Both authors deliver information about the harm that human actions have on the rising temperatures of the world. In addition, both pieces of text share a similar argument in which they both believe that these actions are detrimental. Similarly, the IPCC is referenced in both pieces of text. The authorial persona of the peer-reviewed journal article has slight differences than that of the news article. The persona of the peer-reviewed journal article is very present and engaged. This author, Bill McKibben is an environmentalist who also briefly references other scholars within the text, this only makes the argument more supported. The authorial persona of the news article is more robotic and distant. This means that the purpose of a news article is to educate without any bias or argument, so the author just merely gives information.

Genre is important in differentiating pieces of text. Each genre has certain elements that characterize it and make it unique. For example, the news article is more informal and information than the peer-reviewed journal article which is more research based and argumentative. Although these genres have characteristics that define them, the authors of these artifacts tend to mildly stray away from certain assumptions. This gives the text a bit of character and differentiation. Both genres are aimed at different audiences and have different rhetorical ends. The peer-reviewed article tries to persuade the audience, whereas the news article briefly educates them. Both means of text are informative and serve different purposes.

### Works Cited

McKibben, Bill. *Climate Change*, Feb. 2009. Published by Slate Group, LLC. [https://www-jstor-org.proxy.lib.fsu.edu/stable/pdf/25462376.pdf?ab\\_segments=0%252Fbasic\\_SYC-4653%252Fcontrol&refreqid=excelsior%3A712ed72cd8edeb7b1e4f522fe52b6331](https://www-jstor-org.proxy.lib.fsu.edu/stable/pdf/25462376.pdf?ab_segments=0%252Fbasic_SYC-4653%252Fcontrol&refreqid=excelsior%3A712ed72cd8edeb7b1e4f522fe52b6331)

New, Mark. “Climate Explained: How Much of Climate Change Is Natural? How Much Is Man-Made?” *The Conversation*, 20 Sept. 2019, [theconversation.com/climate-explained-how-much-of-climate-change-is-natural-how-much-is-man-made-123604](https://theconversation.com/climate-explained-how-much-of-climate-change-is-natural-how-much-is-man-made-123604).