TRACING CHANGE IN A MICRO ACTIVITY SYSTEM: AN ACTIVITY-BASED GENRE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

BY GAEL AYERS

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

SCHOOL OF ENGLISH

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

JANUARY 2015

Abstract

The overall objectives of this study were to assess the usefulness of an activity-genre approach, and conceive a multi-dimensional/multi-perspective framework, which could go some way in capturing the complexities of human object-directed activity. In particular, research concentrated on i. how a. the ('power') relations between participants, and b. factors concerning 'culture' and 'identity', can shape the activity system as a whole, and its different parts or elements, and ii. how genre contributes to the patterning and contingency of an activity system . In the formulation of the framework, and to identify and describe the different features, new notions and terms were introduced and defined, involving a number of differentiations of concepts. The framework was applied to a micro activity system, that of an astrology group (the case study), based in Lazio, Italy. It revealed how genre was used in *configuration* to both negotiate 'power relations' between participants and further the Object/motive of the Activity System. 'Communicative purpose' of a genre was created through a whole array of modes e.g. 'size', colour, position within the room, its relation to other genres, indicating the importance of 'situated analysis'. The analysis indicated a complex layering of time and space, local and global culture cross-fertilizing.

Acknowledgements

My thanks most of all to my supervisor, Almut Koester, for all her help, encouragement and generosity. A special thanks to all my fellow participants of the group. I also wish to thank the examiners of this thesis, for the time and thought they dedicated to the corrections. Last, thanks to John for his unswerving support, and of course, thanks to GM.

Contents

List of Figures

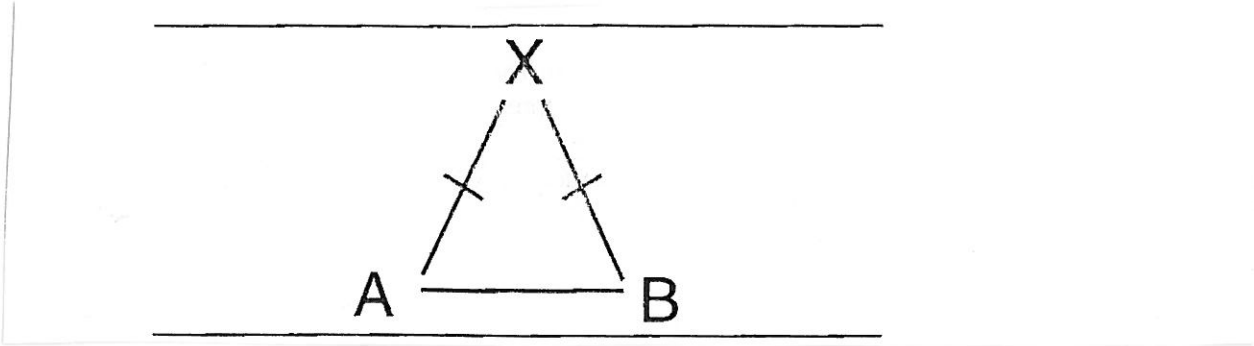


Figure 2.1 Mediational triangle (Vygotsky)

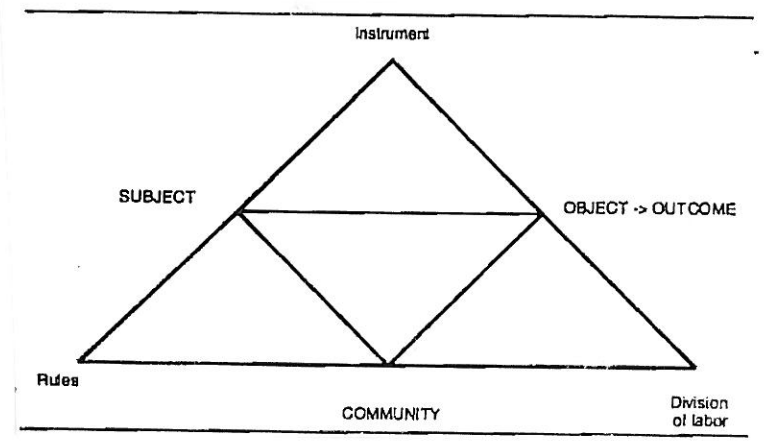


Figure 2.3 Instrumental meditational triangle (activity system) (Leon'tev)

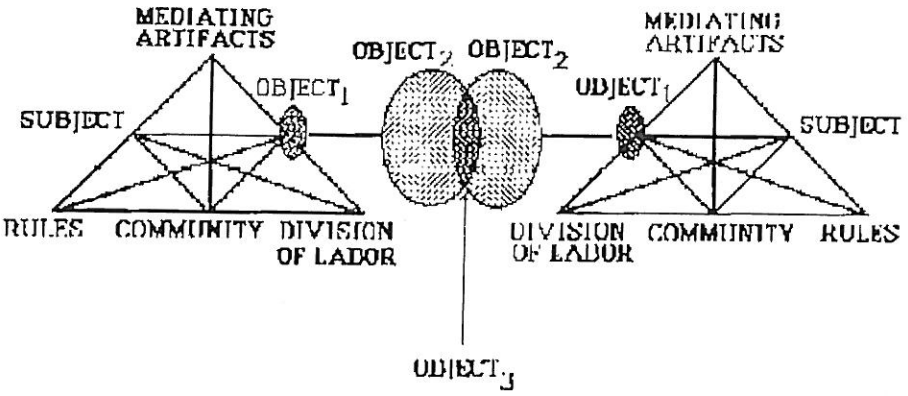


Figure 2.4 EngestrÖm's third-generation activity system

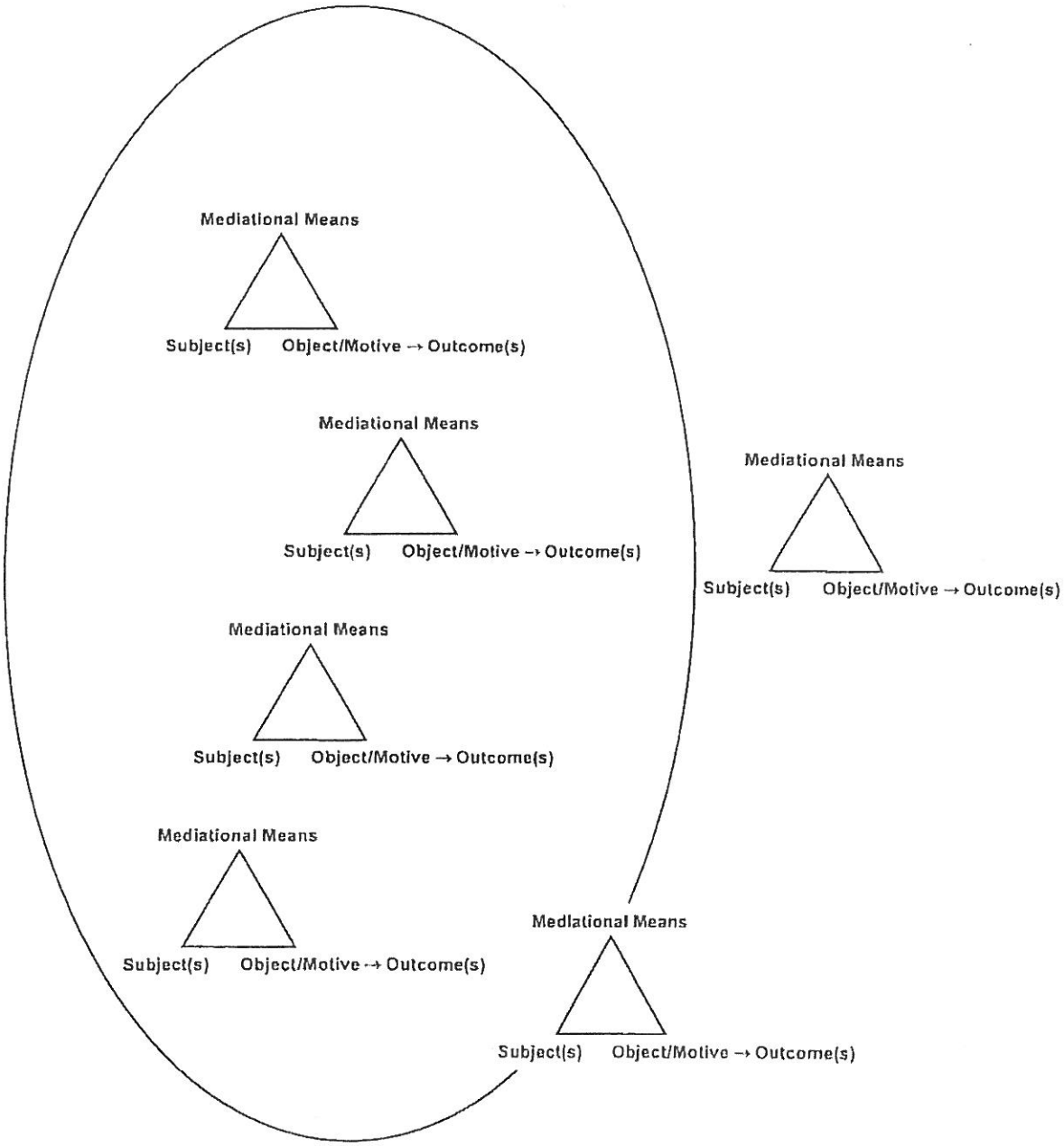


Figure 2.5 Interconnecting multiple activity systems (adapted from Russell)

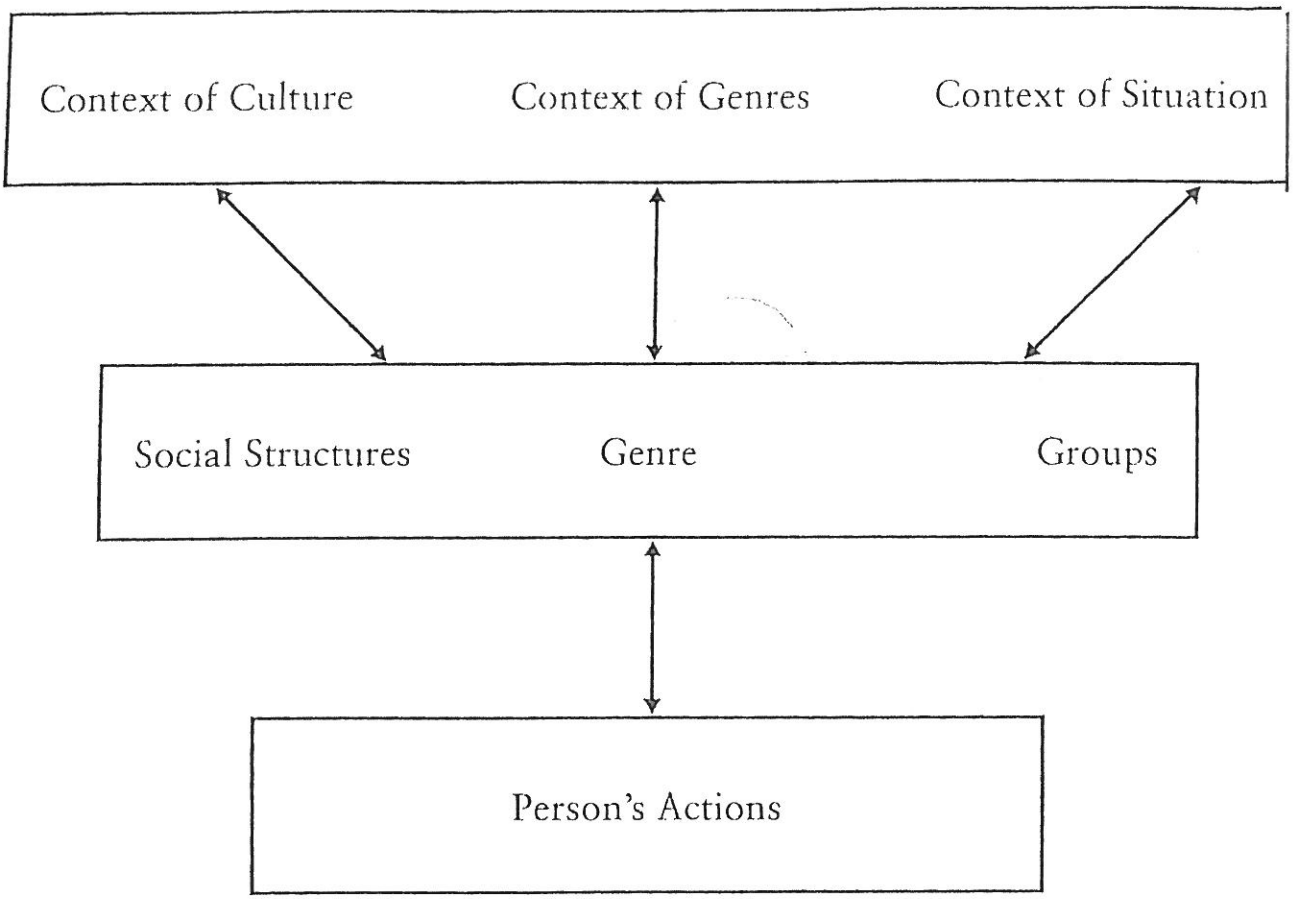


Figure 2.6 Devitt's framework: interactions of contexts, genre, and action

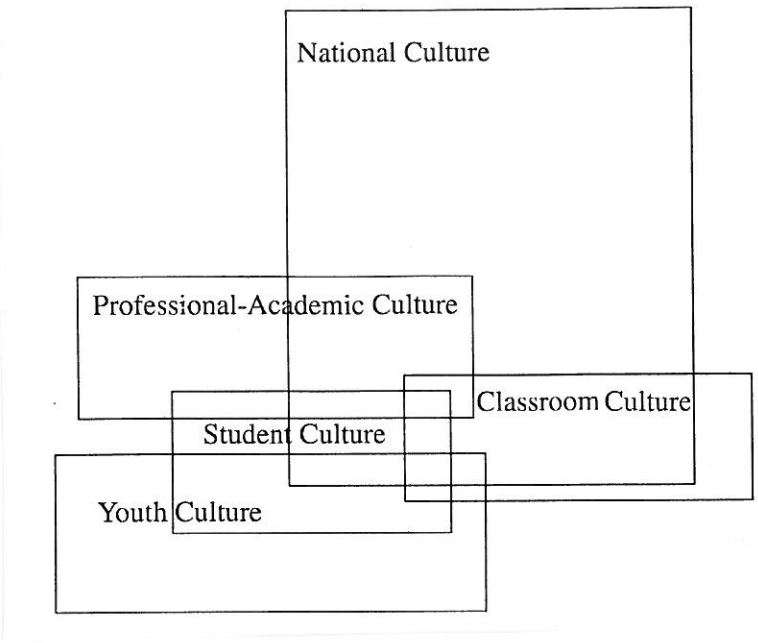


Figure 2.7 Atkinson's modified version of Holliday's 'small cultures'

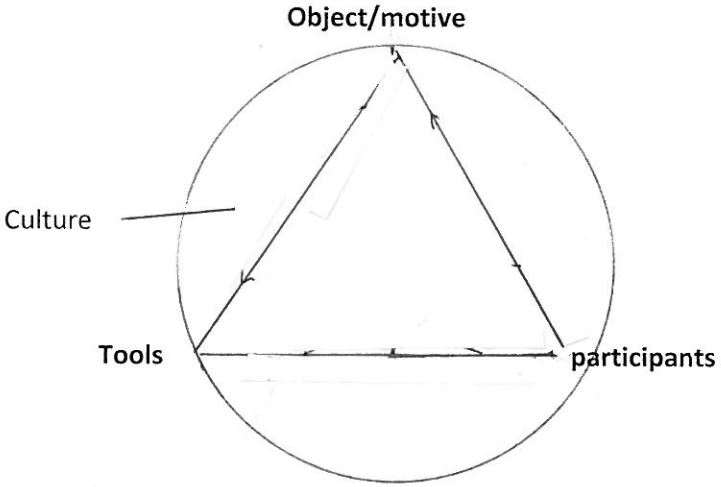


Figure 3.1 The initial framework

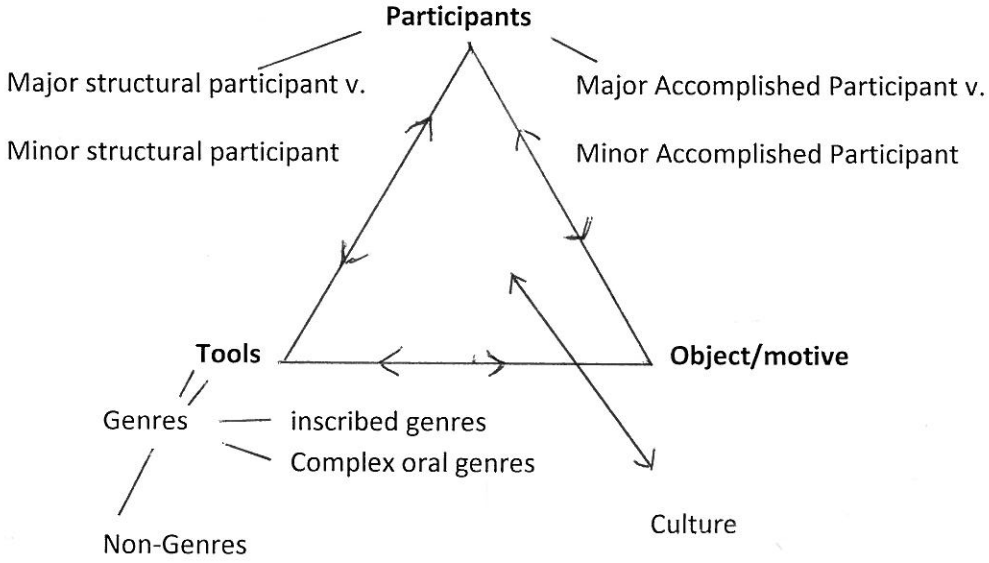


Figure 3.2 The framework following the first modifications

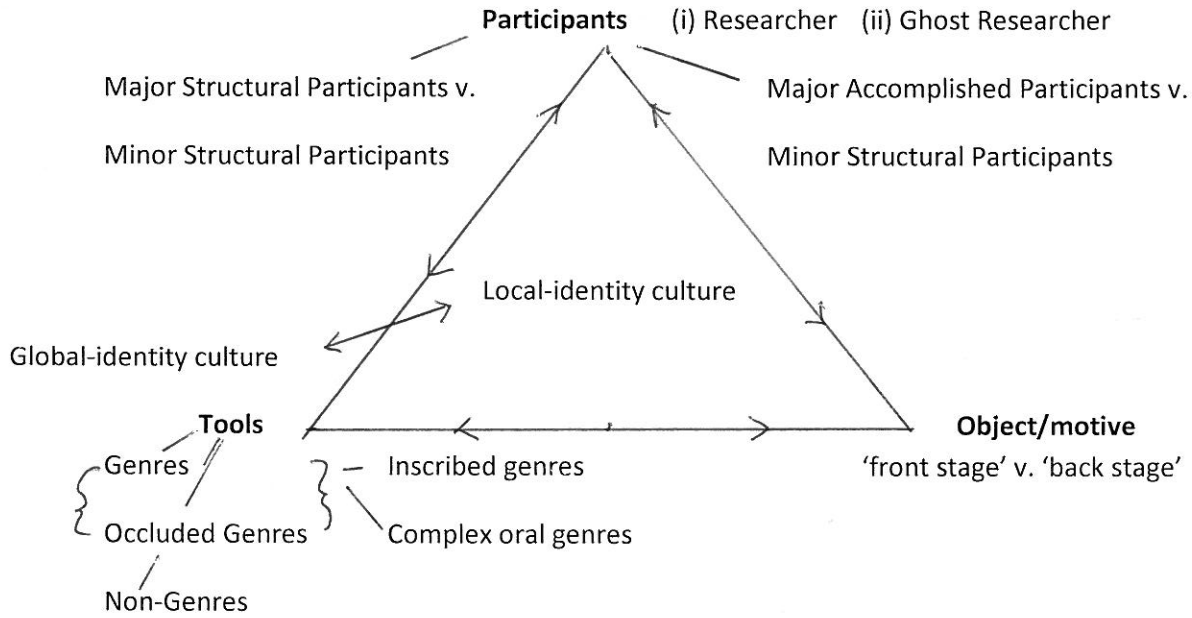


Figure 3.3 The framework following the second modifications

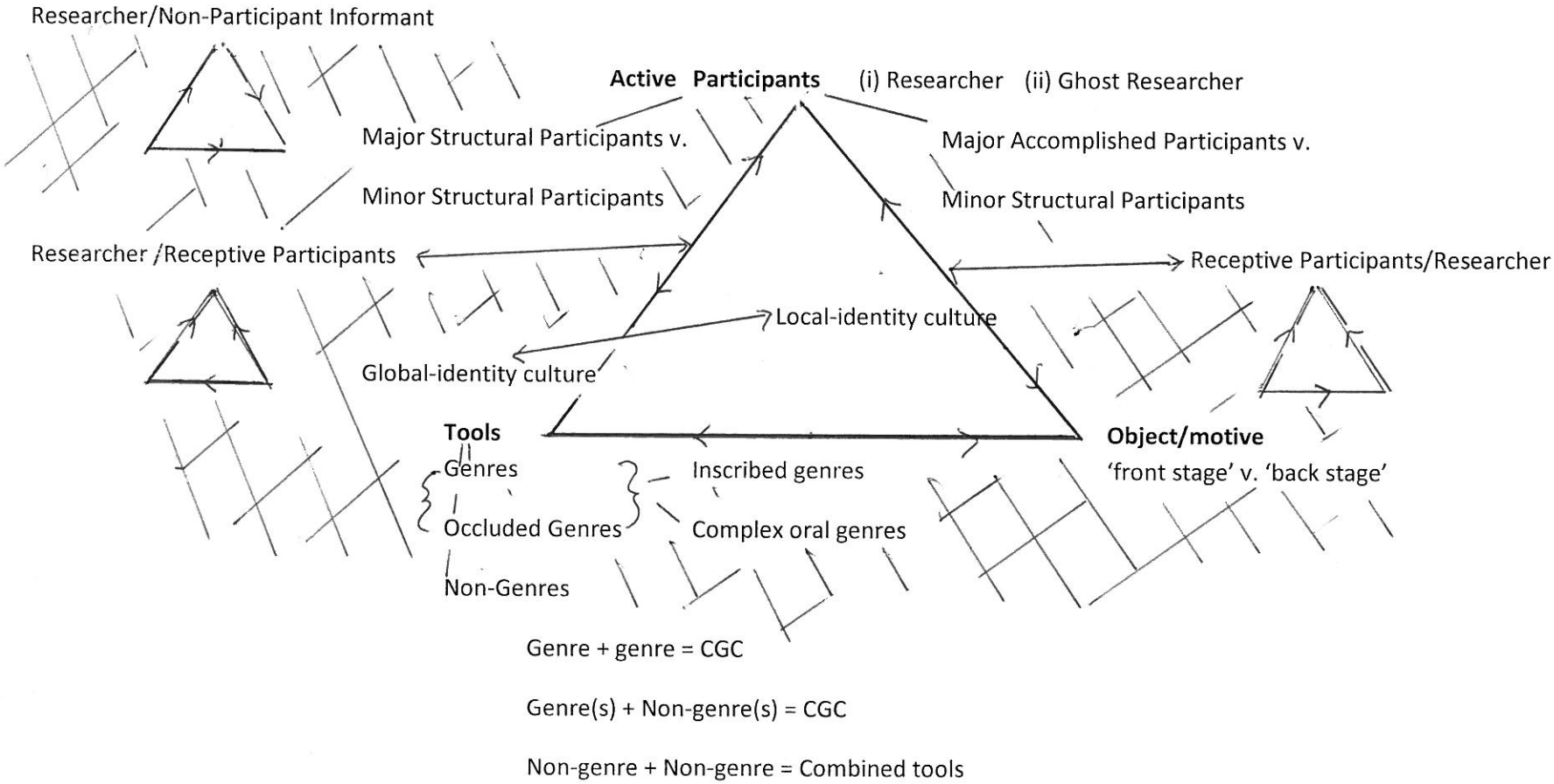


Figure 34 The final framework: Interconnecting activity systems set within activity networking

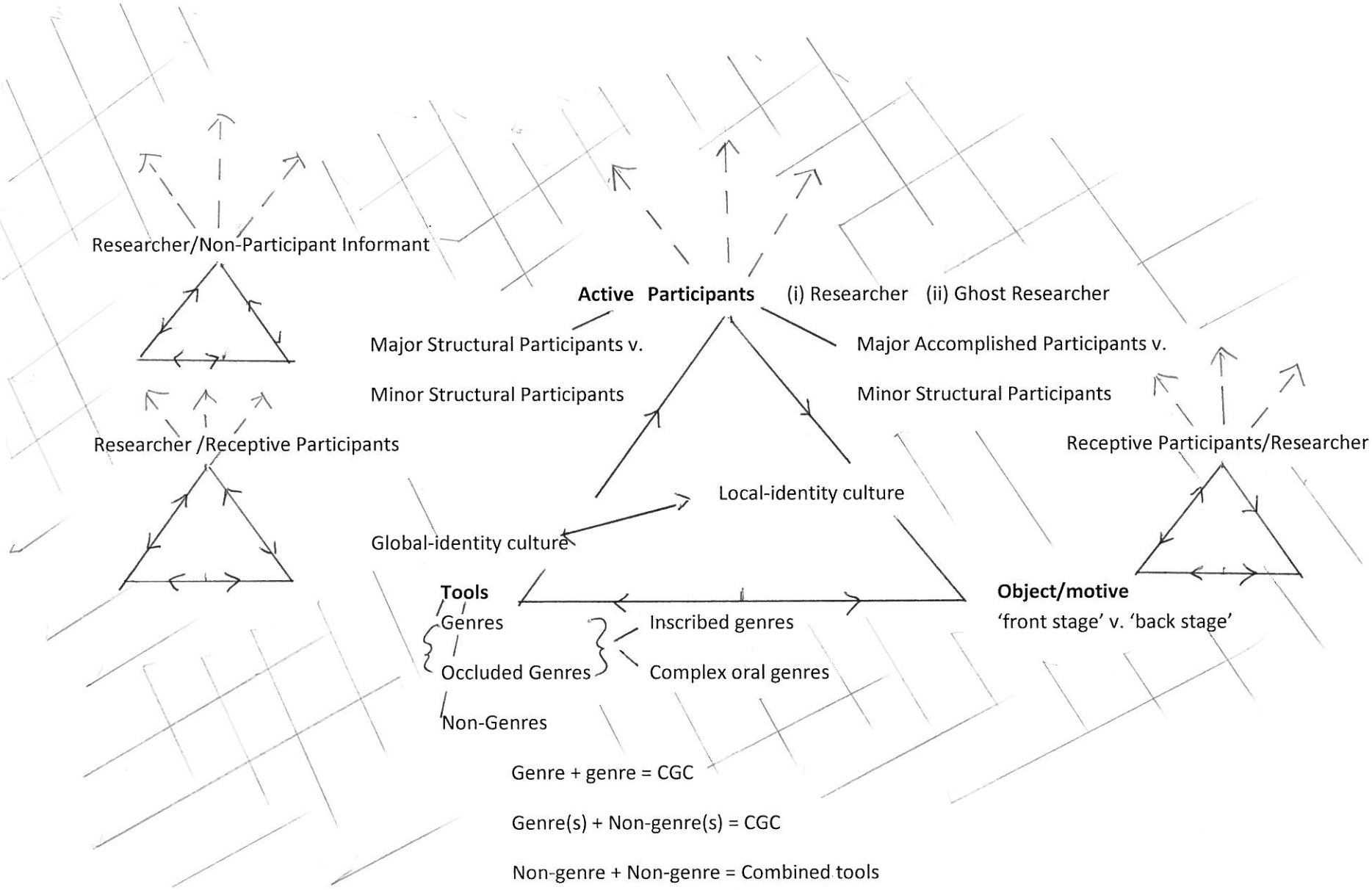


Figure 3.5 The final framework: Interconnecting activity systems set within activity networking

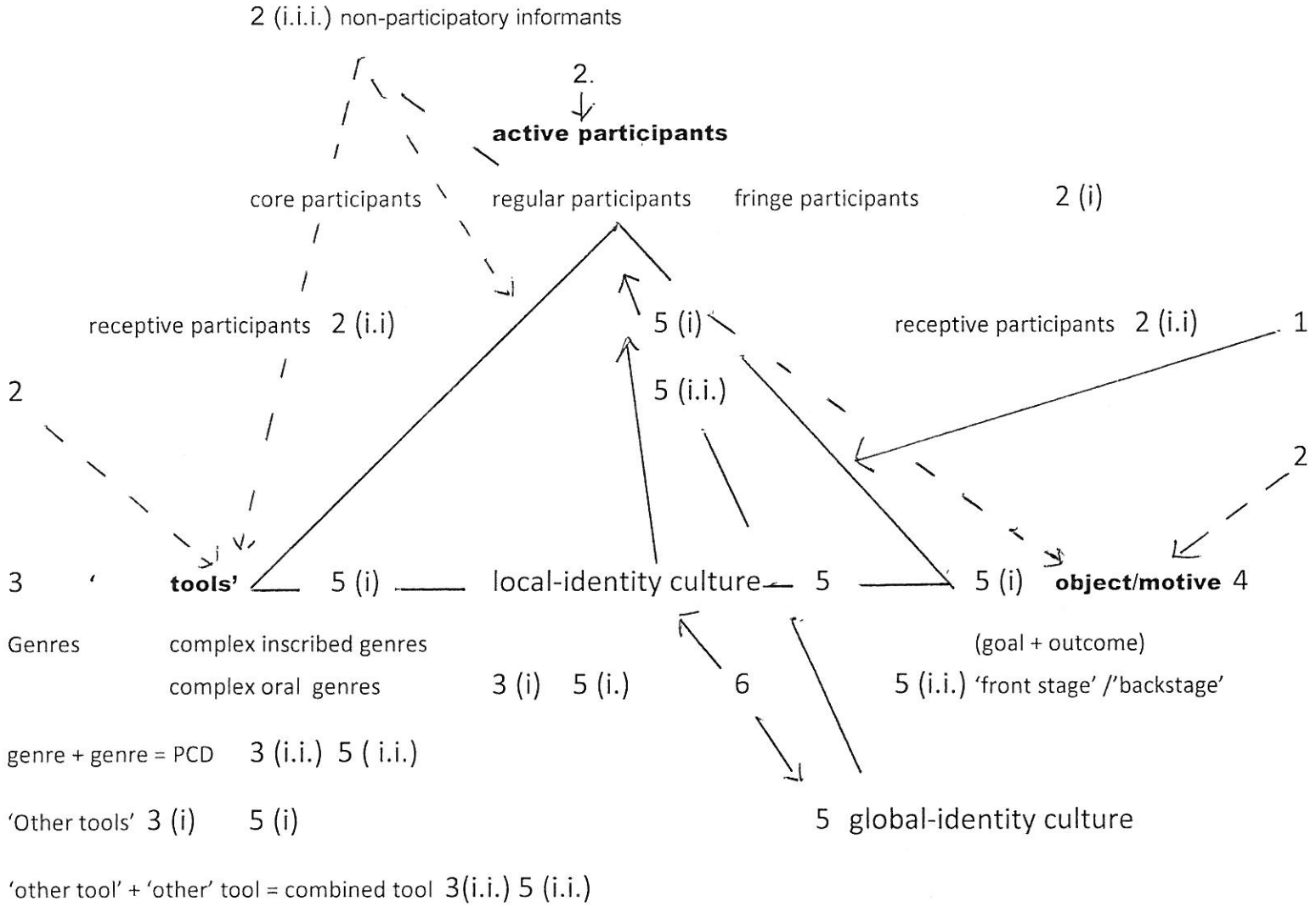
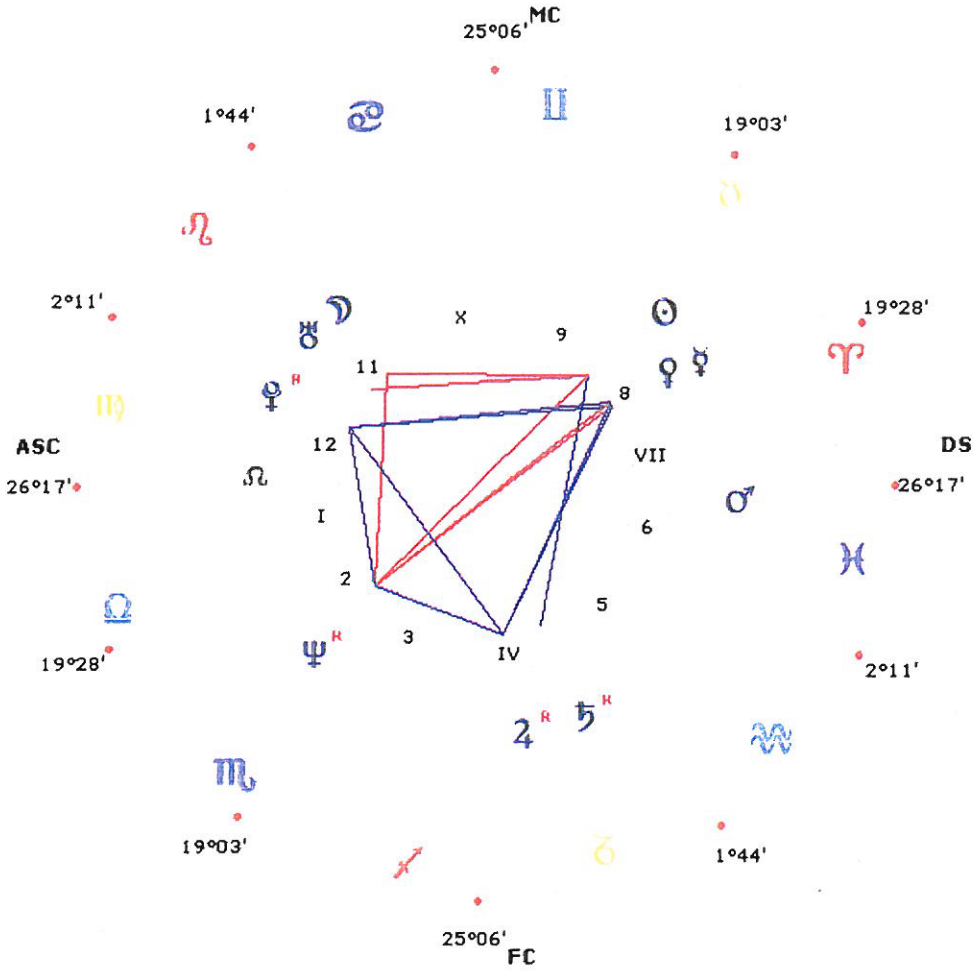


Figure 3.6 Procedure for applying activity system and activity networking framework

Interpretazione Tema Natale

Gaia : Birmingham [United Kingdom] [-1.0] dst
alle ore : 16 e 00 del [redacted]



Posizione Pianeti nei Segni e nelle Case

☉	Sole	13°1'	♉	Toro	8
☽	Luna	8°31'	♌	Leone	11
☿	Mercurio	27°59'	♈	Ariete	8
♀	Venere	29°44'	♈	Ariete	8
♂	Marte	24°07'	♓	Pesci	6
♃	Giove	3°19'	♑	Capricorno	IV
♄	Saturno	18°23'	♑	Capricorno	IV
♅	Urano	16°58'	♌	Leone	11
♆	Nettuno	7°37'	♏	Scorpione	2
♇	Plutone	3°37'	♍	Vergine	12

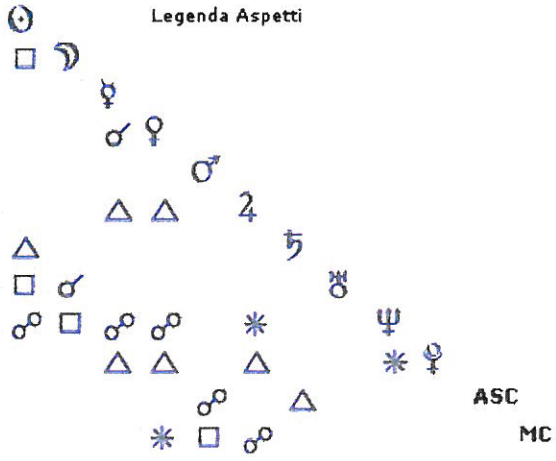


Figure 4.1 Individual birth wheel chart

Figure 4.2 Astrological chart (Renaissance period)

Planet ephemeris for January 2009, 09:44:00 UT.. mean Moon node Longitude

Day	ST	☉	☽	☿	♀	♂	♃	♄	♅	♆	♇
01, Thu	16 29	11 ♑ 07	04 ♓ 45	00 ♒ 00	27 ♒ 42	03 ♑ 50	29 ♑ 01	21 ♍ 46	19 ♓ 15	22 ♒ 27	01 ♑ 16
02, Fri	16 33	12 ♑ 08	17 ♓ 12	01 ♒ 14	28 ♒ 47	04 ♑ 35	29 ♑ 15	21 ♍ 46	19 ♓ 17	22 ♒ 29	01 ♑ 18
03, Sat	16 37	13 ♑ 09	29 ♓ 57	02 ♒ 24	29 ♒ 52	05 ♑ 20	29 ♑ 29	21 ♍ 46	19 ♓ 18	22 ♒ 30	01 ♑ 21
04, Sun	16 41	14 ♑ 10	13 ♈ 03	03 ♒ 29	00 ♓ 57	06 ♑ 05	29 ♑ 43	21 ♍ 45	19 ♓ 20	22 ♒ 32	01 ♑ 23
05, Mon	16 44	15 ♑ 11	26 ♈ 33	04 ♒ 29	02 ♓ 02	06 ♑ 51	29 ♑ 57	21 ♍ 45	19 ♓ 22	22 ♒ 34	01 ♑ 25
06, Tue	16 48	16 ♑ 13	10 ♉ 29	05 ♒ 23	03 ♓ 06	07 ♑ 36	00 ♒ 10	21 ♍ 44	19 ♓ 24	22 ♒ 36	01 ♑ 27
07, Wed	16 52	17 ♑ 14	24 ♉ 50	06 ♒ 09	04 ♓ 10	08 ♑ 21	00 ♒ 24	21 ♍ 44	19 ♓ 26	22 ♒ 38	01 ♑ 29
08, Thu	16 56	18 ♑ 15	09 ♊ 35	06 ♒ 47	05 ♓ 14	09 ♑ 07	00 ♒ 38	21 ♍ 43	19 ♓ 28	22 ♒ 40	01 ♑ 31
09, Fri	17 00	19 ♑ 16	24 ♊ 38	07 ♒ 17	06 ♓ 17	09 ♑ 52	00 ♒ 52	21 ♍ 42	19 ♓ 30	22 ♒ 42	01 ♑ 33
10, Sat	17 04	20 ♑ 17	09 ♋ 49	07 ♒ 36	07 ♓ 20	10 ♑ 38	01 ♒ 07	21 ♍ 41	19 ♓ 32	22 ♒ 44	01 ♑ 36
11, Sun	17 08	21 ♑ 18	25 ♋ 00	07 ♒ 45	08 ♓ 23	11 ♑ 23	01 ♒ 21	21 ♍ 40	19 ♓ 34	22 ♒ 46	01 ♑ 38
12, Mon	17 12	22 ♑ 19	10 ♌ 01	07 ♒ 42	09 ♓ 25	12 ♑ 09	01 ♒ 35	21 ♍ 39	19 ♓ 37	22 ♒ 48	01 ♑ 40
13, Tue	17 16	23 ♑ 20	24 ♌ 42	07 ♒ 28	10 ♓ 27	12 ♑ 55	01 ♒ 49	21 ♍ 37	19 ♓ 39	22 ♒ 50	01 ♑ 42
14, Wed	17 20	24 ♑ 22	08 ♍ 59	07 ♒ 02	11 ♓ 29	13 ♑ 40	02 ♒ 03	21 ♍ 36	19 ♓ 41	22 ♒ 52	01 ♑ 44
15, Thu	17 24	25 ♑ 23	22 ♍ 50	06 ♒ 25	12 ♓ 30	14 ♑ 26	02 ♒ 17	21 ♍ 34	19 ♓ 43	22 ♒ 54	01 ♑ 46
16, Fri	17 28	26 ♑ 24	06 ♎ 13	05 ♒ 37	13 ♓ 31	15 ♑ 12	02 ♒ 31	21 ♍ 33	19 ♓ 46	22 ♒ 56	01 ♑ 48
17, Sat	17 32	27 ♑ 25	19 ♎ 10	04 ♒ 39	14 ♓ 31	15 ♑ 58	02 ♒ 45	21 ♍ 31	19 ♓ 48	22 ♒ 58	01 ♑ 50
18, Sun	17 36	28 ♑ 26	01 ♏ 46	03 ♒ 33	15 ♓ 31	16 ♑ 43	02 ♒ 59	21 ♍ 29	19 ♓ 50	23 ♒ 00	01 ♑ 52
19, Mon	17 40	29 ♑ 27	14 ♏ 09	02 ♒ 20	16 ♓ 30	17 ♑ 29	03 ♒ 14	21 ♍ 27	19 ♓ 53	23 ♒ 02	01 ♑ 54
20, Tue	17 44	00 ♒ 28	26 ♏ 08	01 ♒ 04	17 ♓ 29	18 ♑ 15	03 ♒ 28	21 ♍ 25	19 ♓ 55	23 ♒ 05	01 ♑ 56
21, Wed	17 48	01 ♒ 29	08 ♐ 03	29 ♑ 47	18 ♓ 27	19 ♑ 01	03 ♒ 42	21 ♍ 23	19 ♓ 58	23 ♒ 07	01 ♑ 59
22, Thu	17 52	02 ♒ 30	19 ♐ 53	28 ♑ 30	19 ♓ 25	19 ♑ 47	03 ♒ 56	21 ♍ 21	20 ♓ 00	23 ♒ 09	02 ♑ 00
23, Fri	17 55	03 ♒ 31	01 ♑ 41	27 ♑ 16	20 ♓ 23	20 ♑ 33	04 ♒ 10	21 ♍ 18	20 ♓ 03	23 ♒ 11	02 ♑ 02
24, Sat	17 59	04 ♒ 32	13 ♑ 31	26 ♑ 08	21 ♓ 20	21 ♑ 19	04 ♒ 25	21 ♍ 16	20 ♓ 06	23 ♒ 13	02 ♑ 04
25, Sun	18 03	05 ♒ 33	25 ♑ 25	25 ♑ 05	22 ♓ 16	22 ♑ 05	04 ♒ 39	21 ♍ 13	20 ♓ 08	23 ♒ 15	02 ♑ 06
26, Mon	18 07	06 ♒ 34	07 ♒ 24	24 ♑ 11	23 ♓ 12	22 ♑ 52	04 ♒ 53	21 ♍ 11	20 ♓ 11	23 ♒ 18	02 ♑ 08
27, Tue	18 11	07 ♒ 35	19 ♒ 32	23 ♑ 25	24 ♓ 07	23 ♑ 38	05 ♒ 07	21 ♍ 08	20 ♓ 14	23 ♒ 20	02 ♑ 10
28, Wed	18 15	08 ♒ 36	01 ♓ 49	22 ♑ 47	25 ♓ 01	24 ♑ 24	05 ♒ 21	21 ♍ 05	20 ♓ 16	23 ♒ 22	02 ♑ 11
29, Thu	18 19	09 ♒ 37	14 ♓ 17	22 ♑ 19	25 ♓ 55	25 ♑ 10	05 ♒ 36	21 ♍ 02	20 ♓ 19	23 ♒ 24	02 ♑ 13
30, Fri	18 23	10 ♒ 38	26 ♓ 58	21 ♑ 53	26 ♓ 48	25 ♑ 56	05 ♒ 50	20 ♍ 59	20 ♓ 22	23 ♒ 26	02 ♑ 15
31, Sat	18 27	11 ♒ 39	09 ♈ 53	21 ♑ 48	27 ♓ 40	26 ♑ 43	06 ♒ 04	20 ♍ 56	20 ♓ 25	23 ♒ 29	02 ♑ 17

Planetary ingresses

Planet	Sign	Date	Time, UT
☉	♒	19, Mon	22 40
♀	♓	03, Sat	12 35
♃	♒	05, Mon	15 41

Figure 4.3 Page from a present-day book of ephemeras

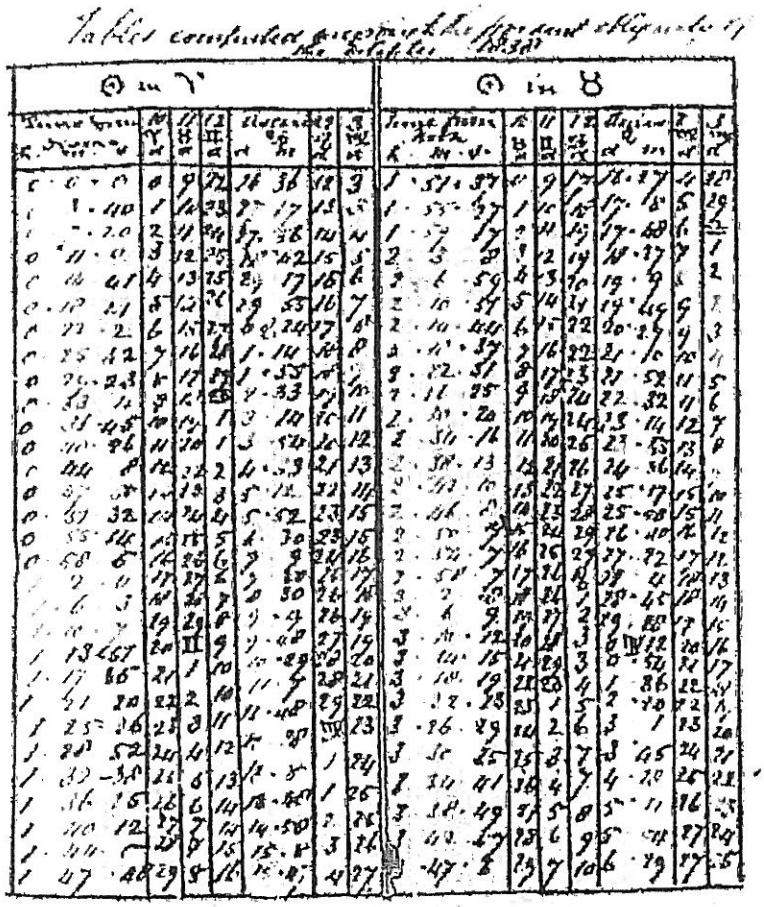


Figure 4.4 Page from a Renaissance book of ephemeras

Zodiac in degrees 0.00			Placidus Orb:0		
Sun	Capricorn	9.43	Ascendant	Libra	5.33
Moon	Gemini	23.08	II	Libra	29.56
Mercury	Sagittarius	27.58	III	Sagittarius	0.37
Venus	Aquarius	11.25	IV	Capricorn	7.20
Mars	Virgo	13.59	V	Aquarius	13.13
Jupiter	Virgo	10.12 R	VI	Pisces	12.34
Saturn	Virgo	26.59	VII	Aries	5.33
Uranus	Scorpio	24.03	VIII	Aries	29.56
Neptune	Sagittarius	20.56	IX	Gemini	0.37
Pluto	Libra	21.38	Midheaven	Cancer	7.20
Lilith	Virgo	19.30	XI	Leo	13.13
Asc node	Virgo	0.26	XII	Virgo	12.34

The planetary positions in the houses express the facts relative to destiny.

☆ Planets in the houses ☆	
Sun	in IV
Moon	in IX
Mercury	in III
Venus	in IV
Mars	in XII
Jupiter	in XI
Saturn	in XII
Uranus	in II
Neptune	in III
Pluto	in Ascendant
Lilith	in XII
Asc node	in XI

Figure 4.5 Table of planetary positions

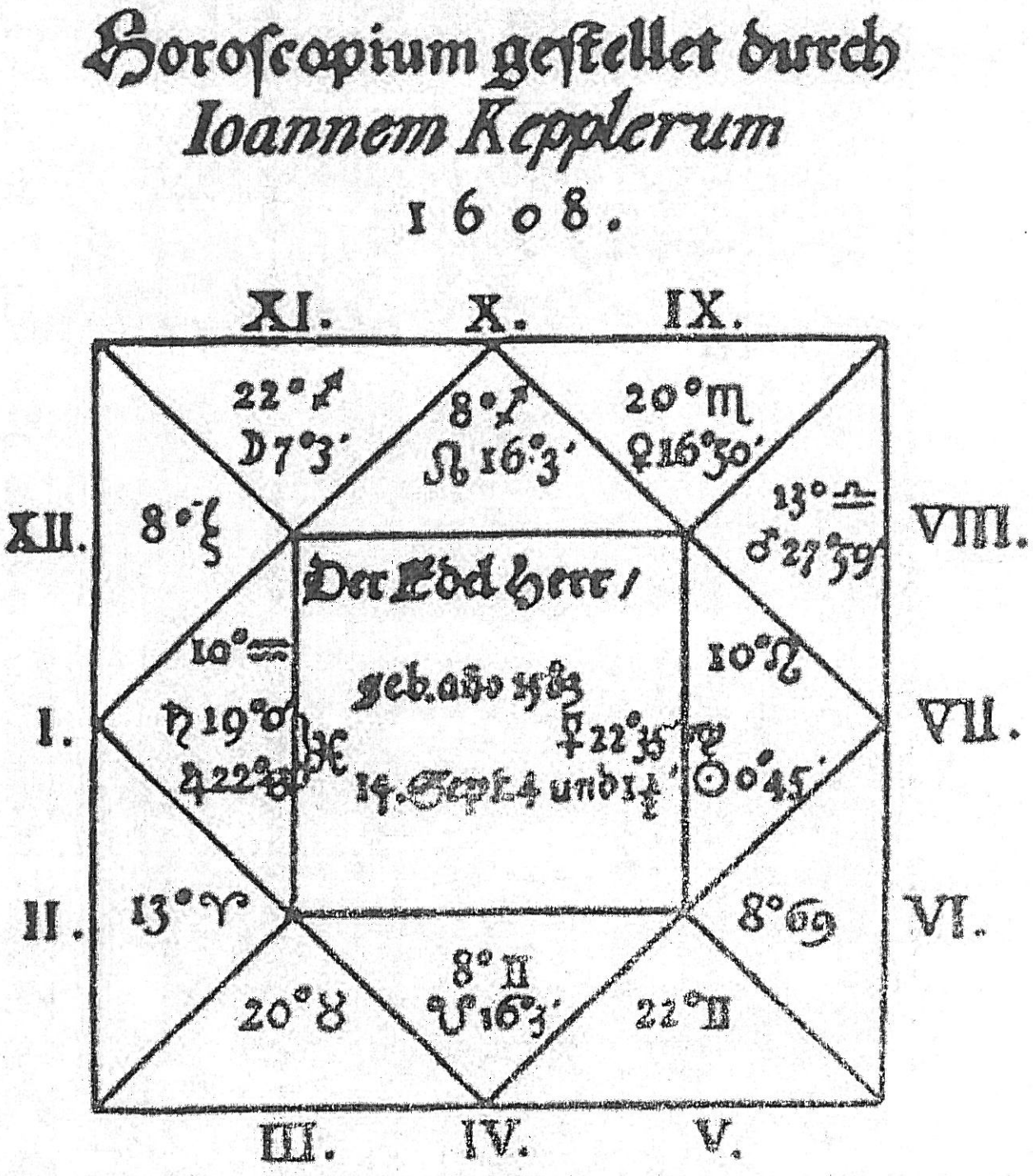


Figure 4.6 Renaissance astrological symbols

Canto IX

Canto IX, nel quale parla madonna Cunizza di Romano, antidicendo alcuna cosa de la Marca di Trevigi, e parla Folco di Marsilia che fue vescovo d'essa.

Sandro Botticelli, Divina Commedia, pa. 9 (disegno, 1485/90)

Figure 4.7 Dante's nine rings

Chapter 1 – Introduction and overview

…the world of genre studies..have continued to grow rapidly, gaining variety and complexity as the concept of genre has been examined through a widening variety of intellectual traditions…We are on the verge of another dynamic period of theoretical reformulation, research and application (of genre) (my brackets).
(Bazerman et al. 2009:xi)

Genre has been at the centre of numerous studies over the last three decades, and as indicated by Bazerman (2009) in the quote above, and very recently by Johns (2013) and Freadman (2012), exploration of the concept continues to be a significant research topic. Indeed, in the last three or four years, there has been, "a gambit of books and articles" (Freadman, 2012:552), by mainstream players, both in the field of New Rhetoric (NR from now on) e.g. Bazerman et al. (2009), Bawarshi & Reiff (2010), Freadman (2012), and English for Specific Purposes (ESP from now on), e.g. Paltridge & Starfield, (2013), concerning genre in some way. Bawarshi and Reiff even talk of a "genre turn" (2010:6). Over the years, the range of genres investigated has been considerably broad: the Scientific Article and its role in the scientific community, both in the 'hard' and 'soft' sciences (e.g. Swales, 1990, Samraj, 2005), other academic genres (Perez-Ilantada, 2013), nurse practitioner interaction with patients (Dunmire, 2000), texts mediated by information technology (Geisler, 2001), history of art monographs (Swales, 2009), to name but a few.

This intense study has focussed on, among others, the role genre is seen to play in the relationship between text and context. This perceived role of genre

constituting a kind of link or bridge between text and context, or the embodiment of same, constitutes the raison d'etre for genre study and analysis, in that the overriding purpose of genre theory is to study 'how people use language to make their way in the world' (Devitt, 2004:9). Greater understanding of genre and how it relates to context has had multiple purposes. Findings of genre studies have been used by ESP scholars to feed into pedagogic agendas focussing on assisting learners to critique and participate efficiently in their professional communities (e.g. Swales, 1990; Hyland & Hamp-Lyons, 2002), since acquisition of specific knowledge (which includes genre knowledge) is necessary for full access to a profession's workings (Swales, 1990; Hyland, 2013). New Rhetoric scholars have investigated genre to understand the practices or 'textual dynamics' (Yates & Orlikowski, 1992) of professional communities themselves (e.g. Orlikowski & Yates, 1994; Yates & Orlikowski, 1992; Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995), or, as put by Freadman, to see how 'genres organize worlds, make objects available, and make things happen' (Freadman, 2012: 553). That is to say, the first approach tends to focus more on the text, while the second, more on the context, constituting a difference in focus (for a recent discussion on the two approaches – see Swales, (2009): the third main approach to genre, the Sidney School, is not specifically touched upon in this thesis, given the nature of its focus).

In trying to understand the relationship genre and context and so develop a satisfactory theory of genre, both ESP and NR scholars have drawn on different areas of theory. Following Miller (1984), earlier work on genre (e.g. Bazerman, 1988; Hopkins & Dudley-Evans, 1988, Swales, 1990) was based on the sociological

concept of social constructionism. Swales (1990) also drew on the linguistic philosopher Wittgenstein (1958) and his concept of “prototypicality”, which was also taken up by Berkenkotter & Huckin (1995). Many genre studies (e.g. Yates & Orikowski, 1994; Bazerman, 1994; Miller, 1992; Swales, 1993; Bhatia, 1997; Ayers, 2008) have referred to Giddens (1984, 1986, 1991) and his structuration theory. Other studies (e.g. Russell, 1997; Artmeva & Freedman, 2001; Berkenkotter, 2001) have encompassed neo-Vygotsky’s activity theory, particularly following Engeström (1987, 1995). Very recently, Freadman (2012) has proposed that the theory of Poststructuralism can contribute to our understanding of the concept ‘genre’. Naturally, some studies have drawn on more than one theory, for instance Berkenkotter & Huckin (1995), who refer to social constructionism, structuration theory and activity theory, with Berkenkotter (2001) later more heavily drawing on activity theory in combination with structuration theory. Orlikowski and Yates (1994) drew on both social constructionism and structuration theory. Miller (1994) and Freedman and Medway (1994) drew on such theorists as Bitzer in traditional rhetoric, M.A.K. Halliday in linguistics and Bakhtin in literary theory.

1.1 The search for a definition of ‘genre’ and ‘context’

As indicated by the breadth of research and intellectual traditions (Bazerman, 2009) drawn upon, each has contributed in some way to our understanding of the concept of genre, and some of the main contributions will be discussed in the next chapter, in the literature review. However, rather not surprisingly, this range of study reflects the

continual search to overcome some inherent problems concerned with the concept of genre, starting with the definition of the term ‘genre’ itself, with Swales commenting that, “The very interest in genre in allied fields...has, at the same time, problematized the concept” (Swales 2004: 3). While there now seems to be general agreement concerning essential characteristics of genre, such as it has both stabilizing qualities, as well as being open to change (e.g. Swales, 2009; Ayers, 2008; Perez-Llantada, 2013), that is, genres tend to be ‘stabilizied-for-now’ (Schryer, 1993), Bawarshi and Reiff comment that the term ‘genre’ itself continues to be “fraught with confusion” (2010:3). Swales again underlines the fact “...there remains the question of the definition of genre itself” and there are those who seem to be “crying out for a working and workable definition” (2009:5). Yet, despite this apparent need, as noted by Bazerman, “...we can never seem to get... a definition of any genre that will satisfy more than a few people for a short time”, (Bazerman 2003:1), with it meaning different things to people in different fields (Bazerman 2003) and even different things to people working in the same field. For instance, Devitt (1999: 611) commented that in three notable books on genre she reviewed - Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995), Freedman and Medway (1994a), and Freedman and Medway (1994b), there were differences between what was considered genre and what constituted genre study, and here we are talking about books whose authors essentially belong to the same school - that of the New Rhetoric.

Then, there is the problem of what is meant by ‘context’. Several writers note the difficulties in defining what context is (Devitt, 1993, 2004; Bargiela-Chiappini, 1999 & NIckeron, 1999; Swales, 2004, etc.): “An initial problem with defining the

surrounding conditions of genres can be seen by trying to specify what a concept of context must include" (Devitt, 2004:19), a sentiment echoed by Swales (2004). Apparently as a result of this, not only has context been defined in a variety of ways (Nickerson, 2000), with definitions ranging from, among others, context delineated by the boundaries of the individual institution or organization (e.g. Blyler & Thralls, 1993), to the context hierarchies proposed by Miller (1984, 1994). Other studies which profess to take into account context can seem to 'avoid the issue' altogether, taking the 'variable' as given, so essentially excluding it from investigation (see Devitt, 2004; Hyland, 2002), which was particularly true for earlier studies on genre, heavy reliance being made on information drawn from texts essentially analysed in isolation (e.g. Swales, 1990; Salager-Meyer, 1991).

Likewise, one of the major exponents of ESP, Bhatia, also criticized earlier genre studies e.g. Bhatia (1994), Swales (1990), for treating professional genres "as simply textual artefacts", with little consideration or awareness of the discursive realities of the professional world. Though, he comments, much of genre analysis is done against the 'general background of contextual factors' concerning professional practices and cultures, these "text-external factors...have never been taken seriously enough" (Bhatia, 2007: 154). It seems, then, that there remains what both Berkenkotter (2001) and Russell (1997) call the "chronic problem" of bridging the gap between macrolevel and microlevel perspectives, how social structure (context) shapes and determines human activity, including the production of texts, from whichever side you come from, whether from text or context (assuming you need to come from one side or the other (as Swales does (2004) in his text-driven v. context-

driven approaches). It seems ironic, then, that if taking genre as representing a kind of 'the middle space' or 'interplay' between the local production of text and its broader context, and hence providing the key to understanding the relationship between the two, understanding genre in itself is problematic. The solution also represent the problem, as it were.

1.2 The concept of 'community'

To explain the connection between text and context, and the role of genre and how a genre is mediated by a wider context than the dyad, scholars of genre theory have generally referred to the concept of *discourse community* (e.g. Swales 1990, Bhatia 1997) or *disciplinary community* (e.g. Berkenkotter & Huckin 1995; Hyland, 2012): *communicative community* (e.g. Widdowson 1998), *community of practice* (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998), refer to the same phenomena or very closely related phenomena. The idea or ideas of some form of 'community' and community 'membership' attracts scholars since, as put by Widdowson, "Communication is...clearly closely related to community...If you do not share a communal view, then communication will prove difficult" (1998:6). Texts are designed to be accessible to like- minded readers only in terms of shared knowledge but also in terms of shared values. If as a reader you identify with the writer "you then *authenticate* the text as a discourse which is expressive of a particular community to which you belong" (Widdowson, 1998: 7). In more exclusive terms, Bhatia comments that "...shared *genre* (my italics) knowledge is that which is not routinely available to outsiders,

which creates a kind of social distance between the legitimate members of a discourse community and those who are considered outsiders" (1997: 364) i.e. to distinguish 'experts' from 'apprentices' (Bhatia, 2008). Similarly, Hyland and Hamp-Lyons (2002) see that the notion of "community" is central to "our understanding of the ways individuals acquire and deploy the specialized discourse competencies that allow them to legitimate their professional identities and to effectively participate as group members." (2002:6) This, of course, is a social constructionist view, that only through this community knowledge can individuals "legitimate" themselves as professionals. It has been a useful vehicle or metaphor, however, to take analysts "beyond texts to the practices which surround them" (Hyland & Hamp-Lyons, 2002:6). Further, the conventions and traditions of a discourse community can be seen to be expressed in the genres which "link the past and present, and so balance forces for tradition and innovation...They (also) structure the role of individuals within wider frameworks" (Swales 1998: 20), so producing a stabilizing and regulatory effect.

Again, however, the concept of 'discourse community' has proved problematic. One of the scholars who has most contributed to the concept, Swales (1990), has commented that his enthusiasm for the concept has "waxed and waned" (Swales 1998:23). It is an appealing regulatory force which can conveniently package texts and professional groups of people, indicating a neat "line", as it were, between the two. Nonetheless, this apparent neatness falls short under closer scrutiny. As commented by Bazerman, most definitions of the concept 'discourse community' tend to get "ragged around the edges rapidly" (Bazerman 1998: 381),

similarly to the term ‘genre’. This naturally means establishing the relationship between genre and discourse community is also not straightforward. A starting point seems to be the issue of ‘ownership’ (e.g. Swales, 1998) - how far a discourse community owns and so determines the genres used by its members and vice versa. Some (e.g. Berkenkotter and Huckin, 1995, Swales 1990), tend to see discourse communities owning their genres, while others (e.g. Mauranen, 1993), see the opposite to be true. There are those who even question the need of the relationship and the dependence of genre theory on the concept of discourse community (Devitt 1996). Here, comes into the play the weight that genres have and the role they play in terms of their relationship to the community(ties) that use them and the agents i.e. the community members. Some writers, like Devitt (2004), stress the importance of (and need) of genre as *social action*, while others, particularly those who rely heavily on activity theory e.g. Russell (1997), reduce genre to the status of a *tool*. Finally, Berkenkotter & Huckin make the point that “...asserting a relationship between the concept of ‘genre’ and ‘discourse community’ is a slippery proposition because neither concept refers to a static entity.” (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995: 21). This seems particularly the case if we consider, as now generally seen (e.g. Swales 2004, Devitt 2004, Bhatia 2004), the ability of genre, and in the same way, discourse community, to change and evolve (Swales, 2004; Bhatia, 2004, etc.). What seems clear as this stage, as expressed by Hyland (2013), is that “much remains to be learnt and considerable research undertaken before we are able to identify more precisely the notion of ‘community’ and how it relates to the profession and the discoursal conventions that they routinely employ in written texts” (Hyland, 2013:108).

1.3 Towards a general theory of genre?

At this point, two choices seem to be open to scholars: or the concept of ‘genre’, and along with it that of ‘community’ are continually adapted as they are used to do particular kinds of work (Freadman, 2012), or we keep on working at developing a general theory of genre (e.g. Devitt, 2004), a kind of genre theory for “all seasons”, which incorporates more fully the two concepts. From the initial quote above, Bazerman (2009), for one, appears to be calling for such a theory, along with Giltrow & Stein (2009:8), and Berkenkotter (2009:10) (both quoted in Freadman, 2013:545).

Genre theory has considerably evolved with a first phase of study “drawing to a close” (Gross et al., 2004:8), genre and communication studies in general having reached a kind of crossroads (Bhatia, 2004). This has essentially involved a “theoretical shift” (Berkenkotter, 2001) with the reassessment of the relationship and definition of text-context, entailing the concept of genre shifting from a centre-stage position (though not secondary, as I will argue), and the somewhat apparent diminishing value of the concept of ‘communicative purpose’ (Swales, 1990) as a “privileged guiding criterion” (Swales, 2004:69), despite recognition of the value and fruitfulness of genre analysis, not only to the ESP community (Hyland, 2013; Johns, 2013), but to genre theory as well (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010). Significantly, Swales has commented very recently that “move analysis is nothing more than a *partial* and *limited* kind of investigation” (my italics) (Swales, 2011:274), and in so doing, implicitly acknowledges the need for more *multi-method* investigations, as noted by some scholars e.g. Tardy (2011), and that a move-analysis approach, though being

particularly fruitful with academic genres, has not been so illuminating for more 'fragmented' genres (a 'looser' internal structure from, for example, a research article), such as those often produced in business discourse e.g. mission statements (Swales & Rogers, 1995), where other 'organizing' elements such as 'topic' e.g. Yeung (2007), or external factors, such as company performance e.g. Bhatia (2004), or indeed, how a company interprets the communicative purpose of a certain document e.g. Swales and Rogers (1995), can greatly impact the organization of a text. On the other hand, in business discourse, the use of *templates* e.g. Winsor (1996), Flowerdrew and Wan (2006; 2010), which can constitute a *move* e.g. in an auditor's report (Flowerdrew & Wan, 2010), in itself indicates quite different writing approaches and values between the two communities (academic and business), which has implications for *what* an analyst should analyze, *how*, and *why*.

At this point, there appears to be the pressing need to "explore factors that influence the creation and reception of genres in particular social, cultural, and political settings" (Paltridge, 2013: 355), and to develop approaches which are comprehensive, context-sensitive, and *qualitative* (e.g. Swales and Rogers, 1995, Nickerson, 2000) in an effort to 'tap into' these contextual factors. In other words, there is the perceived need, as indicated in the previous chapter, for a more comprehensive or *multi-dimensional and multi-perspective conceptual framework* e.g. Berkenkotter, (2001), Devitt, (2004), Bhatia (2004), Flowerdrew and Wan (2010), Flowerdrew (2011), with Bhatia (2004) calling for the "whole elephant" to be considered for investigation, and Flowerdrew (2011) insisting that the "whole can equal more than the sum of the parts" (2011:119) and others seeing that any

framework requires a more ‘critical’ approach for genre and genre analysis e.g. Starfield (2013), than has generally been taken. In his usual highly pragmatic way, Swales comments that, in bearing in mind all these complexities, we still rightly need to aim for frameworks and approaches which are “manageable but respectable” and “sensitive without being debilitating complex” (2004:4).

However, some genre research seems to indicate genre analysts and rhetoricians may be pulling in more opposing directions, as suggested by tracing the work of leading rhetoric scholars, Bazerman and Berkenkotter and Swales. For instance, whereas Swales and Berkenkotter seem relatively close in their line of interpretation of genre and context (including the concept of discourse community) (e.g. Swales, 1993: Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995), in the last few years their positions seem more distant (despite Bazmeran and Swales both contributing to the same (recent) volume, (2009)), with Berkenkotter developing a much greater interest in activity theory (compare Berkenkotter& Huckin 1995 and Berkenkotter 2001) to find a solution to the “chronic problem” of understanding text and context, while Swales (2004) questions the usefulness of activity theory, at least when studying scientific and academic texts.

Likewise, whereas Bazerman (1988) and Swales (1990) (along with Miller (1984)), comments Bazerman (1994: 82), were working together in a kind of synergy on the elaboration of genre, Bazerman (2001, 2003) show, in contrast to Swales (2004), a keen interest in activity theory. This is no mere detail as activity theory implies a very different view of the workings of the world, compared to a more social

constructionist (though not entirely) view often taken by Swales (1990), even though progressively watered down (2004). Hyland, another major player in the field of genre, too, rather overlooks the possible contribution of activity theory: he comments that it is not “yet understood how our membership of different groups influence our participation in workplace discourses” (2013:108), where consideration of multiple identity of participants is fully taken on board by the theory (Engstrom, 1987; 1995), though Hyland makes no reference to the theory. Further, Swales comments that whereas activity theory might be useful in the study of “the worlds of business, government policy making, and the delivery of health care”, he sees it less applicable to where “the most important genres have *acknowledged* authors or speakers” (Swales 2004: 98).

1.4 More recent concerns in genre research

In working towards a more comprehensive theory of genre, it would seem necessary to include concerns (relatively) absent in earlier genre research (perhaps due to the less pressing need compared to today), the importance of which research has revealed, namely, the role and impact of ‘technology’ (Giddens, 1991), and the related issue of ‘globalization’ (Giddens, 1994), the notion of ‘multimodality’, the notions of ‘culture’ and ‘identity’, the notion of ‘power’, and the related need (as I see it) for a ‘critical’ stance to the study of genre.

The role and impact of technology

Notably, researchers do not operate in a vacuum and modernity, particularly expressed through technological developments, is changing our concepts of space and time, and that change is occurring at a much faster pace than ever seen, which willingly or unwillingly, is forcing a change in our view of things. The very relationship and value of the *present* to the *past* is being put into question (Giddens, 1991). Giddens (1984) invites is to consider how these changes alter our 'mind sets', not only the way we do things but the value judgements we hold about them. As modern institutions in all their forms are characterized by 'dynamism', with traditional forms being replaced by the new with an increasing emphasis on globalization (Giddens, 1991), it also follows that such a change should also be evident in *genre*. That is, as *genre* is intrinsically linked to its context, it follows as the context changes, so does genre in response to that change, and along with it, the studies that centre on understanding the concept.

Some earlier genre studies e.g. Bhatia, (1993, 1994, 1997), following Featherstone (1991) noted, due to in the influence of the multimedia, the increasingly competitive professional environment, and that the 'consumer culture' has led to a 'commodification' - promotional and advertising characteristics - in diverse texts where one might not have expected to find such features e.g. in academic texts: book introductions, and university prospectuses (Fairclough, 1995). Despite some see that this undercutting of the "traditional habits and customs" (Giddens, 1991), is "unlikely to make a significant dent in the so-called integrity of professional genre, at

least not in the foreseeable future" (Bhatia 1997: 363), Giddens's thinking (1984) implies, however, change may be happening faster than we are aware of. Hyland and Hamp-Lyons (2002) particularly note the technological changes in the everyday running of things on a broad level, such as use of e-mail, postings on electronic lists, and importantly, the understanding text-visual relations.

The notion of 'multimodality'

As indicated by the number of very recent studies centring on text-visual relations and the concept of 'multimodality', e.g. (Belcher et al, 2011; Paltridge & Starfield, 2013; Paltridge, 2013; Tardy: 2011; Prior, 2009; Prior, 2013), there is a certain feeling that analysts are just fully *waking up* to the importance of visual elements, redressing the previously-given balance of focus to the written word. Though it might be a coincidence, a very recent Swales' work concerning the change in genre (2008), is concerned with changes in the monograph, not of scientific texts (Swales, 1990), but *History of Art* monographs. Pointedly, he does not centre his investigation on 'visuals' in any way (despite the subject matter), but applies previously held genre principles. While some scholars see this relatively new interest in visuals as the result of the current technological revolution e.g. Kress & Leauven (2001:1); Bargiela-Chiappini (2008), others, instead, e.g. Prior (2009), Hyland (2013); Paltridge (2013) see that these elements have been simply overlooked up until now. What seems to be clear is that any unifying theory of genre needs to take into account both 'text' and 'visuals', and the relations between them.

The notions of 'culture' and 'identity'

On a social level, there is also the question of the possible effects of multimedia on the question of 'identity' of genre users, which includes the notion of 'culture' (Devitt, 2004; Atkinson, 2004). Devitt (2004: 25) and Atkinson (2004:278) both comment that more emphasis needs to be given to the notion of *culture* which 'has not yet been adequately theorised' (2004:278). Indeed, with the move to extend analysis of genre well beyond the text (e.g. Huckin, 1997; Nickerson, 2000), the need to more fully include 'culture' in this extension seems almost inevitable. Huckin (1997) notes the importance of culture to understand the context within which genres are used since "cultural factors play a major role in the real world deployment of genres" (1997:68). Widdowson notes that "professional culture changes over time and so their generic conventions change too" (Widdowson, 1998:11), while Devitt proposes that "genre theory needs to continue developing its understanding of the cultural basis of genres, of the sources of the shared values and epistemology within which genres function rhetorically" (Devitt, 1999; 613), and explicitly incorporates the concept in the framework she developed (2004 – see Chapter 2 for a discussion on this). Concerned with disciplinary differences, Hyland (2011:8) criticises how the frequent view of genre taken (and so in its analysis) has tended to 'flatten' out cultural differences, and that analysts looking for the 'frames' or "harnessing generalizations of genre", has led to overgeneralizations being made and over-emphasize of resemblances between texts at the expense of variation. Notably, Swales in *Genre Analysis* (1990) notes that the concept of genre "can have important consequences for cross-cultural awareness and training" (1990:41), and that this importance of cultural, essentially due to pedagogical conveniences, has, up until recently, been

overlooked.

The concept of ‘culture’ seems inevitably intertwined with the concept of ‘identity’. The use of generic forms are one significant way of how we express our ‘belonging’ to one group or another, part of how we project the ‘identity’ we wish others to perceive us by. As put by Paltridge, “in performing particular genres we present ourselves to the world and take on (or reproduce) particular identities” (Paltridge, 2013:354). It would follow, I believe, that any unifying theory of genre would need to take on board this ‘presentation of self’, both at a ‘local’ level i.e. the immediately surrounding ‘community’, and at a ‘global’ level, ‘communities’ created on a more ‘global’ level through the use of technology. From this, we would need to consider the ‘relationships’ between genre users, and the possible tensions arising from ‘local’ and ‘global’ identities.

The notion of ‘power’ and the need for a ‘critical’ stance to genre study

The notion of ‘power’ has repeatedly surfaced in genre study, with scholars (e.g. Bazerman, 2003; Swales, 1993; Winsor, 2003; Devitt, 2004), viewing genre as a potentially (if not real) ‘political’ and ‘regulatory ’ force. This is related to the issue of struggles between ideology, and the need to develop a *critical* understanding of genre. Bhatia (2004), Winsor (2003), and Starfield (2013), to name a few, comment on this need. Hyland and Hamp-Lyons lament that in general both EAP and ESP tend to work “*for* rather than *with* subject specialists”, which tends to encourage analysts and teachers alike not have a critical stance to the values of institutional goals and practices. In other words, should we “replicate and reproduce existing

forms of discourse (and thus power relations) or develop an understanding of them so they can be challenged?" (2002:2). How we answer that question will clearly colour how we interpret genre, and the framework we choose to apply.

1.5 The present study

Towards a unifying theory of genre

As noted above, several mainstream genre scholars (e.g. Bazerman, 2009; Bhatia, 2004; Berkenkotter, 2009; Giltrow & Stein (2009:8), see the need to develop a unifying theory of genre, and others e.g. Flowerdrew (2011), while working with a slightly different focus, note the importance of the 'sum' of the various 'parts'. As outlined above, with the technological advancement and its impact on society and the rise of 'globalization', along with the accompanying undercutting of previously held traditions through its dynamism (Giddens, 1994), any theory appears to require flexibility and explicit incorporation of text-visual relations (Prior, 2009; Tardy, 2013; Bargiela-Chiappini, 2008; Kress & van Leuven, 2001, etc,) and the culture and identity of genre users (Paltridge, 2011, etc.), while at the same time allowing the analyst to take a critical approach to the workings of communities and the use of genres by members, and be aware of the power relations between them and how these relations influence and determine both the use of the genres, and the workings of the community in general, and indeed the perspective of the researcher themselves. On this last point, how the researcher interacts (or, just as importantly,

not) with the community under investigation, and how this might colour their interpretation, if not what they perceive as their objectives and as important to describe, has gained inadequate attention so far, according to some (see Starfield, 2011). It follows that the theory and any resulting framework should endeavour to overcome the dichotomy of text v. context, and incorporate both into analysis, neither being taken as given, but both being part of an integral whole. In such a way, a resulting framework would produce a multi-dimensional framework, capable to producing a multi-perspective view of the workings of a community, as called for by many scholars (e.g. Bhatia, 2004, 2008; Devitt, 2004; Bazerman, 2009; Flowerdrew, 2011).

A multi-dimensional/multi-perspective framework realized through an activity – genre approach

I wish to propose that a plausible explanatory scheme does exist, that is activity theory, through modification by explicit incorporation of the concept of genre. It is not an attempt to diminish the importance of genre but an attempt to 'contextualize' it with other elements. I believe that concepts drawn from activity theory and genre theory can help us achieve this aim, particularly helping us to increase our sensitivity to cultural differences (and here I refer to the concept of 'culture' in its broadest terms), and that considering both 'written' and 'visual' matter part of the investigation as a *sine qua non*, given both can be termed *tools*, under activity theory terminology, that is to say, we need a multimodal approach (even though studies based on activity theory e.g. Russell (1997), Berkenkotter (2001) have tended to overlook this aspect).

The overall objectives of the study

Here, by taking activity theory (Vygotsky) as my theoretical basis, but drawing heavily on genre theory and the social sciences, I rather ambitiously attempt to develop a relatively novel experimental unified framework of investigation to capture the complex cultural-historical layering of human object-directed activity. The framework was developed from previous frameworks (Engström,1987; Russell, 1997), which, within the logic of activity theory necessarily attempts to include all the tools utilized by a system. The framework attempts to incorporate 'culture' in two broad areas – what I will term 'global' culture, and 'local' culture, connecting them to the concept of 'identity'. With an activity theory 'lens', the concept of 'power' is also incorporated into the framework, as participants interact within activity systems and across other systems, leading to conflict of interests and multiple identities, and the play of power relations (Garfinkel, 1967; Giddens, 1990; Thompson, 1994). This investigation takes a 'critical' view i.e. there is acknowledgement that power relations exist and partly determine the workings of things, and this includes the role of the researcher themselves. This would also imply the explicit extension of a critical stance to visuals (Courtis, 1997) and multimodality in context, not only the written word. However, this critical approach is not accompanied by a 'political agenda' (Paltridge, 2011), as it is in other studies (Starfield, 2011, Kandil & Belcher, 2011).

This thesis originates from a desire on my part to investigate the concept of *change* in *genre*, the object of analysis of a previous study investigating change in exemplars of scientific genres (the short texts accompanying Articles in the scientific

journal Nature (Ayers, 2008). I wished to explore areas which were non-academic (given, among others, the already intense research activity in the area of academic genres – see Johns (2013:20) on this point), and more apparently 'exposed' to changing conditions. As in the previous study, I was particularly interested in the concept of 'power' (Garfinkel*,* 1967*;* Thompson,1984; 1991) and its role in determining social structure and specifically, its effects on genre, and was acquiring a growing interest in the notion of 'culture*'.* I had a hunch that combining genre theory with activity theory in some form, with reference to some social science theory, would be a feasible way of incorporating these issues into a theory of genre, and of developing a potentially more useful multi-dimensional and multi-perspective framework in capturing these phenomenon, compared to what I had found in the literature.

The nature of the research

Since I took activity theory as my main theoretical basis for the study of genre, my approach followed previous similar studies e.g. Ding, 2008; Beaufort, 2000, and involved ethnographic research which was 'cyclic' and 'organic'. Chronologically speaking, I established the initial research questions, took the first generation model of an activity system (Engeström, 1987), in line with previous genre studies using activity theory (e.g. Russell, 1997, Berkenkotter, 2001), as my initial framework, and then applied it in an initial investigation of a micro (small) activity system. From the initial findings, this initial framework was then modified accordingly, and the extended multidimensional and multi-perspective framework was again applied

through further investigation of the astrology group, resulting in further modification of the framework i.e. the investigation of the astrology group led to a continual 'feeding' into the framework, as observations were made of the workings of the activity system.

To respect the canons of academic writing up of a thesis (the difficulty in relaying research based on activity theory while respecting writing 'standards' or 'norms' of the academic community has been noted before e.g. Ding (2008)), I first present how the framework evolved, and the changes that were progressively made, and then, I present the investigation of the micro-activity system of the astrology group, in the standard order of the academic experimental article. Hence, though this was done to facilitate the reader's understanding of the research, and respect academic 'norms, the reader should bear in mind that this order does not respect the 'ordering' of the research itself, which, as if reflecting activity theory itself, involved a fair amount of continual 'back' and 'forth' investigation.

The case study

Specifically, I report how a multi-dimensional framework aimed at providing a multi-perspective view was developed through findings *in situ* of a case study. I attempted to understand and 'capture' via a multi-perspective approach, the interplay between text and context. The case study was of a small scale, involving the investigation of an astrology group which was relatively short-lived, and of which I myself was a member. While the small size of the case study is fairly typical of studies drawing on

activity theory (e.g. Berkenkotter, 2001), since it represents a fairly manageable element of study given the complexity of issues that arises in the working of an activity system, as will become apparent in the next chapters, the novelty was my direct participation in the system under investigation. Through this personal participation of the astrology group, I was able to observe the activities of the participants in-action, note the use of the various tools – specifically how genres were used to both regulate and trigger change within the group. The power relations between the participants I observed were also a determining factor in change, relations I was able to identify being an 'insider'.

Formulation of new key terms

In the development of the framework, the study led to the formulation of new key terms principally involving the notion of *genre:* complex genre configurations (CGCs)(based on Prior's productive chains of discourse, 2009) and 'communicative purpose'; then, the notions of *local*-identity culture and *global*-identity culture, and finally, the notions of major versus minor structural power participant(s) and major versus minor accomplished power participant(s). By drawing on activity theory, genre theory, and social science and how participants drew on a wide array of tools, including one of the most powerful, genre. I hypothesized that *both* genres and activity systems have communicative purpose, and that both can have *multiple* and/or *occluded* communicative purpose(s). The modes that make up (complex) genres contribute to their communicative purpose, and so should be taken into account in a study. Complex genres can form to create productive *configuration* of

discourse (rather than chains, since configuration implies the discourse is made up of different parts, which when together become a unit of communication, something which this theory hypothesizes, though it does not wish to imply one excludes the other). These communicative purposes are created at the moment of interaction between participants in an activity system, and can change, reform and create new communicative purposes at any time. I envisage that the framework, and the attempted combining of principles of genre theory with those of activity theory, will be particularly useful for genres subject to greater 'fragmentation'.

Given the nature of the research, the specific research questions are presented in Chapter 4 with the case study

The inherent limitations of the study

Clearly, the study is fraught with limitations: the ambition of the overall objective – to develop a unifying theory of genre, compared to the size of the case study which was used to develop a first framework, and the ethical problems the case study raised, greatly restricting data collection, and indeed, the possibility for any subsequent publication (see Chapter 4 under Methods). This said, I argue that results of the study did provide the 'first building blocks' of the framework, which will obviously require further investigation and verification, through further research (in progress)..

Overview of the thesis

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Here, in this first chapter, I have overviewed the continuing interest in genre in a variety of related fields, and how it is also a subject of debate as to how it should be viewed and studied. In particular, it discusses the disaccord among scholars as how to interpret and how to conceptualize the relationship between genre and context, and the relationship between the two. I then indicated some of the most recent concerns in genre study: the impact of technology, the notion of multimodality, culture, identity, and power and the call for a critical understanding of genre. I then presented the main objective of this thesis, to present an experimental multi-dimensional and multi-perspective framework which attempts to incorporate these issues for the first time in a unified scheme. I then explained how the framework was developed from the literature and findings obtained in a case study of a micro activity system.

In the second chapter a comprehensive review of the literature concerning both activity theory and genre, covering key issues – the concepts of discourse community, 'communicative' purpose, and illustrates the great complexity of issues. It also discusses how the two theories have been used together to further our understanding of genre. Then, after discussing some new concerns in the study of genre, key principles and definitions of key terms are presented. The third chapter focuses on presenting the multi-dimensional/multi-perspective framework, and traces its development and elaboration over three versions. In the fourth chapter, the case study concerning a micro activity system – an astrology group is presented, which is

written up in the first of a research article: Introduction, Methodology, Findings, and Discussion. The fifth and final chapter discusses the main findings of the case study, and assesses the usefulness of the framework, and the implications for future research in future applications.

Chapter 2 – Literature review

Change alone is eternal, perpetual, immortal.

(Arthur Schopenhauer)

An activity system integrates the subject, the object, and the instruments (material tools as well as signs and symbols) into a unified whole. An activity system incorporates both the object-oriented productive aspect and the person-oriented communicative aspect of the human conduct. Production and communication are inseparable.

(EngestrÖm, 1993: 331)

2.1 The aims of the chapter

With this literature review, I attempt to show principles taken from of activity theory, genre theory and social science theory, can work together to create a unified view human object-directed activity, the understanding of which includes, as indicated by the literature, consideration of the notions of 'multi-modality', 'culture' and 'identity', and 'power'. It also aims to show how activity theory and an activity theory based approach can shed light on the workings of genre (in context) and genre systems, how 'communicative purpose' of genre is determined by context, as is the contingent and regulatory nature of genre. The discussion provides the

theoretical underpinning of the framework presented in Chapter 3, and, together with observations drawn from the case study presented in Chapter 4, leads to the formulation of definitions of key terms, presented at the end of the chapter.

2.2 The structure of the chapter

I first discuss the principles and significant studies related to activity theory. From this, I refer to genre studies and attempt to show how they have employed activity theory in combination with genre theory: How some social science theory has enriched our overall understanding of activity systems and how genre is used within them is also discussed. I also endeavour to highlight differences from more traditional views of genre. Then the concept of 'history' is covered and how it has been interpreted in activity theory studies and genre studies. Various notions are then discussed - 'culture', 'identity', 'power', multimodality. The chapter ends with the summarizing of key principles of activity theory, and the formulation of the definition of key terms to be used in an activity-genre multi-dimensional/multi-perspective framework, and some concluding remarks.

.

2.3 Activity theory and its relation to the concept of genre

Berkenkotter (2001) maintains that studies in genre (and not only) such as Devitt (1991), Bazerman (1994), Fairclough (1995), mark a "theoretical shift in focus" from

“immanent properties of particular texts (or performances) to the processes of intertextuality, interdiscursivity, and recontextualization (Linell, 1998)” (Berkenkotter, 2001: 327). In other words, there is a greater emphasis on how text is produced and mediated through their relationship with prior text, the importance of which is also underlined by Swales (2004). However, arising from this ‘shift in focus’ from the ‘micro’(individual texts) to the ‘macro’ (e.g. genre systems), limitations have been perceived in prevailing theories concerning text/ context relationships, specifically the ways in which genres *recontextualize* prior texts and discourses, and how they are linked to dynamic and historically evolving discursive practices (Berkenkotter, 2001).

As noted by Hyland (2004:35), NR has been particularly influenced by Bahktin (1981, 1986), as viewing genre as “flexible, plastic and free” (Bahktin, 1986:79) and his concept of dialogism which allows an interactive, dynamic approach to discourse. However, though Bahktin naturally remains a central figure, both Russell (1997) and Devitt (2004), among others, note that diaologism limits the unit of analysis to oral and written utterance as discourse and brackets off a wide range of non-conversational actions and the material tools through which they are carried out. This can be particularly limiting in writing, since it can be used to organize ongoing actions over large reaches of time and space, mobilizing material tools in regularized and powerful ways (Russell, 1997). This and the fact dialogism tends to focus on the dyad as the level of social analysis (Nystrand et al, 1993), have led scholars to look for a theory which can provide a broader unit of analysis in the search to reconceptualize the relationship between text and context.

Furthermore, Russell (1997), for instance, sees the general social constructionist view taken in some genre study has encouraged an underlying “neo-Platonic” dualism, creating dichotomies such as individual and community. In this, some theoretical construct e.g. social norms, discourse community (Swales, 1990), is bracketed off and posited as a deep explanatory structure and treated as an underlying “conceptual scheme” (Kent, 1993) or “underlying domain” (Nystand et al, 1993) to explain behaviour, including writing. In this way, the question of context (often in the form of the concept of discourse community) is taken as given, rather than being part of the problem (e.g. Hyland, 1998) and in need of analysis and explanation (see Chapter 1 for further comments on this). Berkenkotter (2001), too, sees that this micro-macro split of individual and context (and indeed others e.g. cognitive/ social, action/institution) has fostered an unnecessary dichotomous thinking. On the question of ‘typical understandings of genre theory’, both Winsor (1996) and Devitt (2004) view that there has been the tendency to concentrate analysis on repetition of form and continuity as opposed to the dynamic qualities of genre, its users and the context with which it interacts. Hence, the shaping influences has tended to be seen to flow in one direction - from a social context to the text, which is why genres have been seen as ‘products’ of their communities (e.g. Swales, 1990).

Though the concept of ‘discourse community’ has been described as ‘elusive’ (Bazerman, Editor’s notes: Swales, 2004), Swales’ original definition of the concept (1990) continues to be a point of reference (e.g. Devit, 2004) and discussion (e.g.Flowdrew, 2011): it proposed fairly ‘stable’ entities and was very much based on

an institutional social constructionist view, with the community somehow determining the genres it uses (Yates & Orlikowski, 1994; Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995), implying that “to understand a community’s practices, we must examine the set of genres that are routinely enacted by members of the community “ (Yates & Orlikowski, 1994:542). Bhatia commented that, with discourse communities, “the focus is on lexico-grammar, texts and genres that enable members throughout the world to maintain their goals, regulate their membership and communicate efficiently with one another “ (2004:149).

Then, the ‘discovery’ of Giddens’ structuration theory (Giddens, 1976, 1979, 1984), led Swales to re-adjust the concept (1993), with Swales seeing membership of a community being attributed to instantiation and engagement according to what members were doing at a particular time. He later (1998) recommenced his search for a ‘pedagogically workable’ definition of discourse community, but this will be discussed under ‘identity’ below. Essentially, structuration theory, has been seen as a theory able to explain the ‘link’ between text and context (e.g. Swales 1993), to ‘discourse community and genre’ (Swales, 1990). Giddens’ concept of *duality of structure* is whereby “social structures are both constituted by human agency, and yet at the same time are the very *medium* of this constitution” (Giddens, 1976:121), or in other words, “structure is both the medium and the outcome of the human activities it recursively organizes” (Giddens, 1987:61). Every act of production is at the same time an action of reproduction: the structures that render an action possible are, in the performance of that action, reproduced. This link between production and reproduction is what Giddens calls the ‘recursive character’ of social life, a kind of

continual feedback process. Giddens sees action as a continuous flow of interventions in the world which are initiated by autonomous agents, the practices of whom are structured by rules and resources.

Important steps were made in genre theory through reference to structuration theory, in terms of seeing how genres can evolve (and are not 'static' entities), how they can be part of a 'system of genres', and how 'discourse communities' (1990) are less of a actual sociorhetorical entity operating as a controlling vehicle for genre agency and management (Swales, 1993). Yates and Orlikowski drew on structuration theory (and Miller's (1994) view of genre *typification* – see below), in studying genres in organizational communication (e.g. memos, proposals) as being embedded in social processes rather than isolated rational actions, and seeing how they evolve overtime in "reciprocal interactions between institutionalized practices and individual human actions" (1994:299). They examined how the individual could 'shape' genre in their discussion of the evolution of institutional genre as a result of changing technological and demographic conditions, specifically the development of the office memo from the business letter of the mid-19th century to electronic mail.

How one genre can link to and depend on other genres can be illustrated by Berkenkotter and Huckin's study (1992) of submission process of an article (submission, review, editing, etc.), and Bazerman's study (1992) of US patent applications, whereby only a limited range of genres may appropriately follow another (see below for further comment). In re-adjusting his original view and concept of 'discourse community' (1990), Swales (1993) sees it less of a controlling matrix of

genre – which would be more of a 'social constructionist' view of the workings of things – as a rhetorical community, created through 'instantiation and engagement' (1993:694). Incorporating a more 'fluid and dynamic view of genre', Swales and Rogers (1995:224) looked at how corporations project their corporate philosophy through 'mission statements' - 'a newly evolved genre' (1995:237), which can have a great range of communicative purpose, according the organization.

However, though structuration theory has been seen as going some way of limiting the formation of dichotomies (Swales, 1993: 695), scholars (e.g. Berkenkotter, 2001), who incorporated the theory in their work (e.g. Berkenkotter & Huckin,1992: 1995), later criticized such approaches for being a bottom-up (agent to context) or a top-down (context to agent) process, with emphasis on how the two shape (agent and context) and influence each other, still implying a degree of dichotomy, with genre as structure, representing the nexus between the two (Miller, 1994). There was a tendency, as Berkenkotter saw it, as researchers either 'following the text' (e.g. Devitt, 1991) or 'following the agent' (e.g. Gunnarsson, 1998, quoted in Berkenkotter, (2001:329)). The consequence that the 'picture big' of context still tended to be left, as to how the various elements interacted. Instead, Berkenkotter, for one, sees the need for a more unifying theory to overcome this "chronological methodological problem in social science" (2001:329) of bridging the gap between the macro-level perspectives of social structure, and how they shape and determine human activity and micro-level perspectives, to go towards sufficiently taking into account and describing context. That is to say, a conceptual framework should be multidimensional enough to include the actor, tools, rules and cultural practices. In

Russell's words, we need to construct a theory "to connect locally produced events with other events that "intrude upon and regulate" the specific local events with which they are concerned" and to treat "context not as a separate set of variables but as an ongoing, dynamic accomplishment of people working together with shared tools, including the most powerful, writing" (1997: 351).

Activity theory, particularly in the study of institutional genres e.g. Berkenkotter (2001), Geisler (2000), Winsor (1999), has been seen to overcome some of these difficulties. Russell maintains that it allows us to "theorize and trace the interactions among people and the inscriptions called texts (and other powerful tools) without separating either from collective, ongoing motivated action over time" (1997: 509), so possibly overcoming the micro/macro level distinction, "...by locating and analyzing a particular action or groups of actions in both their synchronic and diachronic relations to other collective actions in systems or networks, especially those actions relatively remote in time and place in which writing is often crucial" (1997: 510).

2.4 Activity theory and models of an activity system

Activity theory was first founded in the twenties of the previous century in Soviet Russia, mainly by the psychology researchers Vygotsky and his closest collaborator, Luria, and then by Leon'tev, and further developed in Europe, particularly by Engeström (1987). Various models have been developed from the theory, which Engeström (1999) has referred to as 'three generations' of activity theory. Bracewell

and Witte (2003) also provide a useful discussion of the varying or modified models of an activity system, and comment, “The theoretical constructs elaborated by activity-theory researchers have aimed to capture the *influence* and *interaction* of *cultural*, *historical*, and *social* factors for particular human *acts*” (my italics)(2003:513), which includes the including production and use of written texts or genres. From this comment alone, the potential for activity theory to contribute to our understanding of genre is apparent, due to the concern for culture (Devitt, 2004, Swales, 2004, etc.), and the shaping elements of historical and social factors (Bazerman, 2003; Bhatia, 2004; Miller, 1993, etc.), as will be discussed below. The model of an activity system has developed, and expanded over the years, though genre theorists often refer to a relatively earlier version, as we shall see.

Vygotsky and Luria’s model of mediation

A central theme in Vygotksy’s theory is the concept of ‘mediation’ or the use of ‘means’. Vygotsky’s, along with Luria, earliest formulation of practical activity is illustrated in Fig. 2.1 (from Vygotsky, 1994: 6, quoted in Bracewell & Witte, 2003:513), whereby material (e.g. a fishing rod) or symbolic ‘means’ (e.g. language), are used to accomplish objectives. The example provided by Bracewell and Witte is the request by one spouse to another (A) to buy a bus ticket (B), with the two events being mediated by the mnemonic device (X) of changing the position of the wedding ring from one finger to another. Witte (2005) notes some important characteristics of Vygotsky and Luria’s approach (1994) and their resulting model: their efforts were “focused on developing a Marxist psychology, including an accommodation of the

dialectical processes hypothesized to operate between humans as natural, biological beings and humans as cultural, social beings" (Witte, 2005:130). With the concept of *activeness* underlining their thinking, Vygotsky and Luria saw that humans strive to control/alter the material and/or natural world by using tools, and that they are capable of mutual cooperation in practical human activity, made possible through sign language, the most important being language. The principle of 'mediation', then, is crucial in that they argue that consciousness develops 'historically' through "the individual's engagements, via tools, in practical activity and through the individual's interaction with others via language and other signs. (Witte: 2005:131). It is through this interaction with others and mediation that the world of 'culture' is created, and that as the use of tools (whether material or symbolic) is learnt from others, clearly past practices are drawn upon.

In Fig. 2.1, the base of the triangle A to B, represents a natural relation between the subject and their environment, while the tripartite relation between A, B and X, indicates a cultural and indirect relation between subject and their environment. Primarily working from a psychology angle, three significant concepts are also included by Vygotsky: the notion of 'the process of internalization', which involves the transformation of 'external means into internal tools for thinking' i.e. what and how a person does things, in turn, shapes their way of thinking; the notion of 'zone of proximal development', which the idea that an individual first completes a task with the help of another individual, and then is able to do it on their own i.e. from interpsycological functioning to intrapsycholoical functioning. In this way, this zone is 'constantly shifting' and involves dynamic processing. Overall, emphasis is given to

change that is ongoing and sustained through dialectical processes. (Witte, 2003:513).

A first triangular model of an activity system – Leon'tev

Figure 2.2 illustrates what is taken to be the first triangular model of an activity system, developed subsequent to Vygotsky death by Leon'tev (1978), and it is this model which is considered the most familiar model, or the first generation of activity theory (EngestrÖm, 1999): three essential elements are now specified – 'meditational means (tools)'; 'subjects (individual, dyad, group)', and 'Object/motive', which constitute the unit of analysis. Hence, while Vygotsky and Luria took as their principal unit of analysis a task requiring the use of a goal-directed and mediated process (Witte, 2005:134) i.e. 'this is what I have to do (e.g. catch a fish), how do I do it?', involving historical and cultural processes – 'my father used to fish and he showed me how to use a rod', Leon'tev took the activity in general, as his unit of analysis (Witte, 2005:134) i.e. 'What is involved in catching a fish?' . In other words, there is a shift of emphasis and a move to a higher level of generalization. Leon'tev gives the example of a hunt (Wertsch, 1985), where the desired outcome is the capture of the prey, and object/motive being the question of how the capture of the prey can be achieved (problem area), and so involving where the hunt takes place, which determine the direction of the activity, the tools used, guns, dogs, or other, the participants being the hunters whose roles can change and adapt as the hunt progresses (a form of division of labour), as can the use of tools. While the capture of the and death of the prey can be seen as the (desired) outcome of the activity

system, the cooking and consumption of that prey involves another or other activity, though related, activity systems.

As noted by Witte (2005:134-135), Leon'tev's contribution, directly developed from the work of Vygotsky and Luria, was his theoretical view of activity itself, providing a three-level 'hierarchical structural' view of activity, each of which constitutes a focus of analysis - 1. the activity itself; 2. the actions (which can be any number) which collectively constitute the given activity; 3. The operations, any number of which constitute a given action. Notably, the levels are interchangeable, in that what functions at one moment as an operation can at the next moment function as an action or vice versa. Witte (2005:135) gives the example of someone writing (action) to produce a coherent text (the goal), whereby the correct spelling is an operation. However, the last element can become the goal if the writer is uncertain of the spelling of a particular word and has to look it up in a dictionary. Leon'tev saw that not only can there be a shift of level, but also a change of motivation e.g. from fishing to something to eat (a human need) to fishing as a sport. In his theoretical construct, Leon'tev added three new components of activity – a. the need or motivation (to catch a fish *to eat*) b. the goal or object of need (in the example above of the bus ticket, to get to particular destination), and c. conditions – that particular operations that an action entails depends on the environmental conditions under which those actions are performed (the presence or not of wind in the act of fishing).

Engeström's 'second generation' activity system model

Engeström's (1987) further elaborated Leon'tev's triangle, while at the same time incorporating Vygotsky and Luria's basic meditational triangle, into what he calls the second generation model (Engeström, 1999), as illustrated in Fig. 2.3: here a smaller triangle is placed within the main triangle, along the base of which, new elements are introduced – rules, community, division of labour (which is now explicitly mentioned). These were introduced to focus study, not only on artefacts and individual people as embedded in dynamic activity systems, but also on the 'environment' within which they occur, the social/collective elements of the system. Notably, for Engeström (1999:67) the concept of 'community' rather simply (and neatly) 'comprises of multiple individuals and/or subgroups who share the same object'. He aimed to explicitly accommodate the fact that practical activity is typically carried out by groups in institutions e.g. schools, engineering forms. Activity systems constantly change as they intersect and interact with other activity systems, and change can also occur due to 'disturbances', which reflect the dialectical processes that occur among two or more of the six components. Engeström also differentiates between activity system members, commenting that expertise should be interpreted within the framework of activity theory as an "interactive accomplishment, constructed in encounters and exchanges *between people and their artifacts* [italics added]" (Engeström i.,1992, quoted in Artemeva & Freedman, 2008: 54).

Observations on the models

All three models, as underlined by Bracewell and Witte (2003: 514) have the important common element of mediation being seen as taking place within purposive goal-directed activity or tasks, or as put by Cole and Engeström (1993), taking the activity system as the basic unit of analysis, whereby this system is defined as 'any ongoing, objected-directed, historically conditioned, dialectically structured tool-mediated human interaction' (1993:3). In this way, the activity systems itself constitutes the context i.e. 'what takes place within an activity systems is the context (Engeström, 1999). Since activity is object-directed, the object or goal (problem-space (Engeström, 1999), motivates the activity, and so becomes the beginning of the analysis. Tools are taken to comprise any means which furthers the activity process towards the system's goal, which includes both artefacts e.g. computers, screwdrivers, etc. and signs and words, both spoken and written. Russell comments that music, architecture, even punctuation – a full stop, a comma, can be taken as tools (Russell: 520). Smart and Brown (2008) note how 'collaborative intellectual activity can be instantiated in symbol-based representations', ranging from diagrams, graphs, photographs, computer programs, and mathematical equations. (The question of the use of symbol-based representations or *multi-modality* is further discussed below in 2.6). In the combining of sign and artefact, Vygotsky, himself, saw that 'the tool serves to master the environment while the sign serves to master one's behaviour' (Vygotsky, 1997, quoted in Bracewell & Witte, 2003).

That the theory provides a construct of contradiction i.e. contradictions are an

inherent part of activity systems, such that the value of the same object produced by the same tool can vary in terms of its use value and 'exchange value' (Bracewell & Witte, 2003: 514; Berkenkotter, 2001: 323), "provides a dynamic capability to activity systems", (Bracewell & Witte, 2003:514), setting activity theory apart from other characterizations. As put by Artemeva and Freedman, "Activity theory provides a higher level of theorization to account for change as well as resistance and conflict" (2001:170) "The resulting framework of activity theory also highlights the need "to study real activity in real situations" (Artemeva & Freedman, 2008:53).

Engeström (1999) has gone on to develop what he calls the 'third generation' activity system model, Fig.2.4, which illustrates two activity systems interacting: this aims to underline the inherent instability, and internal tensions and contradictions, which act essentially as change agents (Engeström, 1999:9). There are networks of interacting activity systems, resulting in not only change, but also multiple perspectives and multi-voicedness. He views this model as the minimum model of analysis of the study of design, such as in the production (outcome) of a commercial product (Engeström 1999).

Witte (2005) pertinently points out that, according to both Vygostky and Luria's model and Leont'ev model, "everything human is in some sense related in some way to activity" (2005:139), which, while this may be possible to share as philosophical premise, creates difficulties in applying the conceptualization. As he notes, if everything is taken as activity, where does one activity start and finish, and another one start? Where are the boundaries? When is one activity theory being studied, as

opposed to another? As a possible solution, Witte takes Engeström's approach to be a possible valid one when Engeström takes the criteria of analysis 'outside' the model. For example, Engeström applied his model to medical clinics, but his benchmark, as it were, was the model of how a medical practice *should* function.

However, Witte, comments, there still remains the problem of specifying a unit or units of analysis for research, and proposes that activity systems or human activity be studied *indirectly* through observation by focusing on meditational means as a possible unit of analysis (2005:143), recalling Vygotsky and Luria's model (Fig. 2.1). That is, rather than delineating that whole activity system from the start of the analysis, a means of mediation is focused on, and then the analyst works "outwards" – a kind of 'domino-effect' investigation. In such an approach, 'genre' might be particularly useful.

2.4 The incorporation of activity theory into genre studies

Particularly Leon'tev's model of activity theory, the first generation model (Engeström 1999), Fig. 2.2, and the work of activity theory scholars e.g. Cole & Engeström *(1993),* and Engeström *(1987, 1995),* have been heavily drawn upon by a number of genre scholars, mainly of the NR school – Russell (1997), Berkenkotter (2001), Ding (2008), Geisler (2001), Bazerman (1997, 2003), Artemeva & Freedman (2001, 2008), Smart and Brown (2008), Schryer et al (2008), etc., and considered and discussed in other genre studies e.g. Swales (2004), Devitt (2004), Bhatia

(2004). It has been referred to as activity-based genre theory (e.g. Smart & Brown, 2008). Essentially, activity theory has contributed to conceptualizations of social context, particularly in terms of the *collective,* often together with structuration theory, which centres more on agency and the individual (e.g. Beaufort, 2000; Berkenkotter, 2001; Schryer et al, 2008).

Russell (1997) turned to activity theory since he viewed that there was no comprehensive theory of writing to explain how various 'doing' – school, work, and other (e.g. recreational), come together through the mediation of writing, or explain how people change as writers, as they operate within various social practices (1997:505). By usefully synthesizing concepts of genre from both the seminal work of Miller (1984), Schryer (1993) and the notion of genres as being 'stabilized-for-now', and from Bazerman (1994), specifically the notion of 'genre systems', Russell sees genres as one of the most important 'tools' that can be used by participants of an activity system. Russell, however, also places importance on other tools, beside the 'written inscription'(which he in any case stretches from a semi-colon to a fully fledged report), such as machines or music (which he also defines as genres), no less because he sees activity systems including diverse 'groups such as a family, a religious group, a discipline, or a profession, and that participants can employ a wide range of tools, often in conjunction with one another (1997:510).

Miller (1984), working from Campbell and Jamieson's idea that genre is a "rhetorical act" (1978), developed the concepts of *typification* and *recurrence*. Echoing Bakhtin's much recognised view that "typical forms of utterance" exist

(1984: 63), she describes how "typified rhetorical action" is performed in response to a certain "typified recurrent situation" (immediate and social context) which requires "typifications of participants" (1984: 151, 157). Typification is based on the social constructionist premise that a community constructs its own 'knowledge' i.e. knowledge is a socially sustained process which is expressed through use of (and recognition of) certain types of communication i.e. the textual realisation of a genre provides the means through which action is accomplished. As a 'typical' response a genre will generally be expected to have typical and distinctive characteristics, such as a particular label, linguistic features, form and content, and other, those (robust) features considered most suitable or effective by its regular users, help creating some stability of the state of affairs through its use. That said, identifying what exactly those typical features constitute can be problematic, particularly for researchers who lie outside the specific genre-user context.

Russell also defines genre as "typified ways of purposefully interacting in and among some activity systems" (1997:513). His view is not dissimilar to Miller's of a situation being 'constructed' when he comments that activity systems are "mutually (re-) constructed by participants historically " (Russell, 1997:508-9), a view held by other genre NR scholars who incorporate activity theory into their research e.g. Schryer et al (2008). Russell goes on to comment that "genres are not merely texts that share some common formal features; they are shared expectations among some group(s) of people " (Russell, 1997: 517). Hence, we are talking about patterns of situations and patterns of action, rather than patterns of form, though patterns of form can occur as a consequence of the pattern of action and context. Russell sees that

an agent or actor has a variety of meditational means at their disposal to accomplish a goal, but “if the subject perceives conditions as the same or similar, the subject may act in the same way again. That is, typified actions over time are routinized or operationalized “, using genres (and not only) in “ways that have proven useful in the activity system” (1997:515). He concurs with Bazerman who describes genres as “forms of life, ways of being, frames for social action” (1994:1), and as such “genres and the activity systems they operationalize (temporarily) are regularized or stabilised through routinized tool use within and among (sub)groups” (1997: 513).

What Russell underlines, however, is that situation or context is not a container for action or texts or a separate set of variables but is “an ongoing, dynamic accomplishment of people acting together “(1997: 508-9). That is, as Russell (with Yanez) later writes, social context is not “what *contains* the interaction”, rather context is constituted by “a weaving together of people and their tools (including genre tools) in complex networks…The network *is* the context” (Russell & Yanez, 2003: quoted in Schryer et al, 2008: 198). A resulting constant ‘flux’ of the state of affairs distinguishes how things are viewed through the lens of activity theory, as opposed to a more heavily social constructionist view, which emphasized more stable elements e.g. Swales (1990), and viewing things through a structuration theory perspective, where ‘structures’ are somehow ‘apparent’ and ‘present’, though their construction can be shaped and altered (as well as being re-created) by human agents. Russell’s view is echoed by Winsor (1999- see below) who comments how activity theory “has the potential to help us stop thinking of context as a container in which text is subsequently produced” , and see how all the different parts (tools,

actors, object) are “mutually constitutive” (1999: 201), and that “lack of unity is normal in any activity system” (1999:200). However, Russell also underlines how written genres, in particular, (re)-create and stabilize- for-now (drawing on Schryer (1993) activity systems and their object/motive (1997:520), and, at the same time, help mediate collective change or innovation, particularly through interactions with other activity systems. The power relations this might involve are discussed below.

An activity theory perspective would also view certain notions of genre as a non-issue, such as the fairly common notion of a ‘core’ identity or ‘integrity’ of genre (e.g. Bhatia, 1997; 2004), which perhaps is most useful as a *starting point* for research of texts removed from their context. In the logic of activity theory, genre use (whether picked up or discarded) and change in the use or particular features of a genre, is subject to its usefulness, as perceived by the participants, for furthering the object/motive of a particular activity system. Hence, while the dynamic quality of genre has been seen as intrinsic, and that changes in genre occurs due to its ‘fluid’ quality (Devitt, 2004) or its versatility (Bhatia, 2004), change, as conceived by activity theory, is a natural part of human object-directed activity, which is characterized by disturbances (Engeström, 1987), and subject to changing conditions, and along with it, genre. That is, change occurs in genre, not so much to the quality of genre itself, but according to the *contextualized* needs of its users, the emphasis being on the participants’ use of a particular genre (singly or in combination with others), which determine that quality.

Notably, in the context of the relationship between school and society, Russell

takes ‘genre’ and specifically ‘genre systems’ as an important analytical category for understanding “both individual behaviour (social psychology) and collective behaviour (society or culture), allowing us to expand dialogic metaphors to trace writing across activity systems and analyze the relationship.” (1997:519-520). Quoting Bazerman’s definition of genres systems as “interrelated genres that interact with each other in *specific settings*” (1994:8, quoted in Russell, 1997:520) (my italics), Russell interprets these specific settings as being activity systems, which genre systems mediate. Following Bazerman (1994:80), he sees that, in some activity systems, the degree of success of some actions may depend on a ‘limited range of genres being used and in a specific order’, as indicated (but not fully determined) by the history of the activity system and the previous actions of its participants. Drawing from social studies of knowledge in biology (e.g. Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995; Myers, 1990), Russell illustrates his synthesis of activity theory and genre systems through the example of writing and learning in US undergraduate biology courses, where different genres e.g. review articles, research reviews, are part of a genre system which ’connects’ and mediates different activity systems, for example the research laboratory, the university administration (Fig. 2. – Bawarsh & Reiff’s (2010) adaptation). He comments how the activity theory of genre he proposes suggests the contradictions individual students would feel between and among activity systems of school and society, resulting in individuals being pulled in different directions, but how such a basis for analysis can aid the understanding of the “myriad of ways writing operates in and among diverse communities”, providing a possible analytical link between classroom and society (Russell, 1997:546).

While Devitt (2004) sees that seeing genre as a ‘tool’ unduly reduces the social power of genre, Bazerman (2003), indicates the potentially powerful role genre can play as seen as a tool in an activity system. He uses activity theory in his study of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEDPA) and its mandated genre of the environmental impact statement to examine the relations between information and the genres for which it is produced and through which it is made usable for social action. To explain the fact NEDPA has received alternative evaluations, Bazerman suggests that a conflict between view of the operations of regularly activity systems can be seen to exist: “The first view is that the activity system the documents are created within and serve as active within must be compulsorily linked to the documents to enforce particular kinds of actions. The second view is that the information once created and presented within the activity system, if it is available and usable by relevant parties within the activity system, will have itself profound effects on the system” (2003: 460). Still maintaining genre as a ‘tool’, he comments however on “the power of the genres is create information that will amend behaviour and policy”, and that ”the genre itself may have changed the social landscape of knowledge production and use”(2003: 461). In these terms, genre can be seen as a powerful social tool. (Notably, Geisler (2000) actually suggests that, in some cases, genres can be ‘promoted’ to object/motive ‘status’ – see later for further discussion)

Notably, several other scholars working from an NR genre approach, advocate the value of activity theory in studying genre learning, the change or transformation of the use of genre by students and professionals, for example (e.g. Artemeva & Freedman, 2001; 2008, Schryer et al, 2008). Beaufort (2000), for one, studied the

socialization processes of two writers (college graduates) new to a non-profit organization, and how they learnt new genres (tools) used by the community (or activity system) through their *interaction* in the system itself. She found that the difficulty of a writing task was not based on genre characteristics "but on the basis, among others, of the rhetorical situation (a) text must address" (2000:195). She gives the example of how a business letter e.g. to a potential sponsor/contributor, becomes extremely important and required far more rhetorical problem solving that does, say, a polite rejection letter to a job applicant (2000:195), which would do little to 'further' the object/motive of the organization. Notably, the "consequences of these interrelationships (e.g. hierarchy of importance) (between the various genres) – the systematicitiy of how writing activities were orchestrated in relation to the …community's goals – had a direct bearing on the socialization processes of writers who were newcomers to the organization" (my brackets) (Beaufort, 2000:196). Further, her findings indicated that, in this particular organization, writing per se was not the focus of the organization, but the end goals (object/motive of the activity system), that was: "providing services and staying financially solvent" (2000:212). The learning on the part of the novices was contextualized and situation specific, and that membership of the community was "conferred from the outset rather than learning being a condition for membership" (2000:213), only that the tasks were differentiated. This is quite a different view of the working of things, compared to some more heavily social constructionist views held e.g. Bhatia (1997), Swales (1990), and the apprentice v. expert dichotomy, where the novice is an 'outsider' until accepted (by the community) communicative practices have been learnt i.e. where a kind of "homogeneity is created between the legitimate members of a discourse

community and those who are considered outsiders" (Bhatia, 1997:364).

Likewise, with the view of helping university graduate to 'participant efficiently in the multiple facets of a organization', Smart and Brown (2008: 220), draw on activity theory, among others, to develop a context-sensitive approach to learn about "complex sociorhetorical landscapes of professional sites" and "cast light on the experiences of novice writers as they enter and attempt to navigate these sites" (2008:220), specifically on the workplace experience of student interims from a professional writing major in a large public university in the U.S. MidWest. 'Activity-based genre theory' was used for the researchers and the research participants (40 student interims) to provide a common theory-based analytical framework which both generated research questions and provided a point of reference for analyzing the collected data (Smart & Brown, 2008: 221). They used a definition of genre that focuses attention on mainly 'visible entities and events', with genre being viewed as "a broad rhetorical strategy" that enables an organization to regularize communicative transaction to ensure or encourage 'reliable, consistent construction' of specialized knowledge which an organization relies on to carry out its work (Smart & Brown, 2008: 222).

Echoing Russell's view that genre helps account for "social-psychological stability, identity and predictability" (1997:515), Winsor (1999) also sees genre's role in maintaining and generating organizations, with text being a way of resolving discontinuities, generating content and meaning categories which represent commonly held expectations: in the context of engineering activity

systems, with genre “even individual low-level employees can negotiate activity system to get work done and serve their own interest at the same time they serve the interest of others. It provides a common understanding that allows activity to go forward even as discontinuities persist” (Winsor, 1999:222). In other words, genres can act as a ‘glue’ which goes towards keeping all the different parts of a system together. In her multiple nine-year case study of the construction and use of documentation to create and disseminate order in the activity systems of several engineering organizations, Winsor studied four engineers, and their use of different texts (in engineering firms).

She followed how the four engineers changed from their roles as co-op students to being fully-fledged engineers and participants of their firms, and how they began to talk about ‘documentation’ or ‘documenting’, used to refer to “writing that described past or future events to establish common understanding of completed or promised actions” (Winsor, 1999:206), indicating that, in activity theory terms, ‘this change was due to the fact producing documentation made sense in the activity system of the full-time employer but not in that of the co-op student’ (1999:206) i.e. when participants of a system shared that system’s goals. She puts the texts under a single label - ‘documentation’, taking them as a single ‘genre’ (despite variety between the texts) since they had a ‘common purpose’ within the activity system. They seemingly aimed at “enabling cooperative work by coordinating the work of various people”, and representing ‘an acceptable means’ to deal the contradiction inevitably present in complex organizations (Winsor, 1999:216). This, Winsor (1999) maintains, somewhat alters “our understanding of genre theory” (1999:221),

specifically what was taken up to then as the role of ‘communicative purpose’ in seeing it as an overriding prerequisite for genre identification (Swales, 1990; Bhatia, 1993) (while acknowledging other characteristics of genres such as content, form, intended audience, medium etc).

Using ‘communicative purpose’ e.g. Swales (1990), Bhatia (1993)as genre determinant can pose problems, has been noted by scholars, e.g. Askehave (1999), Askehave & Swales (2000). Though acknowledging the value of such concepts, Askehave sees that they can be too general and vague, and overlook some important features of texts e.g. ‘official’ communicative purpose v. ‘hidden’ communicative purpose (Askehave 1999:17). Another problem she notes is that a single genre can have ‘sets of purposes’, citing company brochures as an example, which can be used not only to ‘promote’ a particular company but to mould public opinion, create an image of a reliable business partner, and aim to obtain financial support etc (1999:21).

Re-enforcing the problem as using communicative purpose as the defining criterion for a genre, Winsor, referring to Berkenkotter and Huckin’s (1995) view that genres go along a continuum, that textual forms can be considered typical examples of a genre to a lesser or greater degree, her case study turns this ‘somewhat on its head’ (1999:222). Rather than taking ‘similar’ texts in terms of content, label, communicative purpose, as considering them a common ‘genre’, in activity theory, as illustrated by Winsor, what genre theory would likely consider disparate texts can be lumped together under the label (in this case, ‘documentation’). As noted, for the four

participants of the study, “although documentary texts had a variety of purposes, they always shared a common one,” and “they were intended to direct people’s actions toward the activity system’s object” (Winsor, 1999:221). So, even if having a variety of purposes, texts, through their use in a specific activity system, can share a common communicative purpose i.e. they can be considered a ‘single’ genre. Further, this ‘communicative purpose’ can only be identified by observing its use ‘in action’ or ‘getting it directly from the horse’s mouth’, directly from the participants, as they use the texts.

Hence, research based on activity theory has indicated that *‘communicative purpose’-in-use* (Swales 1990) is complicated by the fact that in a specific activity system, texts which do not share a specific set of definable formal features, may be taken as belonging to the same genre, while texts that do share a number of formal features may not belong to the same genre since they may not all be used to operationalize the same recurring, typified actions (within the specific activity system) (Russell, 1997). Further, ‘since a single text can function as a tool for mediating the actions of participants in more than one activity system’, Russell sees that ‘a single text may function as different genres’, and gives the example of the play *Hamlet,* which is not the same genre as script for actors as it is when used in literary or philological analysis (Russell, 1997:518).

Consequently, in interpreting activity theory, ‘communicative purpose’ has often been associated with ‘social action’ but *not* an integral part of genre” (my italics) (Devitt, 2004:48), while for most genre scholars, particularly ESP genre scholars,

communicative purpose is intrinsically linked to, and remaining a defining (if diminished) criterion of, *genre* (Swales, 1990; 2004), and attributes genre its quality of 'social action'. On this tricky issue of the relationship of 'genre' and 'communicative purpose', and indeed the role of genre within an activity system, Russell, in the overall very useful explanation of activity theory, is somewhat elusive, avoiding apparent contradictions: genre is presented as a 'tool', but it is also a 'frame for social action' (Bazerman, 1994) (Russell, 1997); genre is a 'frame for social action', but communicative purpose is expressed by 'social action' as carried out by the subjects in the furthering of the object/motive of a particular activity system; reference to Miller (1984)'s concept of genre and the notion of *typified actions* or responses over time to *recurring* situations is made, but not Miller's *typified forms*, while not clarifying why (1997). He apparently 'solves' these issues by describing genre as a particularly "powerful" and "stabilizing" tool for any activity system (1997:521).

Notably, Geisler (2001) sees that the move to describe genre as a 'tool' comes from a desire to prevent the text ending up as the main (only) object of analysis, as it often has been. She also questions whether all genres should indeed be interpreted as a 'tool' in all cases, within activity systems, seeing two potential roles or status of genre existing: genres as the tools by which an intended action is achieved; and, genres which represent the achievement itself. In other words, in particularly institutional genres, she proposes that private, 'subconscious' documents, such as short memos, can be taken as 'tools', or as a means to further the activity systems object, while generally larger 'public' documents, such as major reports, can

potentially represent the object/outcome itself i.e. they can “jump the wall”, being recognized as “the culturally valued outcome of an activity, not just its meditational means” (2001:298). Finally, she suggests that the *status of a text within an institution will vary over the history of individuals and institutions* – what was once taken as a ‘tool’, makes that ‘jump’ and is recognized to be ‘the object/outcome’, and presumably vice versa, the object/outcome being subject to ‘relegation’ to mere ‘tool’, according to how a particular activity system evolves over time.

Similarly to Winsor, Berkenkotter (2001) sees that genre systems have an overriding identity and communicative purpose. So, the genre of documentation can be seen as one means for ordering the group’s members and accomplishing the activity system’s goal(s) i.e. one way of overcoming potential conflicts of interests and encourage and enact ‘cooperation’. However, drawing on activity system, Berkenkotter also notes the contradictions within a system, such as how clinical psychologists have a dual role of ‘cost-efficient producers’ and ‘healers’. Referring to both activity theory and structuration theory, she studied the discursive practices of professional writers, and presents three theoretical assumptions: “(a) genre systems play an intermediate role between institutional structural properties and individual communicative action, (b) a central means for identifying texts in a genre system is their intertextual activity, and (c) the concept of “genre systems” enables the analyst to foreground the discursively salient components of human activity systems” (Berkenkotter, 2001:326). She illustrates genre systems at work through an example of a psychotherapist's session notes, exemplifying ‘how it all fits together’. The

potential for such an approach, in some areas of study, has been noted, among others, by Swales (2004:23).

Schryer et al (2008) also employ activity theory in the field of healthcare and institutional genres, in their study of the transformation novice healthcare providers involved in patient care, particularly noting the processes where patients are turned into cases or discursively constructed entities, a central activity for the professional fields of both physicians and social workers. In their respective activity systems (with their respective goals), both professions make use of this textual tool, though expressed in different forms - the physicians and novices using a more rapid, verbal expression, in the hospital rounds, while the healthcare social workers, using more written forms in a more reflective one-to-one encounter between novice health-carer and supervisor i.e. the same strategies of case construction are not shared – potentially being a source of conflict and confusion, despite the fact, as noted by Schryer et al (2008:197), healthcare settings are moving towards systems that require collaboration between healthcare practitioners. This illustrates well the potential of tension and contradictions not only within a single activity system (Vygotsky, 1997; EngestrÖm , 1987, 1999), but also across systems, and the potential need to create or formulate a common object/motive – problem space, as illustrated in EngestrÖm ’s (1999) third generation activity model. Notably, Schryer et al (2008) captured and analyzed the various linguistic realizations of the genre, case presentation, recognizable as a language event or text type, this fine-grained linguistic analysis often absent in similar studies of genre learning where activity theory is drawn upon, e.g. Russell (1997).

The use of the notions of 'discourse community' and 'community of practice'

Notably, in their frameworks of analysis, while incorporating activity theory into theory of genre and structuration theory, NR scholars have also referred to the concepts of both 'discourse communities' (Swales, 1990), which are essentially "occupational or recreational groups" (Swales, 1998:20), e.g. Beaufort (2000), and 'communities of practice' (Lave & Wenger, 1991) e.g. Smart and Brown (2008), Russell (1997), Winsor (1999), Beaufort (2000), Schryer et al, (2008), etc.

Beaufort (2000), in her investigation of writing in a nonprofit agency, comments how notions of 'discourse communities' usefully sets genres in the "relatively stable overall functioning of communities of reader and writers in which genres carry out the social goals of the community " (Beaufort, 2000:188), and that a "writer must be fully immersed in the social/political implications of a given document in relation to the discourse community's goals and values" (2000:188). Hence, the ranking of the importance, complexity, and status of a genre is not so much dependent on cognitive criteria and linguistic elaboration, but on its relation to the overall goals of the community. Then, in the same study, she also refers to the concept of 'communities of practice', which draws emphasis to the importance of considering 'social roles' in relation to writing in any given writing situation.

The notion of 'community of practice' has been drawn upon by activity theory scholars, along with the related notions of 'situated learning', (which reflects closely Vygotsky's notion of learning through *interaction* in an activity system by *mediating*

through use of the system's recognized tools), and 'legitimate peripheral participation' (Lave & Wenger, 1991) – how "learners inevitably participate in communities of practitioners and that mastery of knowledge and skill required newcomers to move toward full participation in the sociocultural practices of a community" (Lave & Wenger: 1991:29). Eckert and McConnell-Ginet define a community of practice as "An aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement of an endeavour. Ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations - in short, practices – emerge in the course of this mutual endeavour" (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1992:464). Wenger (1998), identified three main criteria for distinguishing different communities of practice: mutual engagement (including regular interaction), a common, negotiated enterprise (shared group objectives), and a shared repertoire, often developed over time. Hanks, in many ways echoing the functioning of activity systems, while referring to community of practices, writes that "because we all engage in multiple group endeavors at any time and throughout our social lives, we are members of multiple communities, simultaneously and over time (199:221, quoted in Swales, 1998:202).

How novices develop "knowledgeably skilled identities" (Lave & Wenger, 1991:55, quoted in Smart & Brown, 2008:220), both professional and social, as part of their 'situated learning', is considered by Smart and Brown (2008) in their investigation of how student interns deal with new genres in the workplace, where they employ Participatory Action Research – the active participation and collaboration of informants in the research project. This 'local' acquisition through interaction of socio-cultural identities closely reflects activity theory, whereby through

the use of tools, human agents internalize the values, practices and beliefs associated with their social worlds (Schryer et al, 2008)

2.6 Activity theory as a cultural-historical approach

Capturing the influence and interaction of cultural, historical, and social factors for particular human acts, then, is activity theory's main aim (Bracewell & Witte, 2010:513); that is, activity theory is a cultural-historical approach. Russell notes that activity systems "can stretch out in space and time", and that the three main aspects of an activity system changes historically: "The identity(ies) of subjects, the focus and direction (object/motive) of their actions, and their actions, and their tools-in-use are a historically (re) constructed over a few seconds or many centuries" (1997:512). Hence, as noted by Berkenkotter, activities can be "understood in terms of historical layers" (2001:512) , that is the importance of how goals have been accomplished in the past (the historical cultural practices). This emphasis on the historical/cultural construction of all the elements of an activity system, and how one of more of the elements, if not the whole activity system, may be impacted by changes in any sphere of the activity system, is one of the main characteristics and strengths of activity theory.

The concept of 'history' in genre studies

Genre scholars generally recognize a sense of 'history' exists, with Todorov

providing this insight: “Where do genre come from? Quite simply from other genres. A new genre is always the transformation of an earlier one, or of several, by inversion, by displacement, by combination” (1990:15). Closely related to this and how genres shape their like ilk or how genres operate together in sets or repertoires (simultaneously, chronologically, or hierarchically), is Bakhtinian notion of ‘intertextuality’: “Any utterance is a link in a very complexly organized chain of other utterances” (Bahktin 1986: 69) and that “...each utterance is filled with various kinds of responsive reactions to other utterances of the given sphere of speech communication” (Bakhtin, 1986: 91, quoted in Swales, 2004: 21).

In more pragmatic terms, Devitt comments that “The fact that others have responded to similar situations in the past in similar ways - the fact that genres exists - enables writers and reader to respond more easily and more appropriately themselves. “ (2004: 16). She notes, for instance, how response letters to clients refer to or comment on existing tax law (1991, 2004). Such overt citation of another text, other forms of overt reference being quotations, or paraphrases, Devitt calls *referential* intertextuality or what Fairclough called *manifest* intertextuality (1995). This is not unrelated to the use of ‘templates’ used by accountants in tax computation letters, as noted by Flowerdrew and Wan (2006), and the company audit report (Flowerdrew & Wan, 2010). Other genres studies have traced the historical development and ‘evolution of genres, e.g. Bazerman (1988), who traced the history and character of the experimental article in science; Gross et al (2002), who studied the evolution of the Scientific Article from the 17th Century to the Present; Ayers (2008), who examined the developments of the short texts accompanying Articles in

the leading scientific journal Nature.

However, divergences among genre scholars are somewhat apparent concerning how this 'sense of history' is created. There are those e.g. Devitt (2004), Swales (2004), who lay weight on the 'power' of genre and its role as a stabilizing agent (while still acknowledging its capacity to evolve and change), and tend to underline the notion that "antecedent texts and antecedent genres serve as powerful sources for and constraints in the development of new genres" (Devitt, 2004:92), that is a strong sense of history is created between and through genres. Conceptually, this leads to quite different interpretations as to how to describe phenomenon, and when and what should be studied. For instance, Swales (1998), in applying his definition of 'place discourse community' in his quest to find a 'workable' definition extrapolated from his earlier notion of 'discourse community' (1990), concluded that only one of the three groups he studied – Herbarium – clearly fitted the criteria (1998:204), while one presented problems, and a third, Computing Resource Site, Swales concluded, did not fit the definition due to, among others, "the high turnover of staff, its lack of history and the relatively low number of texts produced" (1998:207). Commenting on this last group, Devitt (2004) notes how the presence of potentially clashing culture and high turnover rates invites intriguing questions of how different ideologies are negotiated in a given group, and how coherence is established (or not) within a rapidly changing group (2004: 41). Certainly, all three groups could be taken as activity systems, and studied as such, given, as already mentioned, activity systems can last over centuries or a few minutes, if not a few seconds (Russell, 1997:152).

Giving emphasis to the history of 'genres' (rather than the systems that use them), is closely linked to the notions of 'genre-mixing' and 'hybrid genres'. Swales (2004) notes the examples of the new genres in academic life e.g. performance evaluations, productivity assessment exercises, and though not explicitly stated, seemed to have been borrowed from the business world, along with some of its values. This is reminiscent of Bhatia's concept of genre-mixing (1993, 1997), where new genres or 'hybrid' genres e.g. university prospectuses (Fairclough, 1993) and academic book introductions (Bhatia, 1995), are created, with the increasing incorporation of promotional and advertising characteristics in texts where one might not expect to find such features i.e. borrowing of features between genres of *unrelated* (or generally taken to be unrelated) contexts. This is somewhat different from the intertexuality noted by Devitt (2004) who, citing Yates (1989) talks about borrowing of one genre type to another in *related* contexts. Bhatia sees this phenomena of hybrid mixing as being due to the increasingly dynamic (nature) and complexity of genre (Bhatia, 1997:363), and the influence of the multimedia, the increasingly competitive professional environment and the 'consumer culture' (Featherstone, 1991), a view also held by Luke who comments that, under fast capitalism and a globalized economy, the "processes of textual hybridization are accelerated." (1994; 14).

While the term 'hybrid' genre (Bhatia, 1997) can be useful to indicate the 'origin' of a new genre, it somewhat reduces the potential of a new genre being just that – a new genre with characteristic of different 'parents' (see Ayers, 2008). The notion of 'genre borrowing' (Bhatia, 1995) also implies that elements are only

'patched on' and that the essential identity of a genre remains. Kress (2003), for instance, holds the view that just to use to term "genre mixes" is to in fact "still conceive of genre in the older fashion - of stable genres which can be and are mixed". Instead, he proposes that newer way of thinking might be seeing genre as "a range of genres" being at the disposal of writers and readers and that genre users "make generic forms out of available resources". He sees this entailing a "generative" notion of genre whereby you do not simply learn the shapes of existing kinds of text alone to reproduce them but "where you learn the generative rules of the constitution of generic forms. " (2003:186).

The concept of 'history' in activity theory

Taking an activity theory perspective, genres, along with the other tools employed in an activity system, are seen to be used, changed and discarded, according to their adaptability and value in furthering the object/motive of the system (Russell, 1999:513), and any modification of that object/motive. If a new subject of a system introduces a genre, or modifies an existing genre in use, the onus is seen on the social-cultural-education/professional communication practices experienced by that subject which they carry with them and bring to the system (EngestrÖm, 1999), rather than the genre characteristics themselves, though change may be achieved through modification of those characteristics, or the adoption of another genre, taken from another activity system, or more.

In her longitudinal case study of the transition from university to the workplace

of a novice engineer who had followed a university engineering communication course, Artemeva (2008) reports how the novice, by previously participating in the university course, and the activity system of his family of engineers which had furnished hum with 'insider' knowledge in terms of values and principles of engineering, successfully achieved the adoption of two new genres – the formal oral proposal presentation and written proposal – on the part of the engineering company he worked for, despite the fact these genres were different from the locally accepted practices (generally less informal, comprising of incomplete documentation which had resulted in problems for technical staff when dealing with customer problems of the phone (Artemeva (2008:168)) in use at the time. What is interesting is how the novice "managed to recognize the construal (Miller, 1994, 1998) of the situation as recurrent and respond to it with appropriate genres" (Artemeva, 2008: 179), to further the system's goal of obtaining large orders. Notably, the novice, a recent newcomer to the engineering company, took a calculated risk in presenting the proposed change in genre use to the director of the division, since not only did it go against established practices, but he also faced opposition from the senior engineer. However, he was able to 'play the power relations' within the company successfully, while presenting himself with sufficient engineering 'cultural-identity to be accepted, and bring about change in company practices (and presumably much more), and a change in position (promotion) (Artemeva, 2008:181).

This last recount takes us to a more detailed discussion of important features of activity systems and the relations between the participants, and their use of genre – the question of *culture, identity* and clearly of *power*. Specifically, I aim to highlight

differences in how the notions are viewed by more traditional genre theory, and how this varies from an activity theory perspective.

2.7 The notion of 'culture'

Swales (2009) comments how concern for culture in genre studies has been part of the consolidating trends of recent literature (Swales, 2004; Devit, 2004; Bhatia, 2004, etc.), particularly "the role of contextual colouring in the realization of genre exemplars" (2009:5). He gives an example of an occluded genre (Swales, 1996) i.e. those that are hidden and out of sight to all but a privileged and expert few, - the "personal statements/ statements of purpose" and how their writing and interpretation varies greatly according to the nationality or origin of the writer i.e. how they gave rise to cross-culturally diverse strategies, probably influenced by local cultural traditions and conventions.

On a larger scale, Widdowson (1998: 11) noted how national cultural differences ('primary cultures' to use his term) e.g. American values versus Japanese industry values, can affect the writing of a document, such as a report. Devitt proposed that "genre theory needs to continue developing its understanding of the cultural basis of genres" (Devitt, 1999: 613), and later incorporated culture explicitly in her conceptual framework of genre (Fig. 2.6) (Deivtt, 2004). She holds that the context of 'culture', along with that of 'generic context' (the use of other genres), are important in understanding genre, with the interplay between situation, genre and the actions of

an individual forming the basis of her view of genre: “The context of situation, culture, and genres interact amongst themselves, and the context of situation in part specified by the context of culture and genres, and the context of culture in part specified by the contexts of situation and genres, and the context of genres in part specified by the context of situation and culture, all operating simultaneously and dynamically.” (2004:31).

However, problems arise when attempting to define exactly what culture entails, or as Atkinson has commented, culture has become “one of the most contentious concepts in academia” (2004:279). Devitt, for instance, though incorporating culture into her model of genre, limits her definition as fairly ‘loose’ one: culture refers to “a shard set of material contexts and learned behaviours, values, beliefs, and templates” (2004: 25). As noted by Swales (2004:27), culture, like genre, is a “slippery” term, one which is far from easy to define and even more difficult to clearly identify (Katan ,1999; 2004). As noted by Katan (2004), we use the term *culture* all the time and instinctively feel we know what we mean. This view of culture could be seen as the *received view,* “the common-sense notion” ,with “the idea that a world of human difference is to be conceptualized as a diversity of separate societies, each with its own culture” (Gupta & Ferguson, 1997:1, quoted in Atkinson, 2004:280).

This implies cultural description is deterministic, leading to the idea of ‘cultural dopes’ , as coined by Garfinkel: the idea of a “man-in-the-sociologist’s society who produces the stable features of the society by acting in compliance with pre-established and legitimate alternatives of action the common culture provides”

(Garfinkel, 1967: 68). As noted by Atkinson (2004), in contrast, post-modern culture, following the work of such pioneers as Boas (1974) who emphasized the intense hybridity and cross-cutting influences of even small-scale cultural groups, emphasizes the change, discontinuity, inequality, hybridity of culture, and sees the individual subject as more a "decentred, disunified individual" who "is subject to multiple (and often contradictory) sociocultural influences" (Atkinson, 2004:282). Related to this debate is the idea of seeing culture as 'product' and/ or 'process': 'products' of a received culture are 'linguistic systems', cultural artefacts; a 'process' would involve the 'enculturation' of an individual into a cultural context through interaction with that context (as on a more macro scale) and/or situation (as on a more micro scale) (Atkinson, 2004; Connor 2004), and can be seen to be related to the concept of 'situated learning' (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

According to Connor (2004), when genre studies have taken into consideration culture, they have often, apart from disciplinary culture (e.g. Hyland, 1990, 2008), only considered national ethnic culture as the variable. Instead, adapting Holliday's 'small cultures' model (1999), Atkinson illustrates (Fig. 2.7) how 'national culture' is, in the context of an educational setting, one of many 'cultures' e.g. profession-academic culture, student culture, which may interact or overlap. This is a way of breaking down an analysis into "complexly interacting small, medium-sized, and large cultures" obtaining "a much more complex (if still probably somewhat structuralistic (Atkinson, 2004:286)) notion of the interactions of difference cultural forces" (Atkinson, 2004: 286). What is actually intended for 'small cultures', however, seems to be unclear with Connor (2004: 297) for one, seeing this as referring to such factors

as age, gender, and experience, quite distinct from Atkinson (2004).

Though referred to as a historical-cultural approach (Engeström, 1987, Russell, 1997, Berkenkotter, 2001), Devitt criticizes activity theory, as elaborated by e.g. Russell (1997) for underestimating culture. She sees that whether an activity system exists at all and what tools are used can be determined by the culture. She notes, for instance the deep cultural setting and determining force of the American culture in creating the need to produce shopping lists as the primary tool in the activity of supermarket shopping (Devitt, 2004), as recounted by Russell to illustrate activity theory 'in action' (Russell, 1997).

2.8 The notion of 'identity'

In genre theory and the study of genre, the concept of 'identity' has been explored over the last fifteen years (Bazerman, 2002), with "the practical power of particular genres to express identity", being noted (Bazerman, 2003:3). That culture is an identity-based concept has been noted in sociological studies e.g. Isar & Anheier (2007). Hence, the concepts of 'genre', 'culture' and 'identity' can be seen to be intrinsically linked to one another.

Emphasis has often been given to how genre contributes to the formation of the professional identity, or as put by Bawashi, "genre is largely constitutive of the identities we assume within and in relation to discourse" (Bawarshi & Peklowski,

2000:343). Genre invite its users to assume a certain social behavior, and this, together with a particular experience of particular activity or activities through the participation in a particular community, are constitutive of the development of an identity and identification to that community. Indeed, as noted by Bazerman (2002), people can become committed to those identities, and genre can shape “intentions, motives, expectations, attention, perception, affect, and interpretive frame” (2002:14).

This growing commitment to a professional identity, has been traced in a number of studies already noted (see above) (e.g. Winsor, 1999; Schryer et al, 2008; Smart & Brown, 2008; Beaufort, 2000), where novices gradually acquired the identity of the community they had entered e.g. the four engineering students followed by Winsor (1999), as they gradually became ‘senior’ engineers, changed the way they conceived writing, from ‘solely-texted based’ to ‘documenting’. This awareness was apparently developed through “interaction with more experienced writers, practice in producing generic texts that carried expectations in their standardized actions, and general participation in the activity system of their workplaces that provided insight into how and why texts were used” (Winsor, 1999:206); the communication strategies learnt by novice healthcare providers which shaped their sense of professional identity, in particular, how patient or client information was transformed into professional data relevant for their fields (Schryer et al, 2008).

The concept of a professional identity is fairly universally acknowledged, while the idea that individuals have ‘multiple identities’ is more problematic. The genre scholar Devitt (2004) acknowledges that social groups are complex and individuals

have multiple identities and that groups also have multiple and ideological functions, with genre helping people to fulfill the group's complex needs and fulfill its complex purposes (while social and group functions affect the constitution and construction of the genre). Activity theory clearly encourages the view of subjects participating in various activity systems at one time, so implying a single subject may have 'multiple-identities at any one time' (Russell, 1997; Engestr□ m, 1987). Swales position, for instance, indicates his wariness of activity theory which talks about individuals having 'multiple-identities' (Russell, 1997), according to the context within which we find ourselves, in that Swales sees himself remaining essentially himself (1998: 202), and that "Human being are not chameleons" (1998:202).

Notably, Atkinson (2004) sees that the interest in the notion of 'identity' is related to postmodernist views (e.g. Holliday, et al, 1999) of culture, though personally he sees interest in the notion as a result of what is perceived as the "shortcomings of studying culture as product" (2004:282), to see cultural activity as less dynamic and top-down. He comments that the concept of identity "refocuses inquiry from the impact of big-picture cultural or social forces" on an individual to ways individuals 'shape' or 'adapt' themselves into social agents by utilizing what resources they have at their disposition, and the surrounding constraints (Atkinson, 2004:283). A clear parallel to how participants participate in an activity system, utilizing available the tools chosen to further the object/motive of the system can be made, creating a group culture and identity (intrinsically linked to one other). 'Culture' and 'identity', in this sense, is created through interaction, and is seen as a *dynamic* process (as opposed to the 'received' idea of culture, which can be seen as *static*

(Connor, 2004:292)).

The notion of 'place' in relation to 'identity'

As indicated by names of examples of 'small' cultures (Holliday, 1999), e.g. classroom culture, the significance of the notion of the identity with the surroundings or with 'place' (Myers, 2006) is implied. As commented by Myers (2006:2), people can identify 'place' differently, geographically or relationally (Schegloff, 1972, quoted in Myers, 2006: 37) and on different scales, but is "not just a position in space", it is "also a link to tasks, practices, everyday life" (Myers, 2006:2). The notion of 'place' was picked up by Swales in his formulation of place discourse communities (1998:202), which as he comments, has some affinities with communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991), though, according to Swales definition (1998:204), the group of people essentially involved them regularly working in a particular place, while, with the notion of 'community of practice' can be applied to non-working groups, as well. However, a number of studies have used it in working environments, e.g. Schryer et al (2008), Beaufort (2008).

The concept of 'networking'

The concept of 'place' is related to that of 'local', and notably, when discussing identity, culture and community, scholars often refer to the dichotomy 'local versus global' e.g. Swales (1998), Devitt (2004), and with this, the difference of (local) 'community' versus 'networking'. With studies referring to activity theory, the focus

has generally been ‘situated’ focus e.g. Berkenkotter (2001), Russell (1997), with time, but particularly ‘space’ being relatively circumscribed. Russell comments that “activity theory develops the metaphor of interlocking, dynamic *systems* or *networks*,.. (my italics)” (1997: 519), though takes one to be synonymous with the other.

However, clearly with the development of technologies, cutting across time and space (Giddens, 1984; Giddens, 1991; Thompson, 1991), there has been an inevitable impact on human activities and their resulting complexities, and the concept of context (Featherstone, 2002). This implies that the concept of interconnecting activity systems may be too circumscribed and that another notion, that of ‘networking’, may be useful to use along with activity systems, to incorporate activities which are essentially mediated by technology, or global concerns such as commerce. A number of sociological studies e.g. Thompson (1995), Featherstone (2002), Anheier & Isar (2007, 2011) focus on the concepts of *globalization* and *global culture*, and the concept of ‘networking’, how individuals network together across time and space. In the study of genre, however, scholars have used the term ‘networking’ or ‘networks’ e.g. Bazerman (1988), Winsor (2001) in a rather different sense, with genre systems and genre networking/networks have often been seen as fairly synonymous. A noticeable exception is Swales (2004) who sees a need for genres to be seen as “*networks* of variably distributed strategic resources” (original italics) (2004:31), distinguishing between genre ‘chains’, genre ‘sets’, and genre ‘networks’. He sees *genre networks* as the “totality of genres available for a particular sector” (2004:22) to “capture some sense of the overall frame that is

operating (2004:23). While developing a formulation of ‘place discourse community’ (1998), Swales has yet, to my knowledge, to develop what a community of ‘global’ considerations would entail.

Devitt (2004: 46), on the other hand, refers to the sociological notion ‘social networks’ in the context of speculating how a genre used in a social network (e.g. Facebook and Twitter) might be different from a genre that develops from a closer community. She cites Milroy and Milroy (1985, 2004:44), who developed the concept of ‘social network’ in linguistics, seeing those who are part of such a network are not as tightly knit as other communities. She introduces differentiated notions of Communities, Collectives, and Networks, seeing the first as the most ‘close-knit’, through closeness and frequency of interaction (2004:43), followed by Collectives, a seemingly restricted type of group related to an interest (not unlike Swales Hong Kong Stamp Collecting Society, though he used it as an example of ‘full’ discourse community), and finally the very “loosely linked” Networks, whose “interactions and influences” are “less easily traceable than those within tighter communities”, existing nonetheless (Devitt, 2004:45).

In the first group, she would put tax accountants, and other professional groups (e.g. Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995, Smart, 1993), because of “their common endeavours, the closeness and frequency of their interactions, and the distinctness of their identification (and the ability to name them), as well as the existence of shared genres. The genres of such communities would also seem to be functionally specific and well-defined” (Devitt, 2004:43), with, she adds, a certain degree of flexibility. The

second group, *collectives*, represent those groups which do not have the frequency or intensity of contact of a community, but gather around, for instance, a repeated common interest e.g. volunteer groups, hobby clubs, users of eBay forms, this latter constituting a kind of “instant community”. Devitt sees this kind of group lacking the complexity of purpose and relationships of communities while still having a definable goal. Finally, following the work of Milroy (1980) and Milroy and Milroy (1985), the term ‘networks’ refer to loosely linked groups which utilize certain genres. One example she gives networks created through electronic mail, whereby the people involved may never have met one another but they are receiving common discourse e.g. a joke. Though less easily traceable than those within tighter communications, interactions and influences of social networks exist nonetheless, communication perhaps being unidirectional, more infrequent or sporadic (Devitt, 2004:45-6). Notably, she incorporates ‘culture’ into her framework of genre (2004), and differences are implied between more *local* entities – Communities, and more *global* entities – Social Networks, the potential usefulness of this distinction already having been noted by Swales (1998).

2.9 The notion of ‘power’

The concept of power in earlier genre studies

An aspect often associated with the ‘pattern’ of genre is its *political* nature and its ramifications, though notably, earlier but central accounts of genre e.g. Miller

(1984), Swales (1990), somewhat overlooked this potential impact of the use of repeated forms in social terms. The anthropologist William Hanks examined how the Mayan society was brought under regularized Spanish control through particular genres such as letters to the crown, chronicles, providing as example of the practical power of particular genres to express identity and form the basis of daily life" (Hanks 1987 quoted in Bazerman 2003:3). In terms of discourse communities, Porter noted how they have "mechanisms for wielding power" (1992: 106).

Some social constructionist accounts of discourse communities and their use of genres have been criticized (by e.g. Winsor, 2000, Devitt, 2004) for generally overlooking the political content of genre. Winsor, who herself takes a social constructionist though 'critical' approach, comments that genres are "more political than commonly acknowledged in theoretical discussions about genre, which tend to treat it as a rather neutral concept" (2000:178), citing Miller (1984), and Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) as examples. Such approaches can lead to the endorsement of prevailing 'realities' or ideologies, with the painting of a somewhat one-sided if not simplistic picture, apparently a 'vice' not only evident in some research in genre, but in other fields as well (Edley & Wetherell,1999). For instance, both Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) and Bhatia (1997) place particular onus on the power of the 'expert' member of disciplinary communities. In his view of community, Bhatia sees 'experts' wielding 'social authority' and exploiting generic conventions for 'private intentions' and keeping 'outsiders at a safe distance" (1997: 359-361). Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) see established members maintaining the status quo through various 'control' mechanisms e.g. in the case of research article, the peer review systems and

editorial intervention, while having the knowledge and means to change or manipulate those constraints.

In their accounts, however, there is apparent endorsement of the situation (Beaufort, 2000, Devitt, 2004). In other words, even with adopting an empirical approach, a particular social constructionist view can lead to the perception of the world, and in our case, genres and communities as relatively stable and stabilizing constructs (the term construct itself implying stability) that function in a particular way.

Surprisingly, despite the calls for a more critical approach to genre studies (e.g. Hyland & Lyons, 2002; Beaufort, 2000; Winsor, 1999, Starfield, 2013), and the frequent reference to the 'political nature' or 'power' of genre e.g. Winsor (1999), Devitt (2004), Huckin & Berkenkotter (1995), Bhatia (1997, 2004), few have incorporated these relations into a framework of study of genre, and differentiated between 'participants' appears to be relatively rare in the literature.

Using activity theory, EngestrÖm's second generation model (1987) (Fig. 2.3), however, is a notable exception in differentiating between 'subjects'. Elaborated from a presocietal triangle of individual-population-environment, this model introduces the concepts that the relationship between the individual and the population is mediated by rules of interaction, and the relationship between the population and the environment is mediated through a division of labour (Witte, 2005). This brought focus to the idea of individuals within a 'collective'. Witte (2005:115-116) comments that this generalized model has the advantage, among others, of providing a greater

coverage of phenomena to account for a greater variability in practical human activity, but has the disadvantage, among others, increasing the gap between the "abstract characterization of the components and the appropriate application of these components to the material, situated, and time-bound specifics of activity" (Witte, 2005:516). That is, focusing on the 'collective', rather than the 'individual', it is less suitable to use for tracing the power relations of individuals within a specific activity system. Finally, Devitt (2004) has referred to Todorov (1990) and notes how ideologies are transmitted through genre and what this might mean in terms of power relations between members of a group, though prefers not to incorporate these issues explicitly into her framework (Fig. 2.6).

'Power' in relation to concepts of 'structure'

Above, I discussed the contribution of Giddens' work and his structuration theory. Some scholars concerned with culture and identity (e.g. Atkinson, 2004) have seen Giddens' theory of structuration as a way of creating a feedback loop, so that 'humans are influenced by Society and Culture, but Society and Culture adapt and change according to individual human agency and action (Atkinson, 2004: 283). Referring to Giddens' structuration theory, Winsor's study (1999) of the work order form of an engineering firm, showed how the structured discourse helped structure or maintain the organization. The two groups of users of the text, the engineers and technicians improvised constantly to make the desire order appear and to re-create the hierarchical structure of the firm. This was done by the latter group despite the

fact their initiatives were concealed if not absorbed into the prevailing system, with Winsor interpreting that the work order genre ‘disciplined’ their actions

However, on the question of power, Thompson (1984), for one, sees that Giddens’ view of social structure and practices tends to present everything on an equal footing, and that each agent has equal opportunity to interact and are equally capable of bringing about change through that interaction, and that the rules and resources they draw on in that interaction are of equal importance. In other words, a certain neutrality is perceived. “Part of the attraction of conceiving of structure in terms of rules and resources is that it offers a simple and readily graspable picture of how individuals, pursuing their everyday activities, reproduce social structure. For in pursuing their activities individuals ‘draw upon’ rules and resources which are thereby reproduced, just as in speaking English one ‘draws upon’ and reproduce the rules of English grammar” (Thompson, 1984:164).

Instead, Thompson sees rules comprising structure as embroiled in struggles, subject to rival interpretations and continuously transformed in their very application. He also sees that rules cannot be conceptualized in isolation from the resources which facilitate the exercise of power, with some rules being more important than others:.”... the restrictions on opportunities operate *differentially*, affecting unevenly various groups of individuals whose categorization depends on certain assumptions about social structure” (1984:159). Giddens does acknowledge that structural constraint can reduce an individual to no options. In this sense, structure and agency no longer appear to be complementary terms of duality but the antagonistic poles of

dualism, in that structural constraint may so limit the options of the individual that agency is effectively dissolved. However, his view can be interpreted as meaning even if an individual has but *one* option, they constitute an agent.

Thompson, however, notes that in actual fact options vary greatly in their range, their nature and in the character of want and desires upon which they depend. In social analysis this range of possibilities needs to be explored, “both in terms of the differential distribution of options according to class, age, and sex and so on, but also in terms of the kinds of wants and desires, the interests and needs, which are themselves differentially possessed”(1984:170). Thompson goes on to note that “The differential distribution of options and needs implies that certain individuals or groups of individuals have greater scope for action and choice than other individuals or groups of: freedom, one could say, is enjoyed by different people in differing degrees” (1984:170).

Unlike Giddens, Thompson makes the distinction between the reproduction of ‘institutions’ and the reproduction of ‘social structure’ and sees that reproduction of rules through the use resources by agents is most satisfactorily seen in *institutions.* Institutions are characterized by rules, regulations and conventions of various sorts, by differing kinds and quantities of resources and by hierarchical relations of power between the occupants of institutional positions. When agents act in accordance with these rules and regulations or exercise the power which is institutionally endowed upon them, they may be said to reproduce the institution.

‘Power’ as a ‘negotiable’ or ‘accomplished’ entity

On the other hand, other scholars e.g. Schneider (2007), inspired by the work of Garfinkel (1967), see that the ‘agency’ versus ‘structure’ distinction as a false dichotomy, preferring to concentrate on how “social order is produced as a local accomplishment of situated actors” (Schneider, 2007:186). As structure is a result of action of agents, Schneider sees that the two cannot be studied as independent domains that interact in particular ways.

Instead, participants of a group or organization utilize the interactional and interpretive conventions or ‘rules’ available to them to construct, among other, power relations between themselves and the other participants. In this sense, power is not ‘structural’, whereby structural ‘forces’ influence produce certain behavior. Instead, from an ethnomethodological perspective, power is accomplished or achieved by the participants as they interact with each other, with objective rules being confirmed (or negated) through their behavior orientating action towards (or not) of those rules (Schneider, 2007:182-183). In this way, communicative practices are central to understanding power, and that understanding requires observation as those practices ‘happen’.

This second view of ‘power’ opens the door to a much more complex arrangement of affairs. The dichotomy of ‘insider’ v. outsider’ (Bhatia, 1997; 2004; 2008), perhaps tends to encourage the overlooking or underestimating of the complexity of context, and that, as commented by Beaufort, “there are multiple levels

of participation, and different roles and levels of responsibility may be taken on simultaneously" (Beaufort, 2000:190), and these different levels of participation and responsibility can also change and evolve over time (Winsor, 1999: 206). Schneider (2007) showed that this changing and shifting of power roles can occur within a single interaction, though the effects may be short-lived (in Schneider's example, one teacher's 'challenge' to the consultants' line of wishing to close a unit during an interview was not enough to prevent the closure).

The role of the researcher

This issue is placed under 'the notion of power' since the researcher cannot be placed 'outside' the running of things i.e. they are also part of the 'system', in one form or another, and subject to conflict of interests, something which activity theory highlights (see Chapters 3 & 4). In ESP studies, critical ethnographic studies have often centred on the question of the 'power' of the researcher over the research subjects (Starfield, 2013), or the potential problem of the researcher inadvertently 'upholding' or 'reinforcing' the status quo (Paltridge, 2013), or uncritically applying "frames, intentions, and purposes" "assumed or unconsciously" applied to new contexts (Johns & Makalela, 2011).

An important characteristic of an activity theory based investigation is how it can heighten the awareness of the researcher, through observation and/or participation, and what makes the activity system works, the tools it uses and why, what is important to the participants. Notably, in undergoing an investigation of the

National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant application writing process in the USA, Ding (2008), too, found activity theory helped her to change her focus concerning her approach to asking questions to participants, resulting in a more successful investigation: the interview questions she formulated were constantly evolving as her understanding of the enculturation process (as she called it) changed as the study progressed. In her early interviews she asked questions concerning writing process and strategies, but soon noticed the interviewees were fairly uninterested in these matters, preferring to discuss matters related to science. Following their cue, she changed her approach and obtained much more response with concerning scientific merit e.g. the use of visuals, the value of the research questions, etc. These experiences indicate the importance of the researcher 'positioning' questions (and indeed their very content) to the participants and the shared values of the activity system under investigation, otherwise information gathered runs the risk of having little relevance or not adequately reflected the object a study sets out to investigate, like cutting "the utterance from the real ground" and "losing the key" (Voloshinov, 1976:105, quoted in Prior, 2009:25). It also indicates the importance of observation of the activity system and the power relations within it actually enacted, already indicated by previous studies e.g. Winsor (1999), and what impact the actual presence or interaction of the researcher may have on the activity system, and indeed, the researcher's perception (and understanding) of that activity system.

2.10 The notion of ‘multimodality’

By ‘multi-modality’, I refer to the assumption that communication always draws on a multiplicity of modes, all of which contribute to meaning, so entailing the analysis and description of the full (ideally) repertoire of meaning-making, between and across modes. As with genre and genre characteristics, and indeed human social interaction, particularly when involved in ‘communities’ (as amply discussed above), we can assume that the modes are shaped over time, according to the demands of different communities, motivations and interests of who is orchestrating those modes, and presume a shared sense of ‘culture’ . A key concept is how modes available for use in particular places and times, are configured in any particular context, and the relationship between them (Kress, 2009). This would include all the modes, voice, word, gesture, colour, music, and so on (Jewitt, 2009), which clearly echoes the position of Russell (1997), in his exposition of activity theory, and that these different modes would be considered ‘tools’, some used to express a genre e.g. music, while others, what we can call non-genres, e.g. gestures, but they would all be tools available to the participants of the activity system. However, the approach between scholars concerned with multi-modality varies in some significant ways, mainly in terms of ‘emphasis’.

One scholar of images James Elkins, maintains that culture has become increasingly visual, and talks of ‘visual culture, with the quantity of images both increasing (compared to past centuries), resulting in an impact on both what we mean by ‘literacy’ and the kind of images we create and consume (Elkins, 1999). Following such a line, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) stress the rise of technologies

having brought about a change in genres and the use of multi-modal texts and importance of visual elements, redressing the previously-given balance of focus to the written word. Lanham, commenting on the use of the electronic word, sees that " a major readjustment of the alphabet/image ratio in ordinary communication" has occurred, and which has largely been ignored (1995:125). Likewise, while acknowledging all human communication is multimodal, Bargiela-Chiappini (2008) also sees that "The digital age is responsible for the shift from valued monomodality expressed in static generic types to increasingly complex multimodality" (5). She quotes Iedema (2003: 38) who sees that electronic communication, economic globalisation and multiculturalism are responsible for the dissolution of traditional, linear and hierarchical representational practices and genres.

However, a number of scholars comment that 'multimodality' has always been around us (e.g. Prior, 2009, 2013; Paltridge, 2013; Hyland, 2013). Emphasising how genres are produced in processes that have histories, Prior comments that "multimodality arises not only when a particular text/performance is realized materially in multiple media, but also when we consider the multimodal chaining that marks historical processes. More fundamentally, every text, every utterance, is multimodal as it must involve a mix of inner (thought, perception, motivation and feeling) and outer semiotics (writing, drawing, object production and manipulation) (my brackets)" (Prior, 2009: 24). Hence, he argues, that "multimodality is a routine dimension of language in use, as utterances can only happen in embodied, material, multisensory, multi-semiotic worlds" (Bakhtin, 1981; Voloshinov's, 1973)" (2009:27). Broadly speaking, Prior sees that multimodality is all around us and an integral part in

the understanding of genre, “not some special features of texts or certain kinds of utterance, and certainly is not a consequence of technologies (cf. Kress, 2003).

Interestingly, in their handbook Swales and Feak (2004) substantially discuss how to linguistically describe graphs and tables i.e. the main focus is still the use of word. Instead, Olsen and Huckin (1983) give much greater emphasis to visuals, covering fifty pages to explain the actual appropriate use of and design of ‘*visual elements*’ in their handbook for non-native speakers using English for Science and Technology: as they comment, “There are times...when words alone are not the best way to transfer information, or points of view, times when words need to combined with visual aids.” (1983:119). Prior (2009) notes that Lemke (1998) argues that scientific texts have for a long time been *multimedia* genres, whose mix of modalities plays a crucial role in the construction of meaning. He also notes other studies e.g. Berkenkotter, (2001), have highlighted ways literate activity involved multimodal chains of genres. Hyland (2013) note how many texts, including scientific e.g. mathematics (O’Halloran, 2004) and technical texts have always been multimodal. Paltridge (2013:352) notes that DuBois in as early as 1980 wrote about the role of slides in conference presentations (a topic later taken up by Rowley-Jolivet (2002, quoted in Paltridge, 2013:352), and that Miller in 1998 discussed the role of visual elements e.g. figures, tables, in research papers, and their growing importance.

Hence, given these differing positions, ‘multimodality’ in genre is essentially presented as either part of the *contingency* of genre, genres are evolving, and changes in society and the use of technology are causing genres to become more

visual, or visuals have always been part of genre i.e. part of the *pattern* of genre, and human communication, only up until very recently, little attention has been given to visual representation in the study of genre.

Differences in approach to studying visuals

This brings us to another dissention between genre scholars, as how to accommodate 'visuals' in genre study, how their use affects the written, and viceversa. Both Hyland (2013) and Bargiela-Chiappini (2008) take Kress and van Leeuven's (2001) theory of multimodal communication based on the notions of resources i.e. semiotic modes combined in particular ways or *practices* to produce *multiple articulations,* as a major step in the study of genre visuals. In this way, it is possible to identify 'inventories' of these modes, and analyze them, similarly as one can analyze grammatical elements. Emphasis is on identifying these resources, and analyzing how their articulation contributes to the resulting 'overall effect' synchronically, implying that importance of context may be underplayed. Indeed, Prior (2009) sees that such an approach, taken for example by Kress and van Leeuven (2001), recalls Halliday's Systemic Grammar, and so essentially ignores context by analyzing elements in isolation. Instead, Prior extends investigation of the 'activity' into all the forms or modes that may be used.

To help explain and describe an ever increasingly complex situation, and emphasizing that multimodality should *not* be looked for *only* in a specific text, Prior refers to Bazerman's notion of genre systems (1994), already employed by both

Russell (1994) and Berkenkotter (2001), and introduces potentially two very useful notions of i. *mediated multi-modal genre systems* (2009; also Molle & Prior, 2008), apparently making some reference to activity theory indicated through the term *mediated.* This notion foresees that these 'mediated multi-modal genre systems' are made up of ii. *productive chains of discourse* (PCDs) - 'particular configurations of multi-modality' or 'sequence of oral and embodied genres mixed with written and visual genres', which Prior maintains, should constitute the unit of analysis. This entails looking for 'multimodality' in how genres are used (e.g. a text may be written to be read aloud), in how the participants *perceive* that use (he calls this their 'consciousness'), as well as in externalized artefacts and actions (Prior, 2009:28). The example given is a presentation where the presentation itself can be taken as a genre (within, presumably, an activity system), where the inscribed genres (Russell's 'inscriptions' (1997) of the slides are used, which can contain a great variety of modes - written text, tables, colours, charts, the artefacts used can be the computer, the PowerPoint presentation programme, tables, chairs (and how they are arranged), pointers' stick, the oral speech (Russell's 'vocalization' (1997)) of the presenter who uses stress, and tone of their voice to 'communicate' with their audience, along with eye-contact, gestures, etc. – a whole rich combination of elements or 'configurations of multi-modality' ,or, in activity theory terminology, a wide range of tools.

2.11 Key principles and definitions of key terms for an activity-genre multi-dimensional/multi-perspective framework

Given the fairly extensive literature review above, some key principles and definitions of key terms can be usefully established.

Summary of principles of activity theory

Russell notes that "activity theory does not posit some underlying conceptual scheme or deep structure for explaining behavior…but looks at the reciprocal behavior in mutual exchange and negotiation", (1997:598), and that, as established by Cole and Engeström (1993), the basic unit of analysis of behavior, individual and collective is the activity system

Russell defines an activity system as:

> *Any on-going, object-directed, historically conditioned, dialectically structured, tool-mediated interaction*.

Engeström (1999:45) summarized activity theory with the help of five principles, characterizing an activity system which is: collective, artefact-mediated and object-oriented; multi-voiced; historical; subject to contradictions which bring about change and development; and open to expansive transformations. Drawing on these principles, but, given the onus of the present study, also on the literature on the study of genre with reference to activity theory (e.g. Russell, 1997; Winsor, 1999;

Berkenkotter, 2001, Ding, 2008), I further summarize activity theory with the following eight principles:

- Activity systems can range in size from two people working on the same outcome (Russell, 1997:510), to major institutions (Berkenkotter, 2000; Geisler, 2001; Bazerman, 2003; Ding, 2008), and in a continual state of 'flux' (Engeström, 1983), very much reflecting Schopenhauer's 'perpetual change', as in the quote above.

- As illustrated by Fig. 2.2, based on Engeström (1987), *subjects* historically construct an activity system by choosing some tools - *mediational means*- over others, and mediate the object/ m*otive* (the goal or task), which is shaped and changed over time to produce some *outcome*. In Russell's model (Fig. 2.2), the 'outcome' is visually seen as being "outside" the activity system, being a "product" of its activity. To refer back to the example of the activity system of the hunt (Leon'tev, 1978), the dead prey would presumably be seen as the 'outcome'. Other scholars (e.g. Geisler, 2000) have preferred to simplify issues and 'fuse' the 'object/motive' and the 'outcome', the latter being seen as an integral part of the former.

- An activity system is *historically* and *culturally* constructed. Each of the three aspects of an activity system changes historically. The identity or identities of subjects, the focus and direction (object/motive) of their actions, and their tool-in-use are historically (re)constructed over a few seconds or many centuries (Russell, 1997: 512). Activities can be understood in terms of historical layers, with any system containing elements of earlier historical modes, reference being made to how goals have been accomplished in the past (the historical culture practices) (Berkenkotter,

2001:323).

- Both a single subject and an entire activity system, has at their disposal a variety of mediational means or tools to accomplish a motive, but if conditions are perceived to be the same or similar to previous conditions, they become typified actions over time (Miller, 1984) and are routinized or operationalized, and tools that have proven useful in the activity system are repeatedly used. Social practices and social structures are so regularized, giving the activity system *stability* or *pattern*. (Russell, 1997: 515).

- As dynamic entities (or macrosocial structures) constantly re-created through micro-level interactions (Russell, 1997; Berkenkotter, 2001), an activity system can be seen as mutually constitutive and always in flux (Winsor, 1999:201) - the quality of change or *contingency* is a natural part of an activity system. Any tool may be modified, disposed of, or picked up by an activity system, in response to changing conditions (Russell, 1997).

- Discourse ('vocalization and inscriptions') is <u>one</u> kind of 'material' tool among others, including genres (which can be related to other kinds of material actions or tools, such as gestures for speaking, and the use of computers in presentations (Prior, 2009). Linguistic tools are not privileged over others: tools which are used for (re) constructing systems of human activity include the tone of a voice, the stress of word, etc. in speech, the use of semi-colons, tables, fonts, etc. in writing.

- As tools, genres - (in 'typical, reoccurring conditions) 'typified tool-mediated ways of dialectal, purposeful interaction' (Russell, 1997:513) - are at the disposal of the activity system, but potentially powerful stabilizing forces, capable of amending policy

and behaviour (Bazerman, 2003). Since context is seen as an ongoing accomplishment (Russell, 1997), genres are always only "stabilized-for-now" (Schryer, 1993), and constitute sites of both *pattern* and *contingency*. Through interaction between and across activity systems, people mutually appropriate ways of writing from other activity systems, altering or transforming old genres.

- Both individuals and groups take part in different activity systems, potentially, if not inevitably, leading to dissensus, conflicts, and contradictions within and between activity systems (Berkenkotter, 2001), which hence should not be seen as homogenous entities, (as often discourse communities have been interpreted to be (Swales, 1990, Myers, 1987). Each subject has their own historical and cultural 'make-up' which they bring to bear on the construction and running of the activity system (Russell, 1997).

Working definitions of some key terms

Questions of 'genre', 'communicative purpose'

Problems of 'communicative purpose' and 'genre' seem to arise from unresolved issues concerning the description of the relationship in genre studies based on activity theory, but it may also be due to the frequent attribution of genres with some intrinsic quality or 'integrity' (e.g. Bhatia, 2004). This has led, I believe, to a rather restricted way of seeing 'communicative purpose', apart from the fact genres can have multiple or occluded communicative purposes (Askehave & Swales (2001). That is to say, *regularity* of purpose is still strongly associated with *regularity* of form (Miller, 1984; Swales, 1990), while there is evidence that this is not always the case,

as illustrated by Winsor (1999) and Witte (1992), and as discussed by Russell (1997): genres which do not share a specific set of definable formal features can be recognized as the same genre " as long as these texts are operationalizing the actions of participants in the activity system" (Russell, 1997: 518). That is to say, "Participants' shared recognition of the typified actions that a genre operationalizes is the key to distinguishing one genre from another" (Russell, 1997: 518).

Further, Devitt (2004), for one, sees that attributing 'communicative purpose' to 'social action' somehow 'removes' communicative purpose from genre (Devitt, 2004). One attribution does not, to my mind, exclude the attribution of the concept to another, though it may modify it, but this would be a different issue. Hence, I argue, that the notion of '*communicative purpose'* can be, and has been, usefully and validly attributed to and used as a main guiding criterion for 'genre' which can, nonetheless, be identified in various 'forms' :

- a single genre e.g. the research article, (Swales, 1990; etc.),
- its various parts e.g. the abstract, introduction, etc. of a research article (Ayers, 2008; etc.),
- a collection of genres e.g. a company's documentation (Winsor, 1999),
- a system of genres (Bazerman, 1999) e.g. psychotherapy paperwork (Berkenkotter, 2001), or,
- a whole activity system (Russell, 1997), represented by the element object/*motive* of the activity system model (EngstrÖm, 1993), whereby genre 'jumps the wall' to represent the object/motive itself e.g. major

company reports (Geisler, 2001).

No doubt, other configurations are yet to be discovered. Rather than viewing genre as having some form of intrinsic quality (Devitt, 2004) or integrity (Bhatia, 2004) in terms of 'communicative purpose', the view of genre I taken here is to see this (communicative) purpose (of a single or 'collection' of genres) as potentially varying according to its use on the part of its user(s) (Russell, 1997) (as indicated above), the motivations behind that use possible being multiple, but conditioned by, among others, personal intentions (Bhatia, 2004), relations between people in a group (Goffman, 1971, 1974), the cultural context (e.g. Winsor, 1999; Devitt, 1999), what outcome an activity system hopes to produce (Russell, 1997), and that in any case, at any time a single genre may be site of multiple and/or occluded 'communicative purposes' (Askehave & Swales, 2000).

Hence the value of activity theory: it provides an explanation of how and why 'communicative purpose' of genre is projected and is subject to change, through the continual enactment of participants in one or more activity systems, which we can interpret as *context*. The fact 'communicative purpose' is also necessarily subject to *stability* and *change* has, I believe, even been overlooked by studies in activity theory, with scholars emphasizing the dynamic quality of *genre*, as site of *stability* and *change* (Winsor, 1999; Berkenkotter, 2001; Russell, 1997). Genres change and modify since, in response to changing conditions, genre users have to project modified or changing 'communicative purposes' – what they are doing and why, in the context of "reciprocal behavior in mutual exchange and negotiation" (Russell's

definition of activity theory, 1997:509). Further, how ‘communicative purpose’ can be expressed or created through a single genre, a collection of genres in what mode or configuration genre can be taken to depend on how and when a genre/ collection of genres is used by participants in (any) given activity system(s).

At this point, following this reasoning, the addition of another (ninth) underlying principle of activity theory can be added:

- ‘communicative purpose(s)’ of genre (whether singly or collectively), is created through the use of genre in the enactment of participants in activity systems.

What exactly constitutes *genre* and how it relates to the activity system as a whole, but also the other tools’ needs to be clarified, as well. This is particularly true given the new considerations, presented in Chapter 2, of genre *multimodality (*e.g. Paltridge, 2013; Tardy, 2011; Prior, 2009; Prior, 2013), that we should be considering not only the written or spoken ‘word’ of genres, but the different ‘modes’ employed to constitute a genre, e.g. colour, graphs, drawings, use of calligraphic features such as fonts, bullets, spacing, etc. in written genres. Given the principles of activity theory above, particularly that ‘linguistic tools are not privileged above others ‘ (Russell, 1997), such features can be usefully labeled as *tools*, features that contribute in some way to the furthering of the object/motive of the activity system. But are they to be taken as ‘tools’ of ‘tools’ i.e. features of a genre, or can they be genres themselves? The answers to these questions may seem more obvious when referring to calligraphic features, but what about drawings, charts? Are they genres?

Following Russell (1997:514) and Miller (1994), the following definition can be formulated:

Genre is:

> *a routinized tool(s) used to carry out a typified, routine action", which is typically recognized by the participants. 'Communicative purpose(s)' of genre (whether singly or collectively), is created through the use of genre in the enactment of participants in activity systems.*

With this definition, tables and drawings can be taken to be genres.

Culture and identity: local and global

By referring to Devitt's definition of culture (2004: 25) and Atkinson (2004) and Connor's (2004) on culture, the following definition can be given:

Culture is:

> *Any activity, phenomenon, or institution with which the members identify emotionally or cognitively, leading to a shared set of learned behaviours, values, and templates, which orient and organize the way people think, feel, and act.*

The term *identity* has been borrowed from Holliday et al. (1999), and represents a response, on his part, to previous short-comings of studying culture as product, from a desire "for more dynamic and less top-down way of thinking about cultural activity, especially the individual's role in such activity" (Atkinson, 2004: 282). The individual

or participant, in the logic of activity, is seen as being subject to multiple, sometimes contradictory socio-cultural influences or identities, but essentially, on one level or another, there is a sense of *self-identification* or *belonging*. From here, I took it useful to formulate the two notions of i. *local-identity* culture, and ii. *global-identity* culture, which now needed to be defined.

Local-identity culture is:

Any social and/or working activity, phenomenon, or institution created through the notion of 'place', whereby people, through in-depth and prolonged contact with that place (or places contemporarily) in some form, come to develop a mutual emotionally or cognitively identification, leading to the acquisition of capabilities and a shared set of learner behaviour, values and templates, which orient and organize the way the members think, feel, and act.

Making reference to Giddens, (1984), Thompson (1995), and the 'big-picture culture of Atkinson (2004), and Devitt's (2004) categorization of 'networking', we can say,

Global-identity culture is:

Any social and/or activity, phenomenon, or institution created 'across' both space and time, particularly expressed through technology in some form, whereby people 'interact' using elements of inscribed genres and complex oral genres through networking, leading to the acquisition of capabilities and a shared set of learned behaviours, values and templates to some extent, which orient the way people think, feel and act.

Activity networking

If, for analytical purposes, we take 'local-identity culture' to be mainly associated with activity systems, 'global-identity culture' can be associated with 'activity networking'. Drawing on Devitt (2004:44) and Thompson (1991), the following definition can be formulated.

Activity networking can be taken as:

An 'open' interaction of participants (who may have never met through technology, cutting across 'space' and 'time', indicating a more 'loosely linked' activity which may be infrequent or sporadic, and through which globally-held 'values' or 'culture' are passed on.

Since the interactions and influence of networking is "less easily traceable than those with tighter communities (Devitt, 2004:45), here the issue is kept more open, and loose, with no assumption that the behaviour of people is 'organized' (though this is not to be excluded), and how far a shared set of values exists is harder to assess. This distinction between 'local' and 'global' has been done to attempt to facilitate research and 'keep things open' and does not intend to claim to fully capture the "complex prism" of culture (Featherstone, 2001:2). Combining *identity* with *culture* to delineate two broad identity cultures - 'local-identity' culture and 'global-identity' culture, can be seen as part of considering surrounding social context and practices, and intercultural interactions (Connor and Rozycki, 2013). Participants have identification with different cultures, here as interpreted as 'local' culture and 'global' culture, the notion of *culture* pervading all aspects of an activity system and potentially being expression in all its elements e.g. the behaviour and values of the

participants, the type of genres used, the very object/ motive an activity system pursues. 'Local-identity culture' can be associated to activity systems, while global-identity culture, to what can be termed 'networking'. It can be envisaged that, as people participate in activity systems and networks, local-identity culture can overlap with global-identity culture, and consequently, common tools may be used (contemporarily), with evidence of both cultures being present in the genres.

Power

From the literature discussed above, two lines of thought can usefully be distinguished concerning the concept of power: one which is concerned with structures and agency (Thompson, 1984), the other, as seeing power as an interactional accomplishment by participants in the course of social action (Scheider, 2007). Genre studies have tended to take either a more 'traditional' view of power, taking the status quo for granted (e.g. Swales, 1990), or, while still taking power as a kind of discrete unity that is somehow conferred on people, through their role in an organization, their professional expertise and standing etc. i.e. a hierarchical set-up, see it not as a static entity, but a dynamic one, 'lower ranking' groups, still being able to resist, contest, or acquire for themselves, some of that power (Bhatia, 2004; Devitt, 2004). This latter view seems to fit Thompson's (1984: 68) definition of power:

> *"The capacity of an agent (participant) or agents (participants) to secure specific outcomes through their intervention"* (my brackets).

This 'kind' or 'focus' of power can be termed *structural power*, whereby action of an

agent is concerned with maintaining or contesting social structures. It is undeniable that hierarchies do exist, and that a chairman of an organization (Koester, 2006), over others, would have at his or her disposition, resources which would facilitate intervention. However, as indicated by research following more ethnomethodological approaches, this is not the whole story, and that power can also be understood as a practical achievements, as people in organizations, for example, call on (Garfinkel, 1967), or orient their behavior in acknowledgment, of objective realities of power relations and regulation. Schneider's (2007: 182) definition of power can be taken as:

> "A practical achievement, produced by participants in the course of social interaction in which some version or accounts of 'reality' come to dominate others".

Here, the 'focus' is on what can be called *accomplished* power, where power is a collaborative interactional accomplishment, rather than being an entity which can be possessed. In this way, power relations are seen to be 'constantly shifting', with emphasis on the individual *in loco*. This latter view of power seems particularly relevant to activity theory. However, given the problems of analysis of activity theory, as discussed by Witte (2005), it might be useful to utilize both concepts and incorporate them into a framework of analysis: the notion of structural power can act as a kind of benchmark for the researcher, what they 'expect' to find (rather than what they 'should' find) (again, recalling Witte (2005) and EngestrÖm's (1987) use of an 'model' health practice), and accomplished power, as what is actually observed in the running of the activity system.

2.7 Concluding remarks

From the literature review, I aimed to illustrate how activity theory can contribute significantly to our understanding of genre and its use in context, and that activity theory models can form the basis of a useful framework which captures various dimensions and perspectives. Such a framework promises to go some way in resolving the problematic issue of presenting ‘genre’ and ‘context’ as a dichotomy, and analyzing genre in isolation: the framework would constitute the ‘context’. I also attempted to show that, despite a number of issues being of current concern in both genre study and activity theory studies, such technology, multimodality, culture and identity, and power, no presently available frameworks (to my knowledge) explicitly incorporate these notions into a multi-dimensional/ multi-perspective framework for studying genre in context. Finally, the literature, along with observations from the case study (see Chapter 1, for comments on this), provided the basis for the identification and working definition of key elements, presented above. The next step is to attempt to incorporate them all in a multidimensional/ multi-perspective framework, which will be the objective of the next chapter.

Chapter 3 -
Proposal of an alternative and novel multi-dimensional/multi-perspective analytical frame work : its conception and development

3.1 Aims of the chapter

Here I present the conceptualization and development of a framework based on activity theory, specifically that of an activity system, as conceived by Leon'tev (1978), building on from Vygotsky and Luria's meditational model (1999), and further developed by Engestrm (1987) and Cole and EngestrÖm (1993), and applied by mainstream genre scholars e.g. Russell (1997), Berkenkotter (2001), etc. I attempt to highlight the differences of the framework presented here, and other multi-dimensional and multi-perspective models incorporating genre, and also other models based on activity theory, in that the present framework explicitly incorporates notions of 'power' 'culture', and 'identity'.

I illustrate through the description of the various versions of the framework, how it developed, particularly in light of the findings of the study of the astrology group, presented in Chapter 4. As commented in Chapter 1, this study did not represent a 'linear' progression but, as often the case with research involving activity theory (see Beaufort, 2000; Ding, 2008), a more organic, cyclic form, whereby the initial framework I started off with when researching the role of genre in the astrology

group, was not the one I ended up with at the conclusion of the study (when the activity system broke up, that is the astrology group disbanded). Building on previous research (Devitt, 2004; Swales, 1998, etc.), and through my observations of the astrology group, I developed the concepts and their definitions of local-culture identity and global-culture identity, as presented in the previous chapter. Further concepts and their definitions are presented here to complete the description of the multi-dimensional/ multi-perspective framework.

3.2 The structure of the chapter

The chapter traces the development of the framework and presents this elaboration in four main sections, reflecting the four main versions of the framework: the initial model, the second version following the first modifications, the third version (an activity system model) following further modifications, and finally, the activity system and activity networking framework. This is followed by a section on the procedure for applying the framework. The chapter finishes off with some concluding remarks.

3.3 The development of the framework

3.3.1 The initial model.

The initial model is illustrated in Fig. 3.1, and contains five elements: (i) the triangle which represents an activity system, and the three interacting elements of that system, (ii) Participant(s), (iii) Tools, (iv) Object/ Motive, and the circle which

represents the element (v) Culture. This is a first attempt (to my knowledge) at incorporating the notion of 'culture' explicitly into an activity system model.

(i) An activity system

As can be seen, the basic instrumental meditational triangle was taken, as developed by Leon'tev from the meditational triangle of Vygotsky and Luria (1999), and represents the most familiar model in genre studies of an activity system (Leon'tev, 1978) e.g. Russell, (1997) see Fig. 2.2 (see also Berkenkotter, 2001), as commented previously. An activity system has been defined previously (Chapter 2):

An activity system is:

> *Any human on-going, object-directed, historically conditioned, dialectically structured, tool-mediated interaction*.

The system comprises of three fundamental elements: the humans, the tools which are represent the means of mediation, which together work towards a specific goal or object/motive to achieve a desired outcome (which can be taken to be outside the activity system, as such). Activity theory combines the elements into one unit of analysis (Russell, 1997:510), and sees the activity system under analysis itself as the context (Berkenkotter, 2001).

(ii) Participant(s)

The humans which participate in an Activity System are called here Participants:

Participant(s) is (are):

Is/are that/those human(s) which interact(s) in some way, whether over a longer duration of time or a brief moment, in the activity system to contribute to the furthering of its object/motive

Different labels have been used to refer to people who use genres from 'genre users' (e.g. Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995, Swales 2004), 'actors' (e.g. Gunnarsson, 1997), 'agents' (e.g. Nickerson, 2000). Clearly, a choice of label is significant in that it indicates a certain role. The term 'subject' has often been used (e.g. Russell, 1997; Engeström, 1987), which creates a rather 'flat' effect to the role (though perhaps the intention was to focus on this element rather than 'text'). Here, the term 'participant' is very pointedly used to indicate that we are talking about a participatory role in the Activity System to move it forward towards the object/motive to achieve an outcome, and can be seen as one of the points of departure of the study of such a system. The term is meant to recognize the importance of the active and political role of the participants in the activity system.

(iii) Tools

Other lexical changes have been made compared to the original model (Russell, 1997, Engeström, 19987), with 'meditational means' being simplified to Tools'.

Tools are:

material objects or symbolic means ('meditational means') which are chosen over others by the participants and used to accomplish some action with some outcome – 'tools-in-use' i.e. they contribute in some way to the workings of the activity system in the furthering of the object/motive

Following previous studies (e.g. Russell (1997), Tools comprise genres. In contrast to other multi-dimensional and multi-perspective models e.g. Devitt (2004) (Fig. 2.6), Bhatia (2004) (Fig.2.), which tend to place genre 'centre-stage', and present a hierarchical structure, the framework here, in line with others e.g. Bazerman (2003), Berkenkotter (2001), Russell (1997), attempts to present genre in the context of its use in object-oriented human activity, by including Participants, other elements which may be relevant in the course of that activity, and how all is geared to move the activity towards forward to the Object/motive.

(iv) Object/Motive

Participants choose specific Tools to further the Object/motive of the Activity System:

Object/motive(s) is (are):

the driving or guiding force of an activity system, the goal(s) or its task(s) (or problem space) , which is shaped and changed over time to produce some *outcome*.

Though within a single activity system, different things or events might happen, presumably (as indicated by Russell, 1997), a *leading* activity on the part of Participants should be evident, which conducts the activity system forward towards

that goal.

(v) Culture

In an attempt to incorporate the element Culture, a circle has been drawn to encompass the entire triangle to indicate that culture is diffused throughout the system, affecting (and being affected) by all the elements. The following definition (based on Devitt, 2004:25; Atkinson, 2004; Connor, 2004; Gannon & Pillai, 2013:3) can be given:

Culture is:

Any activity, phenomenon, or institution with which the members identify emotionally or cognitively, leading to a shared set of learned behaviours, values, and templates, which orient and organize the way people think, feel, and act.

As indicated in the diagram of the framework, and commented in the previous chapter, the notion of Culture pervades all aspects of an activity system, potentially being expressed in all its elements e.g. the behaviour and values of the participants, the type of genres used, the very object/ motive an activity system pursues. The visual representation differs from more hierarchical visual representations of Culture (and genre), such as Devitt (2004) (see 2. 6) and Miller (1994), which represent it more as a discrete (though open and interchangeable) entity, compared to other elements in the models, and imply some form of 'hierarchical relationship', and a separate set of variables to be individually investigated.

3.2.2 The second version following the first modifications

The second version of the framework is presented in Fig. 3.2, whereby, primarily based on the first observation of the astrology group (presented in Chapter 4), three main modifications were made: (i) the introduction of arrows in the triangle, (ii) the differentiation of the Tools; and (iii) the differentiation of the Participants. It represents an attempt to incorporate explicitly notions of 'multimodality' and 'power' into a multi-dimensional/ multi-perspective framework (not yet available, according to my reading of the literature – see Chapter 2).

(i) The introduction of arrows

The first change that can be noticed is the use of arrows between the main elements of the triangle of the activity system, to underline the dynamic quality of the relations and their continual 'flux' of 'give-and-take', as confirmed by the observations of the astrology group and previously noted in the literature (e.g. Engeström, 1987; Russell, 1997). In previous models, e.g. Russell (1997), Berkenkotter (2001), Engeström (1987) arrows surprisingly were absent.

(ii) The differentiation of Tools

Confirming the importance of genre (e.g. Devitt, 2004) as one of the most powerful tools (Russell, 1997), it became apparent during the observations of the astrology group, that it was useful to distinguish between tools that were 'genres' and those which were not. Hence, as indicated in Fig. 3.2. Tools were divided into two subgroups – Genres and Non-genres'. Initially, 'non-genres' were labeled 'other

tools', but this appeared to be too generic[1]. Consequently, the second category was made in reference to 'genre', where the following definition is given:

Genre is:

> *a routinized tool(s) used to carry out a typified, routine action", which is typically recognized by the participants. 'Communicative purpose(s)' of genre (whether singly or collectively), is created through the use of genre in the enactment of participants in activity systems.*

As indicated in the Fig. 3.2, two subcategories of Genre Tools are distinguished: following the work of previous scholars (e.g. Prior, 2009; Molle & Prior, 2008; Russell, 1997), and the view that genres created through the 'written' word contain other *modes* (colour, fonts, drawings, etc), which can also be seen to contribute to their use and communicative purpose(s), 'written genres including all their modes' are taken as Inscribed Genres, to indicate that the object of study is not restricted to the written word, and that in any case, 'written' genres should be viewed in these terms. Drawings and tables in some form are included in the category of Inscribed Genres (Prior, 2009). Complex Oral Genres refer to spoken genres which present an even more complex line-up, perhaps including not only the 'spoken word' but also the tone of voice, the use of stress, whistles, gestures, etc., potentially involving sound, sight and movement. Again, the object of genre analysis can be extended beyond the spoken word, and that these features also contribute to the 'communicative purpose' of a spoken genre.

For non-genre tools, the following definition is given:

Non-genre tools are:

material objects, not perceived as genres in the workings of an activity system, but which are used to accomplish some action with some outcome, that is they contribute in some way to the workings of the activity system in the furthering of the object/motive, and will most likely include a wide array of things, from the venue of an activity system to a pencil.

(iii) The differentiation of Participants

In an effort to underline the determining role of the participant within the activity system, this element has been placed at the upper most angle of the triangle. For research purposes, two types of 'power' were defined in the previous chapter. The first was 'structural', and reflects a view of power similar to Thompson's (1984), incorporating Giddens' structuration theory and how the agent interacts with the structures, whereby some agents have more opportunity, through resources available to them, to interact and change structures than others:

Structural power can be taken as:

"The capacity of an agent (participant) or agents (participants) to secure specific outcomes

through their intervention" (my brackets)

As we have seen, however, though this may account for some features of 'power' (e.g. the resources available to a company chairperson (Koester, 2006), it overlooks what was called in the previous chapter 'accomplished power':

Accomplished power can be taken as:

"A practical achievement, produced by participants in the course of social interaction in which some version or accounts of 'reality' come to dominate others"

As discussed in the previous chapter, this view of power follows the work of Garfinkel (1967), where the behavior of one participant (within a dyad or within a community) 'orients' a single interaction to confirm, or challenge, the establishing power relations – the idea that 'power' is an ongoing, dynamic accomplishment, and not something 'out there' (Schneider, 2007) to be exercised.

For the purpose of highlighting the power relations between participants and their use of genre in those interactions while under observation by the researcher, the roles of Participants in the revised framework of the present study were differentiated, as indicated by the observations made of the astrology group. At first, using the criteria of the percentage of presences, three subcategories were delineated: core participants; regular participants; and fringe participants (these would be presumed to be least present). However, the delineating percentages

risked being rather arbitrary, so, on the basis of the definitions of ‘Structural Power’ and ‘Accomplished Power’, the element Participants was divided into the dichotomy ‘Major’ versus ‘Minor’ ‘Structural Power’ participants, and the dichotomy ‘Major’ versus ‘Minor’ ‘Accomplished Power Participants’ (though no value judgment is intended with the terminology as such, though interpretation of any results obtained from the categorization may be critical – see below).

In the logic of activity theory, arrows are indicated between the different subcategories to indicate the state of ‘flux’ of things (Engeström, 1987) i.e. a major power participant can become a minor participant over time or vice versa (Winsor, 1999), and that in a single transaction, a ‘minor’ power participant can orient that interaction to ‘debunk’ claims from another participant to a more powerful or credible position. In this way, it is attempted to avoid the dichotomy rather set up by some more heavily social constructionist views (e.g. Bhatia, 1997; 2004) of an ‘in v. out’ crowd. For the researcher, identifying the major structural power participant (through interviews, reading of organizational hierarchy of an institution, etc.) and their role can be a point of departure or benchmark to facilitate identification of confirmation or shifts and changes in power relations over time and/or within single transactions in the running of the activity system. It could be predicted that as genres are seen as particularly powerful tools (Russell, 1997), major power participants could be expected to make particular use of them in terms of the range of genres, and in the frequency of use, and “frequency of interaction” (Devitt, 2004:43) through that use. On the contrary, during the workings of an activity system, the unexpected use of a particular genre (‘marked’

use) by what had been categorized as a ‘minor power participant’ might indicate a challenge to, for instance, the up-until-then recognized practices of the system, constituting a ‘disturbance’ to the system (Engeström, 1993). In a detailed, prolonged study of an activity system, it might perhaps be possible to usefully provide further sub-categories (for at least that particular activity system). On a final note, this differentiation between participants concerning issues of power is part of the aim to formulate a framework which is ‘critical’.

3.2.3 A second modification of the framework: an activity system model

This next version of the framework, illustrated in Fig. 3.3, involved five changes, that in (i) the differentiation of the concept of Culture, (ii) the differentiation of the multimodality of genre, and the differentiation of Participant(s) with (iii) the introduction of the element Researcher(s), introducing the figure, both as Participant and a Ghost Participant (a non interacting observer), (iv) the differentiation of Object/motive and so desired outcome – Front-stage versus Backstage Object/motive; and last of all, (v) the inclusion of the notion of Occluded Genres.

(i)The differentiation of the notion of Culture

The literature has already indicated the complexities of the notion of ‘culture’ (e.g. Atkinson, 2004; Connor, 2004; Katan, 1999, 2004; Devitt, 1999, 2004; Garfinkel, 1967; Holliday, 1999; 2011 etc.), as discussed in the previous chapter. This indicated that the element ‘Culture’ was too generic, as it stood in the previous version of the

framework, giving little indication as to how to identify features in the activity system which could be described as due to 'cultural factors'. Previous scholars (e.g. Swales, 1998, 2004; Devitt, 2004; Holliday, 1999, 2011, Widdowson, 1998; Engeström, 1999, etc.) have indicated the potential usefulness of the distinction or dichotomy of 'local' versus 'global', and this was confirmed in the observations made of the astrology group: reference to local places, local cultural heroes, etc. indicated a more contained 'local' culture, while use of technology through computer programmes, etc. indicated a more 'global' culture, stretching out into cyberspace. As a consequence, the circle delineating the element Culture was removed and two new concepts introduced to the framework, that of Local-Identity Culture and Global-Identity Culture, as developed in the previous chapter, were introduced into the framework with the following definitions:

Local-identity culture is:

Any social and/or working activity, phenomenon, or institution created through the notion of 'place', whereby people, through in-depth and prolonged contact with that place (or places contemporarily) in some form, come to develop a mutual emotionally or cognitively identification, leading to the acquisition of capabilities and a shared set of learner behaviour, values and templates, which orient and organize the way the members think, feel, and act.

The notion of 'local' 'place' and institutions' (Swales, 1998) refers to an acquisition of a cultural identity through the contact or "closeness" (Devitt, 2004:43) with a geographical position, the workings of local institutions - state institutions, taxes,

court cases, local schools, local universities, etc. and how they influence daily lives (as mainly expressed through the use of tools), clubs, societies, the spoken language (for instance, a local dialect), and so on.

Global-identity culture is*:*

> *Any social and/or activity, phenomenon, or institution created 'across' both space and time, particularly expressed through technology in some form, whereby people 'interact' using elements of inscribed genres and complex oral genres through networking, leading to the acquisition of capabilities and a shared set of learned behaviours, values and templates to some extent, which orient the way people think, feel and act.*

The term 'global' indicates a more 'open contact' (Luhmann, 2012), "accessibility" and "diffusion" being two key aspects – the entity and the genres its uses are 'accessible' to a wider audience in terms of 'comprehension' i.e. the target audience is expanded, and genres are more widely 'diffused', with a wider number of 'participants' in terms of numbers and space i.e. there is a 'remoteness' of place. Global-identity culture would be expressed through the use of technology, computers, mobile phones, tablets, the use of internet, computer programmes, an example being a website which uses a multiple-language conversion for its users, or a website which utilizes only English, taken as the global language, as intended by Nickerson (2005) and Gladdol (2006).

The triangle is used to also represent the 'boundaries' of the 'local-identity'

culture and its expression within a specific loco, and the 'global-identity' culture is seen as nebulous, without boundaries: in the logic of activity theory, the reciprocal relationship between local and global-identity, a continual feeding of one type of culture into another (Connor & Rozychi, 2013), is expressed through the arrows going in both directions. This is not unrelated to EngestrÖm's (1999:45) five principles of activity theory, in particular the third principle concerning 'historicity' – that activity theory is a cultural-historic approach (Russell, 1997; Berkenkotter, 2001, etc.), where EngestrÖm sees that the problems and potentials of an activity system should be understood against its own local history, though contrasted with the more 'global history' of more generic concepts, procedures, tools, employed and accumulated in the local activity. As further implied with the use of arrows between 'local'-identity' culture and 'global-identity' culture in the present framework , an interchange or 'cross-fertilization' (Featherstone, 2002) between the two 'cultures' can be expected, producing an *intersecting* and *layering* of local and global cultures, and indeed, tools, particular genres are likely to contain elements of both, creating 'hybrid' texts (Bhatia, 2004; Molle & Prior, 2008).

(ii) The differentiation of the notion of the 'multimodality' of genre: the notion of Complex Genre Configurations

Based on Prior's (2009) and Molle and Prior's (2008) notions of *mediated multi-modal genre systems* and *productive chains of discourse* - 'particular configurations of multi-modality' or 'sequence of oral and embodied genres mixed with written and visual genres', the notion of Complex Genre Configurations (CGC) is introduced, which represents a sub-unit of analysis (Molle & Prior, 2008: Prior, 2009):

Complex Genre Configurations are:

Multi-modal configurations of genre created through the activities of the participants in the activity system, possibly involving 'other' tools as well, and represent a form of "event' during those activities. The configurations are formed, broken, reformed, with new configurations being constantly formed in the on-going flux of the activity system, and project a communicative purpose at the moment of their use.

The label is meant to underline the role of genre in the notion, and that the configurations are 'temporary', 'created' by the Participants during the 'carrying out' of the activity system. The usefulness of such a notion became apparent during the observations of the astrology group (see next chapter). As indicated in the framework, a genre which is used in conjunction with another genre (Prior, 2009) is categorized as a CGC, as was a genre used with (a) non-genre tool(s), and more than one genre, used in sequence or contemporarily, with (a) non-genre tool (s). Hence, the minimum requirement for a CGC was one genre, in combination with another tool (genre or non-genre). The use of two or more non-genre tools in combination by (a) Participant(s) has been labelled Combined Tool, as indicated in the framework.

(iii) The differentiation of Participant(s): the element Researcher(s)

The element Researcher(s) has been included in the framework to attempt to take into account the potential impact of the presence of a researcher in the running of an

activity system (Starfield, 2013, Paltridge, 2013, Johns & Makaleda, 2011) under observation (no least to increase the awareness of the researcher themselves in this issue), the researcher(s) can be an active (i) Participant (as I was myself in the astrology group, the experience of which heightened my belief of the importance of this matter – particularly concerning the question of 'multi-identities' and conflict of interest, the potential varying allegiance to one system from another – see Ethical Considerations in the next chapter), or a ii. Ghost Participant, whereby the researcher observes without consciously interacting in any way with the activity system, or at least makes every effort not to do so. Technically speaking, if the researcher can only be considered a Participant if, through their interaction, further the Object/motive of the Activity System (see definition above). However, I preferred the term Ghost Participant to say, Observer, which would indicate the researcher was some kind of 'fly-on-the-wall', overlooking potential mechanisms.

(iv) The differentiation of Object/motive (and so desired outcome): Front-stage versus Backstage Object/motive

The Object/motive represents the 'problem space' of the activity system – the 'where are we going and why'. Yet, if 'occluded genres can exist alongside more 'official' genres, which in any case can have more than one 'communicative purpose' (Askehave & Swales, 2001), the Object/motive might also be 'occluded', particularly considering there can be tensions between participants as to what the object/motive is, and the motives between participants in a system can be "multiple" and a source of "conflicts and tensions" (Russell (1997: 508), an already complex situation being further complicated (though necessarily, I believe) by the notion of power, and that

participants exercise power to different degrees within the system. Hence, while the apparent or 'official' Object/motive can represent the ultimate 'glue' that 'sticks' participants together, it also runs the risk of constituting a kind of 'acceptable face', and not really constituting the object/motive of the activity system at all, or only in part, which major power participants possibly pulling in different directions, as was indicated in the study of the astrology group. Here, Goffman's notions of 'front stage performance' and 'back stage performance' (1974) are useful in describing the problem, and have been explicitly incorporated into the framework. At this point, a more precise definition of the element Object/motive is required:

The Object/motive(s) is (are):

the driving or guiding force(s) of an activity system, the goal(s) or its task(s) (or problem space) ,

which is (are) shaped and changed over time to produce some *outcome*. *The 'official' ('front-stage') object/motive(s) may be accompanied by (an) occluded('back-stage') object)/motive (s), and will presumably be partly determined by the power relations of the participants.*

(v) Occluded genres

As was evident in the study of the astrology group, occluded genres (Swales, 2004) play a part in the running of an activity system, and appear to be particularly connected to the issue of power relations, confirming previous observations (Swales, 2004). Though perhaps difficult to identity and even more difficult to assess in details, particular if the researcher is not an Active Participant (and even then, they may not be part of the interaction, as was the case with myself and the phone calls between

some of the participants), their potential to have an impact of an activity system should not be overlooked.

3.2.4 An activity system and activity networking framework

The previous model represented the unit of analysis of an activity system, and be said to be the part applied to the case study of the astrology group (see Chapter 4). However, the continued observations of the astrology groups and indications from the literature, particularly from Russell (1997), Berkenkotter (2001), and Engeström (1987, 1993), indicated the need to develop a framework which incorporated the activity system's interaction with other activity systems, and with what I called in Chapter 2, activity networking. Three illustrations of this framework have been provided: Fig. 3.4, which illustrates the intersecting of activity systems with each other; Fig. 3.5, which illustrates how elements of a single activity system interconnect with activity networking; and indicate where these two conceptions are superimposed, to capture the complexity of cultural-historical layering and intersecting, across time and space (Giddens, 1984), as conceived by the framework. As experienced in the observations (and the active participation) of the astrology group, where communications were perceived as a complex web or series of Chinese boxes, the models 3.3, and 3.4 are to be seen as of just that, a series of interconnecting Chinese boxes.

In the Activity System and Activity Networking framework, four significant

features have been introduced: (i) the notion of Interacting Activity Systems, (ii) introduction of the notion of Activity Networking, (iii) further differentiation of Participant(s), distinguishing between Active Participants and Receptive Participants, and (iv) the introduction the figure of a Non-Participatory Informant. Features (i), (iii), and (iv) are introduced in Fig. 3.4, which is presented first. Feature (ii) is then presented in Fig. 3.5, and shown how the Systems and Networking overlap..

(i)The introduction of the notion of Interacting Activity Systems (Fig. 3.4)

The concept of how activity systems interact has been used by different scholars using activity theory (Russell, 1997; Berkenkotter, 2001; Engeström, 1999, etc.).and can be taken as one of the main driving forces of change within systems, whereby tools, for instance, are acquired by another system through the arrival, perhaps, of a new participant. As illustrated by the adapted figure by Bawarshi and Reiff (2010) (see Fig. 2.5), Russell (1997:526) conceives an overarching activity system within which multiple activity system operate, some connecting to other external activity systems. Engeström's (1999) third generation model (Fig. 2.4) visually connects two interacting activity systems through the element Object, that combining the Object (Object 1) of two activity systems can lead to the development of another (or even two (Object 3) Object (Object 2).

In the framework presented here, while the larger, central triangle represents the activity system under investigation, the four smaller triangles, represent activity systems which interconnect or interact with the first. Slightly different from Engeström's (1999) model, which represents interacting at the level of the element

Object, here, to illustrate that interaction (and change) can potentially take place at all three main elements, a triangle has been placed near each element – 'Tools', 'Object/Motive', 'Participant(s).

(ii) The introduction of the notion of Networking (Fig. 3.5)

As presented in Chapter 2, If, for analytical purposes, we take 'local-identity culture' to be mainly associated with activity systems, 'global-identity culture' can be associated with 'activity networking'. The following definition has been formulated.

Activity networking is:

An 'open' interaction of participants (who may have never met through technology, cutting across 'space' and 'time', indicating a more 'loosely linked' activity which may be infrequent or sporadic, and through which globally-held 'values' or 'culture' are passed on.

What constitutes 'global-culture' is a very complex and object of hot debate, with Featherstone (2001:2) even questioning whether such a thing exists. However, I feel it can be assumed that when individuals interact through networking through the use of technology, values and culture are passed on in some less restricted form, which would need to be assessed when analyzing specific systems.Activity Networking is expressed visually in the framework by the gridding in the background, and the dotted arrows drawn from the different Participants indicate their potential interaction with activity networking. The broken lines of the arrows indicate a 'looser' interaction.

(iii) Further differentiation of Participant(s): Active versus Receptive Participant(s) - (Fig.3.4)

Have we have seen, a *participant* constitutes someone who *participates* in an activity system, that in some way can contribute to the furthering or modification of the object/motive and the activity system as a whole. As with genre studies which describe those who produce and receive genres both as *genre users* (e.g. Miller, 1984; Huckin & Berkenkotter, 1995; Devitt, 2004), a participant can be taken as *actively contributing* to the production of genres or tools, and/or can be taken as primarily *receiving* the genres or tools (or their by-products), but with the capacity (perhaps through collective action) to influence the activity system in some way. Reference to the use and/or production of at least one genre appears a requirement in order discern one type of participant from another. If we take Russell's example of the family shopping list (1997), he and his daughter Madeleine actively produce the shopping list with the object of acquiring the needs of the family, but presumably the other members of the family also determined the content, and if things were forgotten or if the shopping list genre was deemed inadequate in some way by the other members, it would need to be changed. Though there is the risk of entering the problem outlined by Witte (2005), of delineating one activity system from another, in this case, distinguishing between the activity system of shopping and the larger system of the whole family, the distinction between 'Active' and 'Receptive' participants appears a potentially useful one. In the logic of activity theory, these roles can be interchanged i.e. a receptive participant may decide to become active (for example, if Russell's other daughter decides to go shopping with him and Madelaine). Hence, we can say:

Participant(s) is (are):

Is/are that/those human(s) which interact(s) in some way, whether over a longer duration of time or a brief moment, in the activity system. (An) active participant(s) actively contribute(s) to the production of tools, while receptive participants primarily receive the tools (or their by-products), but with the capacity (perhaps through collective action) to influence the activity system in some way. These roles can be interchangeable.

This differentiation is visually represented by the element Active Participant(s) remaining at the apex of the triangle, and the element Receptive Participant(s) being placed on both sides of the triangle, with a two-way arrow from each to indicate the interaction. Feasibly, as a researcher can be an Active Participant, so it follows they may possibly be a Receptive Participant, so this is also indicated in the framework.

(iv) The introduction of the element Non-participatory Informant (Fig. 3.4)

Finally, in carrying out research of an activity system, the researcher may make use of informants, not directly involved in the activity system itself, but who may be able to shed light on its workings and/or its participants: this is indicated by the element Non-Participatory Informant, who can be defined as follows:

(A) Non-participatory Informant (is)(are):

(An) individual(s) who has knowledge of a specific activity system, either through past interaction which has now ceased, and/or is a Participant of a similar or analogous activity system.

The element Researcher is included again to underline the fact that interviews particularly, in the collecting of data, represent an activity system themselves. This differentiation is again meant to increase the researcher's awareness of the complexities of the affairs e.g. an Active Participant may 'suffer' conflicts of allegiance or interest but have full understanding of the workings of the activity system; the opposite might be so for Non-Participatory Informants. This said, neither should be taken necessarily as 'neutral' figures (Starfield, 2013).

3.3 Procedure for applying the activity system and activity networking framework

The last Figure (Fig. 3.6) illustrates how the activity system and activity networking framework can be applied in procedural terms. That said, given the nature of research involving activity theory (Ding, 2008; Beaufort, 2000), the procedure can also be (and probably will be) cyclic, and multi-layered, different elements being investigated at the same time, possible entailing continual adjustment of the part of the researcher as the activity system is investigated. Engeström (1999) sees that the Object/motive can be the point of departure for investigating difference activity systems (which have a mutual object/motive). On the other hand, Prior (2009) and Molle and Priori (2008) indicate the Genre Tools may constitute the initial research point.

Alternatively, an order as indicated in the numbers in Fig. 3.6 can be followed, as I did with the astrology group. A first step could be the identification of would appears an activity system (number 1), followed by the investigation of the three main elements (number 2) – Participants, Object/motive, Tools. Their identification may be fairly simultaneous, or one or more may follow the identification of the other parts, most likely the Participants first (2), followed by the Tools (3), and then, the Object/motive (4).

Most likely the Active Participants will be identified first (2 (i)), followed by the Receptive Participants (2 (i.i.), and then the Non-Participatory Informants (2 (i.i.i.), if the identification of this last element was considered necessary by the researcher to shed light on the workings of the activity system. Non-Participatory Informants might be useful, for example, in the first identification of the structural power roles of the various Active Participants e.g. their roles or position within an organization or institution. Depending on the activity system, it might be necessary for the researcher to turn to Non-Participatory Informants to gain access to the system.

During the observation of the activity system, the various Tools could be identified simultaneously (Genre Tools, and Non-genre Tools (3 (i)), though the identification of some may come later. Then, as the activity system operates, CGC and 'Combined Tools' can be identified (3 (i.i.). The data collected concerning the Participants and the Tools can shed further light on the Object/Motive (4). Then elements of both Local-Identity Culture (5) and Global-Identity Culture (5) can be discerned through

the Participants (5 (i)), the Tools (5 (i))), and the Object/Motive (5 (i)), and then through the more complex differentiated roles of the Participants (5 (i.i.)), and the CGCs (5 (i.i.)), and the Combined Tools (5 (i.i.) of the element Tools, and the 'front stage/back stage' of the Object/Motive (5 (i.i)). Finally, there would be the interplay between Local-Identity Culture and Global-Identity Culture (6) to investigate.

3.4 Concluding remarks

The framework presented above represents a relatively novel instrument of analysis for investigating human object-directed activity, particularly in terms of: the differentiation of the element Participant, and formulation of different roles in terms of power relations; the differentiation of Culture, the differentiation of activity (system and networking); the differentiation of Tools, and the explicit inclusion of the multi-modality of Genre; and finally the inclusion of the figure of the Researcher. In this way, I have attempted to incorporated a number of issues of particular present concern (see Chapter 2 – Literature Review) into this framework, which hopefully will shed light on the complex historical and cultural layering of human activity, and further show the value of combining activity theory with genre theory in an activity-genre approach (Russell, 1997; Berkenkotter, 2001; Bazerman, 2003, Schryer et al, 2008; etc.).

Chapter 4 - Application of the framework - a micro activity system: an astrology group

In space there are countless constellations, suns and planets; we see only the suns because they give light; the planets remain invisible, for they are small and dark. There are also numberless earths circling around their suns... (Giordano Bruno, Despre infinit univers si lumi)

4.1 The Aims of the Chapter

This chapter is concerned with a preliminary application of the initial framework, and its development. The overall objectives of the study were to assess the usefulness of an activity-based genre approach, and conceive a multi-dimensional/multi-perspective framework which could go some way in capturing the complexities of human object-directed activity, which included i. how a. the ('power') relations between participants , and b. factors concerning 'culture' and 'identity', can shape the activity system as a whole, and its different parts or elements, ii. how genre contributes to the patterning and contingency of an activity system - the use, form, and role of genre within that activity.

4.2 The Structure of the Chapter

The chapter presents the case study, that of a micro activity system – an astrology group. The study is presented in the structure of a research article, Introduction, Methodology, Findings, and Discussion. The chapter ends with some concluding remarks.

4.3 The Case Study

4.3.1 Introduction

I began participating in an astrology group in December 2012. The initiative to run an astrology course was promoted by a restaurant owner, and held in her restaurant in the historic centre of a small medieval town in Lazio, an Italian administrative region whose capital (‘capoluogo’) is Rome, the capital of Italy. The owner had previously met the astrologer through mutual contacts and the astrologer had eaten at the restaurant on more than one occasion. The group was formed essentially via word of mouth. As presented by the astrologer at the first meeting, the course was intended to be a course on “Astrologia Evolutiva” (Developmental Astrology), a branch of astrology which deals with the personal growth of an individual, with the belief that each one has a path to follow, a Mecca to reach (as opposed to other branches e.g. Karmic Astrology, which deals with archaic ‘wounds’). It aims to understand which path an individual should follow. The group appeared to have the characteristics of a specific activity system:

Any on-going, object-directed, historically conditioned, dialectically structured, tool-mediated interaction.

I realized after a short period of time (about three meetings from the beginning of the course), in the midst of this micro activity system (micro in that it never exceeded nine people), that a number of issues I had wished to research, and which had not actually been described 'in action' in the literature I had read on activity theory, though often have been mentioned or implied in the logic of the theory, were surfacing: namely,

i. *power relations* between the subjects, and how they can determine an activity system,
ii. the role of *genre* in these issues and the working of an activity theory,
iii. the intricate use of the *verbal* together with the *visual* i.e. genre *multimodality,*
iv. occluded genres *and* object/motives.
v. the importance of *culture*, both 'local' and 'global' and how they interact,

Given what I perceived as a gap in the literature on what I had read to adequately describe what I was observing (see Chapter 2), I took the experience as an opportunity to develop a preliminary multi-dimensional/multi-perspective framework., integrating genre theory with activity theory. As noted before, as often is the case with studies using an activity theory approach (e.g. Ding, 2008), the study took

"shape as it went along" (Winsor, 1999:204): I hoped that the framework would provide, through further adjustments, an initial basis for a fruitful framework and procedure for future research on human object –directed activity and specifically genre study.

Global Aims of the Preliminary Study and Research Questions

I investigated what I have described as a micro activity system – an astrology group, over a period of five months. In the approach described below, I incorporate principles drawn from both activity theory, for example EngestrÖm's (1987) model of activity theory (Russell, 1997) and genre theory, particularly Bazerman's theory of genre systems (1993), as in previous works (Russell, 1997; Berkenkotter. 2001), and Prior's notion regarding the multi-modality of genre, particularly that of *mediated multi-modal genre systems* (2009; also Molle & Prior, 2008), and his unit of analysis, *productive chains of discourse* (PCDs). The study was also strongly influenced by some social science theory (Giddens, 1984; 1991; Thompson, 1984; 1995; Gardinkel, 1967). In this, the global aim of the preliminary study is not to provide a systematic, detailed linguistic genre analysis of discourse, but rather a Goffman-like (1971, 1974) investigation of an activity system, mainly through observation 'in the thick of it', taking note of 'what came up', trying to establish some patterns, or 'tendencies' to use Swales' term (1990), of some form.

As we shall see, what transpired from the observations was a complex *layering* of communications, a series of Chinese boxes or tightly-woven web. Threads, links and chains being continually formed, broken, reformed, in the same

or differing combination (EngestrÖm's continual state of 'flux' and 'disturbances' (1987)). This was happening through various means, between the participants *in-the-moment- of-action* and *previous* moments within the activity system, but also leading outside that specific activity system to other activity systems, presently in action or recently ceased, and practices going *back* hundreds of years, but also practices *current* in cyberspace – an intricate mix of *time* and *space* (Giddens, 1984). Procedurally, it was like following and unravelling different interconnecting coloured threads of varying length and thickness, noting their colour, length and thickness and how, where, and why, they connected to each other. Inevitably, only some threads were 'picked up on', others no doubt escaping notice, breaking in the study process, and perhaps inadvertently being discarded as not irrelevant. What I kept in mind was Russell's point (1997), that though in activity system various activities can be observed, we should follow the *leading* activity (presuming that there is one). In other words, though an activity system can be made up of an intricate web (as I saw it), with different threads leading into and out of the specific activity system, what *was* its '*overall form' or 'shape'.* This constituted a valuable ' guide' for not getting 'entangled up' in the study process (though some 'entanglement' along the way is inevitable).

Research Questions

Research questions were formulated with the aim of throwing light on the power relations between the subjects, and how they determined the functioning of the activity system, and what was the role of genre in these issues and the working of the activity system as a whole. The investigation of genre included multiple modals i.e.

the multimodality of genre, and how they contributed to the role of genre. Finally, cultural factors of the activity system was considered, and how this affected the elements and workings of the activity system. Specifically, by integrating principles from genre theory and activity theory, I needed to know whether the framework helped me provide answers to the following questions:

i. How did the various participants (and the power relations between them) affect the activity system in terms of being stabilizing and/or change agents, and with what means (Russell, 1997; Giddens, 1984; Thompson; 1984; Winsor, 1999)?
ii. How did the tools, and specifically the genres, regulate the activity system (Russell, 1997; Bazerman, 2003; Winsor, 1999)?
iii. What was the relationship between 'verbal' and 'visual' elements of the genres (Prior, 2008; Wysocki, 2004; Swales, 2009)?
iv. What elements within the activity system triggered change? How was change enacted (Russell, 1997)?
v. What evidence was there that culture in some form was influencing the workings of the activity system, and what was that form (of culture)?

I looked for the answers to these research questions in an activity system of which I myself was an active participant – an astrology group. Personal examples are not uncommon in genre studies e.g. Swales cites a hobby group (stamp collecting) of which he is a member, the Hong Kong Study Circle, to act as an example of a concept he elaborates, that of 'discourse community'(1990: 27) ; as mentioned,

Russell (1997) provides an example of an active activity system through his own family, specifically citing the activity he and his daughter, Madeleine, operate, that of preparing shopping lists. Furthermore, Berkenkotter and Huckin comment, “very little work on genre in rhetorical studies has been informed by actual case research with *insiders* (original italics) “ (1995:2), so my direct participation (despite some difficulties - see below), I took as of value.

Further, another characteristic of activity theory based investigation is how it can heighten awareness of the researcher of the functioning of the activity system, and this was all the more so in my case, since I was also an active participant of the activity system being studied. As an active or ‘emic’ participant or ‘insider’ of the activity system, I had access to the understandings of the system, frequently obscure to non-participants (Dressen-Hammouda, 2013). This went beyond, though, for instance, eliminating problems of identifying different genres with the same communicative purpose but with differing formal characteristics (Geisler, 2000), or genres with similar formal characteristics possibly having different communicative purposes Russell (1997). It intrinsically determined my approach (see below).

4.3.2 Methodology

My approach was along the lines described by Beaufort (2000) and Ding (2008), who employed activity theory in their studies, and whose research agenda and framework were adapted and changed as the study progressed. Not surprisingly given the

multiple issues touched upon in the investigation, the procedure I followed involved using a series of approaches and methods, that is, it was a multi-method procedure (Tardy, 2011). Following principles of an ethnographic procedure, similarly to Winsor (1999) and Beaufort (2000), the study materialized through observation and participation in the activity system as it progressed.

Ethical Considerations

As the study involved human activity and human subjects, the ethics of the approach needed to be taken into account. Here, I followed the specifications of the Ethical Review pages on the University intranet page, which state that the University's ethical review process "applies to all new staff led research and all new postgraduate student research projects registered on or after 1st September 2008" (my underlining in the second case), and since I registered prior to that date, I was not required to submit my work to that process. However, my research procedure, I believe, did conform to the British Association of Applied Linguistics recommendations on good practice in Applied Linguistics (from now on, BAAL RGP) (2.1- 2.5: 2006). Further, as it will not be possible to obtain written consent from all the participants before the submission of the thesis, application will be made to 'Restricted Access' in the Library of the University of Birmingham (as advised by Head of School), until that consent is obtained, prior to a paper based on this thesis being submitted for publication, as in line with the specific request of the participants themselves.

Specifically, consent was gained from the group (BAAL RGP: 2.2) for the study, as determined by my active participation. In the very logic of activity theory, I found myself in conflict, my participation having a dual purpose, being aware of my belonging to two contemporary conflicting activity systems, the astrology group – where confidentiality was of the utmost importance, and the postgraduate system of Birmingham University – where the collection of as much information as possible concerning the object of study should be aimed for. It is worth noting that the 'angle' I took in asking (by phone) the astrologer for consent (three meetings into the course) was as a fellow participant i.e. I did not introduce the idea of studying the workings of the course by stressing my participation in another activity system (as a postgraduate candidate), but my participation in *this* particular activity system: in the first meetings, the importance of the transit of Saturn was discussed and how it was having a particularly strong impact on myself, given my astral chart (see Fig. 4. 1). Saturn is the planet of knowledge, and represents restrictions, delays, and authority. It teaches us mastery over our lives, providing structure, discipline, and a guide to our achievements (course handouts; www.astrologiainlinea.it). I explained to the astrologer a genuine feeling, that the course was unexpectantly providing me with a focus, a way of applying and finding structure. She took the long and rather tortuous history of my studies as significant, and maintained that Saturn was helping me "to move forward", and that at that point she, too, saw the course as a vehicle (personal communication).

The astrologer rightly put the question of consent to the 'floor' i.e. the rest of the group, at the next meeting. Some were perplexed at the idea, but probably following

the cue of the astrologer (with whom I had established a fair relationship of trust given the time), who declared herself open to the idea, consent was given provided no taping was done, complete anonymity maintained, no personal details be given except for sex, age, nationality and occupation, no details be given about individual astral charts or any interpretations about them (to “respect their rights, interests, sensitivities, and privacy – BAAl RGP: 2.1) and any note taking be done as discreetly as possible (in an effort to “anticipate any harmful effects or disruption to (their) lives and environment – BAAL RGP – 2.1): in this case, the participants right to freely and without inhibition participate in the astrology group. Written permission would be obtained if any part of the study was used for publication. The last point was at the request of the astrologer herself on the phone, since given the nature of the course, she understandably was most concerned about the question of privacy. The actual nature of the study (that is was for a postgraduate degree) was never proffered and never asked for, only that it was a ‘personal research study ’.

On this last point, though I endeavoured to base the relationship with fellow participants “on trust and openness”, as acknowledged by the BAAL RCP (2.2), gaining consent from the participants was complex. The majority of my fellow participants were “not familiar with the nature of academic activities such, as publication” (BAAL RCP 2.2), and the nature of Applied Linguistics, making it difficult for them to give fully informed consent to the collection of data, at this stage of the study. I believed that that if I had proffered the full nature of the study, what it entailed, and where I might submit any paper I might write up, the condition the workings of the group would have been compromised (BAAL RGP: 2.5). Naturally,

given the nature of the research, if any one of the participants had refused to partake (BAAl RGP: 2.3), this would have meant not carrying out the research at all - all participants had to agree, though I specifically avoided underlining this point so as **not** to put undue pressure on the participants to accept "under duress" (BAAL RGP:2:5): the astrologer led the request. Hence, "no false information" was given to the participants (BAAL RGP: 2:5), only they were not given 'the whole story' incomplete', viz. it was for a 'personal research study'. As it was, all the participants were fully aware of my profession, age, nationality, as I was of theirs (as determined by the nature of the activity system), and the fact I myself was effectively "part" of the research like themselves, due to my role as an active participant, certainly facilitated acceptance of the 'study'. My own astral chart is presented and studied as one of the activity system' genres, rather than using one of the other participants' chart, to respect their privacy (BAAL RGP: 2.1), (though there was a fair amount of exchanging of viewing of other people's charts during the running of the meetings).

As stated above, to respect their "confidentiality and anonymity" (BAAL RGP:2.4), only the details they consented to were included in the study, and that, in any case, application will be made to the "Restricted Access" section of the library of the University of Birmingham. Given the nature of the research the "balance of participation" was clearly affected, particularly in the distribution of 'power' (BAAL RGP: 2.7): effectively, the astrologer "ran the show" in terms of what genres were possible to register and copy e.g. I did not suggest to copy her astrology chart which she used to present the 'theme' of the day (given her reluctance to even let people physically near it, and the care she took of it), even though this was a key tool or

artefact in the running of the activity system, since I was convinced that the response would have been negative. In any case, to do so I would have affected her sensitiveness (BAAL RGP:2.1), or so I believed. There was evidence (through comments made by the astrologer herself) to possibly assume that the handouts of the astrologer were actually a form of 'templates' (Devitt, 1991) i.e. the same handouts were given out in every introductory course (as she defined the course I was a participant of) on astrology. However, when I tried to verify this by asking more specific questions, the astrologer became visibly 'tense (presumably concerned about her role as 'interpreter'), and the issue was not pursued to respect her privacy (BAAL RGP:2.1).

Limitations of the Study

Clearly, mainly due to ethical considerations, considerable limitations were structural to the study. No taping of any description was carried out (ideally, the meetings should have been videotaped) , which meant no posteriori analysis could be done of the language used, or verification of my notes jotted down during the meetings (which, as agreed with the participants, had to be as little as disruptive and discreet as possible – I still had to be attentive as an active participant, and expected to make contributions, which inevitably meant, some details of the happenings were lost). There was also the issue that as a British born and bred English mother-tongue speaker, there was the potential of "cross-cultural distortion" through ethnocentric bias (Goddard & Wierzbicka, 1997:231). However, though no Italian myself, given my long-term contact with Italy and Italian culture, I did not consider in studying the workings of a small group in Italy would be unacceptably distorted, but I was aware of

the problem. Finally, I was not able to obtain a copy of all the inscribed genres, that is, for ethical considerations, it was not possible to obtain a copy of the astrologer's illustrative wheel chart, the astrologer's book of ephemeras, and copies of the other participants astral charts. A 'similar' chart (Fig. 4.2) to the astrologer's, and a page taken from a book of ephemeras (Fig. 4.3), both taken from the internet, have been included, and as stated, I include a copy of my own astral chart. That it was not possible to follow-up the question of whether the handouts, constituted a limitation as would have been useful to verify more fully whether and how adaptations had been made to the genres, according to the specific practices of the group (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Collection of the Data

It has already been mentioned that it was not possible to collect data using tape-recorders or video-cameras. In relatively short time period, five-months, and through sustained participation (I only missed two meetings in five months), through an ethnographic approach (e.g. Starfield, 2011), notes were taken at the moment of observation, and written up immediately after each meeting, and researcher interpretations of the observations were made at the same time, and then confirmed at another meeting (a form of self-triangulation) (Lillis, 2008). Attempt was made to discern patterns or tendencies of behaviour and genre use, and the underlying meanings of things observed. I aimed for a 'thick' as possible description (given the limitations –see above) of the given situation. This was done in the identification of the CGCs, for instance: I noted what appeared to be a fairly regular 'pattern' mix of genre and other tools, and then continually verified and refined the multi-modal genre

configuration as it occurred.

As an active participant myself, rather than being on the outside and working inwards, I found myself doing the reverse e.g. if handouts were given out, I later asked the astrologer whether they had been used in other courses, which I interpreted as other activity systems, which, and whether for the same purposes, and what her sources were. With these questions, sensitively was required on my part, and was indicative of the need of 'positioning' questions to participants being questioned (and the values they hold, etc.) (Ding, 2008). As far as possible, this was followed up by my using the bibliography the astrologer had provided to the whole group, and referring to astrological web-sites she indicated. Clearly, she was at pains to maintain a central characteristic of an astrologer (defined by herself) – interpretative ability.

To gain an overall picture, and note immediate impressions, I applied, as an initial basis of analysis, the first-generation framework (Fig. 3.1) (EngestrÖm, 1993: Russell, 1997), and attempted to identify the three basic elements of the framework: participants – tools – object/motive. Though below I present the elements I initially identified, it should be born in mind that, for instance, the number and degree of participation of the various participants varied over the duration of the course, and that the details I identified and was allowed to note down, according to the agreements of the participants and myself in conducting the research, were collected, not through systematic interviews or questionnaires which would have been 'outside' the activity system), but through elements that surfaced in the running

of the activity systems itself, through reference to the astral charts by the participants, recounts by the participants, particularly how far the astrologer's interpretations rung true, etc. Again, this was through my aim to principally act as an 'insider', a fellow participant. Occasionally, information was collected by 'informal' chat before or after the actual running of the meeting, or during the meeting e.g. I learnt F's age by her reference to her retiring next year, and her occupation in the discussion of the sixth house (corresponding to the zodiac sign of Virgo), the house of work. I learnt S was Danish and a yoga teacher from L. That she was 40 (and born in New York, USA) came from discussion of her astral chart. The fact that this information generally came up during the meetings, I took to be significant in some way (Ding, 2008), and presumably had something to do with nature of the activity system and its object/motive. Further, factors that can be explored concerning differentiation of power (among participants) can include 'class', 'age', and 'sex', and in terms of the kinds of wants and desires, the interests and needs (Thompson,1984:170), and also, in terms of culture (Conner, 2004: 292), to a certain extent.

Consequently, I noted the age and sex, and occupation of the participants (which also coincided with the information they agreed I could disclose). I added 'nationality' due to one of the focuses of the study being 'culture', as well. By keeping a register of participants each meeting (except the two I was unable to attend), I noted down presences. Following the approach indicated by Prior (2009) and the importance of 'place' noted by others (e.g. Myers, 2006), I noted down the geographical position the restaurant, the positioning of the main elements of the venue, indeed, anything which

appeared a ‘tool’ in the running of the activity system, the position of the participants, and of the main genres used during the running of the activity system, and who used them, and at which point during the meeting.

The Data

(i) Participants

Similarly to Swales Hong Kong Study Circle, the participants (or members, as Swales calls them (1990:27), varied greatly in background, occupation, and economic income. Quoting Bizzell (forthcoming, now 1992), Swales comments that there “may be psychological predispositions that attract particular people” making them “’kindred spirits’” (Swales 1990:27). According to the astrologer of the course, a common interest in astrology was not the only reason the group found itself together, as many of the points on our individual astral charts which happened to coincide, indicated the group was “no accident”. The age of participants ranged from 22 to 64. They were all women, all Italian except for myself, British, and a Dane. Only once did a male participate, a 23-year-old Italian ex-university student now working in a form of agricultural commune in Puglia (Southern Italy), at the fourth meeting, but as we shall see, his one-time presence had an enormous impact on the activity system. Specifically, the group was:

The astrologer – 47, Italian, with twenty years’ experience as an astrologer.

L – 55, Italian, female, the restaurant owner

Lo – 52, Italian, female, numerologist

N – 22, Italian, female, university medical student

M – 40, Italian, female, carer

R - 35, Italian, female, trained lawyer, mother of two children, presently not working

F – 64, Italian, female, nurse

P – (over sixty), Italian, unemployed

S - 40, Danish, female, yoga teacher

Myself (who I shall refer to as G) – 53, British, female, university teacher

None of the participants had followed a course on astrology, though at least three (as far as I could identify) had had previous individual astrological readings – L, F, Lo. All the participants cited above lived locally (not more than fifteen minutes drive away),

Other one-time participants:

B – 23, Italian, male, ex-university student/ farmer

T – 30?, Italian, female, profession unknown.

(ii) Tools

In the framework, I defined 'tools' (meditational means) as:

material objects which are used to accomplish some action with some outcome – 'tools-in-use' i.e. they contribute <u>in some way</u> to the workings of the activity system in the <u>furthering</u> of the object/motive

Tools can be Genre and Non-Genre. To facilitate the presentation of the tools, first, (a) he specific Genre Tools will be identified, which will then be followed by

a more detailed description of each, and then (b) the Non-Genre Tools will be identified, followed by a more detailed description of each.

a. Genre Tools

The activity system used both Genre and Non-Genre Tools, but confirming comments by Russell (1997:513), the most powerful proved to be the Genre Tools.

I identified what I called *inscribed* genres and *complex oral* genres in the previous i.e.

> *a routinized tool(s) used to carry out a typified, routine action" (Russell, 1997:514), which is typically recognized by the participants (Miller, 1994). 'Communicative purpose(s)' of genre (whether singly or collectively), is created through the use of genre in the enactment of participants in activity systems.*

The sample of the genres regularly used in the activity system consisted of both 1. The face-to-face interactions (Meetings), and the genres used during the face-to-face interaction between the participants, and 2. Occluded or semi-occluded genres which were drawn upon, not in the face-to-face interaction.

1. Weekly meetings (taken as a complex oral genre). In each meeting, five inscribed genres were used, all being obligatory tools (employed at every meeting), except the bibliography:
    - The individual natal chart (Fig. 4.1)
    - The astrologer's illustrative natal chart (Fig. 4.2)
    - The handouts prepared by the astrologer to be given to Participants (See Appendix)

- The bibliography (See Appendix)
- The astrologer's book of tables (ephemeris), were regularly used (Fig. 4.3)

2. Occluded and semi-occluded genres:

The identification of these genres were predictably problematic. Through information gleaned from the meetings themselves, and phone calls received by researcher from other Participants, as well as the astral charts which were printed 'outside' the running of the meetings, the following were identified:

1. Phone calls on the mobile phones of the Participants.
2. Text messages on the mobile phones of the Participants.
3. Facebook page of the restaurant
4. The astrological web-sites www.astrologiainlinea.it ; www.astro.com.

Description of Genre tools

1. The Weekly Meetings (e.g. Handford, 2007; Koester, 2010)

The meetings were sixteen in total, running from December 2012 to May 2013, the group meeting regularly on Monday afternoon, except for interruptions for Christmas, Easter and other festivities. The meetings were of approximately 90 minutes long, making the duration of the observations over 1,200 minutes (excluding the meetings I missed).

As noted by Koester (2010:35) (though in the context of workplace discourse), the term ‘meeting’ is ‘not overly useful as a label for genres since meetings can have a variety of transactional goals’. However, the term ‘meeting’ (‘incontro’) was used by the participants themselves, and was representative of relatively structured interactions involving a variety of genres (Koester, 2010). That different participants shared some common goals, while others have different agendas, declared or ‘occult’, or that participants had multiple goals, gradually emerged during the running of the course. The meetings made the course resemble a community of practice, in that there was a generically (declared) shared group objective, a shared repertoire of genres, and mutual engagement in the form of regular interaction (Wenger, 1998). There was also evidence of ‘legitimate peripheral participation’ (Wenger & Lave, 1991:29), in that participants gradually learnt the symbols during the course, and this acquisition of knowledge can be seen as part of the ‘enculturation’ into astrology but also into the specific activity system as the astrologer would refer to the symbols and glyphs during the meetings, increasingly taking what they represented as ‘shared knowledge’ between the participants, something which newcomers to the course had to learn to move towards ‘full participation of the sociocultural practices’ (Wenger & Lave, 1991) of the group.

These meetings were one of the main ‘tools’ which made the activity system possible. They also illustrate how an activity system can form, temporary break up, and form again. Notably, however, whereas *within* the meeting, genres were used to give ‘shape’ to events (meant in its broadest term), the regularity of the genre of

meetings (every week) served to give a sense of ‘structure’ and ‘continuity’ to the activity system as a whole, extending it over a period of time (about six months). While a certain amount of ‘disorder’ was tolerated (particularly in terms of what appeared acceptable to the ‘core’ participants) *during* the meetings, a fair degree of punctuality was insisted upon. Again, this was negotiated along the way, with major stakeholders L and the astrologer showing a certain tension about *when* the meeting should start (L wanting it not to start beyond 5.45), the astrologer willing to wait up until around 6.10, for all intending participants to arrive. Phone calls (during and outside the meetings), discussions led to people making an effort to arrive on time, with a fairly loose rule that participants should phone if they could not come, though then the issue surfaced of who they should phone, L or the astrologer, participants doing one or the other. It was decided into about the fifth meeting that if participants could not come they advised the astrologer as soon as they could, and that the meetings would kick-off whatever by 6.00. There is clear a interaction between the genre and how it was used by the participants to further the activity system – without some sort of ‘form’ (which the ‘meeting’ genre provided), it risked disintegrated (very much before it had even been created).

The 5 inscribed genres regularly used during the meetings: The five inscribed genres can be usefully described as a *set of (inscribed) genres* (Devitt, 1991, Swales, 2004). Swales (2004) describes this as a group of genres which “ a particular individual” or “a class of individuals” “engages in, either receptively and productively, as part of his or her normal occupational or institutional practice” (p. 20). Here, I interpret the set of five Inscribed Genres as part of the total genre tools

(which would include the genre of the meetings and the complex oral genres)(see also CGCs below) at the service of this specific activity system, though of course, they will most likely be at the service of other like or related activity systems, as well. Swales comments how 'apprentices' (graduate students) gradually acquire an expanding genre set as they move through the system, (2004:20). Here, however, the use of the specific genres is mainly dependent on the role of each participant within the activity system, and partly determined the identification of the CGC (see below – Criteria).

The Individual Printed Natal Charts (Fig. 4.1) and the Astrologer's Chart (Fig 4.2) (www.blackhatastrology. Accessed August 2013): These charts are clearly exemplars of the same visual genre – a stylized map of the universe showing the positions of the sun, moon, planets and other celestial objects, with the frames of references defined by the (Western in this particular activity system) astrological signs: in the order they appear in the Zodiac, Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius, Pisces, and the eight houses, I to VIII, each house corresponding to a particular sign, e.g. the first house to Aries, the second house to Taurus, and so on. The wheel of the individual printed chart (Fig. 4.1) was calculated by the astrologer before the first meeting (see below ' occluded genres'). The wheel depicted represents the full calculations of the ephemera (see below) of an individual, who is taken to be at the centre of the stylized map of the universe, to visually represent and to gain insights into the individual's personality and potential. All the charts were printed in colour on a standard white A4 sheet. The chart is attractive and appealing, participants commenting how 'pretty'

(‘Che carino!’) is was. It is designed for the eye to fall immediately on the wheel itself which is centred, slightly higher to the top, with the ‘usual’ beginning of an inscribed text – the label i.e. what it is (in this case – **InterpretazioneTema Natale** (original font Arial and colour) (Birth Chart Interpretation) is put to the top left (rather than at the centre) (though above the details of the individual). The use of the dark red/orange appears to try and counterbalance this fact, still succeeding in catching the reader’s eye. A left-right position is as it would be in Western writing: details of the individual upon which the calculation has been made (place, date and time of birth) are placed top left, with a colourful icon (a yellow and orange sun) and name of the source on the top right; a key to the positions of the planets (Zodiac sign and House) and the degrees of their exact position is given bottom left). As in the ephemera, the chart makes use of universal astrological symbols or glyphs (as opposed to icons sometimes provided in newspaper daily horoscopes e.g. A Bull to signify the zodiac sign Taurus); on the bottom right there is a legend providing the planetary aspects. Here, no key is provided so only an informed reader can make sense of it. e.g. the symbol of the square signifies the relationship of ‘square’ or opposition (tension) between two planets (in this chart, between the sun and the moon); the star sign signifies a ‘sextile’ relationship, which indicates ‘harmony’ between two planets (in this chart, between Neptune and Jupiter). The legend draws up the planetary aspects indicated in the wheel by the blue (indicating positive aspects: Trines and Sextiles) and red lines (indicating negative aspects: Oppositions and Squares) at the centre (again, an uninformed reader would not make the connection or arrive at what the lines indicated, and why). The abbreviations are easier to decipher e.g. **MC** (original font (Bookmark Old Style and bold) - Medicielo,

(Midheaven, though this is not a commonly known astrological element); **ASC** (original font (Bookman Old Style and bold) – Ascendente (Ascendant). When not interpreted directly by the astrologer, was generally placed on the table where the participants (other than the astrologer) generally sat (see below Non-Genre Tools).The astrologer's chart (Fig. 4.) was about A3 in size, framed with glass and coloured wooden frame. It depicted an illustrative natal chart, as remarked by the astrologer herself, which may have been her own, though this was never specified. She did comment that it had been a gift from another astrologer, indicating, perhaps, another activity system of astrologers. It was always on a wooden stand on a table across from that where the other participants sat, and to the left of where the astrologer (who happened to be left-handed) stood when giving input to the group. Apart from the position, the chart differed from the printed individual charts given to the other participants, not only in size (A3 not A4), but also in appearance, appearing relatively old (browning paper), which created a form of mystique.

The Handouts (see Appendix).Thirteen handouts written in Italian were given out during the course. They contained a written explanation of the astrological element(s), which was presented or the focus of a particular meeting. Most participants brought all the handouts to the meetings, using them as valuable 'reference' papers as points came up. A notable exception was Lo who always came empty-handed, so frequently made reference to other participants handouts. Specifically, the handouts were (in the order they were distributed): the Birth Chart (HO1), the Sun Sign and the Ascendant (HO2); The Sun and The Moon, and the twelve Houses (HO3); the Four Elements, and the Planets Mercury and Mars (HO4);

The Descendant, the Seventh House, and the Planet Venus (HO5); the Midheaven, The Sixth House, The Tenth House, and the planets Jupiter and Saturn (HO6); the planetary aspects, and planetary transits (HO7); planetary transits as development (HO8); the lunar nodes (HO9); the cycle of the lunar nodes (HO10); Chiron the Centaur (HO11); Personal Chiron (HO12); Lilith (HO13). Generally, a handout was used over two meetings or more. Elements could be discussed earlier than its 'official' presentation. The astrologer commented on more than one occasion that she utilized handouts during the courses she held, implying that they were perhaps 'templates' (Devitt, 1991) – copies of text, repeated for different occasions or situations.

The Bibliography (see Appendix): The bibliography was prepared by the astrologer and given out to each participant. It was provided after requests from two participants (L and G) during the fourth meeting, L being categorized as a Major Structural Power Participant.

The Astrologer's Book of Ephemera (Fig. 4.3): (www.astrologysoftware.com Accessed August 2013). This was a book the astrologer always brought with her. It was entitled "Ciro Discepolo: Le Nuovo Effemerdi: 2000-2050). Ciro is an Italian journalist who previously worked for the Centro Nazionale di Ricerca (CNR) (National Institute for Research). He is the founder of "La Scuola of Astrologia Attiva" (The School for Active Astrology). An ephemeris (effemerde) from the Greek word ἐφημερίς *ephēmeris* "diary", "journal"), gives the locations and degrees of each planet at a given time. I was not able to obtain a page of the book, so in Fig. 4.3), I

include an example of an ephemeric taken from www.astro.com., one of the astrology sites used by the astrologer.

2.Occluded and Semi-Occluded Genres

Phone calls and emails, which did not occur during the meetings of the astrology group but used to further the activity system, did regularly occur, their existence being made apparent with some passing reference during the meetings themselves. In this sense they were 'out of sight' to the participants, other than the sender and receiver of the communications. Particularly at the beginning of the course when there was a bone of contention as the necessary degree of punctuality of the participants for the meetings, L employed occult genres – text message, phone calls (verified by G, receiving one), which excluded the astrologer, in that she was less rigid than L was on insisting on punctuality (see above on the genre 'meetings'. Web-sites were also used, which I describe as 'semi-occluded' in that access 'after the event' would have been possible by the participants. I also include the Facebook page of the restaurant under semi-occluded genres, in that L used the page to advertise the course (though apparently no one was recruited by this means), and some participants made comments. Not all participants had access to this page (including G), and, given the nature of the page, was run by L, rather than the astrologer. Further, as part of 'administration' and 'evaluation', the astrologer had to prepare the astral chart of each participant, or rather she chose to do this. The exact time (or approximate if not known) and location of a participant's birth were first given to L who then passed on the information to the astrologer. This was done either via

phone call or text message or email. The astrologer then printed out the chart (see example Fig.4.1 G's individual natal chart), calculated on the astrological website, www.astrologiainlinea.it , the preferred web-site of the astrologer, where a computer programme was employed, and she also made reference to www.astro.com., as she herself commented to the other participants in passing (on request) during the meetings. Since only the astrologer and L participated in the text messages and phone calls, and were not available to the other participants, I took these to be 'occluded genres' – 'out-of-sight' (Swales, 2004:18) to all but two of the participants. The websites I took as 'semi-occluded', in that they were available to all the participants 'after-the-event', after the astrologer had used them.

b.Non-Genre Tools

Non-genre tools were defined as:

> *material objects, not perceived as genres in the workings of an activity system, but which are used to accomplish some action with some outcome, that is they contribute in some way to the workings of the activity system in the furthering of the object/motive, and will most likely include a wide array of things, from the venue of an activity system to a pencil.*

As the guns in the hunt of Leon'tev and the fishing rod in fishing a fish of Vytogksy, I attempted to identify all elements which, through mediation of the participants (Russell, 1997, Engeström, 1987) appeared to further the object /motive of the

activity system i.e. the running of the astrology group. I noted down the most striking elements and anything that struck me as contributing to the workings of the activity system and its apparent and more occluded object/motive. This included material objects and paralinguistic features (Prior, 2009: 2011). I should stress, that though the 'tools' indicated below may appear 'ad hoc' (and certainly the research would have benefitted from a more detailed investigation if taping or videoing had been possible), I *perceived* all of them as contributing in some form to the workings of the activity system, through the eyes of a researcher, but *also* through those of an *active* participant in the activity system. I identified 5 Non-Genre Tools:

1. The astrologer's wooden pointer
2. The astrologer's clothes
3. L's Samsung tablet
4. The venue
5. The positioning of Participants in the room

Description of Non-Genres Tools

1.The Astrologer's Pointing Stick.

As mentioned previously, this was a apparently a fairly old but good quality, attractive wooden stick which the astrologer often used to indicate features of her astral chart, even though could have used her fingers (which she did sometimes, but often resorted to the sticker, soon afterwards) The stick 'added' to her orienting the Meetings in a certain direction participant role in the activity system, and helped project the 'natural' image, aimed for by the astrologer.

2.The Astrologer's Clothes and Attire

I include the clothes of the astrologer as a 'tool' but not those of the other participants. There were frequent comments about each other's clothes among the participants but presumably that would concern the question of perhaps 'group solidarity among women' (something one of the participants (L – see below) referred to this as "Alchemy among women"), not the object of research here (though the role of gender in activity systems may be a potentially interesting area of research (see Kubota & Chiang, 2013)). Contrary perhaps to the 'collective imaginary', the astrologer was always very plainly dressed, practical top and trousers, flat pumps, no jewellery or make-up. Lo made a comment at the beginning, Ti imaginavo con un'altro aspetto! (I imagined you'd look different). The astrologer made a joke about not wanting to use a crystal ball. She dressed how she felt she was, and believed too much mystique prevented astrology 'reaching' people. She wanted to project a 'down-to-earth', 'natural' image of an astrologer who was working towards achieving what she appeared to take as the Object/ motive of the course - personal growth awareness on the part of the participants through developmental astrology. This desired image I perceived her as projecting was also created through her attire, clothes (natural fibres), and hair and hairstyle (no-dyes, plain natural cut). In other words, these different Non-genre Tools worked, together with the wooden pointer stick, to further the object/motive of the activity system, as seen by the astrologer.

3.L's Samsung's Tablet

This refers to L's tablet which was used on five occasions (though in two meetings). It was placed on a table near the entrance to the restaurant, parallel to and on the left

of the table where the astrologer placed the Illustrative chart. Officially it had no ‘role’ in the course, but L always kept there where she worked when she was serving customers, and it was used by L on specific occasions in the activity system (see below CGCs).

4.The Venue

The venue (Hymes, 1972) was a small restaurant with five tables, each with four chairs. There was a table in the far right corner where the astrologer put the Illustrative chart. Near the door, on the left of this table, was where L placed (or kept) her Tablet. In front of these two tables, another two tables were put together to form a bigger one so all the participants could sit round it. This effectively was the ‘communal’ table.

5.Positioning of the Participants

All the participants, except the astrologer sat around a (square) table, which represented a kind of ‘communal table’. However, the astrologer typically stood, or next to her astrology chart put on a wooden stand (see above), which was across from the table where the rest of the participants sat, or stood in front of the communal table.

The Approach and Methods used in The Analysis

The genre analysis was grounded in themes of genres as situated practices (Devitt, 2004; Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995; Molle & Prior, 2008). The analysis of the data was interpretative and focused on developing a thick, integrated account of the

running of the activity system, given the limitations of the study (see above). The genre analysis analyzed the organization, style, and purpose of each document, its components and connections between other genres, both oral and written. Here I take the hybridism in terms as indicated by the framework (conceived through observation of the group and the genres it used), as 'local-culture' identity and 'global-culture' identity. The concept of CGC was used to determine the connection' or 'link' between the various genres and their orchestration, rather than studying them in isolation.

a. Criteria

1. Major v. minor 'Structural Power' Participants.

As outlined in the modified framework presented in Chapter 3, as 'structural power' I take to be based on the capacity of an agent to intervene in a system to produce an outcome (Thompson, 1984:68), 'major structural power' can be seen in those agents or participants whose capacity to intervene can be greater than the 'minor' structural power participants in terms of assigned role within the activity system (Koester, 2010), a relatively discrete and recognizable entity, pre-existing power relations or entities which can be 'perceived' by the participants. This reflects Bhatia's view that particularly "informed and practising (community) members" (my brackets) (1997:360) wield greater power within a community (to stabilize or change it). This is combined with access to the various Tools of the Activity System, Genre (declared or occluded (Swales, 2004:18)) Tools, taken to be one of the most powerful types of tool (Russell, 1997), and Non-genre Tools (material objects and paralinguistic features). I took these features as a kind of benchmark (Witte, 2005),

as a ‘predictable’ more ‘stable’ distribution of power, which would then facilitate identification of elements of accomplished power, enacted during the meetings. However, as indicated by the framework itself, reflecting the complexity of the notion ‘power’ (e.g. Schneider, 2007), features could ‘overlap’ (as well as continually shift), e.g. the paralinguistic feature of the standing of the astrologer in the meetings, while the other participants sat, could be interpreted as both outward expression of her ‘structural power’ role – as the astrologer in an astrology course, she was running the show, and the astrologer, together with the general behaviour of the other participants, ‘orienting’ their behaviour to that set-up, actively reproducing those versions in their interaction (Schneider, 2007: 181). As indicated in the framework, those participants who could not be identified as participants who had ‘major structural power’ were, by default, labelled participants who had ‘minor structural power’

2.Major v. Minor Accomplished Power Participants.

As outlined in Chapter 3 with the framework, this ‘accomplished power’ refers to where power is seen as an ‘interactional accomplishment’ (Schneider, 2007, developing from Garfinkel, 1967), that is, less stable and more in flux, something that is accomplished repeatedly in the social interaction of the activity system, whereby perceived existing power relations can be continually ‘challenged’ through interaction. The better access of the participants of major structural power to interactional resources will predictably be enacted, with the course of interaction being regulated ‘not so much by pre-existing power relations as by the way participants themselves orient to the context and design their interaction’ (Schneider, 2007: 189). Any use of

interactional resources, or particular tools of the activity system, typically perceived as pertaining to major structural power participants, on the part of other participants, can be taken as ‘marked’, something which is perceived as ‘out of the scheme of things’ (while unmarked elements ‘constitute politic behaviour which goes unnoticed” (Schnurr et al, 2007:211)) as an indication of a ‘shift’ or attempt of shifting power, from, for instance, from a minor to major accomplished power participant role in that moment (the moment can be extended or otherwise).

b.Analysis of the Tools and their Workings

As stated, the genre analysis was grounded in themes of genres as situated practices (Devitt, 2004; Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995; Molle & Prior, 2008). The data analysis concerned the relationship among the genres, the multi-modality of the genres. Once the genre tools were identified, following Prior’s indications (2007, 2009), I utilized Wysocki’s (2004) approach to analyzing visual modes, based on viewer’s ‘interaction’ with the modes: I noted down how they connected to other modes, as a combination of modes, in combination to form a genre, in a possible configuration with other tools to form CGCs (which I envisaged as kind of ‘event (Bazerman 2003:3)), and how they related to the context, and the activity of the participants. In inscribed tools, for example, I included the font used, the print (italics or bold), the length, the structure, the lay-out, the symbols used, the use of colour, the overall effect produced and the resulting ‘communicative purpose’. This also included different graphic features such as the size of the genre, any paper it was printed on, in what form they were presented and physically, where they were

positioned and used in the meetings, and what they communicated to the participates during the meetings. Finally, I attempted to identify patterns to individuate genres, singly, in combination or configuration, what communicative purpose they projected and how they all contributed to providing stability and change within the activity system. This involved noting which participant was using which tool or tools, at what moment, and for what (apparent) purpose.

Identification of the CGCs:

CGCs were defined as:

> Multi-modal configurations of genre created through the activities of the participants in the activity system, possibly involving non- tools as well. The configurations are formed, broken, reformed, with new configurations being constantly formed in the on-going flux of the activity system, and project a communicative purpose at the moment of their use.

Bearing in mind the indications of Witte (2005), in problems of delineating boundaries of activity systems, to consider 'mediation' and the model of Vygotsky and Luria, I concentrated on two main elements to try and identify CGCs: which tools were being used, particularly the genre tools, when, and by whom i.e. which participants: whether they were major or minor power participants (structurally speaking) i.e. I took as signalling the break of one CGC and the start of another: a change in the use of atool e.g. putting down of a tool ; a change of participant e.g. another participant picked up a tool; a change of both tool and participant; a 'marked' behaviour of a participant (particularly one taken as a major structural power participant) e.g.

standing to sitting. The meditational means or tools were critical in distinguishing a CGC from another action or event which occurred during the meetings, but which did not involve the use of a recognized tool of the activity system. For instance, when L and Lo when over to the restaurant door to smoke, this did not involve the use of one of the tools, genre or non-genre, and was excluded from the consideration of CGCs. This is not to say, that this action is not relevant to the running or functioning of the activity system, but it was put under the consideration of power relations between participants (see above), and not that of CGC. Then, in trying to understand how the activity system functioned and how the tools were used and orchestrated, I attempted to identify whether the action altered (even for a moment) the power relations, and what was the 'overall' purpose of that action. That is to say, in my observations, I noted:

- which participants used which tools (both genre and non-genre) and which participants were directly involved in that use (through direct intervention of some kind e.g. verbal response), and whether these participants had been initially considered major or minor structural participants;
- any particular combinations of tools which were seemingly repeated within a single meeting, and over a meeting;
- How (a) combination(s) were signalled through the use of a genre e.g. the reading of an individual chart, but what led up to that reading, also in the form of paralinguistic features, such as the astrologer moving forward from her chart, the picking up of the individual chart;
- How a genre used in a single combination related to the other genre(s) in that combination;

- What could be perceived as the communicative purpose of that combination, and what the outcome was e.g. the accomplishment of particular power relationship in that moment, or over time; a change in the community's practices (temporarily or more permanently);
- Whether a particular combination of use of tools came before or after another identifiable combination of tools, and at what point during the meetings.

4.Identification of Local versus Global-Identity Culture

Local-identity culture was defined as:

Culture which expresses and is expression of a shared set of material contexts and learned behaviours, values, beliefs, and templates created through in-depth and prolonged contact with a 'place' (or places, contemporarily) in some form

Here, I took the geographical position of the venue as significant (Myers, 2006). The place of the meetings was a small town fifty kilometres from Rome, and five of the participants were Roman, and of those not Roman, all had lived or worked at some time or were working there at the time of the meetings. Given this identification with, and the powerful presence of, the capital, I expected this to surface in the meetings in some form, and be particularly expressed through reference, not only to places, but also Roman Catholic Religion and Church, cultural and religious heroes, past and present, politics, etc.

Global-identity culture was defined as:

Culture which expresses and is expression of a shared set of material contexts and learned behaviours, values, beliefs, and templates created 'across' both space and time, particularly expressed through technology in some form, and/or involving (a) global concern(s) and elements of inscribed genres universally recognized.

This concept I took mainly to be expressed through technology, computer programmes used, tablets, and other technological devices, which 'cut across' time and space (Giddens, 1984). With both types of culture, I expected they would be expressed verbally by the participants, and through the tools of the activity system. Overlapping of cultures was also expected.

4.3.3 Findings

The findings are presented in two main sections 1. The question of 'power', that is, all the findings which were considered to do with the 'relations of interaction' between the Participants. 2. The overlapping of the local-identity culture and the global-identity culture.

4.3.3.1 The question of 'power'

The Major 'Structural Power' Participants of the activity system were clearly the astrologer and L, and both their behaviour during the course repeatedly constituted accomplishment of Major 'Accomplished Power', in that their actions and use of

resources continually designed and shaped the context, reaffirming ‘perceived power relations’ (Schneider, 2007). That is not to say, some ‘challenge’ of those relations did not occur. The astrologer had sole access to a number of tools, genre and non-genre – her astrological chart, the relevance of which was highlighted by it being placed on a wooden stand, some distance from the ‘communal table’, her book of ephemera, which was kept (when not in use by the astrologer) on a table next to the stand, and her wooden pointer, used solely by her. This tool ‘set’ constituted her tools of the trade. The astrologer was particularly upset when one day the glass of the chart broke, and did not allow the other participants to help he remove the glass, with the excuse they could hurt themselves. Both Lo and G (on different occasions) asked if they could take a look at the book of ephemera, but both received negative responses, since we would not be able to understand the symbols and how to use it (which may well have been true), though she did not confirm this with the two participants by showing a page of the book. The astrologer never sat, not even when waiting for all the participants to arrive – she simply leaned against the table where she placed the book of ephemera. She stood for the entire duration of the meeting, while the other participants sat, *de fatto* creating a differentiation of positions and roles.

The astrologer’s interaction with L was particularly relevant in the running of the activity system. Clearly, L had a privileged position in that she hosted the course. She was instrumental in ‘recruiting’ participants (by word of mouth, as far as I could ascertain), and used the Occluded Genres of the text messages and phone calls with the astrologer. Notably, all Participants had initially to give their birth details to L, who

then passed them on (using one of the occluded genres) to the astrologer, who then fed the information into the www.astrologiainlinea.it web site, and printed out the astral chart to be given to the individual at the next meeting of the group. The participant could have had the option to prepare the chart themselves (by simply going to the website), though perhaps not everyone has access to a computer (though this would be highly unlikely), or alternatively no access to a colour print it used colours. However, as the aspects of the planets are interpreted through a chart at the bottom of the page, the colours are not actually an absolute necessity. Instead, the preferred procedure by the astrologer reaffirmed the major power participant role of herself and L.

The roles of the minor structural power participants were continually confirmed by the participants spontaneously sitting down almost as soon as they arrived. There was a kind of unspoken code where participants casually sat anywhere – 'just take an available seat'. There was great attention to whether a seat had been taken or not, and I took this as indicating a desire on the part of the participants to create 'solidarity' and a form of 'equality' – no hierarchy. The use of the genre of the individual charts also contributed to this sense of 'group solidarity' in that participants often picked up and looked at the charts of other participants (in stark contrast to the behaviour of the group with the astrologer's chart) – a kind of 'free-for-all', though there were specific moments when this did not occur (see below). Notably, the astrologer commented that this particular group, privacy was not a particular issue, and that such 'free' access between participants was not always the case in similar astrology courses.

Without taping, more subtle shifting of ‘power’ were not possible to satisfactorily identify. However, occasions where behaviour was ‘marked’, indicating an attempted shift in power relations, were noted. Apart from the two occasions when Lo and G asked to see the book of ephemera, on two occasions Lo stood up and pointed with her finger at the astrologer’s chart, which evidently perturbed the astrologer. Lo also laughingly referred to the astrological glyphs as ‘scarabocchi’ (scribbles), and was the only participant who picked up an individual’s chart after it had been interpreted by the astrologer (see CGC – Interpretation below) and made some ‘alternative’ interpretation’. Twice to G, she offered supplementary interpretations through numerology. This was in contrast to the sense of solemnity of the astrological reading the astrologer was endeavouring to transmit, and challenged to a certain extent the role of the astrologer as an authority figure. On a few occasions, Lo attempted to combine two moments which the astrologist appeared to work towards separating, what I call ‘Ritual’ and ‘Commentary’ CGCs (see below), but these attempts appeared to rather ‘irritate’ the astrologist who was rather unresponsive at that moment (of Ritual), apparently wishing to create some kind solemnity or ceremony to the opening of proceedings. I also took it as part of the desire to create some form of ‘reverence’ in the participants towards the meaning or significance of astrology, particularly expressed through the Illustrative Chart (see below on ‘Solemnity’). On three occasions, Lo notably forgot to bring her individual chart, an obligatory genre, as expressed by the astrologer, in that, without it, participation made no sense.

Lo and L were the only two participants who smoked during the course (I noticed two occasions by both, though never at the same time). This involved both of them standing up from their seat at the communal table, and walking over to the door to smoke. In L's case, as a Major 'Structural Power' Participant, it came across as she felt she was entitled to do this, and the action, in turn, oriented activities towards this. As L made comments, this effectively forced the astrologer to turn her head towards her, and the gaze of the other participants shifted in that moment from the astrologer and her chart. Lo's smoking appeared to be part of her 'non-attentiveness' to the group practices, as implicitly indicated by the astrologer (no formal veto had been made not to smoke, but the action was 'marked'), and generally adhered by the other participants. For instance, except for these occasions, and when L used her tablet, participants remained seated throughout the meetings, and while both N and P were smokers, they both declined Lo's invitation on one occasion to join her for a cigarette at the door, a clear challenge to proceedings.

Notably, L also used Occult Genres out of access to the astrologer herself, 'outside' the moment of the enacting of the main gathering genre of the weekly meetings, constituting 'corridor talk'. L perceived the 'tolerance' of the astrologer towards the initial problem of punctuality inappropriate, and assumed a particularly active role in determining what was an appropriate practice, and through Occult Genres in the forms of text-messages, phone calls, attempts were made to influence the behavior of group members, with the result of some kind of 'rules' being established and adhered to (see above – tools).

It is worth noting that the tensions which were apparent in the activity system, particularly concerning Lo, and L and the astrologer increased. So much that after the group broke up for the summer in May 2013, it only had it first meeting again at the beginning of December 2013. According to L, recounting to G, the astrologer had wanted to wait several months before starting up again to 'discourage' the participation of Lo.

L challenged the position of astrologer three occasions, with use of her tool - her Tablet to refer to websites other than those of the astrologer. This also involved her getting up from her seat at the communal table and standing at the table where her tablet was placed (near to the entrance of the restaurant): at that moment there were two people standing. These episodes I took as a CGC –'Challenge' (see below). The one-time presence of B indicated how a newcomer, who was not yet aware of the group's communication and interaction practices, can dramatically change those practices, even inadvertently. After his very intense and personal recount, where he passed instantly from Minor to Major Power Participant a new kind on interaction was introduced, what I identified as the CGC – Confessional. This relative lack of privacy was then consolidated, not only by other participants following his cue, but by the 'free-for-all' manner of the handling of the individual astral charts mentioned above, which subsequently became standard practice within the system.

Furthering the object/motive of the activity system, as seen by the astrologer.

The Object/motive was defined as*:*

the driving or guiding force(s) of an activity system, the goal(s) or its task(s) (or problem space) , which is (are) shaped and changed over time to produce some outcome. The 'official' ('front-stage') object/motive(s) may be accompanied by (an) occluded('back-stage') object)/motive (s), and will presumably be partly determined by the power relations of the participants.

Providing certain tools and having access to others not only constantly reaffirmed her position, but were part of the astrologer's furthering as what she saw as the Object/motive of the Activity System, and this furthering of the object/motive as she saw it, can be seen as part of role as a Major Power Participant or stakeholder (Russell, 1997). That activity systems are characterized by disturbances and conflicts is part of their make-up (EngestrÖm, 1987; Cole & EngestrÖm, 1991), and these conflicts are also apparent in terms the *why* of an activity system. L had clear objectives in trying to create a kind of 'club' from the participants, inviting participants to stay (and eat) late into the evening, often talking about related activities or initiatives in the area before and during the meeting. Given her interactions presented above, Lo appeared to have more occult objectives of further her work as a numerologist. As the course progressed, it was more apparent each participant had different motives for being there: whether to take it as a moment of 'relaxation', or to study astrology in depth, to find some guidance in a difficult relationship, to look for some company, to see the meetings as an opportunity to 'bring along' a disadvantaged relative, to earn some extra income, or to find 'some answers'.

However, through various integrated ways, but particularly through the use of the

genre tools, indicating the power of ‘genre’ (Russell, 1997; Devitt, 2004; Bazerman, 2003; Swales, 2004), the astrologist continually worked to establish the a particular ‘problem space’ – the one that ultimately motivates the action, of the group, as Growth Awareness of the Individual through Developmental Astrology, a path which adherents of this way of thinking believe we all have to follow, while at the same time continually establishing her role as a major power participant by orientating the action of the group towards this goal. This involved, not only the content of the inscribed genres e.g. description and explanation of the Houses, but features which can be termed the ‘values’ or ‘ideology’ (Thompson, 1984) of the field (if it can be called as such), at least as seen by this particular astrologer. Part of this is the projection of 1. ‘universality’ – being part of the universe, and involving ‘underlying universal culture’ 2. ‘credibility’ – that astrology is an ancient science, involving the systematic study of the correlation between astronomical position of the planets and events on earth, 3. ‘solemnity’ – that astrology is neither only the mystic of crystal balls, nor the reductive presentation of daily predictions as presented in newspapers, and elsewhere, but a powerful tool to aid personal growth and understanding. These features were projected both in a. single inscribed genres, and b. through patterns of interaction identified during the running of the course presented below under CGC’s.

1. The projection of ‘Universality’

a.. The Use of Colours in the Astral Charts:

The purple and gold-yellow colours evident in the astrologer’s chart added to ‘universal’ appeal: purple is fairly universally symbolic of both royalty (Roman and Chinese emperors using purple, - the colour purpose also representing the

North Star, the centre of the universe, according to Chinese cosmology) and piety (Roman Catholic and Anglican bishops wearing purple, with reference to the Old Testament, Exod. 26), and gold as royalty (one of the gifts of the Magi to Jesus), or of great values (in such sayings as 'The golden middle way', 'Silence is golden', or the search for the 'golden fleece' in Greek Mythology), or of wisdom (The 'Golden Age' of a particular nation or civilization, Golden Wedding Anniversaries). Hence, these colours contributed in creating some kind of solemnity to the chart and distinguish it from the others.

The colours, apparently frequently used (according to the astrologer), apart from the astrologer's preferred website www.astrologiainlinea.it , on other astrological websites, too, e.g. www.astro.com , www.alwaysastrology.com , to signify the grouping of the Zodiac signs according to their element: green for the Earth signs (Taurus, Capricorn, Virgo); red for the Fire signs (Sagittarius, Aries, Leo); a dark blue for the Water signs (Scorpio, Pisces, Cancer); a sky blue for the Air signs (Aquarius, Libra, Gemini). These can be considered fairly universal colour associations. For instance, in Chinese Feng Shui, green is a colour of the 'wood' element, 'red', fire (often symbolized through the icon of the Phoenix), blue for the water element.

b. The Use of Astral Charts with Visual Representation of the Universe

Both the individual charts and the astrologer's astral chart used the stylized map of the universe (also known as the astrological wheel), showing the position of the sun, moon, and other celestial objects. This immediate and

culturally shared recognition of 'our Universe' gave a sense of belonging and represents a universal cultural artefact (Holliday, 2013). The astrologer chose this representation of an individual's astral chart, as opposed to other types, such as a table (see Fig. 4.5), which are also available on the website e.g.www.interactive.0800-horoscope.com (accessed Dec. 1. 2014).

c. Use of Universal Symbols/icons in the Astral Charts.

The individual charts made use of 'universal symbols', such as the shape of the moon, the circular shape and orange colour of the sun, the universal scientific symbols of male (the masculine planet , Mars) and female (the feminine planet, Venus), the symbols of Taurus and Aries, representing their horns. What the other glyphs represented had to be learnt by the participants as the course when on, and represented part of the enculturation into the practices of astrology. However, these glyphs are universally recognized in astrology, the symbols having a thousand year history, leaving a trail again through classical history, and Renaissance astrology (see Fig. 4.6). Here, we can clearly see how the symbols used in the astral chart taken from www.astrologiainlinea are the same used during the Renaissance (though few planetary bodies had been identified e.g. Pluto). Though the glyphs are almost the same, there is some, though slight variation in the labels e.g. Architenens for Sagittarius (though clearly the Archer is being nominated). In further contrast to the individual natal charts, in the astrologer's chart, icons were used to represent the Zodiac signs e.g. to represent Taurus, there was an image of a bull, universally (relatively) recognizable. The icons were visually similar to

Renaissance images. The use of icons may have also been connected to the purpose of the chart as being an illustrative chart to an audience, allowing immediate visual recognition. For an Italian, in particular, recognition of 'renaissance-like images' could be taken as part of their 'cultural resources' (classical education) (Holliday, 2013), and the appeal to the 'classics, the view that Greek and Latin cultures and languages are the universal basis of Western culture. The symbols and icons (along with the astrological wheel) can be taken as representing a form of 'intermodality', creating a form of 'historical' or 'time' layering

2.The Projection of 'Credibility'

a.The Use of Appeal to the Renaissance.

The significance of repeated reference to the Renaissance, through images (in the astrological charts), reference to Dante' Inferno in the handouts, and reference to Giordano Bruno, the Renaissance astrologer burnt at the stake during the meetings on the part of the astrologer is more fully discussed below under 'local-cultural identity'. In the course, it was used by the astrologer as way to appeal to the education and cultural-historic tradition (their 'cultural resources – Holliday, 2013) of the majority of the participants (ten Italians out of twelve).

b.The Handouts and Bibliography ('Documentation')

Notable, during the course, the astrologer made use of both 1. handouts and 2. a bibliography, utilizing particular fonts, punctuation, and textual organization

to increase the 'seriousness' and 'genuineness' of the course. The two genres could be seen to combine to produce another a kind of macro-genre, that of Documentation (Geisler, 2000), specifically to give weight and credibility to the meetings. They also provided reference and explanation to other genres utilized in the course e.g. the individual astral charts, providing further evidence of 'preparation' and 'forethought'.

The Handouts: These were used to explain the charts, to which explicit reference was made (Fairclough's 'manifest intertextuality, 1992). Below are some examples.

Nel grafico è la linea con la scritta MC, che dà inizio alla decima casa (*In the chart, Midheaven is indicated by MC, which represents the start of the tenth house*). (HO6)

Nel grafico della carta del cielo è la linea orizzontale che si trova a destra, continuazione di quella dell'ascendente.
(In the natal chart the descendent can be found on the right, following the horizontal line of the Ascendant). (HO5).

…con I principali angoli della carta
(with the main angles of the chart) (HO7)

La rappresentazione grafica vede un grande cerchio con un punto nel suo

centro.

((The Sun) is represented by a large circle with a dot in the middle) (HO1)

The use of font and lay-out: as commented by Prior (2009), the choice of a font and lay-out over another contributes to the desired 'communicative purpose' of a written genre. Using a familiar format or one which is expected by readers makes it easier for them to navigate and comprehend a text by providing cues which can be used to follow a writer's ideas more efficiently and to locate information of interest to them, not distracting them with unfamiliar or complicated formatting (www.owl.english.purdue.edu).

That the astrologer consistently used the same font and lay-out (besides whether she was merely using a 'default') helped create 'regularity' and 'stability' to the activity system through the use of this genre, the participants quickly developing an 'expectation' as to how the next handout would look like, and the style (full, formal prose) used. As in the example below, every handout began with establishing what the astrological point in question 'represented', for instance, Midheaven (MC) (Medio Cielo) symbolizes 'the climax' of an individual, where they should aim to arrive, socially and professionally. Below is an extract (See Appendix for a full example). Twelve font Bookman Old Style (the same font as used on the individual astral chart) is used with narrow margins and left and right justification. The font is a *serif* typeface derived from Old Style Antique and designed by Alexander Phemister in 1858.

IL MEDIO CIELO

(12 font Bookman Old Style upper case in bold)

Esso delinea simbolicamente il “culminare” dell’individuo, cioè la sua affermazione socio-professionale, il suo essere nel mondo e la sua capacità di realizzazione. Mentre le caratteristiche dell’ascendente sono spontanee ed immediate, quelle del Medio Cielo rimangono latenti e canno in qualche modo “estratte” nel corso degli anni. Esse richiedono un lavoro di limatura, un impegno volto a ovalizzarle e renderle operanti.

Spesso nasce un’ottima intesa con persone nate nel segno in cui ha il Medio Cielo, poiché sentiamo in loro qualcosa che ci appartiene ma che non vive pienamente. Nel grafico è la linea con la scritta MC, che dà inizio alla decima casa.

(The Midheaven

This represents the ‘culmination’ of an individual, their social-professional fulfillment, their existence in the world and their ability for self-realization. While the characteristics of the ascendant are spontaneously expressed and immediately apparent, those of the Midheaven remain latent and need to be drawn out over the years. They require a fine-tuning, an effort to put them into effect.

Very often one has a great affinity with those people who are born in the same sign as the Midheaven since we feel they have something which is part of us, but which we are not fully aware of. In the (birth) (my brackets) chart it is indicated by the letters MC, and denotes the beginning of the tenth house).

Internationally recognized and used formats, such as APA style (American Psychological Association) or MLA (Modern Language Association) call for left

justification of a page, but not right justification (www.owl.english.purdue.edu). Instead, use of right justification is regularly used in formal Italian writing, as my contact with Italian students has shown me, and confirmed by Italian university colleagues. Again, this could be seen as the astrologer 'satisfying' the expectations of her readership (which appears to take an primarily Italian), and indication of a shared practice. According to my graphic artist informant, the use of Bookman Old Style font projects a feeling of 'sincerity', 'truth', and 'tradition'. Such a serif 12 sized font is considered easy to read, particularly when there is a fair amount of text. As shown by the use of this font in the website www.astrologiainlinea (see abbreviations of astral chart printed from this site above), this might mean there is the use of templates and/or this font is relatively common (at least in Italian astrology circles).

Notably, the astrologer did not make use of underlining, bullets, dashes to create emphasis but used upper cases and particularly bold. This use of graphics can also be found in the websites on astrology I looked at, including the two sites the astrologer refers to: www.astro.com and www.astrologiainlinea.it . These are protected sites so it was not possible to copy an example (and I have not subscribed). Instead, below I give an extract from another astrology site – www.alwaysastrology.com (accessed July 21 2013), which illustrates the point (even though the font Verbana is used, and note the use of only a left-justification of the page, written in English).

What are Uranus Signs?

Uranus Signs represent change. Associated with innovation, technology and discovery, Uranus helps bring about progressive change in all aspects of our lives. This Planet takes us into the future; tradition is made to be broken.

Uranus Signs also represent enlightenment, novelty and ingenuity. Uranus is intuitive and sometimes ahead of its time when you are in tune with its energies. This intuition may cause you to research or investigate a new angle.

Another common characteristic of these texts is their use of numbers. The houses are always written out in full or using roman numbers, while Arabic numbers are reserved for degrees.

Prima casa: settore collegato all'Ariete,…

(The first house: sector relating to Aries…) (HO2)

La distanza tra I pianeti si reduce a pochissimi gradi, con una tolleranza di 9…

(The distance between the planets is reduced to a minimum, with a margin of 9 (gradi) …) (HO7)

Saturn 20°36' Taurus, in House VII

(www.alwaysastrology.com)

The numbers used for the Houses in the individual astral chart 'breaks' this tendency with both Roman and Arabic numbers being used.

The Astrologer's Bibliography. The genre of a bibliography can be fairly easily recognized, though it can be complied for various reasons. In academic terms, a bibliography is an alphabetized list of all the sources used in the process of a piece of research, typically including the authors' names, titles of the works, the names of the location of the publishing houses, the dates of the copies used (www.research.lhup.edu). The most used are the APA and MLA styles, but the ordering of information produces a different effect, through emphasis created through 'fronting' (Quirk & Greenbaum, 1988): in the APA style, emphasis is given to the author and the date of the research publication; in the MLA style, emphasis is given to the author and the name of the work. Either way, they are universally (in academic terms) recognized styles, and aim to project writer credibility through the citation of sources, and to further the research process and debate. As part of the genre of a book or a research article, they can be termed 'part-genres' (Ayers, 2008).

Instead, the bibliography provided by the astrologer had quite a different purpose and can be taken as a 'free-standing' genre. The aim was not to be used to easily check or find sources cited in a piece of research for a wide readership, but aimed at the local audience of the specific activity system. The bibliography provided a list which aimed for easy finding of the works for non-academic use e.g. the date of the works was not included, presumably considered unimportant (which is not the case in academic debate). The modes used in the documents and the bibliography, seemed to confirm this.

It included the following (as it originally appeared – use of 12 font Bookman Old Style)

BIBLIOGRAFIA ASTROLOGICA DI BASE

(12 font Bookman Old Style upper case in bold)

TECNICA ASTROLOGICA di Grazia Bordoni Armenia Editore

(12 font Bookman Old Style upper case) (12 font Bookman Old Style lower case)

SINETESI E INTERPRETAZIONE DEL TEMA NATALE di G. Bordoni Ed. Capone

(Idem.)

IL CONVITATO DI PIETRA, TRATTATO DI ASTROLOGIA DIALETTICA di Lisa Morpurgo Longanesi

(Idem.)

On the subject of Lilith, she provided another text reference which she dictated to the group:

Lilith, l'incontro con il dolore. Astrologia della Luna Nera di Lianella Livaldi (Title and

author dictated tto the group).

On the subject of Lilith, L provided the following texts:

Lilith la Luna Nera di Roberto Sicuteri (Casa editrice Astrolabio) (the book was shown to the group);

Lilith e le Relazioni Affettive nel Significato Astrologico di Lianella Livaldi (Title and author dictated to the group)

c.The Complex Genre Configurations (CGCs) (see below) – 'Moves' .
During the meetings the astrologer orchestrated certain 'events', which I have called 'moves' (Swales, 1990) to project herself as a credible figure of authority, and essentially these were made up of CGCs.

Since the astrologer identified herself with astrology, it should be born in mind that heightening of the figure of authority of the astrologer implied strengthening the validity of astrology. The CGCs are described in detail below. Of particular relevance here is the moves of 'Presentation' - where the astrologer used the chart to present a particular aspect of astrology e.g. the twelve houses, the different planets and their movements, which represented the focal point or *focus* of the meeting; 'Explanation' – where he astrologer explained how the Illustrative Chart worked and what it represented, the position of various elements e.g. the ascendant on the median left,

the descendant on the median right; ‘Interpretation’ – where the astrologer took an individual astral chart in her hand and gave an interpretation to the main astrological element or elements presented at the beginning point covered in ‘Presentation’; ‘Justification’ – a move which involved the astrologer indicating on individual charts where her interpretation came from, generally using the chart plus the diagram below indicating (with gestures) the relations of the different planets to each other; ‘Consultation’ – a move involved the astrologer consulting her book of ephemera.

d.The ‘Matter-of-Fact’ Image of the Astrologer.

As already mentioned, the desired ‘image’ (on the part of the astrologer) of both the course and Developmental Astrology was projected through the ‘matter-of-fact’ appearance of the astrologer herself, through her clothes and general attire.

One of the aims of the astrologer, reflecting her overall objective in the course, was to debunk a common imagine in the minds of many of what an astrologer is.

3.Projection of ‘Solemnity’

A sense of Solemnity was created through the following elements.

a.Quasi-Religious Tone and Language of the Handouts.

Due to restrictions of resources, a detailed linguistic analysis of the handouts was not made. However, through a rather ‘quick and dirty’ view of the genre (Swales, 1990), some use of pronouns and punctuation, in particular, appeared both as part of a form of *enculturation* (Devitt, 2004), creation of a personal identification with the contents with use of the first personal plural (Bhatia, 2004), and the idea of a universal ‘we’, and an almost ‘religious’ appeal (Holliday, 2013), through the use of certain capitals

of letters, reminiscent of analogous strategies used in the Bible (a religious point of reference, given the background of all the participants – see above – Participants), adding an element of 'solemnity' to the texts. An example is given in this extract:

> L'atrologia evolutive ritiene che il nostro Sé interior – Il Grande Saggio – non faccia altro che catalizzare, a nostra insaputa…

(Developmental Astrology considers that our interior Being – The Wise One – is nothing more than a catalyst, unknown to us, …) (HO8)

The use of first personal plural and the punctuation with the use of capitals for 'Wise Being', together with the use of the definite article, adds solemnity to the text, as does the use of the 'universal' 'us' – similar to techniques used in some versions of the Bible:

> Poi, disse: "Ti prego, Signore, se ha trovato grazie agli occhi tuoi, venga il Signore in mezza noi…perdona la nostra iniquità, il nostro peccato.
>
> (Then, he exclaimed, "Oh Lord, if you have found grace, let the Lord come among us…forgive our wrongdoings, our sins)
>
> (Exodus, 34:9)
>
> …nostro Dio, e noi non sapremo con quali vittime…
>
> (…our Lord, and we will not know with which victims)…
>
> (Exodus, 30:26)
>
> (original use of punctuation, though I was unable to identify the original font: www.laparola.net. Accessed Dec. 5 2014)

b.The Creation of the Sense of the ‘Forbidden’.

As previously mentioned, certain inscribed genres – the astrologer’s book of ephemera and the astrologer’s chart – were at the exclusive use of the astrologer herself, who preferred not even to show the pages of the book, or allow others to touch the chart, even when the frame glass was broken, declining offers of help to remove the glass. The chart had been reframed the next meeting, using a very attractive blue colour, which the other participants commented on. On the two occasions that Lo attempted to use the chart to illustrate her point (which was accompanied by Lo standing up from the table, and stepping forward to the chart), the astrologer became visibly uncomfortable. The paper and the size of the chart was in contrast with those of the individual astral charts, the astrologers’ apparently being printed on very good quality parchment-like paper, and of A3 size, while the individual chart’s were printed on standard A4 white sheets. How the charts were differently handled was also notable, from the ‘don’t- touch’ quality of the astrologer’s chart, to the free handling of the individual charts, which were also drawn, doodled, written upon, and folded up, by their respective ‘owners’. Three of the participants – G, N, and M, kept their charts in protective, plastic covers.

C.The Regularity of Overall Structure and Rhythm of the Meetings.

Despite fairly ‘chaotic moments’ – several participants speaking at the same time, people changing places during the meetings, some smoking at the door, people coming late and/or leaving early, outbreaks of laughter, some divergence of topic, recounting of personal details or anecdotes unrelated to proceedings – the astrologer still managed to maintain a relatively regular patterning and rhythm to the meetings,

as indicated in the CGCs I identified.

Ten CGCs were identified:

i Ritual

The astrologer ‘opened’ the meeting by taking out of her briefcase the framed Illustrative natal chart and placing it on a stand, on the same table in the same position, in the far right-hand corner of the room. This created visually and spatially a ‘focal’ point during the meetings, effectively ‘shifting’ the usual focus of the venue (the ‘banco’ or bar on the opposite corner of the room) when used as a restaurant, with the participants having their backs to the bar. She placed her book of ephemera near the chart (usually to the left). She could talk before and after ‘Ritual’, but I noted she almost always did the gesture in silence (even if this silence was not always accompanied by silence on the part of the other participants, particularly Lo). This CGC usually preceded Presentation, but on occasion it preceded Commentary (see below), and was almost always the first CGC of each meeting though Commentary did occur first on occasion (I noted four times). Contrarily, an ‘ending’ to proceedings was not possible to clearly identify, as participants left at different times, and the astrologer always remained for dinner after the meeting (G never did).

ii. Presentation

The astrologer, who always stood in this CGC, used the chart to present a particular aspect of astrology e.g. the twelve houses, the different planets and their movements, which represented the focal point or *focus* of the meeting. This was generally accompanied with gestures (often with a pointing stick) and explanation of the written handout(s) which were then distributed. This usually occurred after Ritual.

It inevitably involved reference to astrophysics, Greek mythology (once to Jewish mythology with the discussion of ‘Lilith’).

ii. Explanation

The astrologer explained how the Illustrative Chart worked and what it represented, the position of various elements e.g. the ascendant on the median left, the descendant on the median right. This was usually accompanied with gestures e.g. a circular movement to describe the movement of the planets (as with Presentation). This genre could occur at any time during the meeting (as opposed to Presentation, which occurred almost always after Ritual) to provide (further) explanation to a query, or at the beginning of a meeting to explain the ‘basics’ of the chart to ‘newcomers’.

iv. Interpretation

This was generally signalled by the astrologer moving forward to the ‘communal table’ where the participants were sitting. All the charts were then put on the table (even if previously participants had been examining them or had them in their hands) This was done almost automatically by all the participants, representing a form of Tarot card reading. During this CGC, only the astrologer touched the charts, though Lo was a noted exception, often picking up an individual’s chart after it has been interpreted and making some comment. Twice to G, she offered ‘supplementary’ interpretations (to the astrologer’s) through numerology. The astrologer took an individual astral chart in her hand and gave an interpretation to the main astrological element or elements presented at the beginning point covered. While the participants

were sitting, the astrologist stood or leant against a table, though never (as far as I could note) the table with the illustrative chart and astrology tables book, facing the participant whose chart was being read. Though she would ask who would like to 'go first' or 'go next "A chi tocca?" (Who's next?), she usually went 'clockwise'. Explanation was also embedded in Interpretation.

v. Response

After and/or during the astrologer's Interpretation, the participant responded to the Interpretation, asking for clarification, commenting on the interpretation (which ranged from – "Mi riconosco in pieno" (That's exactly how I am) (N to the interpretation of Lilith) to "Non mi ci trovo". (That's not me at all) (L to the interpretation of Lilith). Reference was usually made to the chart and /or the Handouts, and on occasion to the illustrative chart (Lo in particularly – I noted five occasions). Three times reference was made to a Samsung tablet by one of the participants (L). Moments of noticeable 'tension' (I identified 6 clear examples), signalled by particularly evident 'face-saving' strategies by the astrologer (often taking a step back from the participant, grave expression, left-hand to left-side of face), always involving 'bad news', e.g. transit of Uranus in the sixth house (Virgo), generally signalling upheavals at work, use of the Italian impersonal form, silence among the other participants, appeared in the Interpretation/Response dyad (I took silence on the part of the participant involved as a 'response') (Watzlawick et al., 1967)

vi. Justification

This involved the astrologer indicating on individual charts where her interpretation came from, generally using the chart plus the diagram below indicating (with gestures) the relations of the different planets to each other. This generally followed Response or Commentary (see below).This sometimes lead to Explanation and reference to the illustrative chart.

vii. Consultation

This involved the astrologer consulting her book of ephemeris, which was always placed back in the same place after Consultation , next to the Illustrative Chart. Being rather large (and heavy), she usually sat on the chair next to and on the left of the table with the illustrative chart. This occurred when she wanted to find the astrological setting of a non-participant (and so whose chart was not available at that moment through a complete printed version) who had been mentioned in Response or Commentary (usually after Interpretation or Justification) e.g. when the position of Mars, relating to male figures in a person's life, in a particular house or sign, was noted in a participant's chart and the participant commented on the connection with a particular person in their life: the astrologist (or through request of the participant or through personal initiative) verified the position of Mars in that person's chart through consultation with the tables – if both the participant and the non-participant had Mars in the same house or sign, this was taken as significant in some way.

viii. Confessional

This involved participants providing very intimate and personal details about themselves or people close to them, often in the form of fairly long monologue e.g. N

following the astrologer's interpretation of Chiron the Centaur, who represents the karmic wound. This frequently occurred after Justification but could also occur immediately after Interpretation (as with N). Frequent reference to the individual natal chart was made (either through gesture, or through words). It was characterized by 'no interruption' on the part of the other participants, which frequently occurred with 'Response'. This could be expressed in a serious and grave tone (e.g. N), or with an edge of humour e.g. Lo in her response to the astrologer's interpretation of her Fourth House, which represents the family and the relationship to the father figure. I only noted reference to the individual's chart.

ix. Commentary

This involved participants commenting on points brought up or expanded in the handouts produced at each meeting, on the astral chart, and occasionally on the illustrative chart. This was differentiated from Response (which followed the astrologer's initial reading of an individual astral chart) in that it could occur at any time during the meeting, after Ritual, usually after Presentation, though it could occur before Presentation. On a few occasions it even occurred before Ritual. Whereas Response was almost always reference to an individual's astral chart (their own) or interpretation, Commentary included a wide range of topics – their own astral charts, those of others, connections to past meetings, etc. Generally, this did not involve moments of 'tension', except on the four occasions of the discussion on 'Lilith' (see below).

x. Challenge

This occurred on three occasions, all three centred on the topic of the Dark Moon or Lilith. L, in disaccord with the astrologer on the interpretation of her Lilith, rose from her seat around the 'communal table' and sat at the table with the Tablet, and twice found a particular reference www.libriesotericiastrologia , and once, a different interpretation of Lilith through another web-site www.graziemirti. Of the three occasions, twice (in the same meeting), it occurred after two Interpretations (L's and G's), and once before Ritual, in the following meeting. On all occasions, the astrologer 'defended' her case, by making particular reference to the website she had used to do her calculations www.astro.com, and the text provided by herself as reference.

The overall effect of the meetings was the creation of a kind of 'mix' between a lesson – CGCs Explanation, Presentation, Justification, and a quasi-religious event, through the CGCs of Ritual, Interpretation, Consultation, and here I would also add the CGC Confessional, which was almost always accompanied by silence on the part of the other participants, and essential involved a dyad between that particular participant and the astrologer. (The in-between moments, generally between one CGC and another, and activity before the beginning of Ritual, added another quality to the activity system, that of a form of club).

4.3.2 The Overlapping of 'Local' and 'Global'-Identity Culture

This specific activity system, had a very strong 'local'-cultural identity, firmly based in the local context, intrinsically linked to Rome and its historical and cultural history.

A strong indication was the frequent reference to classical and Renaissance figures (Rome being one of the major centres for both). This is clearly indicated by the astrologist reference to Bruno Giordano, Renaissance thinker and astrologer, burnt at the stake for heresy in Rome, whose statue is in a major Roman piazza – Piazza dei Fiori (people who live in and around Rome know this piazza as well as St Peter's), Dante Alighieri's Divine Comedy, and reference to Roman gods, taking their identification for granted. i.e. common ground e.g. Mars, the god of War. In other words, between members of the group some grounding in classical education is presumed. In the local state middle school (11 to 14 year-olds) i.e. common obligatory education, two obligatory texts are Nessuno – *Odissea raccontata dai giovani d'oggi* (1997) by Luciano De Crescenzo , which recounts Ulysses Odyssey back to Ithaca, and Dante's *The Divine Comedy* , as verified by three of the participants of the activity system (G, L, R). Notably, in the discussion of the cycle of the lunar nodes, there was talk of the importance of the number 9:

La metà del ciclo nodale cade ogni 9 anni…Il numero 9 è collegato in astrologia umanistica con il graduale esaurimento del passato ancestrale

(Half of the nodal cycle occurs every 9 years…in humanistic astrology, the number 9 is related to the end of the ancestral past) HO10,

And the significance that these years are divided in three periods of three,

…ciascun periodi di nove anni si divide in tre periodi di 3 anni

(Each of these 9-year periods are divided into three periodo of 3 years)(HO10),

And how it relates to the Age of Aquarius and transformation. The astrologer pointed out that Dante in his Inferno, Canto XXIV, also mentioned the Age of Aquarius and this transformation:

In quella parte del giovanetto anno
Che 'sole i crin sotto l'Aquario tempra
E già le noetti al mezzo di se vanno,

(In the Age of Aquarius, in that time of the young inter-planetary year…)

Inferno – Canto XXIV

The astrologer also commented on another Canto IX, illustrated by Sandro Botticelli (1445), whereby nine rings are illustrated (see Fig. 4.7). This connecting our local astrology course to classical and Italian historical figures had the effect of giving credibility and intellectual weight to the field, but most strongly, *local* historical cultural identity and contextualization. Here, the geographic position of where the activity system was held needs to be taken into consideration (fifty miles from Rome). The astrologer made several reference to Bruno Giordano, even though it was to 'distance' herself from him, since she commented that he pursued a deterministic astrology, very different from Developmental Astrology. This could have been to create a 'link' with tradition (enforcing the credibility of astrology – see above) and/or provide a benchmark for comparison to explain her position and views on the value and use of astrology. Either way, a *local* historical and cultural common ground was

presumed which contributed to the creation of the identity of the activity system. Notably, if reference to Dante Alighieri and Bruno Giordano had been made in another country, the USA for instance, this 'local' element would no longer be valid. Indeed, most likely reference to such cultural historic heroes would be seen as laying claim to a 'identity to Western culture' in some form.

Claim to a *global*- identity culture was very strongly felt through the use of the websites to both print the all-important astral charts, and justify positions and create credibility e.g. L and the astrologer both appealed to websites for their arguments over the issue of Lilith. Other features were more ambiguous, as features which can be taken as 'universal' are not necessarily 'global', though they might become so through acquisition: the use of particular colours in the chart which have universal connotations e.g. Red for Fire, Green for Earth; the use of universal astrological glyphs is another indication, symbols which a thousand year history, leaving a trail again through classical history, and Renaissance astrology (see Fig.4.6). Here, we can clearly see how the symbols used in the astral chart taken from www.astrologiainlinea are the same used during the Renaissance (though few planetary bodies had been identified e.g. Pluto). Though the glyphs are almost the same, there is some, though slight variation in the labels e.g. Architenens for Sagittarius (though clearly the Archer is being nominated). Likewise, the page of ephemera taken from a present-day book for astrologers (Fig.4.3) (calculated by a computer programme) is almost identical to a page from the 18th Century (Fig. 4.4) (www.maryenglish.com Accessed August 2013), based on the original Renaissance symbols and format (calculated by hand from an expert astrologer).

This brings us to the notable point that these modes in all their forms can indicate *both* local and global-identity culture or one or the other at any given moment (EngestrÖm's state of 'flux', 1993), according to how they are used, when, why and by whom – in other words, which activity system and by which participant. A single genre may inherently have both 'local' and 'global' and can indicate a form of *time layering*, the individual natal charts being an example – the glyphs, the wheel, the use of colours, Arabic and Roman numbers, the degrees all indicate historic universal identity, while the fact it is printed on paper from a computer website, accessible to all indicates a present-day global identity. Conversely, the details of the individual on the top left indicates an individual and 'local' identity (intrinsically tied to 'place' with the place of birth), while the symbol and name of the website on the top right indicate a both a global identity (through technology and the use of a universally accepted or recognized symbol of the sun) and local (through the use of Italian). Notably, the astrologer mainly used an Italian astrological web-site – www.astrologiainlinea.it, which has no conversion system into other languages, unlike www.astro.com , which converts into nine languages, all European (including English), which may indicate another cultural identity, that of a national one, though this takes us out of the scope of the present research.

Notable is the use of not only *intertextuality* to create cultural values (Devitt, 2004), but the use of *intermodality* , the use of the astrological glyphs being a clear example, where these symbols have been used across time and space and for different but related genres e.g. the ephemera, the natal charts. Evident, then, is not only Prior's

chains of mediate multi-modal genre systems (2009), but Swales' *layering* (2009), something which also surfaces in activity theory through the idea of *historical layering*. which I will call *multimodal layering*.

The use of the font in the astrologers' handouts, partly templates from both websites and books and printed, can be taken as another example where 'time layering' is evident. The content, lay-out seems to be a time-established way of presenting astrological details and explanations. The astrologer has chosen to use a middle-of-the-road font creating a sense of both tradition and sincerity (apart from a document easy to read). If another font had been used, a completely different effect would have been created, as can be seen by comparing three fonts, the original one used (Bookman Old Style), Old English, and Microsoft Sans Serif.

IL MEDIO CIELO

(12 font Bookman Old Style upper case in bold)(original)

Esso delinea simbolicamente il "culminare" dell'individuo, cioè la sua affermazione socio-professionale, il suo essere nel mondo e la sua capacità di realizzazione. Mentre le caratteristiche dell'ascendente sono spontanee ed immediate, quelle del Medio Cielo rimangono latenti e vanno in qualche modo "estratte" nel corso degli anni. Esse richiedono un lavoro di limatura, un impegno volto a valorizzarle e renderle operanti.

IL MEDIO CIELO

(12 font Old English upper case in bold)

Esso delinea simbolicamente il "culminare" dell'individuo, cioè la sua affermazione socio-professionale, il suo essere nel mondo e la sua capacità di realizzazione. Mentre le caratteristiche dell'ascendente sono spontanee ed immediate, quelle del Medio Cielo rimangono latenti e vanno in qualche modo "estratte" nel corso degli anni. Esse richiedono un lavoro di limatura, un impegno volto a valorizzarle e renderle operanti.

IL MEDIO CIELO

(12 font Microsoft Sans Serif upper case in bold)

Esso delinea simbolicamente il "culminare" dell'individuo, cioè la sua affermazione socio-professionale, il suo essere nel mondo e la sua capacità di realizzazione. Mentre le caratteristiche dell'ascendente sono spontanee ed immediate, quelle del Medio Cielo rimangono latenti e vanno in qualche modo "estratte" nel corso degli anni. Esse richiedono un lavoro di limatura, un impegno volto a valorizzarle e renderle operanti.

The use of Old English would not have been an option due to difficulties in reading, but such a font (perhaps used only for headings and titles) can create a sense of 'history' (dating back 1,000 years). Instead, this sense of 'history' was created by the astrologer through different means, as we have seen. The modern Microsoft San Serif is relatively easy to read, but the hard and linear lines create the (desired) effect of the 'here-and-now', and according to my graphic artist informant,

more associated with commerce and business. The choice of font Bookman Old Style (whether conscious or not, here the result is being examined) appears in line with the astrologer's clothes and self-image which was projected – a person of substance and tradition. This contributed to giving credibility and weight to astrology and so the activity system, and helped provide a sense of 'belonging' on the part of the participants, and contributed to the enculturation.

4.3.4 Discussion of Findings: Assessing the Usefulness of the Framework.

Below, I assess whether, through use of the extended multi-dimensional and multi-perspective framework, the research questions could be answered.

The research questions

I started off with the following research questions:

i. How did the various participants (and the power relations between them) affect the activity system in terms of being stabilizing and/or change agents and with what means (Russell, 1997; Giddens, 1984; Thompson; 1984; Winsor, 1999)?

ii. How did the tools, and specifically the genres, regulate the activity system (Russell, 1997; Bazerman, 2003; Winsor, 1999),

iii. What was the relationship between 'verbal' and 'visual' elements of the genres (Prior, 2008; Wysocki, 2004; Swales, 2009)?

iv. What elements within the activity system triggered change? How was

change enacted (Russell, 1997)?

v. What evidence was there that culture in some form was influencing the workings of the activity system, and what was that form (of culture)?

i. How did the various participants (and the power relations between them) affect the activity system in terms of being stabilizing and/or change agents (Russell, 1997; Giddens, 1984; Thompson; 1984; Winsor, 1999)?

The concepts of major v. minor power participants proved useful here at different levels. The distinction between major structural power participants and minor structural power participants helped me grasp an overall picture of the 'objective' structure of the system, providing a benchmark in the observation analysis, indicating possible rules, which participants to particular be aware of and genres they handled, and on what occasion, and what could constitute 'marked' events in the form of participatory action and/or in the use of genres. Then the distinction between 'structural' and 'orientation' power was useful in identifying how these relations were confirmed or challenged and in what manner, and how interaction and transaction between the participants determined the community's practices, and change within the group in terms of 'roles', how a 'minor' accomplished power participant shifted role, and vice versa, and back again, confirming views of power as seen by Schneider (2007), and other scholars following the example of Garfinkel (1967). The differentiation between the participants subsequently help me in trying to explain what was happening between the participants, and the resulting or potential effects on the activity system, both in use of tools, and how they were modified, but how the object/motive of the system was affected.

The case of the Dark Moon is a illustrative example of the tension between major power members, one trying to use genre as a "regulatory mechamism" (Swales, 1990; Bazerman, 2003)(the astrologer), and another using (a different genre) to provoke change (L) – both, however, using the 'appeal' to authority of the respective genres. In a previous course together with N and Lo (*Le Donne in Altre Epoche*) (Women in Other Ages), L had acquired a great interest in the figure of Lilith, which indicated certain values and beliefs, and suggested to the astrologer the figure be covered in a meeting. First, however, the astrologer, commented that she did not like the figure, then after L's insistence (over two meetings), the individual chart did not contain the reading, then that the website she used and believed to be reliable (www.astrologiainlinea.it) did not cover it, and finally that she did not know the figure. When she did finally present the figure in a separate meeting, L reacted as she did, as illustrated in the CGC Challenge, particularly supporting her argument with other genres through the tool of her tablet. What is interesting is how both participants in this 'power struggle' supported their claims, defended their position, created the credibility to their arguments through the use of genres. The astrologer was then under pressure to change her main web point of reference, leading to a substitution in the individual astral charts, and to review her position of what she saw (or did not see) as the role of Lilith in Developmental Astrology (i.e. a review of values and beliefs), potentially bringing about major changes in this particular activity system, and certainly subsequent ones (though, of course, the issue might be dropped).

Another notable feature is that, determining factors or 'regulations' of the activity

system are not equally discussed by all, and often discussed ‘outside’ the moment of enacting of the activity system (‘corridor talk’). One might think that this would be *in primus* who is holding the course, the astrologer, but in actual fact, through her desire to keep as many on board as possible, her ‘tolerance’ has been seen by some particularly active participants as ‘inappropriate’. Again, L assumed a particularly active role in determining what is appropriate behaviour, and through text-messages, phone calls (what could be called ‘occult’ tools), attempts to influence the behaviour of the group members, with the result of some kind of ‘rules’ being formed and adhered to. Indeed, potential new participants are beginning to be given (by the owner) the ‘lowdown’ on how the group operates. Such indications were entirely absent at the beginning – just a loosely formed group of very diverse women, all with a vague or less vague interest in astrology. Already, then, certain power relations within the group were being formed, and are being continually formed, though this just could in many cases be seen as a desire to keep ‘the thing going’. Also, objectively, some have more power than others, L, the restaurant owner, being an obvious example the exercise of, power is also increasing with the perceived success of the course, with more potential participants wishing to join. A fair amount of jockeying for position between the participants is also apparent in the actual meetings e.g. the role of Lo, though this might also be due, in part, to character differences.

‘Unspoken’ exercise of ‘accomplished power’ can be illustrated by one episode. G participated from the beginning and to nearly every session, and also contributed to the group rules, if not to its Object/motive. At the beginning of the third meeting, G

rather abruptly left when the group discussion, guided by the astrologer and received positively by some of the participants (notably L, Lo, M, and N), 'floated off' to discuss issues (crystal therapy) which G perceived as extraneous to what G believed the 'object/ motive' of the group to be, and, through discussion with the owner who phoned me afterwards (who had talked to the astrologer after the meeting), it was agreed that the discussion would, from then on, not go off 'the point'. Here, I should mention that G also has a fairly 'privileged' position with the system as she is a good friend of the owner. G was also one of those who initiated the promotion and formation of the group, by indicating her interest in such a course last year.

'Accomplished power' was also 'negotiated' by participants who were not frequently present, for instance, by B, considered a Minor Structural Power Participant', who had a considerably impact on its workings. He made only one appearance (the fourth meeting), but his intervention determined the formation of the Confessional CGC which became a significant element in the activity system, forming and expressing group identity, which in turn influenced the make-up of Commentary, Interpretation, Response - a domino effect. Up until that moment, the astrologer was very wary of the issue of privacy and would ask for confirmation from the other participants whether their charts could be interpreted in front of the others in any detail. There had been some personal remarks made by the participants in response to the astrologer's interpretation but B's answer, in the form of an impassioned and very personal monologue, silenced all the participants and a new moment of solemnity was created. Significantly, the issue of privacy became secondary, and the astrologer quite soon afterwards, put all the participants' particular details

(concerning the 'element of the day') on the Handouts e.g. the Handout on Chiron (to facilitate things, she commented). One intervention had transformed the group.

ii. How did the tools, and specifically the genres, regulate the activity system (Russell, 1997; Bazerman, 2003; Winsor, 1999),

There were several indications how the participants, particularly major power participants 'regulated' the system, but through the use of genres. First, the weekly meetings on the same day at the same time created a form of stability to the activity system. Then, the astrologer made clear attempts to establish a certain 'procedure' or *pattern* to the meetings, to "what was commonly held expectations" (Winsor, 1999:203) in terms of procedure and what was appropriate to include in terms of content. How she used her illustrative natal chart to explain e.g. the transits of the planets (fast moving planets e.g. Mars, Mercury, Venus, and the slow moving planets e.g. Jupiter, Saturn, Pluto), over time and in the present, closely reflected the "social construction" of reality as outlined by Smith (1974, quoted in Winsor, 1999:203) in that "what actually happens" (out there in space) is transmitted to the listeners (the participants) through the diagram which represents (together with the account of the astrologer) the "social organization of production of account" so what is relayed in the account actually happens – "reality" and the "account" becomes one of the same thing. This visual genre – the natal chart – significantly contributes to the group's understanding of what is acceptable knowledge or significant (Winsor, 1999:204). This knowledge is then used to 'explain' or 'justify' characteristics or interpretations e.g.as a slow moving planet, the impact of Saturn on an individual's natal chart lasts

at least a year and a half: as a fast moving planet (and so where it 'falls'(which zodiac sign and which house) in your chart at your birth is highly significant), the position of Mars, as a 'male' planet, in a natal chart heavily influences your relationships with men (the opposite sex) and/or your relationship with your father (and/or male siblings). Participants and new members were brought into the culture through' rituals' (Meyer, 1995), and here, the calculation and the production of the individual chart, and particularly, the CGC Interpretation, gave the feeling that members were 'initiated' into the group, the sense of 'belonging' confirmed through the repetition of the CGC (in the same Meeting, and across Meetings).

The astrologist used her illustrative natal chart and the individual natal charts (which constituted a genre set (Devitt, 1991: 342) as regulatory mechanisms (Swales, 1990; Bazerman, 1994), to create 'structure' or 'pattern' to the meetings. As none of the participants had followed a astrology course before, (though some were more informed than others on the subject), none really had an idea of what to expect, though this use of 'regulatory mechanisms' was also a way of creating a "shared communal view" (what to expect in the running of the meeting) between the participants and also a repertoire of responses, with each newcomer acquiring an "appropriate response" to the astrologist comments, and how the response should be formulated (Devitt, 2004; Berkenkotter and Huckin, 1995). For instance, the first time the astrologist gave an Interpretation to an individual chart, participants appeared to 'learn' whether they should comment i.e. accept or reject the interpretation, and how much personal detail could be given to justify their position. This was indicated by participants, particularly newcomers ranging in their responses from 'complete

silence' (e.g. S's and R's reactions to their first individual interpretation given by astrologer:) or long and drawn out personal histories (e.g. F's reaction to her first interpretation given by the astrologer) – F: Non so se sto parlando troppo? (I don't know whether I'm talking too much). The first comment made by R (perhaps due to her professional training – a lawyer) was – Posso rispondere? (Can I answer?). Naturally, participants 'learnt' what kind of response could be given - which actually meant 'any'.

iii What was the relationship between 'verbal' and 'visual' elements of the genres (Prior, 2008; Wysocki, 2004; Swales, 2009)?

Whether the study was successful in answering this question really depends on what is meant by 'relationship', which perhaps should have been specified from the start (though this would have been more limiting). How the 'verbal' and 'visual' fitted together was not really affronted though this was not necessarily through a lacking in the framework, and presumably an analysis similarly conducted by Swales (2009) would be more than possible. First attempts were made, however, at noting how the use of fonts, colours, lay-out could contribute to the communicative purpose of a genre, but the way forward here was not entirely clear (at least not to me) (see discussion in Chapter 2 in analyzing multimodality). These are issues of method, however, rather than how effective the framework was. What did surface and merit to the framework, I feel, was this apparent multi-modal genre configuration - CGCs, with this nature changing form , determined by the activities of the participants. Indeed, throughout the study there was this feeling of a fleeting forming and dissolving of 'communicative purpose', which often seemed to be created there and

then. These are very complex issues and the study here only pretends to outline a fairly hypothetical scenario, given the limitations of the study.

i.v. What elements within the activity system triggered change? How was change enacted (Russell, 1997)?

In many respects, this question has already been answered by the first one, which is significant, in that, at least in this particular activity system, change or attempts at change were primarily enacted by *core* participants, through the use of genre, as illustrate with the account of the Dark Moon, but not only. Apparent *fringe* participants, such as B, could also have a significant impact on the workings of the activity system, even the object/motive. These 'interventions' may characteristically be short-lived but very intense, as his intervention was. In that moment, he became a *core* participant, indicating once more this quality of shifting elements.

v. What evidence was there that culture in some form was influencing the workings of the activity system, and what was that form (of culture)?

This initial investigation would indicate that the impact of one culture on communicative strategies would depend on the activity system under analysis, which provides us with the 'thorny' issue of having to describe culture 'as it comes up'. That said, the concepts of local-identity culture and global-identity culture formulated near the end of the investigation seem potentially very useful notions which might be applicable to other realities, other activity systems, but which potentially might, particularly considering the slippery nature of culture, express the same or very

similar notions, through different means.

As indicated by the findings, the concepts of *local-identity culture* and *global-identity culture* helped to identity the complex, multiple identities of the participants and *how* culture is involved in the pattern and contingency of a *present-day* activity system, and indeed in the creation of a particular communicative purpose of a genre. Such a view, seems to usefully flatten out the question whether culture is higher (the overriding influence) on a hierarchical level to genre (Miller, 1994), or whether they should be put on an equal footing, genre and culture equally determining genre use and outcome (Devitt, 2004): both genre and culture contribute to the operating of the system in all its elements. The question, then, is to determine *how* they contribute, rather than which is more determining than the other, or not, and it seems, in this, the framework has helped in making that first step.

The Role of the Researcher in the Framework

Finally, consideration the role of the researcher in relation to the activity system, as indicated by the framework was also useful. From the outside, an 'etic' viewpoint it is an informal group of women interested in astrology: notably, a newcomer (T) was given fairly clear indications of how the group works by L, when overhearing a conversation (which could be taken as a kind of 'interview' between the owner and the newcomer), the group is defined as exactly that - an informal group of women interested in astrology. Only through participation can potential newcomers begin to understand the workings, confirming the problems of researchers being 'etic' to the context of the object of research (Hymes, 19972), already amply commented on in

the literature e.g. Schriffin (1994), and taken into account in genre studies e.g. Swales & Rogers (1995), but perhaps sometimes overlooked, particularly recently (see Swales (2013:274)).

4.3 Concluding remarks

Overall, the results of this first application of the framework have been promising, picking up on a few interesting threads which certainly seem worth following up and investigating further. These initial findings revealed the *specificity* of an activity system and the changing qualities of its elements, very much in line with Engsetrom's (1987) and Russell's (1997) description of the workings of activity systems.

Chapter 5 – Discussion

The overall objectives of this research project study were to assess the usefulness of an activity-genre approach, and conceive a multi-dimensional/multi-perspective framework which could go some way in capturing the complexities of human object-directed activity, which included i. how a. the ('power') relations between participants, and b. factors concerning 'culture' and 'identity', can shape the activity system as a whole, and its different parts or elements ii. how genre contributes to the patterning and contingency of an activity system - the use, form, and role of genre within that activity. In the formulation of the framework, and in effort to identify and describe the different features, new notions and terms were introduced and defined, involving a number of differentiations of concepts: Complex Genre Configurations, Major versus Minor Structural Power Participant(s) and Major versus Minor Accomplished Power Participant(s), Local-identity Culture versus Global-identity Culture. It was also conceived that Local-identity Culture was mainly associated with an Activity System, and Global-identity Culture, with Activity Networking, another new formulation.

5.1 The usefulness of the framework and its different elements

The findings obtained from the first application of this framework to a micro activity system, that of the astrology group, are promising. The different categorization of the Participants helped describe the complex workings of the relations between the

participants, confirming previous research (e.g. Winsor, 1999; Russell, 1997), determined and orchestrated pattern and contingency primarily through the use of the most powerful Tool, genres. This displaces some concerns, I believe, among some genre scholars e.g. Devitt, (2004:47), that activity theory 'reduces' genre to the level of a 'tool', and "diminishes the role of people in creating and using genres" (2004:47), given the importance of *genre* in the running of activity systems through the enactment of the participants.

However, the findings indicate that Genre was very much used in *combination*, confirming previous research (Priori, 2009; Molle & Prior, 2008), to both negotiate 'power relations' between Participants and further the Object/motive of the Activity System, observations which indicate how an activity-based approach can contribute to the understanding of genre, to complement other kinds of studies of genre which, for instance, focus on *collections* of inter-related genres e.g. sets, repertoires (e.g. Swales, 2004; Berkenkotter, 2001), concerning quite a different, though related, quality of genre.

It was interesting to note how similar or identical genres in their form could have such different 'communicative purpose' in use, according to the user or Participant which employed it, an d how communicative purpose was created, not only at the moment of use (part of the *contingency* quality of genre), but also more consistently (part of the *pattern* quality of genre). Communicative purpose was created, through a whole array of modes, size, colour, position within the room, in relation and contrast to another genre, and so on, indicating the importance of 'situated analysis'

(Bracewell & Witte, 2003, etc.). The astral charts are a case in point, where the individual charts (printed on plain A4 paper) were handled so differently from how the astrologer handled her Illustrative chart. In actual fact, if she had opted for a larger version of the individual chart (A3, for instance), the chart would have been easier to see and interpret. The use of different colours and use of symbols (elaborate Renaissance figures instead of astrological glyphs) would have facilitated 'learning' on the part of the Participants, or at least on the part of this particular one. Yet, apparently this purposes was considered 'secondary' to what was defined in the analysis as primary purposes, that of projecting Credibility', Solemnity, on the part of the astrologer, astrology and the proceedings in general. Again, the astrologer could have opted for 'visual props' which were easier to handle and transport (that hers was not easy is illustrated by the fact it broke during transportation), such as plastified carton cue cards, which do not create a sense of mystique, but can efficiently communicate a message through clear and simple diagrams. Instead, the astrologer's beautifully coloured, complex, and visually obscure illustrative chart, bulky, heavy, framed in solid wood and glass was preferred. The assigning of a specific and constant position, upon the same wooden stand (again brought by the astrologer) in the room I also took as significant. This, and the behaviour of astrologer towards it and the meetings as a whole, added to the mystique and a desired creation of reverence. Participants were invited, not so much to cultivate a kind of 'religious' rapport with astrology, but enter into a different 'dimension'. This was also indicated by the visual representations of The 'Universe', symbolic of or our solar system (Saussure, 1966), perhaps simultaneously projecting 'remoteness' – 'space' 'out there', creating a sense of 'awe', but also 'closeness', 'home', (Mother)

Planet Earth. A sense of ‘cultural heritage’ and ‘belonging’ was also projected through the use of classical/Renaissance images and references to historical places, given the geographic position of the venue, and the area where most of the Participants were born or had been brought up in, or at least, had a sustained contact with. The stability and repetition of use of this genre (in terms of where, when and who used it) was fundamental in projecting these elements. Notably, the Illustrative Chart was untouched, while the individual charts constantly changed hands (this ‘mobility’ and ‘flimsy’ quality was in contrast to the ‘immobility’ and ‘weight’ of the Illustrative chart), what their purpose was, and indeed, in what state they were in and kept in. Many used it as a simple note or doodle pad, reminiscing Russell’s comment that the play Hamlet, changes according to their use. Evidently, the individual charts were the focus of composite activities on the part of the Participants, some ‘individual’, some ‘collective’ (Engestrom, 1993). A more in-depth investigation of this might well have revealed some interesting phenomenon, but restrictions of resources prevented further investigation, at least in this case study.

The differentiation, then, made in the framework between different Tools, Genres (Inscribed Genres and Complex Oral Genres) and Non-Genre Tools, proved useful, as did the notions of their ‘combination’, that is Complex Genre Configurations and Combined Tools. For instance, the astrologer created ‘accomplished power’ through, the use of the different Tools at her disposal, and is indicated through the Tools that only she had access to (her Illustrative Chart, the wooden stick), and how she used different CGCs to ‘shape’ the running of the Meetings, and move the system towards what she perceived as the Object/motive. The Participant L used the Non-tool, the

Samsung Tablet, to enact the CGC of Challenge. ‘Marked’ behaviour was indicated by the ‘breaking’ of the acknowledged practices of the Activity System (acknowledged in that most Participants oriented their behaviour to form and maintain those practices (Schneider, 2007; Garfinkel, 1967), and a ‘break’ of a CGC, such as when, during Interpretation Lo picked up another participant’s astral chart to give a supplementary interpretation to that already given by the astrologer. This was accompanied in the Genre Meetings by other ‘practices’ not generally recognized by the group, such as arriving without the obligatory genre for all Participants (the individual astral chart), smoking during CGCs ‘led’ by the astrologer.

In the astrology group, B, a newly arrived participant, who indeed only came once, was, according to the framework, categorized as a ‘minor’ participants in structural terms, through an intervention which was unexpected or not in line with the group practices up until that moment, effectively changed those practices with introduction of the CGC ‘Confessional’, whereby participants recounted intimate details of their lives, in relation to the astrological point that had been raised. Such an intervention should be distinguished from merely ‘holding the floor’ as, for example, P, who tended to prolong her interaction with the astrologer when it was her turn for her astral chart to be read, but this did not have an impact on the meetings as such (except perhaps going over the usual time, on occasion), and the running of the activity system as a whole.

This impact of a newcomer to the activity system is reminiscent of Schryer er al’s study (2008) on the novice engineer, in a moment of negotiating power as a major

participant, bringing in new practices in the terms of new genres e.g. presentational genre, to the engineering firm where he worked, despite going against the position of the senior engineer who was above him, who, in structural terms, had more power. Interestingly, once accomplished power had been exercised, greater structural power was obtained in the case of the novice engineer, who obtained a promotion. Clearly, in such a complex, stratified activity system, such as an engineering firm, the comparison between B and the novice engineer is made with extreme caution, though both are clear examples of Engeström's 'disturbances' (1987, 1993), which naturally occur in activity systems, and which often bring about change in some form. That said, the framework could possibly be useful in creating a 'window' onto the workings of such an activity system in its *totem*, with recognition that an infinite number of activity systems can occur within an organization. It should also be underlined that the categorization of the Participants was to facilitate analysis, but, as for the differentiation of Culture in the framework, made no claim to capturing 'the whole (and very complex) story' of 'power' (Schneider, 2007).

Though there was a certain degree of jockeying of position, as indicated above, there was also evidence of considerable 'negotiation'. Russell comments that the creation of an activity system is enacted through "reciprocal mediation of behaviour in mutual exchange and negotiation" (1997:509), and in the formation of the *perceived* object/motive of the activity system, attempts were made by the participants, 'along the way' through 'mutual exchange' and negotiation' to establish *common ground*, a *common objective*. Even though the astrologer's actions indicated a desire to lead the Activity System to what she perceived as the 'problem space' - the

Objective/motive of the activity system, there was ‘negotiation’, and ‘response’ to the specific behaviour of Participants. One clear example was the negotiation of the starting time of the course. Another was the fact that she started putting personal details of the participants on the handouts e.g. that of Chiron, where initially this had not been done (following experiences in previous courses, previous activity systems where similar texts had been used). This adaptation of the genre to the specific group can be seen as a response to the Introduction of the CGC Confessional, and the practice of the participants to handle and view each other’s astral chart, a ‘lack’ of privacy which contributed to the group cohesion.

Confirming previous findings, (e.g. Devitt, 2004; Bazerman, 2003; Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995; Ayers, 2008), how modifications were made to the handouts (e.g. addition of personal detail, and informational content) and bibliography (e.g. the inclusion of suggested reading on the part of L, not only the astrologer, particularly concerning Lilith), illustrated how change occurs in genres, in terms of their choice by users, when they are used, how they are used, if they are used at all, and change in appearance (visual and verbal) and content, in response to changing conditions and perceived needs. As Swales most recently notes “genres and genre sets are always *evolving* in response to various exigencies” (my italics)(2009:148). Yet, this is usually taken to change over ‘stretches’ of time, hence the term ‘evolution’, which is so often referred to in genre studies (Ayers, 2008; Swales; 2004; Swales, 2009; Huckin & Berkenkotter, 1995, etc.). Though this can be taken as one quality of genre in terms of change, the observations made during the case study indicated that genre, particularly collectively and in combination with other Tools can ‘change’ face for

‘moments’ of time, in terms of the communicative purpose it projects, as illustrated by the ten different CGCs identified during the course of the Meetings. Hence, genre primarily can be said to have the quality of *change*, which in some instances may be *evolutionary*.

The differentiation of the element Object/motive (Official versus Occluded) proved useful since there was evidence that Major Power Participants were pulling in different directions, such as the astrologer wishing to continue and develop a course in Development Astrology, and L wishing to create a form of ‘club’ to help in the promotion of her restaurant. These tensions and ‘disturbances’ are to be expected in activity systems (Russell, 1997, Engeström, 1987, 1993, 1999), as are multiple and sometimes conflicting (and sometimes overlapping) Object/motives.

Notably, Witte (2005) points out how Engeström (1987, 1995) takes criteria ‘outside’ the activity system to assess system or the system’s workings i.e. what a medical practice *should* look like and do, similarly to Molle and Prior (2008), whose main criteria for assessing what constituted a ‘good’ or ‘effective’ combination of visuals and verbal (‘generic values’) e.g. ‘attractiveness’, ‘clarity’, etc. of poster by architecture students were indicated by the architecture professors, i.e. criteria ‘outside’ the immediate activity’ of the students. At least on the part of the astrologer, there was a sense of what the problem areas *should* be (‘Personal Growth’), this not necessarily being the more ‘official’ one. That is, even within the activity system itself, the Object/motive as seen by the Participants themselves might be where the system *should* be moving towards (to be distinguished from Bhatia’s individual ‘private

intentions' (1997, 2004): here, reference is being made to the perceived sense of the 'collective') rather where it is actually going. This indicates the potential value of the differentiation of the element Object/motive in the multi-dimensional and multi-perspective framework.

At any time, a participant may experience a sense of 'belonging' contemporarily to conflicting activity systems. An example is the case of the unwillingness of the astrologer to cover the astrological element 'Lilith', since on the one hand, she felt the need to respond to the requests of the group, while on the other, was part of a group of astrologists who did not recognize the importance of the figure. My own experience of conflict between my participation in the astrology group, and my participation in a university postgraduate programmes, can be taken as another example. I argue that precisely because we 'remain ourselves', we necessarily bring along with us our identity 'baggage' acquired through the participation of other multiple groups to a given group, and in this sense we have 'multiple identities', leading to, as put by Engeström, activity systems being composed of a multitude of often "disparate elements, voices and viewpoints " (1993: 68, quoted in Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010: 95). Both Swales (1993) and Devitt see that that "participation in some groups is more significant for constructing peoples' identity than participation in other groups" (2004:42), a position I adhere to, extending it again further by suggesting that how strongly participants experience a sense of allegiance or belonging to a particular group will vary from group to group, and may be open to modification at any time, or moment. Identity seems intrinsically linked to culture (e.g. Widdowson, 1998; Devitt, 2004), again one feeding into the other (Giddens, 1984).

Finally, the concepts of *local-identity culture* and *global-identity culture* helped to identity the complex, multiple identities of the participants and *how* culture is involved in the pattern and contingency of a *present-day* activity system, and indeed in the creation of a particular communicative purpose of a genre. Such a view, seems to usefully flatten out the question whether culture is higher (the overriding influence) on a hierarchical level to genre (Miller, 1994), or whether they should be put on an equal footing, genre and culture equally determining genre use and outcome (Devitt, 2004): both genre and culture contribute to the operating of the system in all its elements. The question, then, is to determine *how* they contribute, rather than which is more determining than the other, or not, and the findings here indicate that the framework helps in making that first step. The reference to 'place' signaled local-identity culture, and surfaced in references to specific local places and heroes. Though there was use of technology (computer websites, L's Samsung), and reference was made to it as a 'source' of authority, as in the episode of the Dark Moon illustrates, with both the astrologer and L referring to a technological source to back up their argument, fewer clearer elements, compared to the local-identity culture, could be identified, particularly concerning the concept of Activity Networking (see below, however), as was predictable, given the nature of the activity system.

5.2 Problems encountered in the application of the framework

In applying the framework, problems arose concerning the 'boundaries' of entities, as

outlined by Witte (2005) (see Chapter 2), what should be taken as part of this particular activity system (the astrology group) and what, of another. This is a recurrent problem in frameworks dealing with 'slippery' concepts, culture and power included, as exemplified by Atkinson's (2004:286) adaptation of Holliday's (1999) small cultures: what can be taken as Student Culture, and what as Youth Culture? What constitutes Professional-Academic Culture, and what Classroom Culture? Understandably, Atkinson comments that cultures "overlap" (2004:286)

Witte (2005:141) criticizes Engeström for sometimes viewing his model as a model of activity (Engeström, 1987), and on other occasions, as a model of mediation (Cole & Engeström, 1993), the first appearing to follow Leon'tev (1978), the second, Vygostky and Luria (1994). Witte (2005) comments that he cannot see it as both. Certainly, during my observations, I was aware that the activity system was not such a 'neat package', and the difficulties noted by Witte (2005) of distinguishing one activity system from another, that is, deciding whether an action was part of this system or another, was not straightforward. Delineating the astrology group as an activity system, despite having fairly straightforward 'boundaries' on appearance, a group which met up in a particular place weekly over some months, can be taken as fairly arbitrary: there was the problem whether the occult genres, where the astrologer and L organized the preparation of the astral chart through text messages and phone calls, and where L called participants on the phone to 'bring-them-into-line', about punctuality, should be seen as an integral part of the activity system, or as 'support activity systems', which were enacted to further the object/motive (as the major power participants saw it) of the main activity system. Alternatively, they could

be taken as activity systems in their own right (given that activity systems can exist within the dyad and for a few seconds (EngestrÖm, 1987; Russell, 1997)), with the object/motive coinciding, similarly to EngestrÖm's third generation model (Fig. 2.4). Another way of seeing things would be to apply a kind 'interlocking activity systems, along the lines of model adapted by Atkinson (2005) from Holliday's small cultures (1999) (2.7), and indeed as they do in Fig. 3.4; 3.5; of the present framework.

The choice, however, creates a similar dilemma noted by Witte (2005). Witte proposed a return to Vygostky and Luria's focus on a model of mediation, and on this point, the value of the concept of 'genre' appears of significance. Through observation of the activity system (which I had arbitrary labelled as such), or rather, through observation of activity between human subjects, particularly in their use of meditational means, and even more particularly, their use of genre tools (though, clearly, not only), I was able to glean some insight into the workings of what I had theoretically conceived through indirect means. This would not always be possible of course, to observe all the workings of an activity system, apart from the problem of occluded genres. Then there is the problem of analyzing activity networking in use in technology. If we consider paralinguistic features to be important in studying activity systems and their use of tools (Prior, 2009) (and the indications of this study certainly appears to confirm that), then it is conceivable that just analyzing texts on Facebook, for instance, 'after-the-fact', risks losing elements which may be of significance e.g. the speed of response, whether there are 'ghost participants' , and so on.

5.3 Implications for future research

As evident from the findings of the case study, the application of the framework essentially involved Fig. 3.3 – that of an activity system, with some elements being identified to help in the formulation of Fig. 3.4 and Fig. 3.5 – that of the Intersecting Activity Systems operating within Activity Networking. Due to restrictions of resources, a full investigation of how these different elements interacted was not carried out. For instance, L made use of the restaurant's Facebook L in advertising the course, and which apparently became a place for posting comments about it. It would have been an interesting example of perhaps 'networking', depending on whether comments from other than the group's participants were made, or indeed, a *layering* of different types of 'communities' (activity systems and activity networking) was happening, as could be predicted. Though here this was not followed up, in a similar case study, such use of technology to 'supplement' 'fact-to-face local activities, would be worth pursuing.

The framework appears particularly useful in studying activity systems of similar dimensions, such as a local book club, consisting of a relatively small number of people. This possible application was indirectly suggested by Prof. Greg Myers, who I am grateful to for the idea. I have already identified one group as a possible area of study. However, as yet, written permission has not yet been obtained by all the participants, or agreement been made as to the possible means of data collection (clearly, to fully capture all the multi-modality of the genre systems of the activity system, videoing would be the most rewarding). I do not feel able to say whether I

am a participant of the book club or not. I can only say at this point, that given the relative success of contacting a major participant in terms of structural power, of the astrology who was instrumental in gaining acceptance from the group, I have already contacted a similar figure in the book club, who is ‘open’ to the idea, and who has given me certain indications as to how to go about gaining acceptance from the whole group. It will be a fairly long, and perhaps tortuous process, which in any case may fail, since, while the astrologer, given her position, was able to ‘persuade’ the other participants (reflecting a role of teacher-student) by just expressing her position i.e. the others appeared to follow her lead, here with the book club there is no such ‘declared’ or clear hierarchy. As with the astrology group, if one participant chooses not to partake in the study, the study of the group does not go-ahead, as it would mean that participant would lose their right to participate in the book club (BAAL PCG 2.2, 2006) (which, in any case, no one would accept). Further, this group in terms of Thompsons’ (age, profession, nationality) is much more ‘homogenous’ than the astrology group, which makes for perhaps different considerations as to how much information concerning the research project should be given (BAAl PGC, 2006).

What I feel able to comment on is how I identified one of the major participants in terms of structural power. To distinguish between figures or participants in terms of ‘structural’ and ‘orientation’ power, as indicated by the astrology group, and indeed, if the case of Schryer’s et al (2008) engineer is drawn upon, some ‘objective’ ‘measure’ needs to be established, as indicated the Chapter 3. In the astrology group, the participants with major structural power were the astrologer, without whom the activity system not even begin to exist (or at least, not in this form) and L, the

owner of the restaurant who provided the non-genre tool of the venue, without which the activity system had no place to function, or at least, this it was understood by the participants). In a more formal, institutionalized organization, reference could be made to the hierarchical setup. With a book club, the founding members could be identified as 'major participants' in structural power terms, whereby all the other participants, by default, would be categorized as 'minor participants' in structural terms. If all founding members should leave, however, this would no longer be an issue, so perhaps it might be useful to establish, through interviews, etc. the most long-standing members. The degree of participation might also be considered as a relevant element, as I had initially considered when formulating the categories of – 'core', 'regular', and 'fringe' participants. In certain circumstances, or activity systems, this sub-categorization may prove useful, in terms of indicating 'structural power'. Likewise, if the book club met monthly at someone's house, on that occasion, that participants, who could have been categorized as a 'minor participant' (e.g. a non-founding member), would become, in structural power terms, a major participant. Likewise, if the book club, apart from the genre of monthly meetings, had the practice of nominating (through perhaps a rota-system, written or otherwise) someone to choose a book to be discussed, which included the preparation of another genre, a written 'review' of the book by that particular participant who would then present (an oral genre) the review, in that particular meeting, that participant *de fatto* would be a major participant in structural power terms (irrespective of 'initial' categorization). In other words, there would be a 'shifting' in this kind of power (a feature inherent with 'accomplished' power), I aimed to express through the use of arrows in the framework, between the different Participants. It could also be envisaged that a

single transaction in a meeting could be interpreted as the exercise of power both in terms of ‘structural’ and ‘accomplished’ power, with perhaps a founding member signalling that, after the pleasantries, it is time for the book review to be presented.

5.4 Concluding remarks

The multi-dimensional/ multi-perspective framework presented here can only be offered as a possible way of opening a window on the workings of human object-direct activity, and provide the researcher with a conceptual *guide* (Atkinson, 2004) in their investigation. That said, the findings presented here do indicate, I argue, that an activity-genre approach, and seemingly this framework, can do just that – open a window.

Appendix.

1.An example of a handout by the astrologer

2.The bibliography complied by the astrologer

IL CICLO DEI NODI LUNARI

Il movimento dei nodi attraverso lo zodiaco è retrogrado. Nel simbolismo astrologico l'attraversamento dell'eclittica in direzione nord è un movimento verso l'elemento positivo e creativo dello spirito; l'attraversamento in direzione sud è un allontanamento dallo spirito indirizzato verso la materia.

Il Nodo Nord tradizionalmente ha un significato di positività, una condizione di protezione e di realizzazione di scopi superiori; la Luna sembra diretta verso il Sole, di cui rifletterà il potere e la volontà. Al Nodo Sud, invece, la Luna volge simbolicamente la schiena al Sole: è maggiormente sotto il controllo della materia e della natura umana.

Questo andamento alterno è la chiave del significato del ciclo nodale. Quando la Luna si muove in latitudine Nord dal Nodo Nord al Nodo Sud è il momento adatto per un'attività positiva sotto la guida interiore dello spirito, per porre le basi di un'azione creativa volta ai bisogni materiali. Il moto della Luna in latitudine Sud dal Nodo Sud al Nodo Nord indica il tempo dell'assimilazione e della liberazione di ciò che è stato preparato durante il precedente periodo: si verifica anche il ripudio di ciò che non si è stati in grado di assimilare o di usare in modo costruttivo.

L'asse nodale della Luna richiama il processo duplice di integrazione e di disgregazione; le due nature dell'uomo, quella solare o spirituale e quella lunare o egoica, si uniscono e si separano. L'elemento del karma e della schiavitù al passato che caratterizza il Nodo Sud non sempre si manifesta attraverso eventi negativi. Il Nodo Sud è simbolo di abitudine, di comportamento meccanico e dell'espressione scorrevole di un potere basato su conquiste passate o ereditate. Ciò può condurre all'inerzia e all'azione automatica; oppure può indicare l'espressione istintiva di sé e la liberazione della creatività in modo spontaneo.

I Nodi Nord e Sud sono gli aspetti polari di un unico processo: quello lunare di adattamento alla vita, in cui le esperienze passate, personali e collettive, giocano un ruolo importante. I Nodi lunari hanno un moto retrogrado e ciò rimanda ad un ritorno alle origini, ad un riesame del comportamento passato. Il ciclo retrogrado dei Nodi di transito ha un significato molto concreto, soprattutto a livello psicologico.

La durata di questo ciclo è di circa 18 anni e mezzo, per cui ogni 9 anni la bipolarità del destino personale riceverà un nuovo impulso. Alle età di 19, 38, 57, 76 anni l'individuo ha l'opportunità di rinascere e di vedere il proprio destino in una luce nuova. In quei momenti può verificarsi una sorta di discesa spirituale di potere o una precipitazione del karma. Ci sarà una sorta di mutamento di sostanza e di qualità della coscienza o anche una crisi personale piuttosto forte. L'anno che precede ciascuno di questi quattro ritorni nodali è un periodo in cui si dovrebbero tirare le somme del ciclo che si sta chiudendo e prepararsi al prossimo.

La metà del ciclo nodale cade ogni 9 anni. A questo punto si ha l'inversione dell'asse nodale natale: il Nodo Nord in transito si trova sul Nodo Sud natale e viceversa. Il numero 9 è collegato in astrologia umanistica con il graduale esaurimento del passato ancestrale e di quello karmico; quindi il momento centrale del ciclo di transito dei nodi offre l'opportunità di iniziare a chiarire i risultati degli errori e delle omissioni del passato. È anche un tempo in cui la persona può portare fuori di sé quegli elementi utili per affrontare il nuovo modello futuro. Gli eventi esteriori e i cambiamenti della vita sono probabilmente legati più alla metà del ciclo nodale che al ritorno nodale.

Il ciclo nodale dura circa 18,6 anni e può verificarsi qualche discrepanza rispetto alle età riportate di seguito. Sembra essere più significativo il 19 che il 18. Le altre età menzionate sono in relazione con le tre fasi del ciclo novennale: tesi, antitesi e sintesi. Ogni 19 anni il Nodo Nord in transito ritorna alla sua posizione natale. Nove anni più tardi si verifica l'inversione delle posizioni nodali: ciascun periodo di nove anni si divide in tre periodi di 3 anni, la cui relazione reciproca è quella di tesi (primi 3 anni), antitesi (secondi 3 anni) e sintesi (terzi 3 anni). Il primo periodo decide una qualità di attività rispetto ai propri rapporti umani, il secondo configura una reazione a questa attività, il terzo rappresenta il tentativo di sintetizzare passato e presente.

Età nascita 19,38,57,76,95 Età 3,22,41,60,79 Età 6,25,44,63,82
Età 9,28,47,66,85 Età 12,31,50,69,88 Età 15,34,53,72,91

Età 19,38,57,76,95

BIBLIOGRAFIA ASTROLOGICA DI BASE

TECNICA ASTROLOGICA di Grazia Bordoni Armenia Editore

SINTESI E INTERPRETAZIONE DEL TEMA NATALE di G. Bordoni Ed. Capone

IL CONVITATO DI PIETRA, TRATTATO DI ASTROLOGIA DIALETTICA di Lisa Morpurgo Longanesi

References

Anheier, H.K. & Isar, Y.R. (Eds) (2007). *Conflicts and tensions. The cultures and globalization*. *Vol. 1* London, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Anheier, H.K. & Isar, Y.R. (Eds) (2011). *Heritage, memory & identity*. Sage Publications, Asia-Pacific Ple Ltd.

Artemeva, N. (2008) Toward a unified theory of genre learning. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication* , 22:160-85.

Artemeva, N. & Freedmans, A. (2001). "Just the boys playing on computers": An activity theoryanalysis of differences in the cultures of two engineering firms. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 15:164-94

Artemeva, N. (2008). A time to speak, a time to act: A rhetorical genre analysis of a novice engineer's calculated risk taking: 189-240. In N. Artemeva & A. Freedman (Eds) *Rhetorical Genre Studies and beyond*. Inkshed Publications. University of Manitoba Winnipeg

Artemeva, N. & A. Freedman (Eds) *Rhetorical Genre Studies and beyond*. Inkshed Publications. University of Manitoba Winnipeg

Askehave, I. (1999). Communicative purpose as genre determinant. Hermes, *Journal of Linguistics*. 23: 13-23.

Askehave, I. &. Swales, J. M. (2000) Genre identification and communicative purpose: A problem and a possible solution. *Applied Linguistics* , 22; 195-212.

Atkinson, D. (2004) Contrasting rhetorics/ contrasting cultures: Why contrastive rhetoric needs a better conceptualization of Culture. *Journal for Academic Purposes* , 3:277-89.

Atkinson, D. (2004). Contrasting rhetoric/ contrasting cultures: why contrastive rhetoric needs a better conceptualization . Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 3 (4): 277-289.

Ayers, G. (2008). The evolutionary nature of genre: An investigation of the short texts accompanying research articles in the scientific journal Nature. *English for Specific Purposes*, 27 (1): 22-41.

Bakhtin, M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination: Four essays by M.M. Bakhtin*. Ed. M. Holquist. Trans. C. Emerson & M. Holoquist. Austin: University of Texas, P.

Bakhtin, M. (1986) The problem of speech genres. *Speech g**e**nres and Other Late Essays*. Eds. C. Emerson & M. Holquist. Trans. Vern W. McGee. Austin: University of Texas: 60-102.

Bargiela-Chiappini, F. (2009) Introduction: Business discourse. *The Handbook of Business Discourse* .

Bargiela-Chiappini, F. & Nickerson, C. (1999). Buiness Writing in social action: 1-32. In Bargiela-Chiappini, F. & C. NIckerson (eds), *Writing business: Genre, Media and Discourse*. Harlow: Longman.

Bawarshi, A.S. & Peklowski, S.(2000)*The genre function*. COllege English January 62 (3): 327-52

Bawarshi, A. S & Reiff, M.J. (2010) *Genre: an introduction to history, theory, research and pedagogy*. The WAC Clearing House, For Collins, Colorado. Parlour Press, LLC, *West Layfayette Parlor Press* .

Bazerman, C. (1988). *Shaping written knowledge: The genre and activity of the experimental article in science*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Bazerman, C. (1994). Systems of genres and the enactment of social intention. *Genre and New Rhetoric, London , Genre*, 79-101.

Bazerman, C. (1998). The rhetoric of technology. Journal of Business and Technical Communications. 12 (3): 381-387.

Bazerman, C. (2002). The diversity of writing. *The Quarterly - Spring*: 15-18.

Bazerman, C. (2001). Anxiety in action: Sullivan's interpersonal psychiatry as a supplement to Vygotskian psychology. *Mind, Culture and Anxiety*. 8 (2): 174-186.

Bazerman, C. (2003) What activity systems are literary genre part of? *Readerly/Writerly Text*, 10: 97-106.

Bazerman, C. (2009) Genre and Cognitive Development: Beyond Writing to Learn. In Bazerman et al (eds.) *Genre in a Changing World*. The WAC Clearing house, Fort Collins, Colorado. Parlour Press, LLC, West Layfayette, Indiana. 279-295.

Beaufort, A. (2000) Learning the trade: A social apprenticeship model for gaining writing expertise. *WrittenCommunication 17* , 17:185-223.

Berkenkotter, C. (2001) Genre Systems at Work: DSM -IV and rhetorical recontextualization in psychotherpay paperwork. *Written Communication* , 18: 326-49 .

Berkenkotter, C. & Huckin T.N. (1995). *Genre knowledge indisciplinary communication: Cognition/Culture/Power*. *Hillsdale. N.J: Lawrence Erlbaum* .

Bhatia, V. K.(1993). Analysing genre: Language use in professional settings. Longman: Longman.

Bhatia, V. K.(1997). Genre Mixing in Academic introductions. *English for Specific Purposes* , 16: 181-97.

Bhatia, V. K.(2001). Analysing genre: some conceptual issues: Implications and applications . *Academic writing in contexts: Implications and application* , 79-92.

Bhatia, V. K.(2004). Professional discourse: Towards a multi-dimensional approach and shared practice. *In C.C. Candlin (Ed) Research and practice in professional discourse* , 39-60.

Bhatia, V. K. (2008). Towards a critical genre analysis. In Bhatia, Flowedrew. *Advances in Discourse Studies* , 166-77.

Bizzell, P. (1992). Academic discourse and critical consciousness. Pittsburgh. University of Pittsburgh Press.

Blyer, N.R. & Thralls, C. (Eds). (1993). *Professional Communication: The Social Perspective*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Boas, F. (1974). *A Franz Boas reader: The shaping of American anthropology, 1883-1911* (edited by G. Stocking). Chicago: University of Chicago Press,

Bracewell, R.J. & Witte, S.P. (2003). Tasks, ensembles, and activity: Linkages between text production and situation of use in the workplace. Written Communication, 20 (4), October: 511-559.

Cole, M. & Engeström Y. (1993). A cultural-historical approach to distributed cooognition. In G. Solomon (Ed), Distributed cognitions: Psychological and educational considerations. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press: 1-46.

Connor, U. & Rozycki, W. (2013). Culture and Language for Specific Purposes in C. Chapelle (Ed). *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*: 1-4.

Connor, U. (2004). Intercultural rhetoric research: Beyond texts: *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* , 3:291-304.

Courtis, J.K. (1997). Corporate annual report graphical communication in Hong Kong: effective or misleading? The Journal of Business Communication, 34 (3): 269-288.

Devitt, A. (1993). Generalizing about genres: New conceptions of an old concept. *College Composition and Communication*. 44: 573-86.

Devitt, A. (1996). Genre as textual variable: Some historical evidence from Scots and American English. American Speech. 64: 291-303.

Devitt, A. (2004). *Writing Genres*. Southern Illinois University Press Carbondale.

Ding, H. (2008). The use of cognitive and social apprenticeship to teach a disciplinary genre: initiation of graduate students into NH grant writing. *Written Communication*, 25 (1): 3-52.

Dressen-Hammouda, D. (2013). Ethnographic approaches to ESP research. *The handbook for specific purposes* , 512-519.

Dunmire, P. (2000). Genre as temporally-situated social action. A study of temporality and genre activity. *Written Communication*. 17 (1) (January): 93-138.

Eckert, P. & McConnell-Ginet, S. (1992). Think practically and look logically. Language and gender as community-based practice. *Annual Review of Anthropology,* 21: 461-99.

Edley, N. & Wetherell, M. (1997). Jockeying for positions: the construction of masculine identities. *Discourse and Society*, (: 203-212)

Elkins, J. (1999). *Why are our pictures puzzles? On the modern originals of pictorial complexity*. Routledge.

Engeström, Y. (1987). Learning by expanding. Helsinki, Finland: Orienta-Konsultit.

Engeström, Y. (1995). Objects, contradictions and collaboration in medical cognition: An activity-theoretical perspective. *Artificial Intelligence in Medicine*, 7: 395-412.

Engeström, Y.(1999). Expansive learning at work: Toward an activity theoretical reconceptualization. *Journal of Education and Work*, 14: 133-156.

Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language*. Longman Group Limited.

Featherstone, M.(1991). *Consumer Culture and Postmodernism*. Sage.

Featherstone, M. (2001). Recognition and difference: politics, identity, multi-culture. *Theory, Culture & Society*. June: 18: 1-19.

Freadman, A. (2012). The traps and trappings of genre theory. *Applied Linguistics*, 35 (5): 544-563.

Freedman, A. & Medway, P. (Eds). (1994)(a). *Learning and Teaching Genre*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers.

Freedman, A. & Medway, P. (Eds). (1994)(b). *Genre and the New Rhetoric*. London: Taylor.

Flowerdrew, J. (2011) Reconciling contrasting approaches to genre analysis. The whole can equal more than the parts. *In Belcher, Johns and Patridge (eds)* , 119-44.

Flowerdrew, J. & Wan, A. (2006). Genre analysis of tax computation letters: How and why tax accountants write the way they do. *English for Specific Purposes*, 25 (2): 133-153.

Flowerdrew, J.A. & Wan. A. (2010. The linguistic and the contextual in applied genre analysis: The case of the company audit report. *English for Specific Purposes*, 29: 78-93.

Gannon, M.J. & Pillai, R. (2013). *Understanding global cultures: metaphorical journeys through 31 nations, clusters of nations, continents and diversity*. Sage Publications, Inc.

Garfinkel, H. (1967). *Studies in Ethnomethodology*. Engleswood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Geisler, C. (2001) Accounting for the role of texts in the everyday life of complex organizations. *Written Communication*. (18): 296-325.

Giddens, A. (1984). *The constitution of society: Outline of the theory of structuration*. Berkeley. University of California Press,

Giddens, A. (1986). Sociology.

Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and society in the late modern ag*e. Stanford University Press. Stanford, California.

Giltrow, J. & Stein, D. (Eds). *Genres in the internet*. John Benjamin Publishing Company.

Gladdol, D. (2006). English Next: London: British Council. Accessed Feb. 27 at http://www.britishcouncil.org/learning-research-englishnext-htmaccessed.

Goddard, C & Wierzbicka, A. (1997). *Discourse and culture*. In T.A. van Dijk (Ed). Discourse as Social Interaction. London. Sage.

Goffman, E. (1971). *Presentation of self*. Penguin (Pelican).

Goffman, E: (1974). *Frame analysis*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Gross, A.G., Harmon, J.E, & Reidy, M. (2002). *Communicating science: The scientific article from the 17th Century to the Present*. Oxford University Press.

Gunnarsson, B. (1997). The writing process from a sociolinguistic viewpoint. Written Communication, Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 14 (2): 139-188.

Handford, M. (2007). The genre of the business meeting: a corpus-based study. PhD thesis. University of Nottingham. (Unpublished).

Holliday, A. R. (1999) Small Cultures. *Applied Linguistics* , 20: 237-64.

Holliday, A.R. (2013). *Understanding intercultural communication: negotiating a grammar of culture*.London: Routledge.

Hopkins, A & Dudley-Evans, T. (1988). A genre-based investigation of the discussion sections in articles and dissertations. *English for Specific Purposes*. (7): 113-21

Huckin, T.N. (1997). Critical discourse analysis: 78-92. In T. Miller (Ed). *Functional approaches to written text*. Washington C.D. US Department of State.

Hyland, K. (1998) Exploring corporate rheotric: Metadiscourse in the CEO's letter. *Journal of Business Communication* , 35: 224-45.

Hyland, K. (2000). Disciplinary Dscourses: Social Interaction in Academic Writing:. *Harlow, UK: Longman* .

Hyland, K. (2002).Genre: Language, context, and literary. *ARAL*. 22: 113-35

Hyland, K (2004). Genre and Second Language Writing. *University of Michegan Press* .

Hyland, K. (2011). Disciplinary specificity: Discourse, context and ESP: 6-24. In D. Belcher, A.M. Johns, & B. Paltridge (Eds). *New directions in english for specific purposes research*. Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press.

Hyland, K. (2013) Disciplinary identities: Individuality and community in academic discourse. *Applied Linguistics*. 34 (1): 112-115.

Hyland, K. & Hamp-Lyons, L. (2002) EAP: Issues and directions. *Journal of Academic Purposes*. 1 (1): 1-12.

Hymes, D. (1972). Models of the interaction of language and social life. In J.J. Gumperz & D. Hymes (Eds). *Directions in sociolinguistics: The ethnography of communication*. New York: Holt, Reinhard & WInston: 35-71.

Idema, R. (2003). Multimodality, resemiotization: Extending the analysis of discourse as multi-semiotic practice. *Visual Communication*. 2 (1): 2-29

Jewitt, C. (2009). *Handbook of multimodal analysis*. Routledge.

Johns, A. M. (1997). Text, Role and Context: Developing Academic Literacies. . *New York. Cambridge University.*

Johns, A. M. (1998). The visual and the verbal: a case study in MacroEconomics: . 17:183-97.

Johns, A.M. (2013) The History of English for Specific Purposes Research. In Paltridge & Starfield (eds), *The Handbook of English for Specific Purposes*.Wiley-Blackwell, 1-5

Johns, A.M. & Markalela, L.(2011). Needs analysis, critical ethnography, and context. Perspectives from the client -and the consultant. In D. Belcher, A.M. Johns, & B. Paltridge (Eds). *New directions in English for SpecificPpurposes research*. Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press.

Kandil, M. & Belcher, D. (2011). ESP and corpus-informed critical discourse analysis: understanding the power of genres of power. In D. Belcher, A.M. Johns, & B. Paltridge (Eds). *New directions in English for SpecificPpurposes research*. Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press.

Katan, D. (2004). *Translating cultures: An introduction for translators, intepreters, and mediators*. Routledge.

Kent, T. (1993). *Paralogic rhetoric: a theory of communication interactio*n. Cranbury, NJ: Bucknell UNiversity Press.

Koester, A. (2006).*Investigating workplace discourse*. Routledge.

Koester, A. (2010). *Workplace discourse*: Bloomsbury Publishing. Inc.

Kress, G. (2003). Literacy in the New Media. *New York: Routledge* .

Kress, G. (2005). Gains and Losses: New forms of texts, knowledge, and learning. *Computers and Composition* , 22:5-22.

Kress, G. (2006). Reading IMages. The Grammar of Visual Design. *2nd. ed. London. Routledge* .

Kress, G. (2010). Multimodality: A social Semiotic Approach to Contemporary Communication. *London: Routledge* .

Kress, G. & van Leeuwen, T. (2001). *Multimdoal discourse - the modes and media of contemporary communication*, London, Edward Arnold.

Kress, G. & van Leeuwen, T. (2006). *Reading images: the grammar of visual design*. Routledge.

Lave, J. & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lemke, J. (1998). Multiplying meaning: visual and verbal semiotics in scientific texts. In J. Martin & R. Veel (Eds), *Reading science: Critical and functional perspectives on discourse of science*. London: Routledge: 87-113.

Leon'tev, A.N. (1978). *Activity, consciousness, and personality* (M. J. Hall, Trans.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall (Russian original published in 1975).

Lillis, T. (2008). Ethnography as method, methodology, and deep theorizing . *Written Communication* , 25: 353-88.

Luke, T.W. (1994). Placing power/siting space. The politics of global and local in the new world order. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 12 (6): 13 -628.

Lumann, N. (2012). *Social systems*. Stanford. Stanford University Press.

Mauranen, A. (1993). *Cultural differences in academic rhetoric: A textlinguistic study*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang.

Meyer, D. (1995). The challenge of cultural elites: celebrities and social movements. *Sociological Enquiry*, 65 (2): 181-206.

Miller, C. R. (1984). Genre as social action. *Quarterly Journal of Speech* . (70):151-167.

Miller, C.R. (1992). Kairos in the rhetoric of science. In S. Witte, N. Nakadake, & R. Cherry (Eds). *A rhetoric of doing: Essays honoring James L. Kinneavy*: 310-327. Carbondale: Southern Illinois Press.

Miller, C.R. (1994). Rhetorical community. The cultural basis of genre. In Freedman, A. & Medway, P. (Eds). (1994)(b). *Genre and the New Rhetoric*. London: Taylor

Milroy, L. (1980). *Language and Social Networks*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Milroy, J. & Milroy. L. (1985). Linguistic change, social network and speaker innovation. *Journal of Linguistics*, 21: 339-84

Molle, D & Prior, P. (2008). Multimodal genre systems in EAP writing pedagogy: reflecting on a needs analysis. *TESOL Quarterly*, December 42 (4): 541-566.

Myers, G. (1990). Writing biology texts in the social construction of scientific knowledge. *The University of Wisconsin Press* .

Myers, G. (2006) Where are you from? Identifying place. Journal of Sociolinguistics, 10 (3): 320-343

Nesi, H. A. (2011). Genres Across the Dsciiplines. Student Writing in Higher Education. *Cambridge Cmabridge* .

Nickerson, C. (2000). Playing the Corporate Game: An investigation of the Genres and Discourse Strategies in English Used by Dutch Writers Working in Multinational Corporations. *Amserstam, the Netherland, and Atlanta, G.A. Rodopi* .

Nickerson, C. (2005). English as Lingua Franca in International Busines Contexts (ed). *English for Specific Purposes: 24:367-80* .

Nystrand, M., Greene, S. & Wiemelt, J. (1993). Where did composition studies come from ? An intellectual history. *Written Communication*, 10: 267-333.

O'Halloran, K. (Ed) (2004). *Multimodal discourse analysis: systemic functional perspectives*. London and New Yor: Continuum.

Olsen, L.A. & Huckin, T.N. (1983). *Principles of communication for science and technology*. McGraw-Hill College.

Orlikowski, W.J. & Yates, J. (1994). Genre repertoire: The structuring of communicative practices in organizations. *Administrative Science Quarterly* (39): 541-74.

Paltridge, B. &. (2011). Contextualizing ESP research: Media discourses in CHina and Australia. *In Belcher, Johns, and Paltridge* , 25-43.

Paltridge, P. & Starfield. S. (2013). *The Handbook of English for Specific Purposes*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Pérez-Ilantada, C. (2013). The Article of the future: strategies for genre stability and change. *English for Specific Purposes* 32 (4): 221-235.

Porter, J.E. (1992). *Audience and rhetoric: An archaeological composition of the discourse communit*y. Englewood.Cliffs. NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Prior, P. (2005). Moving Multimodality beyond the binaries. A response to Gunther's Kress' "Gains and losses" . *Computers and Composition* , 22: 23-30.

Prior, P. (2009). From speech genres to mediated multimodal genres systems: Bakhtin, Voloshinov, and the Question of writing.: 17-30. In Bazerman et al (eds.) *Genre in a Changing World*. The WAC Clearing house, Fort Collins, Colorado. Parlour Press, LLC, West Layfayette, Indiana. 279-295.

Prior, P. (2013). Multimodality and ESP research. *The Handbook of English for Specific Purposes* , 501-519.

Russell, D.R. (1997). Rethinking genre in school and society: An activity theory analysis. *Written Communication*. 14: 504-54

Ryuko, K. &. Chiang, L.T.(2013). Gender and Race in ESP research. *The Handbook fo Specific Purposes* , 481-511.

Salager-Meyer, F. (1991). Medical English abstracts: How well are they structured? Journal of the American Society for Information Science. 42 (7): 538-531.

Samraj, B. (2005). An exploration of a genre set: Research article abstracts and introductions in two disciplines. *Journal of English For Specific Purpose*s, 24 (2), 119-238.

Saussure, F. de (1966). *A course in general linguistics*. (W Baskin, Trans.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Schiffrin, D. (19994). *Approaches to discourse*. Cambridge, MA & Oxford. Blackwell, 1994.

Schneider, B. (2007). Power as an interactional accomplishment: an ethnomethodological perspective on the regulation of communicative practice in organizations. In M. Zachry & C. Thralls (Eds). *Communicative practices in workplaces and the professions*. New York: Baywood Publishing: 181:201.

Schnurr, P.P, Friedman, M.J., Foy, D.W. et al (2007). Cognitive behavioural therapy for posttraumatic stress disorder in women. A randomized controlled trial. Journal of the American Medical Association. 279:820-850.

Schryer, C.F. (1993). Records as genre. *Written Communication.* 10: 200-34.

Schryer, C.F. , Campbell, S., Spafford,.M., & Lingard, L. (2008). You are how you cite: Citing patients information healthcare settings: 189 - 240. In N. Artemeva & A. Freedman (Eds) *Rhetorical Genre Studies and beyond*. Inkshed Publications. University of Manitoba Winnipeg.

Smart, G. (1993). Genre as community invention: A central back's response to its executives' expectations as readers. *Writing in the workplace: new research perspectives*. in R. Spilka (Ed). Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP: 124-40

Smart, G. & Brown, N. (2008). Developing a "discoursive gaze": Participatory Action Research with students interns encountering new genres in the activity of the work place: 241 - 278. In N. Artemeva & A. Freedman (Eds) *Rhetorical Genre Studies and beyond*. Inkshed Publications. University of Manitoba Winnipeg

Starfield, S. (2011).Doing critical ethnography research into academic writing: the theory of the methodology. In D. Belcher, A.M. Johns, & B. Paltridge (Eds) *New Direction for Specific Purpose:*174-196

Starfield, S. (2013). Critical Perspectives on ESP , 461-481. In B. Paltridge & Starfield, S. (Eds) *The Handbook for Specific Purpose.* Wiley-Blackwell.

Swales, J. (1990). *Genre Analysis*: English in Academic and Research Settings. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press .

Swales, J. (1993), Genre and engagement. *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire*, (71): 687-698.

Swales, J.M. (1998). *Other floors other voices: A textography of a small university building*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associate, Publishers. New Jersey/ London.

Swales, J. (2004). *Research Genres: Explorations and Applications*. New York: Cambridge University Press .

Swales, J. (2009). Worlds of genre - metaphors of genre. In C. Bazerman et al *(eds) Genre in a Changing World* , 3-17.

Swales, J.M. & Rogers, P.S. (1995). Discourse and the projection of corporate culture: The mission statement. Discourse and Society. 6 (2): 223-242.

Swales. J. M. & Feak, C. (2004). *Academic writing for graduate students: Essential tasks and skills.* Michegan ELT:

Tardy, C. (2011). ESP and multi-meethod approaches to genre analysis. In D. Belcher, A.M. Johns, & B. Paltridge *New Direction for Specific Purposes* , 145-75.

Thompson, J. (1984). *Studies in the Theory of Ideology*. *Polity Press* .

Thompson, J. (1995). T*he Media and Modernity: A social theory of the media*. Stanford University Press South California .

Todorov, T. (1990). *Genres in discourse*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Voloschinov, V. (1973). *Marxism and the philosophy of language*. (Trans. L. Matejk & L. Titunik. Cambridge : Harvard University Press.

Vygotsky, L.S. (1997). Consciousness as a problem for the psychology of behaviour (R. van der Veer, Trans). In *The collected works of L.S. Vygotsky. The history of the development of higher mental functions* (R.W. Rieber, Ed). New York: Plenum, 3: 63-79.

Vygotsky, L.S. & Luris, A.R. (1994). Tool and symbol in child development. In R. van der Veer & J. Valsiner (Eds). *The Vygotsky reader*. Oxzford: Blackwell: 97-174.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Widdowson, H.G. (1998). Communication and community: The pragmatics of ESP. English for Specific Purposes. 17 (1): 3-14.

Winsor, D. (1996). Writing like an engineer. A rhetorical education. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence, Erlbaum.

WInsor, D: (1999). Genre and activity systems. *Written Communication*, 16: 200-224.

Winsor, D. (2003). *Writing power: Communication in an engineering center*. Suny series, studies in scientific and technical communications. State University of New York Press, Albany.

Witte, S.P. (2005). Research in activity: An analysis of speed bumps as mediational means. *Written Communication*. 22: 127-163

Wittgenstein, L. (1958). *Philosophical investigations* (G.E.M. Ascombe, Trans.) Oxford: Blackwell.

Wysocki, A.F: (2004). Opening new media to writing: openings and justifications. In A.F. Wysocki et al (Eds). Writing new media theory and applications for expanding the teaching of composition. Logan, Utah, Utah State University Press: 1-41.

Yates, J. (1989). *Control through communication: The rise of system in American managemen*t. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP.

Yates, J & Orlikowski, W. (1992). Genres of organizational communication: A structural approach to stuyding communicataion and media. *Academy of Management Review* (17): 13-35.

Yeung, L. (2007). In search of commonalities: Some linguistic and rhetorical features of business reports as a genre. *English for Specific Purposes*. 18: 347-366.