

# Corpus-based rhetorical analysis of the sub-genre of instruction manuals for household appliances

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## Abstract

My aim in this paper is to describe the rhetorical structure of the sub-genre of Instruction Manuals for household appliances in British English (BE) and Peninsular Spanish (PS). This study is based on the concept of genre, and it consists of a move analysis of an *ad hoc* specialised corpus. The analysis has two discrete parts: a qualitative analysis to establish the structure of this sub-genre; and a quantitative one, to identify the presence of each feature in order to determine the prototypical structure of this sub-genre. Finally, some possible implications of these findings are presented.

**Keywords:** rhetorical move analysis, instruction manuals, English for Science and Technology (EST), instructional genre.

## Resumen

*Análisis retórico del subgénero de los manuales de instrucciones de electrodomésticos basado en corpus*

El propósito de este artículo es la descripción de la estructura retórica del subgénero de los manuales de instrucciones de aparatos electrodomésticos en inglés británico y en español peninsular. Este estudio se basa en el concepto de género y consiste en un análisis de movimientos de un corpus *ad hoc* especializado. El análisis tiene dos partes diferenciadas: un análisis cualitativo, donde se establece la estructura de este subgénero; y otro cuantitativo, en el que se identifican las diferentes características con el fin de determinar la estructura prototípica de este subgénero. Por último, se presentan algunas posibles implicaciones de los resultados.

**Palabras clave:** análisis de movimientos retóricos, manuales de instrucciones, lenguaje científico-técnico, género de la instrucción.

## 1. Introduction

Why do we write a text belonging to a genre the way we do? Why do we follow the conventions of a given genre? It all depends on its communicative purpose. The role of the linguist when facing a genre is to find out everything about it and discover its true nature (Bhatia, 1993: xiii; 2004). We need to understand its *arquitectura* –“architecture” – (Bustos-Gisbert, 2013), that is the overall structure as well as the internal structure and the typical language used. This concept, although not very widespread in the literature, has also been applied by other scholars, as the adjective “architextual”, used to mean “the different generic, discursive, lexical, thematic, and structural blueprints from which a given text emerges and is created” (Herbeck, 2017), links to the Swalesian model of moves and steps that vertebrate a text in genre theory (Swales, 1981; 1990).

This paper tries to understand this “architecture” of Instruction Manuals, called here the Instructional Genre. Adopting a corpus-based methodology, I focus on Instruction Manuals for household appliances to find out how one specific sub-genre within this Instructional Genre works, using Swales’ well grounded and widely known move and step model (1981; 1990) to investigate the “architecture” of these texts.

## 2. Theoretical framework

### 2.1. Genre analysis

Genre analysis is an applied discipline which seeks to distinguish the conventionalized uses of language; its nature is thus versatile and dynamic, and it does not aim merely to describe but also to provide explanations about the nature of genres. Its scope may be small, but it conveys a wide perspective. Genre analysis means investigating highly conventionalized texts within a context to understand how the members of a specific discursive community interpret and use a genre to reach communicative goals (Bhatia, 2002).

The central objective of this paper is to identify all those elements always present in the sub-genre of Instruction Manuals for household appliances:

i.e. the obligatory moves. If one of these elements is missing, the perception we obtain is that the text is incomplete. Then, I will identify the optional elements, which are determined by the “textual context”, and are not present at random. All this provides a “potential generic structure” (Halliday & Hassan, 1989) or “prototypical structure” (Rosch, 1978; Bondarko, 1991). The prototypical structure cannot lose any of the obligatory elements, which would make up the core of the genre, but other peripheral elements are optional and may not be present.

The objectives of genre analysis are mainly pedagogical, as Bhatia and other scholars suggest (Hopkins & Dudley-Evans, 1988; Albadalejo, 1989; Bhatia, 1993, 2002; Bustos-Gisbert, 2013). Nonetheless, there are other implications that go beyond pedagogy:

[There is] a development of genre theory from a purely ESP or LSP pedagogic application to a more critical engagement leading to demystification of the realities of the professional world. [Genre analysis is] a multidimensional and multi-perspective methodological framework to understand and analyse professional and academic genres, professional practices, and disciplinary and professional cultures as comprehensively as possible. (Bhatia, 2012: 26)

A key concept in the above definition is “framework”. This metaphor of the genre as a “frame” is also present in Bazerman:

Genres [...] *are frames for social action*. They are environments for learning. They are locations within which meaning is constructed. Genres shape the thoughts we form and the communications by which we interact. Genres are the familiar places we go to create intelligible communicative action with each other and the guideposts we use to explore the familiar. (Bazerman, 1994: 19)

According to Swales (1990), this “frame” is only an orientation about how speakers or writers may order their ideas and how listeners or readers may orientate their expectations. Todorov spoke about “horizons of expectation” for readers and “models of writing” for authors (Todorov, 1990: 18), and genre analysis is “pattern seeking rather than pattern imposing” (Hart, 1986: 280). In fact, what people remember about a genre is its macro-structure, which reflects what Chesterman calls “macropropositions” (1998: 166).

## 2.2. The concept of genre and its purpose

To have a clear idea of the concept of genre in relation to its purpose, it is enough to recall the following quote which provides the basis for the LSP approach:

It is a recognizable communicative event characterized by a set of communicative purpose(s) identified as mutually understood by the members of the professional or academic community in which it regularly occurs. (Bhatia, 1993:13)

Bhatia also adds that “each genre is an instance of a successful achievement of a specific communicative purpose using conventionalized knowledge of linguistic and discoursal resources” (Bhatia, 1993: 16).

The functional-systemic Sydney School takes the previous concepts but also emphasizes discourse functionality, as Rose states:

[G]enres have been characterized in this research tradition as staged, goal oriented social processes: social since texts are always interactive events; goal oriented in that a text unfolds towards its interactants’ purposes; staged, because it usually takes more than one step to reach the goal. In functional linguistic terms this means that genres are defined as a recurrent configuration of meanings, which enact the social practices of a culture. (Rose, 2012: 209)

Our current approach to professional genres thus integrates rhetorical concepts, and has a twofold objective: (a) inductive, as we study previous texts belonging to the same genre to establish their characteristics, and (b) projective, as previous study will help in the construction (and teaching) of future texts according to the conventions discovered (Albadalejo, 1989). These objectives are also expressed by Bhatia (2002) in the following terms:

to represent and account for the seemingly chaotic realities of the world; to understand and account for the private intentions of the author, in addition to socially recognized communicative purposes; to understand how language is used and shaped by socio-critical environment; and, to offer solutions to pedagogical and other applied linguistic problems. (Bhatia, 2002: 5)

Specific genres have been the object of a considerable volume of recent research, such as Du-Babcock and Bhatia (2013) himself on Business and Technical Communication, López-Arroyo and Roberts (2015) on wine

tasting notes, Rabadán, Colwell and Sanjurjo-González (2016) on the gastro industry, Pérez-Blanco (2016) on newspaper opinion discourse or Coxhead (2018) on language and vocabulary for specific purposes. However, the Instructional Genre has so far received little critical attention.

### 2.3. The instructional genre

The Instructional Genre is often taught within the framework of English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), which is divided into: (a) English for Professional Purposes, and (b) English for Vocational Purposes (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998). Instruction Manuals can be situated in the intersection between these last two categories; they are not an instance of expert-to-expert language, as is the case of pure professional language, but an example of expert-to-non-expert language, so the register also has some characteristics typical of the language used for vocational purposes.

Pearson (1998) differentiates four levels of specialization distinguished by the register used: (a) expert-to-expert; (b) expert to initiates; (c) relative experts to the uninitiated; and (d) teacher-pupil communication. Other authors prefer to distinguish three levels of specialization (Bowker & Pearson, 2002; Buendía & Ureña, 2010): (a) advanced texts with a very high level of specialization; (b) instructive texts, generally with a pedagogical character; and (c) popular texts for the general public. Instruction Manuals belong to the third level according to the first classification, and share characteristics of the second and the third levels according to the second. They are instructive texts, with a pedagogical objective; besides, no previous knowledge can be presumed on the part of the reader, so the writer has to focus on a potential reader who may not know anything about the appliance.

In scientific and technical writing, the general goal is to inform, define or describe and/or argue. The main intention in an instruction manual for an appliance is that of “informing” about it and its functions. Nonetheless, for this purpose we have to describe, categorize and distinguish it from other members of its own category (Kindelán-Echevarría, 2010).

Language functions are related to social behaviour and they represent the intention of the source (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). The way in which these functions are related and how they are linguistically realized are what establishes the particular conventions of each genre (Widdowson, 1988). The Language for Science and Technology (LST) functions proposed by Trimble (1985) can be seen in Table 1.

Description	Physical description Function description Process description	
Definition	Simple/single-sentence definition	Formal definition Semi-formal definition Non-formal definition
	Complex definition	Stipulation Operation Explication
Classification	Direction of the classification	Finding the members of a given class Finding a class for one or more given members
	Explicit	Full classification Partial classification
	Implicit	
Instructions	Telling someone what to do	Direct instructions Indirect instruction
	Instructional information	Explanations Theory Warnings (or any other additional information)
Visual-verbal relationships	Illustrative/graphical material	

Table 1. Rhetorical functions of LST (Trimble, 1985).

All the functions described above are present in Instruction Manuals to a greater or lesser extent. With them, a descriptive frame can be built in functional terms, only with the necessary categories for the description of the communicative event in question and related to the text by means of: (a) the content of the message; (b) the internal logical organization; and (c) how audience is taken into account, as well as establishing a rhetorical referential Swalesian frame (Hopkins & Dudley-Evans, 1988). Thus, I will attempt to establish the rhetorical structure of the sub-genre of Instruction Manuals for household appliances.

### 3. Materials and methods

The objective of this research is: (a) to establish how the genre is structured in Instruction Manuals (qualitative analysis); and (b) analyse and contrast their prototypical structure in BE and in PS (quantitative analysis).

### 3.1. Corpus data

A research study based on real texts gives a reliable description of language use in a genre. In order to study how these manuals are structured, I built a linguistic corpus that meets the particular needs of this analysis. It consists of two sub-corpora, one in BE and one in PS; it is therefore bilingual and comparable as the texts have similar characteristics in the two languages. I included complete written texts, and they were codified or annotated following a manual tagging process using rhetorical tags within a previously established frame (Cristobalena, 2015). It was thus built “[...] using the same sampling frame and similar balance and representativeness, e.g. the same proportions of the texts of the same genres in the same domains in a range of different languages in the same sampling period” (McEnery & Xiao, 2005: 3).

In order to create a valid and representative corpus of Instruction Manuals, I established a data set belonging to the sub-genre of manuals for household appliances and organized according to criteria of language, brand and type of appliance, as can be clearly seen in Tables 2 and 3. The corpus collected consists of forty manuals for household appliances in BE and forty in PS. The word count in each text varies from 17 264 words, in the longest case, to 644 in the shortest. The total number of words collected is 206 669 in BE and 174 134 in PS, making up a total of 380 803 words. This is enough for an LSP study as “a few thousand and a few hundred thousand words” are an appropriate amount when the texts are of a highly specific genre or specialised nature (Bowker & Pearson, 2002).

To maintain a criterion of variety within the homogeneous group of appliances used in household chores, I fixed a limit of 20% of texts belonging to the same brand or type of appliance. This limit was necessary because manuals from the same manufacturer usually have a similar style, and manuals for similar appliances have a very similar content lexis. Unfortunately, no information was available concerning whether the texts were originals or translations.

N	Tagging ID	Brand	Type of appliance	Number of words
1	[040IGWS__130114TechEN]	Beyond appliances	Microwave oven	13 330
2	[008IGWS__111022TechEN]	Bosch	Induction cooker	5 389
3	[012IGWS__111021TechEN]	Breadman	Automatic bread baker TR2828G	17 264
4	[034IGWS__130424TechEN]	Breville	Extreme steam 2400W	2 787
5	[035IGWS__130417TechEN]	Breville	4 Slice Toaster	2 143
6	[022IGWS__120110TechEN]	Elica	Suction cooker hood	2 045
7	[003IGWS__130115TechEN]	Fagor	Refrigerator/freezer + vacuum packing	2 796
8	[009IGWS__111023TechEN]	Fagor	Coffee grinder ML-2006 X	1 087
9	[031IGWS__130114TechEN]	Indesit	Oven FI 31 K.B GB	3 521
10	[001IGWS__130115TechEN]	Miele	Compact oven H 5040 B	13 131
11	[004IGWS__130115TechEN]	Miele	Dishwasher	11 073
12	[006IGWS__130117TechEN]	Miele	Built-in coffee machine CV 3660	16 403
13	[011IGWS__120111TechEN]	Miele	Washing machine W 1613	12 757
14	[024IGWS__130116TechEN]	Miele	Freezer F 12011 S-1	9 103
15	[036IGWS__130115TechEN]	Miele	Microwave oven M 8151-2	15 431
16	[019IGWS__111022TechEN]	Moulinex	Yogurteo	2 291
17	[025IGWS__111022TechEN]	Moulinex	Juice extractor	585
18	[026IGWS__111022TechEN]	Moulinex	Audacio Juice extractor	666
19	[027IGWS__111023TechEN]	Moulinex	Bebeo Steamer blender	1 416
20	[028IGWS__111023TechEN]	Moulinex	Ovatio Food processor	2 752
21	[033IGWS__130114TechEN]	Nodor	Extractor hood	1 349
22	[010IGWS__111019TechEN]	Philips	Airfryer HD9225	3 411
23	[013IGWS__111019TechEN]	Philips	Mixer HR1565	1 483
24	[020IGWS__111019TechEN]	Philips	Vacuum cleaner FC8149 - FC8140	2 109
25	[029IGWS__111019TechEN]	Philips	Blender HR2084	3 026
26	[018IGWS__111019TechEN]	Philips Saeco	Automatic coffee maker	12 361
27	[005IGWS__130115TechEN]	Samsung	Refrigerator	9 530
28	[014IGWS__111023TechEN]	Siemens	Vacuum cleaner	2 275
29	[030IGWS__111022TechEN]	Siemens	Washer-dryer	7 708
30	[032IGWS__130203TechEN]	Siemens	Freezer	3 448
31	[037IGWS__130504TechEN]	Swam	Soup Maker SP18010N	3 317
32	[038IGWS__130504TechEN]	Swam	Grill Chef SP19010CDWMN	1 582
33	[002IGWS__111018TechEN]	Tefal	Coffee maker	866
34	[007IGWS__111018TechEN]	Tefal	Oléoclean Fryer	3 769
35	[015IGWS__111010TechEN]	Tefal	Kettle	1 843
36	[016IGWS__111019TechEN]	Tefal	X'press Cooker	3 294
37	[017IGWS__111019TechEN]	Tefal	Steam generator	2 289
38	[021IGWS__111019TechEN]	Tefal	Steamer Aqua Timer (food processor)	1 475
39	[023IGWS__111019TechEN]	Tefal	Astucio electric casserole	1 273
40	[039IGWS__130504TechEN]	WMF	Perfect Plus (express cooker)	4 291

Table 2. BE sub-corpus.

N	Tagging ID	Brand	Type of appliance	Number of words
1	[003IGWS__130115TechES]	Fagor	Refrigerator/freezer + vacuum packing	2 810
2	[005IGWS__120109TechES]	Fagor	Refrigerator/freezer	2 670
3	[009IGWS__111023TechES]	Fagor	Coffee grinder ML-2006 X	1 140
4	[022IGWS__120110TechES]	Fagor	Oven	3 056
5	[027IGWS__130118TechES]	Fagor	Kettle TK-400	1 155
6	[035IGWS__130114TechES]	Fagor	Steam ironing station PLC-809CC	2 524
7	[039IGWS__130504TechES]	Jata electro	Fryer FR276	1 297
8	[040IGWS__130504TechES]	Jata electro	Food steamer 200	1409
9	[036IGWS__130515TechES]	LG	Induction cooker	5 728
10	[008IGWS__111018TechES]	Magefesa	Express pressure cooker	2 960
11	[016IGWS__111023TechES]	Magefesa	Electric mincer	1 049
12	[017IGWS__120504TechES]	Magefesa	Electric grill	1 260
13	[018IGWS__111023TechES]	Magefesa	Electric pan cooker	1 568
14	[021IGWS__111023TechES]	Magefesa	Pressure cooker	5 581
15	[002IGWS__130115TechES]	Miele	Dishwasher	12 953
16	[004IGWS__130115TechES]	Miele	Compact oven H 5040 B	16 094
17	[006IGWS__130115TechES]	Miele	Coffee machine CM 5100	16 070
18	[007IGWS__130115TechES]	Miele	Washing machine W 1714	11 654
19	[012IGWS__111022TechES]	Moulinex	Home bread	4 319
20	[019IGWS__111022TechES]	Moulinex	Yogurt maker	2 285
21	[023IGWS__111022TechES]	Moulinex	Electric carving knife	648
22	[024IGWS__111022TechES]	Moulinex	Accessimo juice extractor	730
23	[026IGWS__111022TechES]	Moulinex	Audacio juice extractor	644
24	[010IGWS__120111TechES]	MxOnda	Steam ironing station MX-CPV2034	3 863
25	[033IGWS__130114TechES]	Nodor	Suction cooker hood	1 516
26	[013IGWS__111019TechES]	Philips	Kneader HR1565	1 613
27	[020IGWS__111019TechES]	Philips	Vacuum cleaner FC8149 - FC8140	2 360
28	[029IGWS__111019TechES]	Philips	Blender HR2084	3 272
29	[032IGWS__111019TechES]	Philips	Senseo coffee machine	5 054
30	[034IGWS__130114TechES]	Rowenta	Air force vacuum cleaner	2 895
31	[037IGWS__130503TechES]	Samsung	Microwave oven	12 824
32	[011IGWS__111022TechES]	Siemens	Washer and dryer	8 555
33	[014IGWS__111023TechES]	Siemens	Vacuum cleaner	2 384
34	[015IGWS__111023TechES]	Siemens	Freezer	4 967
35	[001IGWS__111206TechES]	Tefal	Ultra Compact sandwich maker	648
36	[028IGWS__130122TechES]	Tefal	Multi Delices yogurt maker	4 482
37	[031IGWS__111018TechES]	Tefal	Pro minute steam ironing station	2 188
38	[038IGWS__130504TechES]	Tefal	ActiFry family	3 369
39	[030IGWS__130114TechES]	Vorwerk	Thermomix TM 31	10 414
40	[025IGWS__111023TechES]	WMF Perfect	Pressure cooker	4 126

Table 3. PS sub-corpus.

### 3.2. Procedure: Rhetorical analysis

Linguistics is essentially a social science but also an applied science (Stubbs, 1993). For this reason, a methodology combining both qualitative and quantitative methods is needed. A mixed methodology combining data of both kinds (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003) was therefore used.

The move analysis aims at establishing the structure and function of the Instruction Manuals for household appliances. For this purpose, and drawing on Swales (1981; 1990), a rhetorical structure is proposed based on moves, steps and sub-steps.

The specific analytical framework proposed had already been used in a previous pilot study (Cristobalena, 2015). It was established after a thorough observation of a number of texts of the corpus, as no other similar analyses had been found to exist in this restricted field.

Moves	Step	Sub-steps
Identification	Manual's title Manufacturing company Name Model Artwork Elements Purpose	
Praise	Self praise Gratitude	
Objective description	Specifications Reference	
Functions	Installing Operating	Installing stages Operating stages
Advice	(Extra) tips Recipes Timing Dos Don'ts Maintenance	Maintenance stages
	Troubleshooting	Problem/solution Guarantee Consumer service
	Legislation	Safety Recycling

Table 4. Moves, Steps and Sub-steps of Instruction Manuals for household appliances.

### 3.3. Tools

The tools used in this study are those designed by the ACTRES<sup>1</sup> research group: (a) a custom-made rhetorical tagger adapted for the needs of this sub-genre; and (b) a browser, which shows concordances in the rhetorical

move or step selected from both languages on the screen and also offers wordlists and statistical information (see Figures 1 and 2).

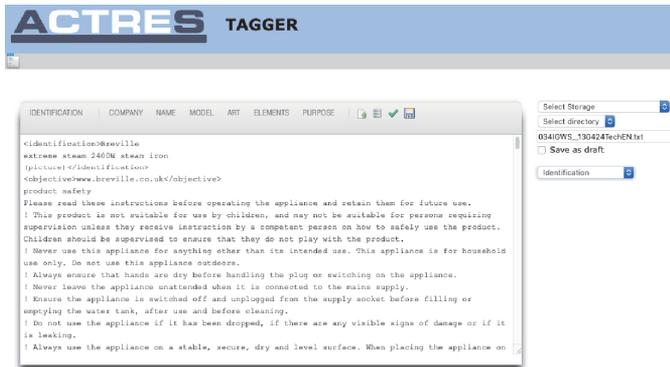


Figure 1. ACTRES Rhetorical tagger.

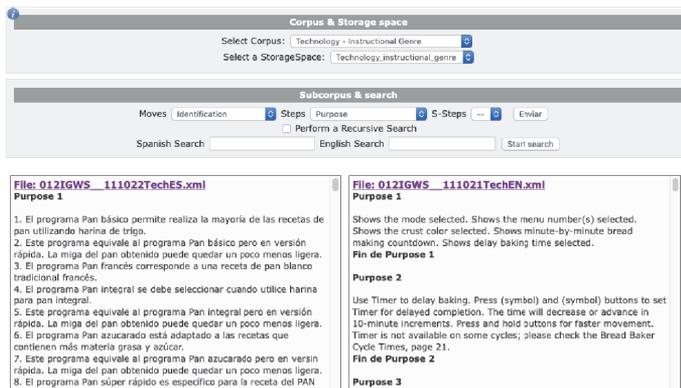


Figure 2. ACTRES Rhetorical browser.

## 4. Results and discussion

### 4.1. Qualitative analysis of the rhetorical structure

From the five rhetorical functions of LST (description, definition, classification, instruction and visual-verbal relationships) (see Table 1), I found, in a first reading, that the descriptive elements are the most outstanding. Following the same taxonomy, a description can be: (a) physical, a description of the appliance and its elements; (b) functional, the purpose of the appliance itself or of each specific part; and (c) of a process, a description of the appliance's operation. The first two types of description,

physical and functional, are found in the first move called “identification” (see Table 4), also to be found in the information about the name of the company, the name of the appliance, the model and one or more illustrations of the appliance and its elements. This last function belongs to “visual-verbal relationships”. We can also find physical descriptions in the technical specifications of the appliance.

However, the last kind of description mentioned, “description of a process”, is not found in the identification of the appliance, it is in a different move. It has also been noted that there are several “descriptions of processes” in the manuals and they do not only refer to the operation of the appliance, but to its installation and its maintenance as well. This move is called “functions”.

The rhetorical functions of “definition” and “classification” are not inherent to Instruction Manuals; instead, the “instruction” is the central axis of the Instructional Genre. Trimble defines instruction as “the rhetoric of telling someone what to do and how to do it to achieve a certain goal” (Trimble, 1985: 20) and he divides it into two groups: (a) instructions, the action of telling someone what to do; and (b) instructional information, additional information surrounding the instructions. In the case of Instruction Manuals, we can find instructions related to the operation of the appliance, as well as instructive information such as advice on what to do or not to do with the appliance.

Below, taking the rhetorical frame already established (see Table 4) as a reference, I present the qualitative analysis of the corpus collected:

#### MOVE 1: <IDENTIFICATION>

In this move we have all the information that identifies the appliance. It is divided into different steps.

##### Step 1. <manual’s title>

This is the name that is given to the manual. It may seem very obvious but it is often included in the text. The noun “instruction” and its equivalent in PS, “instrucción”, nearly always appear. The most popular option in BE is “Instruction manual” while in PS is “Manual de instrucciones”.

##### Step 2. <manufacturing company>

This is the commercial name of the company or brand. Companies usually prefer names that are easy to pronounce in different languages to avoid changing the name depending on the country. “Miele” is the brand that

stands out in both sub-corpora. All Instruction Manuals include the name of the company, but some brands tend to repeat their own name more frequently, for example on the front cover, back cover, etc.

### Step 3. <name>

This is the name of the appliance in general; here we find nouns or noun phrases such as “microwave oven” or “lavadora automática”. But sometimes we also find neologisms to emphasize that it is a new invention (“Thermomix”).

### Step 4. <model>

This is to distinguish the different versions of the same appliance by the same company. We usually find here an alphanumeric code (“CV200”), but neologisms are also used in this case, like “Yogurteo” in BE or “Supernova” in PS; in fact, we could not say which language these words belong to without their co-text.

### Step 5. <artwork>

Although this is not written language, a photo or illustration is present in almost every manual. It can be a general illustration for the cover, or a detailed illustration to facilitate identification of all the different parts and controls of the appliance with numbers or letters.

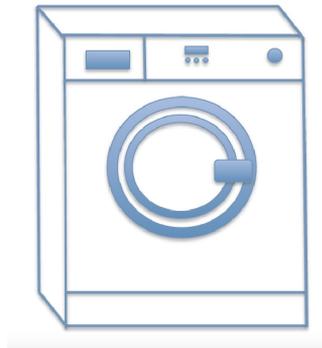


Figure 3. Washing machine.

### Step 6. <elements>

Here, the user is given the names of the different parts of the appliance. This is very closely related to the previous step and they generally come together

by means of numbers or letters. We usually find noun phrases in both languages (“power cord”, “depósito de agua”).

#### Step 7. <purpose>

Apart from giving the name of the element of the appliance, we can also find an explanation of its purpose. This breaks with the trend in the tendency to rely on nouns or noun phrases. Now, we can also find complete sentences:

This function allows the creation of a new user.

Enciende el horno (symbol).

#### MOVE 2: <PRAISE>

In this move, we do not find objective language, for this is the commercial part of the manual. The user has already bought the appliance; the objective of the manufacturer is no longer to sell the product, but to make the client feel that this was the best choice.

#### Step 1. <self praise>

This step refers to the language the manufacturer uses to refer to the properties of the appliance. We mainly find complex/compound sentences in the present tense in BE and PS. We can also find structures that take the form of the slogan:

Your new airfryer allows you to prepare your favourite ingredients and snacks in a healthier way.

Lo mejor de nosotros para su familia.

#### Step 2. <gratitude>

Here the manufacturer congratulates or thanks the client.

Congratulations on your purchase and welcome to Philips!

Le agradecemos que haya elegido un aparato de la gama Moulinex.

#### MOVE 3: <OBJECTIVE DESCRIPTION>

This move presents the characteristics of the appliance with objective information.

#### Step 1. <specifications>

This step shows schematic technical information in the form of noun phrases:

Width: 1 850 mm

Altura 48 mm

But we can also find sentences of the complex/compound type in the present tense:

This appliance contains the coolant Isobutane (R600a), a natural gas which is environmentally friendly.

Este aparato funciona con refrigerante R600A, que no deteriora el medio ambiente.

Step 2. <reference>

This step tells us where we can find further information, either included in the manual (internal reference) or somewhere else, such as a webpage (external reference). This is what is known as “intertextuality” (Beaugrande & Dressler, 1981). Here the imperative is the tense used in the sentences:

See Cleaning and Storing, pages 19-20.

Consulte la lista de centros de servicio autorizados Rowenta o contacte con el servicio al consumidor Rowenta.

MOVE 4: <FUNCTIONS>

This is the core of the Instruction Manual. Here the user is told how to handle the appliance.

Step 1. <installing>

First we are told how to prepare the appliance for installation. Most of this is in complex/compound sentences in the present simple and the imperative:

This is important for the correct electronic functioning of the appliance.

Remove all packaging, stickers or other accessories from the inside and outside of the kettle.

Antes de utilizar la aspiradora por primera vez, la batería debe cargarse durante 6 horas.

Limpie su Thermomix TM 31 minuciosamente antes del primer uso.

### Sub-step 1. <installing stage>

In this step, we get detailed direct instructions for installing the appliance. Very frequently, we find the stages highlighted with bullets or numbers, to stress the order of the installation process. Here we have complex/compound sentences that take the imperative as the main verb, together with many details on how to proceed:

Fit the appliance door from below onto upper hinge pin 4 and then close the appliance door.

Pulse el botón de encendido/apagado y, a continuación, pulse brevemente los botones de 1 taza (symbol) y 2 tazas (symbol) al mismo tiempo.

### Step 2. <operating>

In this step, the manufacturer gives the instructions on how to operate the appliance. First, we may find explanations, for example why it is important to perform such an action. Complex/compound sentences are preferred as well as present tenses:

The microwave cooks the food, and the grill browns it.

Esto facilita el ahorro de energía cuando no se utiliza el horno.

### Sub-step 1. <operating stage>

In this sub-step we find the actual operating instructions. Again, the stages are highlighted, there is a preference for complex/compound sentences using the imperative and we may also observe the use of adjuncts:

Turn the speed selector to position 2 to start the appliance.

Desconecte el lavavajillas pulsando la tecla (symbol).

### MOVE 5: <ADVICE>

This move is different from the previous one since the instructions given here are not directly related to operating the appliance. This advice has a wider scope, and may or may not directly involve the appliance, covering such topics as what products should be used to clean the appliance, or what operations must not be performed because they are dangerous.

### Step 1. <(extra) tips>

These are optional recommendations made by the manufacturer for better performance of the appliance, to save energy, and so on. Here we find syntactic structures of all kinds and they use mainly the present tense:

We recommend using the universal tray with the rack on top.

Una correcta dosificación reduce el impacto ambiental y proporciona un resultado óptimo de lavado.

### Step 2. <recipes>

In the case of appliances used for cooking, we can also find recipes. Here the noun phrase is very important because we have the list of ingredients, which means there are also quantifiers. In the main body of a recipe, BE prefers the imperative and PS prefers the present tense:

Toscana bread, ingredients: [...]

Add the butter.

Alubias con chorizo

Cerramos la Olla y mantenemos en cocción durante 10 minutos.

### Step 3. <timing>

This step shows the time lapse needed for a task. It is very closely related to recipes but it is also found in other kinds of appliances with automatic programmes. This is usually presented in the form of a data table with many numerical noun phrases:

Chips 1000 g 14-16 min.

Tiempo de cocción 5 min.

### Step 4. <dos>

Compulsory advice: the user must perform the instruction given. In this step we can find caution symbols emphasising the message, traffic signs and exclamation marks being common, as some previous knowledge of the world is needed. Sentences take the form of direct orders, using the imperative:

Keep children away from the machine at all times.

Apague siempre el aparato antes de limpiarlo.

### Step 5. <don'ts>

This step only differs from the previous one in the use of the negative, and implies not performing an action because it is dangerous and must be avoided. Here, we also find caution symbols. There are generally complex/compound sentences and they take the negative imperative form:

Do not install or use a damaged washing machine.

No almacene en el congelador bebidas gaseosas.

### Step 6. <maintenance>

This step shows how to maintain the appliance. First, we are given general information. This information takes the form of complex/compound sentences in the present tense:

Changing the filter on time provides you with the freshest, cleanest water from your fridge.

El aparato tiene un sistema electrónico que controla la vida del cartucho antical.

#### Sub-step 1. <maintenance stage>

As in the installation and operation steps, here there is also a sub-step including detailed instructions, the difference being that here the instructions are about the cleaning and maintenance of the appliance. We can find simple as well as complex/compound sentences and the use of the imperative as the main verb:

Wash and dry the accessories.

Enjuague y seque.

### Step 7. <troubleshooting>

In this step, the user will find the information necessary if the appliance fails to work properly. It is divided into three sub-steps: problem/solution, guarantee and consumer service.

#### Sub-step 1. <problem/solution>

Users will be referred to this part to try to solve a problem themselves. This is a very visual sub-step as it appears in the form of a table, columns or lists

to clearly show the possible problem and how to solve it. The complex/compound sentence does not prevail in this case and the present simple is the tense used most. A special characteristic of this sub-step is the use of the interrogative. It not very important quantitatively, but it stands out as it is the only sub-step where we can find it:

What's wrong?

If you have difficulty removing bread from the Bread Pan, slide a flat rubber or plastic spatula along the sides of the pan to loosen the loaf.

¿Qué debo hacer?

Comprueba que la puerta esté bien cerrada.

### Sub-step 2. <guarantee>

In this sub-step the user can find the terms and conditions of the appliance guarantee. This language has legal connotations and, together with the language in step “praise”, it can be clearly differentiated from the rest of the Instruction Manual. In general, there are long and complex/compound sentences in the present tense, and other salient features, such as the use of the passive voice in PS and the use of “shall” in BE, both of which are typical of legal language:

Repair, replacement or refund shall be the sole remedy of the purchaser under this warranty, and in no event shall Salton be liable for any incidental or consequential damages, losses or expenses.

Este aparato no está diseñado para ser utilizado por personas (incluyendo niños) con alguna discapacidad física, sensorial o mental, o falta de experiencia y conocimientos, a no ser que sean supervisados o la persona responsable de su seguridad les haya proporcionado instrucciones precisas sobre el funcionamiento del aparato.

### Sub-step 3. <consumer service>

In case the user still has difficulties, the manufacturer provides a list of customer service providers where, if necessary, the user can have the appliance repaired. This list of providers takes the form of a noun phrase, but there are also sentences with explanations and directions on how to proceed. Here, BE prefers the present tense, tends to be more descriptive, and PS prefers the imperative, and prefers the direct instruction.

You may contact Tefal UK Limited for a replacement.

En caso de anomalías que no pueda solucionar Vd. mismo, póngase en contacto con su distribuidor Miele o el Servicio Post-venta Miele.

### Step 8. <legislation>

This step deals with the current regulations affecting the appliance.

#### Sub-step 1. <safety>

The first sub-step refers to safety regulations country by country. In the UK, for example, there are very restrictive regulations concerning electrical plugs. Syntactically there are different structures, but the complex/compound sentence is the one favoured. It also has a very descriptive character, noticeable in the use of the present tense.

The wire which is coloured blue must be connected to the terminal which is marked with the letter N or coloured black.

Esto garantiza protección suficiente contra descargas eléctricas, como requiere el organismo de certificación.

#### Sub-step 2. <recycling>

Finally there are instructions on how to dispose of the appliance. This sub-step is linguistically very similar to the previous one; it prefers the complex/compound sentence and the tense used is mainly the present. There are also many adjuncts indicating place and purpose, indicating where to take the appliance for recycling and why.

The European Directive 2002/96/EC on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE), requires that old household electrical appliances must not be disposed of in the normal unsorted municipal waste stream.

Este aparato cuenta con las marcas prescritas por la Directiva europea 2002/96/CE relativa a la retirada y reciclaje de Residuos de Aparatos Eléctricos y Electrónicos (RAEE).

According to this description of the different moves, steps and sub-steps, and once the corpus has been tagged accordingly, I can now measure in quantitative terms the relative weight of each one in relation with the whole corpus.

## 4.2. Quantitative analysis of the rhetorical structure

When shaping the genre and its conventions, the most suitable procedure is to analyse probabilistic criteria rather than canonical ones (Bustos-Gisbert, 2013). Once the rhetorical structure has been established, the weight that each particular move, step and sub-step has in the Instructional Genre can be quantitatively determined from the corpus data. The present study uses the statistics tool of the ACTRES Rhetorical browser (see Figure 4). In this example we can see the percentage of text included in the step “purpose”.

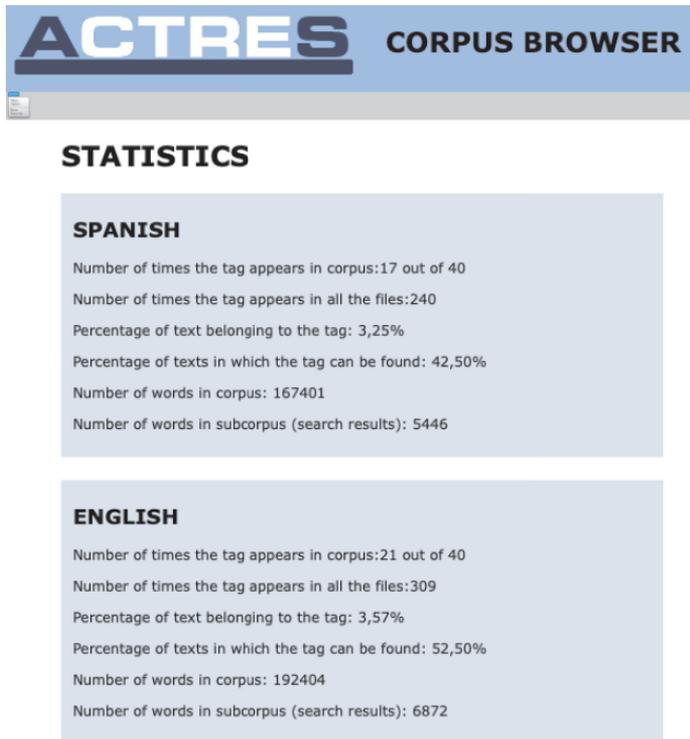


Figure 4. ACTRES Rhetorical browser (statistics).

Following this procedure, the table below presents the percentages that show the amount of text each sub-corpus allocates to the different rhetorical sections. In general, there are no major differences across languages, but I have highlighted those with a difference wider than three texts, as this equals a minimum of 7.5%. A narrower difference is not considered significant.

		PS		BE	
		Number of texts	Percentage	Number of texts	Percentage
Move 1	Identification	40	100.00%	40	100.00%
Step 1	Manual's title	25	62.50%	22	55.00%
Step 2	Manufacturing company	39	97.50%	36	90.00%
Step 3	Name	26	65.00%	24	60.00%
Step 4	Model	25	62.50%	24	60.00%
Step 5	Artwork	40	100.00%	40	100.00%
Step 6	Elements	37	92.50%	35	87.50%
Step 7	Purpose	17	42.50%	21	52.50%
Move 2	Praise	19	47.50%	16	40.00%
Step 1	Self praise	10	25.00%	9	22.50%
Step 2	Gratitude	12	30.00%	9	22.50%
Move 3	Objective description	32	80.00%	37	92.50%
Step 1	Specifications	18	45.00%	20	50.00%
Step 2	Reference	27	67.50%	32	80.00%
Move 4	Functions	40	100.00%	40	100.00%
Step 1	Installing	32	80.00%	35	87.50%
Sub-step 1	Installing stage	29	72.50%	29	72.50%
Step 2	Operating	39	97.50%	39	97.50%
Sub-step 1	Operating stage	38	95.00%	35	87.50%
Move 5	Advice	40	100.00%	40	100.00%
Step 1	Extra tips	34	85.00%	34	85.00%
Step 2	Recipes	9	22.50%	8	20.00%
Step 3	Timing	17	42.50%	14	35.00%
Step 4	Do's	40	100.00%	40	100.00%
Step 5	Don'ts	40	100.00%	40	100.00%
Step 6	Maintenance	39	97.50%	40	100.00%
Sub-step 1	Maintenance stage	35	87.50%	36	90.00%
Step 7	Troubleshooting	40	100.00%	40	100.00%
Sub-step 1	Problem/solution	27	67.50%	28	70.00%
Sub-step 2	Guarantee	35	87.50%	35	87.50%
Sub-step 3	Consumer service	37	92.50%	38	95.00%
Step 8	Legislation	35	87.50%	38	95.00%
Sub-step 1	Safety	29	72.50%	35	87.50%
Sub-step 2	Recycling	28	70.00%	25	62.50%

Table 5. Frequency of moves, steps and sub-steps in the corpus

In Table 5, we can appreciate the different moves as well as the steps in which they are divided, and the sub-steps which in turn are sub-divided. The first difference shown is placed in Move 1 Step 1 (“manual’s title”). PS tends to repeat the manual’s title more often than BE, the difference is 7.5%.

This difference is also found in Move 1 Step 2 (“manufacturing company”). This could be because some companies tend to repeat their own name more often than others. It is not present in 100% of texts because when the files of some manuals were requested from companies, the covers were not included, causing a loss of information.

Move 1 Step 3 (“name”), Move 1 Step 4 (“model”), Move 1 Step 5 (“artwork”) and Move 1 Step 6 (“elements”), show very similar percentages in both languages. It is in the case of Move 1 Step 7 (“purpose”) where there

is a difference of ten percentage points. This shows more explanations about the purpose of the elements in BE than in PS.

Move 2 (“praise”) also reveals some differences very much linked to Move 2 Step 2 (“gratitude”). Move 2 is, in general, more frequent in PS (7.5%). The difference in Move 2 Step 1 (“self praise”) is also minor and in favour of PS. It is in Move 2 Step 2 (“gratitude”) where the difference reaches 7.5% also in favour of PS. We may therefore conclude that, though not to a great extent, PS tends to include flattering language expressing self praise as well as gratitude.

Move 3 (“objective description”) also presents differences, but in this case in favour of BE. Regarding Move 3, there is an overall difference of 12.5%. Move 3 Step 1 (“specifications”) presents a small difference (5%) in favour of BE. However, Move 3 Step 2 (“reference”) gives the broadest difference (12.5%). BE tends to give more references, which are internal as well as external (inside or outside the manual).

Move 4 (“functions”) is the core of the manual with 100% presence in both sub-corpora. In spite of this, there are some internal variations. Move 4 Step 1 (“installing”) shows a 7.5% difference in favour of BE, but in Move 4 Step 1 Sub-step 1 (“installing stage”), where the actual instructions to follow are located, there is no difference, the percentage is the same (72.5%). Move 4 Step 2 (“operating”) also has the same percentage, with some differences in Move 4 Step 2 Sub-step 1 (“operating stage”); here the rate is a little higher in PS (7.5%). We could determine that the appliances in the BE sub-corpus give more explanations on how to instal them and, on the contrary, PS manuals come with more explanations on how to use the appliances.

Move 5 (“advice”) is present in 100% of cases in BE and PS, but it is also the most extensive and it offers advice of different kinds, consequently it presents variations in both languages. In Move 5 Step 3 (“timing”) there is a difference of 7.5%; PS tends to give more data about the length of programmes of appliances, which could also mean that there are more appliances with programming functions in PS. It is in Move 5 Step 8 (“legislation”) that the difference across languages is greater. In the whole of Move 5 Step 8, the difference is 7.5% in favour of BE. Nonetheless, if we observe both sub-steps, the first one, Move 5 Step 8 Sub-step 1 (“safety”), has a higher rate in BE and the second one, Move 5 Step 8 Sub-step 2 (“recycling”), has a higher rate in PS. The differentiation in the first sub-step is 15% and in the second 7.5%. This implies that the section on security has

a higher importance in BE and the part on recycling is more important in PS. This is because BE texts give very detailed information about the wiring of the appliances with very specific information only needed in the UK. On the other hand, PS seems to try to promote recycling, as the amount of text about it is larger in PS.

Finally, it can be said there are small quantitative variations along the general rhetorical structure of this sub-genre comparing BE and PS; however, there is no single reason for these variations, the reasons I have tried to formulate are varied and each one is justified by different motivations.

### **4.3. Prototypical structure of Instruction Manuals for household appliances**

The percentages shown in Table 6 are useful not only for comparing BE and PS percentages, but also to establish the prototypical moves, steps and sub-steps in the sub-genre of Instruction Manuals for household appliances, according to their percentage occurrence in the corpus. To this end, the following rate parameters are taken as reference and they will help in establishing the prototypical structure in BE and in PS: higher than 80%, obligatory; from 79% to 60%, high priority; from 59% to 40%, medium priority; from 39% to 20%, low priority; less than 20%, should not be considered.

Regarding the prototypical structure, there are no steps or sub-steps below a 20% rate to reject automatically. Those sections with a low priority: Move 2 Step 1 (“self praise”) and Move 2 Step 2 (“gratitude”), are not prototypical, so Move 2 (“praise”) could be considered a peripheral element in both languages. Regarding Move 5 Step 2 (“recipes”), if the appliance is not for cooking, it does not make sense to have a recipe section. Finally, although Move 5 Step 3 (“timing”) has a medium rate in PS, it is very close to low priority (40%). This makes it a peripheral element in BE, and it could also be thus considered in PS.

Consequently, the prototypical structures of the Instructional Genre could be established as in Table 6. This means that only the moves regarding “praise” and “recipes” can be considered peripheral in both languages along with “timing” in BE.

		PS		BE	
		Percentage	Priority	Percentage	Priority
Move 1	Identification	100.00%	obligatory	100.00%	obligatory
Step 1	Manual's title	62.50%	high	55.00%	medium
Step 2	Manufacturing company	97.50%	obligatory	90.00%	obligatory
Step 3	Name	65.00%	high	60.00%	high
Step 4	Model	62.50%	high	60.00%	high
Step 5	Artwork	100.00%	obligatory	100.00%	obligatory
Step 6	Elements	92.50%	obligatory	87.50%	obligatory
Step 7	Purpose	42.50%	medium	52.50%	medium
Move 2	Praise	47.50%	medium	40.00%	medium
Step 1	Self praise	25.00%	low	22.50%	low
Step 2	Gratitude	30.00%	low	22.50%	low
Move 3	Objective description	80.00%	obligatory	92.50%	obligatory
Step 1	Specifications	45.00%	medium	50.00%	medium
Step 2	Reference	67.50%	high	80.00%	obligatory
Move 4	Functions	100.00%	obligatory	100.00%	obligatory
Step 1	Installing	80.00%	obligatory	87.50%	obligatory
Sub-step 1	Installing stage	72.50%	high	72.50%	high
Step 2	Operating	97.50%	obligatory	97.50%	obligatory
Sub-step 1	Operating stage	95.00%	obligatory	87.50%	obligatory
Move 5	Advice	100.00%	obligatory	100.00%	obligatory
Step 1	Extra tips	85.00%	obligatory	85.00%	obligatory
Step 2	Recipes	22.50%	low	20.00%	low
Step 3	Timing	42.50%	medium	35.00%	low
Step 4	Dos	100.00%	obligatory	100.00%	obligatory
Step 5	Don'ts	100.00%	obligatory	100.00%	obligatory
Step 6	Maintenance	97.50%	obligatory	100.00%	obligatory
Sub-step 1	Maintenance stage	87.50%	obligatory	90.00%	obligatory
Step 7	Troubleshooting	100.00%	obligatory	100.00%	obligatory
Sub-step 1	Problem/solution	67.50%	high	70.00%	high
Sub-step 2	Guarantee	87.50%	obligatory	87.50%	obligatory
Sub-step 3	Consumer service	92.50%	obligatory	95.00%	obligatory
Step 8	Legislation	87.50%	obligatory	95.00%	obligatory
Sub-step 1	Safety	72.50%	high	87.50%	obligatory
Sub-step 2	Recycling	70.00%	high	62.50%	high

Table 6. Different priorities across PS and BE.

## 6. Conclusions

Throughout these pages, I have developed an analysis of the “architecture” of the subgenre of instruction manuals for household appliances, which was the main objective. The conclusions I have reached are the following: the sub-genre of Instruction Manuals for household appliances is well established in PS and in BE, its structure is well defined and the language used in each step and sub-step has its own characteristics with no major differences across languages. These characteristics are very much linked to the general use of language for science and technology. We can also find language not only belonging to this text type, but there are also traces of other genres such as commercial language in Move 2 (“praise”) or in Move 5 Step 6 Sub-step 2 (“guarantee”), where legal language may be found.

This piece of research also has future projections. The first one would be a study of other related genres such as, for example, instruction manuals for toys. A second one would include a parallel investigation with other languages, French, German, Italian, Japanese, etc. to contrast the results with those from this study. Finally, a further perspective would include interdisciplinary applications in machine translation.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Contrastive Analysis and Translation English-Spanish in its Spanish acronym. See <http://actres.unileon.es/> for further details.

