

## THE DISCOURSE STRUCTURE OF BOOK REVIEWS IN GHANAIAN NEWSPAPERS, 1950-2006

Dr. Gordon Adika

### ABSTRACT

Over the past several years there has been a remarkable scholarly interest in the book review genre in the Euro-American academic world: its prototypicality and variations across disciplines, cultures, and time. Just like western scholars, among the community of African scholars resident in Africa, the book review plays a significant role in scholarly interactions. In Ghana, for instance, where the academic book publishing industry has become vibrant the book review plays an essential role in announcing new knowledge. However, investigations into the structure and possible cross-cultural variations of the genre in a non-native English context such as Ghana's appear non-existent. This study extends research on book reviews to a non-native English context in order to investigate cross-cultural variations relevant to the genre. The study describes and accounts for the range and variability of sub-functions within the four-move structure originally devised by Motta Roth, and further explores the extent to which the social, political and cultural dynamics of the Ghanaian community have shaped the rhetorical moves made in the reviews.

**Key words:** Genre Analysis, Book review, Move Analysis, Ghana, Newspaper

### Introduction

Book reviewing is a process whereby authorities in a given field determine the validity and assess the relative significance of a particular contribution of a scholar or scientists within that field (Hyland, 2000). The book review genre is old as the academic community, and most journals have a section on it, besides its publication in newspapers (Miranda, 1996; Hartley, 2005). A literature survey shows the increasing scholarly interest in this genre, including its prototypicality, variations across disciplines and time (Nicolaisen, 2002; Hyland, 2000; Motta-Roth 1998; Swales, 1990). However, such research has mainly focused on academic journals in the Euro-American academic world.

Considering, on the one hand, English as an international language of scholarship, and, on the

other hand, the book review genre as a communicative event, a study such as this one which extends research on book review to the context of a non-native speaker, should be relevant to the extent that it might indicate cross-cultural variations relevant to the genre. This study uses the schematic framework originally devised by Motta Roth and modified by Nicolaisen to describe the rhetorical patterns of book reviews in an African newspaper (specifically Ghana). The objective is to find out the range and variability of sub-functions in the moves made in the prose of the writers; and the extent to which the social, political and cultural dynamics of the Ghanaian community have shaped the rhetorical moves made in the reviews.

### **Newspapers in Ghana and the Book Review Genre**

Ghana was the first sub-Saharan African country to gain its independence. This was in 1957. The earliest newspapers that appeared in Ghana, then Gold Coast, were written in English. The first was *The Royal Gold Coast Gazette* which began in 1822 as a semi-official paper (Sackey, 1997 citing Quartey, 1963). The first paper to be owned and fully printed by Africans was *The Gold Coast Times* which was started by James H. Brew in 1874. Between 1900 and 1957, there were no fewer than eleven newspapers in the country each year, all of them being English language publications (Ibid). The *Daily Graphic*, Ghana's widest circulating daily newspaper today and from which the corpus for this study is drawn, was first published in 1950. Another current and major daily newspaper, the *Ghanaian Times*, was first published in 1958 under the name *Ghana Times*.

At their very inception, these newspapers started publishing book reviews. The first book review published in the *Daily Graphic* was entitled "A review of *The History of the Gold Coast and Asante*", in the 01 March 1951 issue. The reviewer was Sir Leslie M'Carthy, and the book was authored by Rev. C. C. Reindorf. As regards the *Ghanaian Times*, the very first issue dated 02 August 1958 carried a review of a novel entitled *Leave me alone* by one David Karp. Although the space allotted to the review was small, the publication marked the beginning of the book review as a feature of the paper.

Interestingly, Ghanaian newspapers appear not to have comprehensive editorial policies governing their publication of book reviews. For example, the *Daily Graphic* has no written editorial policy. The editor explained in a written response that: "More often, the reviews are done on request. In certain circumstances the perceived utility of the book informs the review. Other reviews

are submitted by outsiders. However, where the thrust of the book involves obscene or vulgar language, there would be no published review.” The editor of the *Ghanaian Times* indicates that there is an editorial policy, and spells it out as follows: (1) Reviewer needs to demonstrate he/she has read the whole book; (2) Reviewer must be able to summarize the story well; in a credible way. It shouldn’t be a praise song; and (3) Price of book and where available are essential”.

Since it is not the case that the published reviews are deficient in quality, my observation would simply be that Ghanaian newspapers (and probably other African newspapers) would need to provide more informative or comprehensive guidelines regarding style and professional ethics for their book review sections. As the genre consolidates itself as a regular feature of the newspapers, an authoritative written policy would not only ensure the quality of the reviews, but would also enhance the knowledge creation and dissemination process.

Furthermore, book reviews have also traditionally appeared in periodicals, that is, newspapers, magazines and academic journals. In Ghana, newspapers predate academic journals. While newspapers were being published vigorously in the early part of the twentieth century, the first academic journal to be published in the Gold Coast in 1954 was the *Universitas*. It was published by the University College of the Gold Coast (now University of Ghana) and was reviewed in the *Daily Graphic* of January 23, 1954. It is worthy of note that this very first issue of the *Universitas* contained book reviews; and the advertisement that introduced the journal to its potential readers included a statement that a section of the *Universitas* had been reserved for book reviews. Unfortunately, unlike the newspapers which have been published regularly since their first appearance on the news stands, Ghanaian academic journals have been irregular. For example, after the *Universitas* came *Journal of Management Studies* (1961), *Ghana Medical Journal* (1962), *Ghana Library Journal* (1963), *University of Ghana Law Journal* (1964) and many others (Dodoo, 1992). However, with the exception of the *Ghana Medical Journal* and the *Ghana Library Journal*, most of these journals have become moribund. Attempts have been made recently by the University of Ghana to revive the *Universitas* the last publication of which appeared in 1991.

Thus, the focus on newspapers and, indeed the selection of *The Daily Graphic* for this study is motivated by three reasons: first, the regularity of its publication; second, the fairly consistent publication of book reviews as a feature of the paper; and third, the extent of circulation and range of readership.

**Research on the Book Review Genre**

The pioneering work of Motta-Roth (1998) and subsequent corroborative studies by De Carvalho (2001) and Nicolaisen (2002) indicate that the overall rhetorical organization of book reviews across many disciplines is fairly uniform (studies in Connor et al. 2008). Motta-Roth’s genre analytical study of book reviews from the fields of Chemistry, Economics, and Linguistics revealed certain general invariable features of rhetorical organization in content and form. She formulated a schematic description of the typical structural organization of academic book reviews corresponding to four rhetorical moves, comprised of one or a number of sub-functions (see Figure 1 below). While De Carvalho in her study of Literary Theory book reviews reduced the four moves to three (Suarez and Moreno, 2008), Nicolaisen (2002) in his study of Library and Information Science book reviews maintained the four-move structure, but in addition extended Motta-Roth’s schematic representation when he discovered two other sub-functions (12 and 13).

The series of moves and the recognizable sub-functions are typically outlined as shown in Figure 1 below. As can be seen from the figure, the opening paragraph of most book reviews usually encompasses the first move, which may provide five pieces of information about the book: central topic and format, readership, author, topic generalizations, and inserting the book in the broader field of study to which it relates. The second move is usually the longest one. It typically includes a detailed description of how the book is organized, which topics are treated in each chapter, with what approach, and what kind of additional information is included in the book (graphs, pictures, tables etc.). During the third move the reviewer concentrates on specific aspects of the book, giving a positive or negative comment from very mild criticism to praise. Move four rounds up the text, breaking up with the detailed perspective adopted in move three. It provides a final evaluation of the whole book and additionally serves the purpose of closing the text of the review.

**Figure 1: Typical Rhetorical Moves in Book Reviews (Motta-Roth 1998; Nicolaisen 2002)**

<b>MOVE 1</b>	<b>INTRODUCING THE BOOK</b>
Sub-function 1.	Defining the general topic of the book
Sub-function 2.	Informing about potential readership
Sub-function 3.	Informing about the author

Sub-function 4. Making topic generalizations

Sub-function 5. Inserting the book in the field

**MOVE 2 OUTLINING THE BOOK**

Sub-function 6. Providing general view of the organization of the book

Sub-function 7. Stating the topic of each chapter

Sub-function 8. Citing extra-text material

**MOVE 3 HIGHLIGHTING PARTS OF THE BOOK**

Sub-function 9. Providing specific evaluation

**MOVE 4 PROVIDING EVALUATION OF THE BOOK**

Sub-function 10. Definitely recommending the book

Sub-function 11. Recommending the book despite indicated shortcomings

Sub-function 12. Neither recommending nor disqualifying the book

Sub-function 13. Disqualifying the book despite indicated positive aspects

Sub-function 14. Definitely disqualifying the book

Current research on the book review genre gravitate around cross-linguistic, cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary issues (studies in Connor et al. 2008; Hartley (2006, 2005, 2003); Suarez-Tejerina 2005; Nicolaisen 2002), and social interaction dynamics (Hyland 2000). Most of these studies have utilized Motta-Roth's four-move analytical model, and have examined the data either from a qualitative or quantitative approach or a combination of both. Significantly, in terms of the research on the interpretation of authors' opinions, Nicolaisen (2002) has proposed a new research technique that combines the strengths of the two established analytical approaches, and simultaneously uses the four-move analytical structure. To Nicolaisen, the quantitative and qualitative methods used in interpreting the opinions of authors of scholarly book reviews are inadequate (the quantitative approach is unable to properly measure the reviewer's opinions of the reviewed books whereas in the qualitative approach "inter-coder reliability ... is quite low" (Ibid: 127)); therefore, he proposes a new structure-based technique for interpretation. This new research

technique, he argues, draws on the distinct strengths of both the quantitative and qualitative methods; the quantitative approach ensures a high degree of inter-coder reliability while in the qualitative approach coders have a measure of interpretative independence. The new technique relates sub-functions under rhetorical move four to a 5-point rating scale while drawing on the strengths of the two content analytical approaches. Whereas this project on the discourse structure of book reviews in Ghanaian newspapers recognizes the value of the new technique proposed by Nicolaisen, it utilizes both the qualitative and quantitative approaches, using the four-move structure as the framework for analysis and making such interpretations as are generally helpful in describing the general range and variability of moves and their sub-functions in the structuring of content for the book reviews.

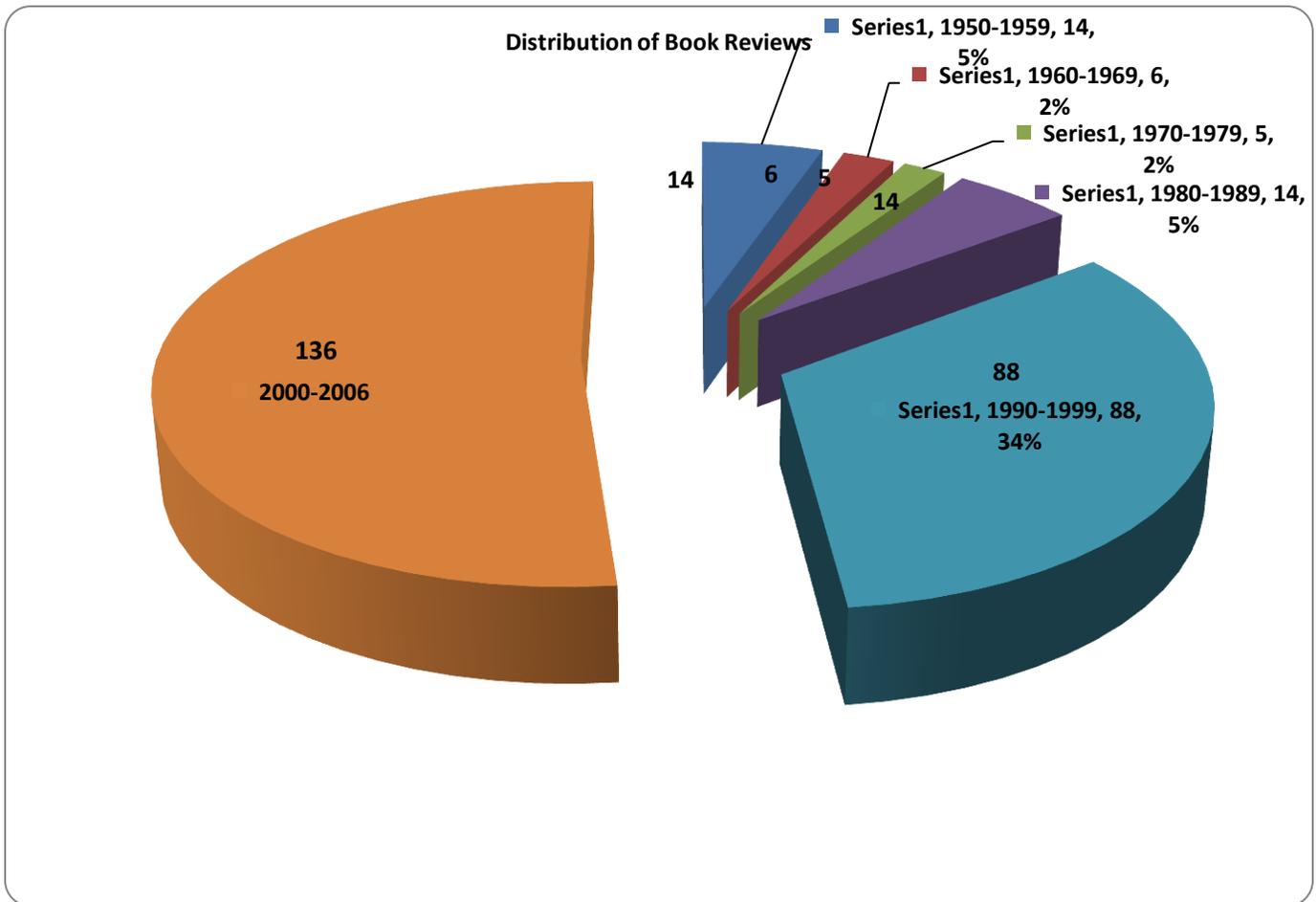
### **The Data and Methodology, Historical and Political Context**

A preliminary survey of the book review publication trend in the *Daily Graphic* showed that from the onset book reviews did not appear regularly in the newspaper. There was no pattern to the publication. It was neither a daily, weekly, monthly, nor quarterly publication. Publication depended on when the review was available. This when-is-available pattern influenced the method of data collection. Every issue of the newspaper had to be browsed for a book review. Five research assistants were engaged to do this. It meant that they had to examine 312 issues (approximate for every year) multiplied by the total number of years, approximately 56 (1950-2006) giving 17,472 issues. The count yielded a total of 263 book reviews published in the *Daily Graphic* over the period 1950 to 2006. A breakdown per decade as shown in the pie chart below is as follows:

- 1950-1959: 14
- 1960-1969: 6
- 1970-1979: 5
- 1980-1989: 14
- 1990-1999: 88
- 2000-2006: 136

**Total: 263**

**Figure 2: Distribution of Book Reviews per Decade**



The periods 1990-1999 and 2000-2006 saw a dramatic rise in frequency of the publication of book reviews. This gave rise to a disproportionate distribution of the data. Therefore, for these time periods one-third of the total data size was used: one-third of 88 and 136 is approximately 30 and 45 respectively. A simple random sampling procedure was used. To ensure that each of the reviews had an equal chance of selection, each review was numbered and placed in a container. Thereafter, a number was randomly selected, checked for the corresponding book review, noted down and placed back in the container before the next pick in order to ensure the equitable occurrence of each review. The total number of book reviews analyzed was therefore 114.

The frequency count of the book reviews in the *Daily Graphic* showed that on average there were just about two publications per year from 1950 to 1979, with some years not recording any publications at all. Indeed, it may be postulated that the social and political climate influenced the

publication of book reviews. Major historical events in Ghana after independence in March, 1957 have been the following coup d'états: 1966, 1972, 1979, and 1981.

It is significant to note that the years immediately following independence, 1958-1965, recorded no book reviews. Ghana had got its independence from Great Britain, and had become the first nation south of the Sahara to become independent. Kwame Nkrumah, a remarkable intellectual, as the first president was known to have spearheaded many developmental projects including the promotion of a culture of learning. It is therefore intriguing that the period was marked by the total absence of book reviews, at least in the *Daily Graphic*. Nkrumah's reign was characterized by intolerance of dissenting views, suppression of freedom of expression and the detention of political opponents (Omari, 1970). In February 1966, Kwame Nkrumah was overthrown in a coup d'état. The first book review following the coup d'état appeared in August 1967; thereafter, there were occasional reviews through the late sixties to 1971.

Subsequently there was the Acheampong 1972 coup d'état, and from that time through the Rawlings 1979 coup d'état there were no book reviews. This was a period of intense political unrest in Ghana. In 1980 when there was the restoration to democratic governance a few book reviews were recorded in the first two years of the decade. It must be noted that the 31<sup>st</sup> December 1981 Rawlings coup d'état (during which period the *Daily Graphic* became known as *People's Daily Graphic* for a number of years) may also have affected the publication of book reviews since, at any rate, for the whole of 1982 and 1983 the publication of this genre was zilch. Between 1984 and 1991 when the political atmosphere gained a measure of stability and in 1992 when there was a return to democratic governance the average frequency of book reviews per year was three; and from 1992 and beyond the average frequency of reviews hit 14 per year.

In sum, it appears that periods of dictatorial rule and political tension stifle the book development industry, and consequently constrict related activities like book reviewing in the papers.

### **Analysis, Findings and Discussion**

As mentioned above, 114 texts were analyzed using Motta-Roth's (1998) analytical framework, and as extended by Nicolaisen (2002). These reviews came from a wide range of disciplines, such as Education, Economics, and Political Science and the distribution of these

disciplines as reflected in the various decades is captured in Table 1 below. (BRs = Book Reviews)

**Table 1: Distribution of Disciplines/Fields per Decade**

Discipline	1950-1959		1960-1969		1970-1979		1980-1989		1990-1999		2000-2006	
	BRs= 14		BRs= 6		BRs= 5		BRs= 14		BRs= 30		BRs= 45	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Education	2	14.3	2	33.3	1	20			4	13.3	5	11.1
Economics	2	14.3	2	33.3			4	28.6	5	16.7	7	15.6
Public Health									6	20.0	5	11.1
English/Literature	4	28.6	1	16.7			1	7.1	2	6.7	15	33.3
Gender Studies									1	3.3	1	2.2
Computer Science											1	2.2
History	1	7.1			1	20	1	7.1			2	4.4
Philosophy	2	14.3			1	20						
Performing Arts	2	14.3										
Astrology							1	7.1	2	6.7		
Agric Science							1	7.1	2	6.7	1	2.2
Psychology					1	20						
Political Science			1	16.7	1	20	6	42.9	5	16.7	3	6.7
Religious Studies									1	3.3	5	11.1
Sociology	1	7.1										
Mathematics									1	3.3		
Art									1	3.3		
<b>Total</b>	14	100.0	6	100	5	100	14	100	30	100	45	100

Altogether, about 14 disciplines or fields are represented, and from Table 1 it is evident that over the years the most book reviews have been in the area of English and Literature, followed by Education, Political Science, and Public Health in descending order. Reviews in Public Health and hard science related disciplines start featuring in the 1980s, with the first Computer Science review appearing in 2005.

**Range and Variability of Sub-functions within the Moves**

All reviews were coded for moves according to Figure 1, analyzed for paragraphs reflecting the general moves, and interpreted by identification of the types of sub-functions. Table 2 below shows the moves and sub-functions by period.

**Table 2: Distribution of Moves and Sub-functions**

	1950-1959		1960-1969		1970-1979		1980-1989		1990-1999		2000-2006	
	BRs= 14		BRs= 6		BRs= 5		BRs= 14		BRs= 30		BRs= 45	
<b>Move 1</b>	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Subf1	11	17.7	4	14.3	5	20.0	12	18.2	3	13.0	43	17.8
Subf2	1	1.6	1	3.6	1	4.0			1	4.3	2	
Subf3	4	6.5	2	7.1			1	1.5	1	4.3	21	8.7
Subf4	3	4.8	3	10.7	1	4.0	6	9.1	5	21.7	24	10.0
Subf5	1	1.6			1	4.0	2	3.0			9	3.7
<b>Move 2</b>												
Subf6	13	21.0	5	17.9	5	20.0	14	21.2	5	21.7	45	18.7
Subf7	3	4.8	1	3.6	2	8.0	3	4.5	1	4.3	4	1.7
Subf8							1	1.5			3	1.2
<b>Move 3</b>												
Subf9	12	19.4	6	21.4	5	20.0	13	19.7	3	13.0	45	18.7
<b>Move 4</b>												
Subf10	7	11.3	2	7.1	2	8.0	7	10.6	4	17.4	36	14.9
Subf11	1	1.6			1	4.0	2	3.0			5	2.1
Subf12	4	6.5	4	14.3	2	8.0	4	6.1			4	1.7
Subf13												
Subf14	2	3.2					1	1.5				
<b>Total</b>	62	100.0	28	100.0	25	100.0	66	100.0	23	100.0	241	100.0

That the discourse structure of book reviews in Ghanaian newspapers follows Motta-Roth’s schema there is no doubt; however, there are some distinctive features within and across the decades that merit mention and which may be regarded as characterizing the discourse structure of Ghanaian

newspaper book reviews. In the first place, across time frames, there are preferences for specific sub-functions: in move 1 the preference is for sub-function 1 (*Defining the general topic of the book*); move 2, sub-function 6 (*Providing general view of the organization of the book*); and move 4, sub-function 10 (*Definitely recommending the book*). Sub-functions 2 (*Informing about potential readership*) and 8 (*Citing extra-text material*) are not used often while sub-function 13 (*Disqualifying the book despite indicated positive aspects*) did not occur in the data. There were three instances of sub-function 14 (*Definitely disqualifying the book*), and in one of the cases, the reviewer's remarks were quite scathing: "...the printers and publishers must realize that the packaging and designing of a book equally add to its acceptability and readability. Surely, the misprints in the *Economic Panorama* are so numerous that the book is an apology to the art of printing and publishing." (*People's Daily Graphic*, August 27, 1987)

Another distinctive feature is the use of multiple sub-functions within a move as shown in Table 3 below:

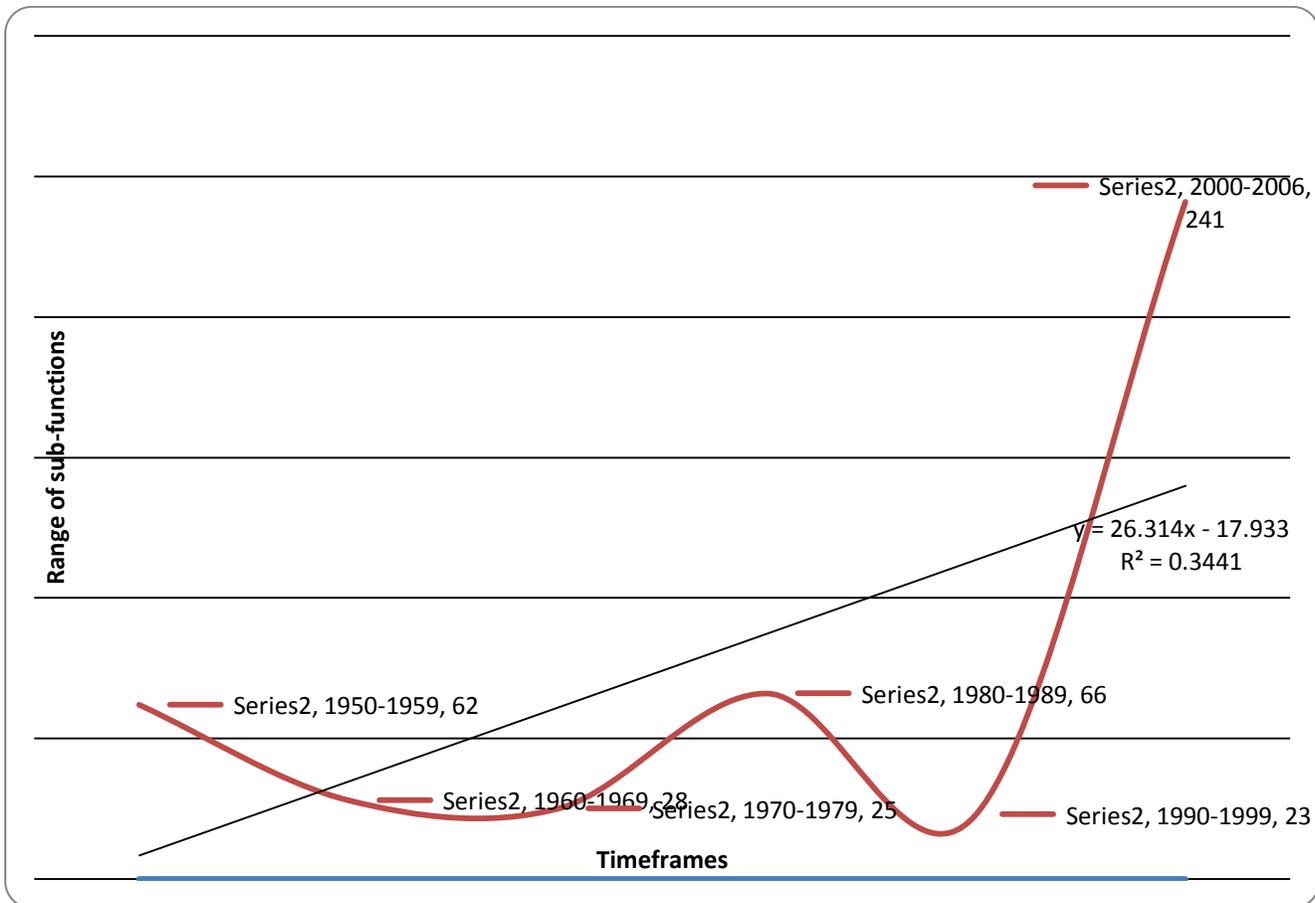
	1950-1959			1960-1969			1970-1979			1980-1989			1990-1999			2000-2006		
	BRs= 14			BRs= 6			BRs= 5			BRs= 14			BRs= 30			BRs= 45		
<b>Move 1</b>	N	%	(Subf) - F	N	%	(Subf) - F	N	%	(Subf) - F	N	%	(Subf) - F	N	%	(Subf) - F	N	%	(Subf) - F
Single	8	57.1	(1) - 5	2	33.3	(1) - 2	2	40.0	(1) - 2	7	50.0	(1) - 6	8	26.7	(4)-5	5	11.1	(1)-3
Double	6	42.9	(3,1) - 3	4	66.7	(4,3) - 2	3	60.0	(5,1),(4,1), (2,1)	7	50.0	(4,1) - 4	14	46.7	(4,1,-)8	28	62.2	(4,1) -13
Triple													6	20.0	(4,5,1)-3	11	24.4	(4,3,1) - 7
Quadruple													2	6.7	(1,3,2,4), (4,2,1,3)	1	2.2	(4,5,3,1)
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100.0</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>100.0</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>100.0</b>		<b>14</b>	<b>100.0</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>		<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
<b>Move 2</b>																		
Single	12	85.7	(6) - 11	6	100.0	(6) - 5	3	60.0	(6) - 3	10	71.4	(6) - 10	24	80.0	(6) - 24	38	84.4	(10) - 32
Double	2	14.3	(6,7) 2				2	40.0	(6,7) - 2	4	28.6	(6,7) - 3	6	20.0	(6,7) - 5	7	15.6	(6,7) - 4
Triple																		
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100.0</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>100.0</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>100.0</b>		<b>14</b>	<b>100.0</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>		<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
<b>Move 3</b>																		
Single																		
<b>Move 4</b>																		
Single	14	100.0	(10) - 7	6	100.0	(12) - 4	5	100.0	(10) - 2, (12) - 2	14	100.0	(10) - 7	30	100.0	(10) - 20	45	100.0	(10) - 36
Double																		
Triple																		
Quad																		
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100.0</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>100.0</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>100.0</b>		<b>14</b>	<b>100.0</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>		<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Table 3 shows that in move 1, while sub-function 1 (*Defining the general topic of the book*) is a key feature there are many instances where it is combined with other functions to create and sequence content for the move. The predominant sequences are:

- **Two or double sub-functions** – for example, the review is started with sub-function 3 (*Informing about the author*) followed by sub-function 1 (*Defining the general topic of the book*); sub-function 5 (*Inserting the book in the field*); preceding sub-function 1 (*Defining the general topic of the book*); sub-function 4 (*Making topic generalizations*) preceding sub-function 1 (*Defining the general topic of the book*); sub-function 2 (*Informing about potential readership*) preceding sub-function 1 (*Defining the general topic of the book*);
- **Three or triple sub-functions** – for example, sub-function 4 (*Making topic generalizations*) followed by sub-functions 5 (*Inserting the book in the field*) and 1 (*Defining the general topic of the book*) respectively; sub-function 4 followed by 3 (*Informing about the author*) and 1 respectively;
- **Four or quadruple sub-functions** – for example sub-function 1 (*Defining the general topic of the book*) followed by 3 (*Informing about the author*) 2 (*Informing about potential readership*) and 4 (*Making topic generalizations*) respectively; sub-function 4 followed by 2 (*Informing about potential readership*) 1 and 3 respectively; sub-function 4 followed by 5 (*Inserting the book in the field*) 3 and 1 respectively. These multiple combinations were common with reviews in the 1990s and 2000s.

An overview of the utilization of the various sub-functions in terms of range and variability across decades shows an interesting trend as summarized in the Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Range of Use of Sub-functions by timeframes



The data shows a decrease in the range of use of sub-functions from 62 in the period 1950-1959, to 23 in the period 1990-1999. This was followed by an increase to 241 in the period 2000-2006. The annual rate of increase in the range of use of sub-functions over the periods under review was about 26.31, with about 34.4% of the changes in the range of use of the sub-functions attributable to changes in the political, social and intellectual environment. The 21<sup>st</sup> century Ghana which is characterized by good governance, a flourishing media and publishing landscape has invigorated not only the frequency of book reviews but also the energy of the prose.

**Other Unique Features**

Beyond the move analysis, also worth mentioning is the influence of the ‘revolutionary rhetoric’ of the Rawlings regime on book review rhetoric. Rawlings had been in power for over a

decade and the ideological struggle between those who felt they were ordinary on one side and those who were perceived to be ivory tower people was played out in the language of some of the reviews. For example, in the review of the *Revolutionary Song Book*, the reviewer says, “*The Revolutionary Song Book* is completely devoid of such academic pomposities which make it easily readable by all classes of the population without consulting the dictionary.” This statement is particularly relevant considering the fact that during this period Paul Ansah (an academic, social commentator, and critic of the Rawlings government), aptly described as a vociferous prose writer, was castigating public officials especially those who claimed to belong to Rawlings’ revolutionary support group with bombastic language in his weekly column in a private newspaper called the *Ghanaian Chronicle*.

Indeed, Paul Ansah used to preface his writing with the following statement – “ Notice is also hereby served that those who think they need a standby dictionary should reach for it because I shall be going into my repertoire or arsenal to do justice to the topic that has provoked me so much, and with the appropriate adjective.” (*Ghanaian Chronicle* 3-9 June 1993) It appears then that the social and political climate influenced the choice of lexical items and even the posturing in the book review: academic pomposity connotes difficult vocabulary and a separatist posture; the language of revolutionary song is simple and all classes of people are invited to be part of its readership.

Additionally, a peculiarity of the discourse structure of book reviews in Ghanaian Newspapers is the tendency to use the penultimate or last paragraph in move four to inform the reader about the credentials or qualifications of the author, to praise the author, or to provide information about where to get the book.

- X, the author of the book, is a statistician with the Ghana Statistical Service and a Study Fellow at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton, England. X who has co-authored a number of core textbooks and teachers’ handbooks on social studies and life skills for junior secondary schools, is also the author of ‘A New Guide for Composition Writing’. (*Daily Graphic*, February 8, 1994.)
- Dr. X was the Director of the Language Centre, University of Ghana over a greater part of the 1980s, and has taught in English Departments of other universities including Uni-

versity of Venda, South Africa, and University of Swaziland. (*Daily Graphic*, March 16, 2002)

### **Concluding Remarks**

The discourse structure of book reviews in Ghanaian newspapers may be characterized as a four-move rhetorical pattern with the use of a moderate variety of sub-functions within each move. In terms of general evaluation, a good number of the reviews tend to be balanced with the majority of reviewers opting for sub-function 10 (*Definitely recommending the book*), confirming the views of Hartley (2006:1195) that several studies have indicated that book reviews tend to be more positive than negative in their evaluations of the books in question. The increase in the number of book reviews at the turn of the century and the concomitant utilization of multiple sub-functions in these reviews reflect not only the flourishing of the publishing industry in Ghana but also the enhancing of the quality of the knowledge creation and dissemination process. What may also be regarded as a unique feature of the book review communicative style in Ghanaian newspapers is the tendency to use the penultimate or last paragraph in move four to inform the reader about the credentials or qualifications of the author, or to praise the author. This is hardly surprising in a culture where academic qualifications and professional achievement deeply enhance one's status in society, and hence the general acceptability of the book.

**REFERENCES**

- Connor, U., Nagelhout, E., & Rozycki, W.V. (Eds.) (2008). *Contrastive Rhetoric: Reaching intercultural rhetoric*. John Benjamins.
- De Carvalho, G. (2001). Rhetorical patterns of academic book reviews written in Portuguese and in English. *Proceedings of the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Linguistics Conference*. Rio de Janeiro: Universidade do Estado Rio de Janeiro, 261-268.
- Dodoo, J.N.D. (1992). The Legon Journal of the Humanities. In: M.E. Kropp Dakubu & F.S. Tsiakata (Eds.) *Proceedings of a seminar on the conduct of research: From formulation to dissemination*. Legon: University of Ghana, 61-63.
- Hartley, J. (2003). On the presentation of book reviews. *Learned Publishing*, 16 (3), 219-220.
- Hartley, J. (2005). How do scientist read and write book reviews? *European Science Editing*, 31 (3), 76-78.
- Hartley, J. (2006). Reading and writing book reviews across the disciplines. Wiley InterScience ([www.interscience.wiley.com](http://www.interscience.wiley.com)). DOI:10.1002/asi.20399
- Hyland, K. (2000). *Disciplinary Discourses: Social interactions in academic writing*. Harlow: Pearson Education.
- Miranda, E. O. (1996). On book reviewing. *Journal of Educational Thought*, 30 (2), 191-202.
- Motta-Roth, D. (1998). Discourse Analysis and academic book reviews: A study of text and disciplinary cultures. In: I. Fortanet, S. Posteguillo, J.C. Palmer, and J.F. Coll, (Eds.) *Genre studies in English for Academic Purposes*. Castello, Spain: Universitat Jaume1, 29-58.
- Nicolaisen, J. (2002). Structure-based interpretation of scholarly book: reviews: A new research technique. In: H. Bruce, R. Fidel, P. Ingersen, & P. Vakkari (Eds.) *Emerging frameworks and methods: proceedings of the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on conceptions of Library and Information Science*. 123-135. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited.
- Omari, P.T. (1970). *Kwame Nkrumah: The anatomy of an African Dictatorship*. Accra: Moxon Atlas.
- Sackey, J.A. (1997). The English language in Ghana: A historical perspective. In: M.E.

Kropp Dakubu (Ed.) *English in Ghana*. Accra. Ghana English Studies Association, 126-156.

Suárez, L. & Moreno, A.I. (2008). The rhetorical structure of academic book reviews of literature: An English-Spanish cross-linguistic approach. In: Connor, Ulla, Ed Nagelhout and William Rozycki (eds.), *Contrastive Rhetoric: reaching intercultural rhetoric*, 47–168.

Suárez-Tejerina, Lorena. (2005). “Is evaluation structure-bound?: An English-Spanish contrastive study of book reviews”. In: Tognini-Bonelli, Elena and Gabriella Del Lungo Camiciotti (eds.). *Strategies in Academic Discourse*, 117–132.

Swales, J. (1990). *Genre Analysis: English in academic and research settings*.

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Gordon Senanu Kwame Adika is a Senior Research Fellow in the Language Centre, University of Ghana, and is also the Acting Director of the Centre. He holds a BA (English and Linguistics) and a PhD (Linguistics) both from the University of Ghana as well as an MPhil (English and Applied Linguistics) from the University of Cambridge, United Kingdom. His areas of specialization include Language in Education, English for Academic Purposes, Discourse Analysis, and Applied Linguistics. He has been in academia for the past 20 years

teaching English and conducting research in the general area of Applied Linguistics. Apart from several journal articles, his book on aspects of English in Ghana *Deviant Usage and Confusing Words* published by Black Mask (Ghana) is a noteworthy addition to studies on varieties of English.