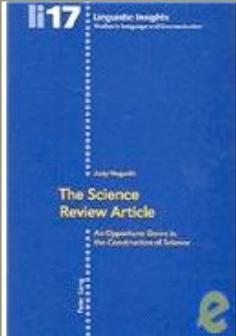


***The Science Review Article:  
An Opportune Genre in the Construction of Science***

<b>Author:</b>	Judy Noguchi (2006)		
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Judy Noguchi's *The Science Review Article: An Opportune Genre in the Construction of Science* is a detailed research text dedicated to analyzing the science review article genre. In the process, she offers a way to help nonnative English speaking scientists become proficient science review article writers, thereby allowing them to participate meaningfully in the scientific discourse community dominated by native English discourse. She defines a science review article as "an article presenting an overview of a field of professional research in the natural sciences or of some important element of it, usually not emphasizing original research by the author(s)" (p. 16). Noguchi's book, organized into eight chapters, moves from defining her concepts, to microanalyzing science review articles through expert informant surveys and corpus analysis, to offering options for helping nonnative scientists become better writers and capable participants in native English scientific discourse. Noguchi's credentials (Ph.D. in applied linguistics) and experience teaching ESP in Japan clearly show through in this thorough and thoughtful text. Reading her book is a journey worth taking, as the book is clearly well-researched, full of examples, and offers more than its simple title might reveal.

A brief outline of Noguchi's book is as follows:

Chapters 1 and 2: Noguchi defines the important concepts in her book, and she examines the

- difficulties facing NNS science writers trying to contribute to the English science literature.
- Chapter 3: She makes her case for the importance of studying and analyzing

the science review article genre and provides expert informant testimony to clarify and define the genre clearly.

- Chapters 4 and 5: Dedicated to microanalysis of 25 review articles, including the use of corpus analysis software to reveal concordances and keywords from the corpus.
- Chapter 6: She identifies four different types of science review articles--"history reviews," "status quo reviews," "theory/model/hypothesis reviews," and "issue reviews"--based on the analyses of the previous chapters.
- Chapter 7: Looks ahead to the new language technologies being developed to support NNS science writers.
- Chapter 8: Serves as a conclusion, reiterating the main points of the book.

Noguchi's text will appeal to researchers working in genre analysis, ESP and those teaching graduate level writing to nonnative English speakers in science fields. She shows a thorough understanding of genre analysis, the science review article genre, and the nonnative English speaking context with which she mostly deals--Japanese. She also adds to the practice of traditional genre analysis by offering new terms for both the discourse communities involved in creating science review articles, "focused global discourse communities" (p. 28), as well as the type of genre science review articles represent, "bridge genres" (pp. 40-41). This latter term she defines as a genre that "a discourse community uses . . . to interact with other communities" (p. 41). As Noguchi writes, science review articles "express a current gestalt of one community so that it can be accessed by and perhaps have an effect upon other communities" (p. 41). This view coupled with her opinion that nonnative English speakers' participation writing English science review articles might diversify the often Western-dominated English scientific discourse make science review articles an "opportune genre" (the subtitle of her book), according to Noguchi.

At various points throughout the book, Noguchi details the complexity of participating as a writer in a number of different "communities" at the same time. Nonnative English speaking scientists not only have a language barrier to overcome when adding their work to native English speaking scientific discourse, but they also must deal with participating in the academic discourse community as well as the scientific one. This participation is further complicated by the existence of factors that are "nested." In chapter 2, Noguchi presents her concept of nested structures, communities, and issues: Within certain structures, communities and issues lie other structures, communities and issues, thus complicating participation in or replication of these. In this chapter, she also offers a handy table (p. 54) of different factors affecting certain genre features that must be attended to when writing science review articles. Following this table are plentiful examples of writing from NNS which typify some of the problems they have participating in the complicated *mélange* of structure, community, and issues. Noguchi has done substantial work detailing the complexity of this predicament.

While Noguchi's book is a research text and not really directed at all EFL/ESL teachers, her insights into the plight of nonnative English speakers attempting to participate in native English speaking dominated discourse offers something for us all. For example, in the first chapter she informs us that "in the area of plant biosciences there is almost no Japanese-language journal where original research can be published. Even the journals published by Japanese academic societies are English-language ones" (p. 28). In chapter 2 she notes that "the problems of

nonnative English speakers are complicated by the fact that they are trying to participate in at least three different communities at the same time: the English-speaking community, the English-speaking academic community, and the focused global discourse community" (p. 51). These issues will become only more apparent and pressing as English continues to grow as an international language. They also mark a trend worthy of consideration at all levels of English teaching and learning. For teachers and researchers working in Japan, the second part of chapter 2 is particularly pertinent reading on different organizational and logical styles between Japanese and English.

Noguchi's text is well organized, meticulously researched, and replete with authentic examples of nonnative English writing in the science review article genre. Though at times this book would be a difficult read for novices to ESP and genre studies, the information contained throughout is fascinating and presented concisely. Noguchi has done an enviable job making her book appealing while not watering down the hefty abstract concepts on which her study is based. While maintaining a researcher's objective perspective and voice, Noguchi also brings a personality to this book which is both scholarly and sensitive to the book's expressed purpose: to help nonnative speakers join the English dominated discourse of the sciences, specifically through the science review article genre. For researchers and instructors working with nonnative English speaking science professionals, this text is full of original insights, persuasive arguments and revealing examples that could inform their continuing research and teaching. For a wider English teaching audience, Noguchi still has much to offer as a writer and expert in her field.

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