

**'INTERPRETIVE GENRES' IN NATURAL HISTORY:  
A SOCIO-COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE**

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# Original Literary Work Declaration

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## **Abstract**

This study is an interdisciplinary research that analyses written discourses in natural history through the genre analysis' lens. Genres are explored and examined by drawing on insights gathered from different disciplines such as linguistics, communication and environmental humanities. Data collected comprise a corpus of selected natural history texts published by the Malaysian Nature Society, Malaysia's oldest non-governmental environmental and conservation body. Multiple conceptual and analytical models are combined to examine these resources from a socio-cognitive perspective: Bhatia's (2004) multidimensional and multi-perspective model for professional discourse analysis and the notion of 'generic integrity'; Tilden's (1957) principles of interpretation; and Leftridge's (2002) introduction of 'interpretive writing' as a distinct genre. Research methods employed for this study are text analysis and non- and participatory observations. Findings reveal that a new breed of genre colony known as 'interpretive genres' exists among the discourses in natural history. Genres belonging to this family serve to achieve communicative purposes that are both goal-directed and pro-social, driven by disciplinary cultures and professional practices of the discourse community. It seems that 'interpretive genres' do not merely communicate facts, but also convey subtle meanings by making intellectual and emotional connections between the inherent meanings in natural resources and audience interests and experiences. Results discussed have practical implications for genre-based pedagogy, professional training and development, environmental communication and interpretation, as well as foster nature appreciation through public understanding of 'interpretive genres'.

## Abstrak

Kajian ini merupakan satu penyelidikan yang merangkumi pelbagai disiplin untuk menganalisis wacana penulisan mengenai sejarah alam semulajadi melalui kanta genre analisis. Genre diterokai dan dikaji berdasarkan pendapat dari pelbagai disiplin yang berbeza, contohnya, linguistik, komunikasi dan kemanusiaan alam sekitar. Data yang diperolehi terdiri daripada satu korpus penulisan mengenai sejarah alam semulajadi yang diterbitkan oleh Malaysian Nature Society, pertubuhan bukan kerajaan dan alam sekitar serta konservasi yang tertua di negara Malaysia. Pelbagai model konsep dan analisis telah digabungkan untuk mengkaji sumber penulisan tersebut dari perspektif sosio-kognitif. Model multidimensi dan multiperspektif Bhatia (2004) bagi analisis wacana profesional dan tanggapan 'generic integrity'; Tilden's (1957) prinsip-prinsip interpretasi; dan Leftridge's (2002) pengenalan kepada penulisan interpretasi ('interpretive writing') yang dikenali sebagai satu genre yang berbeza. Kaedah penyelidikan yang digunakan untuk kajian ini ialah analisis teks dan pemerhatian sebagai peserta dan bukan peserta. Penemuan kajian menunjukkan satu baka genre koloni yang baru yang diberi nama 'genre interpretasi' ('interpretive genres') yang wujud di kalangan wacana sejarah alam semulajadi. Genre-genre yang dipunyai oleh famili ini berfungsi untuk mencapai tujuan komunikasi dan maklumat yang berbentuk pro-sosial, dimana fungsi-fungsi ini didorong oleh budaya disiplin dan amalan profesional dalam komuniti wacana. Ini menunjukkan bahawa 'genre interpretasi' bukan sahaja digunakan sebagai medium komunikasi bagi fakta-fakta tertentu, tetapi juga menyampaikan makna yang tersirat dimana kesinambungan antara intelektual dan emosi dapat dikaitkan. Dengan sedemikian, makna yang wujud bersama sumber asli akan disambungkan kepada kepentingan dan pengalaman pembaca atau pendengar. Kajian menunjukkan implikasi praktikal kepada pedagogi berasaskan pembelajaran genre, latihan profesional dan pembangunan, komunikasi alam sekitar dan interpretasi, serta membantu memupuk penghargaan alam sekitar melalui pemahaman masyarakat umum tentang 'genre interpretasi'.

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## List of Abbreviations

AHI	Association of for Heritage Interpretation
AIDA	The Attention, Interest, Desire and Action model
CARS	‘Create a Research Space’ model
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CETDEM	Technology and Development Malaysia
CGA	Critical Genre Analysis
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DANIDA	Danish International Developmental Agency
DBKL	Kuala Lumpur City Hall
DFC	Danida Fellowship Centre
DOE	Department of Environment
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
ETP	Economic Transformation Programme
FDPM	Forestry Department Peninsular Malaysia
FE	Formal essays
FRIM	Forest Reserve Institute Malaysia
GEC	Global Environment Centre
GTP	Government Transformation Programme
IBEC	Institute of Biodiversity and Environmental Conservation
ISB	Institute of Biological Sciences
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KeTTHA	Ministry of Energy, Green Technology and Water Malaysia
KVL	The Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University
LSP	Language for Specific Purposes
MN	Malaysian Naturalist
MNS	Malaysian Nature Society
NAI	National Association for Interpretation
NC	Narrative compositions
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NH	Natural history descriptions
NHM	Natural History Museum
NRE	Ministry of the Natural Resources and Environment
PE	Personal essays
PEMANDU	Performance Management and Delivery Unit
PERHILITAN	Department of Wildlife and National Parks
RW	Raptor Watch
SFL	Systemic Functional Linguistics
UM	University of Malaya
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIMAS	Universiti Malaysia Sarawak
UPM	Universiti Putra Malaysia
WWF	Worldwide Fund for Nature

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