

**Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci**  
**Filozofická fakulta**  
**Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky**

# **Genre Analysis of TV Show Reviews**

**Bachelor Thesis**

**2022**

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**Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci**  
**Filozofická fakulta**  
**Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky**

## **Genre Analysis of TV Show Reviews**

(Bachelor Thesis)

## **Žánrová analýza recenzí seriálů**

(Bakalářská práce)

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**Olomouc 2022**

**Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Palackého v Olomouci**

**Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky**

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Bakalářská práce

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**Vedoucí práce:** Mgr. Ondřej Molnár, Ph.D.

**Počet znaků:** 96 950

**Počet stran** (podle znaků /1800): 53

**Počet stran** (podle čísel): 64

Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto diplomovou práci vypracoval samostatně a uvedl úplný seznam citované a použité literatury.

V Olomouci dne

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UNIVERZITA PALACKÉHO V OLOMOUCI  
Filozofická fakulta  
Akademický rok: 2020/2021

Studijní program: Anglická filologie  
Forma studia: Prezenční  
Specializace/kombinace: Anglická filologie / Česká  
filologie (AFma-ČFmi)

Specializace v rámci které má být VŠKP vypracována: Anglická filologie maior

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Téma práce anglicky: Genre Analysis of TV Show Reviews  
Vedoucí práce: Mgr. Ondřej Molnár, Ph.D.  
Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

### Zásady pro vypracování:

This present thesis deals with the analysis of TV show reviews written by professional critics through the lenses of genre analysis. The aim is to identify typical moves, rhetorical strategies and lexicogrammatical features of this genre. Within various traditions of genre analysis, the thesis is primarily based on the English for Specific Purposes tradition of Swales (2004) and Bhatia (1993). The theoretical part focuses on concepts related to genre theory, introducing the methodological framework of genre theory. The practical part discusses practical aspects of the analyzed material, leading to some tentative conclusions related to the genre of TV show reviews.

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Podpis studenta: 

Datum: 19.5.2021

Podpis vedoucího práce: 

Datum: 19.5.2021

I would like to thank Mgr. Ondřej Molnár, Ph.D. for valuable advice, guidance and support that made creation of this thesis possible.

V Olomouci dne

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## **ABSTRACT**

Reviews, at their core meant to provide information as well as opinions, became one of the most common type of text that we may encounter these days. The main aim of the present thesis is to analyze a corpus of TV show reviews written by professional critics on internet website or online magazines through the lenses of genre analysis. Utilizing the methodological frame proposed by English for Specific Purposes tradition, it aims to identify typical moves, rhetorical strategies, and lexico-grammatical features. The investigation is then extended by the analysis of register and the internet features of the genre. Most importantly, the proposed results indicate the complicated and significantly variable structure of TV show reviews, the personal nature of the genre, and the problematic applicability of move analysis on essayistic genres. The thesis may be used as a manual for writing TV show reviews as well as a basis for further study in the genre analysis of reviews.

## **KEY WORDS**

Genre analysis, TV show review, move analysis, internet genre, register

## **ANOTACE**

Recenze, které primárně slouží ke sdělování informací i názorů, se staly jedním z nejběžnějších typů textu, s nímž se v dnešní době můžeme setkat. Hlavním cílem této práce je zanalyzovat korpus recenzí seriálů napsaných profesionálními kritiky na internetových stránkách či v online magazínech za pomoci žánrové analýzy. Tato práce se snaží o identifikaci typických moves, rétorických strategií a lexiko-gramatických prvků sledovaného žánru, a to za využití metodologického rámce navrženého školou žánrové teorie English for Specific Purposes. Výzkum je rovněž rozšířen o analýzu registru a internetových prvků žánru. Výsledky práce ukazují na komplikovanou a proměnlivou strukturu recenzí seriálů, osobní povahu žánru a problémy s aplikováním analýzy moves na esejistické žánry. Práce a její výsledky mohou být využity jako manuál pro psaní recenzí seriálů či jako podklad pro další výzkum v oblasti žánrové analýzy recenzí.

## **KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA**

Žánrová analýza, recenze seriálu, analýza moves, internetový žánr, registr

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# 1 Introduction

People are now more than ever overwhelmed by various advertisements, special offers and opinions on various media like TV, radio, or internet websites. The urgent need to promote or evaluate various products (books, films, restaurants, products, ...) thus became an important part of modern culture where everyone has, thanks to open markets, globalization and other factors, many options to choose from.

The texts that are focused on promotion of various products came to represent one of the most adaptable type of genres that develop very quickly over time (Bhatia 2005, 213). Advertising genres are very versatile as at their center there is the overpassing intention to attract readers, and so “some of the most varied and innovative uses of lexico-grammatical and discoursal forms and rhetorical strategies” are employed (Bhatia 2005, 214). Creation of many advertising genres can thus be considered as a form of art (224). One of the many genres that are being according to Bhatia “colonized” by “promotional concerns” is the genre of review (2005, 222–223).

Review is a relatively popular and modern genre that has already been a subject to number of studies. Chik and Vásquez (2017) focused on restaurant reviews from two different cultural backgrounds, the multimodality of the genre, and the consequences of the architecture of internet websites for the genre. Pollach (2006) concentrated on consumer opinion websites, the topic of *word-of-mouth* (WOM), and carried out a thorough analysis of lexico-grammatical features of product reviews. Skalicky (2013) in a more recent study focused on Amazon.com product reviews, their structure, and the preferences of its discourse community.

Nevertheless, the remarks of Taboada (2011) or De Jong and Burgers (2013) (both focused on film reviews that may be viewed as a “close relative” to TV show reviews) are of bigger importance for the present thesis. The genre of review (or at the very least film review) consists according to these two studies of “evaluative” and “descriptive” moves that may be divided into smaller units. Taboada then notes that “[e]valuation can be distinguished from [d]escription because the former contains more evaluative words in general, and significantly more evaluative adjectives” (2011, 261). This remark is important as it shows Taboada’s way of distinguishing moves which is a topic that will be thoroughly discussed in this thesis.

Concerning the interpersonal function of reviews, De Jong and Burgers in their study suggest that “professional critics always try to give their opinion in a more objective way by using the third-person perspective” (2013, 80). Taboada briefly discusses this matter on distinction between online and printed film reviews. According to Taboada, professional reviews feel more “distant” and typically “revised by the author himself or herself” (2011, 251). Nevertheless, the main distinction between the two types is “the spontaneity of the writing” (251).

As this genre exists these days mainly on internet websites or online magazines, and is, as Bhatia (2005, 222–223) notes, influenced by “promotional concerns,” it may be assumed that it is quickly developing. Therefore, most of the presented findings concerning reviews may be challenged, verified, or expanded with the contemporary complex analysis of the genre of review. As other researchers, I also concentrate only on one subgenre of the genre of review. Therefore, this bachelor thesis focuses only on structure and language of TV show reviews written by professional critics that have not been systematically described yet at all.

## **1.1 Hypotheses**

The main aim of this research is to systematically analyze corpus of collected reviews by means of genre analysis with methodological framework provided mainly by Bhatia (1993), Swales (1990), Halliday and Hasan (1985), and Askehave and Nielsen (2004). The result of this thesis should be a sort of manual for anyone who would wish to start writing TV show reviews like professionals. Also, the results may prove to be a useful tool for translators. Lastly, by executing the analysis, the following hypotheses will be tested.

Based on previous research and Bhatia’s assumption that reviews may be influenced by promotional genres that tend to be versatile, I expect that the genre of my interest features some variations and that authors try to be innovative in their composition of genre. In this respect, the essayistic nature of the text and the absence of any prescriptive manual for this genre also play a role. *Hypothesis 1* thus proposes that the genre of TV show reviews will be structurally very complex; it will contain many different moves (both obligatory and optional) and rhetorical strategies; the structure will be significantly varied.

Relating, it may be discussed if in case of essayistic genres, the structural units are easily identifiable or not. The fact that professional critics are expected to outline their reviews properly, and the lack of addressing thoroughly this issue in previous research implies that there might not be any serious problems with distinguishing moves. *Hypothesis 2* is thus that the moves will be easily identifiable and distinguishable from one another through several unambiguous signals.

Both De Jong and Burgers (2013) and Taboada (2011) suggest that the reviews written by professional critics tend to be more “reserved” and “objective.” Therefore, *Hypothesis 3* proposes that the tenor of our genre will be rather formal and impersonal.

As the corpus of analyzed texts consists of reviews found on internet websites and online magazines, certain features typical of internet genres will be probably present. *Hypothesis 4* is thus that the genre, due to the medium (internet websites), contains several features typical for internet genres like links or audio-visual content.

All these hypotheses will be addressed throughout the following chapters. Chapter 2 provides a theoretical framework for the analysis – key concepts like genre traditions, the definition of genre and the specifics of internet genres will be discussed. Chapter 3 then outlines methodology for the analyses and specifies the corpus of analyzed texts. Chapter 4, the practical part of the thesis, presents results of the analysis – contextual analysis, move analysis, register analysis, analysis of internet features, and the specifics of move analysis. Lastly, chapter 5 closes the thesis with addressing the hypotheses.

## **2 Theoretical framework**

### **2.1 Three schools of genre theory**

Before considering methodological framework of the ESP school, it is necessary to discuss historical background of genre theory. This chapter presents a brief overview of three main schools of genre theory that developed in linguistics in the last century. My main aim is to list their similarities, difference, and important figures. This will then serve as a basis for the consequent overview of the concepts of genre theory.

#### ***2.1.1 The North American Rhetorical Tradition***

The North American Rhetorical tradition developed in the USA highly probably due to growing interest in “rhetoric and writing courses” with genres being referred to as “typical responses to recurring rhetorical situations” (Bhatia 1996, 41). One of the most important figures of this tradition who developed this notion is Carolyn Miller with her article “Genre as Social Action” (1984). As the name of the school suggests researchers belonging to this tradition place heavy emphasis on “the situational contexts” and on “the social purposes” of genres rather than on their structural properties (Hyon 1996, 696). Formal linguistic properties are in sharp contrast much more central to the other two traditions of genre theory.

#### ***2.1.2 The Systemic functional linguistics (SFL) oriented Australian Tradition***

The SFL tradition with roots in Australia is at its core inspired by “social semiotics” and “systemic-functional linguistics” (Halliday and Hasan 1985). One of the key figures for this school is thus Michael Halliday who is the founder of this influential linguistic theory that has at its core the notion of *register*. The key features that are encompassed by the register are *field*, *tenor*, and *mode* (Halliday and Hasan 1985). There is, however, a notable problem concerning the relationship between register and genre as Robert Martin classifies features of register as subordinate to genre rather than as on the same level or in other words sees genre as “a semiotic system underlying register” (Martin 1985, 250).

### ***2.1.3 The English for Specific Purposes Tradition***

The English for Specific Purposes Tradition (characterized by names like John Swales, Vijay K. Bhatia or Inger Askehave) emerged around the idea that genre can be seen as a “tool” that can be used “for analyzing and teaching the spoken and written language” (Hyon 1996, 695).

Genre analyses conducted in the ESP tradition are “language-oriented” and focused on formal linguistic features of texts in question using “social context and function” to interpret these language properties (Garzone 2015, 6). However, Hyon notes that researchers of ESP school usually do not concentrate on the “social contexts” to a greater extent but rather focus on certain “formal characteristics” (1996, 695). The central part of these genre analyses is then the concept of *communicative purposes* developed by John Swales (1990). Bhatia points out that “lexico-grammatical” and “discoursal” features of genres are then basically subordinated to these *communicative purposes* which will be more thoroughly discussed in the following chapters (1996, 46–47).

In the consequent methodological and practical part of the present thesis the ESP tradition will be of most importance as this school’s language-oriented methodology is easily applicable, and the results should lead to creation of a manual for composing the chosen genre. The SFL tradition will then serve as a basis for an extension of the present analysis by *register (field, tenor, mode)* territory.

## **2.2 Defining genre**

When discussing genre analysis or schools of genre theory, it is also necessary to define the concept of *genre* itself. In this chapter I concentrate on definitions and reflections of this notion as well as ideas closely associated with it such as *discourse community*. Main part of this review considers Swales’ and Bhatia’s view of genre as ESP tradition serves as the main framework for practical part.

The phenomenon of genre is very old as it has roots in ancient times and for centuries has been looked at as a tool for describing “literary and other forms of artistic production” (Garzone 2015, 1). After the concept of genre got attention from linguists (as illustrated in the previous section) the definitions started to change and multiply. This leads

us to one of the bigger problems which is that there does not exist a single unifying definition of genre that would take into consideration every aspect of every genre school (Garzone 2015, 2).

In a very general sense, genres are “ways in which people ‘get things done’ through their use of spoken and written” language (Paltridge 2012, 62). Apart from genres operating as actions, genres can also be generally perceived as functioning according to the thought that “[e]ach utterance is filled with echoes and reverberations of other utterances” (Garzone 2015, 1). This means that when we speak or write we in vast majority of cases look for patterns and use them again which in the end means that we are never truly original. The concrete usage of language is then completely determined by contextual factors like content, purpose, or relationship with the recipient; no text is thus completely the same as another one but can still be considered to represent the same genre (Paltridge 2012, 64).

### ***2.2.1 Notion of genre in ESP tradition***

According to Swales, *genre* is at its core “a class of communicative events” that is identifiable by “[a] set of communicative purposes” (1990, 58). Thus, if the *communicative purpose* changes, so does the genre; changes on a smaller scale can divide genres to the so called *sub-genres* (Bhatia 2013, 50). It also must be stressed that genres do not have to have only one *communicative purpose* but whole groups of them (Swales 1990, 47). For instance, the genre of reviews can be used not only to evaluate but also to promote as discussed in the introduction.

Genres cannot work without their users. Thus, the genres work properly only if the *communicative purposes* of these genres are “recognized [...] by the established members of the parent discourse community” (Swales 1990, 53). This includes knowing “the communicative goals” and also “the structure of the genres” in question (Bhatia 2013, 50). The members of a *discourse community* obligatorily conform to a number of “rules” when construing a genre; however, “a specialist” can easily utilize some of these “rules” if they want “to achieve special effects” in their usage of a genre which inevitably produces variations (Bhatia 2013, 50). Some of these variations are also noticeable in genre of TV show reviews as discussed in practical part of the thesis.

### ***2.2.2 Notion of discourse community***

As indicated in the preceding summary of genre features, there is a significant concept of *discourse community* that is closely related to genre theory. This notion needs to

be terminologically specified; as in practical part of the thesis, I provide analysis of discourse community of TV show reviews. Swales (1990, 24) proposes a whole set of features for defining discourse communities; here, I present only the most relevant ones.

Similarly as *communicative goals* play role in defining *genre*, there should be at the center of every discourse community “[a broadly agreed set of common public goals]” (Swales 1990, 24). *Discourse communities* must then be in possession of “[one or more genres]” that would help the community in accomplishing these goals (Swales 1990, 26). Apart from genres, the members of *discourse communities* have “[acquired some specific lexis]” like certain abbreviations which makes the communication between its members more efficient (Swales 1990, 26). In this case, the genre in possession of the discourse community is a TV show review; the specifics of the used vocabulary are then related to field analysis.

These concepts are, as was shown, quite complex, and so cannot be simply defined in just a few sentences. Rather, it was necessary to list several defining characteristics. Situation is even more complicated as these concepts are seen by different researchers differently. Because of that, mainly ideas of Swales or Bhatia were considered as the methodological framework will elaborate on their insights.

### **2.3 Internet genres**

Reviews as such can be naturally found in newspapers, magazines, or other printed media, but more importantly also in the digital form on the internet. As the corpus of reviews used for the analyses consists of only reviews available on digital platforms, it is appropriate to consider certain canonic features the digital genres exhibit.

It is important to note that the presence of genre on World Wide Web (WWW) provides genres with special qualities (Askehave and Nielsen 2004, 11). Among them belong *global reach*, *immateriality* or *intertextuality* which is associated with concept of links between texts (11–12).

Apart from these three properties Askehave and Nielsen highlight the importance of *multimedialness* of internet genres that points to “potential of combining text, images, sound, and animations” (2004, 12). Consequently, “tabular and non-sequential reading process” comes to existence as readers of web genres can consume the content in more than one possible order and can change their focus (Askehave and Nielsen 2004, 13). This



feature in particular seems to correspond the most with the intentions of advertising genres because the content of genre becomes more diverse, and so attractive. In case of TV show reviews, audio-visual material is very prominent as discussed in detail in the section 4.5.

Building on Finnemann, Askehave and Nielsen came up with “a two-dimensional genre model” (2004, 15–18). Essentially, this model assumes that there are two modes of reading a web text – first being more traditional *reading mode* when reader “zooms in on the text” and simply “uses the web document as if it was a ‘printed’ text”; second being the *navigating mode* when reader “zooms out of the text and uses the web as a medium” (Askehave and Nielsen 2004, 17). The concept of this two-branch system has significant methodological consequences that will be discussed in the methodology section.

### **3 Methodological framework**

In this part of the thesis, I present methodological framework that is used for genre analysis in practical part. This methodology is mainly based on methods and remarks of Bhatia and Swales (ESP school), however, there are also overlaps to register analysis (Halliday and Hasan 1985) or to analysis of internet genres (Askehave and Nielsen 2004). At the end of the section, the frame that I used for collecting corpus of texts (TV show reviews) for analysis is presented.

#### **3.1 Genre analysis**

Bhatia defines genre analysis as “the study of situated linguistic behaviour in institutionalized academic or professional settings” (1996, 40). The main aim of this process is then “to offer a more dynamic explanation of the way expert users of language manipulate generic conventions to achieve a variety of complex goals” (Bhatia 1996, 40). Importantly, according to Bhatia, genre analysis should lead to “a ‘thick’ description of language use” which means that “a surface-level description of statistically significant features of language” is not sufficient enough for accomplishing its main goal (Bhatia 1996, 40). In order to achieve valuable results, systematic step-by-step analysis needs to be considered.

##### ***3.1.1 Steps in genre analysis***

According to Bhatia, there are basically seven main steps that one should go through to achieve successful results from genre analysis (2013, 63). However, we need to keep in mind that it is not essential to consider all these steps, nor is it needed to perform the genre analysis in the suggested order (Bhatia 2013, 63; Paltridge 2012, 77). Here is the list of steps as proposed by Bhatia (2013) in order in which they are presented:

###### ***1. Placing the given genre-text in a situational context***

Firstly, researchers should consider their former knowledge of the chosen genre and discourse community (Bhatia 2013, 63).

## *2. Surveying existing literature*

Alternatively, one should examine any relevant “literature” (including “guide books, manuals etc.”) about both performing genre analysis and the given genre with its discourse community (Bhatia 2013, 64).

## *3. Refining the situational/contextual analysis*

Before moving on to linguistic analysis, “the speaker/writer of the text, the audience, their relationship and their goals” should be defined to provide the basis for linguistic analysis (Bhatia 2013, 64). Connected to that, place of discourse community as well as “the topic/subject/extra-textual reality” that is being manipulated or represented by the genre should be analyzed and clearly described (Bhatia 2013, 64).

## *4. Selecting corpus*

This self-explanatory step is very significant as a clear frame for collecting corpus of texts must be defined in order to state which texts are and which texts are not part of the genre that we have chosen to investigate (Bhatia 2013, 65).

Connected to that, prior to collecting the corpus, we should according to Bhatia also decide how the collection process itself will look (2013, 65). In case of this thesis, “exploratory investigation” (Bhatia 2013, 65) will be carried out by investigating a small number of texts prior to collecting bigger number of samples.

## *5. Studying the institutional context*

Investigation of “rules and conventions” typical of certain institutional context that possibly have influence on the way the genre is constituted should follow as the next step (Bhatia 2013, 65–66). However, as Bhatia notes, performing “[t]his becomes particularly important if the data is collected from a particular organization” that has “its own organizational constraints and pre-requisites” (2013, 66). This step will not be considered in the present thesis as I do not regard it as relevant for genre of TV show reviews.

## *6. Levels of linguistic analysis*

This stage of analysis stands as the most complex one as it can be divided into three separate “levels.” The core of the analysis thus lays here.

### *Level 1: Analysis of lexico-grammatical features*

This level of analysis is centered around quantitative analysis of frequency of language features in our genre (Bhatia 2013, 66). Nevertheless, results obtained by this way are according to Bhatia quite presumably “constrained by their emphasis on surface

features” and, in contrast to the next level, could not provide us with deeper understanding of the given genre (Bhatia 2013, 68).

Note that I present this level only in sake of integrity of these steps; I will not perform quantitative analysis of language features in scope of this thesis. The decision to concentrate rather on qualitative analysis is strongly influenced by Bhatia’s remark addressing the “thick description” of language mentioned at the beginning of this section.

*Level 2: Analysis of text-patterning or textualization*

Aside from quantitative analysis, the language of the genre is to be analyzed qualitatively which means bigger emphasis on explanation as to why are certain language features used (Bhatia 2013, 69–71). Therefore, the researchers should try to interpret their findings, not only list their statistic occurrence.

*Level 3: Structural interpretation of the text-genre*

This last level of language analysis will be central for practical part of this thesis. According to Bhatia, the importance of structural analysis lies in the revealing of “preferred ways of communicating intention in specific areas of inquiry” (Bhatia 2013, 74).

As I noted in the section concerning defining *genre*, at the core of every genre lies a *communicative purpose* (Swales 1900, Bhatia 2013). This purpose is then realized by individual (rhetorical) *moves*. Each of these structural units has its own “communicative intention;” it is then necessary that this intention is in close alliance with the overarching communicative purpose of the analyzed genre (Bhatia 2013, 75).

Then, every *move* can be realized by different *rhetorical strategies* (Bhatia 2013, 76). Choice of concrete *rhetorical strategy* depends on many factors, but generally, the writer uses the *rhetorical strategy* that seems to be in a given context the most convenient for realization of the move (Bhatia 2013, 75–76).

***Communicative purpose -> Moves -> Rhetorical strategies***

This proposed scheme is central for practical part of the present thesis where I present individual moves and rhetorical strategies of TV show reviews.

Nevertheless, one of the main problems connected to the outlined scheme lies in the process of distinguishing one move from another (*Hypothesis 2*). According to Bhatia, “the ultimate criteria for assigning discourse values to various moves is functional rather than formal” (2013, 163). This means that Bhatia gives priority to function of moves (a move’s function may be for example to inform readers about the main characters of a TV show)

over formal signals (formal signal in a move may be for example significant usage of evaluative adjectives). This topic is thoroughly discussed in the practical part of the thesis.

### 7. *Specialist information in genre analysis*

Genre analysis should be according to Bhatia finished by finding a specialist who is “a practising member of the disciplinary culture in which the genre is routinely used” and thus can validate the results (2013, 80–81). I will not consider this step in this thesis because of its organizational difficulty; however, the results of my analysis can always be verified in another study if someone wishes to do so.

Next, I discuss methodology for analysis of internet features as they are present in our genre of interest.

## 3.2 Analyzing features of internet genres

As was noted in previous chapter, Askehave and Nielsen propose in their study of internet genre “a two-dimensional genre model” consisting of two modes, *reading mode* and *navigating mode* (2004, 16–18).

To avoid simplification when analyzing genres found on internet websites, it is necessary to consider analysis of communicative purposes and “[‘functional units’]” both in reading and navigating mode, with the first one being basically equal “to the approach in ‘traditional’ genre analysis” (Askehave and Nielsen 2004, 18). This means that in regard to reading move, traditional move analysis should be carried out; however, considering navigating mode, the concept of *links* must be introduced (Askehave and Nielsen 2004, 24–25).

A link is generally “a clickable object [...] which allows the navigator to go from one place to another on a webpage or a website” (Askehave and Nielsen 2004, 25). These links then can be analyzed in terms of hierarchy or relationship between the two texts that the link is connecting (Askehave and Nielsen 2004, 25). To add to that, links can be also divided into *generic links* and *specific links* with the first one being of “general, topical status” and latter one being “thematically contextualized” which clarifies its “relevance” (Askehave and Nielsen 2004, 31–33). Only these remarks about the concept of links will be considered as I do not regard further elaboration important for the chosen genre.

### 3.3 Register analysis

As noted, the genre analysis in practical part of the thesis will be extended by *register (field, tenor, mode)* territory. The concept of register is generally closely connected to genre theory in The Systemic functional linguistics (SFL) oriented Australian Tradition. To remind, Robert Martin classifies features of register as subordinate to genre, and so sees genre as “a semiotic system underlying register” (Martin 1985, 250). Halliday and Hasan then define register as “a configuration of meanings that are typically associated with a particular situational configuration of field, mode, and tenor” (1985, 38–39).

The register analysis functions as useful tool for the investigation of significant features of the genre. The results may provide information about relationship between creators and users or about the typical vocabulary of the genre. The interpersonal function of the genre is of particular importance for this thesis as it relates to *Hypothesis 3*. Therefore, without consulting register analysis, the results of the genre analysis would not be complete.

The following section presents the methodology for analyzing the features of register mainly based on Halliday and Hasan (1985), and Leech, Deuchar and Hoogenraad (1982)<sup>1</sup>.

#### 3.3.1 *Field*

The field refers to “what is happening, to the nature of the social action that is taking place: what is it that the participants are engaged in [...]” (Halliday and Hasan 1985, 12). In other words, the aim is to investigate subject matter of the text. This is achieved by inspecting vocabulary, and types of expressions that are prominent in the text (Halliday and Hasan 1985, 24–27).

#### 3.3.2 *Tenor*

Considering tenor, the main aim is to analyze participants who take part in the communication; “the nature of the participants, their statuses and roles” should be investigated (Halliday and Hasan 1985, 12). Besides that, it is necessary to consider relationships between these participants and its significance for realizing the communication (Halliday and Hasan 1985, 12).

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<sup>1</sup> Leech, Deuchar and Hoogenraad (1982) use the term *domain* instead of *field* which are semantic equivalents.

The afore mentioned relationship between participants can then be systematically analyzed on three scales as is illustrated below in the table borrowed from Leech, Deuchar and Hoogenraad (1982, 146). In this table, there are also certain language features that should help us with the analysis.

<b>FORMAL</b>	<b>INFORMAL</b>
Complex sentences Polysyllabic, classical, vocabulary, e.g. <i>investigate, extinguish,</i> <i>decipher</i>	Simple sentences Monosyllabic, native vocabulary, especially phrasal verbs, e.g. <i>look into, put out, make out</i>
<b>POLITE</b>	<b>FAMILIAR</b>
Respectful terms of address, e.g. <i>Sir</i> Indirect requests, e.g. <i>Would you</i> <i>be so kind as to . . .</i>	Intimate terms of address, if any, e.g. <i>John, love</i> Direct imperatives, e.g. <i>Give</i> <i>me . . .</i>
<b>IMPERSONAL</b>	<b>PERSONAL</b>
Passive voice, e.g. <i>the terrorists</i> <i>were shot</i> Third person noun phrases, e.g. <i>the reader, customers</i>	Active voice, e.g. <i>police shot the</i> <i>terrorists</i> First and second person pronouns, e.g. <i>I, you</i>

Table 1: Three scales of tenor from Leech, Deuchar and Hoogenraad (1982)

The three scales are presumably interconnected (Leech, Deuchar and Hoogenraad 1982, 146); and so it may be assumed that texts that are rather informal would also incline towards being personal.

### 3.3.3 Mode

Thirdly, mode of a text refers to “what part the language is playing, what it is that the participants are expecting the language to do for them in that situation [...]” (Halliday and Hasan 1985, 12). At the center of mode analysis is “the symbolic organization of the text, the status that it has, and its function in the context, including the channel ([...]) and also the rhetorical mode [...]” (Halliday and Hasan 1985, 12). Cohesive relations and thematic structures are as well related to the notion of mode (25–26).

The analysis of channel is of particular importance as we can distinguish between writing and speech, both having several typical characteristics. These investigable characteristics are demonstrated below in the table borrowed from Leech, Deuchar and Hoogenraad (1982, 139).

<b>'TYPICAL' SPEECH</b>	<b>'TYPICAL' WRITING</b>
1. <b>Inexplicitness</b>	<b>Explicitness</b>
2. <b>Lack of clear sentence boundaries</b>	<b>Clear sentence boundaries</b>
3. <b>Simple structure</b>	<b>More complex structure</b>
4. <b>Repetitiveness</b>	<b>Non-repetitiveness</b>
5. <b>Normal non-fluency</b>	<b>Fluency</b>
6. <b>Monitoring features</b>	<b>No monitoring features</b>
7. <b>Interaction features</b>	<b>No interaction features</b>
8. <b>Features reflecting informality</b>	<b>Features reflecting formality</b>

Table 2: Typical speech vs. typical writing from Leech, Deuchar and Hoogenraad (1982)

However, Leech, Deuchar and Hoogenraad note that there can be certain overlaps depending on the situation and kind of text in question (1982, 140). Next, I present the corpus of texts on which the presented methodology will be applied.

### 3.4 Corpus of analyzed texts

According to Bhatia's (2013) fourth step in genre analysis, it is now appropriate to present the frame that was used to collect the corpus of texts that are analyzed in practical part of the thesis.

As I noted throughout the previous sections, the corpus of analyzed texts<sup>2</sup> consists of TV show reviews written by professional critics and not by fans on open internet forums. Therefore, websites chosen to be sources of reviews are in most cases online magazines where not just anybody is allowed to write the review. Regarding cultural background, I consider only American and British websites/online magazines as the focus of this thesis is not comparing style of reviews from completely different and unrelated cultures.

Reason for combining both American and British sources is then purely practical. As there is usually only one (or two) critic on one website that writes all the reviews, I decided to consult more websites to avoid the need of including into corpus big number of reviews written by the same person. Nevertheless, with intention to collect moderately large corpus, it was still necessary to include more reviews written by the same critic. The results thus may be affected as it would be expected that one author uses rather similar schema for every review. To reduce consequences of this decision, I set maximum number of texts written by one person to three.

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<sup>2</sup> All the 30 analyzed texts are in their full form in the appendix.



Regarding smaller but no less important details, the corpus consists of texts written in 2020–2022. Also, the corpus was collected to contain reviews of different “genres” of TV shows (e. g. fantasy, crime, comedy, ...) so the results are not relevant to only reviews of e. g. sci-fi TV shows. Nevertheless, certain line had to be set, and so only reviews of TV shows with fictional characters will be included (this automatically excludes reality TV shows or talk shows and such).

On a more practical level, if more than one review about a series was available on the website, both reviews were included in the corpus. However, if the website/online magazine included both review of the whole series and reviews of single episodes (which showed up to be more common), then review of the whole TV show was chosen. Lastly, I include only reviews of the first season of the show to keep the analysis more precise and clearer.

To make this frame complete, here I list all the websites that were considered:

- <https://ew.com/tv/tv-reviews/>
- <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/tv-and-radio>
- <https://www.standard.co.uk/culture/tvfilm>
- <https://www.empireonline.com/tv/reviews/>
- <https://www.indiewire.com/t/tv-reviews/>
- <https://variety.com/c/reviews/>
- <https://observer.com/tv/>
- <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/tv/reviews/>

In this section, I presented the methodology that is used in the next section to analyze the genre in question. As was indicated, genre analysis is a complex process that includes complex structural, linguistic, or situational analysis. In addition, when considering internet genre, it is also necessary to provide basis for analysis of links. Lastly, I presented frame for corpus of texts thereby I have performed one of the most important steps of genre analysis as proposed by Bhatia.

## **4 Practical part**

In this section of the thesis, I analyze the genre of TV show reviews based on the methodological frames presented in the previous chapter.

Firstly, I perform contextual analysis by defining communicative purpose and discourse community of the genre. Secondly, individual moves and rhetorical strategies are discussed in detail. Then, I discuss specific “problems” with move analysis. Thirdly, genre analysis is extended into register territory; therefore field, tenor and mode are analyzed. Lastly, I briefly discuss links and audio-visual material as the features typical for internet genres.

### **4.1 Contextual analysis**

As I note in the methodological part of the thesis, Bhatia (2013) proposes that one step of genre analysis should be concerned with defining the context of genre to establish basis for more detailed and centered analysis. This step entails with little overlap describing discourse community and communicative purpose of the genre in question.

#### ***4.1.1 Discourse community***

In order to comprehend the genre of our interest, it is necessary to examine the participants of the discourse community that own the genre and have control over it.

Participants of discourse community that concerns this thesis are presumably authors of TV show reviews. These authors can be then divided to “amateurs” and “professionals.” In this thesis, I am interested only in the latter half of this broad discourse community. I suppose that “professionals” write their reviews for somewhat distinguished internet websites/magazines and not for open optionally anonymous internet forums/discussions with open access for anyone who wishes to tell others their opinion.

These authors are then expected to have at least basic knowledge of writing about popular culture, and they should be very familiar with world of TV shows, so they are able to provide the readers with relevant contextual information. More concretely, the authors need to have active knowledge of actors (as their names are naturally presented), and other TV shows (as many comparisons take place throughout the review).

The readers are considered as important part of this discourse community as well. They are expected to be fans of the TV shows who are seeking information about qualities of upcoming TV shows to decide if it is worth their time or not. The relationship between readers and authors of the community is then be discussed in the tenor analysis.

#### ***4.1.2 Communicative purpose***

The main aim of TV show reviews is to describe basic properties of TV show and consequently evaluate these properties; it is thus ambivalent in nature. By providing these information, pros, and cons of “product” in question, the genre serves to help its reader to decide whether consuming this “product” is worth their time or not.

These reviews are structured to provide the reader with relevant information only in the most user-friendly way. The choice of topics or facts is then influenced by what the author believes is most important for the reader. The evaluation presented is in most cases presented in a persuasive way as writers to various extent try to justify their opinions and avoid subjectivity.

➔ To describe and evaluate a TV show

## **4.2 Moves and rhetorical strategies**

In this chapter, I present results of the move analysis of the genre, and thus address the first half of *Hypothesis 1*. The classification of the moves as I present them is mine. I identified the moves based on the assumption that genres are dividable into structural units with different functions (as discussed in the previous chapter). This analysis thus follows the framework suggested by Bhatia (2013) and Swales (1900): *Communicative purpose* -> *Moves* -> *Rhetorical strategies*. For discussion of specific problems with differentiating moves, see section 4.3.

Every subchapter presents one identified move with attention to the description of its typical function in the genre. The description of these moves is then followed by rhetorical strategies composing the move. Accompanying examples of the moves are drawn from the analyzed texts.

Nevertheless, before moving onto describing individual moves, I present table with list of all the moves and their occurrence in the 30 analyzed texts.

Table 3: Occurrence of moves found in TV show reviews

<b>Move</b>	<b>Occurrence</b>
<b>Title</b>	30 (100%)
<b>Post-title</b>	20 (66,7%)
<b>Introduction</b>	30 (100%)
<b>Characters/actors</b>	19 (63,3%)
<b>Plot</b>	28 (93,3%)
<b>Setting</b>	9 (30%)
<b>Comparison</b>	3 (10%)
<b>Format</b>	3 (10%)
<b>Background information</b>	3 (10%)
<b>Evaluation</b>	29 (96,7%)
<b>Case in point</b>	14 (46,7%)
<b>Final evaluation</b>	30 (100%)
<b>Practical information</b>	30 (100%)

The list of identified moves is quite exhausting. Nevertheless, six of these moves were found in more than 90% of analyzed texts which permits me to label them as obligatory moves. The remaining moves may be due to their lower incidence marked as optional.

In the following sections I present tables with rhetorical strategies (or in some cases just components) of individual moves. The percentage of the occurrence of the strategies/components is calculated by dividing occurrence of the rhetorical strategy by the occurrence of the corresponding move.

#### **4.2.1 Title**

The title of a review is inherently the first part of every review. This move's main goal is to tell readers what to expect and gain their attention. The titles proved to be schematic at its core with few possible adjustments. Also, they are formed by full sentences as they include verbs.

Table 4: Frequency of components used in title move

Component	Occurrence	Description
<b>TV show name</b>	30 (100%)	-
<b>Evaluation</b>	19 (63,3%)	Authors foreshadow their stand about the show.
<b>Information</b>	16 (53,3%)	Title includes certain information about actor/producer/themes/...
<b>Platform</b>	13 (43,3%)	Platform where the TV show is streaming

The table shows different parts from which the title is generally composed. The obligatory occurrence of the name of the TV show is self-explanatory; however, in more than half cases the title proved to show a certain degree of evaluation. This evaluation then establishes certain expectation about the review, and therefore might influence readers' expectations. The title can take for instance these forms:

**Mare of Easttown** review: Kate Winslet is **undimmable** despite the encompassing gloom (Cumming 2021a)

At long last, **Locke & Key** is here — and it's **delightful**: Review (Baldwin 2020)

Both titles naturally include name of the show. Additionally, the first one is also informing us about the lead actor, and both provide readers with evaluation by the usage of adjectives as “undimmable” or “delightful”. Moreover, the titles are not mere phrases but are stretching into sentence by usage of verb “to be”.

#### 4.2.2 Post-title

Post-title is a move that is strictly identifiable by its position in the review. It comes right after the title and before the main body of the review which then starts with introduction move (see next section); it also traditionally precedes the first picture (if present) and practical information move. This move can be just one sentence long or stretch over one short paragraph. Nevertheless, the main aim of this move is to elaborate on the title and give reader more information to decide if reading the review is worth their time.

Table 5: Frequency and brief characterization of rhetorical strategies used in post-title move

<b>Rhetorical strategy</b>	<b>Occurrence</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Pre-evaluating the show</b>	13 (65%)	Author foreshadows evaluation of the show that will be more thoroughly discussed throughout the review.
<b>Foreshadowing plot</b>	7 (35%)	Basic information about the plot of the show is given.

As shown in the Table 5, there are in general only two basic strategies used to realize post-title move. Only one of these strategies can be realized at the same time. As the *foreshadowing plot* strategy is not very interesting, I would exemplify this move by the second and more common strategy.

This 10-part series could have been the **triumphant** return of the Alien creator, but **inconsistent** world-building and a **basic** plot leave it **unable** to compete with the likes of Westworld (Mangan 2020b)

This post-title example presents itself as very evaluative because of presence of adjectives like “inconsistent”, “basic” or “triumphant”. The post-title is in this case made of two sentences that, however, are not ended with punctuation mark which makes it seem more like a title.

#### **4.2.3 Introduction**

An introduction move is an obligatory move that is always situated at the beginning of the main body of the review. The goal of this move is to set ground for the review and to give certain degree of practical information about the TV show. Generally, this move tries to give reader some basic information and context for information that is to follow.

The introduction move usually does not exceed length of the first paragraph. However, it can be very complex as there is a long list of rhetorical strategies that can be used by the writer to realize this move and its goal. Interestingly, more of these strategies (often 2–3) are usually used at once; nevertheless, all these strategies can be just a sentence long.

Table 6: Frequency and brief characterization of rhetorical strategies used in introduction move

<b>Rhetorical strategy</b>	<b>Occurrence</b>	<b>Characterization</b>
<b>Comparing the TV show with another one</b>	7 (23,3%)	Author compares the TV show with another TV shows on the condition that they have something in common.
<b>Describing adaptation background</b>	5 (16,7%)	If the TV show is an adaptation based on a well-known book, the author may point it out.
<b>Providing information about (a) lead actor(s)</b>	9 (30%)	Lead actor or actors are discussed. Background information about them and their other projects might be given.
<b>Providing information about a producer</b>	3 (10%)	Rare rhetorical strategy that informs reader about a producer and his legacy in a more elaborate way than just a mere note.
<b>Stating and characterizing the genre of the TV show</b>	11 (36,7%)	Common strategy when writer categorizes the TV show, and possibly gives details and consequences of the genre choice.
<b>Making a joke</b>	3 (10%)	Non-standard rhetorical strategy that if present obligatorily comes first in the move. Author hereby uses a “punch-line” of sorts to introduce the TV show.
<b>Stating plot themes</b>	7 (23,3%)	Giving basic information about the plot of the TV show in the form of generalized statements.
<b>Describing an opening scene</b>	2 (6,7%)	Uncommon strategy that functions as “a first taste” of the show. Storytelling techniques are used here.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Providing background information</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">5 (16,7%)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">This vaguely named strategy stands for instances when author discusses wider context of the show like a platform or a franchise.</p>
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Although the presented list is exhausting, it generally shows that introduction move can be realized in many ways, and at the same time still succeed in performing its main goal to provide context. The most common strategy proved to be genre characterization as providing information about genre seems like the most universal way of contextualization. Nevertheless, the occurrence of *joke* or *opening scene description* rhetorical strategies shows that secondary aim of introduction move is to attract the reader to continue reading.

Now, I would like to illustrate this move with one concrete sample (rhetorical strategies are divided by a slash):

TV mysteries are a lot like bumpy flights: So long as they end well, earlier quibbles can be forgiven. “The Flight Attendant,” one of HBO Max’s first marquee originals, didn’t offer its finale to critics in advance, and the first four episodes have plenty of **bumps** if you want to look for them. [/] But the sleek ride Susanna Fogel, Steve Yockey, and especially star/producer **Kaley Cuoco** have cobbled together makes it hard to push the call button, let alone start looking for a parachute. [/] Meshing together a handful of **genres** — part **mystery-thriller**, part **dark comedy**, part **surreal romantic-fantasy** — the hourlong series careens forward with a propulsive pace, curious side stories, and an enticing cast of characters. Suspension of disbelief is a requisite and nagging questions need to be held until the end, but all signs point to net positive trip, even if a **safe landing** is still up **in the air**. (Travers 2020b)

Here, the author starts the review with *joke* referencing in form of pun name of the show with the “bumpy flights” expression. Then, the move continues as *lead actor(s)* (names of actors are presented) by briefly informing us about the cast of the show. The move ends with *genre characterization* (even the word “genres” is used), discussing consequences of this genre choice in more detail. Interestingly, the introduction here ends again with pun regarding the theme of the show with expression “landing”.



#### 4.2.4 Characters/actors

Characters/actors move contains information about characters, their main characteristics, place in the story or background. Actors' names are then standardly following characters' names and are placed in the brackets. It needs to be noted that this move is logically close in its function to plot move, but in this case, there is a minimal emphasis on the story itself.

Table 7: Frequency and brief characterization of rhetorical strategies used in character/actors move

Rhetorical strategy	Occurrence	Description
<b>Providing basic information about characters/actors</b>	19 (100%)	-

As this move can be realized by only one rhetorical strategy, I present only one shortened sample.

In “Bridgerton,” the **Queen Charlotte (Golda Rosheuvel)** with **whom** the king fell in love **is a Black woman**, and his adoration of her paved the way for the inclusion of other races other than only white people in proper British society. But few families of any ethnic background can rival the powerful, prestigious Bridgertons, **whose** eldest daughter **Daphne (Phoebe Dynevor)** is set to make her society debut. She **is** everything a desirable young woman should be—**delicate, pretty, and slim; clever** in conversation and **demure** otherwise; **kind** to household staff, commoners, and other elites alike; determined to be a good wife and mother [...] (Hadadi 2020)

The discussed subject in this example is presented by two characters (with actors in the brackets). The focus on plot is minimal and characters are rather connected by means of verbonominal predicates to some appearance features like “Black woman” or traits like “clever” or “demure”. Connected to this, relative clauses (“whom”, “whose”) are frequently used.

#### 4.2.5 Plot

The plot move is an obligatory part of all reviews. Its main purpose is to provide reader with basic information about the plot of the show. In most cases, it constitutes a big part of a review because of its story-telling aspects – action verbs, continuity of information or citations of replicas are employed.

Table 8: Frequency and brief characterization of rhetorical strategies used in plot move

<b>Rhetorical strategy</b>	<b>Occurrence</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Describing story set-up</b>	19 (67,9%)	The beginning of the plot or the most important information needed to understand the plot is described here.
<b>Describing plot details</b>	20 (71,4%)	Authors very often describe any interesting story aspect to indicate what to expect. However, the details that are presented are never describing climax or ending of the story.
<b>Stating themes</b>	8 (28,6%)	Similarly to the introduction move, this strategy gives general ideas about the plot. It takes a form of a nominal list that does not focus on relationship between its parts.

As usual, these rhetorical strategies do not contradict each other. The chosen sample is an instance of the most common *describing plot details* strategy.

The war on Earth was between atheists and zealots – the Mithraic people who **worship** a deity called Sol. Mother and Father **raise** Champion as an atheist and **discourage** his growing urge to pray (“**Peaceful. Technocratic. It is the only path to progress. Belief in the unreal can comfort human life, but also weaken it**” – alas, none of the dinosaurs whose bones litter Kepler-22b died reading a copy of Syd Field’s Screenplay that could have been preserved for later generations) [Mangan 2020b].

In the example, action verbs like “worship”, “raise” or “discourage” indicate story-telling techniques. Also, a replica from the TV show is presented in brackets to make the move more interesting and give a “sneak peek” to reader.

#### **4.2.6 Setting**

This optional move can be found anywhere throughout the review, but generally precedes the plot move. Its main aim is to describe where or when the plot is set, and it is thus mainly concerned with description of story world of the TV show.

Table 9: Frequency and brief characterization of rhetorical strategies used in setting move.

<b>Rhetorical strategy</b>	<b>Occurrence</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Describing setting</b>	9 (100%)	-

As I demonstrate below, this move is usually only a few sentences long and does not require to be divided into several rhetorical strategies.

Netflix’s sharp “Shadow and Bone” adaptation, from “Arrival” writer Eric Heisserer, tackles Leigh Bardugo’s popular fantasy series. Comprised of a central trilogy and various spinoffs in its “**Grishaverse**,” this is the kind of series with so many of its **own terms, languages and traditions** that turning on the subtitles might be advisable; otherwise, the constant allusions in invented languages might blend together into one indecipherable syllable soup. (Framke 2021b)

As this is a sample from a review of fantasy TV show, the move here directly names the story world of the show (“Grishaverse”), and gives additional information about its linguistic specifics.

#### **4.2.7 Comparison**

This rare move’s purpose is to compare point-by-point a TV show (about which the review is) with a second and somehow-related TV show.

Note that the part of text labeled as comparison move cannot be situated at the beginning of a review. The reason for this lies in the existence of rhetorical strategy – *comparing the TV show with another one* – presented as part of introduction move; when a chunk of text contains comparison and is situated at the beginning of the review, it shall be classified as this rhetorical strategy.

In contrast to the rhetorical strategy – *evaluating by comparison (with another TV show)* – present in evaluation move, this move does not contain any evaluation.

Lastly, many instances when a writer inserts a comparison as a side note into another move were identified; this issue is discussed in section 4.3.

Table 10: Frequency and brief characterization of rhetorical strategies used in comparison move

<b>Rhetorical strategy</b>	<b>Occurrence</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Comparing one TV show with another one</b>	3 (100%)	-

The chosen example conforms to set conditions and is surrounded by evaluation move in the review.

“**Call Me Kat**” is ostensibly **based on “Miranda,”** a screwball comedy from British comedian Miranda Hart. For its own iteration of the show, “**Call Me Kat**” **takes the (very) basic “Miranda” premise** of “a woman in her late thirties runs a shop and doesn’t have a boyfriend” and Hart’s signature fourth wall breaks in which she talked to her audience, pulled funny faces and shared some of the thoughts she didn’t dare speak aloud to the characters right in front of her. (For those unfamiliar with “Miranda,” think “Fleabag” with the punctuation of an enthusiastic studio audience.) **Kat’s mother, like Miranda’s,** is an eccentric worrywart who just want her to get married, already. And **like Miranda, Kat** pines for her handsome friend, played this time by Cheyenne Jackson. (Framke 2021a)

Firstly, the author establishes names of both shows that are compared. Then, they continue with point-by-point comparison of plot aspects like the main premise or characters without adding any strong opinions. This example proves that the comparison move may technically inform the reader about plot or characters, but the presented information is always contrasted to another TV show and thus forms a move on its own.

#### 4.2.8 *Format*

If a TV show is interesting regarding the way in which it was edited, an author may indicate it. As this move is completely optional and rare, there is only one rhetorical strategy used to realize it.

Table 11: Frequency and brief characterization of rhetorical strategies used in format move

<b>Rhetorical strategy</b>	<b>Occurrence</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Describing format</b>	3 (100%)	-

The sample below is surrounded by the plot move as plot is directly affected by the format of the show.

**Director Matt Shakman** honors the rigidity of **'50s multicam,** only breaking from that **format** for an unsettling **scene** near the end of the premiere. Somehow, the artifice sets the lead actors free. (Franich 2021b)

The move involves information about director, camera angles and scenes; then, it slowly transforms into plot move as the writer discusses effects of the format on the roles of actors.

#### 4.2.9 Background information

Background information is a label for sections of reviews that describe real-life events connected to the TV show (and its production) and possibly their effect. There is also only one rhetorical strategy.

Table 12: Frequency and brief characterization of rhetorical strategies used in background information move

Rhetorical strategy	Occurrence	Description
<b>Describing background information</b>	3 (100%)	-

This move is due to its specific purpose commonly realized by only a couple of sentences.

The series' release has been overshadowed by **real-life** revelations about Whedon's historic behaviour towards cast and crew. **HBO replaced him** as showrunner as fast as they could, but the damage was done. (Cumming 2021b)

The expression “real-life” and information about plot-unrelated events concerned with producer of the show indicate the specificity of this part of the review.

#### 4.2.10 Evaluation

The main purpose of this obligatory move is self-explanatory; a writer evaluates and discusses certain aspects of the show, providing the reader with useful information regarding the quality of the TV show in question. The evaluation move can be situated anywhere throughout the review but standardly follows descriptive moves (moves that are not containing evaluation).

Table 13: Frequency and brief characterization of rhetorical strategies used in evaluation move

Rhetorical strategy	Occurrence	Description
<b>Evaluating cast</b>	20 (69%)	Here the writer concentrates on the performance of actors or on the choice of cast.

<b>Evaluating plot features</b>	28 (97%)	Themes, plot details, narrative strategies, ... can be the subject of evaluation.
<b>Evaluating adaptation process</b>	2 (6,9%)	If a TV show is an adaptation of a book, the author can discuss success of adaptation process.
<b>Evaluating by comparison (with another TV show)</b>	10 (34,5%)	Writer evaluates the show by comparing it to a different TV show that is somehow related.
<b>Evaluating format</b>	1 (3,4%)	If the TV show is somehow interesting regarding the format, the author may point it out.

*Evaluating plot features* and *evaluating cast* proved to be common strategies as they are not conditioned by anything – plot and cast are an essential part of every TV show. Because evaluation proves to be an important part of every review, writers employ number of these rhetorical strategies to provide reader with enough information. Importantly, the evaluation move can be as long as several adjacent paragraphs. However, to illustrate this move properly I chose only a shorter instance.

Bettany’s performance is **less successful**. He **nails** the sincere moments but **struggles** with the comedy. He drunk walks, shrieks “what the dickens” and spends much of the series with either a puzzled face or Cheshire cat grin that **wears thin** after the first episode. In fairness, he’s a robot masked behind a human body in a sitcom made by Marvel, but in the end, it all becomes **too much** and yet **not quite enough**. (Helm 2021)

This example represents *evaluating cast* as subject of evaluation is throughout the paragraph “Bettany’s performance”. This move was classified as evaluative mainly because of the presence of many evaluative adjectives like “less successful” or “much and yet not quite enough”, and verbs like “nails” or “struggles”.

#### **4.2.11 Case in point**

Case in point move is a completely optional part of reviews that at its core serves as a validation of writer’s evaluative arguments. It thus contains no evaluation, but rather

follows it immediately. As this move is not very common, it is not complex and can be realized only by one rhetorical strategy.

Table 14: Frequency and brief characterization of rhetorical strategies used in case in point move

<b>Rhetorical strategy</b>	<b>Occurrence</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Asserting a case in point</b>	14 (100%)	-

Below, I present one example of this move that in the text follows an evaluation move (slashes indicate the dividing line).

[...] to control them; and there are too many villains. [//] At one point Mrs. True complains, **“Cops, the Church, the Purists, and our masked freaks. There’s no shortage of people who hate us,”** which made me do a double take. There are anti-Turned religious people in the mix, too? That’s too many baddies to overwhelm viewers with at once! It’s too many faces and motivations to keep track of when the character themselves are barely introduced past being various “Buffy” types, and when so many details about the Turned themselves feel overly malleable. (Hadadi 2021)

In the preceding evaluation move, the author complains about “too many villains”. The case in point move then serves to justify their opinion even by usage of citations from the TV show.

Generally, citations in these reviews can serve as “evidence” or a “sneak peek” (see the plot move) to make the review more engaging. Replicas of characters are then thanks to their purpose well-blended in the text and does not seem as out of place.

#### ***4.2.12 Final evaluation***

Final evaluation is a move that is obligatorily situated at the end of the main body of the review. It can directly follow some other move and even elaborate on it; however, the important thing is that it sums up the review and points out the final thoughts about the TV show. Authors here say what they think ending their evaluation. Importantly, the subject of evaluation is the whole show, not its parts like in evaluation move.

Table 15: Frequency and brief characterization of rhetorical strategies used in final evaluation move

<b>Rhetorical strategy</b>	<b>Occurrence</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Recapitulating the already stated</b>	16 (53,3%)	This common strategy recapitulates things that were already said and is accompanied by evaluation.
<b>Asserting the good and the bad</b>	6 (20%)	Writer puts into contrast pros and cons of the show.
<b>Providing a look ahead</b>	7 (23,3%)	Author suggests what lies in the future of the show or how it can continue.
<b>Stating a verdict</b>	19 (63,3%)	This is the final thought of the author. It tries to tell the reader if it is worth their time. It sounds as a recommendation that can be directed towards the show or the reader.
<b>Indicating the overall stance by means of mark/stars</b>	22 (73,3%)	Non-verbal evaluation in the form of letter mark or number of stars

There are quite many rhetorical strategies that can realize this move. The *mark/stars* is the most interesting one as it is not obligatorily tied to the final position of the review and may be realized after the title move. Apart from this, just as in case of introduction, evaluation or the plot move, writers usually employ more of them to form this move. I illustrate this on the example below.

There's a lot of stuff to enjoy in *WandaVision*, and I haven't even mentioned the period-appropriate theme songs by *Frozoneers* Kristen Anderson-Lopez and Robert Lopez. **But** if you pop the hood of this overlit comedy twilight zone, I worry that the central mystery is a bit standard. [/] Success **will** depend on **whether** the eventual answers are satisfying — and **whether** all those fancy sitcom adornments are just a long wind-up to an overly familiar superhero smash-up. Consider *WandaVision* an unusual first step for this new Marvel phase. [/] The best parts lovingly conjure the mood of very old television shows. The worst parts feel like just another movie. [/] **B+** (Franich 2021b)

This final evaluation move sample forms the last paragraph of the review; the beginning of this move is indicated by the show name (as the subject of final evaluation is always the



show as a whole). Firstly, *asserting the good and the bad* is listed and divided by “but”. Then, *providing a look ahead* is indicated by the usage of future tense that implies a certain degree of uncertainty. Lastly, *stating a verdict* states overall stand of the author by comments on “best parts” and “worst parts” respectively. The *mark* in the end closes the review.

#### 4.2.13 Practical information

This move is not part of the main body of review. Its main aim is to provide reader with information about the author of the text and about other facts surrounding creation of the review. It can be standardly divided into two parts with first one (author, date) being situated at the beginning of the review and second one being situated at the very end.

Table 16: Frequency and brief characterization of components found in practical information move

Component	Occurrence	Description
<b>Author + date</b>	30 (100%)	Name of the author of the review and date of posting the review
<b>Episodes</b>	6 (20%)	Author indicated how many episodes were screened for review.
<b>Platform</b>	15 (50%)	Where readers can watch the show
<b>Airing date</b>	13 (43,3%)	When the show is airing

This move is because of its nature very schematic and lexically uninteresting. Below, I present an example of three strategies combined and situated at the end of a review.

*All **eight episodes** screened for review. The first two episodes of "Suspicion" premiere today, **February 4th** on **Apple TV+**, followed by one new weekly episode every Friday.*  
(Balial 2022)

As I showed throughout this section, the genre employs a number of different moves that can be realized by many distinct rhetorical strategies. In the next chapter, I consider issues connected to process of identifying and differentiating the presented moves.

### 4.3 Specifics of move analysis

A move analysis is not a straightforward unambiguous process; the results that researchers might get are therefore not definitive but highly discussable. In this section, I illustrate reasons for the ambiguous and non-linear nature of the process of move analysis when applied to genres like the one in the center of my attention. I consider the issue of order of moves (addressing the second half of *Hypothesis 1*), and of distinguishing moves both among themselves and from side notes (concerning *Hypothesis 2*).

#### 4.3.1 Order of moves

Bhatia states that “the moves do not necessarily occur in the same order in all cases, and may not occur all at the same time” (2014, 202); which seems to apply to the genre of TV show reviews as well. Additionally, I would argue that in case of our chosen genre, the order of the moves is exceptionally varied.

Firstly, there is essentially no rule for ordering majority of the moves in the reviews (there are exceptions like introduction move or final evaluation move – see previous section). Similarly, the order of rhetorical strategies is not tied to any convention. To illustrate this problem, I present schemes of moves found in four reviews (with the last two being written by the same author).

*Title -> Post-title -> Introduction -> Characters/actors -> Plot -> Evaluation -> Characters/actors -> Evaluation -> Final evaluation -> Practical information*  
(Rosseinsky 2020)

*Title -> Introduction -> Evaluation -> Setting -> Characters/actors -> Plot -> Evaluation -> Case in point -> Evaluation -> Case in point -> Final evaluation -> Practical information* (Hadadi 2020)

*Title -> Post-title -> Introduction -> Background information -> Plot -> Evaluation -> Characters/actors -> Evaluation -> Plot -> Evaluation -> Final evaluation* (Franich 2021a)

*Title -> Post-title -> Introduction -> Plot -> Setting -> Evaluation -> Case in point -> Comparison -> Characters/actors -> Plot -> Evaluation -> Plot -> Evaluation -> Case in point -> Plot -> Evaluation -> Case in point -> Plot -> Evaluation -> Case in point -> Final evaluation* (Franich 2020)

Naturally, if rhetorical strategies were included into these schemes, it would get extremely complicated. Nevertheless, it still shows that the order is not fixed and significantly varies from review to review. Logically, it might be assumed that these variations do not apply to reviews written by the same person; even this is, however, not always true.

To add to this, the presented schemes also illustrate that a move may be very often interrupted by another move and then continue, or that one type of move can occur more times at different places in one text alone. This is especially true for the evaluation, or the plot move as these moves seem to be construing the core of the review.

The reason for all of this lies in the essayistic nature of these texts, but also the interconnectedness of all the information that the writer wants to present. In the next section, I consider issue of differentiating moves that might be connected to this interconnectedness.

#### ***4.3.2 Distinguishing moves***

Distinguishing moves may not seem like a problematic topic in theory but as I will show in this section, when a move analysis is to be applied to an essayistic genre, certain issues arise. To illustrate this, I discuss on tricky examples the role of paragraph division, functional signals and formal (language) signals in the process of move differentiation. As will be shown, the initial expectations (formulated in *Hypothesis 2*) were challenged.

First, the division into paragraphs might seem like a clear lead to separating moves as it would be aided visually. Yet, as I illustrate below, it may be a false lead.

And they're both living in a black-and-white homage to The Dick Van Dyke Show, with a studio audience laughing at every joke, whether funny or not, and a 4:3 screen ratio. **It's a cocktail that shouldn't work.**

**But it does.** Every 30-minute episode resembles a vintage American sitcom, from campy classics to wacky family shows of the Nineties, Bewitched to Modern Family. It's a genius concept that never fatigues. (Helm 2021)

This sample is an example of format move that arguably extends over two independent paragraphs. As we can see, the topic being format/style/composition of the show continues into the second paragraph. Additionally, the sentence "But it does," is strongly connected to the previous sentence as the subject "it" refers to "a cocktail". It can be assumed that the

author here divided the move into two paragraphs for a dramatic effect as the first sentence of the second paragraph unexpectedly contradicts the previous statement.

This works both ways, and so one paragraph can easily host more than one move. This generally happens when writers use long paragraphs, and becomes very apparent especially in the last, closing paragraph of the review like below.

The series' release has been overshadowed by real-life revelations about Whedon's historic behaviour towards cast and crew. HBO replaced him as showrunner as fast as they could, but the damage was done. [//] It's especially **unfortunate** given *The Nevers'* feminist overtones, but if it puts people off, the programme itself doesn't help itself by **failing** to provide much in the way of **discernible** story. The controversy speaks to another of *The Nevers'* themes, and a recurring fixation of Whedon's scripts: the relationship between power and responsibility. It's relevant to showrunners, as well as the plucky young women they depict who take on the forces of darkness. (Cumming 2021b)

I identified two moves in this sample – background information and final evaluation (indicated by the slashes). The paragraph starts with information about the production of the TV show and its director. Then, it continues with a sum up of already discussed features of the show and indicating writer's feelings about the show by evaluative expressions like “unfortunate”, “failing” or “discernible”.

This example does not only show that more moves can occupy the same paragraph or that some of them might be shorter in length than others; it also demonstrates that the borders between the moves are not always clear as moves tend to follow one another very smoothly. The problem is then sometimes to identify the right place for this border. In this case, not only intuition might help us but also the evaluative language expressions. By using “unfortunate” the author seems to make a shift from a bare statement of facts to expressing feelings.

To furtherly explore this issue, below is an extract consisting of characters/actors move and plot move in this order.

Adapted from Chris Bohjalian's 2018 novel of the same name, Steve Yockey's series centers on the titular high-flier, **Cassie (Cuoco), a hard-partying “good time girl” whose job**, in addition to paying her rent, allows her to drink, dance, and bed-hop across the globe. It's clear, though perhaps not to our heroine, that her life choices have

begun to wear on her friends and loved ones, primarily: **her brother Davey (T.R. Knight**, excellent), his husband, and their daughters; her fellow flight attendants, including **Marie (Rosie Perez)**, **who** has her own drama playing out after work hours; and her **best friend Annie (Zosia Mamet)**, **an aggressively competent criminal attorney**. (Handy friend to have.) [//] **While** on a flight to Bangkok, she **meets** charming cypher Alex (Michael Huisman, eminently watchable and expertly opaque), a rich guy who soon becomes a rich dead body. **Confronted** with that gruesome scene and her own hangover simultaneously, Cassie **makes** just about the worst **decisions** imaginable, then **keeps on making** them. And that would be a problem, even if she could **remember** the night before, which she can't, or if a mysterious woman (the great Michelle Gomez) **wasn't hot on her trail**, which she is. (Shoemaker 2020)

There is a problem here as the function/content of the two moves (describing characters and explaining basic story elements) is not significantly distant. Still, there may be certain formal signals for setting the dividing line between two moves. In characters/actors move there are several characters' names and their roles (like "husband" or "best friend"). Also, there are appositions in this move following the names of the actors which shows the non-linear nature of the information presented (there is not a lot of storytelling). The plot move then follows which is indicated by shift towards chronologically ordered plot events and verbs denoting an action (like "makes decisions" or "remember").

The issue here is that some of the formal indicators, as they might be called, are present in both moves. For instance, name "Alex" and apposition that follows it would be normally part of characters/actors move; however, the same sentence also includes certain storytelling techniques (conjunction "While" or action verb "meet") and is closely related with the following sentence ("dead body" and "gruesome scene" refer to one another).

Therefore, moves seem to be most conveniently distinguished by both their content/function (key words) and certain formal aspects (language features). Nevertheless, neither of these aspects is definitive. In cases when the moves have somewhat similar function, it may be better to analyze formal features; and reversely. Unfortunately, even this technique might not work because of the fluent transitions.

Identifying clear borders between moves in the case of TV show reviews may be in certain cases impossible, but it may be of no use anyway. The interconnectedness of the

moves shows itself to be an important feature of TV show reviews. The texts seem more fluent when the transitions are hard to see.

Note that this discussion covers only reviews that proved to be challenging to divide into moves. There are, however, also some reviews where authors distributed the moves in accordance with paragraphs and without ambiguous move overlaps. It can be stated that this feature is author specific.

#### 4.3.3 *A side note vs. a separate move*

In certain cases, distinguishing a full separate move from a side note became a problem. This issue arises mainly because the conditions for a fraction of text to become an independent move are not very clear – length, function, or linguistic signals may be considered.

For instance, I would argue that authors may use a little bit of comparison to make any possible move more interesting and not create a whole separate comparison move.

The 10-episode supernatural drama — developed by Carlton Cuse (*Lost*), Aron Eli Coleite (*Heroes*), and Meredith Averill (*Star-Crossed*) — is an entertaining and heartfelt family adventure about growing up, coping with loss, and finding a demon at the bottom of a well on your haunted estate. **Imagine Goosebumps for grown-ups, or Stranger Things on antidepressants.**

After her husband Rendell (Bill Heck) is murdered [...] (Baldwin 2020)

Their kids, meanwhile, also wade through what feel surprisingly like grounded high school drama, **not the trauma of Euphoria or craziness of Outer Banks but more mundane mortifications:** getting too drunk once at a party, the post-life of a too-vulnerable text, dealing with parents upset with your grades. (Horton 2020)

The comparison in these samples (in bold) is situated inside a plot move and constitutes one full sentence (the first sample) and just a part of it (the second one). The reason for not classifying this comparison as a separate move would be that it is functionally very tightly blended into the plot move – the author here tries to help readers imagine what they are talking about. Also, there are no apparent formal signals that would distinguish the move.

In contrast, below is an example of a full evaluation move (as I classified it) situated between two parts of a plot move.

The pilot episode follows Mrs. True and Penance as they foil a kidnapping attempt on young Matilda (Viola Prettejohn), who is able to speak in every language but English,

by cloaked, gun-carrying villains whose faces looks like they're encased in wax. Over the next three episodes, the motivations of this crew, what they're trying to discover about the Turned, and what they're trying to unearth in London are very sparingly revealed. [//] **But “The Nevers” struggles to build a rhythm when it overloads each episode with so many other details and churns through story so quick.** [//]

In the first four episodes alone, we get: a forbidden romance for Mrs. True, a connection between her and Maladie, a disagreement between her [...] (Hadadi 2021)

At first sight, this case is not very different from the previous comparison examples. It would be possible to argue that this “move” only elaborates on the previous description and is functionally tied into it. Also, the length of one sentence may provide an argument for classifying it as a side note. However, in contrast to the previous comparison examples, there are strong formal signals here – words with evaluative undertones like “struggles”, “overloads” or “so quickly” – that are not to be found in the co-text.

These formal signals are in my view strong arguments for classifying it as a separate move. As I established in section concerning individual moves, there is no evaluation (thus no evaluative expressions) in moves that describe aspects of a TV show such as the plot move.

Note that the purpose of this argument is not to highlight the importance of formal/linguistic signals when classifying moves; but rather to show that when dealing with move analysis, it is possible to put emphasis on different aspects of the text and achieve diverse results.

The process of move analysis is certainly not simple and can lead to very different results if the emphasis is put on different aspects. Nevertheless, all the complexities of the genre are the consequence of the already mentioned essayistic nature of the genre. The author uses components (moves) available for the genre and combines them in various ways, mixes them together, or portions them and puts them in different places in the text. In other words, the writer creates the genre, so it serves its purpose in the most efficient way.

## 4.4 Register

In this section, I present the results of register analysis (divided into field, tenor and mode) based on methodology described in section 3.3. The tenor analysis gets in this case most attention as it directly addresses *Hypothesis 3*. The analysis of discourse community (see 4.1.1) of this genre seems to already undermine this hypothesis; however, it still needs more elaboration. The analysis of field and mode is then only peripheral for aims of this thesis, and thus gets less attention.

### 4.4.1 Field

The main topic of TV show reviews is naturally a TV show and its components. The author on the basis of vocabulary associated with film industry (i.e. scene, episode, season, platform, actors) establishes descriptions of different aspects of the TV show like actors, story or setting – we can see that these sub-topics are in accordance to moves found in the genre. The various mixing of the sub-topics is then the main factor for text cohesion.

Writers are providing a reader with their opinions that must be presented in a clear, coherent way. Authors often use evaluative or emotive language – this would include verbs like “fail”, “struggle” or “achieve”, and adjectives like “best”, “boring” or “funny”. Persuasion that is persistent in the texts is more implicit than explicit – authors use arguments just to help readers form their own view.

Overall, the vocabulary used by authors in TV show reviews is not technical nor semi-technical. Readers encounter only understandable, frequently used expressions. This fact relates to semi-promotional nature of reviews – promotional texts are supposed to be accessible as they are trying to convince readers about the validity of presented arguments.

### 4.4.2 Tenor

The tenor, the inter-personal relation between the author and the reader, is arguably the dominant contextual parameter in case of TV show reviews. To recall, I am considering texts that are written by critics with certain degree of experience and posted on an internet website for public. The readers consuming these texts are the fans of TV shows who want to see the opinions of others. To correctly determine the nature of relationship between these two sides, it is appropriate to focus on certain formal linguistic signals in the texts.

Firstly, in respect to overall formality of the genre, authors use a lot of phrasal verbs and enclitics which are both signs of rather informal texts.



[...] they must still **put up with** being young women in a male-dominated world. (Cumming 2021b)

[...] and **we're taken on** a journey that explores what it means to be [...] (Dyer 2020)

It would be irrelevant to state that the reviews are completely informal texts as e.g. complex sentence structures are a sign of the opposite. Nevertheless, the informality of texts could be potentially supported by personal (rather than impersonal) nature of the genre visible on usage of personal pronouns – authors are inclined to use pronouns *I*, *you* or *we* (and their paradigms).

Yet it didn't take long for **me** to become fully enveloped in it [...] (Framke 2021b)

If **you** asked **me** to rank every single character in the [...] (Franich 2021b)

The camera spins and zooms into tense moments as if **we** hadn't noticed. (Helm 2021)

The effect of this is that readers are more incorporated into the review, they are considered on the same level as the authors who try to establish a close relationship with the reader.

The pronouns might be considered as the strongest sign of personal tenor; still, the genre features also frequent puns, allusions, jokes, or figures of speech.

Yung and Martha Millan are stars, but they're **smothered by the soapy (pun intended) issues** of a criminal underworld [...] (Lopez 2022)

[...] but even her notable screen presence can't **clean up the mess** that the writers keep throwing at her. (Tallerico 2022)

**It is a truth universally acknowledged** that period dramas are a tonic in uncertain times, [...] (Rosseinsky 2020)

[...] which paradoxically frees the programme from having to take itself too seriously.

**Nuns on the run have always known how to party.** (Cumming 2020)

In *Mare of Easttown* (Sky Atlantic), HBO's dark new seven-part miniseries, she plays Mare Sheehan, a detective in the Pennsylvania town of – **wait for it** – Easttown, [...] (Cumming 2021a)

"Did I f--- like a grandma?" Mare asks Richard in the premiere — a line that's either super badass or super campy, **I'll watch 50 more times to decide.** (Franich 2021a)

It screams: **"Look at me, I'm the future of the Marvel Cinematic Universe."** (Helm 2021)

The first two examples are puns – jokes that refer to the name of the TV show (The Cleaning Lady – soapy; clean up). Then, the third sample is an example of funnily used allusion (first line of *Pride and Prejudice*) used as the first line for a romantic TV show review. The last four samples show that writers often simply make fun of anything trying to make the review less serious. The jokes (or punch lines) are short and not extraordinarily original, but they are very effectively used in the texts.

Fortunately, that’s not something we have to worry about too much **on this side of the pond**. (Mangan 2020a)

[...] Ratched is not a **big fish in a small pond**, but someone all too aware of her own vulnerabilities, [...] (O’Hara 2020)

What matters isn’t if or how Lucy and Ethel manage to solve their chocolate conveyor belt problem, it’s how they react when all **hell breaks loose**. (Shoemaker 2020)

For the most part, though, “Shadow and Bone” doesn’t **bite off more than it can chew**, focusing its energy on fleshing out [...] (Framke 2021b)

The figures of speech (especially idioms) are also used by authors in the reviews which pushes this genre into more personal, and informal territory.

Therefore, the tenor of the genre is rather personal and informal as writers try to make the review more interesting and fun to read. Note that this is true for majority of analyzed reviews, not for every single one – few authors do not use jokes or personal pronouns (*I, you, we*) in their reviews which consequently makes their produced texts more serious and less fun to read.

#### **4.4.3 Mode**

Concerning the parameter of mode, the genre of our attention is written (not spoken) and distributed on the internet websites. Thanks to the digital platform, the genre combines texts, pictures, videos, or intertextual links (see section 4.5).

The text part of the genre is highly structured. The title (optionally followed by post-title) is visually highlighted and then followed by information about the author of the review. The main body of the review is structured into paragraphs of various length and ends with the final mark or links to other articles.

In respect to the thematic structure of the genre, various features/components of the TV show in question tend to be thematic in majority of cases. This relates to the fact that

reviews are primarily concerned with providing information about products. Author of the review is then logically in the background.

The fact that I am dealing with reviews written not by amateurs but by professionals for domains where some degree of quality would be expected mirrors in the overall nature of the texts – they are not composed spontaneously but are deliberately prepared. One of the typical characteristics of prepared written texts are complex sentence structures.

**Any time** there's a threat of large danger, the outcome is predictable **because of** knowing **who** can't be harmed in such a family friendly story, or **that** a beat of someone sneaking up slowly for a kill just isn't going to turn out as the would-be murderer planned. (Allen 2020)

**If** Simon and Daphne pretend to be courting, Daphne's unavailability will renew male interest in her, **while** Simon's suggested affection for Daphne will dissuade female interest in him. (Hadadi 2020)

As presented, the sentences are usually relatively long and contain an efficiently high amount of information. Also notice the high occurrence of subordinated clauses like the conditional structure, and adverbial, or relative clauses. It is important that writers present information in a clear, coherent way.

## **4.5 Features of internet genres**

As I noted, the genre of TV show reviews as analyzed in this thesis is an internet genre; and therefore pictures, trailers, and even links represent an irreplaceable part of every TV show review. In this chapter, I address *Hypothesis 4* and present results of analyzes of these three features based on methods of Askehave and Nielsen (2004).

### ***4.5.1 Multimediality – pictures, trailers***

The structure of TV show reviews was already discussed in previous sections; however, an important part of every review is also an audio-visual material. Writers can make their reviews more accessible, user-friendly, or simply more fun very easily by including pictures from the show or even full trailers for readers to watch or listen to while reading the review.

Table 17: Occurrence of trailers and pictures in the 30 analyzed TV show reviews

<b>Audio-visual feature</b>	<b>Occurrence</b>
<b>Pictures</b>	27 (90%)
<b>Picture descriptions</b>	11 (36,7%)
<b>Trailers</b>	12 (40%)

Vast majority of analyzed reviews contain at least one picture (although some reviews may contain even 4). Picture descriptions or trailers are surprisingly not as common features as pictures.

Standardly, the trailers are situated at the beginning or at the very end of the review and are not addressed in the text itself; in contrast, pictures are scattered around the review dividing the text. These pictures always depict characters/actors from the TV show, and they are not showing any important story moments. They thus serve to give the reader a little “sneak-peek” and help them visualize the aesthetics of the show.

Picture descriptions cannot be regarded as superficially interesting or important as they are only telling the reader what they can already see with a little bit of context. The most common form of these descriptions is just the statement of the names of actors in the picture and nothing else. Below I present two examples, one of them conforming to preceding statement, latter one more elaborate.

Ambika Mod as Shruti and Ben Whishaw as Adam (Rosseinsky 2022)

Winslet seems to relish the challenge of the accent and the depressing setting (Cumming 2021a)

The first sample situated under picture with two character includes only names of actors and their respective roles. The second one situated under picture of the main protagonist includes her name but also a comment about the performance of the actress (however, it needs to be noted that this line is also part of the text itself and thus adds a certain cohesion to the text). Both examples are then presumably short and not ended with a full stop.

#### **4.5.2 Links**

As the corpus of TV show reviews was collected from internet websites, these texts are connected to the concept of links (see section 3.2). Of course, every text that can be found on an internet website is surrounded from all sides by a complex interface full of advertisements, suggestions, and such; but this will not be part of the present analysis as

my main aim is to systematically analyze the text itself, and so only intertextual links that are an inseparable part of the main textual body of the reviews.

In the reviews, the names of actors, producers, TV shows or whole franchises connected to TV show in question may function as links. Graphically, it is commonly signaled by underline and possibly different color. As I illustrate bellow, these links are in all cases very well incorporated into the text and do not interfere with readers' experience.

[Amir Wilson](#) plays our underdog hero Tiuri, a young man raised by his powerful stepfather Sir Tiuri the Valiant ([David Wenham](#)) to become a knight... (Allen 2020)

*Them's* approach — [Suburbicon](#) by way of [The Shining](#) — provides an intriguing premise, albeit a harrowing one. (Pitt 2021)

These two examples illustrate two most common links employed in the reviews. Firstly, the names of actors function as links that will after opening send reader to website where they can read other reviews or articles featuring the same actors. Secondly, the names of films function as gateways to reviews of these films (or they can potentially lead to other articles or recaps of films/TV shows).

The links are contextualized and their place in the text is logically justified; these characteristics are typical for *specific links* (see section 3.2). The author uses these links to keep the reader interested in contents of the domain and provide them with options to furtherly consult the information they might find interesting.

Given the medium where we can find TV show reviews, the texts successfully utilize several qualities of internet genres. Readers may thus encounter reviews completed with audio-visual material and intertextual links.

## 5 Conclusion

In the present thesis, I focused on genre analysis of corpus of 30 TV show reviews written by professional critics on internet websites and online magazines. The main aim was to thoroughly investigate communicative purpose, structure, register, and the internet features of this genre.

The *Practical part* presented results of the analysis. Firstly, the contextual analysis of the genre was presented, and the primary communicative purpose was defined – to describe and evaluate a TV show. This remark led to a thorough analysis of the structure of the genre. I identified 13 different moves with their rhetorical strategies that I consequently described, and exemplified. In the following section, I discussed problematic aspects of move analysis. The practical part featured also register analysis – field, tenor and mode of the genre were defined. Lastly, internet features found in the corpus of texts were investigated to complete the analysis.

Only two hypotheses established in the *Introduction* of this thesis were fully confirmed; two of them were disproved by majority of the analyzed texts.

The first confirmed hypothesis – *Hypothesis 1* proposed that the genre of TV show reviews will be structurally very complex; it will contain many different moves (both obligatory and optional) and rhetorical strategies; the structure will be significantly varied.

Throughout the move analysis, I identified 5 obligatory moves (incidence of over 90%) and 8 optional moves (incidence lower than 90%). Each of these moves then proved to entail a varied number of rhetorical strategies or components used to realize it. Incredibly, 9 distinct rhetorical strategies can be found in the introduction move alone which highlight the importance of this move as it is the first move forming the body of the review that may give readers the reason to or not to continue reading the review. On the contrary, the less frequent moves then proved to be realized by a single rhetorical strategy.

As the genre of TV show reviews is highly essayistic and no prescriptive manuals exist, the order of the moves is not fixed. Writers change the order from review to review freely to achieve different effects. The only thing to which the order must conform is the overall accessibility of the text, the information is to be presented in a convenient and logical way.

The second confirmed hypothesis – *Hypothesis 4* proposed that the genre, due to the medium (internet websites), contain several features typical for internet genres like links or audio-visual content.

90 % of analyzed reviews featured at least one picture (featuring main characters of the TV show) and 40 % of texts were also accompanied by a trailer. The authors use this audio-visual material to make their reviews more interesting for the reader thus effectively exploiting options that the internet medium provides.

Intertextual links as another feature typical for internet genres were also identified in the reviews. These links were in all cases used appropriately and were skillfully incorporated into the texts as their inseparable part. Regarding type of links, specific links were recognized.

The presence of both links and audio-visual material makes TV show reviews a truly multi-dimensional genre. Readers encounter not only textual material, but also other semiotic codes. Without these features the genre would not be able to function so efficiently – readers are expected to enjoy diverse nature of the genre.

*Hypothesis 3* proposing that the tenor of our genre will be rather formal and impersonal was in the scale of this thesis disproved.

The tenor of the TV show reviews proved to be informal and personal. I discovered that authors frequently use phrasal verbs, enclitics, personal pronouns (*I, you, we*), jokes, puns, and figures of speech.

The original hypothesis was based on the previous research in the field of genre analysis of reviews. This research is, however, based on film reviews that are approximately ten years old. This significant time gap seems to prove crucial for my hypothesis disproval.

Internet genres and genres that are being influenced by promotional interests like is the one in the center of this thesis would be expected to evolve rather quickly over time. Therefore, it seems that with time many authors of reviews (at the very least the ones connected with film industry) began to write in a more personal style. This also shows that readers these days prefer this more personal, individual approach.

The second disproved hypothesis – *Hypothesis 2* proposed that the moves will be easily identifiable and distinguishable from one another through several unambiguous signals.

This hypothesis assumed that professional critics would outline their reviews properly, also the lack of addressing this issue thoroughly in previous research seemed to support this assumption. Nevertheless, when performing move analysis on the corpus of reviews, a few issues occurred with distinguishing one move from another, and a move from a side note.

I discussed that division into paragraphs would not be in many cases an aid to differentiating moves as one move can be sectioned over more paragraphs and reversely one paragraph may host more individual moves.

Then, the role of content/function (key words) and formal features (language signals) in move distinguishing was considered. It seems that both aspects play a role and may help a researcher with performing a move analysis. Still, neither of them is definitive as in certain cases when one move slowly turns into another one, they might not help. This may be caused by the interconnectedness of every information presented and writers' aim to create a fluent, reader-friendly text.

I also presented that there may be a problem with differentiating a full move from a side note. When dealing with this issue, a researcher should standardly investigate length, function, and formal signals to determine the nature of the chunk of text that stands as a candidate for becoming a separate move.

Nonetheless, when performing genre analysis, it is possible to arrive at different results when putting emphasis on different aspects or signals in the text. Because of this ambiguous nature of move analysis when applied to essayistic genres, the results presented in the section discussing individual moves and their occurrence may be challenged. The findings cannot be completely definitive.

Lastly, it needs to be noted that these issues with move analysis does not have to occur in every review. Even in the corpus of analyzed texts there were authors that distributed the moves in accordance with paragraphs and without ambiguous move overlaps. Overall, writers always create their texts, so they serve their purpose in the most efficient way possible.

The results of this thesis should prove to be a helpful insight into the structure and language of the genre of TV show reviews, the process of move analysis when applied to essayistic genres, interpersonal function of reviews, and internet features in online reviews. The findings could be useful not only for those who would want to write reviews more professionally, but also for researchers. Any future study may challenge, verify, or expand



my results. More language features of the genre may be discussed; also, it may prove useful to analyze consumer TV show reviews, or reviews with different cultural background. Time shifts may have significant consequences on the validity of the present thesis as well.

## 6 Resumé

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá žánrovou analýzou recenzí seriálů napsaných profesionálními kritiky mezi lety 2020-2022 na internetových stránkách či v online magazínech. Hlavním cílem je za pomoci metodického rámce školy žánrové teorie English for Specific Purposes identifikovat typické moves, rétorické strategie a lexiko-gramatické prvky tohoto žánru. Práce je rovněž rozšířena o analýzu registru a internetových prvků žánru.

V teoretické části práce představuji tři školy žánrové teorie a základní pojmy žánrové analýzy. Zaměřuji se především na definici žánru, discourse komunity a vymezení teorie internetových žánrů na základě teorie Askehave a Nielsen.

Následující kapitola poskytuje metodologický rámec pro praktickou část práce. Základem je představení postupu při analýze žánru dle metodiky Bhatii a Swalese. Důraz kladu zejména na strukturní analýzu žánru. Dále popisuji metodiku pro analýzu prvků internetových žánrů dle Askehave a Nielsen a pro analýzu registru dle Hallidaye a Hasanové.

V praktické části práce představuji výsledky žánrové analýzy sledovaného žánru a potvrzují či vyvracím hypotézy definované v úvodu práce. Na první část, která se věnuje popisu komunikačního cíle a specifík discourse komunity žánru, navazuje podrobný rozbor strukturní stránky recenzí seriálů na základě moves a rétorických strategií. Zjistil jsem, že sledovaný žánr je tvořen 5 povinnými moves a 8 volitelnými moves. Tyto strukturní jednotky lze poté dělit na jednotlivé rétorické strategie, kterých může být např. v případě úvodu recenze až 9. Pořadí moves pak není nijak závazně určeno, autoři recenzí tvoří text tak, aby co nejlépe plnil svou funkci.

Následující sekci věnuji problematice rozlišování jednotlivých moves. Při provádění move analýzy se lze soustředit na dělení do paragrafů, na formální (jazykovou) či na funkční (nejlépe viditelnou na klíčových slovech) stánku. Ukázalo se, že paragrafy jsou nejméně spolehlivým vodítkem. Jelikož však autoři recenzí usilují o vytvoření koherentního a atraktivního textu, nelze se definitivně spoléhat na žádnou z těchto stránek. Pokud bychom při analýze dali přednost jedné před druhou, dospěli bychom přirozeně k odlišným výsledkům.

Stejně tak je při analýze moves důležité rozlišovat plnohodnotné moves od pouhých poznámek na okraj. Při tom nám může pomoci délka, formální signály či funkční stránka. Opět je zde nutno zdůraznit, že pokud dáme při analýze důraz na odlišné prvky, dojdeme k jiným výsledkům.

Dále v praktické části práce pokračuji analýzou třech základních parametrů registru, jimiž jsou field, tenor a mode. Zvláštní důraz věnuji interpersonální složce recenzí. Některé studie staršího data navrhovali, že recenze psané profesionálními kritiky mají tendenci být neosobní a formální. Výsledky mé analýzy ovšem dokazují opak, neboť recenze seriálů obsahují kontrahované formy pomocných sloves, osobní zájmena (*já, ty, my*), frázová slovesa či vtipy.

V poslední části práce se zabývám internetovými prvky, které se frekventovaně vyskytují ve sledovaném žánru. 90 % recenzí obsahovalo alespoň jeden snímek (zobrazující hlavní hrdiny seriálu) a 40 % recenzí i trailer. Autoři také často do textů vkládají intertextové odkazy, které propojují více souvisejících článků.

Výsledky mé práce by mohli být užitečné jak komukoli, kdo by chtěl psát recenze seriálů, tak dalším studiím v oblasti žánrové analýzy recenzí. Např. by bylo zajímavé porovnat tyto výsledky s amatérskými recenzemi na internetových blozích.

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## **9 Appendix (available on CD)**

Analyzed texts in their full form with highlighted moves and significant passages