Preface

This research adds a new perspective to the existing limited studies of contests and contest discourse by proposing that the winning contest discourse chosen from a teaching contest represents a particular genre: in essence, it is a change from the classroom-based pedagogic genre which presents a meta-pedagogic identity privileged by the contest adjudicators. This conclusion is based on a careful systemic functional linguistic (hereafter SFL) discourse analysis of the published recordings of winning Mock Teachings and the published adjudicators' comments from the finals of the 2nd Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press (hereafter SFLEP) contest, along with a comparison between these data and Lee's (2011) genre study of ESL classroom teaching. The existing studies of contests and contest discourse usually treat contests as independent social events and contest discourse as a particular discourse type. Therefore, little is known about the relationship between contest discourse and non-contest discourse, and this lack of understanding has led to an underestimation of the importance of contest discourse. The present research aims to fill this gap by analyzing the data from an initial stage of register analysis of the contest discourse, then comparing the generic features of the contest discourse and the ESL pedagogic discourse, and finally analyzing how generic features are privileged in an evaluation loop in the contest adjudicators' post-contest comments. The research then reconceptualizes these processes as "genre blurring" and "genre solidification" in the contest discourse.

Semenyih, Malaysia — Ning Liu
Ningbo, China — Derek Irwin

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Liu, N.; Irwin, D.

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