Minima Onomastica: a new academic genre

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Abstract

The paper focuses on analyzing texts of the academic genre *Minima Onomastica*, published in the *Rivista Italiana di Onomastica (*RIOn*)*. This new genre, not yet described within Text and Discourse Linguistics, aims primarily to present insights or findings on a precise topic or object of study in Onomastics. By applying CARS model, grounded in the theoretical framework of Swales (1990, 2004) that was adapted by Bunton (2002), the compositional structure of a corpus consisting of eighteen texts was analyzed; of these, sixteen were written in Italian, one in English, and one in Catalan. Among the examined texts, two steps of the CARS model (introducing the subject and presenting results) emerged prominently by occurring in all analyzed texts. Additionally, the contextualization step was identified in most cases. These findings allow for a systematic description of the main rhetorical-structural properties of the *Minima Onomastica* genre and confirm its effectiveness in disseminating discoveries, thereby promoting the dissemination and enrichment of knowledge within the field of Onomastics.

Keywords: Text and discourse linguistics; genre; CARS model.

Resumo

O artigo foca-se na análise de textos do gênero acadêmico Mínima Onomástica, publicados na Rivista Italiana di Onomastica (RIOn). Este gênero, que é novo e não foi ainda descrito no âmbito da Linguística do Texto e do Discurso, tem como principal objetivo apresentar reflexões ou resultados sobre um tópico ou objeto de estudo

delimitado da Onomástica. Por meio da aplicação do modelo CARS, ancorado na teorização de Swales (1990, 2004) e na adaptação de Bunton (2002), foi analisada a estrutura composicional de um corpus constituído por 18 textos, sendo dezesseis redigidos em italiano, um em inglês e um em catalão. Dos exemplares estudados, dois passos do modelo CARS (a indicação do tema e a apresentação dos resultados) destacaram-se pela prevalência em todos os textos analisados. Além disso, o passo relativo à contextualização foi identificado na maioria dos textos. Os resultados obtidos permitem sistematizar as principais propriedades retórico-estruturais do gênero Mínima Onomástica e confirmam a sua capacidade de divulgar descobertas, contribuindo para a difusão e o avanço do conhecimento no campo da Onomástica.

Minima Onomastica: a new academic genre[1]

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INTRODUCTION

This study aims to analyze and systematize the rhetorical-structural properties of a newly created academic genre, recently adopted by the *Rivista Italiana di Onomastica* (RIOn): the *Minima Onomastica* genre. Its existence is evidenced by its use and recognition within a defined discourse community and the presence of a specific label to identify it. *Minima Onomastica* is a Latin term that means a minimum piece of writing on Onomastic research. It is in plural form, as it introduces a section presenting multiple examples.

Texts within this genre exhibit particular characteristics: they are identified by a label naming the section in which they appear, distinguishing them from all other academic genres. They are communicatively autonomous, unlike abstracts which accompany texts such as research articles, PhD dissertations, and master's theses. They adhere to specific length constraints that limit the breadth and scope of content, and they lack distinct sections or chapters due to their concise nature. In this regard, *Minima Onomastica* contrasts with other academic genres, namely, research articles, PhD dissertations, and master's theses.

Regarding the communicative and scientific purpose of the genre, it is essential to consider that Onomastics – a discipline focused on the study of proper names – is a broad and interdisciplinary field, encompassing the investigation of name origins and etymologies, spatial distribution, in conjunction with historical and cultural significance. It also includes studies on naming practices across one or more languages and the social impact of names on individuals and groups, extending to literary and other domains. Given the expansive nature of this field, the ability to synthesize findings is particularly valuable. Thus, the encapsulated, minimalist, yet engaging style of presenting onomastic research through this new genre offers an alternative form of scientific communication that is more concise and accessible compared to more extended, comprehensive genres.

Academic genres have been of particular interest within Text and Discourse Linguistics. Many researchers in this field specifically seek to describe and systematize the rhetorical-structural properties of widely used genres, either from a theoretical perspective or with practical, pedagogical aims. The CARS model (an acronym for *Create A Research Space*), noteworthy for its application to the rhetorical structuring of research article introductions, was originally proposed by Swales (1990) and later adapted by Bunton (2002) for PhD dissertations introductions. In the present study, the model was applied to a corpus of eighteen *Minima Onomastica* examples. Hopefully, the description and systematization of the rhetorical-structural properties of this genre will contribute to a deeper understanding of the process of creating and disseminating new genres within the academic context, particularly by observing how they incorporate elements from established genres.

This analysis is part of a broader research framework, resulting from an international project that brings together the efforts of researchers from several fields, entitled *"Between the Abstract and*

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[1] Translated by: Jessica Paula Vescovi.

the News: Constitutive Elements of the Genre Minima Onomastica". Authors Seide and Bini contribute their expertise to the research in the fields of Onomastics and Italian Language, respectively. Silva, in turn, brings specialized knowledge in genre studies and textual classifications.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study presented here falls within the field of Text and Discourse Linguistics. In order to conduct it, theoretical and methodological approaches from Language Teaching for Specific Purposes – particularly English for Academic Purposes (EAP; Swales, 1990, 2004) – were adopted. Among the key concepts within this field relevant to the present research are the notions of "discourse community" and "genre". According to Swales (1990, pp. 21-32), a discourse community can be characterized by the following systematic properties.

First, members of each discourse community share an agreed-upon and recognized set of common public goals. Additionally, they possess mechanisms for intercommunication and use them effectively to share information. To achieve this, they employ one or more genres that facilitate the promotion and realization of their objectives. Moreover, within their socio-professional activities, members have developed and make use of a specific vocabulary. Finally, each discourse community includes certain members who exhibit a high degree of knowledge on relevant contents within the group, as well as proficient discourse skills reflected in the genres they employ; such members are frequently referred to as "gatekeepers".

The concept of a discourse community is pertinent to this research, as it provides a means to delineate the group of individuals who know, use, and promote the genre *Minima Onomastica* – although this is done through an inherently artificial scope. This group is comprised of researchers in the Social Sciences and Humanities who are interested in the analysis, description, and systematization of names and who voluntarily and consciously affiliate with the discipline of Onomastics, a sub-discipline of Linguistics. Specifically, it encompasses individuals in this field who read and/or write texts in various genres published in the journal *Rivista Italiana di Onomastica* (RIOn). Two observations support and reinforce the proposed depiction of this discourse community: the genre in question was recently created and named within this Italian-language journal; and one of the characteristics Swales (1990) associates with each discourse community is the use of specific genres.

Regarding the concept of genre within the field known as English for Academic Purposes (EAP), it is defined as follows:

> A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style. Communicative purpose is both a privileged criterion and one that operates to keep the scope of a genre as here conceived narrowly focused on comparable rhetorical action. In addition to purpose, exemplars of a genre exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience. If all high probability expectations are realized, the exemplar will be viewed as prototypical by the parent discourse community. The genre names inherited and produced by discourse communities and imported by others constitute valuable ethnographic communication, but typically need further validation (Swales, 1990, p. 58).

The quotation highlights the communicative purposes underlying the texts that belong to each genre, establishing this property as decisive for characterizing a given genre and distinguishing it from others. Furthermore, the communicative purposes inherent to genres contribute to shaping

their textual properties: the structure of the texts, on one hand, as well as constraints related to both the contents that may or must appear within them and the adopted style.

Swales' (1990) proposed definition also relates to the (more or less) prototypical nature of each instance of a given genre. Considering the communicative purposes and the target audience, if the main textual properties associated with a genre – structure, content, and style – are evidenced in a given text, it will be recognized as a more prototypical example of that genre.

Finally, it is appropriate to present a brief reflection on genre labels. These labels are generated within the discourse community that employs them, and in the case of genres that remain in use for an extended period, they are successively inherited by members of subsequent generations. Specifically regarding the texts of the genre *Minima Onomastica*, which are the subject of analysis in this research, the label was assigned by the editor of the *Rivista Italiana di Onomastica* (RIOn), as will be discussed in the next section.

Following the recognition of the genre's existence, an investigation into its linguistic, rhetorical, and discursive characteristics was initiated, anchored in Swales' (1990, 2004) theoretical framework. The CARS model was developed by this author as a consequence of examining the characteristics of 48 research article introductions. Situated within the field of English for Academic Purposes, Swales proposed a descriptive model of the introductions of this genre, which encompasses two types of categories: moves, which are higher-level units that fulfill a specific communicative function; and steps, which are lower-level units that comprise a move and contribute to achieving the main communicative purpose of that move.

The CARS model includes three moves that follow an ecological metaphor inspired by the process of niche occupation by a given species: Move 1 consists of delineating a territory, Move 2 involves defining a niche within that territory, and Move 3 corresponds to occupying that niche. These figurative indications can be aligned with the following communicative purposes: Move 1 frames the research within a specific area of knowledge; Move 2 indicates a space within that area that has yet to be adequately studied; and Move 3 presents the uniqueness of the research being introduced (theme, objectives, theoretical framework, methodology, etc.). Each move includes various steps. In the modified version of the CARS model proposed by Bunton (2002), Moves 1 and 2 each comprise five steps, while Move 3 includes fifteen steps. In this paper, the following moves and steps proved useful for describing the genre: Move 1, Step 1 (Claiming centrality); Move 1, Step 2 (Making topic generalizations and giving background information); Move 1, Step 4 (Reviewing previous research); Move 2, Step 1A (Indicating a gap in research); Move 2, Step 1C (Question-raising); Move 3, Step 4 (Materials or subjects); and Move 3, Step 5 (Findings or results).

This model has enjoyed considerable success and displays significant vitality, both in the analysis and description of academic texts and in didactic approaches. It has been repeatedly applied not only to introductions (Dudley-Evans, 1986; Bunton, 2002; Loan; Pramoolsook, 2016) but also to other sections and chapters – literature reviews, methods, results, discussions, and conclusions (Wood, 1982; Crookes, 1986; Kwan, 2006; Chen; Kuo, 2012) – across various research genres, including research articles, PhD dissertations, and master's theses.

In Brazil, the model has been employed for a significant period, as evidenced by the research of Motta-Roth (1995) and Araújo (1996) on book reviews, Santos (1996) on master's thesis abstracts, as well as Hemais and Biasi-Rodrigues (2005) on introductions in the fields of Physics, Education, and Psychology. In Portugal, it has been applied in recent years to PhD dissertations to describe introductions (Silva; Santos, 2018) and concluding sections (Silva; Santos, 2020).

The subsequent discussion will outline key properties of texts within the genre *Minima Onomastica* and provide a rationale for adopting the CARS model in this study.

THE GENRE *MINIMA ONOMASTICA*: EMERGENCE AND DEFINING PROPERTIES

The name of the genre, *Minima Onomastica*, was coined by the Italian scholar Enzo Cafarelli, a renowned researcher in Onomastics, the field dedicated to the study of proper names. In addition to his research, Cafarelli serves as editor of the *Rivista Italiana di Onomastica* (RIOn), where *Minima Onomastica* texts are published. In an issue of the journal currently in press, the editor of RIOn celebrates the achievement of having published 400 texts of this genre, informing readers about its genesis and highlighting some of its defining features.

The creation of the genre arose from the need to find space within the journal for a text that did not fit into any existing section. This seminal text, authored by Giovanni Rapelli, was brief and autonomous. To accommodate this work in the journal, a new section titled *Minima Onomastica* was established in 2016. Following the publication of the first text, numerous others ensued, gradually leading to the social recognition of the genre.

The editor clarifies that there is no overlap between this section and other sections in the journal, which are designated as follows: *Saggi* (Essays), *Varietà* (Varieties), *Opinioni* (Opinions), *Repliche* (Responses), *Materiali bibliografici* (Bibliographic Materials, such as reports, new book releases, and journal publications), *Incontri* (Events), *Attualità* (News – covering projects, research, academic courses, theses, new associations, etc.), *Ludonomastica* (Ludonomastics), and *Osservatóri* (Observatories – terminological, deonymic, anthroponymic, toponymic, odonymic, crematonymic, transonymic, statistical, literary, and didactic observatories).

The names and descriptions of these sections indicate that the journal provides distinct spaces for scholarly essays, various types of bibliographic information, and news about events and new publications in books, journals, and conference proceedings in the field. The space dedicated to the *Minima Onomastica* section is reserved specifically for the publication of

> A brief or very brief yet self-contained article focused on the etymology or motivation behind a single proper name, the history and significance of a deonym, the presence of anthroponyms and toponyms within a specific geographical area, or even the discovery and interpretation of rare and unusual names. It is not an abstract-summary format, nor the introduction or conclusion of a larger article; it bears no necessary relation to current events and, thus, is neither a news announcement nor a review (Caffarelli, in press) (our translation)[2]

With regard to the length of texts in this genre, the editor (in personal communication) clarified that he initially set the requirement of 2,900 to 3,100 characters, but after insistence from some authors, he began to accept texts ranging from 6,300 to 6,700 characters. Thus, there are two alternative standardized lengths for texts in this genre: in the first case, they occupy one page, and in the second, two pages. Caffarelli emphasized that this is the primary rule governing the genre, which limits the scope of content intended for communication. Furthermore, it is expected that the title of the text should be as referential as possible, without puns or wordplay.

The *Minima Onomastica* genre is comparable to other academic genres in terms of the primary aim that authors seek to achieve: to share, within the community of researchers it addresses, the results of studies or reflections on topics in a specific disciplinary field (in this case, Onomastics). Thus, beyond the communicative purpose that it aims to accomplish, it shares two other external or situational properties with these genres: they are all texts written in paper and/or digital formats that are produced and circulate within a given area of activity (scientific research),

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[2] Our translation of "un articolo breve o brevissimo ma autonomo, sull'etimologia o la motivazione di un singolo nome proprio o sulla storia e la vitalità di un deonimico, o sulla presenza di antroponimi e toponimi in una certa area territoriale o ancora sulla scoperta e interpretazione di nomi comunque rari e curiosi. Non un formato sommario-*abstract*, non l'inizio o la conclusione di un articolo di grandi dimensioni, non una necessaria relazione con l'attualità, dunque non l'annuncio di una notizia o una recensione".

and their respective authors assume a particular socioprofessional role (that of researcher). It also shares internal or textual properties, such as the themes addressed (specific to a given disciplinary area) and the style typically adopted in academic writing.

The differences or specificities of this genre in relation to others used within the same discourse community lie in the following properties:

a) in the genre label adopted (*Minima Onomastica*) – which, as stated at the beginning of the section in which the texts appear, clearly distinguishes it from other genres;

b) in the restrictive guidelines for text length previously indicated (which include two options: 2,900 to 3,100 characters in one case and 6,300 to 6,700 characters in the other);

c) in its autonomy and self-sufficiency (in contrast to short academic texts of other genres, such as abstracts);

d) in the rhetorical structuring of the texts (cf. section Analysis and discussion).

These properties, associated with the communicative purposes typical of this genre, confirm that it is a distinct genre from others used by the same discourse community, such as the research article.

It is well known that, most often, each new genre is created based on one or more existing genres, and that the genres used within a given discourse community can mutually influence one another. Regarding the genre in question, it is worth noting that it was created by an editor of a scientific journal, in which texts of various other genres, including research articles, are published. Given this observation, as well as the primary goal associated with the genre (to disseminate, in a brief text, insights and results derived from research and reflections in the field of Onomastics), it was deemed pertinent to base the study on the CARS model, which has already been widely applied to texts in the genres of research articles, PhD dissertations, and master's theses. The collected results, which will be presented in the next sections, validated this methodological choice.

METHODS AND CORPUS SELECTION

The texts of the *Minima Onomastica* genre were analyzed according to the CARS model version proposed by Bunton (2002). Given that this model has been used to describe sections and chapters of texts from several academic genres (cf. section Theoretical Framework), it is worthwhile to reflect on the reasons that support and validate its adoption in a study aimed at describing the compositional structure of complete texts of the genre addressed in this article.

The CARS model has been recognized as a valid and productive tool for analyzing the structure of academic genres, considering their sections and chapters, particularly research articles, PhD dissertations, and master's theses. Initially proposed and developed by Swales (1990), it has been adopted and adapted by numerous authors in the field of English for Academic Purposes (Bunton, 2002; Chen; Kuo, 2012; Loan; Pramoolsook, 2016; among others). In this regard, it has proven to be a reliable instrument in accounting for the flexible modes underlying the structuring of academic texts that aim to communicate research processes and their results. As envisaged within the framework of the model, structuring includes the types of selected content, their ordering and connection in the text, as well as the rhetorical actions (or speech acts) realized within it.

Another methodological procedure adopted was to conduct multiple analyses of the texts selected for this research. In March 2023, the texts were independently evaluated by Silva and Seide. In April, the results were compiled, compared, and discussed, maintaining the convergent

findings. In July, the initial versions of the analyses were reviewed, resulting in the final analysis presented in this article.

The studied corpus was constituted in February 2023. It should be noted that access to the *Rivista Italiana di Onomastica* (RIOn) is not free: it requires a subscription or the purchase of an individual issue. In the absence of financial resources to conduct the research, a request was made for a free sample of sections from *Minima Onomastica*. In response to the request, the editor sent section reprints from volumes 26 (2020), 27 (2021), and 28 (2022), with each volume containing two issues of the journal, resulting in six issues.

In order to constitute the corpus, a total of eighteen articles were selected through a random draw [3] of two issues from each volume. Considering that 145 articles were published in the volumes, the sample corresponds to approximately 12.4% of the total articles accessible. Comparing the selected articles with all those published in the issues of the journal available for research purposes, it is evident that the corpus is representative, as it primarily consists of texts written in Italian, but also includes texts in English (Jordan, 2022) and other Romance languages, namely, Catalan[4] (Ballester Gómez, 2020), and in other issues, both in Catalan and Spanish. The proportion of articles with one and two pages in length was also maintained. Thus, the corpus comprised eighteen texts of the *Minima Onomastica* genre, with sixteen written in Italian, one in English, and one in Catalan. For the purposes of this research, an initial analysis of the original texts was followed by a reanalysis, considering the translation of the texts into languages more proficiently handled by the authors of this article[5].

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The study was initially conducted based on the adapted version of the CARS model. Since additional mechanisms were identified as relevant to describe the genre *Minima Onomastica*, the analysis was subsequently expanded to include other rhetorical moves, as will be discussed below.

With regard to the CARS model, seven steps from the three prescribed moves were identified in the analyzed texts. These are as follows: Move 1, Step 1 (Claiming centrality); Move 1, Step 2 (Making topic generalizations and giving background information); Move 1, Step 4 (Reviewing previous research); Move 2, Step 1A (Indicating a gap in research); Move 2, Step 1C (Question-raising); Move 3, Step 4 (Materials or subjects); Move 3, Step 5 (Findings or results). Therefore, seven steps were recognized, including three steps from Move 1, two steps from Move 2, and two steps from Move 3.

Table 1 below exemplifies the moves that were identified in a text of the analyzed corpus.

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[3] The articles from the same volume were numbered, and using a random number generator software, two articles were selected from each volume of the journal.

[4] The author of this minima is Valencian and wrote his text using Valencian, a linguistic variety of the Catalan language recognized as the proper and official language of the Valencian Community by the Valencian government of Spain since 2003.

[5] The texts in Italian were translated into Portuguese by Bini, the text in Catalan was translated into Portuguese by Seide, and there was no need to translate the text in English.

Table 1 – Exemplification of moves in an analyzed text of the genre *Minima Onomastica* (Cassi, 2022a)

Title	*The landscape speaks through place names and sometimes lies: toponyms in Tuscany*
Move 1 **(Step 2: Making topic generalizations and giving background information)**	Characterized by a notable suggestive quality, place names simultaneously reflect objective conditions and perceptions, as evidenced, among other things, by the frequent use of metaphorical or antiphrastic expressions (...)
Move 2 **(Step 1C: Question-raising)**	Is it therefore correct to say that the landscape speaks through place names?
Move 3 **(Step 5: Findings or results)**	Yes, just as it is through the onomastic action carried out over centuries by human communities, reflecting how the living environment was perceived, utilized, and organized. (...) However, it is essential to pay attention to what the names 'say', whether explicitly, subtly, or even ironically, to emphasize certain characteristics − be they natural or human − or even to deny them.

In Table 1, the textual segments presented in the right column materialize the steps mentioned in the left column[6]. The example illustrates the analytical work that involved identifying the moves and steps evidenced in the texts that were selected for this study.

Table 2 summarizes the total number of moves and steps identified in each of the eighteen texts that were analyzed.

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[6] Due to the page limit of this paper, it was not possible to reproduce a complete text of the genre *Minima Onomastica*. A representative excerpt of several typical moves of the genre was chosen instead.

Table 2 – Number and percentage of moves and steps detected in the analyzed texts

	M1 S1	M1 S2	M1 S4	M2 S1A	M2 S1C	M3 S4	M3 S5
Castiglione (2020)	X	X	X			X	X
Matt (2020)	X	X	X			X	X
Sestito (2020)		X			X	X	X
Ballester Gómez (2020)						X	X
Di Vasto (2020)						X	X
Lurati (2020)		X		X	X	X	X
Caprini (2021)	X	X				X	X
Mussano (2021)		X				X	X
Sottile (2021)		X				X	X
De Albentiis (2021)		X				X	X
Fragale (2021)		X				X	X
Gane (2021)		X	X			X	X
Bullo (2022)			X		X	X	X
Cassi (2022a)	X	X	X		X	X	X
Sgroi (2022)		X	X		X	X	X
Cassi (2022b)	X	X				X	X
Ciciliot (2022)			X			X	X
Jordan (2022)		X				X	X
Total	**5**	**14**	**7**	**1**	**5**	**18**	**18**
%	**27.7%**	**77.7%**	**38.8%**	**5.5%**	**27.7%**	**100%**	**100%**

Source: Authors.

Among the collected data, those concerning Steps 4 and 5 of Move 3 are prominent, namely, the indication of the addressed subject in the text and the presentation of results. Both steps were evidenced in all analyzed texts, indicating their relevance in the *Minima Onomastica* genre. This finding is not surprising, as the primary purpose of texts of this genre is precisely to present a topic along with reflections or results regarded as relevant to it.

Step 2 of Move 1 was also frequently identified, occurring in fourteen of the eighteen texts in the corpus (77.7%). This step corresponds to the contextualization of the conducted research, by making topic generalizations and giving background information, thus enabling the understanding of the expressed ideas. According to the collected data, this step occurs in the majority of texts within the genre.

Another step with a considerable frequency is that corresponding to reviewing previous research (Move 1, Step 4), which was observed in seven texts (38.8%). With a similar occurrence rate, steps corresponding to claiming the centrality of the research area in which is situated the subject addressed in the text (Move 1, Step 1) and question-raising (Move 2, Step 1C) were identified in five texts (27.7%). Finally, indicating a gap in previous research (Move 2, Step 1A) was only noted in one text (5.5%).

Other rhetorical actions were evidenced in the analyzed texts, including the practice of citing other publications, illustrating with examples, presenting recommendations, and including narrative segments. These aspects are not addressed in the present text, as they will be the subject of future research. Despite the limitations of the current study, the operative concepts established and defined in relation to methodological procedures, along with the textual analysis model that encompasses

rhetorical moves and steps (the CARS model), proved to be suitable for describing and systematizing the properties of the *Minima Onomastica* genre.

According to the conducted analysis, the specific properties of texts from the genre of *Minima Onomastica* result in implications for textual structuring. In texts from other academic genres that present the processes and results of investigations, contents such as the objectives to be achieved and the significance of the research, the theoretical framework, and the adopted methodology (including the definition of important operative concepts) are typically expressed, to varying degrees of comprehensiveness. However, in *Minima Onomastica* texts, these contents are not organized into sections or chapters[7].

Additionally, the collected data indicate that the structuring of these texts relies on a limited set of rhetorical actions. In fact, only three steps from the CARS model (Bunton, 2002) demonstrate a high frequency in the analyzed corpus: making topic generalizations and giving background information (in fourteen texts: 77.7%), indicating materials or subjects, and presenting results (in all texts). Since these are the most frequently detected steps in the corpus, it can be concluded that they correspond to the main tasks accomplished in texts of the *Minima Onomastica* genre. It is plausible to assert, with some degree of certainty, that texts of this genre generally include an initial contextualization, the presentation of the addressed subject, and the indication of the results that were obtained from reflections and conducted research. Given that texts of this genre are short in length (compared to research articles), their basic rhetorical structure seems to consist on the succession of these three steps. Further studies that include a larger number of texts may confirm or refute the assertion that it constitutes the typical textual structuring of texts in this genre.

Next, several examples are presented in order to illustrate the materialization of the main steps identified in the analyzed texts. The contextualization of the presented study (Move 1, Step 2) consists on displaying generic and background information, which may refer to a scientific subfield:

(1) Toponymy is useful for historical reconstruction, especially for periods of our history that are poorly covered by documentation, such as Liguria in the 5th to 7th centuries and beyond.[8] (Caprini, 2021, p. 224)

In another example of giving background information, a generic assertion introducing the studied subject is presented:

(2) If it is true that environmental assets are valued as highly as cultural ones, they also manifest as "monuments", material reference points whose destruction irreversibly leads to the loss of the underlying value system associated with them. This is the case with the demolition of the *Rocca Çiaccata*, literally 'broken rock' (located in Caltavuturo, Sicily), an imposing rock formation that was nearly completely demolished about twenty years ago to correct the trajectory of a curve on a provincial road.[9] (Sottile, 2021, p. 242)

In this case, the first sentence (which defends the idea that, within toponymy, natural assets can also be viewed as cultural assets) serves to frame the presentation of the subject (Move 3, Step 4) − the toponymic effects of the demolition of the *Rocca Çiaccata* − as materialized in the second sentence.

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[7] No infographic elements were detected, such as images, tables, or diagrams.

[8] Our translation of "La toponomastica è utile per la ricostruzione storica, specie per i periodi della nostra storia poco coperti dalla documentazione, com'è il caso della Liguria nei secoli dal V al VII e oltre".

[9] Our translation of "Se è vero che i beni ambientali valgono come quelli culturali, anch'essi si configurano come "monumenti", punti di riferimento materiale, distrutti i quali si determina irreversi bilmente la perdita del sistema di valori ad essi sotteso. È il caso della demolizione della *Rocca çiaccata* lett. 'rocca spaccata' (nel territorio di Caltavuturo, in Sicilia), un imponente corpo roccioso che una ventina di anni fa è stato quasi del tutto abbattuto per correggere la traiettoria di una curva di una strada provinciale".

Sometimes, the topic of the text is introduced directly, without concern for giving background information, which may be due to the strict limits imposed on the length of texts in this genre:

> **(3)** The Great Italian Dictionary of Use (GRADIT, Tullio de Mauro [ed.], *Grande dizionario italiano dell'uso*, Turin, UTET 1999-2007, 8 vols.) records many exotic ethnonyms that are overlooked by all other Italian dictionaries.[10] (Matt, 2020, p. 272)

In several texts, two or more steps are implemented in the same introductory sentence. In the following example, presenting the subject occurs alongside the recommendation to adopt a theoretical-methodological procedure[11]:

> **(4)** The interest in the anthroponym *Romolo* cannot be separated from its correlation with the toponym *Roma*, but at the intersection with the hodonymy extended to the names of subway stations and with hagionomy[12], it is possible to find other references[13] (Mussano, 2021, p. 236).

In this case, the topic (the anthroponym *Romolo*) is explicitly stated while simultaneously recommending and justifying a methodological procedure: the study of this anthroponym requires consideration of hodonymy (specifically, the names of subway stations) and hagionomy.

The presentation of findings or results (Move 3, Step 5) is the most frequent step in the studied corpus. This rhetorical action serves to fulfill the primary aim of texts within this genre: to disseminate new knowledge in the field of Onomastics. The following two examples, among other possible ones, illustrate this step:

> **(5)** The markedly mountainous landscape of our region is frequently reflected in place names, with a succession of names derived from terms such as *poggio*, *colle*, *monte*, either in simple or compound forms, and often qualified by adjectives that specify certain conditions (*Montauto, Montebello, Poggio Secco, Poggio Deserto*).[14] (Cassi, 2022a, p. 293)

> **(6)** With the (natural) disappearance of the dental consonant, which first became voiced and then disappeared, "*nativa*" became *Naiva, and later, with vowel reduction, *Niva*.[15] (Lurati, 2020, p. 840)

Three additional steps demonstrate an occurrence rate worth highlighting: reviewing previous research (identified in seven texts: 38.8%), claiming centrality, and the question-raising (each of these two steps appears in five instances: 27.7%). The collected data suggest that these are significant rhetorical actions within texts of the *Minima Onomastica* genre.

Such steps complement the three previously mentioned, which constitute the central rhetorical structure of this genre. Thus, in various instances, authors address or refer to other relevant publications (example 7), emphasize the centrality of the research topic (example 8), and/or identify a research question to which the text will respond (example 9):

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[10] Our translation of "Nel *GRADIT* (TULLIO DE MAURO [dir.], *Grande dizionario italiano dell'uso*, Torino, UTET 1999-2007, 8 voll.) sono registrati moltissimi etnonimi esotici ignorati da tutti gli altri dizionari italiani".

[11] As previously mentioned, this is a rhetorical action not included in the CARS model (Bunton, 2002) but evidenced in the analyzed texts.

[12] Hagionomy is the term that refers to the study of proper names related to sacred and/or religious referents, such as the names of saints in the Catholic Church.

[13] Our translation of "L'interesse per l'antroponimo *Romolo* non può prescindere dalla correlazione con il toponimo *Roma* ma, nell'intersezione con l'odonimia estesa ai nomi delle stazioni della metropolitana e con l'agionomastica, è possibile rintracciare altri riferimenti".

[14] Our translation of "Il paesaggio marcatamente collinare della nostra regione si riflette frequentemente nei nomi di luogo, col susseguirsi di denominazioni derivate dai termini poggio, colle, monte, in forma semplice o composta e per lo più qualificati da aggettivi che ne precisano alcune condizioni (*Montaùto, Montebello, Poggio Secco, Poggio Deserto*)".

[15] Our translation of "Con la scomparsa (naturale) della consonante dentale, sonorizzatasi e poi dileguatasi, *nativa* dava *Naiva e poi, con l'alleggerimento dell'accumulo di vocali, *Niva*".

(7) The [dictionary] *De Mauro* (Milan, Paravia 2000), along with the GRADIT (1999, 2007), lists the two variants in the order: "nobèl, nòbel," but considers them normatively equivalent, both being correct. The same observation applies in the *Vocabolario della lingua italiana Treccani* (2005/2009): "*Nobel* /no'bɛl/ or /'nɔbel/ n.m.".[16] (Sgroi, 2022, p. 318)

(8) I have previously discussed, on various occasions, the literary onomastics of the writer Silvana Grasso, highlighting the strongly motivated dimension of authorial naming, often from a fatalistic perspective (*The Anthroponym in Silvana Grasso: Between Cultural Tradition, Ancestral Evocation, and Modern Pathology*, <*The name of the text*>, XIII [2011], pp. 33-46; *Apollonia and Her Halves*. Introduction to *Il cuore a destra* by Silvana Grasso, Valverde [Catania], Le Farfalle) 2014, pp. 9-27).[17] (Castiglione, 2020, p. 261)

(9) What is the origin of the toponym *Claro* (called *Crèe* in the local dialect), now part of the "new" Bellinzona since 2017?[18] (Bullo, 2022, p. 288)

Example 7 illustrates the reference to other publications (Move 1, Step 4) as part of a literature review on the pronunciation of the loanword *Nobel*. In Example 8, the centrality of the research area (Move 1, Step 1) is inferred from the fact that the author has previously addressed topics in Literary Onomastics related to the work of a given writer. Example 9 presents a research question that the text seeks to clarify (Move 2, Step 1C).

Finally, the indication of a knowledge or research gap (Move 2, Step 1A) appears in only one instance (5.5%), making it a relatively minor step in the analyzed corpus:

(10) We managed to find a clue to a human mystery (not just a scientific one) that had intrigued us for some time: *Niva*, located above *Campo* in *Valmaggia* (or *Vallemaggia* or *Valle Maggia*) in the Canton of Ticino, had seemed indecipherable.[19] (Lurati, 2020, p. 840)

The CARS model comprises a total of twenty-five steps, organized across three moves: Move 1 and Move 2 each include five steps, while Move 3 encompasses fifteen steps. In the current study, however, only seven steps were identified. A plausible reason for this limited number of observed steps relates to the brevity of texts within the *Minima Onomastica* genre (which range between 2,900 and 6,700 characters). The CARS model used in this study was originally developed to analyze PhD dissertation introductions, which are significantly longer texts. Thus, it is unsurprising that, in the analyzed corpus, authors perform a limited number of rhetorical actions. Given the brevity of these texts, the execution of multiple additional steps is both unnecessary and unfeasible. In terms of rhetorical structuring, the genre's central steps appear to involve, as noted, the indication of a subject (Move 3, Step 4), contextualization (Move 1, Step 2), and presentation of research findings (Move 3, Step 5).

Upon examining the *Minima Onomastica* genre, one indeed observes a textual approach

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[16] Our translation of "Il *De Mauro* (Milano, Paravia 2000) col *GRADIT* (1999, 2007) riporta le due varianti nell'ordine: 'nobèl, nòbel', ma normativamente giudicate alla pari, entrambe corrette. Analogamente *Il vocabolario della lingua italiana* Treccani (2005/2009): '*Nobel* /no'bɛl/ o /'nɔbel/ s.m.'".

[17] Our translation of "Dell'onomastica letteraria della scrittrice Silvana Grasso ho già parlato in diverse sedi, facendo rilevare la dimensione fortemente motivata della *nominatio* autoriale, spesso in prospettiva fatalistica (*L'antroponimo in Silvana Grasso*: *fra tradizione culturale*, *evocazione ancestrale*, *patologia moderna*, «Il Nome del testo», XIII [2011], pp. 33-46; *Apollonia e le sue metà*. Introduzione a *Il cuore a destra* di Silvana Grasso, Valverde [Catania], Le farfalle 2014, pp. 9-27)".

[18] Our translation of "Qual è l'origine del toponimo *Claro* (*Crèe* nella parlata locale) divenuto ormai quartiere della "nuova" Bellinzona a partire dal 2017?".

[19] Our translation of "Siamo riusciti a individuare una pista per un enigma umano (non solo scientifico) che ci intrigava da tempo: *Niva*, che sta alta sopra Campo, in Valmaggia (o Vallemaggia o Valle Maggia) nel Cantone Ticino, riusciva indecifrabile".

that values conciseness without compromising content integrity and depth. Unlike other academic genres that allow for detailed argument expansion, *Minima Onomastica* operates on the premise of conveying information succinctly. This is achieved through the clear and precise indication of a topic and a carefully constructed contextualization that sets the stage for the reader. Although presented concisely, the results are communicated in such a way that clearly conveys their value and relevance. In applying the CARS model to this genre, it is noticeable that the authors of the analyzed texts undertake a selective adaptation of rhetorical actions. Rather than strictly following all steps outlined in the model, the *Minima Onomastica* texts reflect selective choices driven by the genre's intrinsic brevity requirements.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study, dedicated to the *Minima Onomastica* genre and grounded in the theoretical framework of English for Academic Purposes (EAP), particularly supported by the CARS model (Bunton, 2002), has yielded insights that add layers of understanding regarding the compositional structure and functionality of this genre within the scope of the *Rivista Italiana di Onomastica* (RION). The application of the CARS model, although originally designed to analyze sections and chapters of other academic genres, proved to be a viable tool for examining the texts of the genre under consideration. The texts of the *Minima Onomastica* genre possess their own label and are communicatively autonomous, which helps differentiate them from other texts within the academic social sphere. Moreover, there are specific norms related to text length, which directly influence the structuring of this genre.

The conducted investigation identified seven specific steps from the three moves proposed in the CARS model across the analyzed corpus. Notably, the subject and the results presentation were prominent, as they were present in all analyzed texts, highlighting their centrality in this textual genre, given that its main purpose is to present insights or results on a particular subject. Additionally, contextualization, which serves to provide the reader with the necessary framing for a deeper understanding and interpretation of the content, was identified in 77.7% of the texts. Beyond the CARS model, the analysis has detected other rhetorical actions within the texts, such as the practice of providing quotations, including examples, offering recommendations, and inserting narrative segments – features that will be the subject of further research.

This analysis was constrained by the limited availability of texts from the *Minima Onomastica* genre. Therefore, we suggest conducting future research that may expand the base of examined texts. Furthermore, the authors of this paper are already engaged in subsequent investigations, focusing on the exploration and classification of distinct rhetorical phenomena related to the microstructure of the genre, beyond what has been mentioned in the previous paragraph.

Ultimately, given the particular nature of Onomastics, a field dedicated to the study of proper names and their origins, etymologies, and sociocultural distributions, the *Minima Onomastica* genre proves to be particularly valuable. The ability to synthesize findings is crucial, especially when considering the vastness and diversity of onomastic phenomena. Thus, the effectiveness of this academic genre significantly contributes to enhancing comprehension and disseminating knowledge within the discipline. Moreover, the conducted analysis emphasizes the importance of understanding the variations of different academic genres and adapting rhetorical strategies as necessary to meet their specific demands.

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