

Rhetorical situation



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Rhetorical Situation Rhetorical Situation One of the central considerations in the Norton Field Guide is the rhetorical situation. A rhetorical situation is a form of communication with another individual or entity. Specifically this involves five components. These five components include: purpose, audience, stance, genre, and a medium ('Norton Field Guide,' p 1). Purpose involves the specific intentions involved in the producing the communication. Audience is the specific individual or entity the communication is directed at. Stance represents the specific attitude an individual takes in their communication. Finally, genre is the kind of writing; this would involve the specific medium of production. These elements are all important notions as they establish the structure of the rhetorical situation and demonstrate there are underlining parameters in this communication.

Entering the Conversation

In the text 'They Say/ I Say' authors Graff and Birkenstein discuss the notion of 'entering the conversation.' Entering the conversation refers to the process of writing or potentially speaking that engages with a listener. In this way, one enters a conversation not simply by speaking their mind, but by considering the perspective and opinion of the opposing party. As such, the individual's writing or speaking directly considers these viewpoints and builds off of them in the form of a conversation. This is highly important for a variety of reasons. As a rhetorical strategy 'entering the conversation' means that the dialogue being produced is well considered and deeply engaged with another person's views. This is a way of looking at academic writing from an entirely new perspective. The authors indicate that oftentimes academic writing is written as if there is an ultimate 'truth,' or written simply to say 'smart' things (Graff & Birkenstein, p. 3). Instead,

entering the conversation recognizes that the greatest possible insights are those that are gleaned from direct conversation and deliberation with another person.

Reading Strategies

Summarizing is recognized as highly important in academic writing. From an overarching perspective, summarizing is important as it is the first step in entering the conversation. In this way summarizing, functions as an indicator that demonstrates the individual recognizes what they are responding to. The authors indicate then that it is necessary to summarize the opposing argument early in the text and then refer to it at strategic points (Graff & Birkenstein, p. 19). While summarizing is important, the text indicates that this summary should get directly to the point rather than exhausting the reader with every possible aspect of the argument. The authors indicate that there are a variety of possible ways to introduce or summarize opposing views (Graff & Birkenstein, p. 20). They refer to an example from a George Orwell text. The Orwell text, rather than summarizing an opposing argument, includes a quote that speaks to the essence of this argument. In addition to beginning the text with the opposing argument, it is necessary to consistently refer back to these views during the text. Signal verbs then function as a means of introducing these opposing arguments.

References

Bullock, Richard. Norton Field Guide to Writing. New York: Norton. 2012. Print.

Graff, Gerald. Birkenstein, Cathy. They say/I say. New York: Norton. 2009. Print.