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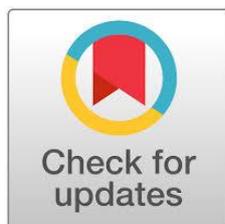
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Promoting Students' Reviewing Skills in Foreign Language Writing through Genre-Based Activities in Linguistics Classes

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Abstract

Recently, genre studies have contributed not only to linguistic areas but also to language education. In language teaching and learning, developing learners' awareness of various genres, especially those prevailing in their future job contexts, is essential because learners could be better prepared to produce texts of the same genres when required successfully. In this study, genre-based activities (GBAs) were introduced to 40 third-year EFL students in two linguistic classes where the teacher used English as a medium of instruction (EMI). The data collection was conducted via class interaction, assignment analysis and informal talks. The data analysis revealed that, despite some limitations in the intervention, GBAs had such positive effects on students' development of reviewing skills in English writing as students could link their text evaluation and revision to the contextual features, and they tried to read extensively about the features of different genres, and accordingly, they could enhance their genre awareness, resulting in their better evaluation and revision of texts. However, unfamiliar genres might hinder the effects of GBAs. Texts elicited from students, and multimodal texts were more appropriate inputs for novice genre analysts.

Keywords: genre; genre analysis; genre-based activities; writing skills; reviewing skills

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Introduction

The findings from recent studies of genres and genre application in teaching revealed that raising learners' awareness of various genres is essential for their language skill development (Devitt, Reiff, & Bawarshi, 2004; Cheng, 2011, 2015; Yayli, 2011; Yasuda, 2011; Cozma, 2014; Johns, 2015; Tribble, 2015; Yasuda, 2015; Nagao, 2019; Dugartsyrenova, 2020).

The empirical studies of genre and genre analysis application in language skills development, as mentioned, were conducted in ESL or ELF classes (Devitt, Reiff, & Bawarshi, 2004; Cheng, 2006; Ortega, 2010, 2012; Yayli, 2011; Yasuda, 2011; Cozma, 2014; Johns, 2015) or in ESP classes (Cheng, 2006, 2015). According to Ortega (2010), students' linguistic knowledge supports their writing development, which means their writing competence could be enhanced when they gain better linguistic knowledge of a certain language. Accordingly, in English Linguistics classes where English linguistic knowledge is the focused content of teaching, the English writing skills of the students could be developed along the way. However, none of the genre and genre analysis application studies were conducted in a linguistic class. This paper denoted a study on 40 EFL students in two EMI functional grammar (FG) classes, in which English writing skill was not the central focus of teaching but developed alongside linguistic knowledge and skills. GBAs, consisting of genre analysis and follow-up activities, were employed to help students use the linguistic contents of the course in scaffolding their awareness of the construction of different genres, then develop their ability to evaluate and revise the texts produced in those genres. Students' skills of reviewing their writings with genre features could be promoted from this awareness and ability.

Literature review

Genre and genre analysis

As a recurrent configuration of meaning, which enacts the social practices of a culture (Martin & Rose, 2008), a genre is defined by characterizing schematic and linguistic patterns typically found in all texts of the genre. These patterns allow text producers and receivers to distinguish texts in one genre from others. As there are constraints and conventions on the typical and specific lexico-grammatical and discoursal features of all texts in a genre (Cozma, 2014), genre awareness is not biologically transmitted but must be acquired through exposure to the texts of the genre.

In the systemic functional linguistics (SFL) view, different genres are identified based on their different functions. Genres are defined by Martin (1985) as staged, goal-oriented social processes of communicative events in which the same set of communicative purposes are shared among members. The construction of a genre is determined by the communicative purpose(s) that all texts aim to fulfill. Since language is only a meaning-making resource

(Halliday, 1970), analyzing the language features of the texts only serves as a resource to realize different communicative purposes. Accordingly, the basis for categorizing texts into genres could be the communicative functions that the texts perform. Knapp and Watkins (1994) provided a two-level classification of genres. At a higher level, they classified genres in terms of such general processes as explaining, arguing, or narrating. At a lower level, they classified genres in terms of such specific products as information reports, commentaries, or expositions. In this paper, the term “genre” refers to a group of texts in the same subject area, with the same communicative purpose(s), and used in similar situations. Therefore, communicative purpose identification should be the initial stage of any genre analysis, followed by key feature analysis of the texts in the same genre, then a thorough investigation into the interaction between these purposes and features. In this study, the focus of this analysis was on evaluating how much the language choices in the texts support the fulfillment of the text functions and genre goals.

Reviewing skills in writing

Writing is not an isolated product existing in a vacuum but as a mediated and dynamic social activity (Canagarajah, 2002) because to write is to communicate, and writing is a way of getting things done (Hyland, 2003). In Flower and Hayes’ (1981) views, “writing is best understood as a set of distinctive thinking processes which writers orchestrate or organize during the act of composing” (p.366). As a text construction technology, writing requires different combined skills, which must be practiced and learned through experience (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). Therefore, writing skills must be taught in schools or other assisting environments, whether in one’s mother tongue or foreign languages (Flower & Hayes, 1981). The FG course in this study was an EMI course for English majors, so it was supposed to be an assisting environment for students to further develop the reviewing skills in writing that they had already accomplished.

Taking the view of writing as a process, Flower and Hayes (1981) viewed that writing is made up of distinctive, goal-directed, and hierarchical cognitive processes and goal setting is a crucial feature of a good writer. This model also pays adequate attention to the role of a writer’s linguistic knowledge in writing. Therefore, the model should go well with the functional approach to writing skill development when integrating students’ English writing skills with teaching the linguistic contents.

Flower and Hayes's (1981) writing model involves the task environment, the writer's long-term memory, and the writing processes. Any writing process should include the four sub-processes of Planning, Translating, Reviewing, and Monitor, and Monitor controls the other three sub-processes. In this action research, the intervention was conducted in the sub-process of Reviewing, which combines evaluating and revising. The term "reviewing skills" is used subsequently to refer to the skills of evaluating and revising the writings.

Genre analysis and writing skill development

Genre and genre analysis studies have been applied in writing classrooms for decades. According to Sakari and Hirose (1996), since language teaching often occurs in the confined foreign language classroom with unreal contexts, the language teaching focus is often on grammar practice or vocabulary exercises, in which language is only a medium of instruction. Consequently, learners tend to be more aware of grammatical issues than pragmatic issues (Alcon Soler, 2005; Koike & Pearson, 2005). Being taught in such a way, as mentioned, many of these learners - the foreign language writers - construct their writings with the belief that such texts are autonomous and context-free (Yasuda, 2011) and accordingly fail to see writing as a process that is enacted dynamically, interacting with purpose, audience, and language choices. Wang (2013) stated that the concept of genre in the linguistic sense had transformed people's opinions on the nature of writing: writing is no longer perceived as static and monolithic but as a dynamic and flexible social process. Recent studies on genre teaching and learning have proved the interaction between genre analysis activities and learners' language skill development (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010; Cheng, 2006; Cheng, 2011; Yayli, 2011; Yasuda, 2011; Johns, 2015; Cozma, 2014; Tribble, 2015). There have been studies that specifically focused on applying SFL-based genre pedagogy to developing writing skills so that students can learn about genre-related contents and language concurrently, and the results showed positive effects that students' language choices for constructing texts in a genre changed over time in optimistic manners (Yasuda, 2015, 2017; Nagao, 2019). This promotion is possible because genre analysis could condition the growth of learners' linguistic knowledge of a certain language, which is in a reciprocally supportive relationship with their writing skills in that language (Ortega, 2010).

In writing classes, the teaching activities that focus on analyzing the prototypical texts of specific genres can raise students' genre awareness and develop their ability to appropriately contextualize their writings according to the genre features (Cheng, 2011). Investigating how different resources involved in meaning-making processes might raise learners' awareness of the various language choices available to fit the contextual situations (Caffarel, 2006). Such awareness is expected to orient the learners – the novice writers - towards the genre goals they need to achieve (Yasuda, 2011). In other words, once being fully aware of the social function(s) that they might encounter in a specific genre, these novice writers would be able to see “language as a meaning-making system” (Martin, 2009, p.11), so that their language choices when writing in this genre could be more systematically goal-oriented. Accordingly, the analysis of different genre features provides chances for learners better to understand the constraints and conventions behind the language choices. This understanding allows students to moderate the language choices for the best fulfillment of the functions of their writings.

In the researcher's FG course, genre analyses were where students' genre knowledge was scaffolded, and their linguistic knowledge and skills were consolidated. The follow-up activities evaluated texts and revised them to enhance the agreement between the genre goals and features and language choices in the texts. In these activities, students reflected on their genre knowledge with the writing quality. In this paper, the term “genre-based activities” (GBAs) denotes genre analysis combined with their follow-up activities.

Method

The research was initiated with the hypothesis based on Ortega's (2010) position that once facilitated linguistic knowledge and language analyzing skills. Students would be aware of the potential effects that language choices may have on writing purpose accomplishment and thus could moderate the language choices to enhance the quality of their writings.

The context of the study

The researcher conducted this action research in my FG course – an EMI linguistic course, with the three major expected learning outcomes: (i) students could understand the linguistic contents in the SLF approach and conduct linguistic analyses in the functional

approach; (ii) students could evaluate the texts based on these linguistic contents; and (iii) students could apply the linguistic contents to the development of their English skills.

The linguistic contents of this FG course included SFL concepts and issues, including text-context relationship, field, mode, tenor, transitivity, mood, modality, theme, and cohesion, which were the inherent features of texts in functional linguistics. During this research, the researcher specifically highlighted the activities of analyzing the transitivity systems, the mood patterns, modality, thematic structures, and cohesion of the texts. In the follow-up activities, the language choices were evaluated in terms of how well they agreed with the communicative purposes of the texts. All revisions were needed to improve the language choices - writing purposes agreements were made.

The participants

GBAs were used in an FG class of 21 third-year students for the academic year 2019 and another FG class of 19 students for the academic year 2020. All these students were English majors, so one of the exit requirements for their completion of the program was a C1 (CEFR) certificate, or 6.5 to 7.5 IELTS, or level-5 certificate in Vietnamese Standardized Test of English Proficiency. All 40 students were in the same English language teacher education program, just of different cohorts; they learned the same subjects with the same schedules. During their first two years, these students took English proficiency courses (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) to be exposed to English in different genres, ranging from social to academic. At the beginning of this FG course, many students had reached the C1 (CEFR) level, and others were at B2.

The previous writing courses

Before taking the FG course, the students took four English writing courses designed to scaffold their English writing proficiency from A2⁺/B1 level (CEFR) to B2⁺/C1 level (CEFR). These courses allowed them to experience writing in different genres, divided into social genres (e.g., informal notes/ letters/ emails, informal instruction, a narration of a trip, or film review), and academic genres (e.g., course leaflet, statistical analysis reports, compare-and-contrast essay, argumentative essays, scholar article reviews or research proposals). However, students focused more on practicing the academic genres; the focus on these genres was also assumed by the

course designers to avail in almost all contexts of students' future jobs as teachers, teaching material developers, or even translators and interpreters. Writing teaching in these courses was process-based; students went through all the sub-processes of Planning, Translating, Reviewing, and Monitor (Flower and Hayes, 1981), so they were familiar with Reviewing.

The intervention

This two-cycle action research was conducted in Kemmis and McTaggart's (2000) model. The aim of GBAs in the intervention was to explore how linguistic content and genre awareness could influence students' development of reviewing skills in English writing. This aim was fulfilled in three stages: (i) familiarizing students with the typical language features of specific genres; (ii) providing students with tasks that required detailed textual and contextual analyses of texts of specific genres so that they could fully understand and evaluate the language choices-writing purposes agreements; and (iii) applying the linguistic contents (accumulated through the lectures) and the genre awareness (accumulated through GBAs) on evaluating, then revising their writings.

Cycle-1 seven-session intervention was conducted in the second half of the course, with three lectures, three whole-class tutorials, and a midterm project presentation session, followed by two post-course weeks for take-home assignment completion. All Cycle-1 sessions were in face-to-face mode. Cycle-2 nine-session intervention included four lectures, four whole-class tutorials, and a midterm project presentation session, followed by two post-course weeks for take-home assignment completion. The first two Cycle-2 sessions were in face-to-face mode. The other seven were all via Zoom meetings due to the first COVID-19 social distancing period in Vietnam. Cycle 2 intervention was revised from Cycle-1 intervention to support students better in their GBAs. In both cycles, the lectures provided the linguistic contents needed for the following GBAs. Students observed how the researcher applied the linguistic contents in my model text analyses. In the lectures on contextual features and cohesive devices, students participated in some short teacher-led GBAs integrated into the lecture because the concepts taught in these lectures had been previously introduced in another subject. A detailed description of activities used in the intervention can be found in Appendix 1.

During the tutorials, the students practiced analyzing texts based on the linguistic contents from the lectures. At certain times, the researcher controlled the choice of input texts

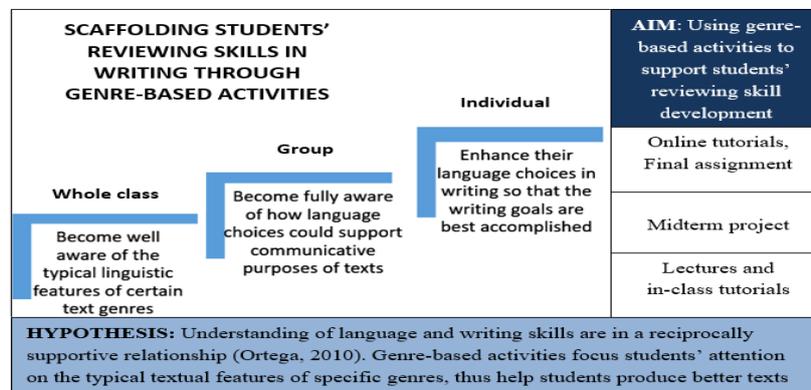
for analysis to ensure that the input texts concentrated on a specific genre and that the practice allowed students to focus on the common features of the targeted genre only. The concentration guaranteed the emphasis on the targeted genre to be strong enough for students to shape a broad view of how certain language choices supported the text purposes systematically in this genre. The follow-up discussion activities were where the researcher guided the students in their investigation of the typical language patterns found across texts so that their conclusions on genre features could be made. The follow-up discussion activities were for students to further investigate the mutual interaction between these language patterns and the text purposes. The language modification tasks were assigned as in-class group work in Cycle 1 but as the post-class group works in Cycle 2 (as the breakout-room function was not supported for the researcher's Zoom ID). After this group work, groups of students took turns to present their suggested modifications and evaluate the effects that other groups' modifications might bring to the texts.

The midterm project was for groups to evaluate the language choices-writing purposes in concord and suggest language modifications to achieve the targeted purposes better. The project instructions were sent to students two weeks before the project presentation session. After each group's project presentation, the researcher initiated a follow-up discussion and circulated it among students. The discussion was designed for the students to shape more clearly their awareness of how language choices could affect the writing purpose.

The final take-home assignment was for individual students to demonstrate how their reviewing skills in English writing might be influenced by the linguistic contents and genre awareness gained from GBAs. In this assignment, students were required to choose one among their writing products to review the language choices based on the genre features and the linguistic knowledge and skills they learned in the course. The detailed requirements are described in Appendix 1.

Though the intervention steps in the two cycles were not identical, they both originated from the same hypothesis about the reciprocally supportive relationship between genre awareness and writing competence, and both were oriented towards promoting students' reviewing skills alongside linguistic knowledge and skills. The procedure is summarized in Figure 1.

Figure 1. *The intervention*



As presented in Figure 1, students' reviewing skills and linguistic knowledge, skills, and genre awareness were scaffolded. Students started by learning the linguistics contents, applying what they learned in analyzing texts of specific genres, then familiarizing themselves with the typical linguistic features of texts of these genres. Once aware of the characterizing linguistic features of these genres, they gradually scaffolded the awareness of the reciprocal relationship between language choices and the text's communicative purposes and, even further, the goals of the whole genre. Finally, they improved their skills in evaluating the language choices-writing purposes agreement and revised the texts so that the language choices supported their writing purposes more efficiently. In this combination, the lectures, the in-class tutorials, the midterm project, the final assignment, and online tutorials functioned as a three-step staircase for students to "climb upwards" based on their linguistic knowledge and skills to promote their reviewing skills in writing.

The observation

The observation of the intervention was conducted via three major modes. To observe students' genre awareness development and their ability to evaluate the language choices-writing purposes agreement, the researcher interacted with students during the lectures, genre analysis discussion, and post-presentation Q&A to guide them through the activities and collect data. To observe how students' reviewing skills were developed along with GBAs, I analyzed the modifications students made to their writings and explained why the modifications were necessary. The analysis scheme in Appendix 3 was used. Also, *informal talks* with students, face-to-face and via Zoom, during break time, before and after the lectures, allow

me to observe how GBAs helped them in seeing the correlation between language choices and writing purposes and how such understanding might guide them in reviewing their writings in a well-informed way.

Findings

Cycle 1

The analysis of data in Cycle 1 revealed four major themes:

Theme 1: In GBAs, inadequate genre awareness hindered students' identification of writing purpose achievement problems

In Tutorial 1, most students lacked adequate awareness of genre goals, the features shared by texts in the same genre and the relationship between language choices and writing purposes.

Figure 2. Tutorial 1 GBA requirement

Task: How much does the realization of mood and modality in the information signs given support the communicative effectiveness of the signs? What modifications would you make to enhance the communicative effectiveness?

To address the requirement shown in Figure 2, most groups focused their discussions on the accuracy of mood structures and modal verbs. The researcher observed that students successfully based themselves on the contents of Lecture 1 to classify the mood types and modal devices. However, no attempts at analyzing the influences of the mood structures and modality devices on the text purposes and the genre goals were made. The question about the goals that the input texts shared took students a few seconds to find the answer, and eliciting questions about how the distribution of mood types and modal devices supported the text purposes also confounded many students. In response to this question, students intensively discussed the agreement between the choice of mood structures and modality devices and text purposes for about ten minutes, but their evaluation of the harmony between the mood, modality and text purposes was still underdeveloped.

Through my analysis of the groups' comments and revision of the input texts based on Appendix 2, students' inadequate genre awareness was revealed - the same problems as what Alcon Soler (2005), Koike and Pearson (2005), and Dugartsyrenova (2016, cited in

Dugartsyrenova, 2020) pointed out. The grammatical accuracy of the mood structures and modal verbs were the main focus of the comments. The comments were missing the mood choice and degree of modality following the genre goals and the communicative purposes of each text. Only one out of four groups could suggest revisions that enhance the text's communicative effectiveness. The modifications of the other three groups were scanty and defectively developed, which were unsatisfactory in task fulfillment but understandable since students had no experience with GBAs before.

During our break-time informal talks, the students explained that although they experienced different genres in language skill courses, they had never had assignments focusing on genre goals and features and language choices-text purposes agreement analysis. Therefore, the alignment of language choices to the text purposes and the genre goals and features had never received much of their attention in writing.

Theme 2: GBAs enabled students to better link the contextual features with text evaluation and modifications.

Students mentioned the genre goals and the shared features of texts in the same genres, to different extents, anytime they discussed the language choices realized through the transitivity system and cohesion (tutorials 2 and 3).

Tutorial-2 GBAs, as shown in Figure 3, included evaluating the language choices-writing purposes agreement, detecting related problems, and resolving them. The students were required to recommend the language changes so that the texts matched the new contextual features – audience and mode – when the tourism website's written entries were converted into tour-guide spoken commentaries. According to Pasquarelli (2006), in genre pedagogy, the purposes and audience of the texts are two important variables that writers must consider when performing social actions. Correspondingly, students' awareness of and emphasis on the matching between language choices and contextual features promised that their writing reviewing would potentially be improved.

Figure 3. Tutorial 2 and 3 GBA requirements

Tutorial 2

Task: How much does the realization of transitivity in the tourism website entries (as provided) support the communicative effectiveness of these texts? Supposing that you are a tour guide introducing the places to the tourists, how would you change the texts into your tour commentaries with the same contents? What modification would you make and why?

Tutorial 3

Task: How much does the realization of thematic structure and cohesive devices in the blog posts/ product manuals/ course information leaflets/ travel brochures / book introductions / academic compositions support the communicative effectiveness of these texts? What modifications would you make to enhance the communicative effectiveness?

Tutorial 2 shows that the genre awareness of nine students had been enhanced, which has also been observed by Yasuda (2011). In the submitted word file of one group, students managed to relate many of their comments on language choices with the text purposes, the genre features, the recurring contexts in which the texts appeared, and the receivers of the texts. Two out of four groups converted the written entries into the tour-guide commentaries, and students' demonstrations of the commentaries were of good quality. The other two groups' commentaries did not sound natural for spoken language, which might be due to students' proficiency in English, but the comments and language modifications they gave revealed their attempts at assessing the transitivity realization with the text purposes and genre features.

Figure 4. An example of students' comments on the texts

Comment 1: There should be a more direct lead-in here. Fewer existential processes, more material processes instead

Comment 2: Clarification about "Dam Da", "Trinh" temple, "Mau" temple, etc. should be added. Otherwise, just omit this part

Comment 3: A guiding phrase needed

Comment 4: Connective construction should be added

Comment 5: No need for too specific number

Comment 6: A guiding phrase needed

Comment 7: Markers like first, second, third is needed for making the information clearer

Comment 8: A closing needed

Figure 4 demonstrates various attempts a group made in converting the website entry into a tour-guide commentary. Besides the suggestions of adding such new elements as lead-in parts, which were quite popular, the changes of clauses from existential to material processes or mental process clauses from the "like" type to the "please" type were good efforts students made to enhance the liveliness of the spoken language through transitivity system. Other good

efforts of changing a written genre into a spoken genre were evidenced in the suggestions that verbal process clauses were inserted with projecting / quotation clauses, and some clausal in declarative mood were transformed into the interrogative mood (rhetorical questions) to engage the audience better.

The genre choices in Tutorial 3 were not limited to those listed in the requirement (as shown in Figure 3). The students were allowed to choose genres of their preference and at their convenience, so students appeared to be much more active and engaged in the task than in the previous tutorials. With their prior experience in GBAs, students not only modified the small details at clause levels (changes in the cohesive devices or the thematic structures of the clauses) but became more confident and ambitious in their efforts to rewrite the texts, with major revisions suggested to above-clause level in the texts. Creative revisions of language choices were observed, including changing the thematic progression in the texts or employing nominalization to enhance the cohesion of the texts. In this tutorial, almost no interaction between the students and me as the teacher happened, no guiding question was raised, but students' task fulfillment was still productive.

During the informal talks with students, the researcher figured out that once students understood that language choices could influence writing purpose accomplishment, they became more selective and critical in the choice of mood, modal devices, processes, and themes in the texts. Students' understanding of the linguistic contents was accumulated through the lectures, and their experience of applying them was gained through GBAs. The quantity and quality of modifications they made and the level of complexity of the modifications were gradually promoted. It could be inferred that GBAs were a helpful preparation for students in reviewing the texts inputted by the teacher and potentially producing their well-contextualized texts.

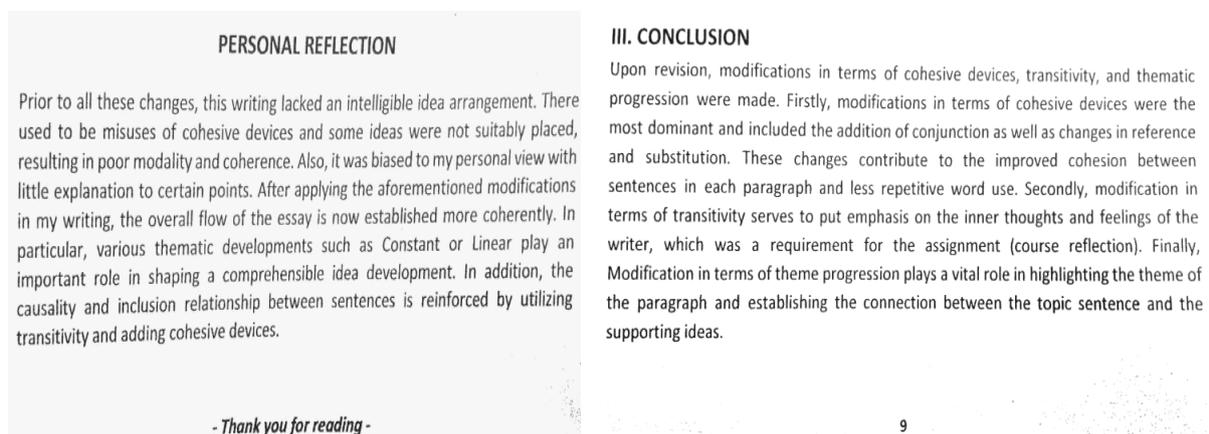
Theme 3: GBA-structured assignments promoted students' ability to evaluate and enhance their writing quality.

The midterm assignment requirement was: groups of students to analyze three to five sample academic compositions in one academic genre based on their mood, transitivity, and theme systems. The final assignment requirement was: for individual students to choose one of their writings in the same genres as the midterm assignment to analyze and revise. In both assignments, students explained why certain modifications were needed or what effects might

be created from each change. In the final assignment, students also reflected on how much the revision affected their writings.

My analysis of 21 assignments showed that students could review the writings in all interpersonal, conceptual, and textual aspects. In 19 final papers, the explanations of the changes were related to at least two aspects, but mostly to cohesion, communicative effectiveness, and tone of the writing. In six papers, students detailed analyses of the audience, purposes, and genre features so that their suggested modifications could resolve most of the conflicts between the language choices and those factors in the original writings. Students' modifications to their writings successfully improved the texts' communicative effectiveness, tone, and cohesion. This finding is quite close to what is reported in Yasuda (2015) and Yasuda (2017) about the positive effects of SFL-based genre pedagogy on students' language choices in such genres as academic texts. This finding also resonates with Nagao's (2019) conclusion that GBA paired with a sequenced and well-structured teaching methodology can enhance students' writing skills. Students' reflections or comments on how the modification had changed the writings, which were retrieved from two papers, are presented in Figure 5.

Figure 5. *Samples of students' reflections (Cycle 1)*



As shown in Figure 5, Reflections demonstrate that students could assess their writing, spot problematic details, and improve their writing. However, in the revised versions of two students, only trivial changes were made with superficial justifications. Noticeably, during a final assignment tutorial, Sa (pseudonym) kept asking me again and again if there could be any possibility that no problems be detected in her original writing. The researcher encouraged

reviewing more critically, and imagine the change in audience and medium of the text, and linking those contextual changes to the language modifications. However, in Sa's submitted final assignment, only two trivial modifications were made to the conjunctions, and the explanation for these modifications was poorly developed. Sa's failure to connect the language choices and the contextual features might be caused by her inadequate understanding of the interaction between the contextual aspects and the language choices.

Theme 4: The choice of unfamiliar genres in GBAs might hinder students' genre awareness and text evaluating skill development.

Despite being an interesting text type in terms of composition and functions, tourism signs seemed not a good input choice for genre practice to some students. Some students revealed during our short informal chat right before an online final assignment tutorial meeting that: tourism signs were not a friendly input to many of them, and identifying the genre features and purposes of these signs was a hard job for those unfamiliar with well-conditioned tourist complexes. Not many students in the class had the chance to travel much, so in Tutorial 1, their poor travel experience hindered their evaluation of the textual features and the significant purpose agreement.

In the same way, many students found it hard to role-play as a tour guide in Tutorial 2. The detected cause for this problem was: that these students had never observed any tour guides introducing a place to visitors, so the role-playing task was a big challenge for them.

Cycle 2

The revision of the intervention

The intervention in Cycle 2 started two weeks earlier than in Cycle 1, and some revisions were made to the intervention plan. As mentioned in 4.1, in the early weeks of Cycle 1, students focused too much on grammar and spelling and were almost unaware of the link between the language choices and the text purposes when reviewing the given texts. However, when the researcher gave students guided questions about the audience and the mode of the texts, students paid more attention to the language changes in interaction with the contextual features, and then one group was quite successful in their revision of the tourism website entry. The researcher figured out that students' understanding of the interaction between the contextual aspects and the language choices was not good enough to assist them in their text

evaluation and revision, which was again seen in the case of Sa. In addition, some Cycle-1 students explained that they had never received assignments in which the genre goals and features were focused, so they almost lacked understanding about why a text belonged to certain genres, what a text should be like to be classified into these genres, or what made genres different. Therefore, in Cycle 2, the intervention started earlier, with the focus being extended to contextual aspects of the texts.

For this reason, two more sessions, one lecture and one tutorial on the contextual aspect were added to help students identify the situations in which each genre was used (Bawarshi &Reiff, 2010, p.193). In the lecture on contextual aspects, students learned with various examples of how the field, mode, and tenor of the texts affect text producers in the ways they shape the communicative purposes of the texts and how the linguistic resources, as well as the multimodal resources, could be mobilized by the text producers to reach these communicative purposes. In the tutorials, students participated in a teacher-guided contextual analysis of the job advertising leaflets they collected from the Job Fair. During these two sessions, besides teaching the linguistic contents, the researcher tried to highlight genres as what was going on in specific situational contexts so that any genre could display the interaction between language and field, mode, and tenor to reach specific communicative purposes. This revision was an attempt to address students' lack of genre awareness and limited understanding of the roles of context, so it prepared students better for GBAs in the upcoming sessions.

The second revision was: the texts for GBAs were chosen among the ones students wrote in their previous writing courses, with the priority set on the genres familiar with students' life experiences and interests. The tourism signs and tourist website entries, which might have confused those with little travel experience in Cycle 1, were substituted by job advertisement leaflets that students collected from the Job Fair, two COVID-19 precautionary posters collected from the propaganda channels, and samples of IELTS Writing Task 1. As the Job Fair was the university's annual event, the job leaflets were familiar to the students. In addition, writing the content for a course/ event leaflet was one of the tasks students had in their second year. Therefore, the choice of leaflets was considered appropriate for contextual aspect analysis. When Cycle 2 lecture on Mood and Modality was delivered, the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic was at its climax in Vietnam; the emergence of new COVID-19 cases

and treatment were among the number-one discussion topics on social media, and the government made use of all propaganda channels to educate people the protective measures against COVID-19. Thus, the choice of COVID-19 precautionary posters posed almost no challenges to students in identifying the shared communicative purposes and the interpersonal features of the genre. In addition, since the tutorial on Mood and Modality was via Zoom, which meant Internet connection was available for everyone to search for supplementary input texts, the analysis of an additional input text - the English lyrics of the song “Ghen Covy” (The Washing-hand Dance) - was improvised along the analysis of the precautionary posters. Finally, as IELTS Writing Task 1 format - chart/diagram description - was one of the content students had in their first year, IELTS Writing Task 1 samples were a better choice than website entries in the sense that they were familiar to students, and the number of clauses could be more appropriate to in-class analysis.

The third revision was: the text genres chosen as input for the midterm project and final assignment were diversified. The open choice of genres and subgenres allowed students to select the texts from genres. This revision was an attempt to address a case in Cycle 1: two students could make almost no revision to the chosen writings.

The data collected from the revised intervention reveals three other major themes.

Theme 5: Multimodal texts in GBAs were better for novice genre analysts to shape their genre awareness.

The input texts used in the model analysis were monomodal and multimodal in the lectures on contextual factors and interpersonal metafunction. In the tutorials, students’ job leaflets for guided practice were monomodal and multimodal. Two of them are shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Two sample job leaflets for analysis



It took students a shorter time to navigate the multimodal leaflets than the monomodal ones to identify the communicative purposes highlighted in each part and throughout the whole text, the contextual features of field and tenor and explore the linguistic patterns (mood types, modal devices). Multimodal text samples, with their visual elements, more concise language, and well-structured format, seemed more reader-friendly to students. The multimodal elements could assist them in evaluating how the linguistic features supported the text purposes more effectively. One student shared:

“This [multimodal leaflet] is easy to read. The audience are right there in the photos, and the relationship can’t be distant with such big smiles. [...] Look! These [phrases] are bigger in size – so this is the main purpose”. (personal communication, January 17th, 2020)

From my observation of students discussing the agreement between the leaflet purposes and their contents, students made better use of the visual and design elements than the linguistic elements when grouping the texts into genres. The ability to group texts into the right genres could be very important for novice genre analysts like these students because their confidence in genre identification would motivate them to search extensively for texts of the targeted genres and analyze many texts of the same genres to demystify the common linguistics patterns appearing across texts. Their genre awareness might be naturally constructed, and accordingly, their ability to produce, then evaluate and revise the texts of these genres would be enhanced.

Theme 6: The reviewing skill practice in GBAs was more effective when the input texts were elicited from the students.

It happened by chance that the annual Job Fair – a mandatory school event – was organized on the same day as one class session of my FG course, which means the session had to be canceled to make way for the Job Fair. Therefore, the researcher assigned students with home readings to compensate for the lost session and asked them to collect job advertising leaflets at this event. After the Job Fair, various job advertising leaflets were emailed to the researcher, so plenty of texts in the same genre as input for contextual analysis in Tutorial 1 were available. However, to get students to practice distinguishing different genres, the researcher added some other leaflets, notices, and announcements from the Internet to the collection, mixed them with the leaflets students collected, and divided texts of different genres

equally among the groups in their Tutorial 1 genre identification discussion. The researcher could observe students focusing most of their attention on the job leaflets they collected, and most of their group discussion concentrated on what made the job leaflets and what might be problematic about their language and visuals. This discussion activity engaged students more than the previous sessions.

In Tutorial 2 on Mood and Modality, which was Zoom-based, the analysis of the English lyrics of the song Ghen Covy (The Washing-hand Dance) was suggested by the students when the analysis of the two COVID-19 precautionary posters had finished. As the song, the Vietnamese singers, and the dancers in the video were popular and much loved by young Vietnamese people, the researcher could, at times, hear some students singing softly along certain parts of the song, and the analysis of the lyrics seemed to attract more participation than the analysis of the two posters. The researcher could not see the students' facial expressions when sharing the full screen in the Zoom window but could distinguish about six or seven different voices stating the types of mood or modality of each clause along the analysis of the English lyrics, so the researcher could somehow figure out how motivated they were. The evaluation of how the language choices supported the purposes of the songs also attracted better participation from students; most of the comments were positive. No revision to the lyrics was suggested because, as the students explained, the lyrics perfectly match the melody already.

Theme 7: GBA-structured assignments effectively entailed extensive reading of genre features and strengthened reviewing skills.

It was quite unclear in Cycle 1 but clearer in Cycle 2 that to seek more guideposts in navigating the genre and fulfilling different tasks in GBAs, especially in the midterm project and final assignment, students had to read extensively the texts of the genre they were exploring. A group of students shared in the lead-in of their midterm project presentation how hard they worked on reading substantially the academic writing guides and even scholarly articles analyzing the features of the genre they chose to analyze (argumentative essays). All other groups immediately echoed this sharing, saying that they all made the same efforts to find arguments to evaluate the language choices in the texts and justify the modifications they made. Students' extensive reading of texts in targeted genres was reported to help strengthen their awareness of genre features and goals, which was then combined with the linguistic

knowledge and skills accumulated from the lectures to promote their ability to detect the mismatch between language choices and communicative purposes of their texts, then revise the problematic details.

From the final papers in Cycle 2, the explanations students gave for the writing revision were more detailed and well-reasoned than those in Cycle 1. An example of a student's detailed explanation of the modifications is provided in Figure 7.

The extract of a final assignment presented in Figure 7 provides evidence of the student's well-developed reviewing skills. First, the detailed evaluation of her writing could be demonstrated through her ability to spot the problematic language choices in writing – the problems that might affect the flow of logical arguments and mislead the readers of her argumentative essay writing purpose. Second, her ability to apply the linguistic knowledge (textual meaning) and language analyzing skills to revise her writing was demonstrated through the modifications in terms of cohesive devices and themes and her detailed justification of the effects the modifications could bring to the text.

Figure 7. A student's modifications in the final assignment (Cycle 2)

The original clause	The modified clause	The modification and why the modification is needed?
(7) Secondly, <u>convenience is brought to viewers when items are displayed on computers.</u>	(7) Secondly, <u>considering the vast online resources of exhibitions, Internet users can enjoy great convenience.</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thematic progression - "Convenience" should have its role reversed from theme to rheme so that the new theme "considering the vast online resources of exhibitions" can form a constant thematic progression with that of (5) ("computers with internet connection").
(8) They can learn about historical objects or artworks exhibited anywhere without travelling a long distance.	(8) <u>That is to say</u> , they can learn about historical objects or artworks exhibited anywhere without travelling a long distance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohesive devices - There is an expository relationship between the (7) and (8), so the appositive conjunction "that is to say" is added to add more elaboration.
(9) On the other hand, the role of museums and art galleries is <u>undeniable.</u>	(9) On the other hand, <u>with considerable justification</u> , the place of museums and art galleries <u>cannot be entirely taken by online exhibitions.</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohesive devices & thematic progression - The inclusion of a circumstance - topical theme ("with considerable justification") forms a linear thematic progression between (9) and (10) through a lexical chain which are the synonyms "justification" - "reasons". - "Online exhibitions" should be added so that the rheme of (9) is consistent with one of the ideas ("computer technology") in the thesis statement (3). This improves the coherence between the thesis statement and the second topic sentence in the second body paragraph

Discussion

The seven themes presented revealed both the positive influences and the limitations of using GBAs in FG courses on the students' scaffolding development of reviewing skills in writing. Despite students' focus on grammatical accuracy at the beginning of the intervention, there was evidence during the intervention that the awareness of the language choices-writing purposes relation allowed students to relate the genre features and contextual features with the language choices, making language choices appropriate to the writing purposes and the genre goals. This finding strengthened the findings of Ortega (2010) and Ortega (2012) and the argument by Caffarel (2006) that students' understanding of how different resources could be involved in meaning-making processes might encourage them to seek various choices available at different language strata, allowing them to be more creative and competent in their language learning. The follow-up activities were designed for students' application of genre awareness in text evaluation - identifying the disharmony between the language choices and the writing purposes and seeking appropriate ways to better the concordance between them. In other words, GBA-structured assignments were useful for students' practice of reflecting on the communicative purposes and the overall writing quality, so the constructive impacts of GBAs on students' ability to evaluate writing products were observable. Also, GBAs motivated students' extensive reading about genres to strengthen their genre knowledge and improve their ability to evaluate the concordance between the language choices and the genre features and goals. This finding echoed the reports by Cheng (2015) that GBAs could facilitate learners' noticing and learning of genre-specific features and the underpinning purposes of those features.

The quality of students' linguistic features analyses and their text modification suggestions were quite clearly enhanced from group midterm projects to individual final papers, demonstrated through students' task completion during Cycle-1 tutorials. With revisions in the intervention duration and content and the efforts to use input texts which were more reader-friendly to students in Cycle 2, the increase in complexity level of linguistic analyses and the quality of the modifications were even more seen. What could be inferred from this observation is: that GBAs functioned as a helpful springboard that boosted students' confidence in GBA tasks and might, to different degrees, guarantee students' successful evaluation and revision of the existing texts (midterm project) and improve the writing

products of their own (final paper). This finding also supported Yasuda's (2011) report that genre-based tasks in foreign language classrooms could result in clear gains in some aspects of their writing performance and genre knowledge development. This finding somehow resonated with Yasuda's (2015) and Yasuda's (2017) conclusions about the constructive changes in students' language choices when writing in certain academic genres after applying SFL-based pedagogy.

Conclusions

The analysis of students' final assignments revealed a detectable enhancement in students' writings, which were visible in different aspects of the texts. Students' genre awareness allowed them to choose the right writing pieces as input and re-determine the purposes of these writings to guide themselves in their analysis of language choices-writing purpose agreement; the linguistic knowledge functioned as the analytical framework for them in their evaluation of the language choices. This finding entailed that: once students' genre awareness is emphasized, they can detect the writing problems related to communicative purpose achievement and resolve them, and their ability to evaluate and revise their writings was promoted.

In addition, for Vietnamese university students, and possibly in similar contexts, multimodal texts and the more familiar and reader-friendly texts might better assist students - the novice genre analysts with limited linguistic and genre knowledge - in the familiarization stage of GBAs.

There are some limitations to this study. First, the two cycles were conducted in two different classes. Although the students in these classes took the same courses, of generally the same age and English proficiency levels, they are not identical in learning styles; so comparing students' development of reviewing skills in two cycles may not be fully comprehensive. Second, in cycle 2, seven of the nine intervention sessions were via Zoom. The observation was less effectively employed than in Cycle 1.

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Appendix 1: *What the students and the teacher did in two cycles*

CYCLE 1			CYCLE 2		
Session	What the students did	What the teacher did	Session	What the students did	What the teacher did
0. The contents of the sessions before the intervention:			0. The contents of the sessions before the intervention:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Language, Context and Function - Functional labels and ranks - Overview of functional grammar and the metafunctions - Contextual aspects of the texts (Field, Mode, Tenor) 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Language, Context and Function - Functional labels and ranks - Overview of functional grammar and the metafunctions 		
			1. <i>Lecture 1:</i> Contextual features	Learning the contextual aspects of the texts (Field, Mode, Tenor) Observing and practicing the analyzing skills	Introducing the concepts of field, mode, and tenor. Modeling the analysis of the contextual aspects of the sample texts (New Year postcards)
			2. <i>Tutorial 1:</i> Practice with GBAs	Collecting job advertisement leaflets at Job Fair Analyzing the contextual features of job advertisement leaflets	Giving instruction on how to collect texts from the Job Fair Facilitating students in their analyses Observing students' awareness of genre features and the language choices- genre goals reciprocal relation
1. <i>Lecture 1:</i> Interpersonal meaning: Mood & modality	Learning and discussing the concepts, the classification, and the realization of mood and modality Observing and practicing the analyzing skills	Introducing the key concepts of mood and modality, their classification and realization Modeling the analysis of mood and modality in sample texts	3. <i>Lecture 2:</i> Interpersonal meaning: Mood & modality	Learning and discussing the concepts, the classification, and the realization of mood and modality Observing and practicing the analyzing skills	Introducing the key concepts of mood and modality, their classification and realization Modeling the mood and modality analysis of the sample texts
2. <i>Tutorial 1</i>	Analyzing the interpersonal	Providing the information signs	4. <i>Tutorial 2:</i>	Analyzing the interpersonal meaning	Providing the input texts,

Practice with GBAs	meaning realization 3 information signs Assessing the agreement of all the textual features and the purposes of the texts/ genre. Suggesting the possible revision of language to enhance the text's communicative effectiveness	as input texts Facilitating students in their analyses Facilitating Q&A Observing students' awareness of the genre features and the language choices-genre goals in relation	Practice with GBAs	realization in 3 texts, including 2 COVID-19 precautionary measure posters (1 in English, 1 in Vietnamese) and a Vietnamese song with an English subtitle Assessing the textual features- texts purposes/ genre goals agreement Suggesting the language modifications to enhance the text's communicative effectiveness	which are from COVID-19 propaganda channels Facilitating students in their analyses Observing students' awareness of genre features and the language choices-genre goals relation
3. Lecture 2: Representational meaning: transitivity	Learning and discussing the concepts, the classification, and the realization of processes, participants, and circumstances Observing and practicing the analyzing skills	Introducing the key concepts of processes, participants, and circumstances, their classification and realization Modeling the transitivity analysis of the sample texts	5. Lecture 3: Representational meaning: transitivity	Learning and discussing the concepts, the classification, and the realization of processes, participants, and circumstances. Observing and practicing the analyzing skills	Introducing the key concepts of processes, participants, and circumstances, their classification and realization Modeling the transitivity analysis in sample texts
4. Tutorial 2: Practice with GBAs	Analyzing the transitivity systems of the website entries introducing the tourist spots Assessing the harmony between transitivity realization in the texts and text communicative purposes or the genre goals Converting these written texts into spoken commentaries to tourists, specifying all the modifications in interpersonal and representational aspects to fit the new contextual features Acting as tour guides delivering the commentaries to the tourists	Providing the input texts and assigning the groups with the texts (2 texts for each group) Facilitating students in their analyses. Facilitating Q&A Observing the changes in students' awareness of the genre features and the language choices-genre goals relation	6. Tutorial 3: Practice with GBAs	Analyzing the transitivity system of a given explanatory text (IELT writing task 1 - explaining a diagram/bar chart/pie chart) Assessing the harmony between transitivity realization in the texts and text purposes/genre goals Rewriting the text in the group, changing the process and circumstance types. Commenting on the other groups' revised texts in terms of how the changes made by other groups affect the text goals and genre features	Providing the input texts and assigning the groups with the texts (2 texts for each group) Facilitating students in their analyses Observing the changes in students' awareness of genre features and the relation between language choices and genre goals

5. <i>Lecture 3:</i> Textual meaning: cohesive devices & thematic structure	Learning and discussing the concepts, the classification, and the realization of cohesive devices, theme and rheme Observing and practicing the analyzing skills	Introducing the key concepts of cohesive devices, theme and rheme, their classification and realization Modeling the analysis of cohesive devices, theme and rheme in sample texts	7. <i>Lecture 4:</i> Textual meaning: cohesive devices & thematic structure	Learning and discussing the concepts, the classification, and the realization of cohesive devices, theme and rheme Observing and practicing the analyzing skills	Introducing the key concepts of cohesive devices, theme and rheme, their classification and realization Modeling the analysis of cohesive devices, theme and rheme in sample texts
6. <i>Tutorial 3</i>	Analyzing the cohesive devices and thematic structure of texts of a familiar genre (each group chose 3 texts of one genre among the following: blog posts, product manuals, course information leaflets, travel brochures, book introductions, and academic compositions) Assessing the harmony between cohesive devices, thematic structures, communicative purposes, and genre goals Revising the language for the best accomplishment of writing purposes	Checking the input texts that groups of students collected for the approval Facilitating students in their analyses Facilitating Q&A Observing the changes in students' awareness of the genre features and the relation between language choices and genre goals	8. <i>Tutorial 4</i> Practice with GBAs	Analyzing the cohesive devices and thematic development in texts of various genres: poems, children's stories, factual reports, recounts Assessing the harmony between cohesion and thematic structures of the texts and text communicative purposes as well as the genre goals Revising the language for the best accomplishment of writing purposes	Providing and eliciting from students the input texts; assigning the groups with the texts Facilitating students in their analyses. Observing the changes in students' awareness of genre features and the relation between language choices and genre goals
7. <i>Midterm project</i> with GBAs	Analyzing the realization of transitivity, mood, and thematic in 3 to 5 texts of the same genre (each group chose among the sample academic compositions of one of the following types: narrative, expository, or argumentative) Assessing the harmony between	Checking the input texts that groups of students collected from English learning websites and other sources for approval Facilitating students in figuring out how to do the midterm project Facilitating Q&A Observing the changes in	9. <i>Midterm project</i> with GBAs	Analyzing the realization of transitivity, or mood, or thematic development in 3 to 5 texts of the same genre (each group one of the following: explanation essay, comparison and contrast essay, statistical analysis report, discussion essay, argumentative essay, review of scholar articles)	Checking for approval of the input texts that groups of students collected from English learning websites and other sources Facilitating students in figuring out how to do the midterm project Facilitating Q&A

	all the textual features analyzed and the genre goals Revising the language for the best accomplishment of writing purposes	students' awareness of the genre features and the relation between language choices and genre goals		Assessing the harmony between all the textual features analyzed and the genre goals Revising the language for the best accomplishment of writing purposes	Observing the changes in students' awareness of the genre features and the relation between language choices and genre goals
00. Final assignment	Analyzing students' writings (the same type as the one chosen in the midterm project) to see how much their language choices supported their writing purposes Revising the language for best achievement of writing purposes Reflecting: How all the revisions made might have improved the harmony between language choices and writing purposes	Online tutorials: How to do the final assignment Comparing the original and the revised versions of students' writing to see how their writings had been improved	00. Final assignment	Analyzing students' writings (the same type as the one chosen in the midterm project) to see how much their language choices supported their writing purposes Revising the language for best achievement of writing purposes Reflecting: How all the revisions they made might have improved the harmony between language choices and writing purposes	Through online tutorials, facilitating students in figuring out how to do the final assignment Comparing the original and the revised versions of students writing to see how their writings had been improved

Appendix 2: *The analysis scheme for GBA practice in groups*

Session	Group (members)	Number of comments	How well could students evaluate the texts in terms of genre features, writing purpose and language feature concord, audience, spelling, and grammatical accuracy.)	Number of suggested modifications	What are the modifications about? (Mood, modality, transitivity, cohesive devices, thematic structure, thematic progression, spelling, grammatical accuracy)
...
...

Appendix 3: *The project and assignment analysis scheme*

Student	Number of modifications	What the modifications are about (mood, modality, transitivity, cohesive devices,	How well each modification enhances the writing purpose and language feature concord / demonstrates students' linguistic knowledge	How well students could spot the problems in their writing. How each of the explanations
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		thematic structure, thematic progression, spelling, grammatical accuracy).	from the course). How genre goal-oriented / appropriate to the contextual features each modification is.	demonstrates student's grasp of linguistic knowledge and skills in FG and their genre awareness
...
...