

Developing Research Paper Writing Programs for EFL/ESL Undergraduate Students Using Process Genre Approach

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Received: January 9, 2016

Accepted: February 19, 2016

Online Published: March 8, 2016

doi: 10.5539/hes.v6n2p19

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/hes.v6n2p19>

Abstract

Research Paper Writing (RPW) plays a key role in completing all research work. Poor writing could lead to the postponement of publications. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a program of (RPW) to improve RPW ability for EFL/ESL writers, especially for undergraduate students in Higher Education (HE) institutions, which has caught less attention of curriculum developers so far. Therefore, this study aims to determine the core components of (RPW) program perceived as essential for EFL/ESL undergraduate students using Process Genre Approach (PGA) to develop a program of RPW. The Delphi Technique (DT) was used to validate those components through the interviews of experts including two boards of ten experienced and qualified lecturers of TESOL and curriculum studies in Can Tho University (CTU) in Vietnam and Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM). The results revealed that the core components of RPW program for EFL/ESL undergraduate students were determined and confirmed. This paper is therefore believed to make a great contribution to practical applications for RPW program developers, lecturers, undergraduate and postgraduate students in EFL/ESL contexts.

Keywords: EFL/ESL undergraduate students, Research Paper Writing (RPW) program, Process Genre Approach (PGA)

1. Introduction

Scientific writing plays a key role in academic contexts because scholarly publications contribute to career promotion and reputation. A thesis or dissertation provides an opportunity for students to identify a topic and gain deep insights into research work (Swales, 1990). In recent years, there has been a rapid growth of successful manuscripts; however, manuscript publications still remains new and problematic (Day & Gastel, 2012). For example, non-English speaking scientists have problems with the discourse community in writing research articles (Karimnina, 2013), make more errors in their texts (Purves, 1988, as cited in Hyland, 2003); tend to plan less than L1 writers, and have more difficulty setting goals and generating materials (Flower & Hayes, 1981); L2 writers are also less inhibited by teacher-editing and feedback (Silva, 1993, 1997; Krapels, 1990; Leki, 1992, as cited in Hyland, 2003). Moreover, the low level of learners' motivation in learning writing was found because EFL teaching in Vietnam has focused on the language form of the target language (e.g., completing English grammar and vocabulary exercises) (Tran, 2007).

To find solutions to those matters, approaches of L2 writing teaching and learning have become a great concern since 1980 (Hyland, 2003). More specifically, studies on the effects of the product, process and genre approach have been explored so far. The findings of those studies showed that each writing teaching approach has its own strengths and limitations. For example, positive points of the product approach emphasized the imitation of input, repetition, controlled writing and accuracy, whereas writing skills are ignored in this approach. By contrast, the process approach concentrates on language skills, whereas no emphasis on linguistic knowledge is given. Much similar to the product approach, the genre approach is also blamed for limiting learners' creative thoughts about content; nevertheless, it has some strengths as a result of a great emphasis on conventions, readers and

purposes of a certain genre (Badger & White, 2000).

Thus, a novel writing teaching model named the Process Genre Model (PGM) was then proposed by Badger and White (2000). Just a few years later, the PGA was widely used and supported by a number of researchers (e.g., Kim & Kim, 2005; Yan, 2005; Nordin & Mohammad, 2006; Frith, 2006; Gao, 2007; Foo, 2007; Nihayah, 2009, 2011; Babalola, 2012; Gupitasari, 2013; Handayani, 2013; Pujianto et al., 2014). Also, in recent years, EFL teachers in Vietnam have been integrating the process genre based and communicative approaches into their writing classes (Tran, 2007). However, previous researchers have paid more attention to different genres (i.e., transactional letter writing, essay writing, business writing, argumentative writing, narrative writing and report writing). As briefly reviewed, very little information on the effects of the PGA on EFL students' RPW ability has been provided. Therefore, this paper proposes using the Process Genre Model (PGM) to teach RPW in Higher Education (HE) for EFL/ESL students.

Since 2004, the policy of Vietnamese education emphasizes the improvement in Higher Education (HE) quality to meet the requirements of the global developments in all fields and demands of well-trained and qualified workforce. The Education Law of 14 June, 2006 replacing the Education Law of 2 December, 1998 stated that higher institutions have their right to design their own programs; however, these organizations must follow the core programs proposed by the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) (Vaes & Nguyen, 2008). It was also indicated that textbook, syllabi and teaching materials must meet the requirements of educational methods. The content therefore must focus on training vocational abilities, moral and physical education as well as improving skills as required by each profession in order to improve educational qualifications. Specifically, both practicality and theory must be applied in professional education, leading to learners' practice and professional development (Vietnam, 2011).

Therefore, CTU, a multidisciplinary university, which is the biggest public university in the Southeast of Vietnam, has a mission of the development of scientific research projects as well as get an access to scientific and technological knowledge for problematic solutions to science, technology, economics, culture and society in the region. In particular, the first phase of CTU program aims to support the main strategic objectives of CTU including: (1) human resource development by supporting grants for Ph.D., MSc and short training E courses; (2) upgrading of facilities (ICT, laboratories, etc.); (3) introduction of new techniques (e.g., molecular biology, etc.); (4) developing courseware and new curricula; (5) developing distant education; (6) strengthening of research capacity in defined areas. Meanwhile, the second phase emphasizes the improvement in the quality of teaching and e-courses, multi-disciplinarity, as well as enhances the growth of applied research, networking, and etc. With such a significant emission, in recent years, CTU has provided HE for 35,038 undergraduate students, 1,806 master students, and PhD 40 students. Thus, it has currently 77 undergraduates, 28 Master and 8 Doctoral training programs. Especially, English majored students in CTU are taught four skills of English as their major subjects, namely, speaking, listening, writing, and reading. In particular, compulsory academic writing genres such as sentences writing, letters, paragraphs writing, essays writing etc., are required to study in the first and second academic year. In the third academic year, these students are required to attend a RPW course for the preparation of thesis writing in the final year. There is, however, a lack of the development of RPW programs to meet the society's demands and students' learning needs.

As mentioned, RPW is one of the popular genres of academic writing required for university students (Ahn, 2012). Therefore, curricula in the education system including RPW programs need to be developed and updated by curriculum developers to meet society's demands and students' leaning needs. Nevertheless, this perspective has caught less attention of curriculum developers. The curricula in the education system in many countries including in Vietnam are outdated compared to today's production technologies. As Thanh (2006) stated that Vietnamese institutions still use curricula designed to meet the needs of the state-owned economy 10 years ago. Consequently, at HE level, students' language proficiency is at low level, and thus very few college graduates meet EFL requirements of recruiters (Tien, 2013). More specifically, colleges and universities pay less attention to the instruction of RPW skills for university students due to a lack of awareness of its importance in academic success and future reputation. Consequently, today, most university students including Ph.D. students face the challenges of writing up their theses (Fergie, 2011). This is because most supervisors focus on a provision of crucial subject discussions and advice on research design rather than help their students with their writing up (Kamler & Thomson, 2004). Universities in Vietnam including CTU are facing such problems.

Regarding such problems and realistic needs of education, this study aims to determine and propose the core components of the content of a RPW program using PGA to teach the third year university students in academic year (2015-2016), who major in English studies in English Department, at School of Education, in CTU. This paper is, therefore, believed to contribute to practical applications for RPW program developers, lecturers,

undergraduate and postgraduate students in EFL/ESL contexts. The research question is addressed: “Which core components of RPW program are essential for English majored students of CTU, Vietnam?”

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework of Curriculum Planning for English Language Teaching

There are many different perspectives on curriculum planning for English Language teaching. For example, in order to design the programs, the content, the form and structure of the program must be considered (Johnston & Goettsch, 2000). Likewise and Graves (2009) highlights four factors: (1) who will be taught, (2) what will be taught, (3) how it will be taught, and (4) how what is learned will be evaluated. In this view, Graves and other researchers (e.g., Johnson, 2009b; Johnson & Golombek, 2011) emphasizes the key role of context analysis for the design of curriculum. Therefore, this work considers the content, the form and structure of the RPW program with the role of context for the development of the core content of the program as a need of HE. Therefore, the following section provides the theoretical foundation for this work through a critical discussion about the conceptualization of the knowledge base of the program and academic writing skills.

The term “content” and “knowledge base” are used alternatively by many researchers (e.g., Day, 1991; Richards, 1998). Lafayette (1993) argued that knowledge of language proficiency, civilization and culture, and language analysis are needed in the program. Day (1993) proposed knowledge base of program including knowledge of content, pedagogy, and support. Knowledge of various disciplines affecting English teaching and learning approaches focuses on knowledge of psycholinguistics, linguistics, L2 acquisition, sociolinguistics, and research methods (Day, 1993, p. 4). Therefore, in this study, to design RPW program, knowledge of content, language proficiency, language analysis and support knowledge regarding the important role of context are taken into considerations.

In terms of academic writing, Richards (1998) stated that a good writer needs to produce a clear text considering readers’ perspectives. Coherence as an orderly development of ideas, continuity, no irrelevance, an appropriate emphasis on ideas and a sense of completeness is carefully considered. Obviously, he or she needs to follow the accepted textual form depending on a specific genre of writing. Tribble (1996) also claimed that writers need to have knowledge of a genre regarding: (1) content knowledge (i.e., knowledge of concepts including subject areas); (2) context knowledge; (3) language system (i.e., syntax and lexis knowledge), and writing process knowledge (i.e., knowledge of the most appropriate way to prepare a writing task). Harmer (2004) also perceived that writers need to have knowledge of genre, general, socioculture, and topic as a subject to get successful in written communications. Thus, in this study, genre knowledge, context and content knowledge, general world knowledge, topic knowledge, language system knowledge and writing knowledge of RPW is included in RPW module.

2.2 Theories of the Process Genre Approach

Researchers (e.g., Flowerdew, 1993; Badger & White, 2000; Yan, 2005; Nordin & Mohammad, 2006) all paid more attention to the integration of genre and process approaches to teaching writing and agree with the statement that these two approaches are complementary, and the PGA is derived from the integration of the strength of genre and process approaches in which language, context knowledge and writing process are emphasized (i.e., planning, drafting, publishing) with regard to the purpose, audience of writing and all aspects of social contexts. According to Badger and White (2000), writing in PGA is referred to as creating a situation and providing sufficient supports for learners to determine the purpose and other aspects of social contexts. In this regard, students are provided with sample writing texts, and required to first take into considerations real situations, readers, and then practise language use (vocabulary and grammar) on a specific genre. In this view, Hyland (2003b) also emphasized the text and context, and the role of language in written communication. He also highlighted the process of learning and acquiring genres instead of solely focusing on the end product, or a specific variety of genre.

Adapted from Badger and White’s (2000), Yan (2005) proposed six steps for teaching writing: (1) preparation, (2) modeling and reinforcing, (3) planning, (4) joint constructing, (5) independent constructing, and (6) revising. In Yan’s (2005) view, PGA is an effective tool used for providing writing assignments for students, which could lead to the unite content, organization, syntax and meaning, writing and revising, writing and thinking. Similar to Badger and White’s (2000) view, Yan (2005) suggested using the PGA to teach academic writing. However, Yan (2005) attempted to introduce a lesson plan for an argumentative writing using PGA. Additionally, these researchers suggested that teachers should support students; however, they provide different ways to support students. For example, Badger and White (2000) suggested providing sample-writing texts for learners to identify the purpose and other aspects of social contexts, namely tenor, field, and mode of writing. Thus,

students are first asked to consider real situations, audiences, and then practise language use (vocabulary and grammar) on a specific genre. Meanwhile, Yan (2005) recommended giving a helpful feedback and suggestion to students.

Moreover, Yan (2005) highlighted the idea that teachers are those who could bring curiosity and self-confidence to their students thanks to their concerns for students' interests in topics, and teacher are those who pay attention to individual differences during the writing process. These two ideas are not, in actual fact, confirmed by Badger and White (2000). Yan's theory highly appreciated the cooperation of teachers and students. According to Yan, both teachers and students could start to write texts together. More specifically, students are able to be supported by teachers to produce ideas freely, and then teachers will write produced texts on blackboards or computers. This idea is, in fact, not focused in Badger and White's (2000) theory.

Additionally, Yan (2005) suggested that students should be asked to compose the texts on related topics and class time can be set for students to compose. At this stage, teachers play roles as consultants and assistants. Yan (2005) also confirmed that students could continue their writing as a homework assignment. More importantly, although Badger and White (2000) ignore revising and editing, Yan (2005) focuses on revising and editing. In this regard, students will hand their writing in teachers, and teachers will mark one by one. Then, students will revise, discuss, and evaluate their works with their peers. At this stage, teachers could work as guilders and facilitators. The most important thing is that it is possible for teachers to assist students with publications, which aims to encourage students to become professional writers.

Nordin and Mohammad (2006) also proposes using the strength of the process and genre approaches to teaching a written recommendation report. According to these researchers, the PGA focuses on the use of texts as models. More importantly, they attempt to explain how the model works in the context of a technical writing classroom through an example of an engineer writing a recommendation report concerning the purchase of new elevators for the company. Be consistent with previous researchers, they also argue that learners should first be aware that writing occurs in a social context and situation with respect to a certain purpose, and then learners must relate the purpose of writing to the subject matter, the writer/audience relationship, and the mode or organization of the text. The most important thing is that according to Nordin and Mohammad (2006), the PGA provide a chance for learners to explore how texts are written differently; as a result, learners are exposed to the organization and language used in the text. They will then go through a process of multiple drafts instead of aiming at the final product. Different from previous researchers' view, these researchers emphasize the important role of input. However, it was highlighted that learners' knowledge of a particular genre varies; for instance, learners who have been equipped with adequate knowledge only need little or no input. By contrast, learners who lack knowledge of the organization of the text or the language conventionally used for a particular audience need supports and "input". This idea is in fact in line with Input Hypotheses of Krashen (1985), Nordin and Mohammad (2006) also emphasized that input may be received from a variety of sources such as teachers, other learners as peers, or the model text itself. Moreover, four basic roles of writing teachers when using the process/genre approach: audience, assistants, evaluators and examiners are emphasized by Nordin and Mohammad (2006).

2.3 Proces Genre Model (PGM) of Research Paper Writing

Proces Genre Model (PGM) proposed in this study was an integration of three theories: (1) Process Genre Theory (PGT) proposed by Badger and White (2000); (2) PGT proposed by Yan (2005); (3) PGT proposed by Nordin and Mohammad (2006). PGM of RPW has three main stages: 1) prewriting/planning includes sub-processes: text analysis, noting down, generating ideas, organizing and ordering; 2) while-writing includes translating/drafting/writing practice; 3) post-writing includes sub-processes: revising and editing, feedback giving, rewriting/redrafting, evaluating and publishing. Detailed activities and main objectives of each stage are presented as follows:

1) Prewriting/Planning

Text analysis: refer to the analysis of writing samples to provide input for students to identify the schematic (or generic) structure, discourse structure, linguistic conventions of a particular genre regarding the purpose and audience of writing. This activity helps writers to select the core content required in their writing and help them know how to present it.

Noting down: involve noting down keys words, collocations and core ideas, etc.

Generating: include activities which help writers find out what they are going to write about. It is effective if a practical purpose for discussion is provided to help learners share their experiences leading to motivation

enhancement for writers.

Organizing: include activities which help writers identify priorities in what they have to say and help writers emphasize the most important parts of their arguments to ensure what is being written about is relevant to potential readers.

Ordering: refer to a review of the way in which writers organize their texts for communication with potential readers effectively.

2) While-writing: Translating/drafting/writing practice

This stage includes activities such as practising writing in groups, in pairs or individually. A set of writing tasks is provided. It focuses on controlled writing and free writing tasks. The writers then translate plans and ideas into the provisional text.

3) Post-writing

Revising and Editing: revising refers to reading back over the text, which helps maintain an overall coherence of the text. Good writers should tend to concentrate on getting the content right first and leave details such as correcting spelling, punctuation and grammar until later. The checklist of guidelines for writers to edit their work is provided. Students practice in pairs in this activity.

Feedback: include peer feedback and teacher feedback. Peer feedback provides input and authentic audience. Teacher feedback reduces mistakes on content and organization of the text, word choice, language use and mechanics use.

Rewriting/Redrafting: after getting feedback, writers attempt to rewrite based on feedback provided.

Evaluating: writers learn how to evaluate their writing based on the checklist provided for the assessment of their writing. Students can work in pairs in this activity.

Publishing: involve teaching students know how to determine and select potential journals or conferences to submit their papers.

2.4 Research Paper Writing (RPW)

RPW in English began in the 14th century; however, it is relatively new, today. The first journals were published 300 years ago (Day & Gastel, 2012; Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia). The IMRAD format (Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion) is a standard format of most scientific papers within the past 100 years proposed by many researchers because of its simple way to convey research results (e.g., Day & Gastel, 1998, p. 1; Fred & Randall, 2005, p. 2; Glasman-Deal, 2010, p. 45; Swales & Feak, 2004, p. 222; Day & Gastel, 2012). IMRAD helps authors to organize and write the manuscript easily. IMRAD provides a clear outline for editors, referees, and ultimately readers. However, it is not the only format for scientific papers because some papers have no fixed structure. Therefore, IRDAM, IMRADC, IMRMRMD, ILMRAD formats are used by authors (Swales & Feak, 2004, p. 222; Day & Gastel, 2012).

There are many perspectives on definitions of RPW. However, according to previous authors, RPW is generally defined as scientific writing or science writing. More specifically, Day and Gastel (2012) emphasize that unlike other genres of writing designed for entertainment purpose, scientific writing focuses primarily on writing and publishing scientific papers, referring to a provision of new scientific findings. Scientific writing is also viewed as the transmission of a clear signal to a recipient. Thus, the words of the signal should be clear, simple and well-ordered as possible. Metaphors, similes, idiommatic expressions should seldom be used in research papers; and the meaning should be clear. Likewise and Swales (1990) defined research articles as a genre “complexly distanced reconstructions of research activities,” rather than “simple narratives of investigations” (p. 175).

Based on some perspectives on the definitions of RPW of previous scholars, in this study, RPW mainly gains deep insights into some common types of research papers including research articles, review papers, research proposals, research reports, conference reports or theses called dissertation, referring to writing for scientifically academic purpose, and for academic readers because those are the popular genres required in academic and working environments. Therefore, the current work attempts to detect and propose core components in RPW program in order to help students to use the format, language use and mechanics in research papers conventionally and precisely. Moreover, the material emphasizes the important role in the selection of the relevant content of research papers, which means that, the content referring to ideas presented in the writing should be coherent and relevant to the topic and writing genre. Also, the structure of research papers should be introduced to help students write for meeting the needs of a specific organization.

3. Methods

3.1 Instrument

In this study, the Delphi Technique (DT) was conducted within two rounds to validate the core components of RPW program for EFL/ESL undergraduate students. To save time, a questionnaire with structured questions was used through face-to-face discussions to survey two groups of experts' opinions about the components of RPW program perceived as essential for EFL undergraduate university students. The questionnaire was developed by researcher based on the theory of PGA and students' RPW ability. Therefore, the questionnaire includes necessary components of RPW program and categorized into 8 structures. Structure 1 involves a lesson related to introduction to RPW including 6 items. Structure 2 involves a lesson related to research paper skills including 12 items. Structure 3 involves a lesson related to writing the abstract section including 4 items. Structure 4 involves a lesson related to writing the introduction section including 5 items. Structure 5 involves a lesson related to writing the Literature Review (LR) section including 8 items. Structure 6 involves a lesson related to writing the methods section including 4 items. Structure 7 involves a lesson related to writing results sections including 4 items. Structure 8 involves a lesson related to writing the discussion section including 2 items. The core components of RPW program through the questionnaire was then introduced to the expert jury. These experts were asked to evaluate and validate the components of the program based on the proposed questionnaire. They were also encouraged to make any addition, omission, corrections, and change if necessary. After all their comments and suggestions were consolidated, the core component of the program was adjusted by the researcher and then sent to the expert jury again to confirm the final component of the program.

3.2 Participants

RPW program was designed to teach EFL/ESL undergraduate students. These students are the third year university students in academic year (2015-2016), who major in English studying in English Department, at School of Education, in CTU. They are taught four skills of English as their major subjects, namely, speaking, listening, writing, and reading. In particular, compulsory academic writing genres such as sentences writing, letters, paragraphs writing, essays writing etc., are required to study in the first and second academic year. In the third academic year, these students are required to attend a RPW course for the preparation of thesis writing in the final year.

Two groups of experts' include two boards of ten experienced and qualified lecturers of TESOL and curriculum studies in CTU, Vietnam and USM, Malaysia were interviewed to confirm the core components of RPW program for EFL/ESL undergraduate students. Six lecturers got PhD degree, and four teachers got master degree. They are enthusiastic and experienced in teaching academic writing for ESL/ELS university students.

4. Findings and Discussions

In this work, through the obtained data from the DT, RPW program was proposed to enable ESL/ESL lecturers to teach English RPW using PGA for ESL/ESL university students, who have already studied academic writing skills and had knowledge of different genres: sentences writing, paragraphs writing, letters writing, essays writing and etc. However, these students have not attended writing courses: research proposals, research reports, research articles, conference reports, review papers and theses. Therefore, this section presents the core components of RPW program for teaching EFL/ESL university students how to write several common genres of research papers including research proposals, research reports, research articles, conference reports, review papers and theses. The proposed RPW module in this work is organized into 8 units introduced within 45 periods (1 period is equal to 45 minutes) including theory, practice and assessment through the progress tests after the instruction of each section. The content, structure and main objective of each unit are presented in details as follows:

Unit 1: introduces "Introduction to Research Paper Writing (RPW)".

In this unit, six sections related to the introduction to RPW are introduced within 6 periods to students as presented in details as follows:

Section 1: What is Research Paper Writing (RPW)?

This section aims to help students gain deep insights into RPW. As a result, after the lesson, students will be able to distinguish differences in content, organization, language use, and style of research papers in different disciplines.

Section 2: Origins of Research Paper Writing (RPW) and its challenges.

This section aims to help students get knowledge of the origins of RPW and have an awareness of its challenges.

Section 3: Roles of Research Paper Writing (RPW)

This section aims to raise students' awareness of the important role of RPW in academic success and future career.

Section 4: Common types of research papers

This section aims to introduce some common types of research papers: research proposals, research reports, research articles, conference reports, review papers and theses to raise students' awareness of differences in content, organization, language use, and writing style of research papers in different disciplines.

Section 5: Characteristics of Research Paper Writing (RPW).

This section aims to help students get knowledge of unique characteristics of RPW.

Section 6: The standard overall structure of research articles and theses.

This section aims to help students know about the standard overall structure of research articles and theses. Therefore, this section first presents "*Overall Structure of Research Papers*". In this section, the lecturer emphasizes the introduction to IMRAD format (Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion) proposed by many researchers (e.g., Day & Gastel, 1998, p. 1; Pyrczac & Bruce, 2005, p. 2; Glasman-Deal, 2010, p. 45; Swales & Feak, 2004, p. 222; Day & Gastel, 2012). As mentioned earlier, IMRAD helps authors organize and write the manuscript easily. Also, IMRAD could provide a clear outline for editors, referees, and ultimately readers to follow in reading the paper rather than IRDAM, IMRAD, IMRMRMRD, ILMRAD formats (Swales & Feak, 2004, p. 222; Day & Gastel, 2012). However, it is not the only format for scientific papers because some papers have no fixed structure. Finally, the lecturer introduces the traditional formats of theses called ILrMRD format proposed by Kwan (2006).

Unit 2: presents "Research paper writing skills".

This unit was been introduced and practiced in 5 periods, and it first introduces basic sub-skills of RPW proposed by Kim et al. (paper presented at International Language and Education Conference in Malaysia, on October, 2015) including: (1) planning skills involving skills of text analysis, noting down, generating ideas, organizing and ordering; (2) translating/drafting skills; (3) revising, editing and proofreading skills; (4) evaluating skills and (5) publishing skills. Then, skills of listing references are introduced in this unit.

Indeed, planning skills should be introduced to students (Adrian, 2011, pp. 3-17) to identify what is the purpose and who is the audience of writing, and thus students know how to select, organize and reject ideas of their writing, search related articles, identify the gaps of previous studies, contact the journals, match the topic to the journal, read authors' guidelines, note down ways in which research is different and innovative with respect to theirs, choose one paper as a model onto which to map their research, imitate the style and organization, consult with the professors and colleagues about the most appropriate journal where authors can publish their research, and know how to outline research articles or theses.

Unit 3: Presents "Writing the abstract Section".

In this unit, basic moves of an abstract, basic ways how to write an abstract and language focus used in an abstract are introduced and practiced within 3 periods. The assessment of abstract writing ability is carried out within 1 period.

Abstract is called a summary (Adrian, 2011, p. 179), allowing elaborating on each major section of the paper. Many authors (e.g., Pyrczac & Bruce, 2005; Swale & Feak, 2014) advise authors to write an abstract before writing the body of the papers to accurately reflect the content of the paper. According to these researchers, the abstract should give enough details for readers to decide whether or not to read the whole article. According to many researchers (e.g., Swale & Feak, 2004, p. 282), an abstract should briefly summarize, including a single paragraph, containing from about 4 to 10 sentences (which may vary from 50-300 words). Many researchers also agree with Swale and Feak (2004, p. 282) that an abstract should include moves: (1) Background, (2) Aim, (3) Method, (4) Results, (5) Conclusion. However, Pyrczac and Bruce (2005, p. 2) proposed an abstract including basic moves: (1) Introduction including a literature review (typically with no heading); (2) Method (a main heading that is centered) including participants (a subheading that is flush left); Instrumentation (a subheading that is flush left); (3) Results (a main heading that is centered); (4) Discussion (a main heading that is centered). Moreover, Adrian (2011, p. 179) categorized an abstract into different types: (1) unstructured abstract has a single paragraph of 100-250 words containing a very brief summary of the paper; (2) structured abstract is similar to unstructured one, but it is divided into several short sections; (3) extended abstract seems like a mini paper organized in the same way as a full paper (e.g., Introduction, Methods, Discussion), but it is substantially

shorter (two or four pages).

It is noted that depending on the journal, conference or competition, the extended abstract may or may not include an abstract—for example, it may begin directly with an introduction. Conference abstract which is normally a standalone abstract (sometimes up to 500 words), designed to help conference organizers to decide whether they would like you to make an oral presentation at their conference. It is noted that, the type of abstract you choose and the format to use will depend on the journal or conference. Make sure that you read their instructions to authors before you begin writing.

Unit 4: introduces “Writing the Introduction Section”.

This unit introduces 5 sections within 5 periods including theory, practice and assessment: (1) Basic moves of the introduction section; (2) tenses and common expressions used in the introduction section; (3) research problem statement writing skills; and (4) definition writing skills, and (5) title preparing skills.

As known, the introduction section provides the rationale for the paper, moving from general discussion of the topic to the particular question or hypothesis being investigated attempting to catch readers’ attention in the topic (Swale & Feak, 2004, p. 222). However, in a thesis or dissertation, the introduction and the Literature Review (LR) are often presented in separate chapters. In journal articles, LR is presented in the introduction, whereas theses and dissertations typically have two separate chapters for these elements. It is noted that, it is better to follow the format of a specific organization. In this unit, CARS model is also introduced to students. Its details are presented as follows:

Move 1: Establish a research territory

- a. By showing that the general research area is important, central, interesting, problematic, or relevant in some way (optional)
- b. By introducing and reviewing items of previous research in the area (obligatory)

Move 2: Establishing a niche

By indicating a gap in the previous research, or by extending previous knowledge in some way (obligatory)

Move 3: Occupying the niche

- c. By outlining purposes or stating the nature of the present research (obligatory)
- d. By listing research questions or hypotheses (probable in some fields, but rare in others)
- e. By announcing principal findings (probable in some fields, but rare in others)
- f. By stating the value of the present research (probable in some fields, but rare in others)
- g. By indicating the structure of the RP (probable in some fields, but rare in others)

Source: (CARS model, as cited in Swales & Feak, 2004, p. 244)

Finally, in this unit, research problem statement writing skills proposed by (Swale & Feak, 2004, p. 257) and definition writing skills proposed by (Swale & Feak, 2004, pp. 55-80; Pyrczac & Bruce, 2005, p. 69) are introduced and practiced based on provided tasks.

Unit 5: Introduces “Writing the Literature Review (LR) Section”

This unit is introduced within 15 periods including theory, writing practice and assessment.

LR is an important sub-genre of postgraduate research proposals, dissertations or theses (Cooper, 1988; Swales & Feak, 2004, p. 116; Bunton, 2002). However, it is quite challenging to write LR because it requires many academic writing skills including: critical thinking skills, paraphrasing skills, citation skills, and etc. (Turner, Elizabeth, Bitchener, & John, 2008). Therefore, in this unit, academic writing skills are introduced and practiced including: (1) critical writing skills through practicing general specific paragraph writing skills, descriptive paragraph writing skills, and problem solution paragraph writing skills proposed by (Swales & Feak, 2004, p. 44), paraphrasing skills, citations skills to avoid plagiarism proposed by (Adrian, 2011, pp. 151-159), being concise and removing redundancy skills proposed by (Adrian, 2011, pp. 73-83), breaking up long sentences proposed by (Adrian, 2011, pp. 33-51), skills of using APA style including mechanics use skills proposed by (Lenore & Barbara, 2011).

Unit 6: introduces “Writing the Methods Section”.

This unit presents 4 sections within 3 periods: (1) the moves of methods section; (2) language focus; (3) and writing practice; and (4) the assessment of students’ method section writing ability.

This section includes presenting research design, setting and sample (instead of participants), materials, intervention description, the measures or instrumentation, data collection procedures, research procedures of research in order for readers to know the details of the methods to ensure the reliability and validity of the study (Szuchman & Thomlinson, 2011, pp. 81-82).

Unit 7: presents “Writing Results sections”.

This unit presents 2 sections within 4 periods: (1) the skills of results reporting and APA styles for designing and presenting figures (graphs), tables. Then, there is a provided task for the assessment of writing ability of this section.

This section aims to present a summary of findings (Szuchman & Thomlinson, 2011 p. 101) to show new results contributing to the body of scientific knowledge. Therefore, this section should be presented clearly in a logical sequence. Raw data are rarely included in scientific papers. However, data are presented in the form of figures (graphs), tables, and/or descriptions of observations.

Unit 8: Introduces “Writing the Discussion Section”.

This section presents 2 sections within 3 periods: (1) discussions moves proposed by (Swales & Feak, 2004, p. 270); (2) language focus. More specifically, articles in different disciplines are provided for students for genre analysis. As a result, students can compare the different ways to write the discussion section.

It is not easy to provide useful guidelines for writing discussions (Swales & Feak, 2004, p. 268). The main aim of this section is to explain what the results mean and then link back to the introduction by a way of the question(s) or hypothesis posed. It also indicates how the results relate to expectations and to the previous literature, whether they support or contradict previous theories.

In this study, the PGA the content of RPW program is consistent with that proposed by previous authors in some aspects (e.g., Adrian, 2011; Day & Gastel, 1998, 2012; Kwan & Becky, 2006; Szuchman, Lenore, & Thomlinson, 2011; Swales & Feak, 2004). However, to fit the demands and requirements of CTU and students’ learning needs, in this this study, the proposed structure and activities of the program are different from that of the previous one. Indeed, the content is proposed for a 45-period course including theory, practice and assessment.

5. Limitations, Recommendations and Conclusions

This study is limited to propose the core components of (RPW) program perceived as essential for EFL/ESL undergraduate students using PGA in order to develop RPW programs based on the results obtained from DT. EFL/ESL undergraduate students for this study are those who major in English and study four skills of English: listening, speaking, reading, writing. Especially, they have already learned basic academic writing skills and academic writing language in the previous years. This program is, therefore, not generalized to all EFL/ESL undergraduate students. However, it is believed that this paper significantly contributes to the practical applications for RPW program developers, lecturers, undergraduate and postgraduate students in EFL/ESL contexts. Noticeably, it is suggested that HE institutions in general and lecturers in specific should adjust or modify the content of each section or change its structure to fit their real contexts.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to my main supervisor and co-supervisors for their research knowledge support, and the sponsors of the Mekong 1000 Project for their financial support.

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