

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTION

The purposes of this research were: (1) to study English writing ability of learners after each lesson- there were five lessons: exposition, fiction review, information report, narrative and news item, (2) to compare English writing ability of learners with three different levels of proficiency: pre-intermediate, intermediate, and upper-intermediate, (3) to study learner autonomy after the study, (4) to compare autonomy of learners with three different levels of proficiency: pre-intermediate, intermediate, and upper-intermediate, (5) to investigate the correlation between levels of students' writing ability and autonomy. The subjects were selected from 30 students who enrolled in 1553105 Creative Writing in the first semester of the 2004 academic year at Chiang Mai Rajabhat University.

Chapter five presents conclusion, discussion and suggestion for further elaboration in implementing genre-based pedagogy and computer-assisted language learning as follows.

CONCLUSION

This study has already depicted its essential chapter, results, and the aim of this section is to conclude the findings and see how the findings correlated to the following research questions.

1. Do students in three different levels of writing proficiency pass the minimum requirements of each genre after accessing to the Genre-Based Courseware?
2. How much do students in each level improve their writing skills?

3. How different do students in three levels learn independently over a period of the study?

Research Question 1

Do the students in three different levels of writing proficiency pass the minimum requirements of each genre after accessing to the Genre-Based Courseware?

With the findings shown in the previous chapter (see Chapter 4, Table 7), all three levels of students did meet the requirements in terms of overall results in writing each genre and the data analysis obtained from the students' writing verified that their English writing ability was developed via the given treatment. Levels of writing competency were particularly different since the mean scores confirmed that not a single group of the students received identical scores. Additionally, if we take a closer look at the findings of individual group of students (see Chapter 4, Table 8), the upper-intermediate and intermediate students could pass the minimum requirement and the pre-intermediate ones could meet the requirement only in the third lesson (information report). Perhaps, it might be concluded that levels of students affected their writing results.

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Research Question 2

How much do the students in each level improve writing skills?

There were three stages in the Genre-Based Courseware and in each stage the students developed ideas, reshaped their language, and discussed about vocabulary with the teacher. The writing results showed that each level of students can master each genre differently: the upper-intermediate was the only group that could pass all the minimum requirements by means of writing individual genre (see Chapter 4, Table 8). It means they had a sufficient control in writing each genre because they can incorporate the ideas of genre structure, self-expression and self-monitoring technique together at the end of each lesson. Apparently, the intermediate group also showed their mastery in writing each genre except for the first lesson (exposition). Even though the students in the pre-intermediate group was unsuccessful in their writing, they could also show their potential in developing their writing skills, especially in the third task.

Research Question 3

How different do the students in three levels learn independently over the period of study?

It was significantly different among three groups of competency. The results of the questionnaire analyzed by using One-Way ANOVA (chapter 4, Table 10) identified that the students in the upper-intermediate and intermediate groups with higher scores in writing had more responsibilities in their learning process, tried harder to find their learning techniques and accessed to the lessons more often than pre-

intermediate ones. Furthermore, the quality level of students in the upper-intermediate group indicated that their autonomous learning was in the very-high level (see Chapter 4, Table and using the rating scale of questionnaire for learner autonomy in Chapter 3, Table 4). Intermediate students' level of autonomy was in the high level and moderate level for the pre-intermediate ones. From this finding, it has an implication for language teachers that students' autonomy accounts for the writing ability so students could be trained to be good at writing by enhancing their level of autonomy.

DISCUSSION

1. The Genre-Based Courseware

With the introduction of the term “genre” in the ESP context by Tarone *et al.* (cited in Dudley-Evans, 1994), such terminology itself is rather difficult to understand and it requires a great endeavor to read a lot of related documentation in the field of discourse studies. Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993) have defined the professional and academic genres as particular forms of language which underpin their own distinctive communicative purposes and specific linguistic knowledge of certain community. Written genres, however, differ in their structures and conventions. Thus we can distinguish narratives from newspaper articles. This research focused on the use of written genres that were conceived a framework from *Exploring How Texts Work* by Derewianka (1990) and *English for Social Purposes* by Hammond *et al.* (1997). The studies conducted by Hyon (2001; 1996), Henry and Roseberry (1998), Caudery (1998), Cunningham (2000), Cresswell (2000) and Utthangkorn (2003) also shed light on this research. The practical availability of computer-assisted language learning currently becomes important and provides new paths and implications for language-teaching pedagogy and second language acquisition (Chapelle, 2001 and Levy, 1997). This research combined a theoretical framework from genre-based pedagogy and CALL to develop English writing ability and learner autonomy and the results of the

implementation indicate that English writing ability and learner autonomy of the students was developed over the period of study. The three stages of the Genre-Based Courseware were the crucial factors as mentioned below.

GBC stage 1 (building knowledge and modeling text)

Students had different background knowledge about writing and might not comprehend the text they were about to write since writing is not as simply as putting sentences together to form a written text. Thus, it was good to build and generate students' ideas by using discussion about current issues. The focus of the instruction was to broaden their schema and facilitate their thinking process because the activities underlied three metafunctions of the language use- ideational (i.e. use of language to express ideas), interpersonal (i.e. use of language to maintain social relations), textual (i.e. use of language to create relevant genres)- and these ideas based upon the work by Halliday (1994), Christie (1999), Leckie-Tarry (1995) and Kern & Warchauer (2000). Students learned how to develop ideas from exchanging their point of views with the teacher and they even argued with friends if they didn't agree. Central to the success of texts written by students after the study derived from the displays of the text models in e-text activities on the courseware which deliberately details the text organization and the purposes why those texts were written. Students began to have rough pictures in their minds about how to start writing the texts from their own ideas by using sample texts as models. Each text model was explained and highlighted its important features on the screen and the teacher also gave further explanation and asked questions why each text had different moves (schematic structures). Students all agreed that the sample texts could also helped them how to begin their texts and they learned that writing any kinds of texts with good examples might be better than starting writing without prior knowledge. On the other hand, it positively indicated that this stage can raise the students' awareness of both the schematic structure of each text and the social

issues associated with genre. Genre schematic structure and its features were linguistically realized through the use of e-text activities.

GBC stage 2 (joint construction of text)

While the realization of the texts' organization (schematic structure) was achieved in GBC stage 1, it wouldn't suffice since the realization itself was vague and meaningless in general. This stage, GBC stage 2, was aimed at enhancing students' writing ability in terms of self-expression. A text with schematic structure awareness and self-expression of the writer could convey the texts' communicative purposes clearly. There were some activities in the form of e-texts carried out at this stage and at this stage the role of the teacher decreased compared with the previous one. Most of the time students did the e-text activities with the guidance from the teacher. In the e-text activities featured the sample texts in the form of misplaced moves, writing a story from prompts and there were even some pictures to arouse students' attention in the writing class. The visual feature of the computer format activates the student's cognition, which promotes excellent results in writing development (Schultz, 2000). The students started writing their first drafts from the directions in each lesson and meanwhile the teacher helped students reshape their idea and organization. One interesting fact found in this stage some students tried to take risks in creating longer sentences and using new vocabulary to express their ideas since they thought that the teacher might help them rewrite those sentences in the class. Especially, those pieces were just first drafts so they were free to discuss their texts with friends. Students handed in their first drafts and the teacher gave comments and suggestion on schematic structure and ideas.

GBC stage 3 (independent construction of text)

This stage was considered to be a free stage for students because there was no class for this stage and they might revise their own texts (second drafts) with the courseware through web connection. The students, in fact, were expected to compare

their written texts with the sample genres in the courseware so that they could develop their autonomy in this stage as well. This stage is similar to the research done by Weber (2001) that the students compared their texts with the model legal essays in the corpus and at the same time the activity promote learner autonomy. Students should have their own responsibility and they could come to see the teacher anytime they wanted to. The objectives of this stage were threefold: Students have responsibility in their learning process, students try to find their own ways of learning and whether the courseware facilitates students' learning process. Students were supposed to develop self-monitoring at this stage and tried to find techniques for their own learning process. The result from the questionnaire identified that all groups of students tended to develop their autonomy, especially, the pre-intermediate group showed an attempt to learn independently from the courseware with their own learning pace. Cresswell (2000) suggests in his study that the self-monitoring technique increase the way the students develop their autonomy to individual needs during the learning of writing. The students turned in their second drafts and the teacher gave comments and explanation of grammar. The students tried to correct their grammatical mistakes on their own since the teacher would not tell them all about how to revise their mistakes. Students submitted their final drafts by ways of email.

In conclusion, each stage of the Genre-Based Courseware has its own specific goal: genre structure awareness, self-expression writing and self-monitoring development as shown in Figure 7. Both English writing ability and learner autonomy of the subjects were significantly different through the implementation of the three stages of the Genre-Based Courseware. One beneficial fact that made learning through the Genre-Based Courseware different from normal classroom was classroom atmosphere. The students found learning new ideas through computer was more interesting and it facilitated their autonomy. In addition, quality and quantity of language output accumulated during the study.

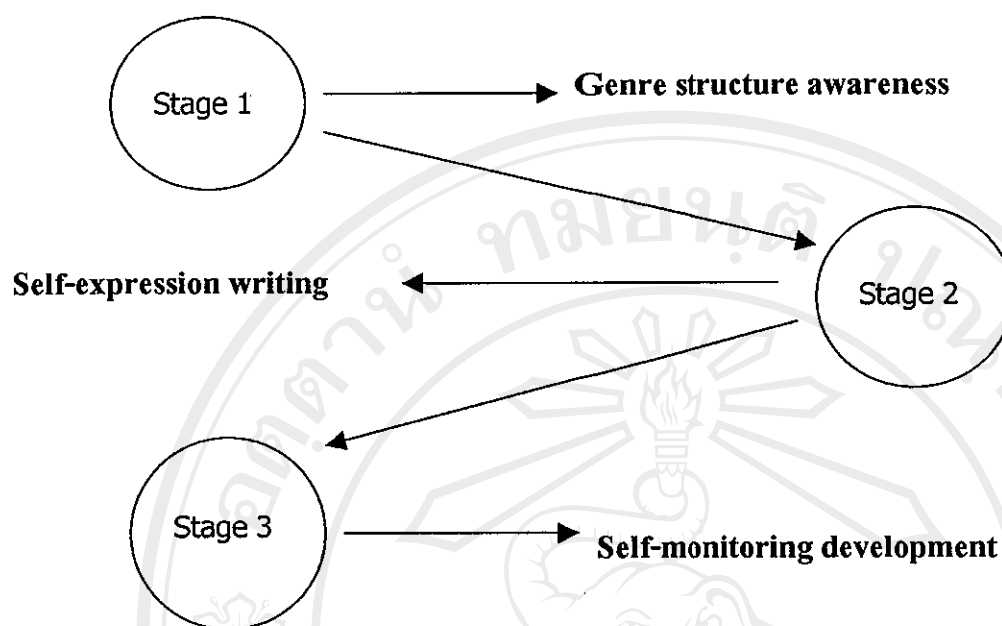


Figure 7 Model of Genre-Based Courseware

2. Limitation of the study

1. The author of this research is not a computer programmer so some imperfections of the Genre-Based Courseware might be found in the lessons such as web page design, colors, animations, and pictures.

2. The teaching and learning procedures were carried out in front of computer screen most of the time, thus the light from the monitor might have an impact on students' eyesight.

SUGGESTION

As mentioned previously that this study was conceived ideas from genre-based pedagogy, computer-assisted language learning to trial how the two disciplines have effects on English writing ability and student autonomy. According to the study, the results provide some considerations for effective implementations in three aspects. Students' maturity is very important because in the third stage students should show their potential in developing self-monitoring and responsibilities in order

to fulfill the assigned tasks. The availability and effectiveness of the computer lab (hardware) in the neighborhood can be known as the primary factors of the study; otherwise, the research cannot be conducted. Students will have difficulty accessing the courseware and might not be able to develop their sense of autonomy. The final factor is time allotment; students cannot redraft their writing effectively if they have so little time to finish their assignment. The teacher should provide optimal time in allowing students to submit their final drafts so as to reduce time constraint.

Suggestions for further research

1. In order to effectively monitor the students' self-monitoring, there should be a check-list report or self-monitoring diary.
2. It is very interesting to conduct a research by using the genre-transformation activities- have students transform the original written texts into other genres and see how they transfer the information.
3. Further study should be conducted to see how frequent each student access to the program and how long they spend time with the program and testify that time has an impact on students' writing ability or not.