

## The Effect of the Genre Awareness Approach on Development of Writing Ability

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**[Abstract]** The study examines the effectiveness of the genre awareness approach, a new writing instruction approach, on the development of EFL undergraduate students' writing ability. The participants chosen for this study were twenty-seven undergraduate students who enrolled in an English course at a public university in Thailand. Writing tests, genre awareness questionnaires, and interviews were administered to students at the beginning and the end of the course. The results indicated that the genre awareness approach substantially benefited students by enabling them to be aware of how texts were shaped for different communicative purposes. Furthermore, students' writing ability increased identically with positive attitudes. Recommendations for teaching practices and further research are discussed.

**[keywords]** genre, genre awareness approach, EFL, writing ability

### Introduction and Literature Review

Writing is not just a process of forming words into sentences and putting sentences into texts. Rather, it is a purposefully situation-based activity. This means that writing is an act depending on the situational contexts and the communicative purposes (Hyland, 2002). A writer's role, purposes, audiences, content, contexts, etc. have an influence on how texts are shaped. In other words, this specific situation is called a genre (Hyland, 2003). Therefore, the ability to write can be perceived as the ability to produce a text that aligns with certain contexts, audiences, and purposes or to produce a text that is appropriate to its genre (Tribble, 1996). To have better writing thus refers to the ability to produce a piece of writing, which shows the appropriateness of style and correctness of form to match the situational contexts and communicative purposes (Hyland, 2014).

According to Atkinson (2003), a genre-based approach is one of the writing pedagogies, which is developed to improve students' writing ability based on the genre concept. In order to respond to what writing is, students should be explicitly taught to write to reach the particular goals in a distinctive way. This explicitness quality makes students grab a clear picture of what is to be learned to acquire writing skills (Gee, 1997). Students would be taught to use the appropriate language features such as grammar, vocabulary, and organization that are required in the particular contexts or how language is used to achieve the purposes in particular situations (Henry & Roseberry, 1998).

Moreover, students are taught how to write certain types of texts for their future occupations (Freedman, 1993) and they do not need to worry about the right and wrong of the language used. Instead, students could give more focus on the use of language to achieve effective communication. Ahn (2012) examines the effect of implementing a genre-based approach to develop writing ability on second language primary school students. The findings revealed that students' writing ability and students' awareness of how different texts were organized were improved.

As for instructors' choice of teaching writing genres, based on Hyland (2003), there are basically six broad families of text-types, which are exchanges, forms, procedures, information texts, story texts, and persuasive texts. These text-types have different features, which could be found in different written text-types. However, some could be found in most of the written texts. For instance, information texts refer to the texts providing news or data in the form of descriptions, explanations, and reports. The objectives of this text types are to give and to describe the information. Another text-type that is usually found in the written texts is persuasive text-type. The persuasive texts refer to the texts showing writers' point of view on agreeing or disagreeing about something. The goal is to persuade the readers to lean on the writers'

beliefs.

Surely, when students only have to focus on one genre, better writing could be easily developed. For instance, Su and Chen (2012) investigated the effects of a genre-based approach on teaching summary writing. The result indicated that genre-based approach noticeably improved the students' writing ability. However, this only focuses on grammatical and lexical knowledge but not for the effective communicative purposes and understanding, which is the key to a successful communication. The nature of genre is dynamic. It is nearly impossible to simplify the complex rules of genres to teach to the students (Bakhtin, Holquist, & Emerson, 1986). Hyland (2007) claims that genres are too complex and to vary to be successfully abstracted from the original context and taught in an artificial environment (Hyland, 2007). For example, when an instructor asks students to write to their lovers or their parents and send it back to an instructor as homework.

It would not be the same or as authentic as writing to that readers in the real world contexts. The acquisition of a rhetorical knowledge requires considerably more than the explicit teaching from models. Therefore, to explicitly teach genre in the classroom, genre-based instruction has a potential to be prescriptive and restrictive formulas of how to write (Coe & Teslenko, 2002). Students would only produce writing in a set of prescriptive types (Freedman, 1993). With the inadequate mastery of genre, a major problem in written communication may occur. In the end, only better writing can be developed but not better writers.

Freedman (1993) suggests that teaching writing is about raising awareness of the importance of genre factors, which is valuable to all writers because this awareness does not only make the students become fully aware of the stylistic features of writing but provides them with strategies to reproduce these features in their own writing. Students should not only be taught how to write but also how the meaning is conveyed through choices of words, organization, and grammar. By means of genre awareness which is the ability to be aware of how texts are constructed and to serve what purposes based on the genre elements, students are equipped with a tool to be adapted and to be used in a variety of contexts rather than the learned genre (Devitt, 2004). Cheng (2006) examined how students developed genre awareness in the genre-based writing pedagogical framework. It was found that students gained more understanding from analyzing the texts leading to a better understanding of the interaction between writers, readers, and purposes that different contexts or different genres comprise of.

By the same token, Yasuda (2011) conducted a similar study and the results showed that the students made progress in their genre awareness and the students' progresses in the genre awareness knowledge were obvious in their written products. Through this path, the students will understand the communicative purposes behind every language choice, organization, and grammar that the students choose to use during the writing tasks as well as to reflect the appropriateness of grammar, sentence structures, and vocabulary to match the readers, purposes, etc. Equally important, the student will gain more understanding with rhetorical and linguistic awareness of different genres and the creativity in writing.

This clearly demonstrates that once the basic convention and restrictions of the genre are understood; one can apply this knowledge into one's own writing without holding on to the pattern (Bhatia, 1993). When the students face a new genre, the students should be able to apply the concept of genre awareness to the new genres outside the classroom by considering the writer's role, author, context, etc. during writing. Then, the better choice of choosing the appropriate word choice, grammar, etc. is made by the students.

Genre awareness does not only help students adhere their writing to a particular genre but, it also provides an understanding of how a genre fulfills a rhetorical purpose of a context in the real world. Genre awareness acts like a tool in helping students to make better choices from what students are already equipped with the linguistic knowledge, which is the reason why genre-based instruction and genre awareness are complementary.

In sum, since we are unable to predict what students may face in the future, we should assist them in developing the tool such as genre awareness, which, in this case, is a practical option. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the effectiveness of the genre awareness approach on the EFL undergraduate students' writing ability and students' awareness of genre. Students' attitudes toward the course are also explored.

## Research Methodology

### *Participants*

A total of 27 first-year undergraduate students, enrolling in one section of the English course in the academic year 2015 at a public university in Thailand, were selected as the participants of this study. They were all classified in the upper-intermediate level based on the conceptual framework of the study. However, the actual students' performances may be varied.

### *Teaching Methods*

The course syllabus was based on the framework of the study, which comprises the teaching-learning cycle (Hyland, 2003), the move analysis (Swales, 1990), and the prompt analysis for genre awareness (Johns, 2008) for a 12-week period. The content of the course involves two topics, which were the informative and persuasive texts. All of the instructional materials in this study were validated by two experts in language teaching and language assessment. The features for each material were related to the writing rubric, which were syntax knowledge, vocabulary knowledge, textual knowledge, sociolinguistic knowledge, functional knowledge, and content knowledge and the conceptual framework of the study.

The teaching-learning cycle of Hyland (2003) was used as the teaching steps for writing tasks of the study, which were contextualizing, modeling, negotiating, constructing, and connecting. The contextualizing step aimed to help the students to be aware that the texts were influenced by the purposes, the writer's role, the audience, the contexts, etc. and to build a shared knowledge of a target genre. The modeling step aimed to explicitly teach the students to be aware of the purposes, structures, linguistic features, and organization of the target genres by providing the students with what was to be learned and the knowledge of the language choice. The negotiating step aimed to help students to write target genres with the help from the instructor and friends. The constructing step allowed students to write by themselves without the help from the instructor or the students' peers.

Lastly, the connecting step helped the students to be able to identify different text types and the genre's elements based on what they had learned in class and relate what they had learned to other genres. As for genre awareness, the genre awareness task through the writing awareness checklist was given to students every step of teaching, which was suitable for the teaching-learning cycle that provided students the time to reflect on what they had learned every week through the clear step of teaching.

### *Data Collection*

In this study, a one-group pretest-posttest design was employed to investigate the effect of the genre awareness approach on EFL students' writing ability. Students were assessed with the pre-writing test (informative and persuasive texts), the pre-genre awareness questionnaire (the relationship between genre elements and writing), and the interview (genre awareness knowledge and students' attitudes towards the course) at the beginning of the course. The pre-and post-writing test and the pre-and post-genre awareness questionnaires used the same instruments because this study aimed to investigate the effects of the proposed writing instruction over these instruments. It is, therefore, advisable to use the same instruments to investigate the changes and progress of the students' performances.

Nevertheless, the organization might be different. As for the interview, ten students in class were chosen to be interviewed individually. Five students were from the low level of English proficiency and another five were from high level of English proficiency based on the university in-house tests. Each interview lasted for ten to fifteen minutes. The qualitative data gathered were validated by two experts including the research for cross-checking.

Then, the treatment, which is the genre awareness approach, was employed. During this time, the writing awareness checklist was given to the students in order to record the progress of students' genre awareness knowledge. The writing awareness checklist was designed to help the students to be aware of the genre's elements before writing, during writing, and after writing. It was given to the students at every step of the teaching to emphasize and to reinforce the genre awareness knowledge. Students had to tick in

the box and filled in the gap to show that the students were already aware of that element as well as sending it back to the instructor for evaluation.

At the end of the course, the post-writing test, the post-genre awareness, the attitude questionnaire, and interviews were given to students to explore the changes in the students' writing ability, genre awareness knowledge, and attitude towards the course.

### *Data Analysis*

To investigate the students' improvement of writing ability, the scores from the pre-writing tests and the post-writing tests were compared by using *t*-test. Plus, the writing awareness checklist was used to be analyzed together with the scores from pre- and post-tests through content analysis and frequency. Moreover, in order to investigate the effects of genre awareness on EFL students' writing ability, the genre awareness questionnaires were used and were analyzed by descriptive statistics. The interviews were also employed and were analyzed by the content analysis and frequency. Lastly, the students' attitudes were determined by the attitude questionnaires and attitude interviews through descriptive statistics and, content analysis and frequency accordingly.

## Results and discussion

### *Students' Writing Ability*

Results gained from the pre- and post-writing tests were compared using *t*-tests. Students' writing tests in informative and persuasive texts were marked based on five items, which were syntax knowledge (an understanding of the grammatical structure suitable within the context), word choices (an understanding of the vocabulary suitable within the context), textual knowledge (an understanding of the genre structure in which the target genre is written), sociolinguistic knowledge (an understanding of language used based on writer's role, audience and context), functional knowledge (an understanding of the communicative goals and function of each move), and content knowledge (an understanding of the topics required for the text). Table 1 reports the descriptive statistics of the results on students' writing tests.

Table 1

#### *Informative text*

Items	Mean		S.D.		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post				
Syntax	0.51	3.51	1.34	2.85				
Vocabulary	0.49	3.62	1.34	2.81	-5.63	26	0.000	-1.37
					-5.85	26	0.000	-1.45
Textual	0.36	3.14	1.26	2.80	-4.43	26	0.000	-1.30
Sociolinguistic	0.36	3.37	1.34	2.83	-4.60	26	0.000	-1.39
Functional	0.39	3.21	1.49	2.73	-5.61	26	0.000	-1.31
Content	0.50	3.56	1.53	3.00	-5.60	26	0.000	-1.31
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.60</b>	<b>20.49</b>	<b>8.09</b>	<b>16.61</b>	<b>-5.89</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>-1.40</b>

As indicated in Table 1, the students' overall mean scores of the pre-writing test and post-writing test for the informative texts showed that the overall mean score of the post-writing test were higher than the pre-writing test overall mean score. Moreover, based on the findings, the *t*-test results revealed that the students' post-writing test overall mean score was higher than the students' pre-writing test overall mean score with statistical significance.

Although students showed great improvement in writing, the overall mean score of the post-writing test was still low. One possible explanation for this might be due to the time constraint and the nature of

this English course that students had to study four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) within three hours once a week for 12-week period. Based on the students' interviews, some of them also reported that they needed more time as there were so many things to be learned and understood within the time given. This meant they could not catch up with the lesson learned in class. According to Nikitina (2012), writing is a skill that takes a lot of time, practices, and patient to develop.

Consequently, the instructor should consider the writing strategies that are appropriate with each teaching step in order to help students to express their ideas and to guide students to be able to write within the short period of time. Instructors should help students to be on the same page by starting the writing lesson with the most fundamental knowledge to help students to pass through it in the first place (Shaughnessy, 1977). Then, the writing lesson could become more challenging for students to overcome. When students face some difficulties, instructors could slow down and repeat that lesson again.

Also, another strategy that could help students expressing their ideas is to provide students with an interesting or a familiar topic that students could immerse themselves in the topic (Taylor, 1981). Triastuti (2011) believed that the significant issue in using genre-based approach is the input texts. The texts should be appropriate to the students' needs, interests, and proficiency level in order to bring the best results from the students. By this way, students should have idea of what to write down and find it interesting enough to overcome some difficulties.

In this study, students' background knowledge was different. Some had a low proficiency level while some had a high level of proficiency. This could have also caused the problems to the students in the class since the instructor could not follow only one lesson plan. It had to be adjusted for the low level students. However, at the same time, the lesson plan had to be suitable for students with higher level of proficiency. In the end, students' writing ability was developed but the students' writing ability at the end of the course could have been higher if every student in class were on the same page or with the same background knowledge the whole time.

Table 2

*Persuasive text*

Items	Mean		S.D.		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post				
Syntax	0.98	5.91	2.08	1.7	-10.28	26	0.000	-2.64
Vocabulary	0.99	5.70	2.08	2.07	-7.59	26	0.000	-2.31
Textual	0.96	6.50	2.03	1.83	-10.69	26	0.000	-2.92
Sociolinguistic	0.96	6.22	2.03	1.81	-10.66	26	0.000	-2.79
Functional	1.08	6.19	2.30	1.78	-10.20	26	0.000	-2.53
Content	1.08	6.72	2.30	1.85	-11.24	26	0.000	-2.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.02</b>	<b>37.44</b>	<b>12.74</b>	<b>10.54</b>	<b>-10.55</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>-2.74</b>

Table 2 shows the pre- and post-writing tests focusing on the persuasive texts. The similar results to the informative texts could be found in persuasive texts. Students' writing ability in all areas was greatly improved and the post-writing tests' overall mean score was significantly different from the pre-writing tests' overall mean scores.

Improvement in both text types could be a result of the teaching steps and materials in the genre awareness approach. To elaborate, there were certain concepts that were needed to be understood. Generally, explicit teaching is believed to be characterized by a scaffolding concept. Students are guided and are supported during the learning. Instructors give students clear explanations and positive feedback through the process of learning (Archer & Hughes, 2011). Rosenshine (1987) believed that explicit teaching is a systematic teaching method that a small step of teaching is employed to check the students' understanding to achieve the goals. Since the genre-based approach is an explicit teaching, scaffolding

concept is embedded in the teaching especially in the teaching-learning cycle. The teaching-learning cycle consists of five steps, which aim to help students clear what is to be learned and to support their progress by providing information needed with guided practice. Also, students are given feedback in order to help students' understand the lessons (Hyland, 2003). Watanabe and Swain (2007) conducted research and found that group activities that required peer scaffolding, instructor scaffolding and feedback enhance students' writing ability. As a result, teacher's guidance and scaffolding activities have a positive influence on students writing ability.

In conclusion, although every student's writing ability was improved, the results of the writing tests revealed that the low level proficiency students' overall writing performances were developed significantly than the high level proficiency students. Also, there was an obvious connection between the knowledge of genre awareness and writing products. It could be assumed that low level proficiency students were influenced more from the genre awareness writing instruction. This is consistent with Griffin's work (2012), which explored the students' development of reading comprehension. The findings indicated that the improvement occurred at lower level of proficiency students than at higher level of proficiency. One explanation of this could be because instructors were not able to offer teaching strategies to higher level of proficiency students. Instructors only knew how to deal with lower proficiency students. Moreover, most of the records found today are about how to improve low proficiency students but not high proficiency students. Since there are no records, instructors handled high proficiency students intuitively (Griffin, 2012). Therefore, students with high proficiency level are less developed than low proficiency students.

### *Genre Awareness Knowledge*

The total of overall mean score of students' pre- and post-genre awareness questionnaires showed that students had more awareness of genres with statistical significance. There are six genre elements relating to writing in the questionnaires, which were the genre name (the students' knowledge of target text such as vocabulary, organization, etc.), the purpose (how to complete the task or the purpose of the text), the context (the relationship between a writer and a reader), the writer's role (the writer's role towards the audience), the audience (the audience towards the writer), and the content (what students should write about).

Table 3

#### *Students' Awareness of Genre*

Items	Mean		S.D.		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post				
Total of genre name	3.25	4.11	0.62	0.59	-5.26	26	0.000	-1.45
Total of purpose	3.44	4.09	0.62	0.62	-4.11	26	0.000	-1.07
Total of context	3.64	4.18	0.66	0.57	-3.03	26	0.005	-0.89
Total of writer's role	3.38	4.05	0.56	0.54	-5.32	26	0.000	-1.24
Total of audience	3.68	4.11	0.52	0.56	-2.88	26	0.008	-0.81
Total of content	3.53	4.24	0.73	0.61	-3.79	26	0.001	-1.08
Total of genre awareness	3.51	4.18	0.62	0.68	-2.86	26	0.001	-1.05
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>4.14</b>	<b>0.48</b>	<b>0.53</b>	<b>-4.65</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>-1.29</b>

Simply stated, students' genre awareness was improved with statistical significance comparing with the pre-genre awareness questionnaire's findings except for the context and audience elements. This could be explained by the term of context of production (Nystrand, 1987). This means that a situation in which a text is produced influences how texts are shaped. In this study, students needed to produce a text within a classroom where the instructor was always an audience. As a consequence, the context of the writing was the same throughout the course. Although students were given texts with different situations and audiences,

it might not be authentic enough for students to acknowledge it. Therefore, students might not notice the difference in the context and the audience. According to Hyland (2003), genre is dynamic and it is difficult to teach to students in an unauthentic situation because when students write a letter to their parents or their friends and directly send that letter to those audiences, it is not the same as writing love letters or letter to parents but send those letters as classwork or homework to the instructors. The audiences, contexts, purposes, writers' role and etc. are different. The language used is also different. In addition, in order to check whether students' genre awareness were surely improved, the genre awareness checklist that students needed to complete every class and the interviews were collected and were used as the tools to confirm the results from the genre awareness questionnaires as follows.

Based on the pre-interview data, regarding the genre awareness knowledge, the students' reports showed no sign of genre awareness in writing in the pre-interview findings. The findings solely showed that students thought about organization, structuring sentences, and choosing vocabulary, which was what students considered before they started writing. When students were asked about how those elements affected their writing, all students' unanimous responses landed on nothing but organization.

On the contrary, based on the post-interview data, the students' reports showed sign of genre awareness in writing. The findings showed that the students thought about genre's elements, organization, and structuring sentences before they started writing and during writing. When the students were asked about how those elements affect how you write, students answered that those elements affected the formal and informal language used including grammar and vocabulary. Students also reported that they could use what they have learned about writing to other contexts such as at work, outside classrooms, etc.

Furthermore, based on the writing awareness checklist which was aimed to reinforce the students' knowledge on genre awareness, the sign of students' improvement was significantly shown.

Table 4

*Writing Awareness Checklist*

Genre element items (Percentage)	Genre name	Purpose	Context	Writer's role	Audience	Content
<b>Information Text</b>						
Pre-checklist	7.40	7.40	0	7.40	7.40	14.81
Post-checklist	59.25	51.85	66.66	70.37	66.66	96.29
<b>Persuasive Text</b>						
Pre-checklist	0	3.70	0	3.70	3.70	25.92
Post-checklist	92.59	85.18	92.59	96.29	85.18	96.29

Based on the writing awareness checklist's findings, the percentage calculated from the checklist towards the understanding of genre elements and how these elements affected how texts were shaped was low for both text types in the pre-checklist. Students did not know how to answer the questions or knew what they were. Basically, there were ten checklists for each class excluding the pre- and post-checklists. The first checklist's answers showed nearly the same results as the pre-tests'. Then, from the second to the fourth, the finding's percentage was higher. As for the fifth and tenth checklists, students needed to apply the genre awareness to the other texts types that they did learn in class. The findings showed that they struggled on the first time that they had to apply the knowledge to other text types. This was consistent with Yang (2011) research.

Based on the study of Yang (2011), the investigation of ESP learners in the EFL setting whether these learners were able to compose another genre drawing on their previous knowledge of genre analysis after completing a genre-based writing course on hospitality and tourism was conducted. The findings revealed that the students could transfer genre knowledge to other genres when they were guided with a scaffolding instruction and practices. However, if the students did not receive sufficient guiding or did not have experience in other genres before, they could face some difficulties transferring genre knowledge. In other

word, it was difficult for students to notice the audiences, contexts, purposes, writers' roles and how texts were shaped if they had never been exposed to this knowledge before. As a consequence, in this study, on the tenth checklist that students had to apply to other text types, students illustrated great improvement or, in other words, the genre awareness transferability.

This genre awareness transferability is the ability to make connections between the types of writing learned in class and the writing genres they face outside the classrooms. It is believed that once students are able to see the core concepts of one situation in terms of its social purposes and rhetorical, they could apply this genre awareness knowledge to another (Clark & Hernandez, 2011). In other words, they would not only write better but also acquire the tools that students need to the new writing. Furthermore, as it is shown, the percentages of purpose and audience category were lower than other genre elements when the tendency should be higher. This may be because what Nystrand (1987) explained as the context of production. It was difficult to duplicate the authentic situation to the classroom situation when the genre elements or the audiences, writers' role, purposes, etc. in the real world were different.

### *Students' Attitudes towards the Course*

As shown in Table 5, the results revealed that the students had positive attitudes towards the genre awareness course. To look into more details, the students' attitudes towards the course could be categorized into three groups (the course, the steps of teaching, and the course materials), which all showed students' satisfaction towards the course.

Table 5

*Students' Attitudes towards the Course*

<b>Items</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>
Students' overall attitudes towards the course	2	5	4.04	0.69
- <i>I understand every step of the writing instruction.</i>	2	5	3.85	0.94
Students' overall attitudes towards the steps of teaching	3	5	3.99	0.44
- <i>I think the activity during constructing helps my understanding of how to write better.</i>	2	5	3.40	0.97
Students' overall attitudes towards the course materials	3	5	4.11	0.41
- <i>The language exercise really helps me to review what I have learned.</i>	3	5	4.40	0.57
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4.04</b>	<b>0.46</b>

The item that received the lowest scores in the genre awareness course category was the students' understanding of every step of the writing instruction. This was confirmed by the lowest mean score in the second attitude's category, which was the step of teaching. Students reported that they were not satisfied with the constructing step. During this step, the instructor monitored the room and gave guidance when needed. Students needed to use the knowledge of what they had learned to write the text by themselves. The students thought that the activity during constructing did not help their understanding of how to write better. As for the students' attitudes towards the course materials, students agreed that the language exercise helped them to review what they had learned and the students satisfied with this teaching material the most.

The results from the interviews also indicated the similar findings. One student reported that "*this kind of writing teaching helps me to understand more about writing and there is a technique that I could use in writing from now on*". However, some students thought that the content in one class was too much and they could not follow their friends. "*I learned a lot in one class but sometimes it is too much*". In addition, some students stated that "*I would like the step of teaching to go slower than this because I feel like I need more time to process what I have learned. There was one class that the teacher taught us about the writing model. Then, the teacher asked us to write. It was difficult for me to use what I had learned to write a text*".



Generally speaking, students could not link what they had learned and applied it in the writing product. Eventually, they would not be able to complete the tasks since they could not apply what they had learned to other areas. Such a finding was similar to the findings of Thep-Ackrapong (2005). The study stated that with the teaching writing situation and a small number of writing exercises in Thailand, it led to the difficulty for students to integrate language skills, for instance, from grammar to writing or from one context to another.

In the constructing, students disagreed with the constructing step because the content was too much and they could not produce a written text. The reason behind this might be because students could not link what they have learned to the real world writing despite the fact that they had learned a lot and they knew the content of what they had learned. In sum, the overall results showed the positive attitudes towards the course, activities, and teaching steps after receiving the genre awareness approach adapted from the genre-based writing approach following the teaching-learning cycle.

### **Implications and Conclusion**

The findings in this study revealed that the genre awareness approach had a crucially profound influence on students' writing ability. The students' ability to write was improved in all six categories including syntax, vocabulary, textual, sociolinguistic, functional, and content knowledge. Also, the students gained more understanding of why texts were different in different situation. Thus, language instructors and institutions are encouraged to integrate the genre awareness approach in their instruction and classrooms in order to provide the students with tools that may support them to develop their writing ability. Several classroom implications could be drawn from the results of the study.

Firstly, when genre-based pedagogy or the genre awareness approach adapted from the genre-based approach is used in the general EFL classroom, instructors would face many challenges since genre-based pedagogy is intended to be used to teach language in specific purpose and situation. In the general EFL classroom, the goal is for students to learn all four skills to be able to communicate in everyday life. Therefore, it is unpredictable what genres students will face in the future, for instance, if genre-based pedagogy is used in the engineering course, it is predictable that students will face the engineering texts in the future. However, in the general EFL classroom, students do not learn language for the specific purpose like the ESP or EAP course.

Therefore, using a genre-based approach in the general EFL classroom is needed to be more practical by providing students with various authentic texts to analyze to find commonalities and differences in both genre elements and language used. By this way, both instructors and students need to analyze a stockpile of authentic texts in order to find the commonalities and differences among genres. Instructors could first ask students to bring all kind of printed materials that students can find at home such as labels, posters, etc. to the classroom and analyze those texts together. Later, if instructors wish to teach only some of the writing genres, instructors could ask students to bring only a certain kind of written texts to class.

Next, students who had no experience with certain types of teaching materials in the classroom such as checklists, reflective journals, portfolio, or peer assessment should be trained before those teaching materials are integrated in class in order to gain the maximum benefits from these materials. Gómez (1999) suggested that students should be trained to use a portfolio for effective results. Instructors could give some examples of how to do the portfolio and start doing the first task with the students. Then, this support is gradually removed and students need to take this responsibility to complete the tasks by themselves. Also, to implement reflective journals to the classroom that students have never been exposed to reflective journals before like some of those students in this study, University of Central Florida (1998) suggests that instructors should provide a guidance regarding how to write reflective journal as 3-R, which are reaction to what you have experienced, relevance to what is learned and what to improve, and responsibility to be able to apply to daily life.

First, the instructors could ask students about their daily life, what they have done today, and what they think about the topic given. The topic should be related to students' life or what students are familiar with it. Then, instructors ask students to write that idea down in the notebook. After that, instructors could give

some examples of how those experiences related to what they had learned in class. For example, if the topic for the class is about the direction, instructors could ask students to think about how they come to school and how they go home. Then, instructors could ask students to look at what they wrote and link to the vocabulary that they have learned in class. Lastly, students should be asked to think about how to use the new direction vocabulary that they had learned to everyday life, for instance, can they use this word to tell direction to other people? Or can students write a map directing someone to the destination? This guidance could be used as the basis for instructors who are interested in bringing reflective journals to the classroom and apply this 3-R to their own teaching styles and goals.

Thirdly, the genre-based approach's characteristic tends to focus on only one genre. Because of that, the genre awareness was used to fulfill the gap. It helps students to apply what they have learned to other genres. As a result, students' writing ability seemed to be improved and students seemed to be more aware of the genre elements and how texts were shaped by those elements. However, in this study, students were briefly tested on genre awareness transferability for only two times in class. It would be better if the genre awareness transferability is paid more attention by asking students to apply genre awareness knowledge to more authentic text types or arranging more genre awareness transferability activities for students. To help students to be able to transfer genre knowledge, Instructors could arrange a genre and context awareness activity.

First, instructors explain to students that people write different ways for different purposes in different contexts based on genre elements, which are writers' role, audience, purpose, etc. (Millar, 2011). Students will be asked to write one word from those elements in a piece of paper. Then, instructors ask students to combine those words from each element together and discuss the language choice that will be used with that combination such as word choice, organization, and grammatical features. From this activity, students will be aware of how texts are shaped based on the genre elements. Once students can accomplish and understand the goal of this activity, instructors can give a variety of authentic text types to students and ask them to find the genre elements in those texts. Later, instructors could lead the discussion of this activity such as what students have found, what the commonalities among texts given are, types of texts they have found, etc.

With respect to the teaching activities, materials, and steps of teaching, the results suggest that students liked the exercises that consisted of a variety exercises including vocabulary, sentence structures, grammar, and sociolinguistic knowledge. However, some students reported that the content learned in one class was too much. They wanted more pictures, not only texts. Also, students did like individual work. It would be better if they could do group work. One reason for this diversity is because of the difference of the student's preferences, learning styles, and learning strategies.

According to Reid (1998), learning styles are rooted in fixed genetic traits meaning that each student has his or her way of learning and it would be hard to investigate why they prefer one style instead of others. Therefore, instructors do not have control over students' preferences. In order to help students from feeling out of place or trying to control students' preferences, a variety of activities should be brought into the class so that students can experience many types of activities, which fit their preferences. For example, instructors could create a writing exercise that includes vocabulary, grammar, and writing sections. Each section focuses on different students preferences. In the vocabulary section, instructors could provide pictures for students to fill in the vocabulary. As for grammar section, instructors could ask students to listen to a story and fill in the blank. Another way in order to try to bring out the best in students is to do learning styles survey. By this way, instructors would understand what most students prefer and what they do not so that lesson plan could be arranged accordingly.

Lastly, to apply the writing assessment in this study to the classroom or other studies, instructors need to be sure that the content learned in class reflects in the writing assessment used. Genre is a specific type of writing. The writing assessment should be designed specifically for the learned genre in order to ensure a more reflection on the students' language ability (Crusan, 2013). Moreover, writing rubrics that are created for specific genres would help students to know what goals are needed to be achieved and what instructors should comment on when assessing students' works. Although many instructors still rely on all-purpose criteria because it is convenient to use in judging students' writing, such criterion is not appropriate

to evaluate the specific genres since it does not reflect what students have learned. Therefore, it could not entirely determine students' writing ability.

In conclusion, this study provided an empirical report of how EFL undergraduate students developed their writing ability and genre awareness knowledge as they engaged in the genre awareness approach adapted from the genre-based approach. The results of this study indicated that students' writing and genre awareness knowledge were developed significantly. However, this study examined only one group of students without a comparison group. As a result, although students writing ability significantly improved, it was possible that the writing improvement was not due to the instruction alone. Thus, future studies would be recommended to use two groups and to compare the results. However, the findings from this study would still be valuable for the instructors of English and the researchers as they can be used as a guideline for the instructors and the researchers who would be interested to a new instructional approach to help the students to master writing.

### Acknowledgements

First and foremost, the authors would like to thank Professor Paul Kei Matsuda for his useful guidance and insightful comments of this article. Also, the authors wish to thank the anonymous reviewers who made this article possible through the support and encouragement. Thank you. This research was supported by the Thailand Research Fund's Royal Golden Jubilee Ph.D. program.

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