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The Effect of Genre-Based Writing instruction on EFL Learners' Writing Performance: Intermediate Students at the Higher Language Institute

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Abstract

This dissertation reports on a study of the impact of genre-based instruction on developing writing performance and fostering genre awareness of EFL learners in the Syrian EFL context. The study was conducted with five EFL learners of *B-level* at the Higher Language Institute located at Damascus University. A five-session workshop using a designed module integrating different frames of genre pedagogies provided students with writing instruction. Written samples were collected pre- and post- instruction from students. Additionally, a pre-instruction interview, a post-instruction class discussion, a post-instruction free writing class assignment, and a post-instruction in-class observation were used to collect data. Collected data was qualitatively and quantitatively analyzed. Students' pre and post-instruction writing samples were rated on mechanics, vocabulary, language use, organization, and content. The same writing samples were also linguistically analyzed on genre awareness and command. Content analysis following the inductive and deductive approaches was used to analyze the interview, class discussion, free writing samples, and the class observation field notes. Data analysis revealed the impact of instruction on raising students' genre awareness and improving their writing performance. Results showed that the majority of students, four out of five, changed their view of the nature of writing and genre after the instruction. This same majority was additionally successful in demonstrating awareness of the instructed genre and showing command over their post-instruction written performance of it. The four students, as data reveal, were as well able to transfer their gained knowledge into a new text and develop metalanguage to describe, analyze and talk about the text. Results additionally showed that positive trends of class behavior were associated with students who demonstrate signs of awareness of the instructed genre. Finally, statistical significance between students' pre-and post-instruction writing samples indicated the impact of instruction on developing the students' writing performance. Correlation analysis revealed that the provided instruction has affected students' post-instruction writing performance of vocabulary, language use, organization, and content.