

THE USE OF GENRE THEORY FOR IMPROVING WRITING PROFICIENCY SKILLS IN EXPLANATIONS

EL USO DE LA TEORÍA DEL GÉNERO PARA MEJORAR LAS HABILIDADES DE ESCRITURA EN LAS EXPLICACIONES

L'UTILISATION DE LA THÉORIE DES GENRES POUR AMÉLIORER LES COMPÉTENCES D'ÉCRITURE DANS DES EXPLICATIONS

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ABSTRACT

The study reported in this paper focuses on the use of genre theory as an appropriate framework for English L2 writing in the subject English Language IV of the degree in English Studies. We compared 40 explanations written by students in this course at the University of Alicante (Spain) before and after they had studied different text types following genre theory. This study will show that using the theory of genre as a framework to teach academic writing helped students to improve their level of literacy through the study of text types and specific grammatical structures that appear in these texts. Findings suggest that exposing students to good models of different text types, paying special attention to explanations, and asking them to write texts based on these models, improves students' texts from the grammatical and the textual points of view.

Keywords: genre theory, academic writing, text types, explanation, tutorials

RESUMEN

El estudio presentado en este artículo se centra en el uso de la teoría del género como un marco adecuado para la escritura Inglés L2 en la asignatura de Inglés IV de la licenciatura en Filología Inglesa. Se compararon 40 explicaciones escritas por los estudiantes en este curso en la Universidad de Alicante (España) antes y después de haber estudiado diferentes tipos de texto siguiendo la teoría del género. Este estudio mostrará que el uso de dicha teoría como marco para enseñar la escritura académica ayudó a los estudiantes a mejorar su nivel de alfabetización mediante el estudio de los tipos de textos y las estructuras gramaticales específicas que aparecen en ellos. Los resultados sugieren que la exposición de los estudiantes a buenos modelos de diferentes tipos textuales, con especial atención a las explicaciones, y pedirles que escriban textos en base a estos modelos, mejora la producción escrita de los estudiantes desde el punto de vista gramatical y textual.

Palabras clave: teoría del género, escritura académica, tipos de texto, explicaciones, tutorías

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RÉSUMÉ

L'étude présentée dans cet article se concentre sur l'utilisation de la théorie du genre en tant que cadre pour l'écriture en anglais L2 dans le cours Anglais IV de la licence en Philologie Anglaise. 40 explications écrites par les étudiants de ce cours à l'Université d'Alicante (Espagne) ont été comparées avant et après avoir étudié les différents types de texte suivant la théorie du genre. Cette étude montre que l'utilisation de la théorie du genre, en tant que cadre pour l'enseignement de l'écriture académique, a aidé les élèves à améliorer leurs compétences en littéracie à travers l'étude de certains types de textes et des structures grammaticales qui apparaissent dans ces textes. Les résultats suggèrent que l'exposition des étudiants à de bons modèles de différents types de textes, focalisés particulièrement sur les explications, et le fait de leur demander d'écrire des textes basés sur ces modèles, améliorent les productions écrites des étudiants du point de grammatical et textuel.

Mots-clés: théorie du genre, écriture académique, types de textes, explications, tutorats

Introduction

This paper will show that genre theory is a very suitable approach for the interpretation of ‘text and context’ and ‘language learning and development’. The application of genre theory to the analysis of texts at tertiary English at a tertiary institution in Spain is appropriate in order to help students to write better or more easily, which is crucial in social interaction. In this sense, it is important to precise that, in a tertiary context, writing as social interaction is most critical in interactions related to assessment, e.g. essay-writing (Fecho, 2011; Hua, Seedhouse, Li & Cook, 2007, p. 1; Trofimovich & McDonough, 2011). This study will show that using the theory of genre as a framework to teach academic writing helped students to improve their level of literacy through the study of text types and specific grammatical structures that appear in these texts. Taking genre theory as a framework to analyse students’ texts, the intention is to pay attention to the importance of organising information at the text level, and to see text as a social product reflecting the social context in which it is written, since there is a connection between form and meaning. In this sense, the genre pedagogy used in this paper has drawn on systemic functional linguistics (hereafter SFL) (see section 2), which views language as a social semiotic system (Halliday, 1978). In Matthiessen’s words:

Learning a language increasingly becomes a matter of learning through this language in a growing range of quotidian and professional contexts (thus moving closer to the condition of native speakers); and learning a language can increasingly be helped by learning about this language —not only passively by investigating it and by developing one’s own resources for learning. (2006, p. 33)

Language is understood as a resource for making meaning in social contexts (Edelsky, 2006, p. 165). This study shows that students need to be aware of the importance of their language choices in order to deliver well-written, structured and effective texts according to the communicative situation. Moreover, this research will point out

that it is necessary that students are exposed to models of authentic texts so that they observe the main characteristics of different text types and they understand how language works in them, as Mahboob *et al.* make it clear: “The aim of providing model texts is not only to guide students in their writing, but to also begin to build a shared metalanguage that would develop students’ knowledge and understanding about language” (2010, p. 34).

The written data analysed in this article consists of students’ writing: one explanation written during the first semester before genre theory had been introduced (see data presented in figures 1 and 2 in section 3.2) and another explanation written during the second semester once students had been exposed to typical models of this text type (see figures 4 and 5 in section 3.4). This study is justified because university students have problems with their writing. For this reason, genre theory is introduced, so that students are taught the different genres explicitly in order to improve their writing. The analysis will show that students improved their written skills after the main characteristics of each text type following genre theory were explained to them.

Literature Review

Genre studies have focused on socio-cultural actions. As Biber (2006, p. 11) points out “[...] the term *genre* has been used to refer to a culturally recognized ‘message type’ with a conventional internal structure, such as an affidavit, a biology research article, or a business memo”. Similarly, Parodi (2010, p. 25) defines genre in the following way: “a constellation of potential discourse conventions, sustained by previous knowledge of the speakers/writers and listeners/readers (stored in the memory of each subject), based on contextual, social, linguistic, and cognitive possibilities and/or constraints.”

Genre-based approaches to language teaching (and particularly the teaching of writing) attract

considerable interest from language teachers who are looking for suitable frameworks to promote the development of the discourse competence of their learners (Bruce, 2008, p. 1; De Silva Joyce & Feez, 2012; Martin & Rose, 2012). One of the main purposes for following a genre-based approach is to make students familiar with text types and to make their writing practices successful and academic, with the result that the texts they produce are accurate and coherent.

This article will show that applying the genre theory helps tertiary students of English in a Spanish University to increase their level of literacy. Literacy can then be defined as the ability to function effectively within a given set or sets of discourse practices embedded in their social and cultural contexts. Genre-based teaching can help students gain access to discourse, which will help them improve their written and spoken interactions in a second language. In this sense, genres are seen as ‘resources for meaning’ rather than a ‘system of rules’ (Swales, 2002).

Genre theory entails that the text is seen as the central category in literacy, as Kress points out:

“Text is the result of social action, and so the centrality of text means that literacy is always seen as a matter of social action and social forces, and all aspects of literacy are seen as deriving from these actions and forces”. (2003, p. 86)

In Fairclough’s words, “genres are the specifically discursive aspect of ways of acting and interacting in the course of social events” (2003, p. 65).

The main genre-based approaches are connected with rhetorical genre theory, critical analysis and SFL. In this article we will follow the concept of genre derived from SFL and now associated with the Sydney School. This approach to genre theory highlights that genre is defined as a staged, goal-oriented social process, which involves the interaction of participants using language in a conventional, step-wise structure (Moyano, 2013; O’Brien, 2004, p. 5).

This study adopts the Sydney School work on genre pedagogy as a framework, because it considers it essential to concentrate on the literacy practices needed for students to succeed at any level (primary, secondary or university). For this reason, the explicit teaching of the different genres and the different language resources needed to enact that literacy practices are crucial points in this research (Martin, 2000; Rose, 2005,).

The genre-based approach to the teaching of writing can be effective in a variety of settings. The concept of genre in this paper describes the ways in which we use spoken or written language to achieve social purposes within a culture. On top of this, the term genre is used to refer to the relationship between the social function and the pattern of language that can be predicted to accomplish that social function. In this sense, texts that share the same purpose in culture and have many of the same obligatory and optional features are called genres or text types.

The notion of genre derived from SFL shares some premises with rhetorical genre theory and the critical analysis of writing practices. An important feature of rhetorical genre theory is its understanding of genres as collective rhetorical strategies that achieve some degree of stability, because they produce the sorts of outcomes valued by those who employ them (Miller, 1984; Bazerman, 1988; Freedman & Medway, 1995; Coe, Lingard & Teslenko, 2002; Devitt, 2004; Artemeva & Freedman, 2006; Klein & Unsworth, 2014). A full understanding of genres is not possible, according to rhetorical genre theory, without a deep appreciation for the exigency to which genres respond and for the situation within which they exist and which they help create.

Critical analysis of writing practices builds upon the notion of writing as a social practice. This approach draws upon the terms and assumptions from critical discourse analysis (Blommaert, 2005; Fairclough, 2003; Rogers, 2004), neo-Vygotskian

research (Wertsch, 1985) and activity theory (Bazerman, 1988; Prior, 1998). It has an explicit political agenda and tries to uncover power hierarchies and societal asymmetries leading to the marginalization of certain social groups in the writing and texts produced in local classroom communities.

These theories have in common that the text is understood as a social product and that different texts are chosen depending on the communicative end that speakers or writers have. In this sense, both approaches share with genre theory the understanding of writing as a ‘meaning potential’ (i.e., what can be said) (Halliday, 1978). In other words, what the speaker can do or mean, which implies that out of the different choices that are possible in language, the speaker selects the most appropriate ones, according to the communicative situation or the functions that language has in context, rather than a set of rules (i.e., ‘what must be said’).

The genre approach has a crucial role in literacy, since it concentrates on both the production and the analysis of texts in a given language. The genre theory highlights the importance of writing effective texts that contain ideas consistent with the cultural conventions in which the texts are written. As Coffin states, this approach focuses “in looking at the potential of the language system in terms of all the different kinds of meanings from which speakers of the language can choose” (2001, p. 96).

When using genre theory as a theoretical framework following the Sydney School, students are offered good examples of different genres or text types, so that they can observe the different stages in the construction of the text. After that, students are asked to observe the main grammatical features in the text, and to write their own texts following the stages and linguistic patterns found in the model. Wennerstrom emphasizes the following idea:

Each genre presents a different set of rhetorical choices- from lexicon and grammar to format, content, and organization- that students can study and adapt to their own writing. [...] Students can become language researchers, or ethnographers, studying the surrounding culture’s ways of writing and adapting what they learn for their own purposes. (2003, p. 3)

Genre theory based on work by the Sydney School is a very suitable approach for establishing a relationship between culture, society and language use, because it focuses on the relationship between texts and the context in which those texts occur. In this way, students become aware of the different genres that they can use depending on their communicative purpose, their audience, and the level of formality. In Martínez Lirola’s words: “This is essential so that students can see how members of a culture use written texts as part of their social lives and they can conclude that the purpose of a genre determines its shape, i.e., its schematic structure.” (2006, p. 149)

Data and Methodology

Introducing the method.

The English Language IV course deals with academic writing for advanced students in English. After one semester observing how students had difficulties in the choice of grammatical structures and the choice of vocabulary that was collocated with specific text types, it was decided to apply genre theory, in order to help students improve their writing skills and be able to adapt their register to the text type they were using, dependent on the communicative situation.

This study comprises 40 explanations written by senior students on the degree in English Studies during the academic year 2013-2014. Most of them wanted to be English teachers at high school. There were also students who wanted to work as translators or interpreters. All of them had studied English in primary and secondary education and at the University in the three previous years of their degree. The subject English Language IV is a

compulsory subject in the last year of the degree. Its main aim is to further students' mastery in the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), paying special attention to academic writing. There were 32 female students and 8 male students, all of whom were Spanish. Students had a two-hour class every week to improve their writing, and there was another two-hour class where attention was given to the other skill areas (reading, listening and speaking).

In the first semester students worked on the sentence and paragraph levels. Then, in the second semester students were introduced to the main text types following Butt et al. (2012) and Droga & Humphrey (2003) and Humphrey et al. (2012). At the end of the academic year 2013-2014, students were asked to write an explanation (i.e., a genre used to tell how and why things occur) following the models introduced in class and paying attention to the main grammatical and textual characteristics of this text type.

194

The following paragraphs describe the main steps of this research, which have been designed in order to answer the main research question of this paper: to what extent does the use of genre theory help students to improve their writing from a textual and a grammatical point of view?

Firstly, students were offered typical examples of explanations and asked to describe their generic text structure, so that they could observe the different stages in the construction of the text. Students were also asked to observe the main grammatical and structural features in sample texts.

Secondly, students were assigned writing tasks in which they had to write two paragraphs that were going to be a part of an explanation. These paragraphs were corrected and commented on by the teacher with each student in an individualised tutorial before the students moved on to a larger writing assignment, which implied writing a full explanation.

There was only one marker, the teacher, who paid attention to the main stages of explanations, i.e., the identifying statement and the explanation sequence (Butt et al., 2012, p. 239) and to their main grammatical and textual features (see figure 3) in order to determine what was a good example of explanation or what aspects needed to be improved so that the texts produced by the students were similar to the ones presented and analysed as good sample texts.

Thirdly, once students had received feedback from the teacher, they were asked to write their own explanations on a topic of their choice following the stages and linguistic patterns found in the models seen in class.

Genre theory was adopted as a theoretical framework so that students could become aware of the relationship between the structure and shape of texts in order to be effective in their context, and to achieve the goals of their culture. Making genres explicit and showing how to write them will help students to be aware of how knowledge is structured in different written genres depending on the text type. Genre theory uses materials and tasks based on authentic linguistic data in order to promote student awareness of the conventions and procedures of the genre in question.

First semester data analysis.

The subject English Language IV had traditionally focused on cohesive devices within the sentence, without paying attention to the whole piece of written work or the context in which that language would be used. Following this approach, the main difficulties found on the sentence level were multiple grammar errors and a general misuse of conjunctions. Moreover, the choice of vocabulary and grammatical patterns was not appropriate for the register or text type. There were also ambiguities, referencing problems, and redundancy issues. During the first semester, the abovementioned sentence-based teaching was followed. Consequently, students worked only

on the sentence and paragraph levels and, at the end, students were asked to write a five-paragraph explanation.

A coding scheme for grammar and textual errors was developed to pay attention to the main errors found in students' essays. Therefore, figures 1 and 2 show the main grammatical and textual errors students made in their essays before they were introduced to genre theory. If we look at figure one, we can clearly observe that

students' main difficulties in the first semester were related to the placement of articles, in other words, they were not confident about the fact that abstract uncountable nouns normally take the zero article for general reference. However, they also had problems using abstract uncountable nouns with the definite article when used to talk about one specific example. Moreover, there were also difficulties with the wrong use of prepositions and 'to' verb forms.

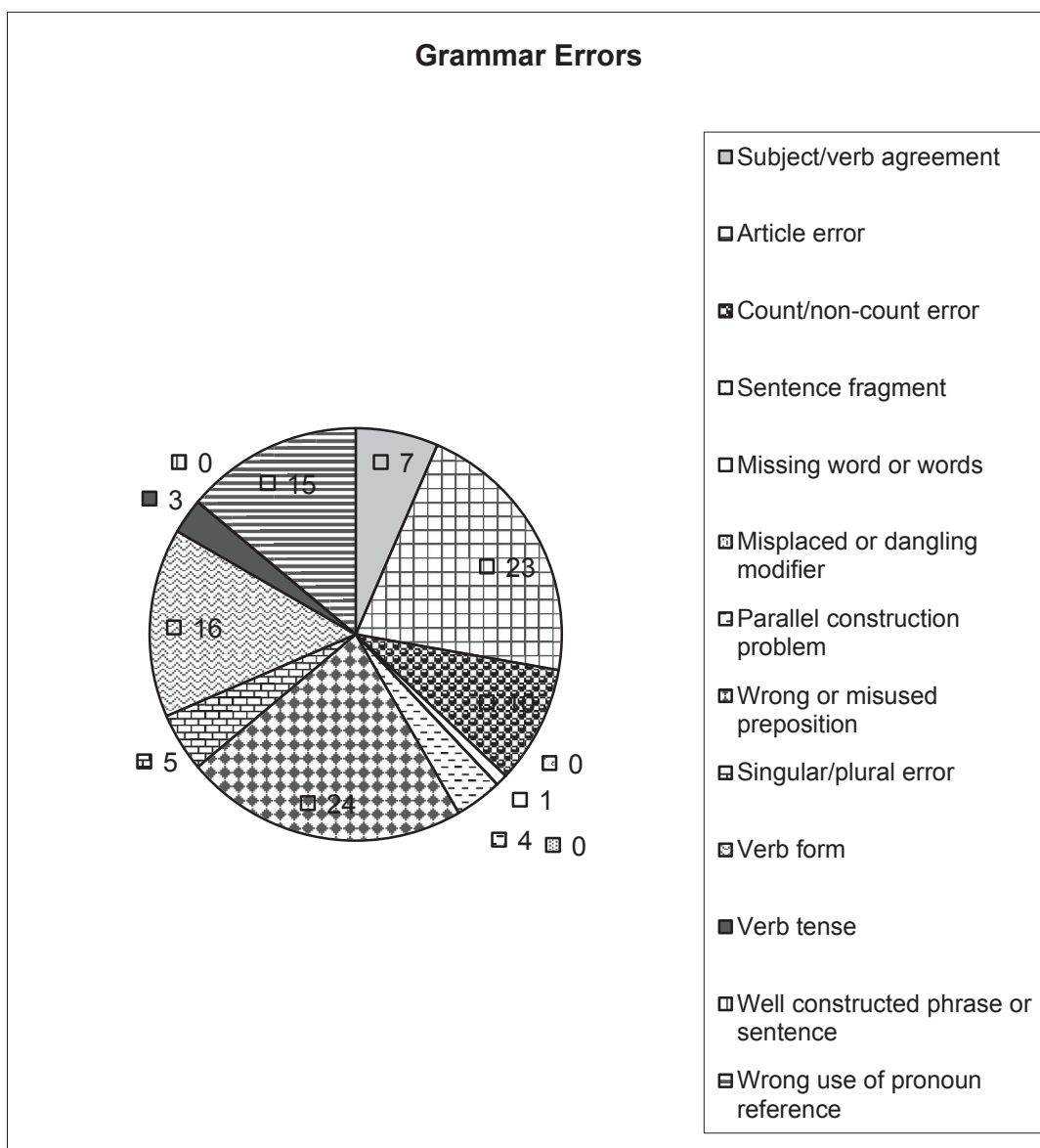
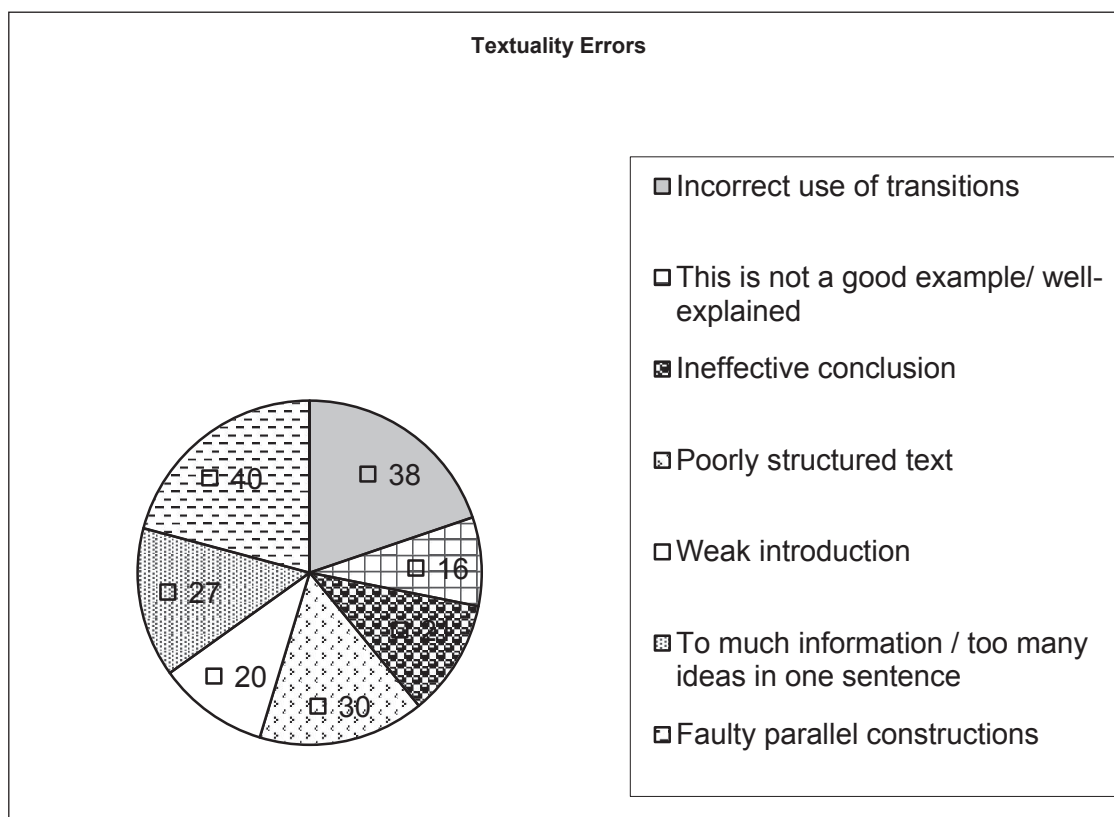


Figure 1. Results of the First Forty Essays Regarding Grammar Errors. First Semester.



196

Figure 2. Results of the First Forty Essays Regarding Textual Errors. First Semester.

If we concentrate on the main textual errors students made before they were introduced to genre theory, it is obvious that the main problem students had was the use of faulty parallel constructions, because all the forty essays analysed showed this error. It is also significant that 38 out of 40 students had problems with the use of transitions, i.e., connectors. This goes together with the fact that many students (27) tended to cluster ideas in one sentence, instead of using more complex constructions. In addition, only 10 students structured their texts in a coherent and cohesive way, whereas 30 students produced written texts with a very poor structure. Fewer than half of the students offered good examples to illustrate their arguments and half of them presented weak introductions or conclusions. Paying attention to these errors and to the ones presented in the previous figure made it necessary to emphasize the relationship between grammar

and textuality to improve the students' writing skills following the genre approach.

Teacher's roles and the importance of individual tutorials in the application of genre theory.

As pointed out before, this subject started to be taught focusing almost exclusively on language-related problems on the sentence level and giving minimal attention to discourse-related aspects of writing. Thus, students were accustomed to immediate retrospection concerning error correction but were not able to apply the correct grammatical structures in their own essays. Genre theory highlights the fact that, in teaching writing, teachers need to pay attention not only to the processes of composing texts, but also to the nature of texts that students write (Fenstermacher & Soltis, 2009, p. 25; Hammond & Derewianka, 2000, p. 187).

Teaching based upon genre theory contrasts with the previous experiences of teaching writing in English Language IV, in which students were asked to produce texts without being introduced to the main text types, without being exposed to good models of written texts; in addition, the idea of context and its relationship with the written text was neglected. This contrasts with one of the main advantages of using genre theory: the development of an interrelationship between language and text and the contexts in which those texts occur; in other words, including a social perspective in the study of language (Martínez Lirola, 2006, 2013).

Consequently, the role of teachers is essential in order to bring cultural aspects of language use into the classroom (Edelsky, 2006, p. 74; Carrasquillo and Rodríguez, 2008, p. 53) and also in order to decide to what extent it is necessary to provide students with feedback that will be useful for them and not discourage them in their writing process (Ferris, 2004, p. 59; Hyland, 2003, p. 223).

The traditional roles of teachers consist of being a source of knowledge and controller of every aspect of the teaching-learning process (Harmer, 2001, p. 57 and ff.; Martínez Lirola, 2007, p. 34). The teacher needs to be familiar with the different genres or text types and with the main structural and grammatical elements in each text type, i.e., teachers' knowledge of the generic structure in each genre and the selection of the right text types in teaching practice is crucial in the learning process, as Hasan points out:

A teacher's understanding of generic structures will be an active ingredient in his or her success as a teacher. Students need to be exposed to a wide range of genres—particularly those that are actively required in the educational process—for example, *résumé*, report, expository essay, and so on. It is a mistaken view of both text and learning to imagine that one can get children to write an essay on the relationship between climate and vegetation by simply talking about it: and it is worse still to imagine that one can do this without talking about it at all. (1989, p. 69)

So that students were not distracted when being provided with feedback, the teacher invited them to come to individualised tutorials where the marked essays were discussed and feedback was given in a one-to-one tutorial. The teacher could deal with their individual queries and be aware of the main weaknesses and strengths in their explanations. These individual tutorials gave students the opportunity to ask questions about the feedback they had received, about their errors, and ask for any additional explanations about their essays (Bitchener et al., 2005, p. 196). In this way, students took an active part in the correction process and were more motivated in the whole teaching-learning process, because the teacher could monitor them individually (Martínez Lirola & Crespo, 2008).

Results and discussion of the second semester data analysis after the implementation of genre theory.

Following genre theory implies offering students good examples of different genres or text types, in order to help them observe the different stages in the construction of text and the relationship between the text and its context of use. After that, the implementation of genre theory involves students being asked to observe the main grammatical features in the text under analysis, and to write their own texts following the stages and linguistic patterns found in the model (Gardner, 2012; Martínez Lirola & Tabuenca, 2008, 2010; Wingate, 2012). Butt et al. (2012, p. 9) enumerate the following text types: recount, narrative, procedure, information report, explanation, exposition and discussion.

Working with genres implies paying attention to the importance of the cultural and social contexts of language use. Apart from this, special attention should be paid to grammar as a rich and effective resource used to create meaning, i.e., the different grammatical choices are linked to the context of use and to the genre or text type. In Coffin's words: "The explicit teaching of generic

structures and their associated grammatical features can help learners (particularly non-native speakers of English) to master the functions and linguistic conventions of texts necessary for successful participation in a range of disciplines and professions.” (2001, p. 113)

In order to implement the genre theory approach as presented in the previous paragraphs, students were exposed to authentic examples of explanations and to the specific features that would form part of this text type structure. One of the main purposes of this methodology was that students should be able to deduce that the structure of explanations consisted of the following:

- Identification: identifies and gives general information about the phenomenon.
- Explanation sequence: a temporal sequence of the main phases of a process or a cause-and-effect sequence of events. (Droga & Humphrey, 2003, p. 142)

In this second phase of the research, once the teacher had explained the main characteristics from different text types, the students were offered real examples of them, paying special attention to explanations. For this reason, each piece of writing was first examined in order to identify the main grammatical and textual characteristics of explanations, as shown in figure 3.

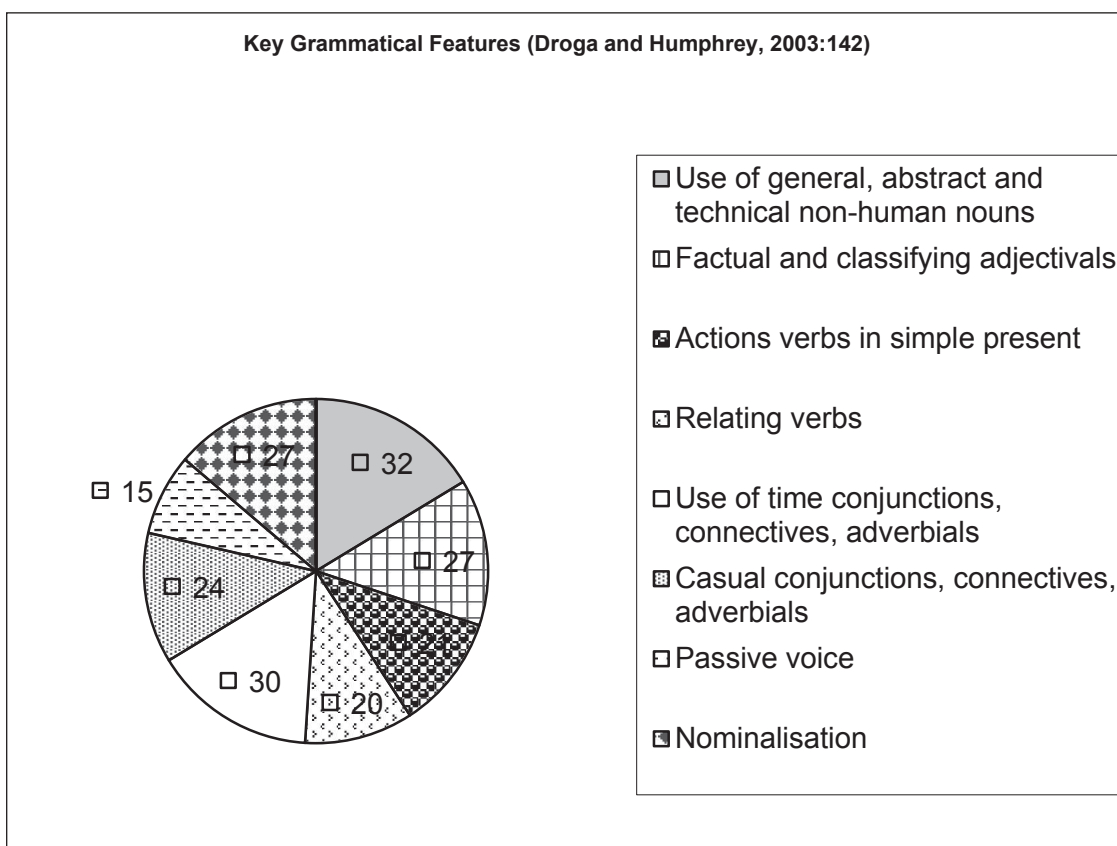


Figure 3. Key Grammatical Features in Students’ Explanations (following Droga and Humphrey, 2003, p. 142)

After being introduced to the structure of explanations and their key grammatical features, students were asked to write their own explanation,

based on the real examples analysed in class. As the previous figure points out, students’ writing shows many of the key characteristics of this text

type. Figure 3 shows that the most outstanding grammatical features of explanations found in students' texts were the use of abstract and technical non-human nouns and the use of time and causal conjunctions and other connectors throughout the texts analysed. Not only had students applied the use of nouns and adverbials characteristic of these text types, but also there was a significant use of factual adjectives and nominalizations. In

more than half of the explanations analysed there was an appropriate use of verbs.

Having paid attention to the main features of the text type under analysis, the main grammatical and textual errors observed in students' texts produced before they had been introduced to genre theory were also analysed. Figures 4 and 5 show a great improvement in students' writing.

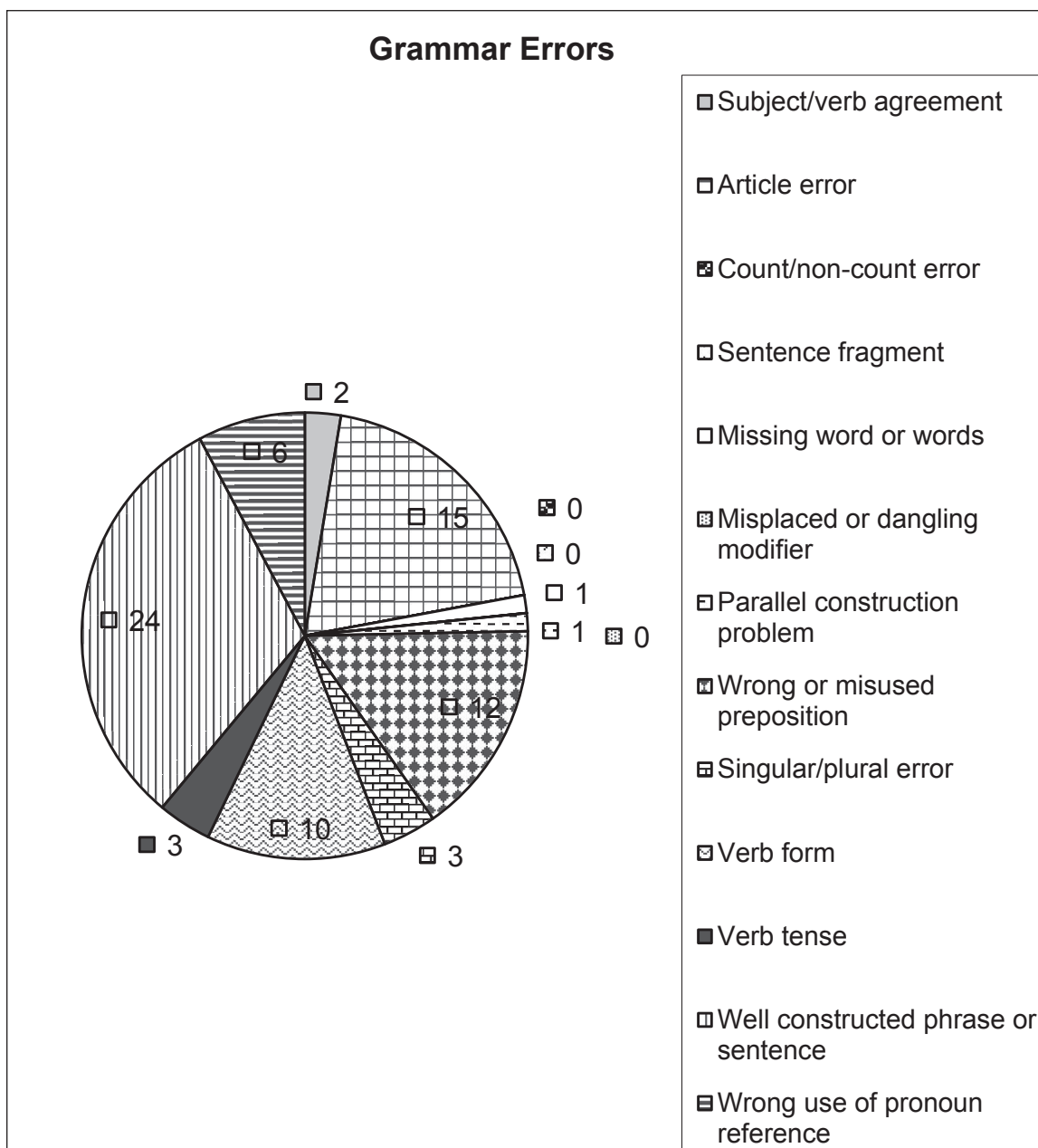


Figure 4. Results of Grammar Errors from the Second-Semester Study

It is significant that 24 students had well-structured sentences, whereas fewer than half of the students created well-constructed sentences before, although they were used to work on the sentence level. All the errors had been reduced (articles, subject-verb agreement, etc.) and some of them have disappeared in the second semester

(countable and non-countable nouns) or only one student had problems with it, as is the case with parallel constructions. There is a significant improvement in the correct use of verb forms, which shows that students are better able to organise their ideas.

200

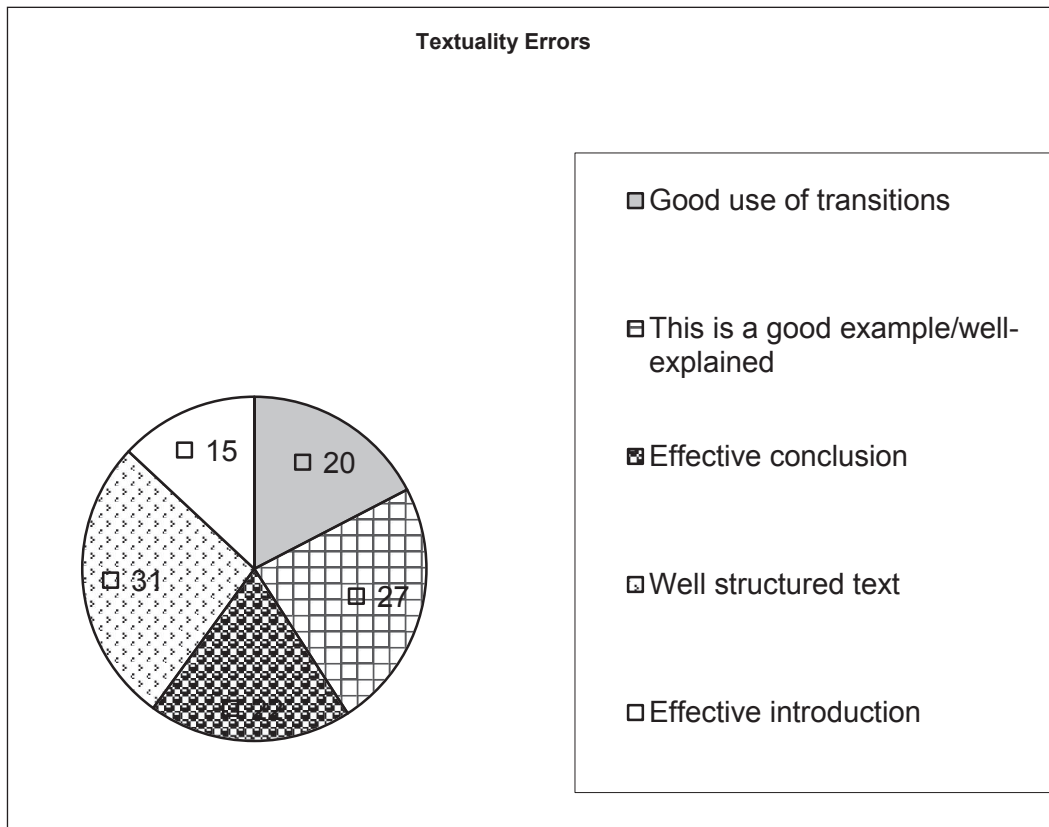


Figure 5. Results of Textual Improvements in the Second-Semester Study

As regards the main improvements in students' texts from the textual point of view, all the textual aspects were found to be better in the last 40 essays: good examples, effective conclusions, etc. It is obvious that there was a great improvement in the use of transitions, because almost all students had problems with this textual aspect, while in the second phase of the study half of the students used them very well and many times in their writing. Moreover, it is outstanding that before genre theory was introduced all students showed poor

structured texts, but after learning the structure of explanations analysing good examples of this text type, 31 students wrote very well-structured texts. Due to the limitations of this paper, we are going to offer only one example from one of the explanations written by a student after genre theory was explained to him. This example shows an appropriate use of concrete nouns, transitions and the passive voice, which are some of the main characteristics of explanations, as already mentioned in figure 3:

The term stimulant is applied to certain kinds of drugs which tend to increase mental sharpness and physical activity: caffeine, amphetamines or even cocaine are considered stimulants. Nevertheless, the use of them implies unpleasant side effects and risk of addiction.

Moreover, addictions present psychological and physical dependence. Most of the stimulants used can generate one or the other, although in some cases both of them can be produced. Firstly, a physical dependence in which the organism requires the presence of stimulants to continue its usual operation.

The previous figures and example reflect the fact that the use of adequate models was effective in the students' acquisition and application of the main linguistic features in exposition writing. On the whole, the results of the study show an adequate use of the grammatical and textual features appropriate to explanation writing after genre theory had been followed in the teaching of academic writing. The results of this study demonstrate that accuracy (correctness of English) in students' writing improves once they were familiar to genre theory. Moreover, this enhanced accuracy takes place both at the grammatical level and at the textual structure of the text selected.

Conclusions

This research studied the effects of teaching students academic writing through authentic text types, as genre theory proposes. The use of the adequate models of explanations was effective in the students' acquisition and application of the main linguistic features in this text type writing. Additionally, students were qualified to write explanations understanding the impact of language choices and the relationship between these choices and the contextual features of the text.

The study found an improvement in students' writing from the grammatical and the textual point of view through the combination of genre theory

and feedback provided in tutorials. Therefore, genre theory can be considered an appropriate theoretical approach for teaching academic writing at University level. If genre theory had been applied during the whole academic year it is very likely that students' written skills would have improved more because they would have had more opportunities to analyse the form and structure of authentic texts and to practice writing their own texts following the examples of real text types presented in the classroom.

In order to contribute to the need for further research on students' writing improvement, the present study has investigated the extent to which using genre theory, as a framework for academic writing, helps students to improve their written skills, as the results presented in the previous section point out. This research has highlighted the relationship between literacy and effective writing with an applied educational emphasis. Consequently, making genres explicit will allow students to deal with the various written genres used in their context of culture and to see language as a dynamic and social phenomenon, which helps them understand the social context in a text.

By using genre theory, teachers and students must realize that as speakers of a language, we do not speak or write independent sentences, but we produce texts according to the context in which we are interacting. In other words, genre theory focuses on the organization and content of discourse, addressing explicitly the linguistic and structural differences in a variety of genres; it provides opportunities for the study of grammar and lexis in context.

Using the genre approach to teach about whole texts in context makes it possible to: (a) establish a relationship between the meanings we want to convey, language chosen to express them, and the context in which those meanings make sense; (b) observe how language elements in a text are related to and depend on each other, so that the construction of the whole text makes sense in

context; and (c) show students that to construct effective texts they need to make conscious choices depending on the purpose they want to accomplish with the text.

In addition to the previous implications of teaching with texts, grammar and genre-based descriptions of text can be used in order to improve students' writing in the following ways:

- Selecting a text as an instance of a genre. It is convenient to examine several texts to confirm a genre type.
- Identifying its schematic structure by examining grammatical features that connect the text with its context in each stage of the text.
- Drawing the attention, when teaching, to the key grammatical features that create the genre and its stages.
- Using these aspects in a detailed way in teaching, so that students concentrate on the grammatical aspects of the text that teachers consider crucial.

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