

# Practicing Genre-based Writing in the Context of Teaching Turkish as a Second Language

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## Abstract

*While second language (L2) writing skills pose challenges for learners, they are also unarguably consequential in academia. L2 writing studies conducted in Turkey are scarce, and most of them have an EFL focus. Studies on writing in Turkish as an L2 are almost nonexistent. Following the initiative that language teachers should pay a closer attention to the realities that take place in their local sites of L2 writing instruction, this study aimed at capturing the views of a group of Turkish as an L2 learners who were engaged in genre-based academic writing as a part of their academic Turkish summer school. The participants followed the production principles of genre-based writing and provided the researcher with qualitative data at the beginning, during and at the end of their writing practices with several genres. The thematic analysis revealed a positive change in the participants' views toward writing especially with the help of model text analyses and annotation writing activities and an increased genre knowledge toward the genre types studied.*

*Keywords:* Genres, genre-based writing, annotation writing, moves and steps, Turkish as a second language.

## Introduction

In an era when English language teaching has been popular throughout the world, we are increasingly intrigued by the theory and practices of skills instruction. Since L2 (second/foreign language) writing skills pose various challenges to learners, and academic writing skills are unarguably consequential in their academic lives, we as scholars and language teachers should pay closer attention to the realities that take place in our local sites of L2 writing instruction. The shift in the vision from “writing as an *object* to writing as an *activity*” (Canagarajah, 2002a, p. 6, italics original) has enabled us to see writing not as a product but a practice. To put it succinctly, the major paradigm shift in literacy studies and language teaching which started in early 1990s has given a new shape to L2 writing instruction by drawing writing teachers' attention to notions such as communicative purposes, power imbalances, critical perspectives, writers' identities and their efforts to create their unique voices.

The history of L2 writing practices reveals that writing was highly neglected in the early years of L2 studies (1960s) because of the dominance of audiolingualism. The disciplinary division of labor between L1 and L2 writing emerged in the 1980s out of the writing needs of the increasing number of international students in the US higher education (Matsuda, 2003). As a distinctive area of scholarship, L2 writing instruction has evolved around some guiding concepts such as language structures, text functions, themes/topics, creative expressions, composing processes, content and genre (Hyland, 2014). In essence, influenced by the application of existing principles of second language pedagogy, the teaching of L2 writing has shifted its focus from sentence-level productions to free composition writing. While the initial concerns were mostly structurally- or cognitively- oriented ones such as language structures, themes/topics and composing

processes, the most recent concerns have been guided by the tenets of *the context of language use* which prioritize communicative purposes of writers, the influence of readers in writing, reader expectations and appropriate language use in a given context. Teachers who prefer to take a genre orientation to writing instruction “look beyond subject content, composing processes and textual forms to see writing as attempts to communicate with readers” (Hyland, 2014, p. 18). Genre-based (also called reader-based) writing instruction takes genre as its main focus and writing practices are organized around genres.

### Literature Review

Only in the last two or three decades has the importance of the concept of genre been fully understood. This social conception of academic writing has rooted in the works of scholars who have focused on different dimensions of genres. Hyland (2004), for instance, sees genres as common sense labels we use to categorize texts and the situations in which they are used. In his book *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings*, Swales (1990) defines the notion of genre as a class of communicative events with some shared set of communicative purposes. The communicative purpose of a genre is recognized by the members of a discourse community, who, in turn, decide on the constraints on what is acceptable in terms of content, positioning and form for a particular genre (Paltridge, 2001). From the systemic perspective, Martin (1992) defines genre as a goal-oriented, staged social process. They are goal-oriented because they have evolved to achieve things, they are staged because achieving purposes requires following certain steps, and genres are social because members of a culture employ them.

It is customary to identify three broad, overlapping approaches to genre (Johns, 2002). These orientations are influenced by (1) the Australian work in the tradition of *Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)*, (2) the *New Rhetoric (NR)* studies developed in North American context and (3) the teaching of *English for Specific Purposes (ESP)*. While Hallidayan SFL sees genres as linguistic strategies for achieving rhetorical goals such as narrative, argument, recount and so on, both NR and ESP employ the notions of dialogism and contextual situatedness. NR researchers are principally interested in the contexts in which genres are used and how certain genres serve to represent an elite of expertise and power, thus, they find SFL agenda of extending access to valued genres overly simplistic (Hyland, 2004). Following the tenets of some leading concepts such as social purposes, discourse structures and context (mostly ESP tradition), the pedagogical base of this study consists of consciousness raising, needs analysis and academic training of a group of learners who study Turkish as a second language.

Today, genre-based approaches to writing instruction have become the main alternative to process pedagogy (Hyland, 2003) and many writing teachers, especially the ones in the field of ESP and English for Academic Purposes (EAP), believe that “explicit attention to genre in teaching provides learners a concrete opportunity to acquire conceptual and cultural frameworks to undertake the writing tasks beyond the courses in which such teaching occurs” (Cheng, 2006, p. 77). Due to the increasing popularity of genre-based pedagogy in language education, there are several studies conducted in ESL contexts with international graduate students (Cheng, 2007; 2008, Uhrig, 2012, Wette, 2017), and also in various contexts and institutions other than the US where English is

used as an academic language (Kuteeva, 2013, Qin & Uccelli, 2016, Negretti & McGrath, 2018, Yasuda, 2011, Wang, 2017).

Considering L2 writing studies in Turkish educational contexts, we see that there are very few of them. Some take their foci as the first language use in EFL writing (Akyel, 1994), the effects of peer e-feedback on EFL writing (Çiftçi & Koçoğlu, 2012), error treatment in L2 writing (Erel & Bulut, 2007), the effects of peer feedback on writing anxiety (Kurt & Atay, 2007), L2 learners' writing self-efficacy and writing anxiety (Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015), comparative analysis of lexical bundles used by native and non-native scholars (Güngör & Uysal, 2016), critical thinking and voice in writing (Alagözlü, 2007) factors influencing students' academic writing practices in English (Altınmakas & Bayyurt, 2019) and the bidirectional transfers of rhetorical patterns in L1 and L2 writing (Uysal, 2008). Addressing a neglected area in L2 writing instruction research, Yiğitoğlu and Reichelt (2014) examined writing instruction in Turkish language classes in a US university as a less-commonly-taught language. In the Turkish language program at Georgia State University, the teacher/researcher provided a genre approach in her writing classes and provided suggestions for the design and implementation of L2 writing instruction.

In another study with a genre focus, Yaylı (2011) inspected how a group of pre-service EFL teachers' genre awareness became embedded in their stances through genre-based writing instruction in an EFL context and also how viable multi-genre portfolio use was in genre-based EFL writing instruction. In the study, some participant stances revealed the instances of cross-genre awareness, which is different from the concept of 'recontextualization' (Cheng, 2007). Recontextualization is "learners' abilities not only to use a certain generic feature in a new writing task, but to use it with a keen awareness of the rhetorical context that facilitates its appropriate use" (Cheng, 2007, p. 303) but cross-genre awareness goes one step further to mean "a transfer of skills of recontextualization across different genres requiring awareness of different purposes, different contexts and different lexico-grammatical features" (Yaylı, 2012, p. 127). It refers to an ability to establish bridges between different genres through transferring their skills of recontextualization. The fact that writers' awareness in one genre might influence their awareness in another, forming a cross-genre awareness, requires certain attention from writing instructors who design their classes according to the principles of genre-based writing instruction. Therefore, as a part of the research purposes of the present study, I decided to inspect some possible instances of cross-genre awareness in the expressed views of a group of Turkish language learners who participated in genre-based writing classes I designed and delivered.

Besides touching upon the learner-centeredness in ESP genre pedagogy, in his discussion on some existing ESP genre-based writing research, Cheng (2006) criticizes the use of some labels such as 'advanced Asian doctoral students' or 'an Angolan undergraduate student' with their face value. Instead, he advises researchers not to miss the opportunity "to observe the full intricacies of learning in the ESP genre-based classroom" (p. 80). These terms are of course helpful and should be borne in mind but they should also be used as heuristics to uncover learning and/or learner dynamics in genre-based writing classes. Following this line of thinking, this study aims to capture the views of a group of Turkish language learners being engaged in genre-based academic writing. The following research questions were posed:

1. What are these students' views on writing in Turkish and their initial visions of academic writing?
2. How do these students view the genre-based writing activities performed in the four-week academic writing course?
3. Are there any instances of cross-genre awareness observed in students' oral and/or written statements?

### **Method**

The academic writing needs of a group of Turkish as a second language learners gave the impetus for this qualitative study for which data were mostly drawn from the oral and written interviews I held with students both weekly, and at the beginning and at the end of the academic Turkish course.

### **Participants**

Due to its attempt to be an international university, Pamukkale University is welcoming more and more international students each academic year. These students start their undergraduate studies after they complete a Turkish language prep education. They receive Turkish language education from a group of foreign language education specialists at a language and research center of the university called PADAM. During this prep year, most of them start with an A1 level and they have to achieve a C1 level at the end of the academic year. Only after receiving a C1 level of proficiency in Turkish as a second language, can they attend an academic Turkish course which is scheduled to last for four weeks in summer. In the summer of the 2017-2018 academic year, there were two groups of such learners (40 students in total) and I was the instructor of one of these groups consisting of 19 students in the academic writing component of their four-week academic Turkish course.

Out of 19 students, 17 (13 males and four females) regularly attended the classes and volunteered to participate in the interviews. The ages of the participants ranged from 18 to 28 with an average of 20.1. The students were from various countries like Somali (three students), Yemen (two students), South Sudan (two students), Afghanistan (two students), Uganda (one student), Iraq (one student), East Turkestan (one student), Zambia (one student), Ghana (one student), Algeria (one student), Syria (one student) and Comoros Islands (one student). They all were students who were enrolled to study in the field of sciences like medicine, math, physics and various engineering departments and were multilingual students who were capable of using several languages other than Turkish. The most common languages in their repertoires were Arabic and English, which were followed with some local or national languages of their countries.

### **Teaching Procedure**

Teaching procedure and data collection in this academic writing course went hand in hand. In the first week (starting on 18 June 2018), my students and I talked about their academic and occupational writing needs, considering their lives in Turkey and also the

writing expectations in the undergraduate programs they were about to start. We formed a pool of genres consisting of CV writing (for the first week), letter of intent (for the second week), comparative essay writing (for the third week) and reason and result essay writing (for the fourth week). While CV and letter of intent writing aimed to serve more professional or occupational needs, essay writing activities aimed to prepare students for the kinds of writing activities they would perform in their undergraduate programs (for the written exams with open-ended questions mainly).

Since teaching Turkish as a second language in Turkey is a newly emerging academic field, no strict curriculum or teaching plan is available for instructors. Therefore, I took the responsibility of designing my own syllabus according to my own pedagogical beliefs and due to my experiences with pre-service EFL teachers' genre-based writing (Yaylı, 2011; 2012) I decided that academic writing my Turkish learning students do in class should be also genre-based. As Hyland (2003) aptly reminds us, "[g]enre -based pedagogies rest on the idea that literacies are community resources which are realised in social relationships, rather than the property of individual writers struggling with personal expression" (p, 24). Therefore, while deciding on the genre types and the teaching cycle in our academic writing course, I was eager to choose the key genres that will help them "gain access to ways of communicating that have accrued cultural capital in particular professional, academic, and occupational communities" (p, 24). To put it pithily, with CV and letter of intent writing as our first two genres (genres of power), I tried to demystify the writing experiences that they may need in their future careers. With essay writing (comparative and reason and result types), I aimed to provide them with some consequential experience so that they would have an access to the dominant genres of written exams in their graduate programs and also I hoped to overcome these students' potential risks of experiencing some social and academic inequalities that might result in excluding them (Benesch, 2001).

For the teaching cycle, I followed the tips Hyland (2014) suggested for the syllabus design in a genre-based writing course, and I started with student needs analysis as I described earlier. I tried to distinguish between present situation analysis and target situation analysis by paying attention to students' current abilities and their future roles in their undergraduate programs. As a related issue, I also analyzed the learning context of the learners as "teachers need to ensure that their writing syllabi will operate successfully in the local context, acknowledging the opportunities and constraints presented by the situation in which the course will run" (Hyland, 2014, p. 64-65). As a part of this analysis, I provided the learners with the material resources that text production requires (Canagarajah, 1996) such as plastic folders, paper and xeroxing facilities. Finally, my students and I talked together over the goals and objectives of this academic writing course and I informed them of the stages of the syllabus step by step. The steps we agreed to follow were:

1. establishing a context
2. modeling the genre
3. noticing
4. explicit analysis of texts
5. controlled production
6. independent writing (Hyland, 2014)

While establishing the context, we discussed when and why we employ the targeted genre. I brought model texts for this genre and I asked the students to form groups so that they did noticing activities in groups. As a part of their noticing activities, they paid attention to textual features of texts, conducted move-step analysis on model texts in a Swalesian way (1990) and wrote down these features in their annotation papers. When they wrote down their first draft of the targeted genre, they also wrote another annotation to explain their choices for moves and steps and the changes they made in their own drafts so that their writings were not simple replicas of some model texts. After receiving my comments on their first drafts, they revised their writing to hand in their second drafts. They put together all these papers in their folders chronologically. In sum, our writing activities were centered around the following steps:

1. reading some model texts,
2. analyzing textual features of the genre in terms of moves and steps,
3. writing an annotation on these textual features as a group,
4. writing a first draft individually,
5. writing an annotation on the first draft to explain the rhetorical choices made in terms of moves and steps, and finally,
6. writing a second draft after receiving some feedback on the first draft.

### **Data Collection**

While implementing genre-based writing activities according to the plan above, as a parallel activity, I collected some qualitative data with interviews and observation. As we know, “interviewing is one of the most common and powerful ways in which we try to understand our fellow humans” (Fontana & Frey, 2005, p. 697-698). At the beginning of both oral and written interviews, I briefly informed the participants of my purpose and made assurances that what was said in the interview would be treated confidentially (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). Interviews were the main sources for data collection but at the same time they were employed to clarify participant observations. The interview transcripts formed the backbone; thus, students’ genre performances and their linguistic developments from first drafts to the second ones were not analyzed for research purposes. For the interviews, these were the main stages:

1. an initial written interview (individually, with 17 participants, Appendix A)
2. weekly interviews after all the writing steps of genres are over (with six participants)
3. a final written interview (individually with 17 participants, Appendix B)
4. a final focus group interview (with the whole class)

I audio recorded all the oral interviews and held both oral and written interviews in Turkish. While interpreting and discussing the interview data, I got help from my personal observations as well. In the initial written interviews (on 18 June 2018), I asked my students’ opinions on writing in Turkish language, their favorite writing activity type, the most difficult writing activity type and their expectations from the academic writing course that they started to attend. In the weekly interviews, I asked the

most talkative and volunteering students (six of them) to analyze how they found the writing activities of the week. I asked them to comment on all the steps we employed in writing such as model text analysis, discussions in groups on the textual features of these model texts and reflecting their views in an annotation, writing the first draft, writing an annotation over their first draft, the feedback they receive and second draft writing. In the final stage of interviews, I gave written interview questions (on 10 July 2018) which aimed this time to capture students' views on the academic writing classes we held for four weeks in general, their favorite genre and their reasons, the step they found the most beneficial, the step they found the easiest and the most difficult to perform and their views on the possible effects of this writing course on their future academic lives. Also, it is worth noting that although any linguistic analysis on students' texts were not included as a part of the study, especially their annotations were sometimes used and referred to as secondary data sources, which were helpful in verifying my observations.

### **Data Analysis**

In terms of qualitative data analysis, there are several ways and I have chosen the basic qualitative analysis which is conducted for certain themes and perspectives (Creswell, 2009). The research questions I posed earlier and had in mind throughout the study shed light on the analysis of interview data. In order to validate the accuracy of the information, I followed the steps Creswell (2009) suggested for the general qualitative data analysis procedure as follows: (1) First I organized the data for analysis, (2) secondly, I read through all the data for a couple of times, (3) then, I coded the data according to the emerging themes, and these themes mostly emerged and grouped after being captured as participant reactions to the interview questions, (4) then I related these themes to the broader categories which were guided by the research questions and (5) lastly I interpreted and discussed the meanings of these themes and main categories by referring to the existing literature.

For the reliability purposes, I checked that the approach I followed in data analysis was consistent across different researchers and different projects (Gibbs, 2007). Also, I checked my transcriptions to make sure that they did not have mistakes. I regularly compared the meaning of themes and the overall data. And lastly, I asked a colleague to cross-check my themes and main categories to receive an independent coder's opinions for an inter-coder agreement, which was high in the present study. In sum, keeping in mind the tenet that interviewing is "inextricably and unavoidably historically, politically, and contextually bound" (Fontana & Frey, 2005), my observations of these students' linguistic development from A 1 to C1 (I was one of their instructors in the prep year) and their performances in the academic writing class helped me a lot with both the design, implementation and also during the meaning making stages of the present study.

### **Results and Discussion**

My analysis of both written and oral data was guided by the three main research questions of the study. Therefore, I decided to reflect the themes that emerged during my coding and the broader categories they fit into under the three research questions:

### Students' Views on Writing in Turkish

When I asked the participants of their views on writing in Turkish, they referred to the writing classes they took in the prep year that they had just completed. I collected their initial views with the help of a written questionnaire with open ended questions (See Appendix A). The participants' responses to the first question in the questionnaire revealed two themes. Firstly, most of them complained of the difficulties in writing. Except for two participants, P7 and P15, they all remembered their difficulties and how hard writing was especially at first. Some of the participant statements were as follows:

I think the most difficult class was writing. I had difficulty with the spellings of ı, i, u, ü, o, and ö. The distinction between them is like a nightmare. If one can successfully write in a language this means he has learnt the language. (P1)

Writing classes are important because I know that learning to communicate with others requires writing skills. (P3)

I was not the only one having difficulty in writing in class. It is not about the Turkish language itself, learning to write in any language is difficult, I think. (P5)

Writing was my favorite class because I like writing. I write regularly in my mother tongue, Uigur, I keep a dairy and I sometimes write poems. (P7)

Writing is difficult as we have to know and reflect many things like correct grammar, correct spelling and etc. Finding the right word is also a problem. Luckily our writing teacher was very patient. (P10)

At first I mean in the first three or four months I had a lot of difficulties in writing and thought I would never do it properly. In time as my Turkish improved, and with practice, I got better at writing. (P16)

Secondly, they stressed their need for good writing skills and stated how helpful and important writing was in terms of contributing to their language learning in the prep year:

I think both writing and speaking are very important classes because next year we will start our programs and we will speak with the professors and take written exams. If we are poor in these skills, we cannot be successful. (P12)

At first I was terrible at writing. The teacher found many mistakes and I learnt a lot from these mistakes. In time as my Turkish improved, my writing also improved. (P14)

We did several writing activities in class this year and I learnt to write an essay for the first time. I can say that with the help of writing practice and teacher's comments My Turkish improved. (P4)

With the second question in the questionnaire, I collected the participants' views on their favorite writing activity and most of them said they liked writing essays. It is probably because essay writing was commonly performed in classes. Some other favorite activity types they stated were letter writing, story completion and summarizing texts.

Essay writing is my favorite writing activity type because while writing essays I collect some necessary information, design what I will include in paragraphs and pay attention to language. (P9)

Essay writing taught me a lot. You have to be careful with the design of your paragraphs. There must be at least three paragraphs and you can write about anything you like. (P16)

I like story completion activities most because I like listening to stories in my life as well. This improves my creative thinking. (P1)

When asked about the most difficult writing activity type, interestingly, most of them stated that essay writing which requires some search before writing was difficult and time consuming. This means essay writing was stated both as the most liked and the most difficult writing type. It was probably because essay was the most practiced type of writing in the prep year especially after they achieved a certain proficiency level. Other types they mentioned as difficult were letter writing (P2 and P5) and poem writing (P7). Some participants referred to topics instead of activity types and said that writing on science-related topics was difficult and a few of the participants stressed that no kinds of writing were difficult to them any longer.

Essay writing on some topics like science was difficult to me. I had to search a lot about the topic first. (P8)

I know how important it is to learn to write a good essay but it is difficult. You have to do search on Internet about the topic and write paying attention to essay writing rules. (P13)

The reactions I received when I asked the participants about their expectations of our academic writing classes and of the possible effects of these classes upon their future academic lives were not varied at all. Most of their expectations were centered on structural dimensions of writing. All of them stated that academic writing classes would contribute to their academic success in their graduate programs.

At the end these classes, I hope I will not get confused with ı, i, u, ü, o, and ö. (P1)

I want to be better at essay writing. I still find it difficult to find what to write in paragraphs and how. (P 6)

I need to be successful in my program and with the writing courses I believe my chances will increase. (P9)

The comments of the participants I collected initially revealed that many of the participants perceived writing as a key to success in their graduate programs.

Although they seemed to be aware of the importance of writing, they stated that they did not attend writing classes regularly. Also, their writing classes during the prep year was product-based and although they received comments from the teacher on their writing, they were not engaged in a reviewing-drafting cycle. When for instance they were expected to write essays, they did not start with a reading of sample essays or a discussion of reader-writer relationship and language use; and thus they started writing their essays after a search for the topic. It was clear that they took writing as a product to give some necessary information and any writing would be good with a correct use of language and with some information delivered in paragraphs in a balanced way.

All these views and past experiences in writing gave me the impetus for the design of a genre-based writing class that will introduce these students to concepts like writing as a social activity, reader-writer relationship and communicative purposes in writing. That very few of them stated that writing was necessary to communicate with others (P3 above, for instance) provided a surface vision of writing and the power of writing which is shaped by communicative purposes and appropriate language usages. With a pure utilitarian and simplistic vision, to them, the only influence of academic writing classes would be to improve their performances in written exams in their graduate programs. It mostly stems from a traditional view of writing practice in which the teacher is the only reader of student writings all the time. However, in the academic writing classes, we started with CV writing and I encouraged them to create a CV for a possible future job envisioning some working places and addressing some readers with a potential to hire them.

### **Students' Views on Genre-Based Writing Activities**

In the final written interviews and in our focus group interview on the last day of the classes, I aimed to capture the participants' views on the genre-based writing classes and the steps we followed in classes (See Appendix B for the questionnaire). When asked of their views on genre-based academic writing classes, all of them responded positively:

With the help of this academic writing class, my writing skills have improved a lot. (P2)

Receiving feedback and rewriting were highly beneficial I think. Now writing is my favorite class. (P4)

With the help of CV and letter of intent writing, I think I can easily get the job I want after graduation. (P12)

In these interviews, I also asked the participants about their favorite genre type with their reasons. The most commonly liked genre was letter of intent and CV writing, which were followed by comparative essay writing. Only one participant (P15) was observed to favor reason and result essay.

I liked CV and letter of intent writing the most because these are the ones that may contribute to my after-graduation life and career. (P3)

I liked letter of intent writing the most because I am planning to apply for an AM after I graduate and this will help me a lot in the future. (P 14)

I believe these academic writing classes were very useful. (R: Why do you think this way?) After studying CV and letter of intent writing, I can get a job easily. The practices in class will help me a lot in my future job hunting. (P17)

Before the final interviews, I held oral interviews with six participants every week after we completed the steps of our genre-based writing activities to scrutinize their views. In these interviews I asked them to reflect upon the steps we followed in classes (i.e., model text analysis in groups, writing the first draft, writing an annotation on your writing, and writing the second draft). Most of the participants (12 of them) found model text analysis in groups the most beneficial step, and this was followed with first draft writing and annotation writing. When asked of the easiest step, there was an equal distribution among model text analysis in groups, first draft writing and second draft writing (i.e., five participants for each step). And in terms of their statements on the most difficult step, more than half of them (10 participants) recognized first draft writing as the most difficult step while 5 of them found annotation writing as the most challenging.

While analyzing model texts, we worked in groups and learnt a lot from each other. (P15)

Reading model texts and discussing these texts in groups to find their features were really fun. I could not do some of the move-step analyses for instance without my friends' help. I learnt new perspectives. (P7)

While writing the first draft, I had to be creative so that my text would be different from the model texts. I also had to write about these differences in my annotation. I found these writings both challenging and fun. (P9)

I think the easiest step was writing a second draft. Because you write according to teacher's feedback and easily avoid making mistakes. (P16)

I think writing the first draft is the hardest. You have to write a unique text and your text must be different from the model texts. (P5)

While writing an annotation, I sometimes felt lost. (R: What do you mean?) You asked us to express how our text was different from others and create some possible new moves and steps, but I could not achieve this sometimes. (P12)

For each genre, the participants were expected to read some sample texts and analyze these texts in terms of moves and steps not individually but in groups. This created a positive atmosphere in class as writing is mostly done in isolation but with the help of group discussions they were observed to learn from each other and this provided a significant boost for their oncoming writing activities. "The main aim of genre-based approaches is to use text analysis to enable students to understand and control the conventions and discourses of their discipline" (Wingate, 2012, p. 28). In a related vein, in the group discussions on model texts, while encouraging learners to notice some

common discourse features of the targeted genre, at the same time I pushed them to make some changes in their writings (first drafts) from the model texts and to express these differences in their annotations on their writings. As some applied linguists (Benesch, 2001; 2009, Canagarajah, 2002b) caution us about the need we have in order to pay attention to the socio-political contexts of writing as well as the exploration of teachers' and students' social identities (Belcher, 1994), we can achieve consciousness-raising in students with the help of such annotation writings. As we all know, annotation is a description of any piece of writing and it is one of the ways of broadening academic literacy practices of language learners through giving them authorial maturity and a self-assessment/reflection possibility (Yaylı, 2012). In essence, with the help of the annotations the participants wrote, they stated that they became more aware of the rhetorical and textual organization of texts belonging to a genre but at the same time they learnt to notice the social inequalities, power relations and the importance of negotiation skills in writing. With the help of CV writing, for instance, they said they had a conversation-like interaction in their minds with their possible future bosses and while they were forming their texts, they kept this in mind to be able to get the job. This signals that writing jumped over the classroom walls and the reader was not the course coordinator but a potential employer outside. The fact they were in the country of the target language (i.e., Turkey) and that many of them wanted to settle down and have a job in Turkey might have played a role in their ease with 'writing for communicative purposes in a discourse community'. As Hyland (2004) aptly stresses, "the idea that people acquire, use, and modify the language of the written texts in the course of acting as members of occupational groups is an attractive one" (p. 45) and the participating students were observed to enjoy this new writing experience of becoming a member of this new country.

In the focus group interviews, the participants all stated that they improved their writing skills and appreciated this new writing practice. When I asked them to be specific about the reasons of this improvement they observed both in themselves and peers, they said model text reading, analyzing purposes in these texts and forcing themselves to make some changes in their own texts were new to them and these were challenging but at the same time beneficial as these activities forced them to think from a reader's, writer's and the community's perspectives and to internalize some norms. They gained an acute awareness toward the fact that they also had the necessary power to utilize the norms of the targeted discourse communities they wanted to be a member of.

### **Instances of Cross-Genre Awareness**

During our weekly interviews, I asked the participating students to assess the steps that we employed for each of the targeted genres and gathered their views with their consent. In one of these interviews I held after we studied comparative essay writing, one of the participants was observed to convey some features of one genre (i.e. debate) in another one (i.e., comparative essay). In fact, P7 stated that he transferred some qualities and features that he used in an oral debate he participated in his speaking class into his comparative essay writing:

Comparative essay writing was easy for me because I had a similar practice.  
(R: How?) A week ago for our speaking class, one classmate and I prepared a debate on 'which one knows better, the one who reads a lot or the one who

travels a lot' and in the debate, I supported the view that the one who reads a lot knows better. I did my writing on the same topic, I mean I compared these two types of people in my writing and in the conclusion part I emphasized the same idea. I got help a lot from the debate we did in class earlier. (R: What help did you get from the debate exactly?) I studied comparative structures and how to defend my idea for the debate task and for the comparative writing, such information was available for me and I made use of all these in my writing.

The similarities in purposes and language structures in an oral genre (i.e., the debate) and a written genre (i.e., comparative type of essay) might be said to scaffold his transfer of some skills of recontextualization, which exemplifies an instance of cross-genre awareness. Other than this instance, no overt examples of cross-genre awareness were observed. Some participants mentioned the similarities in purposes in CVs and letters of intent but did not state that they transferred any skills or structures. Any acts of transfer were not explicitly mentioned in interviews except for the one above. This participant, P7, was the most proficient in Turkish and the oldest in class with various educational experiences. These might have given him a broader look at genres from different perspectives. It can also be concluded that the potential for cross-genre awareness will increase if reading/literacy experiences get varied.

### **Conclusion**

The present study was based on a thematic analysis of student views writing in Turkish and performing genre-based writing in an academic writing course. Their initial views revealed a focus on language structures and this focus defines learning to write in a foreign language as an action involving "linguistic knowledge and the vocabulary choices, syntactic patterns, and cohesive devices that comprise the essential building blocks of texts" (Hyland, 2014, p. 3). However, a change was observed in the participants' views toward writing especially with the help of model text analysis and annotation writing activities. As emphasized in the works of Swales (1990), Johns (2002) and Paltridge (2001), students should be encouraged to carry out ethnographic investigations of the genres they need to acquire and the contexts in which these genres occur. With the group discussions, the participants were given a chance to examine reader-writer relationships, their contexts (both the fields of work and study) and different purposes of writers that they observed and named under moves and steps. With the help of annotation writing, my purpose was to enhance students' critical thinking skills and reflection. Due to my constant prompts, the participants were also observed to make some changes in their writing in order not to sound repetitive or imitating. While using model texts as their guide, they also realized the need to create a text different from the model texts. As these students came from low income countries, the first time they did writing was during their prep year education, which means a lack of any writing instruction in their mother tongues or in the education languages in their countries. Considering this reality, this new practice and success with it can be seen as a huge achievement for these students who have for the first time experimented with paying attention to contextual features, communicative purposes and the abilities of negotiation together with rhetorical and textual features of writing.

In terms of the participants' transferring skills of recontextualization (i.e., cross-genre awareness), there was only one instance. P7 transferred his awareness of purposes and rhetorical features belonging to an oral genre to a written one. The scarcity of instances might have stemmed from several reasons. First of all, such awareness was not aimed as a part of instruction; therefore, the participants were not encouraged specifically to transfer skills among genres. Secondly, this writing instruction was totally new for the students, who had barely received writing instructions back in their home counties. Also, the time we spent for our genre-based writing activities was limited to only four weeks, which might not have been adequate enough to create certain awarenesses in students toward similarities among different written or oral genres. In a related vein, thirdly, we studied only three genres; CV, letter of intent and two types of essay writing, which might have also been limited in terms of giving learners essential practice with genre awareness. Therefore, with longer period of writing experiences, with more hands-on-experiences on various written and oral genre types in classes and also with further reflection opportunities other than annotation writings, the chances of creating genre awareness in learners for individual genres might be enhanced. Also, with an increased genre awareness, learners might go beyond their awareness of a single genre and easily establish some links between genres with the help of their cross-genre awareness, and eventually they can be metacognitively more mature writers.

In sum, the participants' final statements in the focus group interview revealed an increased genre knowledge toward the genre types studied, and they were observed to have highly positive feelings about this new writing instruction they received. They all expressed that in spite of difficulties attached to move-step analysis on model texts, or first draft writing, they benefitted from this new experience. The limited number of instances of cross-genre awareness does not mean that they did not increase other awarenesses. In terms of having genre knowledge on the specific genres studied, and in terms of having genre awareness through paying closer attention to variations within and across genres, the participants became well-equipped. "Thus, genre knowledge and genre awareness definitions demand that in our teaching we help students learn to manipulate genres, adapt their knowledge of genres to different contexts, and evaluate the effectiveness of their choices in light of what they know about genres: This is effectively asking them to engage in metacognition" (Negretti & McGrath, 2018, p. 13). With increased abilities of adaptation and flexibility and with more practice in writing, students can be empowered with enhanced metacognitive skills, which refers to going beyond knowing what you know to knowing how you will make use of your knowledge in other relevant contexts of writing.

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## İkinci Dil Olarak Türkçe Öğretiminde Tür Temelli Uygulama

### Özet

*İkinci dil yazma becerileri, öğrenenler için zorluklar teşkil etse de akademide tartışmasız bir öneme sahiptir. Türkiye'de yapılan ikinci dil yazma çalışmaları nadirdir ve çoğunun odağı yabancı dil olarak İngilizcedir. İkinci dil olarak Türkçede yazma becerisini inceleyen çalışmalar ise yok denecek kadar azdır. Dil öğretmenlerinin ikinci dilde yazma eğitiminde yerel gerçekliklere daha fazla dikkat etmesi gerektiğini savunan girişime dayanarak, bu çalışma, yaz okulunda akademik Türkçe eğitimi alan bir grup öğrencinin tür temelli akademik yazma eğitimi hakkındaki görüşlerini incelemeyi amaçlamıştır. Katılımcılar, tür temelli yazım ilkelerine dair bir kaç yazım türüne odaklanarak yazma alıştırmaları yapmış ve katılımcılardan alıştırmaların başında, sürdürdüğü sırada ve sonunda nitel veri toplanmıştır. Tematik analiz verileri, özellikle model metin incelemelerinin, açıklama yazma etkinliklerinin ve katılımcıların odaklanılan yazım türleri hakkındaki artan bilgilerinin yazmaya dair görüşlerinde olumlu bir değişikliğe neden olduğunu ortaya koymuştur.*

*Anahtar Kelimeler:* Türler, tür temelli yazma, açıklama yazma, hamle ve adımlar, ikinci dil olarak Türkçe

### **Appendix A**

#### Initial Written Questionnaire

1. What do you think of writing in Turkish?
2. Which is your favorite writing activity in Turkish? And why?
3. Which is the most difficult writing activity in Turkish? And why?
4. What are your expectations from the academic writing course? What kind of classes do you want to participate? And why?
5. How do you think these academic writing classes will influence your future academic lives?

### **Appendix B**

#### Final Written Questionnaire

1. What do you think of our academic writing classes?
2. What are your favorite writing activities/genres? And why?
3. Which step do you think is the most beneficial? And why? (model text analysis in groups, writing the first draft, writing an annotation on your writing, and writing the second draft)
4. Which step do you think is the easiest? And why? (model text analysis in groups, writing the first draft, writing an annotation on your writing, and writing the second draft)
5. Which step do you think is the most difficult? And why? (model text analysis in groups, writing the first draft, writing an annotation on your writing, and writing the second draft)
6. How do you think these academic writing classes will influence your future academic lives?