วารสารอิเล็กทรอนิกส์
ทางการศึกษา

ผลของการสอนแบบอรรถฐานและแผนผังกราฟิกต่อความสามารถในการเขียนโต้แย้งภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษา

Effects of Genre-Based Approach with Graphic Organizers on Argumentative Writing Ability of EFL Secondary School Students

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บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อ 1) ศึกษาทักษะการเขียนโต้แย้งภาษาอังกฤษของผู้เรียนหลังจากได้รับการสอนแบบอรรถฐานและแผนผังกราฟิก และ 2) ศึกษาความคิดเห็นของนักเรียนที่มีต่อวิธีการสอนเขียนโต้แย้งภาษาอังกฤษ กลุ่มตัวอย่างของงานวิจัย คือ นักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 5 ที่ลงทะเบียนเรียนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษรอบรู้ จากโรงเรียนมัธยมแห่งหนึ่งในจังหวัดนครนายก จำนวน 30 คน การเก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลใช้การรวบรวมเชิงปริมาณและคุณภาพ จากเครื่องมือในการทดลองคือ แบบทดสอบก่อนเรียน-หลังเรียน แบบสอบถามความคิดเห็น และการสัมภาษณ์กึ่งโครงสร้าง ซึ่งวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลโดยใช้การวิเคราะห์ค่าที (paired sample t-test), ค่าเฉลี่ย, ส่วนเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน และการวิเคราะห์เนื้อหา (content analysis) ผลการศึกษา พบว่าความสารถในการเขียนโต้แย้งภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียนหลังจากการสอนแบบอรรถฐานและแผนผังกราฟิกเพิ่มขึ้นอย่างมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติที่ระดับ .05 และนักเรียนส่วนใหญ่มีความคิดเห็นเชิงบวกต่อวิธีการสอนแบบอรรถฐานและแผนผังกราฟิก

คำสำคัญ : การสอนแบบอรรถฐาน, แผนผังกราฟิก, การเขียนโต้แย้งภาษาอังกฤษ

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Abstract

The objectives of this study were 1) to investigate EFL students' writing ability after implementing a genre-based approach with graphic organizers on argumentative writing, and 2) to explore EFL students' perceptions toward a genre-based approach with graphic organizers on argumentative writing. The sample consisted of 30 eleventh grade students from a public school in Nakhon Nayok who had enrolled in an English Mastery course. The study employed a one-group pretest-posttest quasi-experimental design to measure the effects of the instruction. The data were collected both quantitatively and qualitatively by using a written pretest and posttest, a questionnaire, and a semi-structured interview. A paired-sample *t*-test was then used to compare the students' abilities before and after the treatment. The data from the questionnaire and interview were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and content analysis. The findings revealed that the students' argumentative writing ability significantly improved after the implementation of this approach at the .05 level of significant and students had positive perceptions of this form of writing instruction.

Keywords: genre-based approach, graphic organizers, argumentative writing

Introduction

According to the Thai basic core curriculum, learning English as a foreign language is required as an important tool for communication, education, and knowledge seeking. Writing skill is a desirable quality for students to have before graduating. The emphasis for eleventh graders is on 1) speaking and writing appropriately to request as well as provide data to compare, and express opinions about issues and situations heard and read, and 2) speaking and writing appropriately to describe their own feelings and opinions about various matters, activities, experiences with proper reasoning.

Writing is an important skill for students because it improves critical and creative writing, which serves as a tool for purposeful communication with readers, such as informing, persuading, responding, and reflecting on knowledge (Bakry & Alsamadani, 2015). Many foreign language students, however, do not perform well enough to meet the standard of the curriculum.

When students are required to write in a foreign language, they experience difficulties in learning to write. They require a stage of drafting in their first language because they have troubles with vocabulary or linguistic usage, as well as engaging audiences to understand the messages (Kitvilairat, 2016). Secondary level students, on the other hand, may experience anxiety in generating and organizing ideas as a result of the difficulties mentioned earlier, and the time allotted to them to compose a piece of writing is limited.

Argumentative writing is the process of communicating messages by thinking and making reasonable decisions based on ideas and supporting evidence. Hasani (2016) stated that argumentative writing is important for students at the high school and university levels because, when it comes to working life, they must be able to persuade and make strong arguments related to their field of profession to a large number of people in their workplace. In addition, younger students are supported with opportunities in discussion and responding to their classmates through writing argument on various topics (O'Hallaron, 2014).

On the contrary, argumentative writing is a difficult skill to master. Language researchers discovered that second language learners struggled with argumentative, the most difficult of all types. There are three possible reasons for this: 1) it necessitates students' prior knowledge of what is being considered 2) students struggle with grammatical and vocabulary usage when presenting an argument. 3) students have less experience with the structure of argumentative writing (Lam et al., 2017). There are several writing genres; however, most Thai EFL students struggle more with writing argumentative essays than other genres (Tongjean et al., 2019). This is because students must clarify their opinion with appropriate reasons as well as provide evidence or fact to support their claims in order to persuade readers.

A genre-based approach is an approach to teaching and learning writing refers to process of writing that follows steps and it shows the features of organization, layout and communicative purpose used in the writing. It benefits students because it includes language, content, and context, and it also allows teachers to explicitly present different ways of writing work (Hyland, 2004). This method is purposeful and supportive, with the process following the three teaching-cycle stages to assist the students in finishing their writing which include deconstruction, joint construction, and independent construction. (Martin & Rose, 2005). It is also essential for teachers to be concerned with the topic chosen as well as teaching students what to write and how to properly organize the text (Visser, 2017).

The graphic organizer is one of the most instructional methods for language learners because it helps students generate concepts and more ideas for making good justification (Regan et al., 2017). Many studies have shown that graphic organizers can facilitate learning in prewriting activities such as planning and organizing their writing. Furthermore, because of the benefits of arranging concise data from various sources to present in a chart or diagram, graphic organizers are used in several studies of writing instruction (Srijan, 2020).

Despite the fact that a paper-based graphic organizer is still widely used in many classrooms, students today are more familiar with technology. It is preferable to incorporate technology into writing tools for students to use as a writing prompt (Hughes et al., 2019). This

study employed a genre-based approach and graphic organizers to assist students in constructing texts and expressing ideas through charts. The researcher's goal is to investigate whether EFL students perform better on their ability in argumentative writing with genre-based approach and graphic organizers, as well as their perceptions of the instruction.

Objectives

1. To investigate the EFL students' writing ability after implementing genre-based approach and graphic organizers on argumentative writing.

2. To explore the EFL students' perceptions toward genre-based approach and graphic organizers on argumentative writing.

Methodology

Research Design

The study used a one-group design to investigate and compare students' argumentative writing abilities before and after they received genre-based approach and graphic organizers. The argumentative writing tests, pretest and posttest, were used to assess students' ability to write persuasively. Participants were selected using a purposive sampling design.

Population and Participants

The participants in this study were 30 secondary school students, eleventh grade, with mixed gender and low-medium level of English ability from a public school in Nakhon Nayok. They were all native Thai students. Their English background was moderate because most of them had decent basic English proficiency and their abilities in using English were differed. The sampling method of this study was purposive sampling. The students were selected from the enrollment of Mastery English course in the first semester of academic year 2021. Then, six students from low to high performance in the writing test were chosen for the semi-structured interview at the end of the course.

Research Instruments

1. English argumentative writing test

The English argumentative writing tests, including the pretest and posttest, are used to measure and compare the students' argumentative writing ability before and after receiving the treatment in terms of arguments and convention. The topics of the pretest and posttest were paralleled, and students' argumentative writing ability was evaluated by using the writing text scoring rubric adapted from Bërveniku (2017) which required the focus of the

points, the introduction and argument, identification of flaws in the negative arguments and ability to defend itself, and the style of the argument that could hold the audience's attention and belief. Therefore, the rubric was designed to meet the requirements and divided into two aspects, namely, argument (organization, introduction, evidence, counterargument, conclusion) and convention (language features).

2. A graphic organizer

The main-idea-and-detail chart was used to assist students in developing and prioritizing their arguments for inclusion in the organizer provided. This type of chart was provided in the prewriting stage of the genre-based approach's second stage, joint construction, and in the final stage, independent construction. The topic is based on the school environment and relates to students' daily issues.

3. Questionnaire

The 20-statement questionnaire with a four-point Likert Scale which was designed to explore students' perceptions. The questionnaire provided Thai statements and distributed to students at the end of the course and translated back to English.

4. Interview questions

Semi-structure interview questions about students' attitude towards the writing instruction with a graphic organizer. Six students were selected randomly based on their writing performance to have the online interview in the last week after the instruction. The students were able to freely express their opinions in Thai in order to reduce students' anxiety and get deep details about their perception.

Data Collection

The data collection took 12 weeks, 24 periods. The test was conducted during the first two periods of the Mastery English course. During the third period to the twenty-second period, the argumentative writing instruction were conducted. Finally, the posttest was done during the last two periods which were the twenty-third and twenty-fourth period.

Research Procedure

First was the development of genre-based approach and graphic organizers by studying basic concepts and review literature related to the current study in terms of writing skills, assessing writing, genre-based approach, argumentative writing, writing instruction using genre-based approach in Thailand, graphic organizers, graphic organizers in teaching writing. Second was creating the argumentative writing lesson plans, argumentative writing tests,

questionnaire, and semi-structure interview questions. The instruments then were evaluated by the experts for validation and feedback. Finally, the instruments were revised based on the experts' recommendations.

After the phrase of developing research instruments, the argumentative writing pretest was done to the experimental group and collected students' pretest scores. Next, within 12 weeks with 50 minutes per period. The written pretest was administrated in the first week. During the second week to eleventh week, the participants participated in a genre-based approach with graphic organizers activity through Google meet application. The procedure was stated as follows.

Deconstruction stage

The participants were encouraged to discuss about the purpose of the text, identify the elements, the structure, and some language features provided in the sample text.

Joint Construction stage

The participants worked together constructing the sentences about the presented topic by using graphic organizer chart. Then, adjusted the ideas regarding their friends and teacher's feedback.

Independent stage

The participants individually revised their draft, outline the whole essay, and rewrite the essay based on the suggestions

After eleventh week, the researcher conducted a written posttest in the last week of the instruction. Students were investigated their perceptions toward the genre-based writing and graphic organizer through the questionnaire adapted from Jantasin (2015) and semi-structured interview to gather in-depth information about the instruction.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. To investigate the students' writing ability after implementing the instruction. The scores from pretest and posttest were analyzed by using SPSS to find T value, mean scores, and standard deviation to compare students' argumentative writing ability. The data obtained from the questionnaire was analyzed by using descriptive statistics which included mean and standard deviation and content analysis was used to analyze the data from semi-structure interview to present students' perceptions toward the instruction and graphic organizers on argumentative writing.

Figure 1

a conceptual framework of genre-based approach and graphic organizers on secondary EFL students' argumentative writing ability
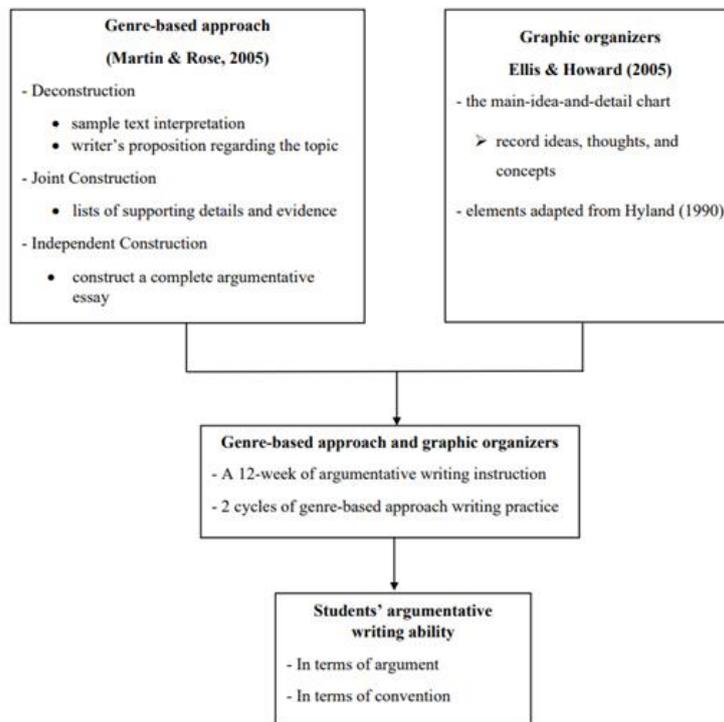
The instruction took place in a classroom setting, where students went through the stages of exploring the text, constructing texts based on the structures and language features they have studied, individually writing their own texts, and revising the draft based on the feedback they have received. The genre-based approach teaching and learning cycle from Martin and Rose (2005), as well as the use of graphic organizers based on aspects proposed by Elli and Howard (2005) that the main-idea-and-detail chart would help students to determine their main point of view and reason to support the opinion with its simple and comprehensible pattern, are employed in the study from the components of Hyland (1990) argumentative writing structure namely, proposition, claim, evidence, and consolidation.

Results

The findings consist of two categories: 1) the effects of genre-based approach and graphic organizers and 2) students' perceptions of the students toward the writing instruction.

According to research question 1: To what extent does argumentative writing achievement of secondary students improve after receiving genre-based approach and graphic organizers? The argumentative writing test was used to assess the students' writing ability before and after receiving the instruction. The paired sample *t*-test was used to examine the students' mean scores and indicate the significant difference of the pretest and the posttest mean scores.

Table 1

Comparison of students' argumentative writing pretest and posttest scores

Writing test	Min	Max	*M*	*SD*	*t*-test	Sig.
Pretest	1	10	8.77	3.55	-11.832	.000*
Posttest	14	17	14.17	2.14		

p < .05, n = 30

As the results presented in Table 1, the total score of the writing test was 18, The pretest mean score was 8.77, and the posttest mean score was 14.17, a difference of -5.40. The pretest had a lowest score of 1 and a highest score of 10. In the posttest, the lowest score was 14 and the highest was 17. The results concluded that the students' argumentative writing ability improved significantly after the implementation of genre-based approach and graphic organizers, as evidenced by a significant difference at the level of .05 ($p <. 05$) between the pretest and posttest mean scores.

The evaluation rubric adapted from Bërveniku (2017) was used to grade students' argumentative writing in two aspects: arguments and convention. In terms of argument, the students' writing was graded based on the following criteria: organization, introduction, evidence, counterargument, and conclusion. The use of vocabulary and phrases was evaluated in terms of convention in language features. The minimum and maximum scores, mean scores, standard deviations, and t values for each aspect are presented in the two tables below.

Table 2

Students' argumentative writing ability in terms of arguments and convention

Writing test	Pretest		Posttest		*M* Difference	*t*-test	Sig.
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*			
Arguments	7.40	2.81	11.77	1.63	4.37	-11.005	.000*
Convention	1.37	0.99	2.40	0.68	1.03	-7.399	.000*

p < .05

The results presented in Table 2, there was a statistically significant difference in the mean scores between the pretest and posttest for argumentative writing. In the argument section, the pretest mean score was 7.40 (*SD* = 2.81), and the posttest mean score was 11.77 (*SD* = 1.63). The difference in mean scores between the pretest and posttest was 4.37. In convention part, the mean score of pretest was 1.37 (*SD* = 0.99) and the mean score of posttest was 2.40 (*SD* = 0.68). The difference between the pretest and posttest mean scores

was 1.03, which were significantly greater than the level of .05. After receiving genre-based approach and graphic organizer, students' writing ability in terms of proposing arguments and using language was improved.

According to research question 2: What are the EFL students' perceptions toward argumentative writing instruction using genre-based approach and graphic organizers? In order to explore 30 eleventh grade students' perceptions toward the instruction. The questionnaire and semi-structure interview questions were used to answer this research question. The questionnaire consisted of general information part and 20 statements of perception part. Besides the opinions from the questionnaire, six students from different levels of ability were chosen to have the interview.

Table 3

The result from questionnaire

Questionnaire Items	M	SD
1. I like to discuss more on the topics in class when learning through this activity.	3.67	0.48
2. The instruction cycle helps me to participate more with friends when learning through this activity.	3.43	0.50
3. I engage more with the teacher when learning through this activity.	3.53	0.51
4. I get more feedback from classmates and the teacher than in a traditional classroom.	3.50	0.51
5. The approach is more engaging than traditional instruction.	3.57	0.50
6. The instruction cycle helps me to write systematically.	3.87	0.35
7. The instruction cycle helps me to write more.	3.60	0.50
8. I am motivated to learn more through the instruction.	3.57	0.50
9. It is easy to follow steps of writing in this approach.	3.63	0.49
10. Graphic organizer helps me to break the ideas into smaller steps.	3.60	0.50
11. Graphic organizer is easy to use in writing argumentative essay.	3.60	0.50
12. Graphic organizer is easy to understand.	3.67	0.48
13. I write argumentative essay better when using graphic organizer.	3.57	0.50
14. graphic organizer helps me to write effective arguments.	3.60	0.50
15. I prefer using graphic organizer when I have to write argumentative essay.	3.53	0.50
16. I spend less time on the writing with this approach.	3.53	0.50
17. I would like to use graphic organizer in writing other text types.	3.53	0.50
18. This approach and graphic organizer helps me to improve my writing ability.	3.63	0.49
19. I would like to study this approach in other text types.	3.57	0.50
20. I would like to apply graphic organizer with other subjects.	3.40	0.50
Grand Mean Score	3.58	0.49

According to the table, means of opinion scale ≥ 2.5 from the Likert 4-point scale on the questionnaire refers to the positive perception. According to the formula of Best and Kahn (1998), the mean scores of all questionnaire items were 3.58 which higher than 2.5 meaning that the students had positive opinion towards the argumentative writing instruction using genre-based approach and graphic organizers. It can be indicated that students had a positive response toward the argumentative writing instruction. They believed that a genre-based approach would facilitate them to prepare to write in both organization and language usage aspects. They also enjoyed discussing the topics brought up in the activity.

In terms of using graphic organizer, they said that this instrument helped them understand each element of an argumentative essay and make their proposition more reliable. They also agreed that using a genre-based approach with a graphic organizer could motivate them to write more and help them improve their writing skill. When they had to write an argumentative essay, they preferred to use the graphic organizer for their writing.

In addition, from the findings of the semi-structure interview, students also had a positive perception of writing instruction. Since they may be unfamiliar with this text type, all interviewees agreed that this approach could improve their understanding of how an argumentative essay was constructed. Students were encouraged to write systematically by participating in activities with their classmates and teacher. They also discovered that the approach could improve their writing skills and reduce their anxiety about argumentative writing.

This approach provided students with opportunities to access the patterns of the texts by allowing them to experience the use of language features in the modeling text. Students could learn some of the vocabulary and phrasing used in the sample texts by deconstructing them with their friends and writing similar texts together. As a result, it can be concluded that a genre-based approach can improve students' argumentative writing ability.

Although, some students struggled to find the right words or phrases to present their arguments because they could not think of proper words or phrases to write. However, after a few weeks, they could recognize how to use alternative words from sample texts to avoid repetition of a specific word that they frequently use in the writing.

Discussion

The findings were examined and discussed regarding two main aspects, according to the purposes: students' argumentative writing ability and their perceptions toward the writing instruction.

1. Students' argumentative writing ability

The research revealed that after receiving genre-based approach writing instruction, students' argumentative writing ability improved significantly. On the posttest, the students performed better in both the argument and convention sections.

Prior to issues with organizing ideas and writing styles, it was discovered in the pretest that some of their writing was incomplete and inefficient. The students' claims were not supported by compelling evidence. It is consistent with what Kongpetch (2006) and Kettrachon (2008) discovered in their study, which discovered that the most difficult aspects of argumentative writing that students expressed were concept generation and arrangement. The implementation of genre-based approach and graphic organizer resulted in a significant improvement in the students' argumentative writing ability in terms of arguments and conventions. Students could use the graphic organizer to organize their writing and create a fully completed essay that included all of the necessary elements. They presented a compelling argument supported by credible evidence, as well as an appropriate counterargument to the proposition.

The instruction was beneficial when writing arguments because it helped them understand the structure and language features used in the sample text and allowed them to check that the evidence was relevant with the claims that they proposed in order to clarify their positions. The approach kept students engaged in rewriting the sentences together by following patterns and moves of the sample texts in joint construction. Students were able to recognize the elements of the writing and reduce their difficulties in composing the text by becoming familiar with the structure and pattern of the argumentative essay, which was consistent with the study's mention of Mauludin (2020). As also presented in Dirgeyasa (2016), this could assist students in the writing of various text types because it was suitable not only for academic but also for professional settings, and it encouraged and facilitated the student's ability to learn independently.

The use of graphic organizers in this instruction was also successful because it helped students plan out how they would write each element of the essay. Because of their simple and understandable format, graphic organizers played an important role in assisting learners in breaking down ideas into smaller steps. When students used a graphic organizer, they were able to prepare to write. They could also write a good argumentative essay in less time. According to the findings of this study, the main-idea-and-detail chart of Ellis and Howard (2005) provided a simple and understandable pattern to follow, and students could use this chart to easily state their opinion with good reasons.

The organizer greatly assisted students in argumentative writing by illustrating that their writings were fully constructed, including a thesis statement, arguments, evidence, counterargument, and conclusion. It could be interpreted as the graphic organizer facilitating

students in effectively forming their ideas and constructing the target genre of writing. According to DiCecco and Gleason (2002), graphic organizers assist students in visualizing the relationships between primary and secondary ideas, as well as the content structure and essential relationships between concepts.

2. Students' perceptions toward argumentative writing instruction

According to the findings, students had a positive attitude toward genre-based writing instruction and graphic organizers. The questionnaire and interview findings were discussed in two ways: perceptions of genre-based approach, and perceptions of using graphic organizers to assist writing.

2.1 Students' perceptions of genre-based approach

The students stated that they enjoyed discussing the topic presented during the activity. According to Mauludin (2020), prior knowledge can be gathered by students through the collaborative construction process before beginning the writing process. Students must go through the prewriting phase before writing the text, in which they prepare all of the necessary elements. Accordingly, they felt more engaged with the teacher and classmates, particularly in joint construction by learning through the activity cycle, in which they could bring the background knowledge that they had to discuss and share with their classmates.

Furthermore, the instruction cycle enabled them to see an overview of the target text type, allowing them to write more in the independent construction stage. They also had opportunities to get feedback from friends and teacher in order to improve their writing. When comparing the pretest and posttest results, it can be seen that they made more progress in argumentative writing ability. This was consistent with assertion of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (Shabani et al., 2010) that this was a cooperative approach because knowledge is best constructed when students collaborate and help one another develop new ways of learning.

2.2 Students' perceptions of using graphic organizer in writing

According to the results of the questionnaire and semi-structure interview, the students agreed that using a graphic organizer helped them improve their argumentative writing skills. First, a graphic organizer assisted them in breaking down ideas and narrowing them down to major reasons. It was consistent with what Anderson et al., (2018) stated in the study, that organizers were used by participants to help them generate ideas, find a focus, decide what to write about, develop, organize their ideas, and gain experience using language to express those ideas. In compliance with Trisusana and Susanti (2020), graphic organizers were critical for students to call on their own experiences, observe various matters around them, and ask questions during the prewriting stage in order to help them decide what they could write about.

Second, Styati and Irawati (2020) discovered that using graphic organizers improved students' writing in terms of supporting arguments, conclusion statements, and overall quality. It can be confirmed to this study which found that when students used a graphic organizer to outline their writing text, they were able to spend more time writing more effective arguments.

Recommendation

The following suggestions that could be investigated for future studies on argumentative writing are as follows.

First, the study was a one-group pretest-posttest design. In the future study could have more groups to compare the effects of the treatment in order to confirm the effective of using genre-based approach and graphic organizers.

Also, this study was conducted on secondary school students who enrolled in Mastery English course of eleventh grade. The instruction could be conducted with students from different level, for instance, tenth or twelfth grade or on lower secondary students, different program, such as Science – Mathematics since English is a compulsory course and different school to ensure the effectiveness of the approach.

Additionally, the approach used in the study was argumentation. In the future research could study of using the approach and graphic organizers with another text types to investigate the effects of the treatment on different variables. Therefore, students could know how to differentiate and construct other types of writing.

Finally, in this study explored the students' perception towards the approach through questionnaire and semi-structure interview. In future research could use classroom observation, collecting students' writing from each activity and having other types of interviews, such as an unstructured interview so that the students could have less stress as it is more fluid and casual or having a focus group interview where the students feel free to discuss with their friends in order to collect a variety of information for the study's results.

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