A Comparative Study of the Effects of Genre-Based and Corpus-Based Instructions on Intermediate EFL Learners' Writing Ability

Mohammad Alipour[1*], Meisam Ziafar[2], Venus Yadollahi[3]
[1,2,3] Department of English Language Teaching, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran
*Corresponding Author's Email: alipour83@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT
This study intended to examine the effects of corpus-based and genre-based activities on improving the writing ability of intermediate EFL learners. To this end, 64 learners at the intermediate level in intact classes were assigned to two experimental groups based on two types of instruction, one genre group and one corpus group. In order to collect data, a writing pre-test was administered to both groups to make sure that the learners had initially similar writing proficiency. In the genre-based group, the learners were exposed to different genres of writing in English, and the corpus-based group learners were taught writing skills through corpus-based materials (concordancing materials) via the AntConc software in eight sessions, each 90 minutes. At the end of the study, both groups took a writing post-test. Both the pre-test and post-test were assessed by two raters, and inter-rater reliability was calculated using Pearson correlation, ensuring the assessment method. After the data collection stage, the data were analyzed via paired- and independent-sample t-tests. The results revealed that both corpus- and genre-based instructions enhanced EFL learners writing ability. It was also found that those who received instruction through genre-based activities showed significantly higher performances in the writing test than those who received corpus-based activities. The findings of this study could be useful for the improvement of writing among EFL learners.
KEYWORDS: Genre-based instruction; Corpus-based instruction; Writing ability

INTRODUCTION

Writing is considered a basic skill because it plays a significant role in (L2) learning at the academic level. Writing is a process of generating and organizing ideas, and also translating these ideas, into readable text (Richards & Renandya, 2002, p. 303). Writing is not only the process the writer uses to put words together but also the resulting product of that process (Nunan, 1991). When writers write, they bring the knowledge of the process writing and of the strategies they will use in composing (Hayes, 1996). Writing is very much like the sea or better say like an ocean. Every writer expresses their internal ideas and thoughts that are swimming on sea-life. "Writing is not an innate natural ability but is a cognitive ability" (Harris, 1993, p. 78) and has to be acquired through years of training or schooling. It is a visual medium and there are both the printed and hand written pages (Kress, 1997). Writing ranges from written notes to formal carefully argued essays on complex issues and functions as a communicative act that transmits information and links people together (Brown, 1993).

Simply, the purpose of writing is to write and convey the message. The purpose of writing could be to entertain, persuade or explain something to a reader. The audience should be identified at the outset because it helps the writer with decisions about the tone, the choice of the language and the structure of writing. The vital elements of writing are form, content, audience, structure and style. This is applied as much too creative writing as to any other form of writing. Creative writing is the process of inventing or rather presenting your thoughts in an appealing way (Bunting, 1998).

Accordingly, there is no doubt regarding the crucial role writing plays in learning language. One of the factors which attracted the attentions of many researchers around the world is the investigation of the effects of the identity of the learners on writing performance. In this regard, Ivanic (1998) emphasizes on the significance of writing through which every person depicts her/his identity. In fact, he presents his own social view regarding writing. He continues that every person's writing are composed of the "writer's portrayal of himself or herself, the reader, their relationship, the writer's commitment to the ideational content, their assessment of the reader's knowledge and beliefs" (Ivanic, 1998, pp. 94-95).

Second language (L2) writing researchers have recently focused on the concept of genre and its relevance to L2 writing and argued that the generic properties of different texts written by members of different discourse

communities are to be mastered by L2 writers before they can write successfully in their second language (Hyland, 2004). Writing is now viewed as a social activity because of the influences from such recent notions as communicative competence in linguistics, social constructionism in philosophy, and situated learning in education (Canagarajah, 2002). Because of the social nature of writing, second language writers need to learn to participate and function in different speech communities. In the genre-based approach, "each group constructs discourses that suit its social practices, historical experiences, and interests" (Canagarajah, 2002, p. 36).

Genre analysis is the study of how language is used within a particular setting (Swales, 1990) and is concerned with the form of language use in relation to meaning (Bhatia, 1993). Genre analysis is a tool to examine the structural organization of texts by identifying the moves and strategies, and to understand how these moves are organized in order to achieve the communicative purpose of the text. Genre analysis also examines the text patterning or textualization in genres to show statistical evidence of a particular linguistic feature in a specific genre and the specific features of the genre that the evidence textualizes. Finally genre analysis examines the lexico-grammatical features of genres to identify the linguistic features chosen by expert users of the genre to realize the communicative purpose, and to explain these choices in terms of social and psychological contexts (Henry & Roseberry, 1998). Other considerations in genre analysis include the communicative purpose of the target genre, the roles of the writer and the audience, and the context in which the genre is used.

As noted in Henry and Roseberry (1998, p. 148) "there has been considerable interest in the genre-based approach to the teaching of language since the mid-1980s". This approach has a communicative purpose as its foundation and originated through the work of Swales (1990), and Bhatia (1993). Genre-based approaches see writing as essentially concerned with knowledge of language, and as being tied closely to a social purpose, while the development of writing is largely viewed as the analysis and imitation of input in the form of texts provided by the teacher (Badger & White, 2000).

A corpus is a large collection of naturally-occurring language text collected in a regular way that is usually stored and processed electronically. There are two different kind of teaching by use of corpus-based material as a methodology: direct and indirect approach direct approach is more than welcome since it offers university students the opportunity to become autonomous learners (Boulton, 2009) because through the use of this approach students engage themselves in learning language by directly accessing to computers and online corpus materials, and the teachers act as a facilitator, but in indirect approach the teacher give the student the printed handouts or introduce the printed books which are corpus based, in this study the researcher will be used indirect approach, because of the difficulties which exist in the research context and it is not possible for learners to have direct access to online corpus based materials in classes. The use of corpora or corpus-based activities in language classes is very beneficial for EFL learners to get familiar with real authentic language. Language teachers also benefit from corpora to increase the meaningful input that is provided to learners. It is also to the advantage of textbooks writers to develop corpora in order to achieve a perfect evidence of the language actually used by speakers and writers in natural situations, rather than relying on their beliefs and intuitions while preparing materials in the field (Biber & Reppen, 2002).

PROBLEM AND PURPOSE

It seems that most ESL/EFL students find writing difficult. In fact these EFL/ESL students are afraid of writing because writing challenges them in expressing their identities. In other words, writing, according to Ivanic (1998), "consists not only of 'subject matter' but also of the writer's portrayal of himself or herself, the reader, their relationship, the writer's commitment to the ideational content, their assessment of the reader's knowledge and beliefs" (pp. 94-95).

In addition, although most people have difficulties in writing in second language, it is the role of the teacher to guide the learners looking at writing both as a product (i.e., where the learner imitates, copies, and transforms models of correct language) and as a process (i.e. the cognitive processes which competent writers go through in order to achieve their objectives in a text). Moreover, it is worth mentioning that writing is also a tool for survival since second language learners may need to write in second language if they want to communicate with native or non-native speakers of that language. Therefore, writing is essential for EFL/ESL learners to keep contact with people of other societies.

Research in second/foreign language teaching recognizes that corpora are widely recognized as a valuable resource in defining language, but there is a departure debate defining language for learners of English or its use in language classrooms (Hunston, 2002). Many studies (such as Chan & Liou, 2005; Chujo, Utiyama & Miura, 2006; Gaskel & Cobb, 2004; Sun & Wang, 2003) have attempted to examine whether corpus-based activities are effective

International Journal of Modern Language Teaching and Learning
Available online at www. ijmltl.com. Vol. 2, Issue 3, 2017, pp. 136-148
ISSN: 2367-9328

with EFL learners in writing/reading or in vocabulary instruction. Students' attitudes towards using corpus-based sources in writing/reading or in vocabulary learning have also been explored in many studies (see Sun, 2000; Yoon & Hirvela, 2004). It seems that no empirical study that has been conducted in the EFL context to compare the effectiveness of corpus-based and genre-based activities on EFL learners' performance in writing.

Therefore, this study makes an attempt to investigate the comparative effects of genre- and corpus-based instruction on Iranian EFL learners' writing performance. In effect, the writing performances of EFL learners are investigated and compared in terms of improvements in syntactic complexity and vocabulary diversity caused by teaching writing via corpora as well as genres.

Therefore, the following research questions were proposed in order to address the objectives of the study:

Does corpus–based writing instruction have any significant impact on Iranian EFL learners' writing ability?

Does genre-based writing instruction have any significant impact on Iranian EFL learners' writing ability?

Is there any significant difference between corpus–based and genre-based writing instructions on enhancing Iranian EFL learners' writing ability?

METHOD
PARTICIPANTS

Sixty four Iranian EFL female learners were selected to participate in this experiment. The participants' age range was between 19 and 28. They were selected from four intact classes. They were learning English in Ariyana, a language institute located in Ahvaz, Iran. The participants' native language was Persian. Since this study intended to compare two types of instruction, two experimental groups and no control group was considered. One experimental group consisted of 33 EFL learners which received genre-based instruction. The other experimental included 31 EFL learners which received corpus-based instruction. It should be mentioned that each group comprised two classes which together had beyond 30 learners. Their level of English language proficiency was intermediate based on the institute's placement tests and the course book they were studying. The required data for conducting this study was collected by the researcher and one of her colleagues.

INSTRUMENTS

One instrument was a researcher-made writing test that was administered twice in the current study, once as the pretest and once as the posttest. The purpose of this test had was to measure the learners' writing ability prior to and after the instructional phase. The test was developed in a way to include different paragraph types, i.e. descriptive, narrative, expository, and argumentative. Toward this end, the learners were asked to write about four different topics, each representing one paragraph type. The topics were: 'describe your house' (descriptive), 'write about a good memory' (narrative), 'explain why you like your family' (expository), and 'is it necessary to exercise?' (argumentative). The learners were asked to write at least 150 words about each topic in a time limit of 20 minutes for each one. The same topics were applied for the posttest at the end of the treatment as well.

Another instrument was the writing assessment checklist. The scoring of the tests was based on Brown and Bailey's (1984) grading scale (cited in Farhady, et al., 1994), as shown in table 1. Accordingly, the scores could vary within a range of zero to twenty. Two experienced EFL instructors scored the compositions.

Table 1. *Brown and Bailey's (1984) Grading Scale*

Component	Point
Organization	5
Logical development of ideas	5
Structure	3.5
Mechanics	3
Style and quality of expression	3.5

A further instrument employed was AntConc. It is a freeware corpus analysis and multiplatform tool for text analysis. It includes seven tools: Concordance, Concordance Plot, File View, Clusters/N-Grams, Collocates, Word List and Keyword List. I used the Concordance tool to extract concordance lines of special lexical items and

International Journal of Modern Language Teaching and Learning
Available online at www. ijmltl.com. Vol. 2, Issue 3, 2017, pp. 136-148
ISSN: 2367-9328

grammatical points which are used in each writing genre. These served the main teaching means via which the participants in the corpus-based group were instructed.

MATERIALS

The materials used in this study were a set of texts and concordance lines. Concordancing can help learners to uncover those grammar rules systematically using the contexts of the vocabulary which provide helpful information for learners when attempting to write (Nagy, 1997). In the present study, these concordance lines were extracted for each writing genre by means of the Antconc software. For this purpose, some texts were extracted from the Internet on each of the four writing types mentioned earlier. The software was then employed to extract the concordance lines for the use of the most frequent lexical items and grammatical points found in each genre. These functioned as the instructional materials for the corpus-based group. They allowed the learners to correct their usage of vocabulary as well as grammar.

As for the genre-based group, the learners were trained through the same texts which were downloaded from the Internet and supplied the concordance lines. For each writing genre focused on in the treatment, ten passages were downloaded on different topics, adding up a total of 40 texts. The teacher drew the learners' attention to the generic structure of each genre and how texts are developed and shaped. In other words, the instruction was geared to both the macrostructures (moves and steps) and microstructures (vocabulary and grammar) of texts.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

In order to investigate the effect of genre-based versus corpus-based instruction on EFL learners' writing ability, a structured procedure was designed to collect data. The treatment procedure was conducted in eight 90-minute sessions during the spring in 2016. The research method used in this study to collect data was a quasi-experimental one with the pretest-posttest two-experimental-group design.

The participants of the groups were pretested in order to test their writing ability before treatment sessions. The pre-test was scored based on Brown and Bailey's (1984) Grading Scale by two raters. The inter-rater reliability was calculated and a correlation coefficient of 0.78 was obtained via Pearson correlation which shows a relatively high degree of inter-rater reliability of pre-test scores.

In the genre-based group, the framework for implementation of genre-based writing instruction was adapted from Badger and White (2000). Two sessions were devoted to each particular writing genre. During the first session, the examples of the target genre were represented to the students. For example, for the first topic *new fashions: advantages and disadvantages*, the learners were exposed to some argumentative texts extracted from the Internet. They were asked to read them carefully and then some negotiations were made between the learners themselves and the learners and the instructor. Then, the students were asked to read back the materials carefully and make themselves ready for the role plays based on the linguistic materials and the purpose of the assigned materials. Afterward, some role plays and group discussions were conducted and the students were then asked to write on the topic (new fashions: advantages and disadvantages) based on their gained topical knowledge related vocabulary items and grammatical functions which had been highlighted during the introductory phase.

In the second session, the at-home-prepared writing sample of the participants were reflected upon and gaps (lexical, functional and organizational) were critically highlighted by the teacher in such a way that the correct modeling of each mistake was presented for the participants regarding the situational use of concepts they used in their writing samples. Finally, the learners were asked to take an imaginative role of each generic topic and write on it. For example, the participants were asked to write argumentatively on the topic: *imagine you are walking outside. A spring storm is coming, what you see, hear, smell, taste, and touch?* Then, the writing samples of the participants were marked by the teacher, and they were individually decided on the kinds of the mistakes they had committed.

The instructional procedure for the corpus-based group was relatively similar to that for the genre-based group. The learners were taught writing through corpus-based materials (concordance materials). An introduction session was conducted for the participants. During the introduction session, the purpose of this study and how to use concordances were explained to the students. Afterward, the participants were asked to write a series of writing paragraphs. For example, the learners were asked to write an argumentative paragraph about the following topic: *Television, newspapers, magazines, and other media pay too much attention to the personal lives of famous people, such as celebrities* that the teacher specified for them. As mentioned, concordances were used for the learners since they could find the correct use of vocabulary, synonyms, antonyms, propositions, adjectives, and nouns. The students

were not allowed to use other vocabulary references except the concordances lines. Then, their papers were corrected considering the general rules of essay writing such as main ideas, supporting ideas, examples and the order they appeared in the essay as well as cohesion and coherence.

At the end of the study, both groups of the study (consisting of four classes) took the posttest. The posttest was scored by two raters in order to ensure the inter-rater reliability. The correlation coefficient of .81 was obtained through Pearson correlation which indicates a high degree of inter-rater reliability.

After the data collection stage through the pre-test and post-test, the data were entered into SPSS for analysis. An inter-rater reliability analysis was performed using Pearson correlation in order to see the extent to which the two sets of participants' scores on pretest and posttest rated by two raters were correlated. In order to prove the normality of the scores of the pretest and posttest among two groups of the study, another statistical procedure, namely, one sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was performed. The first and second hypotheses of the study were tested through paired sample t-test. The third research hypothesis was checked by an independent sample t-test.

RESULTS

Prior to executing the necessary statistical procedures, it was essential to ensure the data were normally distributed. Thus, one-way Kolmogrov-Smirnov test was conducted as follows.

Table 2. *Descriptive Statistics Pertaining to the Test of Normality*

	Kolmogrov-Smirnov Test		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre Corpus Group	.162	30	.167
Post Corpus Group	.217	30	.89
Pre Genre Group	.110	32	.145
Post Genre Group	.138	32	.153

p<0.05

Table 2 illustrates the normality of the variables as a prerequisite for the following statistical procedures in this study. It is clear from the figures under the sig. column that they are all are bigger than 0.05; therefore, it can be concluded that the data were normally distributed and the other statistical procedures, namely paired- and independent-sample t-tests, could be safely employed.

In order to answer the first research question and investigate whether the corpus-based writing instruction affected EFL learners' writing ability, the researcher-made test was used as a pre- and post-test. Thus, to determine how much progress each group made in the interval between the pre-test and post-test, two paired sample t-tests were run, using the SPSS software. Table 4.2 shows descriptive statistics and the paired sample t-test for the results of the pre-test and the post-test for the corpus-based instruction group.

Table 3. *Paired Sample T-test between the Mean Scores of Pre- and Post-testsof theCorpus Group*

		N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
			Paired Samples Test			
Corpus Group	Pre-test	33	12.64	2.95	3.016	.003
	Post-test	33	16.06	3.72		

p<0.05

Table 3 reveals that the mean score of pre-test for the corpus group was 12.64 with standard deviation of 2.95, but the mean score of post-test was 16.06 with standard deviation of 3.72.The t-value=3.016 and sig(=.003)<0.05 shows that there was a meaningful difference between the mean scores of pre and post-tests for this group. The results of the post-test that was carried out throughout the treatment period manifest the expected progress for the corpus group. Regarding the results, it was concluded that corpus-based instruction enhanced EFL learners' writing ability, and the first null hypothesis was rejected.

International Journal of Modern Language Teaching and Learning
Available online at www. ijmltl.com. Vol. 2, Issue 3, 2017, pp. 136-148
ISSN: 2367-9328

To address the second question and examine whether the genre–based writing instruction had any significant impact on Iranian EFL learners' writing ability, another paired sample t-test was run. The results of pre and post-tests scores in the genre group are displayed in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4. *Paired Sample T-test between the Mean Scores of Pre- and Post-tests of the Genre Group*

		N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
			Paired Samples Test			
Genre Group	Pre-test	32	11.73	3.62	3.475	0.00
	Post-test	32	18.33	2.89		

p<0.05

Table 4 illustrates the results of the paired samples t-test between the pre-test and post-test for the genre group, as we can see, t-value= 3.47 and the sig=.000 which is smaller than 0.05. Moreover, there was a significant difference between mean scores of pre-test (M=11.73) and post-test (M=18.33) in genre group. So we conclude that the differences between the means in pre-test and post-test are meaningful and the second null hypothesis is rejected.

In order to see if the difference between the corpus-based and the genre-based writing instructions on enhancing Iranian EFL learners' writing ability (i.e., the third question) was statistically significant, descriptive statistics and an independent sample t-test were computed. The results of the independent sample t-tests are depicted in the following tables.

Table 5. *Descriptive Statistics for the Corpus and the Genre Groups on the Post-test*

		N	Mean	SD
Post-test	Corpus Group	33	16.06	3.72
	Genre Group	32	18.33	2.89

Tables 5 manifests that there is a difference between the post-test scores of the corpus group (M=16.06, SD=3.72) and the genre group (M=18.33, SD=2.89) with respect to the type of the treatment. In order to find out whether or not the observed difference was statistically significant, an independent-sample t-test was performed (see Table 4.5).

Table 6. *Independent Sample T-test between the Corpus and the Genre Groups on the Post-test*

	Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances		T-test for Equality of Means	
Independent Sample T-test				
	F	Sig.	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Equal Variances Assumed	5.905	.022	4.915	.000
Equal Variances not Assumed			4.915	.000

p<0.05

According to this table, the results of independent samples t-test for the post-test are indicative of the fact that there was a significant difference between the two groups in their post-test of writing ability. Thus, corpus- and genre-based

International Journal of Modern Language Teaching and Learning
Available online at www. ijmltl.com. Vol. 2, Issue 3, 2017, pp. 136-148
ISSN: 2367-9328

instructions affected the writing ability of the two groups differently (t=4.91, .000 < .05) and the third null hypothesis was also rejected. Therefore, it can be concluded that those who received instruction through genre-based activities showed significantly higher performance in the writing test than those who received corpus-based instruction.

DISCUSSION

The present study attempted to address the following null hypotheses:
1. Corpus–based writing instructiondoes not have any significant impact on Iranian EFL learners' writing ability.
2. Genre-based writing instruction does not have any significant impact on Iranian EFL learners' writing ability.
3. There is not any significant difference between corpus–based and genre-based writing instructions on enhancing Iranian EFL learners' writing ability.

Concerning the first null hypothesis and in order to compare the pre and post-test means of the experimental group for the corpus-based writing instruction, the descriptive statistics and the paired sample t-test wererun.Regarding the results, it was concluded that the corpus-based instruction improved EFL learners' writing ability, and the first null hypothesis was rejected.

The success of the corpus-based instruction could be attached to a pattern that merges teachers' explicit instruction and students' discovery learning through corpora use. The instructional interposition was manifested to be impressive not only in organizingthe learners' original knowledge of high-frequency verbs they generallymishandled but also in boostingtheir knowledge of other variant expressions. Regarding the results, the experimental participants group became more aware of the correct usage of the vocabularyand gainedmore knowledge of English writingin general. Such knowledge enhancement isworth and can hardly be gained through implied learning, a time-consuming process with no guarantee of result.

The success of the corpus-based instruction also emphasizes the advantage of error correction on raising students' awareness and persuading them to follow the correct patterns. As suggested by Todd (2001), learners' ability to self-correct errors was strongly correlated with their ability to induce patterns of word utilization from concordances. Previous studies have also illustratedthat students' self-correction increased the accuracy of grammatical and lexical forms in their L2 writing (Chandler, 2003; Ellis, Sheen, Murakami, & Takashima, 2008; Sheen, Wright, & Moldawa, 2009).

Generally, the positive effects of teachers' error feedback and students' self-correction practices on making better the accuracy and fluency in L2 writing can be confirmed by the results. Carrying on these positive effects to the subsequent writing can be done by some students. To represent learners' weak areas, concentrate learners' attention on certain patterns, and activate them to instantly correct the wrong usage, error correction, apparently, works well. In this way, learners are able to deal with all possible errors they may make at one time, so such a systematic way of providing error feedback can be considered as more efficient way of applying error correction.

Through concordance programs, the corpus-based instruction requires students to access native-speaker data and most students perceive an approach as useful in learning vocabulary. Indeed, with much more exposure to a target language word than incidental learning of vocabulary, teachers provide L2 learners with learning opportunities (Cobb, 1997). Also, it is applied in bilingual corpora which helped learners to observe the lack of one-to-one translation equivalents and multiple possibilities of L2 expressions in different contexts. As shown in previous studies on Chinese learners of English, learners were allowed to know word usages in different contexts and self-correct their own errors in essays by using the bilingual concordancer (Wang, 2001; Yu & Yeh, 2004).

Under the situations when suitable corpora are unavailable, teachers could make their own sub-corpora or bring data together from large corpora and arrange them into teaching materials for their own teaching purposes. For designing a corpus-based instruction such as improving texts to facilitate the data for beginners, Aston (1997) gave useful suggestions, selecting data from familiar genres, reducing the quantity of data, and simplifying the tasks. For beginning and intermediate learners, such a teacher-oriented learning may be more advantageous and helpful (Aston, 1997; Gavioli, 1997) although learner-oriented discovery learning is generally successful. Learners can be awarded more freedom and self-rule in searching data, especially for their linguistic enquiries whenthey have improved in their meta-linguistic skills and have stored experiencein corpora use.

At the first sight, the idea of discovery learning proposed in the 'three Is' model, i.e., illustration, interaction, and induction (McEnery, Xiao, & Tono, 2006) is very interesting as it supports data search began by learners for achieving their own needs and aims to prepare learners a 'linguistic researcher' (Johns, 1997). The reality was not so hopeful, though preferably it is learner-directed learning. EFL learners approved teacher guidance on data search and data interpretation, each could hardly be attained through interaction with other learners. As cautioned by Gavioli (1997),

International Journal of Modern Language Teaching and Learning
Available online at www. ijmltl.com. Vol. 2, Issue 3, 2017, pp. 136-148
ISSN: 2367-9328

because classification and interpretation of corpus data draw on learners' linguistic as well as meta-linguistic skills, asking students to obtain corpus data does not make them linguistic researchers. To classify learners' findings which surely need a lengthy process of trial and error, they are left alone without clear teacher guidance.

Concerning the second null hypothesis, paired sample t-testbetween the pre-test and post-test forgenregrouponwriting skill was compared. As Table 4.3 reveals, the difference between the means of pre- and post-test for writing skill was significant at the level of ($p<0.05$). Based on the results, the genre-based instruction had a considerable effect on learners' writing skill in the experimental group.

It was also concluded that, after observing the results, in classroom setting in EFL situation like Iran, using genres will be useful. In improving the ability of learners, they are taught the construction of moves in any kind of social writing especially in writing narration and description which are two important issues.In this way, English students achieve higher scores in writing courses and considerablyimprove in construction of compositions and paragraphs in Iran in an EFL setting although Iranian students do not have adequate opportunitiesto be exposed to English.

In addition, beyond the sentence level, they have little experience of writing, and so they tend to lack confidence, especially when they are in a basic level class. To acquire linguistic knowledge, such as grammar and vocabulary, students in EFL situations need to write identically what they want to say. The foundation of writing is the understanding of linguistic forms and their functions in order to attain specific purposes in their future. Moreover, knowing how a text is structured in an accepted way in a society is essential.Students in EFL situations can deal with these requirements in the genre approach. Linguistic knowledge, as a foundation of writing, is not neglected, especially for students who have little linguistic competence. Learning rhetorical patterns of different genres is stressedin a way towrite in socially accepted ways which helps students gain the purpose of writing.

Therefore, in a genre-based writing class, the teacher begins withconstructing contextual knowledge of the target genre by focusing on the purpose of the text, the context where the writing takes place, and the elements that encourage people to accept a certain kind of writing for what it is desired to be. After constructing this knowledge, students start to deconstruct the model text genre and providean independent writing when they practice the model genre with the teacher's guidance.

As stated before, instruction in genre approach improves students' writing performance. This conclusion adds to the validity of other studies such as that of Cox, Holden, and Pickett (1997), Kapka and Oberman (2001), Asadi (2012), Elashri (2013). The shift in the writing teacher's role from the traditional role consideringthe learner's first draft as though it were the final product, and undertaking the role of a consultant, simplifying the learner's step-by-step making the piece of writing, is decisive in encouraging students to write better.

Providing a safe, persuading, and non-threatening environment and constructing settings that stimulate students' writing help them to improve their writing performance. Student-writers requirethe feeling of support and acceptance from the teacher and peers in order to take the kind of risk necessary in the process of producing good writing. Learners are encouraged to write and to share their writings when they feel secure from criticism. Therefore, the class is considered as a community of writers and students who respond to a supportive writing atmospherein a positive way. This is unchanging with the findings of other studies such as Mouritzen (1993), and Cohen and Hill (2000).

In writing, teachers require more training, especially on genre instruction. For those unfamiliar with writing as a genre, it would be recommendable to read books by experts in the field. To become familiar with what is happening in the field of writing, teachers should talk to other teachers who use the genre approach. Concerning what writers do and how they feel when writing, there is a stronger base for discussion. In order to develop the students' writing sub-skills, these types of discussions are crucial. Those topics that interest student-writers and relate to their lives should be chosen.

On the basis of the findings of this study as well as the previous studies, it can be asserted that if Iranian students are given formal teaching about the genre, they will write better and more successfully. By using the formal teaching, we mean the field, concept, the mode of the discourse, and the genre of different text types according to the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) originally proposed by Halliday (1985). The students who are familiar with the genre can create a text with respect to the context of situation, which concentrates on who, what, how, when, and where, on the one hand, and the context of culture which fixes on the cultural aspect of the communicative event, on the other hand.

To draw a conclusion, with an overall and a specific view to texts, genre instruction has provided language teachers and language learners. To facilitate language learners, it can work as a problem-solver overcoming the problems in learning. Moreover, it can work as a good assistant;for working out an impressive teaching model, teachers can use it.

To consider the third null hypothesis, and find if the difference between the corpus-based and the genre-based writing instructions on enhancing Iranian EFL learners' writing ability was statistically significant, descriptive

statistics and an independent sample t-test were computed. Thus, corpus- and genre-based instructions affected the writing ability of the two groups differently and the third null hypothesis was also rejected. From the data obtained, it can be concluded that those who received instruction through genre-based activities showed significantly higher performances in the writing test thanthose who received corpus-based instruction.

Genre-based instruction had significant impacts on motivation for writing. This finding establishes the results of few conducted studies in the field, such as Tran's (2007) study on motivation and learners' identity in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing classroom in Vietnam. Boscolo, Favero, and Borghetto (2007) investigated motivation for writing and interest. The interest and motivation for learners are increased by the processes of Genre-Based Instruction (GBI) with narrative texts and the very characteristics of text analysis and genre awareness in order to modify their writings proficiently. Since the learners were unwilling to write unrelated paragraphs, they have never applied writing as a means to narrate the events, ideas, or notions. On the other hand, when the learners are taught genre-based writing, they find the key to writing, and it opens a new motivating way to go on writing so that their desires are satisfied.

In order to write by means of genres, students should learn to think about the values of others and various beliefs along with testing their own ideas. Regarding this, their wants and consequently their motivations for writingwere enhanced. This view is very similar to Hasan (1996) who claims that various forms of semiotic mediation produce the varied forms of human consciousness, and arrival of an ideological consciousness is considered essential to a writer's genre enhancement. Accordingly, this makes the socio-cognitive competence of learners to grasp a hard skill like writing. On the other hand, GBI has the conceptof social purpose and consciousness raisingreceived in its framework (Hyland, 2003). Thus, the learners' motivation for writing is enhanced by the use of such strong instructional techniques in an EFL setting like Iran.

CONCLUSION

According to Condon and Kelly-Riley (2004), "One of the most important skills in the digital age is one of the oldest — writing" (p. 56) which at the same time is the most complicated and difficult one (Baradaran & Sarfarazi, 2011; Blackmore-Squires, 2010; Pakdel Estalkhbijari & Khodareza, 2012). Surely, whether one is in college or the workplace, communication of ideas through writing is central to all disciplines(Condon & Kelly-Riley, 2004).Therefore, the main aim of language teaching is fostering competent writers (Nudee, Chatupote, & Teo, 2010). Fulfilling this purposerequiresaccepting effective teaching techniques which are contextualized, practical, and motivating in order to reduce problems attached to EFL writing.

The findings of this study suggest that when the objective of writing is encouragement and when writing is practicedin a process-based approach, genre-based and corpus-based instructionsare more efficient options for EFL teachers to select. On the other hand, the writing ability of the learners who received a genre-based instruction showed to statistically improvecompared to the ability of their counterparts who were instructed using the corpus approach. In fact, genre analysis as a guidance, where the community context, linguistic choices, and markers are being explained, proves to be useful in providing the learners with the essential strategies in order to deal with the writing skill. However, the writing skill of the learners is affected by many elements; apparently fulfilling genre analysis is advantageous. It is worth mentioning that from a genre analysis viewpoint to the writing skill, there is an action and reaction among text-writing task, learner and genre-discourse community, and linguistic choices which apparently affect the process of literacy skills.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST
The authors declare no conflict of interest.

REFERENCES

Abbott, R., & Berninger, V. (1993). Structural equation modeling of relationships among developmental skills and writing skills in primary and intermediate grade writers. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 85*(3), 478–508.

Badger, R., & White, G. (2000). A process genre approach to teaching writing. *ELT Journal*, 54*(2)*, 153-161.

Bakhtin, M. (1986). *Speech genre and other essays.* Trans. Ver W. McGee. Austin.

Benedict, L. (2006). Genre-based teaching and Vygotskian principles in EFL: The case of auniversity writing course. *Asian EFL Journal, 8*(3), 226-248.

Bereiter, C., & Scardamalia, M. (1987). *The psychology of written composition*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Berkenkotter, C. & Huckin, T. (1995). *Genre knowledge in disciplinary communication.* New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Bhatia, V.K. (1993). *Analyzing genre: Language use in professional settings*. New York: Pearson Education Limited.

Biber, D., & Reppen, R. (2002). What does frequency have to do with grammar teaching? *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 24,* 199-208.

Biber, D., Conrad, S., & Reppen, R. (1998). *Corpus linguistics: Investigating language structure and use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Biggs, J. (1988). *Approaches to learning and to essay writing*. In R.R. Schenech (Ed.) learning strategies and learning styles, New York: Plenum Press.

Birjandi, P., Alavi M., &Salmani-Noudoushan M. (2004). *Advanced writing.* Tehran: Zabankadeh Publications.

Boulton, A. (2009). Testing the limits of data-driven learning: language proficiency and training. *ReCALL,* 21(1), 37-54.

Brown, H. D. (*2001*). *Teaching by principles*: *An interactive approach to language pedagogy*. White Plains, NY: Longman.

Brown, H. D. (2004). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practice*. New York: Pearson Education, Inc.

Brown, J. D., & Bailey, K. M. (1984). A categorical instrument for scoring second language writing skills. *Language Learning, 34*(4), 21-43.

Brown, K., & Hood, S. (1989). *Writing matters: Writing skills and strategies for students of English.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Browne, A. (1993). *Helping children to write.* London: Paul Chapman Publishing.

Bunting, R. (1998). From process to genre: Recent developments in teaching of writing. In A. Kelly, & J. Graham, (Eds.) *Writing under control* (1998). London: David Fulton Publishers.

Canagarajah, S. (2002). Multi-lingual writers and the academic community: Towards a critical relationship. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 1,* 29-44.

Celce-Murcia, M. (1991*). Language teaching methodology.* London: Prentice Hall.

Celce-Murcia, M. (2001). *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*. Boston: Thomson Learning, Inc.

Chambers, A. (2005). Integrating corpus consultation in language studies. *Language Learning & Technology, 9*(2). 111-125

Chambers, A. (2007). Integrating corpora in language learning and teaching. *ReCALL*, *19*(03), 249-251.

Chan, T., &Liou, H. (2005). Effects of web-based concordancing instruction on EFL students' learning of verb-noun collocations. *Computer Assisted Language Learning, 18*(3), 231-250.

Chastain, K. (1988). *Developing second language skills: Theory and practice* (3rd Ed.) Florida: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Cheng, A. (2006). Understanding learners and learning in ESP genre-based writing instruction. *English for Specific Purposes 25,* 76-89

Chenoweth, N. A., & Hayes, J. R. (2001). Fluency in writing: Generating text in L1 and L2. *Written Communication*, *18*(1), 80-98.

Cheung, D. & Lai P. C. (1997). The genre analysis approach to technical report writing: A template or an analytical framework? *ESP Malaysia 5*(1), 56-68.

Chiu, K., Utiyama, M., & Miura, S. (2006). Using a Japanese-English parallel corpus for teaching English vocabulary to beginning-level students. *English Corpus Studies, 13,* 153-172.

Coe, R. M. (1994). An arousing and fulfillment of desires: The rhetoric of genre in the process era–and beyond. *Genre and the new rhetoric*, 181-90.

Cope, B. & Kalantzis, M. (1993). The power of literacy and the literacy of power. In: *The Powers of literacy: a genre approach to teaching writing*. Chapter 3, pp. 63-89. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Cummins, J. (1986). *Language proficiency and academic achievement*. In J.W. Oller (Ed.) issues in language testing research. Rowley, Mass.: New York house.

Diffley, F & Lapp, R. (1988). Responding to student writing: Teacher feedback for extensive revision. A workshop presented at TESOL Chicago.

Flower, L. (1979). Writer-based prose: A cognitive basis for problems in writing. *College English*, *41*(1), 19-37.

Flower, L. S. (1994). The construction of negotiated meaning: A social cognitive theory of writing. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

Flower, L., & Hayes, J. R. (1980). The dynamic of composing: Making plans and juggling constraints. *Cognitive Process in Writing, 31*, 50-58.

Flower, L. S, & Hayes, J. (1983). *A cognitive model of the writing process in adults* (Find Report). Pittsburg, PA: Carnegie Mellon University. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 240608).

Flowerdew, L. (2000). Using a genre-based framework to each organizational structure in academic writing. *ELT journal*, 54*(4)*, 369-378.

Flowerdew, L. (2005). An integration of corpus-based and genre based approaches to text analysis in EAP/ESP: Countering criticisms against corpus-based methodologies. *English for Specific Purposes*, *24*, 321-332.

Foomani, E. M., & Khalaji, K. (2016). Corpus-Based Versus Traditional Collocation Learning: The Case of Iranian EFL Learners. *Journal of Social Science Studies*, *3*(2), 103-116.

Freedman, S. W. (1983). Student characteristics and essay test writing performance. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 313-325.

Gaskell, D., & Cobb, T. (2004). Can learners use concordance feedback for writing errors? *System, 32*(3), 301-319.

Gillespie, M. K. (2001). Research in writing: Implications for adult literacy education. Retrieved December 13, 2015, from http://www.ncsall.nt/?id=561

Grabe, W., & Kaplan, R. B. (1996). *Theory and practice of writing: An applied linguisticperspectiv*e. London and New York: Longman.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1975). *Learning how to mean: Exploration in the development of language.* London: Edward Arnold.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1985). *An introduction to functional grammar.* London: Edward Arnold.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1994). *An introduction to functional grammar (2nd ed.).* London: Edward Arnold.

Hanafiyeh, M. & KhanehKreshi, A. (2013).The Effect of Corpus-Based Instruction and Thesaurus-Based Teaching on Iranian EFL Learners' Grammatical Knowledge. *Journal of Basic and Applied Scientific Research, 3*(2), 167-179.

Hariston, M. (1982). The winds of change: Thomas kahn and the revolution in the teaching of writing. In Sondra Perl (Ed.) Landmark essays on writing process (pp.113-126). Davis, CA: Hermagoras Press.

Harris, D. P. (1969). *Testing English as a second language*. New York: Mc.Graw-Hill.

Harris, J. (1993). *Introducing writing.* London: Penguin Books Ltd.

Hayes, J. R. (1996). A new framework for understanding cognition and affect in writing. In C. M. Levy & S. Ransdell (Eds.). *The science of writing: Theories, method, individualdifferences and applications* (pp. 1-27). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Henry, A., & Roseberry, R. (1998). An evaluation of a genre-based approach to the teaching of EAP/ESP writing. *TESOL Quarterly, 32*(1), 147-156.

Hicks, D. (1997). Working" Through" Discourse Genres in School. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 459-485.

Homstad, T., & Thorson, H. (1996).Using writing-to-learn activities in the foreign language classroom.*Technical Report Series, 14*(1), 42-68.

Hunston, S. (2002).*Corpora in applied linguistics.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hyland, K. (2002). *Teaching and researching writing.* Harlow, Essex: Longman

Hyland, K. (2004). *Genre and second language writing.* Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.

Hyon, S. (1996). Genre in three traditions: Implication for ESL. *TESOL Quarterly 30*693,-722.

Ivanic, R. (1998).*Writing and Identity: The discoursal construction of identity in academic writing.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Johns, A. (1991). Faculty assessment of ESL student literacy skills: Implications for writing assessment. *Assessing second language writing in academic contexts*, 167-179.

Johns, A. M. (2003). Genre and ESL/EFL composition instruction. *Exploring the dynamics of second language writing*, 195-217.

Johns, J., Fox, T., & Silvia, R. (Eds.) (2004). *Effective writing. Source Aid, LLC.* Retrieved May 10, 2013, from: www.SourceAid.com

Kalali, N. N., & Pishkar, K. (2015). The Effect of Genre-Based Teaching on Iranian EFL Learners' L2 Reading Comprehension. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, *2*(7), 123-137.

Kay, H., & Dudley-Evans, T. (1998). Genre: What teachers think? *ELT journal*, *52*(4), 308-314.

Keh, C. L. (1990). Feedback in the writing process: a model and methods for implementation. *EFL Journal*, 44*(4)*, 294-304.

Kellogg, R. (1996). A model of working memory in writing. In Levy, M., Ransdell, S. (eds.) *The Science of writing: Theories, methods, individual differences, and applications* (pp. 57-72). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Khatibi, M. B. (2014). The Effect of Genre-Based Teaching on EFL Learners' Speaking Performance. *Iranian Journal of Research in English Language Teaching*, *2*(1), 38-52.

Kim, Y., & Kim, J. (2005). Teaching Korean University writing class: Balancing the process and the genre approach. *Asian EFL Journal, 7*(2), 1-15.

Kirsch, G. &Roen. D. (Eds.). (1990). *A sense of Audience in written communication*. London and Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Kroll, B. (1998). Assessing writing abilities. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *18*, 219-240.

Kroll, B. (2001). Consideration for teaching on ESL/EFL writing course. In C. Maurcia (Ed.), *teaching English as a second or foreign language*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

Lucas, F. L. (1955). *Style: The art of writing well*. Harriman House Limited.

Mansfield, M. A. (1993). Real world writing and the English curriculum. *College Composition and Communication*, *44*(1), 69-83.

Mosayebnajad, F., & Aidinlou, N. A.(2015).The Effect of theS ystemic Genre Instruction on Writing Performance of Iranian EFL High School Students. *MAGNT Research Report, 3* (1). 377-388.

Muncie, J. (2002). Finding a Place for Grammar in EFL Composition Classes. *EFL Journal*, *56*, 407-430.

Nagy, W. E. (1997). On the role of context in first- and second-language vocabulary learning. In N. Schmitt &M. McCarthy (Eds.), *Vocabulary: Description, acquisition and pedagogy* (pp. 64-83). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nunan, D. (1991). *Language teaching methodology*. London: Prentice Hall.

Olson, D. (1993). How writing represents speech. *Language & Communication, 13*(2), 1-17.

Paulston, C. B. (1972). Teaching writing in the ESOL classroom: techniques of controlled composition. *TESOL Quarterly*, 6*(1)*, 33-59.

Raimes, A. (1983). *Techniques in teaching writing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Raimes, A. (1985). What unskilled ESL Students do as they write: A classroom study of composing. *TESOL Quarterly 19*(2), 229-258.

Raimes, A. (1987). Language proficiency, writing ability, and composing strategies: A study of ESL college student writers. *Language Learning*, *37*(3), 439-468.

Randaccio, M. (2013). Language change in scientific discourse. *JCOM 3(2)*. http://jcom.sissa.it/archive/03/02/A030201/jcom0302%282004%29A01.pdf

Richards, J., & Renandya, W. (2002). *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice.* Cambridge: Cambridge University press.

Sharples, M. (2002). Disruptive devices: mobile technology for conversational learning. *International Journal of Continuing Engineering Education and Life Long Learning, 12*(5/6), 504-520.

Silva, T. (1990). Second language composition instruction: Development, issues, and directions in ESL. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second language writing: Research insights for the classroom*. 11-24.

Sinclair, J. (1991). *Corpus, concordance, collocation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sun, Y. C. (1999). Web-based concordancing: Challenges and opportunities for English language teaching. In *Proceedings for the English International Symposium on English Teaching* (pp. 517-526).Taipei: Crane.

Sun, Y. C. (2000). *Using on-line corpus to facilitate language learning.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the teaching of English to speakers of other languages, British Columbia, Canada. Retrieved from http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/s1060374304000190 .

Sun, Y. C., & Wang, L. Y. (2003). Concordancers in the EFL classroom: Cognitive approaches and collocation difficulty. *Computer assisted language learning*, *16*(1), 83-94.

Swales, J. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Swami, J. A. (2008). Sensitizing ESL learners to genre. *TESL-EJ, 12(3).* Retrieved February, 1, 2016 from http://www.tesl-ej.org/wordpress/past-issues/volume12/ej47/ej47a9/

Tangpermpoon, T. (2008). Integrated approaches to improve students writing skill for English major students. *ABAC Journal,* 28(2). Retrieved February, 4, 2016 from http://www.journal.au.edu/abac_journal/2008/may08/01(1-9)_article01.pdf

Tribble, C. (1996). *Writing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

White, R., & Arndt, V. (1991). *Process writing*. London: Longman.

Widdowson, H. G. (1990). *Aspects of language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Yoon, H., & Hirvela, A. (2004). ESL student attitudes toward corpus use in L2 writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 13,* 257-283.

Zamel, V. (1982). The composing processes of advanced ESL students: six case studies. *TESOL Quarterly*, 17*(2)*, 165-187.

Zamel, V. (1983). The composing processes of advanced ESL students: six case studies'. *TESOL Quarterly. 17*(2), 165-87.

Zare-ee, A. (2009). The effects of teaching genre moves on EFL learners' performance in letter writing. *Pazhuhesh-e Zabanha-ye Khareji*, *49*, 43-64.