

## **The Impact of Summary Writing with Structure Guidelines on EFL College Students' Rhetorical Organization: Integrating Genre-Based and Process Approaches**

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### **Abstract**

This study aimed at investigating the impact of writing on Iranian EFL college students' rhetorical organization. Thirty Iranian female undergraduate students majoring in English at Al-zahra University participated in the current study. The writing instructions included two stages, each lasting for four weeks. The participants were assigned to a control group and an experimental group according to an "S" model and received writing instructions based on genre and process approaches. The experimental group received writing instruction on text structure designed according to descriptive genre for the first four weeks, followed by the instruction on the process approach for the second four weeks. However, the control group received the process writing instruction only during the second stage. The research questions focused on whether summary writing with instructions on text structure improves students' rhetorical organization or not. Also, the study sought to find out how students' rhetorical organization improves when instructions on text structure are used as a supplementary tool to the process approach. The design of the study was quasi experimental. The findings revealed that summary writing with instructions on text structure helps students have better performances in rhetorical organization, concerning content, organization, language use, and syntactic complexity. Also, the obtained results indicated that genre and process approaches can be complementary, and summary writing with instructions on text structure can be used as a supplementary tool to the process approach.

**Keywords:** summary writing, EFL college students, rhetorical organization,  
genre based approach, process approach

## Introduction

Many college students may often experience difficulties with writing that are not caused by a lack of understanding or critical ability. Writing is a complex activity; yet, it is also a rich mode of learning. Academic writing requires time: time to generate ideas, determine purposes, develop an argument, organize and arrange text effectively, and revise. It also requires time of the instructor: time in successfully creating writing assignments; time in integrating writing well into the instructional goals, and time in responding thoughtfully to students' writing. In addition, college level writing often involves the complex task of reading, comprehending, interpreting and processing a difficult text including the ongoing text that one is producing in writing while negotiating such reading (summary writing). According to Richards and Renandly (2002), there is no doubt that writing is the most difficult skill for EFL learners to master. They argue that the difficulty lies not only in generating and organizing ideas but in translating these ideas into readable texts. This can be the problem for most undergraduate Iranian college students majoring in English since they need to be able to write essays, compositions, term papers, etc. This problem can be attributed to the short time students spend in Iran high schools, that is, only two hours a week classes for only 2 hours a week. They prepare themselves for Konkoor (University entrance exams), they practice only multiple-choice tests and reading comprehension tests of English and have little or no chance of practicing writing, which may lead teachers and students to pay more attention to reading than to writing. Based on my personal experiences, most of the Iranian undergraduate students majoring in English have problems using the language effectively. This undesirable fact causes problems for both students and instructors. Very few teachers ask students to learn model essays by heart or teach writing through process approach. But teaching independent writing skills in different genres in a short period of time is not an easy task. Another problem goes back to the way feedback is provided by teachers. Although Truscott (1996) once argued against grammar correction in L2 writing classes, it is still a fact that students benefit from teachers' correction or written comments. Hedgcoch and Lefkowitz (1994) emphasize the role of multiple draft process-oriented approach. They mention that foreign language learners are less motivated to correct and revise their writing since their

language class do not emphasize on the multiple draft process- oriented approach.

Summary writing is brief statements of the main ideas in a text or a passage often produced while or after reading something (Richards and Schmidt, 2002). Summary writing, in this study, is different from just taking notes; it is in the form of composition. According to Trust (2005), writing a summary helps to clarify your thinking process and a good summary must be a clear, simple guide to what is written. It must make sense as the first text and must make sense alone.

### **The Reading-Writing Connection**

According to Richards and Schmidt (2002), writing and reading share to some extent the same set of micro skills such as understanding main idea, understanding sequences, and noticing specific details. Surveys done by Stotsky (1983) show that good readers are good writers, that additional reading helps more in improving writing than grammar exercises or extra writing practice. Belanger's (1987) review of writing/ reading connections shows that instruction in reading helps improve writing and instruction in writing also brings about significant improvements in reading when instruction in reading and writing focuses on common elements. Carson et al. (1990) and Shanahan (1984), in this regard, indicated that there is a bi-directional relationship between reading and writing. In this view, reading and writing are both interactive and independent. Allison, Berry and Lewkowicz (1995) explored the writing /reading connection in EAP classes through the effects of mediating tasks, such as group discussions, or comprehension exercises, finding that summary writing improves rhetorical knowledge and improved rhetorical knowledge helps learners comprehend reading material and retain knowledge longer since summary writing is the process of close and critical interpretation and evaluation of the text. Yang and Shi (2003) in their study on improving Japanese ESL students' compositions by summary writing found that: the participants either wrote confidently or struggled through the writing processes, relying to varied degrees on such strategies as verbalizing what is being written, planning content, referring to the sources, reading what has been written, reviewing and modifying their own writing, and commenting on the source texts.

Leon and Carretero (1995), in their study, tried to analyze the effect of improving knowledge and the use of text structure as a comprehension strategy on students' reading ability. Their findings show that the use of text structure as a comprehension strategy contributes to: (a) clear superiority in the recall of essential ideas from the text, (b) the decrease of detailed information, and (c) the improved use of the organizational plan in the recall task. Leon and Carretero's (1995) use of text structure as a comprehension strategy and Chung's (2000) finding that logical connectives and paragraph heading improve reading comprehension imply:

1. A combination of logical connectives and paragraph headings aid comprehension at macrostructure level. A combination of microstructure and macrostructure levels means the same as "text structure", and 2. Text structure as a comprehension strategy improves the organizational plan in the recall of the texts. According to Paltridge (2004), in the case of teaching academic writing students can be asked to undertake an analysis of the social and cultural context in which their writings occur, and consider how the various components of the situation in which they are writing, have impacts on what they write and how they write. He thus emphasizes the role of students' familiarity with text structure of different genres.

The analysis might include a discussion of:

- The setting of the text
- The purpose of the text
- The content of the text
- The intended audience for the text, their role and purpose in reading the text
- The relationship between the reader and writer of the text and how this has impact on what they say and how they say it.
- General expectations and conventions for the text, as well as, particular expectations, conventions and requirements of the student's field of study
- The background knowledge, values, and understandings which are assumed they will share with their readers, including what's important to their readers and what's not.

Kubota and Lehner (2004) in their study suggest the use of contrastive rhetoric in order to familiarize students with cultural differences in rhetorical patterns among various languages. The results of study by Henry and Roseberry (1999) indicate that providing students with explicit knowledge of the schematic structure of essay introductions, combined with practical analysis of the genre both in the target language and in the mother tongue, can be beneficial to learners' output in terms of organizing information and in how this information is combined.

In the past two decades, the trend for writing has shifted from the product-oriented approach, which focuses on finished pieces of writing, to the process-oriented approach, in which writing is seen as a recursive process (Cohen, 1990) instead of a linear sequence of activities. Gardner and Johnson (1997) describe writing process as a fluid process created by the writers as they work. They believe that accomplished writers move back and forth between the stages of the process, both consciously and unconsciously. Also, Hyland (2003) mentions that the process approach to teaching writing emphasizes the writer as an independent producer of texts. Teachers according to him, must allow their students time and opportunity to develop their abilities to plan, define a rhetorical problem, and propose and evaluate solutions. Response which is in the form of teacher-student conferences, peer response, audio taped feedback, and reformulation, is crucial in assisting learners to move through the stages of the writing process - organizing source material, planning the purpose and outline, writing the first draft, revising, editing, feedback and writing the final draft. The process approach according to Newkirk (1990) is considered to be a student-centered approach, in which teachers should serve as a fellow writer, reader, coach, and editor. Because of this shift, some scholars emphasized the role of the writer and the actual process of writing (e.g. Raimes, 1991; Zamel, 1984). Some delved into the details of types of feedback, with research ranging from comparing the effect of teacher and peer feedback on writing (e.g. Paulus, 1990), to the study of the comparison of trained and untrained peer response (e.g. Berg, 1999), and to such controversial reviews as Truscott's (1996) who downplayed the importance of teachers' grammar correction.

According to D. Brown (2001), process approach does most of the followings:

- a) Focus on the process of writing that leads to the final written product.
- b) Help students to understand their own composing process.
- c) Help them to understand the process of prewriting, drafting, and rewriting.
- d) Encourage feedback from both teacher and peers.

According to Trupe (2002), effective instruction on the process approach results in better papers. Students who are asked or required to spend more time on a paper in a collaborative environment will think more about their topic, retain more information, and develop more powerful insights.

Holmes (2005) in a study on using process approach to facilitate ESL adult students' planning and production stages of writing found that by giving students interesting and stimulating topics to write about, and by developing tasks in which students have a more genuine purpose to write, students' writing performances will be improved. Providing feedback for revision is perceived as an important feature of the process-approach writing instruction. Storch (2005) chose 23 adult ESL students to investigate the nature of the writing processes evident in the pair talk. Villamil and de Guerrero (1996) found better text exploration and subsequent revisions in college courses using peer feedback. Byrd (1994) found foreign language students' improvements in syntax through peer editing. Studies done by Cohen (1987), Hyland (1990), and Robb et al. (1986) show that peer feedback and teacher feedback are useful. Also, Nunan and Carter (2001) mention that peer-feedback and cooperation and group work are proved to be successful methods and techniques in EFL writing classrooms.

Kim and Kim (2005), in their review, mention that collaborative peer feedback helps learners engage in a discourse community and create an authentic social context for interaction and learning. It also helps learners participate actively in learning. Also, Stanley (2002) in coaching students writers to be effective peer evaluators found that the participants who received coaching demonstrate a greater level of student engagement in the task of evaluation, more productive communication about writing, and clearer guidelines for the revision of draft.

However, a few found less positive results in peer and teacher feedback. Leki (1990) pointed a few problems with peer comment:

- 1) Students pay more attention to surface errors than to semantic or textual ones.
- 2) Peer advice facilitates little revision
- 3) Students find it difficult to decide whether their peers' comments are valid or not.

Paulus (1999) conducted a study on the effect of peer and teacher feedback with eleven international undergraduate students enrolled in a pre- freshman composition course at a public university. The results show that most of the revisions were meaning- preserving changes as defined by Faigley and Witte taxonomy (1981).

Swales (1990) defined genre as a recognized event with a shared public purpose and with communicative intentions manually understood by participants. It is often a highly structured and more or less standardized communicative event with constraints on allowable contributions in terms of their intent, positioning, form and functional value on the part of the participants since writers begin with generating ideas or collecting information relevant to a topic, organizing the ideas and information in a way to meet the readers' expectation (p.19). By Swales' definition (1986), writing is usually governed by conventions and rules. Reppen (2002) reported benefits of genre-based approach to writing in helping fifth-grade students' writing improvements. The results of his study show that by discussing features of different text types students learn the language needed to talk about texts, and begin to understand how and why texts are organized in certain ways. Johns (1999) reported benefits of genre-based approach to writing as well as reading in a university composition class for ESL students in US. Allal, Chanquoy, and Largy (2004) mentioned that integration of genre-based approach and text organization has positive effects on improving students' writing performances and their consciousness of genres and text structures. Lian (2004) considers writing as a social act in which the writer and the audience of the particular text interact with each other. It is thus important for students who are non-native speakers of English to become familiar with the background knowledge of the culture and the discourse expectations of that community by studying about

different genres. Henry and Roseberry (1998) found desirable effects of using genre-based approach to writing for EAP management students to write tourist information texts. The genre-based approach, which emphasizes form, gives access to certain realms of social action (Cope & Kalantzis, 1993). Mustafa (1995) found that formal instruction through a special course on writing term papers plays an important role in raising students' awareness of the macrostructure of this genre. Hyon (2001) offered an EAP reading course based on genre-based approach. The results of his study show that:

1. EAP students were more sensitive to rhetorical features of texts after the course than before it.
2. EAP students can remember genre features learned from the instruction longer.
3. Some long term outcomes of the genre-based approach may be effective, giving student's confidence as they approach reading different texts.

This study aims to investigate the effect of summary writing with structure guidelines on the Iranian EFL college students' rhetorical organization and to examine the impacts of using process approach writing and genre based approach on enhancing EFL college students' general writing performances.

In this study, the following research questions were posed:

1. Does providing genre-based structure guidelines improve EFL students' writing performance?
2. Does providing genre-based structure guidelines improve various aspects of EFL students' writing including content, organization, vocabulary, language use, mechanics, text length, and syntactic complexity
3. Does providing genre-based structure guidelines within process writing instruction improve EFL students' writing performance?
4. Does providing genre-based structure guidelines within process writing instruction improve various aspects of EFL students' writing including content, organization, vocabulary, language use, mechanics, text length, and syntactic complexity?

## **Method**

### **Participants**

The participants were thirty Iranian female undergraduate freshman students majoring in English Literature as a foreign language at their second semester at Al-Zahra University in Tehran. They were from different cities of Iran and therefore of various cultural background. The participants had not attended any writing courses before at the university. They participated in "Study Skills" class every Saturday from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. for eight weeks and took pretest, posttest I, and posttest II and wrote summaries for the given descriptive texts. It is worth mentioning that the researcher taught the class herself. The participants also were divided into two groups, each consisting of 15 students, according to the results of the pretest.

### **Instrumentation**

The instruments used in the present study included: (1) the evaluation form adapted from Heaton (1988), and (2) the quantitative text analysis, which included (a) analysis of the text length and (b) analysis of syntactic complexity (Scott, 1996).

#### **The Evaluation Form**

The evaluation form, an analytical evaluation method, was adopted from Heaton's scheme (1988). It is "a marking scheme which has been carefully drawn up by the examiner or the body of examiners. It consists of an attempt to separate the various features of composition for scoring purposes" (Heaton, 1988). By separating the total score into five categories, the evaluators can avoid being too subjective and being affected by prejudice, fatigue, and carelessness. Thus, the analytical method is "ideally suited to the classroom situation because certain features have been graded separately, and the students are able to see how the particular grades have been obtained" (Heaton, 1988). The evaluation form includes five features, and the total score is 100 points, of which content and organization respectively account for 25 points, vocabulary and language use respectively account for 20 points, and mechanics account for 10 points. Of the five features, content makes up a quarter of the scores because content is usually considered the most important part of writing, while organization also makes up another quarter. Moreover, vocabulary accounts for 20 points because it includes choice, usage, word form, and idiom form, and misuse of vocabulary may cause misinterpretation of texts. Furthermore,

language use accounts for another 20 points because improper pronouns may also cause reader's misinterpretation of texts. And mechanics accounts for only 10 points because improper use of them causes the least misinterpretation. Mechanics is scarcely related to the text structure.

### **The Quantitative Text Analysis**

Text length was measured by calculating the average number of words per text. This was designed to judge whether structure guidelines would help students write compositions with longer texts or not. Syntactic complexity was assessed by sentence length, which was obtained by the average number of the words per sentence in a given text. Analysis of syntactic complexity would provide evidence for whether structure guidelines would contribute to students' ability to write longer sentences or not.

### **Procedure**

This study included two stages, each lasting for four weeks. The first stage included a pretest, three assignments for summary writing, and a posttest. The second stage included the process approach writing instruction plus provision of feedback, two assignments for summary writing, and a posttest.

The first stage lasted for four weeks and the activities conducted included: (a) the Pretest, (b) summary writing, and (c) Posttest I.

At the beginning of the first stage, all the participants took a pretest. They wrote a passage more than 100 words describing a story about themselves, helping them to picture the person they are without using any reference books or dictionaries. Their pretest writings were evaluated and scored by two evaluators based on Heaton's (1988) evaluation form in order to prevent subjectivity in evaluations. The average of two scores on every individual student's writing was considered as her pretest score. All the participants were divided into two groups (the Control Group and the Experimental Group) according to an "S" model. In such a model, the student who scored the highest in the total score was put in the Experimental Group, and the students who scored the second and the third were put in the Control Group. Moreover, the students who scored the fourth and the fifth were put in the Experimental Group. The rest of the students were grouped in the same way.

### **Summary Writing**

After the participants were grouped, they were asked to write summaries on three descriptive texts, which were of different sources. Students in both groups, were requested to hand in their summaries in time. The participants were treated differently: The students in the Experimental Group were given structure guidelines designed according to the textual structure of the texts for summary writing whereas the students in the Control Group were not given any reference. During the first stage, the assignments were graded and then returned to the students without any comments lest the comments should interfere with the effects of summary writing with structure guidelines on students' writing. Because the first stage was merely designed to determine whether or not summary writing improves students' rhetorical organization when structure guidelines are taught alone.

After three assignments had been completed, a posttest was given to all the participants. In the posttest I all the participants were asked to write a passage more than 100 words describing a person whom they know best or was important for them without using any reference books or dictionaries in 40 minutes in class. The results obtained from posttest I were compared to analyze the effects of summary writing with the structure guidelines on students' writing ability in any aspect of writing (Heaton 1988). The presence of differences would imply that students' rhetorical organization would improve through summary writing with instructions on text structure. The second stage also lasted for four weeks. During this period, activities conducted included: (a) the process approach instruction, b) writing exercises and (c) posttest II.

### **The Process Approach Writing Instruction and Summary Writing**

During the second stage, the process approach writing instruction was introduced to both groups in the class according to Hyland (2003). Then the participants were asked to work on a descriptive text and to implement the process approach writing according to the instructions given to them. They also were asked to write summaries for the descriptive text for the week after.

As providing feedback is one of the major activities in the process-approach writing instruction, the students were taught how to give feedback, how to help peers make revisions of the drafts, how to revise, edit, and rewrite. So, each of the participants was asked to choose a partner in her own group for providing feedback. The partner had to be someone who the participant thought would cooperate the best with her. For this, the participants were provided with a

"feedback providing form" and worked together on the given descriptive text. Then they were asked to describe their hometown as draft I, and to provide feedback on draft I for revision, and then they revised draft I according to the feedback provided by the peers. The revisions which served as draft II were handed in for the teacher's feedback. After that, draft II was returned along with teacher's feedback for another revision. This was aimed to familiarize them with the process of revision.

At the end of the second stage, all the participants took Posttest II, in which all the participants were asked to write within 40 minutes in class a passage of more than 100 words describing a place without any reference books or dictionaries. The results obtained from Posttest II were compared to judge whether there were still significant differences in any aspect of writing between the two groups or not. If the participants in the Experimental Group still had significant better performances in any aspect of writing, it could then be inferred that summary writing with structure guidelines could be used as a supplementary tool for the process approach writing instruction in improving students' writing performances.

## **Results**

To find out the effect of summary writing with structure guidelines on EFL college students' rhetorical organization through integrating genre-based and process approach writing instruction, a set of statistical analyses ( Correlation coefficient (Rho) and T-test) was carried out which are presented below.

### **The Results of Spearman Correlation Coefficient between the Two Evaluators in the Posttest I Topic**

Before analyzing any results of the Posttest I Topic, all the scores (the total scores and the individual scores for content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics) given by the two evaluators were tested by Spearman rank - order correlation (Rho) to determine whether there existed a correlation between the two evaluators or not. The results of Spearman Correlation Coefficient between the two evaluators in the Posttest I Topic are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

*The Results of Spearman Correlation Coefficient between the Two Evaluators in the Posttest I Topic*

	Number of the Evaluators	Number of the Participants	Correlation
<b>Content</b>	2	30	.795 *
<b>Organization</b>	2	30	.827 *
<b>Vocabulary</b>	2	30	.659 *
<b>Language Use</b>	2	30	.728 *
<b>Mechanics</b>	2	30	.581 *
<b>Total Scores</b>	2	30	.878 *

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

According to the statistical results, the scores given by the two evaluators were reliable, when  $r = .795$  for content, when  $r = .827$  for organization, when  $r = .659$  for vocabulary, when  $r = .728$  for language use, when  $r = .581$  for mechanics, and when  $r = .878$  for total scores (see Table 1).

The average of the two sets of scores was then calculated and used for further tests. T-test was run to find answers to questions 1 and 2.

### **The Results of T-test on the Total Scores and the Individual Scores of Five Features of Writing in the Posttest I Topic**

In this part, the results related to research questions (1) and (2) will be discussed in detail according to table 2.

Table 2

*The Results of T-test on the Total Scores and the Individual Scores of Five Features of Writing in the Posttest I Topic*

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	P-value
<b>Content</b>	1	15	15.8333	1.86764	-2.910	28	.007*
	2	15	17.9000	2.01955			
<b>Organization</b>	1	15	15.6667	1.70783	-1.961	28	.060**
	2	15	17.3000	2.73731			
<b>Vocabulary</b>	1	15	14.9667	1.18723	-.373	28	.712
	2	15	15.1333	1.26020			

<b>Language Use</b>	1	15	14.3000	1.32017	-1.132	28	.267
	2	15	14.8667	1.42009			
<b>Mechanics</b>	1	15	6.3333	.91937	.591	28	.559
	2	15	6.4333	.93478			
<b>Total Scores</b>	1	15	67.0333	6.12509	-1.736	28	.064**
	2	15	71.3333	7.38402			

Group 1 = the Control Group

Group 2 = the Experimental Group

N = the number of the participant

\* Significant at  $P < .05$

Significant at  $P < .10$ \*\*

The statistic results showed that there was a significant difference in the total score between the Control Group and the Experimental Group, when  $t(q) = -1.736$ ,  $df = 28$ ,  $P = .064^{**}$  (significant at  $P < .10$  level). The difference indicated that the participants in the Experimental Group had better performances in the total scores in the Posttest I Topic. Thus, summary writing with structure guidelines, designed according to different texts of different genres, made a large contribution to students' writing performances in general (improved rhetorical organization). So, null hypothesis 1 was rejected.

Also the results showed that there was a significant difference in content, when  $t(q) = -2.910$ ,  $df = 28$ ,  $P = .007^*$  (significant at  $P < .05$  level). This significant difference between the participants' performances showed that genre based structure guidelines did contribute to better performances in content. Furthermore, there was a significant difference in organization, when  $t(q) = -1.961$ ,  $df = 28$ ,  $P = .060^{**}$  (significant at  $P < .10$  level). This significant difference between the participants' performances showed that summary writing with structure guidelines did help students to achieve better organization in writing. In the statistical results related to vocabulary, no significant difference between the participants in the two groups was found, when  $t(q) = -.373$ ,  $df = 28$ ,  $P = .712$ . The results showed that the students who had four weeks practice of summary writing with structure guidelines did not have better performances in choosing words and idioms than the students who did not have the help of structure guidelines, even though the former had better performances in content and organization. The results related to language use showed that there was no significant difference between the participants in the

Experimental Group and the participants in the Control Group (see Table 2) when  $t(q) = -1.132$ ,  $df = 28$ ,  $P = .267$ . So, summary writing with structure guidelines did not contribute to better performances in language use. The results related to mechanics showed that there was no significant difference between the participants in the Experimental Group and the participants in the Control Group (see Table 2) when  $t(q) = .591$ ,  $df = 28$ ,  $P = .559$ . So, summary writing with structure guidelines did not contribute to better performances in mechanics.

### **The Results of T-test on the Quantitative Text Analysis of the Posttest I Topic**

Table 3 shows the results of quantitative text analysis.

Table 3

*The Results of T-test on the Quantitative Text Analysis of the Posttest I Topic*

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	P-value
<b>Text Length</b>	1	15	166.80	42.648	-.837	28	.410
	2	15	188.07	88.690			
<b>Sentence Length</b>	1	15	12.5060	3.28643	-.608	28	.548
	2	15	13.1920	2.8879			

Group 1 = the Control Group

Group 2 = the Experimental Group

N = the number of the participant

\* Significant at  $P < .05$

Significant at  $P < .10^{**}$

In the statistical results related to text length, no significant difference between the participants in the two groups was found, when  $t(q) = -.837$ ,  $df = 28$ ,  $P = .410$ . The results showed that the students who had four weeks practice of summary writing with structure guidelines did not write longer texts.

In the statistical results related to sentence length, no significant difference between the participants in the two groups was found, when  $t(q) = -.608$ ,  $df = 28$ ,  $P = .548$ . The results showed that the students who had four weeks practice of summary writing with structure guidelines did not write longer sentence.

### **The Results of Spearman Correlation Coefficient between the Two Evaluators in the Posttest II Topic**

Before analyzing any results of the Posttest II Topic, all the scores (the total scores and the individual scores for content, organization,

vocabulary, language use, and mechanics) given by the two evaluators were tested by Spearman rank - order correlation (Rho) to determine whether there was a correlation between the two evaluators. The results of Spearman Correlation Coefficient between the two evaluators in the Posttest II Topic are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

*The Results of Spearman Correlation Coefficient between the in the Posttest II Topic*

	<b>Number of the Evaluators</b>	<b>Number of the Participants</b>	<b>Correlation</b>
<b>Content</b>	2	30	.790 *
<b>Organization</b>	2	30	.858 *
<b>Vocabulary</b>	2	30	.719 *
<b>Language Use</b>	2	30	.612 *
<b>Mechanics</b>	2	30	.555 *
<b>Total Scores</b>	2	30	.903 *

\* Correlation is significant at 0.01 level

According to the statistical results, the scores given by the two evaluators were reliable, when  $r = .790$  for content, when  $r = .858$  for organization, when  $r = .719$  for vocabulary, when  $r = .612$  for language use, when  $r = .555$  for mechanics, and when  $r = .903$  for total scores (see Table 4). The average of the two sets of scores was then calculated and used for further tests. T-test was run to determine whether there was any significant differences between the Control Group and the Experimental Group in the total scores and the individual scores of the five features of writing after the implementation of process approach writing instruction for four weeks.

#### **The Results of T-test on the Total Scores and the Individual Scores of Five Features of Writing in the Posttest II Topic**

In this part, the results related to research questions (3) and (4) will be discussed in detail according to table 5.

Table 5  
*The Results of T-test on the Total Scores and the Individual Scores of Five Features of Writing in the Posttest II Topic*

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	P-value
<b>Content</b>	1	15	16.4667	1.68466	-2.502	28	.018*
	2	15	18.2333	2.15362			
<b>Organization</b>	1	15	15.9667	1.86573	-2.456	28	.021*
	2	15	18.1333	2.86273			
<b>Vocabulary</b>	1	15	15.0667	1.38701	-.640	28	.528
	2	15	15.4000	1.46629			
<b>Language Use</b>	1	15	14.8333	1.02933	-1.767	28	.088**
	2	15	15.6333	1.42009			
<b>Mechanics</b>	1	15	6.5000	.90633	.000	28	1.000
	2	15	6.5000	.84515			
<b>Total Scores</b>	1	15	68.9000	5.71714	-1.971	28	.049*
	2	15	73.8667	7.91126			

Group 1 = the Control Group

Group 2 = the Experimental Group

N = the number of the participant

\* Significant at  $P < .05$

Significant at  $P < .10^{**}$

Table 5 shows that there exists a significant difference in total scores between the Control Group and the Experimental Group, when  $t(q) = -1.971$ ,  $df = 28$ ,  $P = .049^*$  (significant at  $P < .05$  level) for the total scores. The results indicated that the students who wrote summaries with structure guidelines still had better general writing performances (improved rhetorical organization) after the implementation of process approach writing for four weeks. So, null hypothesis 2 was also rejected.

According to the results shown in Table 5, there still existed a significant difference in content, when  $t(q) = -2.502$ ,  $df = 28$ ,  $P = .018^*$  (significant at  $P < .05$  level). Thus, the results indicated that structure guidelines still did make a significant impact on the students' writing content after the implementation of process approach writing for four weeks. Also there still existed a significant difference in organization, when  $t(q) = -2.456$ ,  $df = 28$ ,  $P = .021^*$  (significant at  $P < .05$  level). Thus, the results indicated that structure guidelines still did make a significant impact on the students' writing organization after the implementation of process approach writing for four weeks. Furthermore the

results showed that no significant difference was found in vocabulary use, when  $t(q) = -.640$ ,  $df = 28$ ,  $P = .528$ . The results indicated that structure guidelines did not make any significant impact on the vocabulary of the students' writing after the implementation of process approach writing for four weeks. Accordingly there still existed a significant difference in language use, when  $t(q) = -1.767$ ,  $df = 28$ ,  $P = .088^{**}$  (significant at  $P < .10$  level). Thus, the results indicated that structure guidelines still did make a significant impact on the students' language use after the implementation of process approach writing for four weeks. And no significant difference was found in mechanics, when  $t(q) = .000$ ,  $df = 28$ ,  $P = 1.000$ . The results indicated that structure guidelines did not make any significant impact on the mechanics of the students' writing after the implementation of process approach writing for four weeks. The results of t-test on the Posttest II Topic indicated that students in the Experimental Group had better performances in content, organization, and language use.

### **The Results of T-test on the Quantitative Text Analysis of the Posttest II Topic**

Table 6 indicates the results of quantitative text analysis of the posttest II.

Table 6

*The Results of T-test on the Quantitative Text Analysis of the Posttest II Topic*

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	P-value
<b>Text Length</b>	1	15	182.07	42.145	-.973	28	.339
	2	15	204.47	78.545			
<b>Sentence Length</b>	1	15	12.7380	3.89471	-2.493	28	.019*
	2	15	15.8133	2.76608			

Group 1 = the Control Group

Group 2 = the Experimental Group

N = the number of the participant

\* Significant at  $P < .05$

Significant at  $P < .10^{**}$

The results of Table 6 show that no significant difference was found in text length, when  $t(q) = -.973$ ,  $df = 28$ ,  $P = .339$ . The results indicated that structure guidelines did not make any significant impact on the text length of the students' writing after the implementation of process approach writing for four weeks.

The results also show that there was significant difference in sentence length, when  $t(q) = -2.493$ ,  $df = 28$ ,  $P = .019^*$  (significant at  $P < .05$  level). The results indicated that structure guidelines did make significant impact on the sentence length of the students' writing after the implementation of process approach writing for four weeks and they could write complex and longer sentences.

### **Discussion**

Some findings of other researchers support this study. They are as follow: Allison, Berry and Lewkowicz (1995) explored the writing /reading connection in EAP classes through the effects of mediating tasks, such as group discussions, or comprehension exercises, finding that summary writing improves rhetorical knowledge and improved rhetorical knowledge helps learners comprehend reading material and retain knowledge longer since summary writing is the process of close and critical interpretation and evaluation of the text.

Leon and Carretero (1995), in their study, tried to analyze the effect of improving knowledge and the use of text structure as a comprehension strategy on students' reading ability. Their findings show that the use of text structure as a comprehension strategy contributes to: (a) clear superiority in the recall of essential ideas from the text, (b) the decrease of detailed information, and (c) the improved use of the organizational plan in the recall task.

Holmes (2005) in a study on using process approach to facilitate ESL adult students' planning and production stages of writing found that by giving students interesting and stimulating topics to write about, and by developing tasks in which students have a more genuine purpose to write, students' writing performances will be improved. Also, Byrd (1994) found foreign language students' improvements in syntax through peer editing.

Reppen (2002) reported benefits of genre-based approach to writing in helping fifth-grade students' writing improvements. The results of his study show that by discussing features of different text types students learn the language needed to talk about texts, and begin to understand how and why texts are organized in certain ways. Johns (1999) reported benefits of genre-based approach to writing as well as reading in a university composition class for ESL students in US.

The conclusions are as follows: first, according to the results obtained from the t-test on the total scores and the five features of writing in the Posttest I, the participants in the Experimental Group had significantly better performances in their total scores in writing summaries for texts of descriptive genre. Thus, the results implied that students benefited from summary writing with structure guidelines designed according to the text structure or organization of the texts of descriptive genre. To determine precisely which of the five features of writing the participants had improved, I went a step further to analyze the differences in the scores in each of the five features. Second, the results of the Posttest I showed that there was a significant difference in content. This significant difference in content between the two groups' performances indicated that summary writing with structure guidelines designed according to the text structure or organization of the texts of descriptive genre also contributed to better performances in content. Moreover, the results of the Posttest II showed that there was a significant difference in content. This significant difference in content between the two groups' performances, after the implementation of process approach instruction, indicated that summary writing with structure guidelines designed according to the text structure or organization of the texts of descriptive genre contributed to better performances in content when structure guidelines were used as a supplementary tool to the process approach writing instruction. Third, the results showed that there were significant differences in organization in both the Posttest I and Posttest II. Thus, structure guidelines could be used as a supplementary tool to the process approach writing instruction, and these in turn contribute to better organization in students' writings. Fourth, in the statistical results related to vocabulary, no significant difference between the students' performances was found either in the Posttest I or the Posttest II. The results suggested that structure guidelines did not help students to perform better after 8 weeks (4 weeks in the first stage and 4 weeks in the second stage) in this feature. Fifth, the results related to the language use showed that in the Posttest I, there were no significant differences between the students in the two groups in this feature. So, structure guidelines did not help students have better command of language use. But the results related to this feature in the posttest II showed that there was a significant difference between the students in the two groups after the implementation of

the process approach writing instruction. It can be concluded that when structure guidelines were used as a supplementary tool to the process approach, students had better command of language use. Sixth, judging from the t-tests on the total scores and the scores of five features of writing in Posttest I and Posttest II, there was no significant difference in mechanics in the two groups. Thus, the results indicated that structure guidelines did not help students to perform better in mechanics even after the implementation of the process approach writing. Seventh, the results related to the quantitative text analysis suggested that there was no significant difference in text length in either of the Posttests. The results suggested that the use of structure guidelines was of no help to students to write longer texts after 8 weeks (4 weeks in the first stage and 4 weeks in the second stage). Eighth, the results of t-test related to the syntactic complexity showed that there was no significant difference between the two groups in Posttest I, but considering Posttest II there was significant difference between the two groups. That is the students in the Experimental group wrote summaries with longer sentences after the implementation of the process approach. It can be concluded that when structure guidelines were used as a supplementary tool to the process approach, it did help students to write longer and complex sentences.

From the discussion of the results, it is found that structure guidelines are useful to improve students' rhetorical knowledge of textual organization. Improved rhetorical knowledge of textual organization with the aid of structure guidelines help students have better performances in general and in some aspect of writing such as content, organization, language use and syntactic complexity (writing longer and complex sentences), whether these guidelines are used alone or as a supplementary tool to the process approach writing instruction.

Thus, these pedagogical implications can be made:

- 1) Teachers can teach genre-based approach writing to their students and by this they can help them be aware of the rhetorical organization of different genres.
- 2) Teachers can use process approach writing instruction and help students learn peer editing and writing process. In this way they will write compositions with rich content.
- 3) Writing summaries for texts of different genres help students to improve their reading comprehension. Students will retain what they

have learnt from reading texts and convey these understanding to writing compositions. It is suggested that teachers ask students to write summaries for texts of different genres.

- 4) Students can improve content and organization of their writing with the aid of structure guidelines designed according to the structural organization of assigned reading texts. Thus, such guidelines help instructors improve their tutorial instruction by enriching writing content. Also, these guidelines help students achieve better organization and alleviate the teachers' workload by avoiding repetitive giving feedback on improper writing organization.
- 5) To sum up, the genre-based approach can be integrated into the process approach; at least, it can be adopted as a supplementary approach in writing instruction by providing students with structure guidelines for summary writing prior to the implementation of the process approach. In other words, the genre-based approach and the process approach can be complementary instead of being mutually exclusive, if they are properly implemented by preventing the genre-based approach from being teacher- centered and authoritative.

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