

Abstract

This study attempts to show the writing progress of Burmese migrant worker students' writings before and after they were taught to write journal entries and book reviews using a genre framework based on Systemic Functional Linguistics.(1994). The journal entries promoted writing practice and added motivation by encouraging the writing of the students' personal stories, while the reviews of simplified novels (graded readers) developed the linguistic knowledge of the book review as a common text type. The specific teaching of the framework of recounts was intended to develop the students' ability to write their stories in their journals. Likewise, teaching the students to understand narrative structure and its language was intended to develop their ability to choose the major stages of a narrative to summarize and focus on the main elements that are included in it.

The main objective of the research was to promote the development of their writing, focusing on the way they produced the text organization and language features of the text types journal and book review. The data of this study is in the form of 100 each of journal entries and book reviews. 10 students wrote 10 each, and their writings are analyzed based on a framework adapted from Derewianka (1990).

The findings indicate how the text organization and language features in the genre framework the students developed when they wrote the journal entries and book reviews. The five language features in the SFL genre framework are specific participants; verb tense; action verbs in recount genre, and a variety of verb processes in the narrative genre; linking items to do with time; and pronouns.

In the journal entries, the results show that among those five language features, some nouns and pronouns are used alternatively in an appropriate way, but some are used redundantly in the journal entries. Thematic variety, including the use of marked theme, increases somewhat after the recount instruction. The use of action verbs (Material Process) is the most significant evidence of the students' development in their journals. Most students used more action verbs after instruction than beforehand and the appropriateness also improved. After getting the genre instruction, most students got a better awareness of past tense and use of linking items to do with time. The students could exhibit their skill with them more than beforehand.

In the book reviews, students were able to summarize the major stages of the story more precisely, drawing on awareness of narrative structure. However, because of the limited time available and the heavy writing schedule the course entailed, the students may not have developed their writing as much as they otherwise would have. The great benefit to them was in terms of getting two kinds of intense writing practice, and the chance to put their often remarkable stories into words.

Based on giving a different set of instructions to the students, recommendations are made for further research which would lead to a different output.