

## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

#### 1.1 The Research Problem

This study is anchored in a field of Applied Linguistics – foreign language learning. Within this area, a recurring theme is the need to help English as a foreign language (EFL)<sup>1</sup> learners to enhance their academic literacy; that is, master the reading and writing skills that are essential in academic settings. The development of EFL literacy has been of concern to applied linguists for the past fifty years. As a result, a number of models of reading and approaches to writing have been developed and the relationships between these skills have been studied.

Attempting a definition of literacy is a difficult task. Traditionally, literacy has meant the ability to read and write but the term is more inclusive. First, it involves an awareness of how these two skills interact. In addition, although becoming literate demands basic abilities, the surface-level decoding skills needed to understand texts and the encoding skills required to produce them are hardly enough. Becoming literate in the fullest sense means being able to construct meaning through texts and communicate it in specific social contexts (Johns, 1997). As can be seen, the definition of what it means to be literate has evolved. Therefore, literacy should be taught and learnt not only in terms of low-level reading and writing skills but also in terms of broader generic knowledge that involves the ability to interpret, critically evaluate, and produce texts which are appropriate in certain contexts. Being literate in today's world is an increasingly complex undertaking, and learning to read and write in a foreign language is probably one of the most difficult challenges students face. This reveals the pivotal role higher education plays in enabling students to enhance their academic reading and writing abilities with appropriate instructional support.

Nowadays, academic literacy is necessary for improving one's educational and professional opportunities. In fact, Williams and Snipper (1990) define it as:

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<sup>1</sup> In this study, the terms English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL) are used interchangeably. I have adopted the American practice of using ESL to cover situations that may elsewhere be divided into ESL and EFL. Similarly, the term L2 (second language) is used subsuming second and foreign language.

the ability to process and interact with a body of artifacts and ideas preserved within the specific domains of educational institutions. It is a set of behaviours peculiar to the formally educated. Academic literacy reflects the notion that literate people are those who read (...) the very sorts of texts college students face (...) It reflects the notion that they can also write about these texts in some fashion. (p. 8)

Academically literate individuals are then those who can work effectively with texts interpreting the information gained from reading, evaluating it and eventually writing about it. Without this ability to read and write academic texts, students are at a disadvantage in educational settings. According to Pugh, Pawan and Antommarchi (2000), “individuals with poor literacy skills face formidable barriers to success, beginning with their postsecondary education.” (p. 25). In fact, although people learn to read and write at primary school and are permanently surrounded by texts belonging to different genres, there is general dissatisfaction among educators with students’ literacy skills since many learners are unable to go beyond the use of reading and writing as mere decoding and encoding skills and achieve the generic knowledge needed for academic success. Several authors (Grabe, 1986; Johns, 1981; Ostler, 1980) stress that students of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) are weak in essential literacy skills. This is confirmed by studies of university students’ literacy reported by Vardi and Bailey (2006), which indicate that these students have limited capacity to incorporate information from the texts they read in the texts they write and organise them following the patterns of the genre and discipline in question. Indeed, learners are often underprepared for the academic literacy requirements that typically characterise university-level coursework. This inadequate preparation may stem from the lack or inefficient teaching of academic literacy skills and genres at secondary school level.

In this respect, various scholars point out the marked divergences between the reading and writing skills promoted at secondary school and those required at university (Carlino, 2006; Flower, 1990; Hjortshoj, 2001). At secondary school, students read and write to carry out tasks that are different from the type of reflective reading and writing that they need in order to learn at university. Besides, the literacy skills developed at school are seldom focused on the academic genres that students need so as to continue their academic studies. Cassany (1999) published an ethnographic study of the reading and writing tasks that secondary school students usually undertake. The results showed that the most frequent practices are taking notes, answering comprehension questions and writing monographs. Note-taking includes both literal copy of the teacher’s

dictation and reformulation of explanations – mechanical tasks that can be carried out without attending to content. Other usual tasks are responding to questions about background reading material in tests and monographs. This author explains that students develop a technique by means of which they can answer reading comprehension questions without actually understanding the content of texts because some of these questions bear a syntactic relationship with a fragment of the text. Therefore, they only need to remember or locate the information that constitutes the answer in the source text, and copy it without reformulating it. In general, literacy practices often consist in reading and reproducing information verbatim in subsequent writing tasks. These practices discourage reading comprehension and autonomous writing. The criticism levelled at the secondary school system that literacy is not taught beyond a basic level is a constant in the literature in this field:

Traditionally, written language has been treated as separate from its real and functional uses (...) In spaces where it has a clear functional utility – the activities of study and transmission of knowledge in different subjects – it is normally treated as an instrument that is already known and is rarely an object of study in itself. From this it can be deduced that the school is the place where students have to learn how to write but where they are actually not taught how to do so. (Milian, Guasch & Camps, 1991 as cited in Ruiz Flores, 2009, p. 12)<sup>2</sup>

These literacy problems are exacerbated at university since undergraduate studies pose novel intellectual challenges to students, who are exposed both to new knowledge and new ways of reflecting about it (Vardi & Bailey, 2006). These demands are intensified by the additional need to show comprehension through writing. Students not only face complex material from the conceptual point of view, but also have to express new notions using academic writing and the generic conventions required by the university and their discipline. When students have to meet these literacy requirements, which represent a greater effort than those at secondary school, it is not unusual for them to experience severe difficulties, which become even more serious when reading and writing in a foreign language.

At university, students read and write to broaden their knowledge and show that they have learnt the content of their discipline. In fact, the transmission of knowledge in higher education relies on literacy as a privileged vehicle (Rosales & Vázquez, 2006). Reading and writing to learn require critically evaluating, synthesising and integrating

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<sup>2</sup> My translation.

information from multiple sources and from one's background knowledge into the processes of text comprehension and production. In order to succeed in these tasks, which are commonly carried out in academic settings, students not only have to understand texts but also have to relate them to existing knowledge and arrive at a synthesis of information based on their own ideas and those in their readings. The fact that students at university read and write to learn falls within the epistemic function of writing. Over the last three decades, there has been a growing interest in a number of issues that, under different labels such as heuristic, epistemic and critical writing, revolve around the role of reading and writing to learn. The relevance of this function of literacy to the teaching and learning process at university is reflected in studies carried out in the US since the 80s and represented in the movements *Writing across the Curriculum* (Bazerman, Little, Bethel, Chavkin, Fouquette & Garufis, 2005) and *Writing in the Disciplines* (Monroe, 2003), which emphasise reading-to-write and writing to learn tasks. In these movements, there is a recursive relationship between reading, writing and thinking. As a matter of fact, a number of authors (Emig, 1977; Flower, 1979; McGinley & Tierney, 1989; Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1985) have pointed out this epistemic potential of writing and its power to influence the elaboration of knowledge. For instance, McGinley and Tierney (1989) note that when students combine reading and writing tasks, learning is enhanced as "they traverse the topical landscape" (p. 250); that is, they approach the topic by means of several reading and writing assignments and form a synthesis of the terrain. In fact, writing a specific text in a particular social context seems to trigger, as Scardamalia and Bereiter (1985) put it, the reorganisation of the student's conceptual structures.

When students read and write to learn at university, they approach different genres in a new context. Academic genres are usually difficult for students because they have seldom been required to read or write them; consequently, they are unaware of their structure and features. Indeed, academic literacy practices are often in stark contrast with learners' usual reading and writing practices. Bartholomae (1986) highlights the dilemma faced by students when they attempt to read and write in academic contexts:

Every time a student sits to write [or read] for us, he has to invent the university for the occasion (...) He has to learn to speak our language, (...) to try on the particular ways of knowing, selecting, evaluating, reporting, concluding, arguing that define the discourse of our community (...) where the rules governing (...)

the development of an argument are both distinct, and even to the professional, mysterious. (p. 4)

Achieving academic literacy, therefore, requires not only that students acquire new knowledge specific to their discipline, but also that they develop appropriate academic reading and writing skills to understand and produce that knowledge. Underlying most university-level reading and writing tasks are the assumptions that learners can read and comprehend texts, summarise them and respond to them in writing. Nevertheless, problems are to be expected as students struggle with these new demands of the university. Learners' literacy problems are often perceived as a failure of the secondary school system that develops limited literacy emphasising literal comprehension and reproduction of the information in texts instead of transformation (Peronard Thierry, 1997). Even though this may be true, it is important to bear in mind that the genres required at university are hardly touched upon in the secondary school context. Thus, academic literacy is not the continuation of what students should have learnt at previous levels but involves new abilities that require explicit instruction (Carlino, 2006). Although it is essential that the university generates the conditions for learners to acquire academic literacy skills, there is a tendency to expect them to read and write certain genres that are not taught explicitly, i.e. through systematic instruction, because it is assumed that it is not necessary to do so at university. This situation can be described as *the institutional practice of mystery*, a phrase coined by Lillis (1999, p. 127) to refer to what universities often assume students are able to do without instruction.

Even though, since the 1990s, the implications of reading and writing academic texts have started to gain prominence outside the English-speaking world, teaching academic literacy at Argentinian universities is much more recent than in Anglo-American contexts. In our educational settings, academic literacy instruction has scarce systematisation, resources and coverage; it is fostered by the need to keep students within the education system and the commitment of teachers, whose actions usually focus on the transition from secondary school to university and from undergraduate to postgraduate courses in which the academic literacy requirements change (Carlino, 2006). In spite of the relative importance that academic literacy has received, for university-level students in Argentina, EFL reading and writing are vital to academic success as English plays a leading role in enabling access to postsecondary institutions,

and continues to spread as the major world language for the dissemination of research, science and technology. In fact, EFL literacy has an important function within educational institutions, both nationally and internationally (Kern, 2009). On the one hand, an informal survey of university curricula reveals that EFL reading and writing scores affect decisions on student progress in most degree programmes in Argentina. On the other hand, minimum literacy scores on international language proficiency tests (i.e. TOEFL, GRE, IELTS, CPE) are used by many universities abroad for admission. Such tests are powerful gate-keepers since they decide whether students will be allowed to study in English-speaking countries and also in places where English is not the official language but is used as the language of instruction. In addition, because so much academic communication is established through the medium of English, EFL academic literacy plays an important role to help students keep up with the latest developments in their discipline, and to ensure that their own academic work is available to their colleagues. If they intend to publish for an international academic community, they have to write in English, the language of the most prestigious journals. This generates the motivation to enhance university students' EFL academic literacy so that they can understand and produce academic texts.

In conclusion, the adaptation to the new demands of the university can be facilitated if its literacy practices are made explicit. It seems vital for students to become aware of the conventions that govern EFL academic literacy, the social contexts in which particular academic genres are used, and the specific purposes they serve. To achieve this, genre theory and research highlight the value of analysing genres as a common classroom practice. In this respect, Hyland (2007) points out that genre-based instruction "allows writing teachers to identify the kinds of texts that students will have to write in their target occupational, academic or social contexts and to organise their courses to meet these needs." (p. 5). In particular, genre-based pedagogies seem to be very promising in EFL academic contexts as they increase students' knowledge of academic writing and genre conventions. The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of genre-based instruction on the process of teaching summary-response writing in order to contribute to enhancing EFL academic literacy in the context of an English Language course at an Argentinian university.

## 1.2 Rationale

In this context, academic literacy is fundamental because the learners that participate in this investigation are pursuing degree programmes to become EFL teachers, licentiates and translators. I have chosen to carry out this study in this particular setting since I consider that academic reading and writing skills are a challenge for EFL teachers and students alike. My interest in this topic started in my undergraduate days, has developed out of my experience as a teacher over the past ten years, and continues to grow as I attempt to enhance students' EFL academic literacy.

My motivations for undertaking this research study are twofold. First, I am interested in literacy instruction and firmly believe that it is a powerful tool to succeed in academic and professional contexts. Second, this is, in my view, one of the areas in which students have most difficulties and, as a consequence, the one they often fail in examinations. Generally, low-performing students evidence lack of reading and writing skills which might stem, among other things, from lack of explicit instruction.

The most prevailing conception that justifies not teaching literacy explicitly at university holds that reading and writing involve basic, monologic skills, transferable to any context and subject to universal conventions (Carlino, 2006). Hence, it is not necessary to learn how to read or write at university as they entail previously acquired abilities. In addition, university students are commonly believed to be autonomous because they are adults. Therefore, literacy is often implicitly understood to improve. As a result, there is a mistaken but widely spread assumption that writing develops from reading without systematic instruction. Students are given texts to read and expected to transfer their knowledge and skills to new situations, i.e. writing. This accounts for the fact that they are required to understand and produce academic genres but not taught how to do so except through remedial work (Carlino, 2006). In EFL contexts, this reflects the commonly held view that L1 literacy skills transfer automatically to the L2, which usually happens with expert readers and writers. However, research reveals that this is not the case with novice learners (Grabe & Stoller, 2002).

To interpret the difficulties involved in achieving an acceptable level of academic literacy, it is necessary to take into account the difference between *natural* and *problematic abilities* and the notions of *expert* and *novice competence* (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987). Natural abilities are acquired without systematic instruction whereas problematic abilities, for instance, academic writing, can only be learnt by

means of explicit teaching. As regards the notions of expert and novice competence, during the writing process, experts work at two levels, a conceptual level and a linguistic level. Information is first organised into a hierarchy and then translated into written language. Consequently, expert writers produce texts according to the *knowledge-transforming model*; in contrast, novice writers do not work at the conceptual level and, as a result, write according to the *knowledge-telling model* (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987). In the first model, the interaction between ideas (what to say) and discursive forms (how to say it) produces changes in subjects' knowledge. In the second model, this does not happen as texts are written without planning. Writers elaborate a mental representation of the task but, instead of following problem-solving processes, they identify the topic, evaluate the content in their memory and write. This does not require planning since the natural solution to the problem is the reproduction of available knowledge. Depending on their cognitive maturity, subjects plan their writing on the basis of problem-solving procedures and follow the knowledge-transforming model or merely follow the knowledge-telling model. The former reveals the cognitive structure of mature writers whereas the latter reveals that of novice writers who do not take into account the task or the audience. These authors conclude that, in many school contexts, texts are written following the knowledge-telling model and, therefore, students are unable to transform their knowledge, which limits their capacity to learn. In fact, many learners focus on the superficial features of texts and evidence minimal intellectual engagement with the texts they read and write resorting to simplified strategies without taking into account the purpose of the text or the context. As Tierney and Pearson (1994) suggest, they "perceive the task (...) to be detached from self and tied to a text." (p. 508). Thus, their ability to connect reading and writing is impaired. Indeed, these students find it difficult to integrate information from background reading texts with their prior knowledge, and to transfer ideas from texts to other situations, e.g. their academic writing in which they resort to copying as the principal method of text integration. Evidently, such learners are seldom able to summarise the texts they read properly, let alone respond to them critically. They employ literal copy as the main strategy to produce a written summary and are limited in their attempts to give a critical response to texts. Lacking these reading comprehension and writing skills is a disadvantage at university, where students are expected to be proficient readers and writers of academic genres.



The English Language IV students participating in this study are at an advanced level of language proficiency and should have displayed expert competence, but faced similar obstacles to novice learners when writing summary-responses since they failed to summarise texts appropriately and respond to them critically. This study aimed to tackle that problem. In short, these students' need to develop EFL literacy skills in an academic context and receive explicit teaching served as the basis for the present study.

In this investigation, I have advocated the least frequent conception that, according to Carlino (2006), justifies teaching literacy explicitly at university as it acknowledges that reading and writing are not universal but socially situated practices belonging to particular discourse communities that use specific genres. They are not monologic skills but dialogic activities that take into account the text, and the reader's and writer's roles in certain contexts. This conception holds that it is necessary to teach academic literacy because the skills of reading and writing at university differ from those acquired during previous schooling and cannot be learnt spontaneously. Therefore, it is necessary to teach students how to read and write as expected at university because this is a new discourse community in which genres change. In my view, reading and writing are epistemic tools to construct knowledge in different disciplines, and students need explicit instruction in the literacy practices with which their discipline elaborates knowledge to be able to enter the academic community.

### **1.3 Content of the Chapters**

In this first chapter, I have introduced the research problem addressed by the present study and have also referred to the motivations for undertaking it. I will now outline the content of the following chapters. In the second chapter, I will present the theoretical framework that this study is based on and a review of previous research connected with the topic of this investigation. In the third chapter, I will describe the participants in this study; the materials used; and the piloting, data collection and analysis procedures. In the fourth chapter, I will present the outcome of this study together with a discussion of the results obtained. In the last chapter, I will conclude the study with a summary of the research findings and will review the research question, hypotheses and objectives to assess their fulfilment. Then, I will present the pedagogical implications that derive from this study, its limitations, some avenues for further research, and final considerations.

## CHAPTER 2

### Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter is to present the theoretical framework within which this study has been conceived and a review of the literature related to the topic. This section starts by defining the term literacy and explaining its scope. Theories of literacy influence how reading and writing are taught and learnt. Therefore, it is important to explore such theories and the pedagogies that stem from them. The theoretical framework for this investigation is grounded on the integrated-skills approach to the teaching of EFL and theories of literacy instruction, namely, models of reading and approaches to writing, in particular, on genre-based literacy instruction. The theoretical underpinnings presented below are followed by a review of the literature, the objectives and the research question of this study.

#### 2.1 Theoretical Framework

##### 2.1.1 Definition of Literacy

Literacy is commonly viewed as the ability to read and write. Because conceptions of literacy influence the way reading and writing are taught, it is essential to understand that it is more than the set of skills involved in decoding and encoding words. It also involves an awareness of how reading and writing interact, and are used as tools to learn and construct knowledge in particular social contexts. In fact, as suggested by its etymological link to the Latin *littera* (letter), literacy implies the mastery of a writing system and its conventions. However, *litteratus*, its root, refers to learnedness, so literacy conveys a broader scope than reading and writing alone since it also entails learning. It is therefore possible, as Kern (2009) suggests, to operationally define literacy not only from a linguistic, but also from a cognitive and even a social perspective.

From a linguistic perspective, literacy involves the ability to decode and encode words, that is, to recognise and produce them. It implies knowledge of the semantic, syntactic and morphological rules that determine how words can be combined within and between sentences, into paragraphs and larger units of discourse. From this perspective, especially at the lower levels of foreign language learning, literacy

instruction is conceived as text-centric, and is typically focused on accuracy (knowledge of grammar and mechanics). The assumption that literacy depends on the mastery of the linguistic code has treated meaning as an intrinsic property of texts and disregarded the interpretive dimensions of communication; this separation between teaching literacy in terms of linguistic rules and teaching it as a means communication is represented in language programmes that place textual analysis and interpretation at opposite ends of the curriculum (Kern, 2009). While the kind of literacy taught in introductory courses is concerned with textual description, the type taught at advanced levels is more critical. This shift in emphasis may account for the problems of articulation between beginning and advanced level literacy practices.

From a cognitive perspective, reading and writing are thinking processes through which students relate words to their knowledge of language, texts and content in order to create meaning. Even the most basic acts of communication require interpretation; it is in this sphere that the cognitive dimension of literacy plays an important role (Kern, 2009). Indeed, both reading and writing can be seen as acts of meaning construction in which individuals make connections between textual elements and their prior knowledge (Tierney & Pearson, 1983). This takes us beyond literacy as a simple process of decoding, encoding and interpreting texts and leads to a conception of literacy as a process of constructing knowledge in particular social contexts.

From a social perspective, literacy entails the relationships between readers, writers, texts and their contexts. Considering literacy in its contexts of use enables us to see reading and writing as complementary dimensions of written communication (Kern, 2009). This perspective takes a broader view of communication in which meaning is not only a matter of encoding, decoding and interpreting texts, but depends on the perception of linguistic, cognitive and social relations. Such an orientation to literacy instruction engages learners in reading and writing as meaningful acts of communication and sensitises them to the relationships between texts and their social contexts. This approach to literacy developed in languages for specific purposes programmes in the 1970s and 1980s, and laid the foundations for teaching literacy as communication; what has now been added is a greater focus on its sociocultural and critical dimensions (Kern, 2009).

When considering the sociocultural perspective, according to Kern (2009), reading and writing are communicative acts in which learners draw on conventions provided by their culture. Texts develop out of an interaction between the writer, the

reader and the sociocultural context because different cultures interpret and produce texts in different ways. As a result, students' native language literacy conventions may not automatically lead them to success in a new language, especially when L2 literacy practices do not match earlier L1 educational contexts. For example, learners who write a text and incorporate sentences recalled verbatim from reading may be accused of plagiarism rather than being acknowledged as operating within the framework of a different scholarly tradition. Similarly, students from educational contexts where texts are seen as the authority may be at a disadvantage in an L2 literacy context in which text information is fallible, and they have to evaluate it and choose from competing interpretations. These learners may encounter difficulties because this implies a break with familiar literacy practices. Consequently, rather than viewing literacy as a single ability transferred from one language to another, the particular contexts in which students can be regarded as literate should be considered (Stoller, 2001). In conclusion, the goals of literacy are not universal but a question of socialisation into particular communities and it is necessary to learn context-specific uses of reading and writing.

Several scholars (Flower, 1994; Gee, 1996; Lea & Street, 1998, 1999; The New London Group, 1996) have criticised mainstream notions of literacy and contributed to this new socially-based conceptualisation. They challenge the linguistic definition of literacy focused on the ability to read and write according to norms. These authors also question the notion of a monolithic and generalisable concept of literacy and favour the idea of multiple literacies that involve the situated practices of using texts to fulfil particular social purposes. In fact, there is no single conception of academic literacy across the disciplines – thus the term *academic literacies*, which implies that reading and writing are shaped by each individual discipline. Building on theories of reading, writing and literacy as social practices (what is now called the New Literacy Studies), Lea and Street (1998, 1999) have argued for a new approach to understanding literacy in academic contexts; they maintain that there are three models of literacy in such contexts: a *study skills* model, an *academic socialisation* model, and an *academic literacies* model. The first model sees literacy as an individual cognitive skill and assumes that students can transfer their knowledge of literacy from one context to another. The second model is concerned with students' acculturation into the discourses used by members of a disciplinary community and presumes that genres are relatively stable and students can reproduce them unproblematically. The third model, academic literacies, is concerned with the institutional nature of knowledge in particular academic

contexts. It views the process of acquiring literacy as involving power relations among people and institutions, and acknowledges the different identities that the participants in the process, namely, teachers and students, take up as academic readers and writers. This model treats reading and writing as practices associated with different communities that vary with social context and culture. This expanded view of literacy involves not only the ability to produce and interpret texts but also an awareness of the relationships between textual conventions and sociocultural contexts, and has important implications for EFL teaching. First, if literacy is a sociocultural construct, then students should focus on the ways in which reading and writing are used in specific contexts. Second, the view that literacy is not a uniform entity but consists in contextually appropriate practices suggests that attention has to be paid to the relations between particular genres and the ways of reading and writing them in a given context.

As regards the critical dimension of literacy, Flower (1990) distinguishes between the basic process of *receptive literacy* and the transforming process of *critical literacy*. This author argues that, sometimes, reading and writing are tools for testing the recall of content and this reproduction of the information in texts leads to receptive literacy, which emphasises the consumption of information. She contrasts this type of literacy with critical literacy, which involves the ability to think about the information in written texts in order to question the writer's assumptions, transform that information and use it for new purposes. At a basic level, literacy means comprehending texts with an emphasis on getting information. By contrast, critical literacy means going beyond understanding texts and adopting a questioning attitude towards what we read and write. Flower differentiates critical thinking, which is not dependent on literacy, from critical literacy by underscoring the contribution of writing. The former is defined by McPeck (1981) as "the skill to engage in an activity with reflective skepticism" (p. 8) whereas the latter involves more than evaluating other people's arguments since it may also entail writing to support one's own. Critical literacy is essential in academic contexts because it is "the means by which students enter the conversation of their disciplines." (Flower, 1990, p. 5). That is to say, it provides access to the practices that the members of the academic community typically use in interpreting and producing texts. This distinction between receptive and critical literacy reflects the need to rethink literacy practices.

An obstacle to critical literacy is *dependence on literalness* (Ruiz Flores, 2009). Academic literacy is related to new concepts whose acquisition is mediated by students'

ability to learn from texts. Constructing meaning from texts on the basis of new concepts requires being able to comprehend and produce texts about such concepts. However, understanding concepts does not necessarily enable students to produce a coherent text about them to show what they have learnt. In view of this, students can either construct meaning on the basis of concepts or reproduce words from a source text in order to carry out a literacy task simulating comprehension of its content but without being concerned about the concepts referred to. According to Ruiz Flores (2009), when students choose the second alternative, they resort to the perceptible part of the sign, the signifier, to hide their deficient access to its imperceptible part, the signified concept. This appropriation of sequences from the source text gives rise to dependence on literalness, which entails “substituting the intellectual use of concepts for the material use of chains of signs that are employed independently of their meaning.”<sup>3</sup> (Ruiz Flores, 2009, p. 20). This is manifested when students produce a text copying fragments from a source text (total dependence on literalness) or combining source text fragments with a text composed by themselves (partial dependence on literalness). This latter type of literalness often gives rise to *anacoluthons* (Ruiz Flores, 2009, p. 9), texts that lack cohesion because different structures have been amalgamated in a way that goes against possible syntactic combinations. Both types of dependence cause problems as literalness “falsifies reading and writing tasks”<sup>4</sup> (Ruiz Flores, 2009, p. 93). In fact, it is possible to consider dependence on literalness as a strategy of text production that originates in response to the problems that students face due to their superficial approach to writing tasks, and the difficulty of writing an autonomous text from sources that contain new information. Unfortunately, detecting the use of this strategy is not always easy. Total dependence on literalness is difficult to identify and dangerous if what the student copies coincides with what the teacher considers the correct answer. In contrast, partial dependence on literalness can be detected more easily because, when combining their writing with fragments from the source text, students break syntactic rules or change the register abruptly. When dependence on literalness goes unnoticed, what the teacher interprets as the appropriate performance in a writing task is, in fact, achieved copying from the source text without any comprehending or composing processes. On the contrary, the student carries out a different process that does not involve the same

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<sup>3</sup> My translation.

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linguistic, cognitive or social resources, and does not mobilise content or genre knowledge. In fact, writing tasks dependent on literalness can be considered *pseudowriting practices* (Ruiz Flores, 2009, p. 8) that do not involve composing and are not useful to learn or assess learning. Such practices entail avoiding reading, understanding and writing, and are some of the most serious problems in tasks that require composing from sources, which are very common in academic settings. If students produce texts dependent on literalness and this is not detected, they can advance within the education system without composing (Ruiz Flores, 2009). This creates some of the difficulties that learners experience to move from basic literacy skills to critical literacy.

While discussions of literacy have tended to be divided into linguistic, cognitive and social dimensions, the expanded notion of literacy requires that these perspectives be addressed weaving together its linguistic, cognitive, sociocultural and critical aspects. If we do so, literacy becomes:

the use of socially-, historically-, and culturally-situated practices of creating and interpreting meaning through texts. It entails at least a tacit awareness of the relationship between textual conventions and their contexts of use and, ideally, the ability to reflect critically on those relationships. Because it is purpose-sensitive, literacy is dynamic – not static – and variable across and within discourse communities and cultures. It draws on a wide range of cognitive abilities, on knowledge of written and spoken language, on knowledge of genres, and on cultural knowledge. (Kern, 2009, p. 16)

One important implication of this definition of literacy is that it involves conventions. The ways in which people read and write texts are not universal but governed by specific social conventions. Another implication is that literacy is not an individual phenomenon but is shared by the members of a community. This leads to the need for students' socialisation into the literacy conventions of a particular discourse community so that they can interact with the texts that characterise it. In fact, Smith (1988) discusses this process as *joining the literacy club* and stresses the need for students to develop a sense of group membership. Along similar lines, Gee (1996) cogently argues that becoming literate means *apprenticeship* in particular ways of interacting with texts. Furthermore, because literacy practices are part of social practices, this author suggests going beyond reading and writing skills and exploring *Discourses*, “ways of behaving, interacting, valuing, thinking, believing, speaking and often reading and writing that are accepted as instantiations of particular roles.” (Gee, 1996, viii). In Gee's view,

individuals cannot be accepted as members of a given group until they have mastered the relevant discourses. Finally, if literacy involves social conventions shared by a community, it also entails critiquing those conventions. Learners need to acquire more than the linguistic, cognitive and social dimensions of literacy. They need to be able not only to interpret and create meaning through texts, but also to critically reflect on how this meaning is constructed.

Becoming literate is then not so much a matter of acquiring reading and writing skills as it is a matter of using literacy as a tool for constructing meaning and learning. Even though it is a linguistic process that relies on knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, textual organisation and conventions, becoming literate involves more than decoding and inscribing words. It is also a cognitive process that entails creating links between our knowledge of textual forms and the interpretation of those forms. However, the text-centric and cognitive views of literacy share limitations as they consider literacy as a product of instruction instead of considering it as a set of processes contingent on social factors (Kern, 2009). Literacy is, in fact, a social practice developed in a particular community. Ideally, it is not a passive process of socialisation into conventions but an active process of critically evaluating the practices into which one is being socialised. These three dimensions of literacy are interdependent. Reading and writing are always embedded in sociocultural contexts and draw on cognitive as well as linguistic knowledge. Although these views of literacy have sometimes competed against one another, it is necessary to acknowledge the interactions among them. Each of these perspectives provides only a partial view of literacy. Together, they complement one another and illuminate the multiple dimensions of reading and writing. If literacy is understood in the broader terms described in this chapter, it can be considered as a dynamic set of linguistic, cognitive and social processes rather than a uniform and universal construct. The benefit of such a perspective is twofold: On the one hand, it offers a better understanding of what reading and writing are and of how they relate to each other and, on the other hand, it offers an organising principle for literacy instruction (Kern, 2009). This view also acknowledges that reading and writing are connected to other abilities emphasising the holistic nature of what has usually been treated separately as reading, writing, listening and speaking skills, and leads to an integral approach to literacy. In the next section, I refer to ways of integrating reading and writing within the framework of an integrated-skills approach.



### 2.1.2 An Integrated-Skills Approach to EFL Reading and Writing

Not long ago, foreign language teachers referred to language learning in terms of four isolated language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Speaking and writing were described as active or productive abilities while reading and listening were considered passive or receptive ones. Due to this, the attempts to link reading and writing were limited because they were understood as two separate skills. Reading represented the skill involved in decoding words in order to interpret meaning whereas writing represented the skill involved in encoding words to produce meaning. Such a view limited reading and writing to acts of information transfer and influenced textbook contents and methods of instruction. Treating the skills as separate led to compartmentalised goals described in terms of discrete behaviours rather than integrated skills. Nowadays, readers are no longer regarded as passive, but are seen as active participants in the learning process. Moreover, as Kucer (1987) points out, new interest in the relationships between reading and writing has expanded their scope to a consideration of both literacy activities, which are closely connected. The inadequacy of the four-skills model is now recognised and there is strong evidence that an integrated reading-writing approach offers advantages (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). In fact, language learning now places great value on integrated instructional approaches with a focus on meaningful communication and the development of learners' communicative competence (Hinkel, 2006).

The integration of skills is essential for advanced EFL reading and writing in academic settings. In this respect, Tierney and Pearson (1994) emphasise that a vital issue is “the extent to which reading and writing are intertwined with one another, with oral language processes, and with other symbolic systems.” (p. 516). Likewise, Flood and Lapp (1987) posit that competent language users cannot engage in either activity without the other or without listening and speaking. In a similar vein, Kucer (1987) maintains that the way in which language is used in the reading lesson should parallel its use in the writing lesson. Thus, each skill fine-tunes the other and supports both literacy activities. In the same way, Britton (1970) highlights that what is important is “the marriage of the process of composing in written language to that of reading, and the relating of both to the learner's spoken language resources.” (p. 159). In fact, students involved in reading and writing activities develop a sense of why something they read was written and approach reading with what might be called *the eye of a*

*writer* (Tierney & Leys, 1986, p. 19). Scarcella and Oxford (1992) use a revealing metaphor to account for this:

Learning a language is very much like weaving a tapestry. Both language learning and weaving involve development processes. In developing their second language ability, language learners weave various threads (vocabulary, grammatical structures and discourse features) to create proficiency in the four skills – reading, writing, speaking and listening. Similarly, in developing their tapestries, skilled weavers work coloured yarns into shapes and patterns. (p. 7)

As can be seen, in this approach, language is viewed as a meaning system (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992). Although this system is composed of many strands, such as grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation, these are not regarded as independent of the whole. Every skill relates to the others, so developing any skill in the system affects the others as a result of their related nature. While a lesson may focus on a specific skill, content is explored through tasks that draw upon all language skills. This approach is natural in academic settings where reading usually leads to writing, and provides a framework to integrate these literacy activities.

In this integrated-skills approach, language learning is a process involving teachers and students in collaborative efforts. Because this approach fosters learner autonomy, the roles of teachers, students and instructional materials are reconceptualised (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992). The learning process is facilitated by the assistance of the teacher who serves as a guide helping the learner to overcome obstacles. Like the weaver's mentor, the teacher suggests strategies for acquiring the language more efficiently and provides exposure to the necessary input, and the learner creates the second language in the same way as the weaver creates a tapestry. Others may help but, in the long run, it is the learner's desire to learn that shapes learning. Materials serve as sources of language input and provide opportunities for communicative and authentic language use. They take into account individual learners' differences and cater for various learning styles. Integrated-skills instruction usually follows the principles of the communicative approach. The modes for integrated teaching with a communicative emphasis include content- and theme-based, task-based, and genre-based instruction (Hinkel, 2006).

After having highlighted the importance of following an integrated-skills approach to reading and writing, I will refer to the specific relationships between these abilities.

### 2.1.2.1 Reading-Writing Relations

The relationships between reading and writing are important in any discussion of academic literacy skills. Many tasks that require reading for academic purposes also involve writing from the same texts. In fact, common academic literacy tasks are summarising, paraphrasing, quoting, synthesising information from multiple sources and writing responses to those texts (Hirvela, 2001). In this respect, Carson and Leki (1993) have stated that “reading can be, and in academic settings nearly always is, the basis for writing.” (p. 1). In particular, university students carry out the task of writing from source texts, which starts with reading those texts. When students compose from sources, “reading and writing blend, making it difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish what is being done for purposes of reading from what is being done for purposes of writing.” (Spivey, 1990, p. 258). Thus, teaching reading and writing together at advanced academic levels is essential in order to offer students valuable preparation for the academic literacy requirements at university.

Despite the centrality of the relationships between reading and writing, throughout most of the twentieth century, these attracted little attention. However, nowadays, reading and writing are believed to be inextricably linked processes. According to Kern (2009), if reading involves creating meaning from texts, writing involves designing texts to create meaning. Indeed, these two skills are closely intertwined, and require the integration of multiple operations. Consequently, the study of these two abilities from a single perspective to throw light on their relations now constitutes an area of interest. In fact, researchers have been concerned with the impact that reading and writing have on each other for more than three decades. As a result, models that attempt to account for reading and writing as part of a global process in which common knowledge is shared have been formulated.

In L1 contexts, a number of seminal investigations<sup>5</sup> in which researchers examined the relationships between reading and writing appeared in the 1980s. Several authors (Kucer, 1985; Squire, 1983; Stotsky, 1983; Tierney & Pearson, 1983) presented significant correlations between them, and postulated the existence of common universal principles that account for their connections. Stotsky (1983) published a

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<sup>5</sup> Most of these investigations were influenced by linguistic theories. As a consequence, the underlying models do not correspond to a sociocognitive perspective since they have stressed linguistic aspects as measures of text comprehension and production to the detriment of social and cognitive processes (Parodi Sweis, 1999).

review of studies that focuses on reading-writing relations and shows that “better writers tend to be better readers (...), that better writers tend to read more than poorer writers, and that better readers tend to produce more syntactically mature writing than poorer readers.” (p. 636). She concludes that reading seems to be a consistent influence in writing ability. Similarly, Squire (1983) maintains that comprehension and production are two sides of the same coin and refers to cognitive universals that are present in both. For him, there are processes of reading and writing such as activation of prior knowledge that are identical. Likewise, Tierney and Pearson (1983) argue that both reading and writing are similar processes of meaning construction; that is, comprehending and composing share cognitive mechanisms, which supports the development of literacy instruction that integrates both. Kucer (1985) also investigates the commonalities between reading and writing, suggests that the notion that they are separate skills is unacceptable, and proposes a *text world production model* that represents the fusion of both abilities. This text world exists in the minds of readers and writers and its visible structure is in the texts they interpret and produce, but the process of construction of the text world is common to both reading and writing. This model reveals the existence of a basic global competence common to both whose central component is shared knowledge and strategies. In a report discussing the relations between reading and writing, Nelson (1998) concludes that “there is an awareness that many acts of literacy are hybrid in nature” (p. 269). Two major issues in L1 research on reading-writing relations: *reading to write* and *writing to learn from sources* are highlighted by Shanahan and Tierney (1990). L1 perspectives have influenced L2 reading-writing scholarship and have served as the foundation for L2 research.

In L2 contexts, investigations on reading-writing relations have focused on the directionality between reading and writing, that is, either reading improves writing or writing improves reading; there is no direct relationship (no-directionality) or reading and writing improve each other (bidirectionality). Eisterhold (1991) presents three interrelated hypotheses that account for the connections between text comprehension and production, and constitute models that reflect the direction of transference from one to the other. In the directional model, both abilities share structural components so that what is acquired in one can be applied to the other one. For instance, if readers understand a text and are capable of recognising its superstructure, they will be able to use that rhetorical pattern to produce a text, too. What defines this model is the nature of the transference of information since it can only be carried out in one direction. There is

specific knowledge that cannot be transferred, and also knowledge that can only be transferred in one direction. The most common directional model is called reading to write. The assumption in this model is that reading influences writing, but writing is not particularly useful for reading. The non-directional model proposes that the connection is not directional. In this interactive model, reading and writing are supposed to derive from a single underlying competence and share common cognitive processes. It is argued that, what is learnt in one skill should improve the other one. Unlike the directional model, transference of knowledge is not limited and can occur in any direction. In a directional model, what is transferred from reading to writing is a knowledge base acquired in one domain and passed to the other. In contrast, in a non-directional model, what is transferred is considered part of a single underlying system or basic shared competence. The former model is linear whereas the latter allows for the open flow of information. The bidirectional model is based on the assumption that reading and writing are both interactive and independent processes. This model presents comprehension and production as interrelated processes that utilise shared knowledge and strategies. Multiple relations between the two domains are accepted together with the possibility that the type of relationship changes as the subject grows up. Eisterhold believes that a bidirectional model is the most comprehensive one as it includes separate subsystems and underlying common capacities. Nevertheless, this author considers that the three models offer different ways of approaching the relationships between reading and writing, and that various pedagogical alternatives stem from them. While the directional model centers on the type of input (reading), the non-directional model emphasises common cognitive competences basic to reading and writing. On the other hand, the bidirectional model points at multiple relations that constitute the basis of the connection, but stresses that there are domains specific to each ability and variations throughout readers' and writers' development. On the whole, these models suggest that pedagogical interventions that involve reading and writing should aim at strengthening the connection between them. These hypotheses illustrate the state of the art as regards the relationships between reading and writing.

Current research seems to have reached a consensus on this issue and reading and writing are seen as mutually supportive for literacy development. Grabe (2001) concludes that "one of the most consistent implications of (...) reading and writing relations is that they should be taught together and that the combination of both literacy skills enhances learning." (p. 25). A collection of L2 studies, Belcher and Hirvela's

(2001) *Linking Literacies: Perspectives on Reading-Writing Connections*, emphasises reading and writing as complementary activities and refers to a complex aspect of L2 literacy that is attracting increasing attention: how students read source texts and incorporate material from them into their written work. In fact, this is one of the L1 issues that has generated the most interest, yet it has received much less attention in L2 contexts.

In this regard, it is hard to imagine a setting in which academic writing is not to some extent *text-responsible prose* (Leki & Carson, 1997), that is, responsive to information obtained from reading. In effect, students' ability to write is heavily dependent on their ability to read and vice versa, especially at post-secondary level. Students know that what they read is important for how they write, so they develop sensitivity to the language and structure of texts. Hirvela (2007, p. 7) presents three primary modes of reading-writing connections: *reader response*, *writing to read* and *reading to write*. Various other terms are used when discussing the last notion of going from reading to writing; these include *reading for writing*, *reading while writing* and *writerly reading* (Hirvela, 2007, p. 110). Carson (1993) provides a definition of this concept: "reading for writing can be understood as referring most specifically to the literacy event in which readers/writers use text(s) that they read, or have read, as a basis for text(s) that they write". In this respect, Spack (1988) observes that "perhaps the most important skill English teachers can engage students in is the complex ability to write from other texts, a major part of their academic writing experience." (pp. 41-42). Among the activities common to reading for writing, we find summarising. This seems to be one of the primary contact points between reading and writing in academic settings and is the focus of this investigation, which is framed in the mode reading to write from sources. This study centers on the processes of text comprehension and production paying attention to the relationships between reading and writing from a linguistic, cognitive, sociocultural and critical perspective. It is my intention to approach reading and writing connections in the light of the bidirectional model that uses reading to strengthen writing and maintains that production also influences comprehension.

So far, a comprehensive model of L2 reading-writing connections on which to base research and practice does not exist (Hirvela, 2007). Said model should be an integral theory of language, and be sufficiently broad to account simultaneously for the inclusion of reading in a theory of writing and vice versa. The connections between reading and writing should go beyond the linguistic perspective towards a cognitive

perspective that pays attention to the strategies that are common to reading and writing, and a social perspective that includes readers, writers and their social contexts. Even though there is no such model, it is possible to turn to available models of reading and approaches to writing, which offer insights into how to enhance literacy. Although it may be shortsighted to compartmentalise the interconnected competences inherent in reading and writing by examining these skills in isolation, for the purposes of this study, it will be useful to discuss them individually to facilitate their analysis. Nevertheless, reading and writing ought to be viewed as tightly interwoven processes from both theoretical and pedagogical perspectives, hence the choice of the word literacy. With this relationship between reading and writing in mind, the next section continues to elaborate a core definition of literacy with a focus on EFL literacy instruction, namely, models of reading and approaches to writing.

### **2.1.3 EFL Literacy Instruction**

The teaching of EFL literacy has been an object of concern in the field of Applied Linguistics for many years. EAP learners have already acquired literacy skills in their native language. However, it cannot be assumed that, because students can read and write in their mother tongue, they will be able to do so effectively in EFL. They need to learn the ways in which EFL literacy differs from their own literacy practices, which may entail learning new linguistic conventions, cognitive processes and social practices.

EFL literacy is essential for studying in academic contexts. For this reason, researchers have developed a number of models of reading (i.e. bottom-up, top-down and interactive) and approaches to writing instruction (i.e. controlled composition, current-traditional rhetoric, and process approaches). When we contemplate literacy theories and the pedagogies that stem from them, depending on the perspective, it is possible to see reading and writing as products or processes (Wallace, 2008).

In the traditional product views of the 1960s and 1970s, the core was the formal properties of texts and the learner was considered passive. In the learner-focused process views that emerged in the 1970s, the focus was on students' active process of individual construction of meaning, not form. Learner-centered approaches have radically changed literacy theory, research and practice from a focus on form to a focus on students' meaning-making processes. However, most of these models of reading and approaches to writing have failed to consider the social contexts in which texts are

interpreted and produced and the genres used in those contexts, which are very important in EFL academic settings. Since the 1980s and 1990s, interest has shifted to a contextual approach, which Johns (1997) calls *Socioliterate*. This approach accounts for the texts, roles and contexts that students encounter as they acquire EFL academic literacy. In this view, literacy is acquired through exposure to discourses from a variety of social contexts. Through this exposure, individuals gradually develop knowledge of genres, central elements of this view. In the following sections, I will discuss models of reading and approaches to writing, and will then turn to genre-based literacy instruction, an example of the Socioliterate approach.

### **2.1.3.1 Models of Reading**

Over the past four decades, researchers have tried to enhance our understanding of reading comprehension by proposing different theories and models of reading. The terms theory and model are sometimes used interchangeably but they are not the same. Whereas a theory is an explanation of a phenomenon, a model is a way of representing the components and relationships within a theory, and of describing the psychological processes involved in text comprehension (Goldman, Golden & van Den Broek, 2007). In almost all cases, models assume that reading is comprised of a number of component skills and abilities. There are specific models based on empirical evidence and metaphorical models that make more abstract generalisations and represent the most common way to discuss models of reading (Grabe, 2003). Three main metaphorical models of reading, namely, bottom-up, top-down and interactive, have been postulated. This section examines these widely known metaphorical assumptions about how comprehension is carried out, and reviews a specific model and its pedagogical implications. For a review of 11 specific models proposed over the last 20 years, see Grabe (2003).

Bottom-up models (e.g. Gough's model, 1972 as cited in Goodman, 1988; LaBege & Samuels's *Automaticity Model*, 1974) depict reading as a mechanical process in which the reader passively decodes each word letter-by-letter. Bottom-up processing implies lower-level decoding of the language system with little interference from the reader's background knowledge. Reading is understood as a perceptual ability whose aim is distinguishing symbols to translate them into an oral code. These models of reading are known as linear or data-driven because they emphasise reading word by



word and identifying visual information present in the text, but do not consider the elaboration of meaning. Advocates of these models believe that the text has a single meaning expressed by the author not open to different interpretations, and the reader's task is to decode it and store it in memory. Bottom-up models have a behaviourist orientation and consider that readers memorise information in response to stimuli. As a result, instruction emphasises the formal properties of texts (i.e. grapheme-phoneme associations) and the development of memory capacity. Most linear models are models of comprehension of single words or sentences as isolated units. They pay little attention to higher-level units and concentrate on lower-level ones. Much of this research has identified human beings' minds with computing processes. Today, there is no doubt that written language processing consists of units that overlap hierarchically; that is, higher-level units are combinations of lower-level ones. As a result, no current model depicts reading as a purely bottom-up process since such an extreme view is not accurate.

On the other hand, top-down models (e.g. Goodman's *Psycholinguistic Guessing Game Model*, 1969; Smith's model, 1971) assume that the reader actively controls comprehension directed by goals, expectations and background knowledge. Top-down processing involves higher-level inferences that use prior knowledge to give a text coherence. Goodman (1969) calls reading *a psycholinguistic guessing game* in which readers actively predict the meaning of the text on the basis of activated knowledge. According to this author, readers generate hypotheses about the text, sample from it and confirm expectations or generate new predictions. These models are based on schema theory, which explains the interpretation of texts through the activation of the reader's schemata. These represent the way in which knowledge of things, events and situations is stored in memory and reorganised every time new information is incorporated. When someone has comprehended a text, he/she "has found a mental home for the information in the text, or (...) modified an existing mental home in order to accommodate that new information." (Anderson & Pearson, 1988, p. 37). Thus, schemata help make sense of the world and fill in the gaps in communication through inferences. When relevant schemata to reconcile our experience with what we read are unavailable, things do not make sense. In fact, the ability to access schemata that are relevant to a text is "crucial to effective and efficient reading and writing" (Kucer, 1987, p. 31). However, contemporary reading research makes virtually no references to schema theory, but refers to knowledge stored and recalled from long-term memory (Kern, 2009).

Therefore, the term should be regarded as a metaphor for knowledge representation and memory retrieval rather than as a fully developed theory. Top-down approaches emphasise higher-level skills such as prediction of meaning from context at the expense of lower-level skills such as recognition of words when, in fact, good readers can decode lexical and syntactic units not by guessing but by means of automatic identification (Eskey, 1988). In this respect, Eskey (1988) explains that fluent reading entails “both skillful decoding and relating the information to the reader’s prior knowledge.” (p. 98). As a matter of fact, there is no evidence that good readers sample from text and then generate hypotheses. On the contrary, eye movements in fluent reading are highly automatic. Besides, these models characterise the reader as someone who samples text information to confirm expectations, but do not clarify what mechanisms are used to generate inferences. Under extreme interpretations, it is not clear what readers can learn from a text with new information if they must first have expectations about it (Grabe, 2003). As a result, strong top-down views have limitations because they do not account for how new information is handled.

Neither bottom-up nor top-down models offer adequate explanations of the reading process since they are both unidirectional; that is, higher-level skills and lower-level ones are assumed to work independently. A compromise is provided by interactive models of reading that combine ideas from a bottom-up perspective with those from a top-down view and offer more useful ways to understand reading comprehension.

Interactive models (e.g. McClelland & Rumelhart’s *Interactive-Activation Model*, 1981; Stanovich’s *Interactive Compensatory Model*, 1980) postulate that information processing mechanisms influence each other; that is, higher-level processes can supply information to lower-level ones. Word recognition and syntactic parsing need to be automatic, and background knowledge needs to support these lower-level processes. The idea that the processes operate in a linear manner is rejected. Even though it is possible that specialised mechanisms exist, communication in a single direction is not accepted. The basic assumption is that elements from bottom-up and top-down views can be combined interactively. Unfortunately, this leads to contradictory assumptions that do not match empirical findings either. Research demonstrates that inferences do not have an impact on automatic word recognition since automatic aspects of reading operate without interference from background knowledge; for this reason, recent discussions refer to restricted interactive models (Grabe, 2003). These recognise that information and resources are shared across processes, but the

more automatic processes are, the less they are influenced by information from other levels because this would disrupt the automaticity needed for efficient reading. Restricted interactive models are primarily bottom-up with respect to automatic processing (e.g. word recognition and syntactic parsing). Top-down processing is used for higher-level units or to solve difficulties that slow down lower-level processing. In spite of these restrictions, it is now generally accepted that reading is an interactive process in which readers use both bottom-up and top-down processes to make sense of a text. However, to avoid overgeneralisations, many discussions present specific models of reading rather than metaphorical ones.

One of the most influential specific models that is relevant to the present study is Kintsch's (1988) *Construction-Integration Model*. This model stems from the works of van Dijk and Kintsch (1978, 1983) and van Dijk (1977, 1978, 1980, 1985), and combines automatic bottom-up processing (labelled the construction phase) with a restructuring process to create coherent discourse representations (the integration phase). The construction component of the model depicts the reader as generating information from the text via word recognition, syntactic parsing and proposition formation. This information is consolidated by an integration process. An interactive type of processing in which there is constant feedback between the lower-level and higher-level units is postulated. Van Dijk and Kintsch (1983) present their views in their book *Strategies of Discourse Comprehension*, in which they point out that what counts as text comprehension is how the reader constructs mental models of the text. There are two types of mental models: *the text model of reader comprehension*, which refers to what the text is about (the textbase), and *the situation model of reader interpretation*, which refers to how the text is interpreted (van Dijk and Kintsch, 1983). These authors identify three levels for the structural analysis of texts: surface linguistic form, propositional textbase and situation model. The first level is the surface representation of words and sentences, where linguistic relations are processed and short-term memory intervenes. The second level is the representation of the semantic structure of the text, where the relations between sentences and the global topic of the text are established with the intervention of long-term memory. During reading, semantic meaning units that are equivalent to phrases and clauses are built. These are called *semantic propositions*<sup>6</sup> (van Dijk & Kintsch, 1983) and are the building blocks of text

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<sup>6</sup> The basic unit of text representations is the proposition, defined by van Dijk (1980) as the smallest semantic element that can be logically falsified. It is the meaning that underlies a clause or simple

comprehension. Certain propositions are stored in memory because of their relevance, and the microstructure of the text is reduced to its macrostructure, which equals a summary. This is achieved by means of *semantic information reduction operations* (van Dijk, 1977, p. 143) that transform propositions of the textbase or micropropositions into macropropositions or main ideas that represent the global meaning of the text. This globalisation of information is possible thanks to a group of cognitive processes that van Dijk and Kintsch (1978) initially called *rules*<sup>7</sup> and later renamed using the term *macrostrategies* (van Dijk & Kintsch, 1983); these include *copy/deletion*, *selection*, *generalisation* and *construction/integration*. These macrostrategies are restricted by the reader's knowledge and purpose, which determine the elements of the text that are relevant.

The third level of text analysis is the representation of the situation in which the text was produced (e.g. who, for whom, what for, when, where, etc.) that is activated by the text on the basis of the reader's knowledge of the world. The situation model is constructed by readers as they imagine the possible world in which the things the text

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sentence and its conceptual representation. Each proposition contains a predicate and one or more arguments. The verb head represents the predicate and the names and nominal constructions, the arguments. Van Dijk regards propositions as theoretical units of a cognitive model. Their significant feature is that they preserve text meaning but not surface linguistic forms. To construct the meaning of a text, individual propositions are linked on the basis of argument overlap as well as other clues signalling their connections. The surface structure of a text offers a variety of lexical and structural cuing systems for building coherence relations. These systems include repetition, synonymy, hyponymy, paraphrase, anaphoric and cataphoric reference, transition markers, substitution and ellipsis. In addition to lexical and structural signalling systems, patterns of text organisation and genre features can be used to build coherence. When the text does not provide the necessary information for constructing coherent textbases, prior knowledge is activated to solve gaps through inferences, propositions not explicitly mentioned. The reader uses different strategies to construct a multilevel representation of the text (i.e. microstructural or local coherence, macrostructural or global coherence and superstructural strategies). These strategies enable the reader to build a text model of comprehension and also play a role in the development of the situation model of interpretation. For a comprehensive description and suggestions of how to apply these strategies, see Cubo de Severino (2008).

<sup>7</sup> Van Dijk and Kintsch's (1978) original model of reading was based on rules. These researchers modified their first proposal to develop a model based on macrostrategies that shows the dynamic and online nature of comprehension. Their second model is more comprehensive than the original one and corrects some of its weaknesses. While the first model was predominantly structural, the second one is strategic. Instead of operating with abstract rules, they work with more flexible cognitive operations or strategies. According to van Dijk and Kintsch (1983), a strategy enables us to perform an action in the most effective way, in a rapid manner and with minimum effort. Unlike rules, which are rigid, strategies are flexible cognitive processes oriented to a goal that act simultaneously processing information from different levels of text structure and helping readers decode and infer information to understand a text. Strategies are normally employed in an automatic and unconscious way, but when an obstacle is detected, they are used in a conscious way. As Parodi Sweis (1999) explains, these authors' model started within a psycholinguistic framework but has moved towards a sociocognitive perspective from which comprehension is the process of interpreting meanings based on text information, prior knowledge and the demands of the social context.

refers to occur. The factors influencing the construction of a situation model include readers' purpose, task, genre, background knowledge and interests, among others. This type of information builds the situation model of interpretation which is superimposed onto the text model of comprehension. Unlike the propositional textbase, the situation model differs from reader to reader. This accounts for how the same text (i.e. surface linguistic forms) can produce diverse interpretations since readers use prior knowledge to recreate the situations conveyed by texts. They integrate information from the text with their own knowledge because texts do not provide all the necessary information for meaning construction, so it is necessary to close the gaps through inferences. Although low-level decoding or textbase construction and higher-level processing or situation model building may seem diametrically opposed, they are complementary. While micropropositions are generated through the analysis of the text's surface or microstructure, macropropositions are formed through top-down operations (i.e. summarisation rules or macrostrategies) that generate a macrostructure. These authors' remarks hold not only for the comprehension but also for the production of discourse. Language users always begin with a macrostructure; for example, when they are required to write a summary, the structure of this summary provides the macrostructure (van Dijk, 1977).

Both the text model and the situation model play important roles in comprehension. A description of reading comprehension as involving two levels of text understanding (text and situation) is now accepted by most researchers, and there are important advantages to such a framework (Grabe, 2003). First, the two-model account of reading comprehension explains why we read texts in different ways and, second, it explains the difficulties that readers encounter. Different levels of reading ability, purposes for reading and genres will lead to more emphasis on a text model of comprehension or a situation model of interpretation. For example, a manual is not intended to be interpreted in different ways by readers as it emphasises the text model of comprehension and a single interpretation. In contrast, a poem privileges the situation model of personal interpretation, which is emphasised when the reader has prior knowledge of the topic and a more evaluative stance towards a text. There is research evidence that readers respond to texts in line with these two models; readers with minimal background knowledge of a topic tend to reflect information presented in the text whereas students with extensive background knowledge produce higher levels of evaluative commentary (Kintsch, 1998).

The complementary roles of the text model and the situation model, and the various higher- and lower-level processes involved highlight the complexity of reading comprehension. It becomes evident that the interaction of both top-down and bottom-up information is important while reading. An increasingly common view in the literature is that reading is essentially divided into two components: *decoding* (word recognition) and *comprehension* (Alderson 2000, p. 12). The latest, constructivist and transactional models of reading put emphasis on the reader's input. For instance, Rosenblatt's (1994) transactional theory argues that knowledge is constructed in the reader's mind by means of a transaction between the text and the context. While the text evokes meaning, it is the reader's sociocultural context that has an impact on the process of knowledge construction. The focus is not on discovering meaning within the text but on constructing the meaning of the text, which entails transactions among the reader, the text and the particular context.

This review does not cover all the models of reading that have been proposed so far because space precludes a more detailed treatment. Overall, however, the models described above represent efforts to synthesise empirical evidence and explain the nature of reading. Nevertheless, gaps continue to exist among these models as they do not provide a complete account of how fluent reading works. In addition, in spite of the applicability of L1 models to L2 contexts, research has not produced viable L2 reading models yet (Koda, 2008). The end of this selective revision has been determining what understanding a text means from a perspective that emphasises the linguistic, cognitive and social aspects of the process.

### **2.1.3.2 Approaches to Writing**

Studies of writing have provided explanatory paradigms known as models of composition or approaches to writing. In this section, I present a revision of the main traditions in the teaching of writing discussing some of the most representative approaches in L1 composition scholarship that have been imported to the L2 context. In order to do so, I outline the dominant theoretical framework, focus, and characteristic practices of the three orientations to writing instruction, namely, product-, process- and genre-based approaches. Product approaches focus on form, the linguistic and structural resources needed to create texts. Process approaches emphasise the writer's cognitive processes, and genre-based approaches address the social context of text production.

Although these three orientations – textual features, cognitive processes and social context – arise from different theoretical bases and are often seen as incompatible, they are widely represented in current teaching practices and are essential in a comprehensive pedagogy of literacy.

Product approaches (e.g. Kierzek & Gibson, 1960; Vivian & Jackson, 1951; Warriner, et al., 1958 all cited in Parodi Sweis, 1999), which characterised most writing instruction from the 1940s to the 1960s, were concerned with the finished product and textual form. These approaches ascribed intrinsic value to the formal properties of texts placing less emphasis on writers' cognitive processes and on how they addressed a particular audience and fulfilled a specific communicative purpose. Questions dealing with why and for whom students were writing were not taken into account and writing tended to be defined in linear and mechanical terms. These early approaches to the teaching of writing were based on the notion of controlled or guided composition. The theoretical framework that underlay these form-focused approaches was rooted in the audio-lingual method, structural linguistics, and behaviourism, which viewed language learning as imitation, repetition and systematic habit formation. As a result, writing was conceived as a mechanical skill, i.e. the mastery of correct grammatical and rhetorical structures by passive writers. There was a focus on the accuracy of textual forms and mechanisms to encode surface features of texts such as spelling and punctuation. Characteristic practices included substitution tables, expansion, transformation, sentence-combining and completion exercises that learners used to imitate model texts. Spencer's (1967) *Guided Composition Exercises* is an example of guided composition. In the mid-1960s, teachers began to feel that controlled writing was not enough and it was necessary to do more than enabling learners to write grammatically correct sentences. This led to an emphasis on more extended writing activities. The new movement, referred to as current-traditional rhetoric because it was a revitalisation of the rhetoric offered by Greco-Roman philosophers, took text manipulation beyond the sentence to the level of discourse, and focused on teaching rhetorical functions such as description, narration, exposition and argumentation. Classroom tasks concentrated on analysing the structure of paragraphs and on arranging these into particular patterns. Learners' attention still remained focused on form but at a broader level. Oshima and Hogue's (1992) *Writing Academic English* is an example of current-traditional rhetoric. Although many teachers still use it, this approach can be misleading because it gives the impression that the writing students are supposed to imitate is the result of a linear

process. Besides, the use of sequential terminology such as pre-writing, writing and revising fails to show that cognitive operations may co-occur during the act of writing. In fact, in this approach, revising is the same as editing and changes focus on form rather than content. Accordingly, teachers respond to writing as if it was a final product, and are concerned with surface features rather than meaning-related problems. Teachers and students who view writing as mechanical and are concerned with form do not explore content. Product-oriented instruction emphasises the linguistic rather than cognitive dimensions of writing. To focus on the latter, it is necessary to turn to process approaches.

The process approach of the 1970s (e.g. de Beaugrande, 1979; Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Flower & Hayes, 1981) emerged in reaction to controlled composition and current-traditional rhetoric. It was concerned with the writer's cognitive processes rather than the finished product, and encouraged meaningful writing on topics of interest to the learner. Since grammar instruction did not improve students' writing, and the focus on product did not take into account the act of writing itself, researchers began to investigate the process of composing. There was a substantial shift in focus as research captured the non-sequential and recursive nature of the process of writing. Teachers felt that the product approach ignored individual expression, so it became more important to guide rather than control learners' writing and let content determine form. As a result, instead of constraining students' writing by imposing prescribed patterns, teachers sought to foster creativity. Whereas product-oriented teaching was deductive and teacher-centered, process-oriented teaching was inductive and student-centered. The dominant theoretical framework of this writer-focused approach was cognitive psychology and constructivism. In this approach, learning was a discovery process and writing was a way of generating and exploring new ideas. The central focus was on writers' internal processes and fluency of expression. Focus on form was delayed until the writer had come to terms with content and organisation. In fact, grammar, spelling and other formal issues came into play in the editing phases but were not emphasised at the beginning of the process to encourage students to express themselves freely. Classroom activities included brainstorming, freewriting, planning, drafting, revising and (peer)editing. The nonlinear nature of the process is important in this approach. In contrast to what is postulated in product approaches, the above-mentioned activities do not take place in a series of stages but interact in a recursive manner. Writing taught as a process of discovery implies that revision becomes the



main focus of instruction so teachers, who used to provide feedback at the end, intervene throughout the process leading students through cycles of revision. In process-oriented composition pedagogy, teachers focus on content and organisation in their feedback and save mechanical concerns for final drafts. This is in sharp contrast to methods that emphasise form and correctness and ignore how ideas are explored through writing. What is modelled in this approach is not the text but the writer's processes. Whereas product-approaches emphasised linguistic resources, here it is cognitive resources that are given priority. Leki's (1995) *Academic Writing: Exploring Processes and Strategies* is an example of the process approach.

Van Dijk and Kintsch (1978, 1983) have proposed a model of the process of writing. The area of comprehension has received greater emphasis and they acknowledge that they do not count on a comprehensive model of text production but speculate about its components and strategies. The fundamentals of their model will not be repeated since they have been presented in the previous section on reading, but information relevant to writing will be highlighted. The model of written production that these authors set forth is also strategic. There is a flexible mechanism that enables us to construct lexical, syntactic and semantic representations. The model contemplates three components: a global plan of the process of production that identifies goals, audience, objectives and style; a pragmatic plan that limits the macro speech act; and a semantic plan that corresponds to the macrostructure of discourse. This model requires multiple interactions that are carried out by means of strategies for the generation of propositions, and entails the activation of a situation model that organises knowledge for a task. The strategies involved in the construction of semantic macrostructures consist in reverse macro-operations, which are the opposite of the macrostrategies that operate in text comprehension. In text production, the writer starts with a global representation to have an identifiable topic, and microstrategies of specification provide detailed information about the topic. These can act enumerating the elements of a group, analysing the components of actions and particularising general information. Such strategies encode knowledge in coherent sentences on the basis of the situation models activated. These authors believe that a global model of comprehension and production should start as a strategic process that originates in models of situation, which play a fundamental role both in reading and writing.

Process approaches have had a profound impact on writing instruction in L1 and L2 settings, and inform nearly all composition textbooks today. However, they have

been subject to criticism (Canagarajah, 2001). First, even though these approaches acknowledge cognitive processes, they ignore the influence of the sociocultural context on such processes. As a result, they favour students who are already familiar with culturally appropriate academic genres. Indeed, the lack of explicit models can make it difficult for EFL learners to discover the expectations for various types of writing. Second, the implicitness of the process approach can also pose problems for evaluation. Although learners are encouraged to explore their ideas freely, teachers do not accept students' writing that does not conform to their expectations. On the whole, process-oriented instruction has been questioned because students are not prepared for the demands of writing in academic contexts in as much as their understanding of the conventions used in such contexts is at stake. This has led to a focus on the genres students need to control in academic settings. It is precisely the specific context in which writing is used that is accounted for in genre-based teaching.

Genre-based approaches (e.g. Swales, 1990; Bhatia, 1993), the third major orientation to writing instruction, are concerned with the social context. These approaches concentrate on teaching academic and professional genres and emphasise the role that discourse communities play in shaping written communication. When we communicate, we do not construct meanings in a completely personal manner but within socially determined parameters. These constraints are not universal but specific to particular discourse communities. In order to participate in such communities, students have to know their conventions. The dominant theoretical framework of this context-based approach is social constructionism. Genre-based approaches focus on audience needs and expectations, so learning is apprenticing in a new discourse community and appropriating the genres used in it. Students enter a community by becoming aware of the ways in which its members use language to fulfil particular communicative purposes. Instructional techniques include analysing the lexicogrammatical features and the rhetorical structure of genres to become aware of the conventions for particular text types in specific contexts. An example of genre-based materials is Swales and Feak's (2009) *Academic Writing for Graduate Students*.

Hyon (1996) has described the three most prominent genre-based approaches. These traditions share the goal of analysing writing in particular contexts, but differ in their intellectual frameworks, educational settings, focus, and use of genre in the classroom. The first one, the Sydney School, designed genre pedagogies based on Hallidayan Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and the work of Kress (1989) and

Martin, Christie and Rothery (1994) for three populations in Australia: primary and secondary school children, and adult immigrant L2 learners. The focus of this tradition is on empowering underprivileged members of the community and providing them with resources for academic success. The second group of genre theorists is the New Rhetoricians based on the work of Berkenkotter and Huckin (1993) and Miller (1984), whose arguments stem from rhetorical, social and ideological stances rather than from the analysis of textual organisation to be applied in the classroom. They focus on L1 composition, especially in American settings, and on how experts exploit genres since they see immersion in target situations rather than instruction as essential for genre acquisition. The third school is English for Specific Purposes (ESP) based on the work of Swales (1981, 1990). Researchers in ESP are interested in genres as tools for teaching the kinds of writing required of non-native speakers (NNSs) in academic and professional contexts. In academic settings, genre teaching seeks to remedy deficits in literacy skills by analysing the key genres employed and making these clear to students. The focus is on providing learners with the language resources to enter academic discourse communities. Despite their differences, these three traditions share their concern with helping students become more successful readers and writers of academic and professional genres, and establishing norms of interaction in specific settings. However, Hyon observes that investigations of the impact of genre-based pedagogy in the classroom have been scarce. Indeed, little empirical research has been done on the outcome of genre-based writing instruction, particularly in L2 contexts (Kern, 2009). Nevertheless, studies that suggest that a genre-based approach might be useful to help students enhance their EFL academic literacy are beginning to emerge.

Product-, process- and genre-based approaches to writing instruction each address important aspects of this skill. Genre-based instruction proposes a view of writing as a linguistic, cognitive and social process and emphasises the relations between readers, writers and texts in specific social contexts.

#### **2.1.4 Genre-Based Literacy Instruction**

Over the past two decades, genre has become prominent both in first and second language studies. Although in literary studies the concept has traditionally referred to types of literary production, recently, it has come to be used in Applied Linguistics to

refer to non-literary texts, too. Linguistic definitions of genre extend beyond literary texts to include a wide range of spoken and written discourse forms.

The notion of genre is based on the idea that members of a community recognise the texts they use and are able to draw on their experiences with such texts to understand and produce them. Genres have been defined as “staged, goal-oriented social processes” (Martin, 1993, p. 142) rather than static textual forms, and as “effective ways of getting things done in familiar contexts.” (Hyland, 2002, p. 116). Therefore, they can be discussed in terms of real world uses of texts such as a report. Many are parts of families of genres such as types of letters. At a more abstract level, there are macrogenres encompassing large varieties of text types (i.e. narrative, expository and persuasive), which have been referred to as rhetorical patterns or structures. However, the notion of genre has replaced these general patterns with specific genres, their language, structure and context of production and interpretation. This has led to analyses of genres such as the research article and an account of what happens within them called move analysis. Recently, studies devoted to particular discourse features of written academic genres such as citations, hedges and titles have emerged (for a state-of-the-art collection of research studies in the field, see Flowerdew and Peacock, 2001a). The relevance of genre analysis is that the descriptions of target genres may be applied to pedagogy.

Genres can be taught so that students recognise the structure and features of texts relevant to their needs and use them to assist their comprehension and production. In fact, for Hyland (2007), genre has become “one of the most important and influential concepts in language education.” (p. 5). The teaching of key genres is, indeed, a means of helping learners gain access to ways of communicating in particular professional, academic and occupational communities (Hyland, 2003). In particular, knowledge of genres is important for EFL students’ successful participation in an academic community. According to Hyland (2007, p. 56), there are four types of *genre knowledge*: knowledge of *the communicative purposes of the genre*, knowledge of *the appropriate forms* (i.e. schematic structures and lexico-grammatical features) needed to construct and interpret texts, knowledge of *content and register*, and knowledge of *the context* in which the genre is found. Such knowledge empowers students to participate in their academic community as they acquire the writing skills needed in academic settings.

The concept of genre first occurred in the literature used by Swales (1981) in an ESP journal. The field of ESP, which is part of English language teaching (ELT), can be classified into two main branches, English for General Purposes (EGP) and ESP (Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001b). Within ESP, there are again two principal divisions, EAP and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). Each of these major branches is then divided according to the disciplines or occupations with which it is concerned. Thus, EAP is subdivided into English for Biology and Mathematics, for example, and EOP branches out into English for Pilots, Doctors, etc. This study is concerned with EAP, which covers activities in higher education the purpose of which is the teaching and learning of the English language required by undergraduates and postgraduates completing academic studies in English-medium institutions. EAP originated in response to the phenomenon that English is the language of research and publication, and many universities use it as the language of instruction. As a consequence, there has been growth in the preparation of NNSs for study in English. This has taken place in major English-speaking countries where overseas students whose first language is not English study, in former colonial territories of Britain where English is the second language and the medium of instruction, and in countries where English has no official status but there are English-medium universities.

Stevens (1988) has proposed three characteristics of ESP/EAP. According to him, it consists in ELT which is designed to meet the specific needs of the learner, related in content to particular disciplines or occupations, and centered on the analysis of the language appropriate to those activities in contrast to EGP. In addition, ESP may be restricted as to the language skills to be learnt. Further characteristics are the use of authentic texts, a communicative approach, and custom-made materials.

The first characteristic, needs analysis, is a defining feature of ESP and EAP. It is a point of departure when designing a syllabus, tasks and materials. The first step is producing a description of EAP students' needs, which are different from those of EGP learners. An approach to needs analysis may be to find out why the learners are doing an English course and in what situations they will need English. Information can be gathered from those with responsibility for the course and learners. Various methods can be used for conducting needs analysis including questionnaires, interviews, observation and tests. After the analysis of learner needs, a detailed description of the goals for the course as well as the potential difficulties learners will have has to be developed.

The second characteristic of EAP is the need for students to interact with content in ways that are similar to those in which content is used in target language situations. EAP professionals advocate the use of academic subject matter as the basis for curriculum design and explore content-based instruction (CBI). There are three models of CBI (Stoller, 2001, p. 211): *sheltered* (a content course taught by a specialist to a segregated group of L2 learners sheltering them from native speaking students), *adjunct* (two courses, a content course taught by a specialist and a course taught by a language professional), and *theme-based instruction* (a language course structured around topics or themes that provide the basis for language instruction). The premise of CBI is that language cannot be isolated from authentic content, which provides the richest context for language teaching. The goal is to provide meaningful contexts for language study instead of focusing on language alone. In fact, some EAP professionals advocate curricula structured around academic tasks. Task-based instruction expands the CBI focus on language as a vehicle for learning content by using content as a vehicle for carrying out tasks. EAP professionals contend that content- and task-based approaches represent viable responses to EAP students' needs. Within these approaches, the role of the teacher becomes that of a guide rather than the source of knowledge. Strevens (1988) has also described the particular qualities of EAP teachers and learners. Teachers should be willing to design teaching materials and activities for their students' needs, and familiarise themselves with the students' subject. On the other hand, EAP learners need to develop skills to study alone. Indeed, an important part of EAP methodology involves promoting learner autonomy by encouraging students to take responsibility for their own learning.

The third characteristic of ESP/EAP is that pedagogy is focused upon descriptions of the specific language appropriate to the discipline or occupation. Johns and Dudley-Evans (1980 as cited in Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001b) claim that the problems encountered by students are rarely connected with knowledge of the subject or the language alone but these two factors are intertwined. They believe that language teachers need to understand the conceptual structure of the subject students are learning so as to understand how language is used to represent that structure. In order to achieve this, a methodology referred to as genre analysis has been developed. The analysis of genres is a useful tool to help NNSs cope with the writing tasks required in academic contexts, and has become important in EAP since the pioneering work of Swales

(1990), regarded as the doyen of the discipline, and Bathia (1993), after which numerous analyses of discipline-specific genres appeared.

The most influential ESP genre-analysis approach, and the theoretical and pedagogical background of the present study, has been established by Swales (1990). This theorist sees genres as communicative events employed by specific discourse communities whose members share social purposes. The framework proposed by this author is based on the analysis of learners' needs and on genre analysis. The latter is characterised by the examination of the moves (schematic structures or rhetorical patterns) that make up a genre, and the lexico-grammatical realisations of those moves. Drawing on Swales's techniques for genre analysis, Bhatia (1993) recommends seven steps to undertake a comprehensive analysis of any genre. These involve placing the genre in a situational context, surveying existing literature, refining the situational analysis, selecting a corpus, studying the institutional context, deciding on levels of linguistic analysis, and checking against specialist information. These analyses have been translated into pedagogical proposals and teaching materials.

Genre-based pedagogies employ the ideas of the Russian psychologist Vygotsky (1978) and the American educational psychologist Bruner (1990). For these scholars, the notion of *scaffolding* emphasises the role of interaction with peers and experienced others in learning. The concept is mainly associated with SFL approaches, but is also present in ESP, and has been elaborated into an explicit model represented by *the teaching-learning cycle* (Feez, 1998, p. 28); this cycle informs the planning of classroom activities by showing the process of learning a genre as a series of stages involving: *building the context, modelling, joint construction, independent construction and linking related texts*. The ESP genre-based framework of academic literacy is often referred to as a *visible pedagogy* (Hyland, 2007, p. 11), which offers an explicit understanding of how texts are structured and why. However, compared with the popularity of genre-based studies, research on how students analyse and produce genres is still underrepresented in the literature (for a recent discussion of this literature gap, see Cheng, 2006). Moreover, genre-based approaches have not been spared from criticism.

As Hyland (2007) explains, reservations have been expressed by proponents of the New Rhetoric, by those influenced by critical pedagogy and by advocates of the process approach. Supporters of the New Rhetoric argue that genres should be taught in their original contexts rather than in the artificial environment of the classroom. They

question the notion of EAP as socialisation into a discourse community by means of the acquisition of generic conventions on the grounds that entering a disciplinary community is not as easy as it is portrayed. In fact, the idea of a community promotes an image of solidarity that hides social inequality. The assumption is that academic progress involves the mastery of increasingly complex genres. However, some scholars (i.e. Barrs, 1994) question whether one can empower students simply by providing practice in various genres, and contend that it is only when people already occupy certain social roles that power is conferred by the use of specific genres. Likewise, Prior (1998) argues that entering a disciplinary community is not so much a matter of novices serving apprenticeships with experts but more a case of continual negotiation. As a result, the notion of an academic discipline constituting a discourse community into which students will be initiated is of limited value if it presupposes a homogeneous community from which power relations are absent. However, according to Hyland (2003), while it should be acknowledged that the move from the classroom to the real world represents a transition for learners, there is no reason why teachers should not prepare students for it.

In addition, those influenced by a critical pedagogy claim that genre teaching reinforces dominant discourses and ideologies. They argue that this approach does not problematise the conventions but induces learners into the values, culture and knowledge of their disciplinary communities. As Cope and Kalantzis (1993) point out, if genre-based instruction is not carried out in a critical way, it can be oppressive rather than liberating. In this respect, Benesch (1993, 2001) has criticised EAP for being too ready to accommodate to traditional academic practices, which limits the participation of NNSs in the academic culture, and transforms English into an instrument of elitist language policies. She maintains that academic institutions are not areas of debate or resistance, and also criticises the pragmatic and uncritical approach to teaching genres. Instead of this accommodationist stance that aims to assimilate EFL students into academic life, Benesch (1993, p. 45) argues for *critical pragmatism* and believes that the academy should adapt itself to the cultures and languages of second language students. In his critique, Pennycook (1997 as cited in Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001b) maintains that EAP should develop students' linguistic and critical awareness beyond specific disciplines. Providing learners only with the linguistic skills for dealing with academic work misses the opportunity to help them develop forms of linguistic, social and cultural criticism to question how language works within and outside educational



institutions. To reconcile the tensions students face, Christie (1987) suggests that “learning the genres of one’s culture is both part of entering into it (...) and part of developing the necessary ability to change it.” (p. 30). For this author, using genre approaches uncritically implies being represented by dominant discourses and ideologies. Consequently, it is necessary to negotiate genre conventions in a critical manner within the existing discursive constraints. Students cannot ignore the dominant discourse norms as this prevents them from participating in the academic community. Instead, they have to take into account the existing conventions and work with them in order to introduce variants. According to Breen and Candlin (1980), communicating is “not merely a matter of following conventions but also of negotiating through and about the conventions themselves. It is a convention-creating as well as a convention-following activity.” (p. 90). A critical perspective on academic genres might explore how issues such as gender, ethnicity, culture, ideology and identity are reflected in texts (Swales, 1996).

Finally, exponents of the process approach state that genre instruction stifles creativity. There is the danger of reifying genres, so students see them as sets of rules, which Freedman and Medway (1994, p. 46) call *a recipe theory of genre*. For these authors, the potential risk of genres is that they can be reduced to static rhetorical formulas and taught in a prescriptive fashion similar to traditional product-based teaching. As genres are said to constrain creativity, the question that arises is whether they should be taught explicitly. In relation to this, Heath (1986 as cited in Kern, 2009) asserts that what is needed is a discovery approach to genres in which students become aware of the importance of genres and are helped to identify their features by themselves. In fact, what should be taught is not just the formal features of genres but the link between them and their social contexts. It is not enough to familiarise learners with genres as ready-made moulds for texts. They should become aware of how particular rhetorical patterns reflect social and communicative needs within particular discourse communities. This requires a contrastive approach to teaching genre (Kern, 2009). First, students cannot understand a genre by looking at a single model, but have to look at several examples of a genre in order to identify what rhetorical features are common. Second, students cannot understand a genre by looking at examples of that genre alone, but have to compare it with other related genres in order to see what features vary. Although the use of models has been rejected by proponents of process-based teaching, it is extremely important in the teaching of writing. Nevertheless,

according to Kern (2009), there is a difference in the way models are used in product-based approaches and in genre-based teaching. In the former, models serve as ideals to be imitated whereas, in the latter, models are examples of how a writer has approached a particular writing task for a certain audience. Consequently, students can discover what makes a piece of writing effective in a particular context instead of imitating it because it constitutes a good model. Even though genre pedagogy is based on language awareness rather than creativity, it offers a student-centered framework rather than a text-centered one, which enables learners to participate in academic contexts and, in Hyland's (2003) view, there is nothing inherently prescriptive in it.

It is unclear whether the genre-based approach is put at risk by the criticism levelled at it. Pennycock (1997) expresses the tension at the heart of ESP:

On the one hand, we need to help our students gain access to those forms of language and culture that matter while, on the other, we need to help challenge those norms. On the one hand, we need to help our students develop critical awareness of academic norms and practices while, on the other, we need to understand and promote culturally diverse ways of thinking, working and writing. (p. 265)

For this author, it is necessary to ensure that any EAP programme pays attention to critical awareness. While it is problematic to promote a greater diversity in the use of language than the academic community would accept, Pennycock considers that a compromise would be to reveal that conventions have been socially constructed.

Drawing together genre and process approaches, Flowerdew (1993) suggests that we should focus on the process of learning genres rather than concentrating only on the end product. This author argues for an educational rather than training approach to the teaching of genres. Since the wide range of genres students will need cannot be predicted, they should be helped to find ways of discovering how genres differ from one another. Flowerdew makes the important point that genres should not be presented as fixed patterns but as prototypes which allow for variation. He suggests using genre analysis to familiarise students with the notion of genre and acquaint them with the features, structure and social function of specific genres. What this scholar advocates is not slavish imitation of prescribed models but an awareness of how writers in a specific discourse community use genres. Swales and Feak (2009) also avoid laying down rules and encourage students to explore what the expectations of their discipline are. A similar approach is presented by Johns (1997) who describes ways of helping students

learn to interpret, critique and produce texts in specific academic contexts. She recommends that students should act as researchers and ethnographers in their academic culture to discover discipline-specific expectations and the knowledge and skills necessary for membership in their academic community. A suggestion Johns makes is asking students to collect several examples of a genre, identify its typical generic structure and linguistic characteristics, and analyse the social context in which it occurs, the roles of readers and writers, and its relationships with other genres.

The controversies over the effectiveness of genre-based teaching highlight the need for examining the effects of such instruction. Clearly, more empirical studies are required in this area, particularly research that provides descriptions of the teaching and learning processes, the classroom activities students engage in, and the genres they produce. This study attempts to address that perceived need and develops a concrete pedagogical example of the genre-based approach by evaluating the effect of genre-based instruction on summary-response writing at university. The next section focuses on the genre chosen, namely, the written summary-response.

### **2.1.5 Summary-Response Writing**

Summarising texts and responding critically to them are essential skills for anyone who reads for the sake of learning since they are cognitively demanding tasks that require not only reading comprehension but also subsequent reflection and writing. Actually, a summary-response is what Bracewell, Frederiksen and Frederiksen (1982 as cited in Mathison, 1996, p. 316) refer to as a *hybrid* act of literacy that places demands on reading, writing and critical thinking. It fits in the family of tasks called reading to write or writing from sources, which seems to be a prime area to develop critical literacy (Newell, Carriaga, More & Peterson, 2001). Therefore, summary-response writing needs to be developed as an important skill of academic literacy.

Summary writing, the ability to delete irrelevant details, select main ideas and condense the information in a text, seems to be an appropriate starting point for the investigation of the integration of reading and writing. Indeed, it constitutes a kind of bridge between the texts university students have to understand and those they have to produce (Klein, 2007). Summary writing tasks are described as “junctions where reading and writing encounters take place and (...) a complex composing process begins.” (Sarig, 1993, p. 161). These tasks involve an interphase between reading and

writing since one reads to select information taking into account the text to be produced, and writes guided by the interpretations from the reading, so writing nourishes itself from reading and viceversa. As a result, summarising presupposes carrying out diverse activities: reading the source text, writing the summary, revising it and rereading the original. This is a recursive process that involves multiple reading and writing acts. In addition to reading, interpreting content and writing, summarising entails constructing knowledge. According to Perelman (2008), “The written summary has a privileged position in students’ learning process since it is considered a tool that enables them to approach texts in service of the acquisition of knowledge.”<sup>8</sup> (p. 15). This is evident in the sense that the Greek and Romans gave to this word – *resumere* in Latin can be divided into the prefix *re-* that means coming back, and *sumere* that refers to delving into something (Corominas, 1973). As a matter of fact, summarising is related to the epistemic function of writing that requires getting involved in the process of transforming knowledge (Pipkin, 2010). When learners condense information, they need to understand the source text and transform it into a new text. However, summarising is a task that can easily be carried out on the basis of processes of knowledge-telling and writing strategies dependent on literalness.

From a linguistic perspective, when students resort to these processes and strategies, there is no real composing from the source text but the reproduction of that text. Ruiz Flores (2009) points out that the difference between copying and composing “is not a matter of degrees but of completely different activities. In fact, it is common for them to interfere with each other; copying pays attention to signifiers whereas composing is necessarily involved with the conceptualisation of the signified.”<sup>9</sup> (p. 174). Indeed, the linguistic reformulation of content enables students to access stored semantic information rather than literal memories and use it in service of a task, which is different from the mere reproduction of information (Perelman, 2008). In this respect, Ruiz Flores (2009, p. 140) explains that pieces of writing in which there is dependence on literalness or *information dump* have the following characteristics: Information appears in the same order as in the source text, is not elaborated to serve the purpose of the task and is not reformulated linguistically but appears as literal copy from the source text. This can be associated with what Flower (1979) calls *writer-based prose* as

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<sup>8</sup> My translation.

<sup>9</sup> My translation.

opposed to *reader-based prose*. The former is adequate for writers that write for themselves whereas the latter is the act of writing so that another person understands it. Reader-based prose is a text produced by expert writers. In contrast, writer-based prose is the product of inefficient attempts at a writing task, and originates in the writer's limitations without responding to the reader's expectations. Since novice writers seem to generate writer-based prose, the abilities to produce reader-based prose have to be taught. In fact, Trabasso and Bouchard (2002) state that the quality of summaries improves with instruction.

From a cognitive perspective, summarising implies the ability to manage certain mental processes. According to van Dijk (1978), besides understanding the meaning of a text, students have to be able to summarise it, that is, "produce another text that bears special relationships with the original text since it reproduces its content briefly." (p. 59). Although language users may produce different summaries of the same text depending on their knowledge, purpose, audience and task, they always do so on the basis of the same general macrostrategies (van Dijk & Kintsch, 1983). In order to obtain the macrostructure or global meaning of a text, it is necessary to apply operations of *semantic information reduction*, namely, *copy/deletion*, *selection*, *generalisation* and *construction/integration* (van Dijk, 1977, p. 143). When summarising, students select those propositions that correspond to macropropositions, delete unnecessary information, make generalisations and construct and integrate global propositions.

From a social perspective, according to Perelman (2008), summarising is a sociocultural practice of written language devoted to the acquisition of knowledge in pedagogical situations. For this author, a summary requires the conceptual reconstruction of the knowledge transmitted in texts in teaching situations that may either hinder or facilitate its production. As a result, summarising is not only a linguistic ability or a mere cognitive process but a complex discursive and conceptual practice inserted in a specific social context. Thus, being able to write a summary can be considered as "the appropriation of a social practice of written culture"<sup>10</sup> (Perelman, 2008, p. 55).

In conclusion, summarising makes linguistic, cognitive and social demands on the subject: the production of a written text, the construction of the meaning of the source text, and the adaptation to a new communicative situation in a particular social

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<sup>10</sup> My translation.

context (Perelman, 2008). First, summarising requires the conceptual interpretation of the source text to assign meaning to its content. Second, it entails rewriting the text by means of reformulation rather than reproduction. This involves semantic rather than lexical equivalence (Veck, 1991), and it also demands an organising principle for the selected content. The writer has to express the same content with new linguistic forms to create a text that is coherent with the source text. Finally, summarising requires considering the context since this activity is the product of a certain purpose and is aimed at a particular audience. This threefold requirement, namely, constructing meaning, composing and taking into account the communicative situation, evidences that summary writing is a complex linguistic and cognitive activity highly dependent on the social context in which it is produced and interpreted.

Summary writing is one of the most common academic tasks (Pipkin, 2010). Summaries are present in abstracts, research proposals, essays from sources, reports and covers of books, so they are constitutive elements of several genres. From primary school to university, we perform a variety of tasks that require summarising information. Indeed, surveys of academic writing tasks in university settings where English is the language of instruction suggest that the summary is assigned in many classes and plays an important role in more advanced and complex writing assignments such as syntheses, annotated bibliographies and literature reviews (Keck, 2006). As a matter of fact, Marzano, Pickering and Pollock (2001) identify summarising as one of the top nine effective teaching strategies in the history of education. Yet, according to Wormeli (2005), it is an underutilised teaching technique. Surprisingly, little is known about the summary writing strategies of EFL university students. Investigations into summary writing as well as its effectiveness in developing both reading and writing skills have been minimal particularly in the last decade, so it deserves more attention.

This lack of research is surprising given that national and international high-stake tests use the summary to evaluate reading comprehension and writing. The results of such tests reveal that, in many cases, students' summaries do not express the macrostructure of texts and display inefficient organisation of their content (Perelman, 2008). Generally, this failure is attributed to students' lack of reading and writing abilities, but the approach to the teaching of summary writing as a technique in which syntactic and lexical transformations are emphasised without the conceptual appropriation of knowledge in a specific context is not questioned (Kaufman & Perelman, 2000 as cited in Perelman, 2008). Perelman (2008) rejects the idea of the

summary as a technique that involves linguistic reformulation and, as explained above, interprets it as a cognitive process of conceptual production in a social context. When the summary is written outside a communicative situation and is not part of social practices, it does not serve its purpose, e.g. condensing information to study or understand the source text better. On the contrary, it is isolated from reality and has the mere function of evaluating reading comprehension. If summary writing is taught only to be evaluated out of context, students are unaware of its importance to construct knowledge and resort to local strategies focused on lexical and syntactic transformations. Unlike the approach that makes summary writing an exclusively linguistic practice, Perelman treats it as an activity related to the teaching and learning of content in specific social contexts. This illustrates the fact that reading and summary writing are linguistic, cognitive and social activities that feed on each other.

The genre chosen for this study, the summary-response, implies not only summarising but also responding critically to texts. Responding means both replying and reacting (Kern, 2009). These two meanings come into play when students read and write. Learners respond to a text in the sense of replying by filling in discourse that the writer has left implicit in the text. They also respond in the sense of reacting based on how well the text coincides with their knowledge, beliefs, values and attitudes. Rather than absorbing everything they read in texts, students should be able to react to the ideas in them. Indeed, common to all variations on genre pedagogy is the emphasis on developing critical literacy (Johns, 2002). Therefore, it is important to make students aware that their understanding of a text cannot occur without some kind of critical response on their part. If there is no response, learners are simply reproducing the source text instead of transforming it to construct knowledge. A written response offers an opportunity to clarify and synthesise what has been learnt from reading. In fact, writing always involves responding in both concrete and abstract ways. At the concrete level, students respond to a teacher's assignment. At a more abstract level, planning what they want to say involves responding to many factors including purpose and audience. From this perspective, every text students write is a response. This response-based pedagogy helps develop critical literacy and integrate literacy skills as students use writing to reflect on their reading (Pipkin, 2010).

Reader-response theory (Richards, 1920 as cited in Kern, 2009) links the linguistic and cognitive aspects of summary writing with its social dimensions. In this tradition, there is an interest in the dynamic relationship between the reader and the text

challenging the assumption that meaning exists independently of the interpretation of an audience. This does not mean that readers have complete freedom to interpret texts in any way they please. Although the meaning of a text is not fixed in an absolute sense, irrelevant interpretations can be ruled out by appealing to interpretive constraints. Indeed, readers and writers are socialised into communities that constrain the way they interpret and produce texts. To the extent that readers share similar linguistic and cognitive resources, and read in the same social contexts, their interpretations of a text will be alike. This is so because people read for certain purposes in particular settings and follow specific conventions established by discourse communities. Reader-response theory offers important insights for foreign language teachers (Kern, 2009). First, students should not be thought of as a uniform group with homogeneous interpretations. They may produce diverse interpretations because of differences in their beliefs and values as long as these fit in with interpretive constraints. Therefore, the pedagogic principle is to explore multiple interpretations. It is students' justification of their response that matters. Learners should be able to evaluate source texts, present their own analysis and justify their positions. This theory contributes to the view of literacy that takes us beyond the linguistic aspects of texts to the cognitive and social dimensions of discourse, and emphasises students' active role in creating meaning.

The generic structure of a written summary-response has two sections. First, the summary section summarises the source text as neutrally as possible. It consists in two basic moves: an introductory sentence (type of text, title, author and credentials), and summary sentences. Then, the response section describes the strengths and weaknesses of the text, and interprets its value (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). This section consists in three basic moves: a statement of opinion agreeing or disagreeing with the ideas in the source text, response sentences, and a concluding sentence. Generally, the summary-response has this topic-comment pattern; it begins with a brief summary of the source text and continues with an evaluative commentary (Mathison, 1996).

A well-thought-out summary-response provides evidence that a student has engaged in critical literacy skills that are highly valued at university. Such skills require more than comprehending a text to summarise it and agree or disagree with it. They require, as Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) put it, not only *knowledge-telling* but also *knowledge-transforming*. As this chapter draws to a close, it is important to highlight that, although the summary-response has been recognised as a valuable genre in academic settings, little is known about how students perform this literacy task.



## 2.2 Literature Review

The framework above presents a theoretical panorama of the issues investigated. Building on it, what follows is a review of research on these topics at the international, national and local levels.

Many studies have been carried out emphasising the integration of reading and writing as similar processes of composing. Research has stressed the fact that academic writing is rarely done in isolation, but is virtually always done in response to reading source texts (Cumming, Kantor, Powers, Santos & Taylor, 2000; Hale et al., 1996; Hamp-Lyons & Kroll, 1996; Horowitz, 1991; Leki & Carson, 1997; Weigle, 2002 all cited in Cushing Weigle, 2004; Morra, in press). That is, before students write on a given topic, they are expected to read about it. Despite this, a report generated by *Reading Research Quarterly* has shown that EFL reading and writing are not usually taught together because they are still seen as separate skills (Mallozzi & Malloy, 2007).

The issue of literacy development has been a concern in Argentina for more than three decades. Studies carried out by the Ministry of Education and UNESCO have placed Argentina in the 33<sup>rd</sup> position in the area of reading comprehension and have called for an urgent revision of the curriculum at all levels of the education system centering on the teaching of reading and writing, especially at the level of trainee teachers (Carrullo de Díaz, 2003).

Even if literacy instruction at university is well developed in theory and practice in the English-speaking world, in the Argentinian context, research and its application are more recent (Carlino, 2006). In the past, studies used to refer to students' literacy problems in terms of their cognitive processes but teaching practices were not questioned. At present, reading and writing at Argentinian universities have started to be thought of as activities that are central to both teachers and students in academic communities, and have to be investigated and taught explicitly. In a contrastive study of methods to teach writing in 125 universities in Argentina, Australia and the United States in the last two decades, Carlino (2006) observed that most American universities have writing centres and intensive writing courses. This originated in the L1 movement *Writing Across the Curriculum* (Bazerman et al., 2005) and the trend towards *Writing in the Disciplines* (Monroe, 2003). In Canada, the teaching of writing has not developed in the same way as in the US, but American experiences have been adopted as examples. Australian universities also have writing centres and academic literacy programmes.

These universities have developed specific policies that recognise the importance of literacy, and the integration of reading and writing. As a result, these institutions have trained teachers, and created academic writing courses for students. The theoretical foundation for these actions is the description of academic genres carried out by SFL, ESP and studies of academic literacies (e.g. Lea & Street 1998, 1999). This reflection on the teaching of literacy is based on the idea that writing influences learning, that each discipline has specific genres that students have to know, and that the best way of learning to write is writing to learn. Until recently, many Argentinian universities disregarded literacy. Nowadays, there is greater concern for reading and writing at university, but actions are barely inserted into the curriculum and receive little institutional support. Lately, the need to make institutions responsible for the development of academic literacy has led to the creation of writing workshops and courses for students that enter university; however, these have been short, temporary and conceived as remedial work due to the dissociation between secondary school and university. For this reason, there are attempts at coordinating both levels so as to keep university students within the education system. In spite of this growing preoccupation with academic literacy, actions do not seem to emerge from systematic planning and do not have a broad scope.

In 2005, *Secretaría de Asuntos Académicos*, National University of Córdoba (UNC), evaluated introductory courses and reading comprehension was a recurring problem. Due to this, a proposal was made to improve reading and writing instruction by teaching the conventions of academic discourse. In this sense, Bocco (2007) points out that the difficulties with academic literacy not only pose pedagogical problems but also underlie the socio-economic sphere. In view of this, enhancing reading and writing instruction can foster academic equality since it guarantees students' progress at university.

The role of instruction in the acquisition of second language reading and writing has sparked a large body of literature. The majority of researchers have examined instruction in the context of a particular approach (i.e. communicative, task-based, strategies-based, etc.) with the aim of informing pedagogical practices. Studies have yielded mixed results with some investigations indicating that instruction promotes learning and others suggesting that it has little effect (Mackey & Gass, 2005). There are many reasons for this disparity in findings. Classrooms vary and instructional practices that enhance learning in one setting may not do so in another context. The different

methodologies employed, units of analysis and measures of learning all contribute to the difficulty in comparing results. In an attempt to determine whether there is an overall pattern of positive effects of instruction, Norris and Ortega (2000) carried out a meta-analysis of studies of classroom instruction. Their overview suggested that instruction promotes second language learning lending support to explicit instructional approaches. For Byrnes, Maxim and Norris (2010), genre-based pedagogy falls at the end of the types of explicit instruction investigated by Norris and Ortega.

In this respect, several researchers (Belcher & Braine, 1995; Clark, 1992; Dudley-Evans, 1995; Hedge & Gosden, 1992; Hyland, 2003; Jacoby, Leech & Holten, 1995; Johns, 1995; Martínez, 2005) have reported that the ESP genre-based framework of instruction is effective in teaching academic literacy to EFL learners to familiarise them with the conventions of the academic community. However, studies examining genre-based teaching in such a framework are still underrepresented in the current literature (Cheng, 2008). Most of the L2 research into genre-based instruction has focused on students at the elementary and secondary school levels (Tardy, 2006). For instance, Myskow and Gordon (2010) used the genre approach in an EFL high school writing course to teach the university application letter to students preparing for post-secondary studies. On the other hand, many studies have analysed academic professional genres written by graduate students or professionals (i.e. Cheng, 2007, 2008). However, investigations of academic pedagogical texts written by undergraduates seem to be far and between. Thus, there is need for research on EFL university students as it also seems necessary to address this stage before students can write research and discipline-specific texts. In particular, aspects of explicit teaching that characterise this framework such as how students analyse genre exemplars and how such analyses shape their writing are still not duly explored. In fact, few descriptions of genres and their resulting pedagogical proposals contain discussions of the process by which learners have actually interacted with such genres in specific classroom settings. It seems that the genre-based approach still remains “an approach which privileges the analysis of learners’ target genre needs and the preparation of teaching materials but has relatively little to say about the actual learning by the learners” (Cheng, 2006, p. 77). As a result, genre-based research seems to lag behind theory and practice. In view of this, Freedman (1993) calls for empirical studies of the explicit teaching of genres since, so far, research has remained theoretical and anecdotal with data obtained mainly from case studies.

At the international level, studies carried out with EFL university students have shown the effectiveness of genre-based instruction. Reppen (1995) conducted a case study in which 20 learners undertook a five-week genre-based Social Studies course. She found that student writing, content knowledge and attitudes towards the subject all reflected a positive change. Similarly, Mustafa (1995) examined the effect of providing ESL students at university with genre-based instruction in the conventions of written term papers, and discovered that students' writing improved as a result of such instruction. Henry and Roseberry (1998) also reported the positive results of a genre-based academic writing course at university in which learners improved their ability to produce a tourism brochure. Likewise, Hyon (2002) observed that L2 graduate students increased their attention to the rhetorical features of texts after an EAP genre-based course. A related study led Hyon (2001) to conclude that genre knowledge acquired through explicit instruction can facilitate L2 reading and writing. Along similar lines, Swales and Lindermann (2002 as cited in Cheng, 2008) studied how L2 graduate students improved their production of the literature review section of research articles in their academic writing class. These studies have enhanced our understanding of the ESP genre-based literacy framework. However, an issue that remains to be addressed is how learners actually analyse genre exemplars before producing target genres specific to their disciplines. Therefore, it is necessary to extend the observation of students' performance from the final products of genre tasks to their process of analysis of genre features before the production of target genres. In order to do so, learners' writing samples should be examined to explore how generic features become integrated in their own writing.

At the national level, Trebucq (2005) carried out a study of the effect of genre-based instruction on the teaching of business report writing. The results supported the hypothesis that genre-based teaching enhances the written production of Business English learners at an intermediate level of language proficiency as revealed by test results, interviews held with the instructors and questionnaires administered to the students.

Among the academic genres relevant to university education, Johns (1997) distinguishes between academic professional genres (e.g. research articles) and pedagogical ones. Three essential pedagogical genres are the summary, the synthesis and the critique or summary-response (Brehens & Rosen, 1982). A number of studies of summary writing in English as a native language have revealed that instruction

facilitates summarisation (Afflerbach, 1990; Brown, Campione & Day, 1981; Brown & Day, 1983; Brown, Day & Jones, 1983; Chambliss, 1995; Taylor, 1984; Taylor & Beach, 1984; Winograd, 1984). Several of these studies over the last thirty years have analysed summary protocols of native English speakers and described similar strategies based on adaptations of van Dijk's (1978) original model of the rules involved in summarisation processes.

It is possible to group studies of summary writing according to the way in which summarising is conceptualised: as a comprehension or as a production process (Perelman, 2008). In each of these orientations, there are psycholinguistic investigations and studies related to teaching. Psycholinguistic investigations into summary writing are related to the use of macrorules, knowledge of textual structures, relevance clues and prior knowledge. On the other hand, studies related to teaching are centered on models of direct instruction in summarisation strategies. A brief overview of such studies seems in order.

The first group of studies concerned with summary writing was anchored in cognitive psychology. In the late 70s, van Dijk and Kintsch (1978) started a line of research in English-speaking countries that had a great impact on later studies. Their model of text processing gave rise to investigations centered on reading processes that aimed at describing the mental operations that take place during text comprehension and summary writing, and at establishing the difference between mature or expert readers and immature or novice ones. These investigations resulted in proposals for instruction to teach novices the processes carried out by experts. The first of these studies was Day's (1980 as cited in Perelman, 2008) dissertation. He trained students aged between 11 and 13 to apply the basic summarisation rules. Results indicated that improvement was related to the degree of explicitness of the training. The classic studies by Brown and Day (1983) compared the behaviour of expert university students and novices aged between 10 and 18 and showed that the former resorted to all the rules and were skilful at using integration while novices employed deletion rules more frequently. This was due to an increase in the complexity of these macrorules. Whereas deletion is a very simple summarisation strategy and, therefore, does not present difficulties, integration is more complex. Similarly, Brown, Day and Jones (1983) concluded that copy was a common summarisation strategy. The subjects in their study were limited to reading texts in a linear manner and retaining elements they considered important because of their intrinsic value without considering main ideas. Literal copy and the absence of

generalisation, construction and integration were an indication that the learners could not perform these cognitive operations successfully, but adopted a heteronomous position and depended heavily on the source text.

A second group of studies has considered that summarising involves not only the comprehension of the source text but also processes of written production. For Charolles (1991), Vigner (1991) and Fayol (1992), summarising entails writing another text that must satisfy the requirements of being brief, accurate and formally different from the source text. The first requirement, referred to as *the economy principle* (Vigner, 1991), accounts for the demand to delete secondary ideas. The second requirement, accuracy, implies avoiding personal reactions and achieving maximum semantic equivalence with the source text, that is to say, not altering its meaning. Finally, summarising requires linguistic reformulation of content to arrive at a coherent and cohesive text that enables readers to have access to the meaning of the original with less difficulty. These three requirements can generate contradictions. For instance, reformulation must have paraphrastic character due to the demands for accuracy but, at the same time, has to be accompanied by reduction. This line of research has also distinguished between adults and children. In general, when adults summarise, prior knowledge enables them to elaborate a mental model of the situation that controls the semantic relevance of the summary. In addition, knowledge of textual organisation and surface clues facilitates the selection of relevant information (Meyer, 1975; Fayol, 1985). As regards children and young people, Fayol (1992) points out the existence of three gaps: limited knowledge of textual structures that provide a frame to elaborate the macrostructure and of linguistic clues to detect the importance of information, lack of prior knowledge of textual content, and scarce knowledge of the rules to summarise. Whereas mature or expert readers identify textual structures and use them to organise propositions, novice subjects utilise the strategy of listing. Moreover, as several researchers (Anderson, Spiro & Anderson, 1980; Rumelhart & Ortony, 1977 as cited in Tierney & Pearson, 1994; Stein & Trabasso, 1982 as cited in Perelman, 2008; Thorndyke & Yekovich, 1980) have emphasised, subjects that do not possess previous knowledge related to the topic of the text have difficulty in summarising it. Finally, the application of macrorules is conditioned by knowledge of the world and text structure, which guide the construction of the macrostructure.

In Argentina, Pipkin (2002) carried out investigations that analysed the production of summaries on the part of primary school students. The results revealed

that children have many deficiencies as to coherence and lexical and grammatical cohesion. In a similar vein, Kaufman and Perelman (1997) also conducted studies with primary school students and identified the use of two types of strategies: local ones that consist in the substitution or deletion of words, and global ones that show a consideration of content. The former generate lack of coherence because of the substitution of concepts or the elimination of connectors whereas the latter preserve the information of the source text and lead to summaries that reformulate the meaning of the original. For these authors, the use of local strategies stems from a conception of summary writing based on the technique that privileges lexical and structural work and fosters microstructural changes. In fact, the analysis of common teaching practices reveals that summary writing is considered a linguistic ability that is independent of cognitive processes and the social context of text production.

Despite the fact that previous studies have examined the strategies used by subjects to summarise texts, they have concentrated on the description of products without trying to clarify the process by means of which students can move from novice to expert competence as a result of pedagogical interventions (Perelman, 2008). Indeed, methods of instruction have centered only on the relations between the subject's summarisation strategies and the text, and have disregarded the relations between readers and writers, and the purpose of the summary in a particular academic setting. As a consequence, summary writing has been reduced to the application of rules separated from the process of production of a genre in a specific context. Unlike others, this study attempts to understand summary writing from a perspective that takes into account the linguistic, cognitive and social dimensions of the genre. Instead of examining the relations between the subject and the text in an isolated way, I have adopted the perspective of a subject that belongs to an academic community. In addition, most of the investigations described above involved elementary and secondary school students but, to date, only a handful of studies on record have addressed the summaries of university level EFL students. Indeed, Johns (1993) highlights that summarising, a major issue for EAP literacy development, is not typically addressed from a reading-writing perspective and is a relatively neglected area of research. This author makes a very strong case for centering literacy instruction on reading-writing relations and teaching advanced students to write from sources, which is essential for academic success.

Among the few studies that focus on summary writing at university, Campbell (1990) conducted an investigation to document how native speakers and NNSs use

information from a background reading text in their own academic writing. She described their use of direct quotations, paraphrases, and summaries in compositions. The results demonstrated that, when these two groups of students integrated information from a text into their compositions, they relied on copying as the primary method of text integration, and that NNSs relied on the background text more than native speakers. In other studies (e.g. Moore, 1997; Shi, 2004, 2008), L2 undergraduate students were also found to rely more on source texts in their summary writing than their L1 counterparts. For instance, Keck (2006) analysed L1 and L2 writers' use of paraphrase within a summary task and confirmed that L2 writers used significantly more near copies than L1 writers. Conversely, the summaries of L1 writers contained more moderate and substantial revisions than those of L2 writers. Likewise, a study by Johns and Mayes (1990) compared summaries produced by ESL university students at two levels of proficiency. These authors found that low-level students engaged more in copying than transforming while better students were able to synthesise main ideas into a coherent summary.

In a similar line of research, Martins Vieira (2005) reported L1 studies in various Latin American universities in Argentina, Mexico and Venezuela, and established undergraduate students' deficiencies in reading and writing. Among these studies, in Argentina, Rinaudo, Vélez, Squillari and Bono (2001 as cited in Martins Vieira, 2005) analysed 500 summaries produced by students and observed that they were written with the same structure as the original and deleted main ideas of the text. These summaries were presented in the form of lists, and incomplete ideas led to the distortion of the meaning of the original. Action plans based on mother tongue teaching at university have been proposed in order to overcome these problems.

In the local context of this investigation, Morra (1996, 1999, 2002, 2003) carried out studies of the effect of explicit teaching on summary writing by EFL university students, and examined the summarisation strategies used. Results revealed that explicit instruction has a positive effect on the quality of the written summary. This researcher points out that the ability to summarise is vital for Argentinian university students who need to keep records of material published in English and incorporate this information in their writing. As this genre has been an object of study over the last thirty years but this interest has not been matched by suggestions for classroom applications, additional studies are called for.



As regards research into summary-response writing, regrettably, both L1 and L2 studies on this topic have been scarce. Among the few L1 studies devoted to this genre, Mathison (1996) investigated how undergraduate students wrote critiques of texts they read. Results indicated that the majority of students performed the critique as a personal response task and did not contextualise their commentary within a disciplinary framework. Only a small number of students seemed to interpret the critique as a task in which to integrate information from a source text with their commentary to build an argument for or against it. Students tended to write critiques that were not balanced; they either included too much evaluative commentary or concentrated more on summarising than on responding to the text. The results of this study underscored the need for the explicit teaching of this genre. In the area of EFL, Teramoto and Mickan (2008) analysed the first author's experiences in writing a critical review at the beginning of postgraduate study in Australia. These scholars point out that EFL students often face severe difficulties in writing this type of review due to their lack of experience in demonstrating critical thinking in this genre. They maintain that students' problems stem from their misunderstanding about the critical analysis dimension of the genre as well as its conventions and social purposes.

This overview of the current state of the art is selective rather than extensive. Each of these studies represents a valuable contribution but reveals the need for more empirical investigations into EFL academic literacy and the process through which students develop genre knowledge. To address the gaps mentioned above, I intend to explore the effect of genre-based instruction on summary-response writing. The present study offers a more detailed picture than that of others by systematically examining the process of teaching summary-response writing and also extends previous investigations in both the genre studied and the explicitness of the instruction and materials.

### **2.3 Objectives of the Present Study**

To close this chapter, I will present the objectives, research question and hypotheses of this investigation. The objectives of this study can be divided into general and specific.

### **2.3.1 General Objective**

On the assumption that genre-based teaching enhances EFL academic literacy, the general objective of this study is to investigate the effect of genre-based instruction on the process of teaching summary-response writing to EFL university students at an advanced level of language proficiency.

### **2.3.2 Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives of this study are to assess whether genre-based instruction in summary-response writing has positive effects on:

- (a) the ratings of students' task performance (collected via test scores);
- (b) observable performance (via analysis of students' summary-responses);
- (c) students' abilities and attitudes towards genre-based instruction, and their self-perceptions (via questionnaires and self-assessment checklists); and
- (d) teacher attitudes towards genre-based instruction and materials (via interviews).

## **2.4 Research Question and Hypotheses**

In the light of the theoretical framework and literature review presented, and according to the objectives stated above, this study intends to answer the following research question: Is genre-based instruction an effective pedagogical tool to teach summary-response writing to EFL university students at an advanced level of language proficiency?

The following hypotheses have been proposed:

H<sub>0</sub>: Genre-based instruction is not an effective pedagogical tool to teach summary-response writing to EFL university students at an advanced level of language proficiency.

H<sub>1</sub>: Genre-based instruction is an effective pedagogical tool to teach summary-response writing to EFL university students at an advanced level of language proficiency.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **Methodology**

The previous chapter provided the theoretical background for this study and a review of the literature focusing on the issues that this investigation is concerned with. This chapter describes the methodology followed in this research, which constitutes a quasi-experimental study with no random assignment (one-group, pre- and post-test design) based on quantitative and qualitative methods to collect and analyse the data. First, I will describe the context of the study. Then, I will refer to the participants and the materials used and, finally, to the piloting, data collection and analysis procedures.

#### **3.1 Context of the Study**

The present study was carried out at the School of Languages in an Argentinian university during the first semester of the 2010 academic year. This institution offers five-year Teacher Training, Licentiate and Translation Studies programmes in EFL. Each academic year of these degree programmes includes an English Language course which students are required to complete independently of the programme in which they are enrolled. In this five-level course, the four skills, namely, reading, writing, speaking and listening, are developed in the context of CBI. Students are expected to make progress from an intermediate to a proficiency level of English. The subjects in this study were students attending English Language IV, the advanced level at which summary-response writing is taught.

In this educational context, a true experimental design with random assignment of subjects to treatment and control groups was neither desirable nor feasible. First, it would not have been ethical to deny students access to an instructional approach that is considered effective. Second, there were only two groups of students, one in the morning and another one in the evening, which were not comparable since the profile of the morning group is different from that of the students who opt to take the evening class. The former group usually includes learners who are studying full-time whereas the latter may include more students with off-campus jobs. For this reason, the morning group often outperforms the evening group, so the initial nonequivalence of the groups would have been a threat to the validity of the study. Consequently, even though genre-based instruction was provided to both groups, the morning class, which also had the

largest number of students enrolled, was chosen for this study. Finally, a controlled experiment would have been more rigorous, but it would have been less interesting as it would have differed from real conditions. As a result, this field experiment in an authentic setting was thought to be more appropriate and the intact class group method and quasi-experimental design were employed. The common way of dealing with the problem of nonrandomisation, repeated measures design or within group design, was used and each subject's score in the pre-test was compared to his/her score in the post-test as suggested by Mackey and Gass (2005).

Quasi-experimental designs take place in authentic learning environments using genuine class groups, which opens up the study to the threat of heterogeneity of the initial group. To eliminate this threat, the pre-test was given on the first day of class, which enabled the researcher to make sure that the students did not know the genre. The experimenter also controlled the effects of extraneous variables that might influence the results eliminating from the datapool students who had already done the course and, therefore, had received instruction in summary-response writing. The design was also disrupted by student attrition between the pre- and post-test. Subjects dropped out for reasons such as scheduling conflicts, and there were new students, all of whom were discarded. Besides, there were no-shows for the post-test, which also reduced the sample size.

This kind of investigation has been defined by van Oostendorp and Swaan (1994 as cited in Parodi Sweis, 1999) as naturalistic since it takes place in a traditional environment, which enhances the face validity of the research, as opposed to situations in which subjects perform tasks under laboratory conditions that are different from their everyday situation. Given that the effect of a particular instructional approach was investigated, an existing classroom was thought to be the most *ecologically sound* (Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991, p. 143) setting for this research.

### **3.2 Participants**

A total of 46 student subjects participated in this study. The rest of the participants were one instructor and two raters.

### 3.2.1 Subjects

The sample for this investigation did not consist of students taken at random but belonging to one intact class selected on the basis of *convenience sampling* (Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991, p. 42), the selection of individuals who happen to be available for the study. The morning group of students attending English Language IV was chosen because of its profile and size. In terms of their linguistic background, all the subjects were Spanish-speaking learners of EFL enrolled in the fourth year of five-year Teacher Training, Licentiate and Translation Studies programmes at the School of Languages in an Argentinian university. They were at an advanced level of English language proficiency equivalent to level C1 of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* published by the Council of Europe, which corresponds to level 4 of the framework developed by the Association of Language Testers in Europe (Shaw & Weir, 2008).

The first testing instrument (pre-test) was administered to 100 subjects. The students who missed one of the data-gathering sessions, either the pre-test or the post-test, were not included in the study. Thirty-one of these subjects were discarded because they were not able to complete the second stage of the study (post-test). The remaining 23 students were doing the course for the second time and had already received instruction in summary-response writing; therefore, they were discarded, too. In the end, the sample size was 46 subjects, 35 female and 11 male. Their average age was 22 years old, ranging from 20 to 27.

The pre-study questionnaire designed to collect demographic information about the subjects revealed that the composition of the group was homogeneous as regards native language, age, and lack of experience in summary-response writing. In addition, the students were comparable with respect to the number of years spent in the English programme before the study. Besides, these subjects were representative of the student population enrolled at the School of Languages in terms of native language, age, sex (ratio of male to female students) and number of years in the programme according to information provided by the Teaching Department (*Área de Enseñanza*), School of Languages, and the Department of Statistics, UNC (2008). For more information about the subjects, see 4.2.2 Results of Questionnaires.

### **3.2.2 Instructor**

An EFL teacher was chosen out of three teachers who were teaching the English Language IV course in which the study was carried out. This teacher holds the Chair of English Language IV and was selected on the basis of her broad experience in teaching EFL at university. She graduated from the School of Languages, UNC as an English Language Teacher and did a Master of Arts in English at Texas Tech University, US. Before this study, the instructor received a training session on teaching summary-response writing following the genre-based approach.

### **3.2.3 Raters**

Two EFL teachers scored the subjects' summary-responses. These raters hold a degree in EFL Teaching granted by the School of Languages, UNC. They are members of staff at that School and one belongs to the Chair of English Language IV. They have extensive experience and have been teaching EFL students at university level for more than 10 years. Before rating students' performance, the raters attended a training session on assessment criteria.

## **3.3 Materials and Methods**

The materials used in this research study were the following: a set of genre-based classroom materials aimed at developing the student subjects' knowledge of the genre under investigation, an instructor's pack aimed at providing guidelines for following the genre-based approach, and a raters' pack providing guidelines for assessing students' performance using an analytic scoring scale. In addition, this study employed the following data collection instruments: two summary-response writing tasks, written questionnaires, self-assessment checklists and teacher interview protocols. In order to ensure that these materials and instruments were relevant to the participants in this study, needs analysis was carried out to obtain information about the expectations teachers have, the literacy skills learners need to acquire, and the texts and tasks they need to work with. This analysis was made on the basis of the information provided by the course syllabus. Furthermore, to arrive at a description of the genre in the context of this investigation, a database of summary-responses from previous students in the same

course (i.e. final exams) was examined using genre analysis of the schematic structure of the genre and its lexico-grammatical realisations.

### **3.3.1 Genre-Based Classroom Materials**

A set of genre-based classroom materials was prepared to teach summary-response writing to the student subjects (Appendix A). The activities and tasks included in it are based on *the cycle of teaching and learning* (Feez, 1998, p. 28), which informs the planning and sequencing of classroom activities showing the process of learning a genre as a series of stages that involve: *building the context, modelling, joint construction of the text, independent construction, and linking related texts*. These stages are not fixed; it is possible to enter the cycle at any point skipping stages if they are not necessary or returning to them for revision to suit learners' needs. However, when a genre is first introduced, teachers and students usually work through all the stages.

### **3.3.2 Instructor's Pack**

The instructor's pack (Appendix B) was prepared to provide the instructor, who had never taught summary-response writing following the genre-based approach exclusively, with guidelines for doing so. These guidelines explained the aim of the classroom materials, the rationale for the classroom activities and tasks, and the role of the instructor, who was expected to follow the guidelines to work with the classroom materials and contact the researcher if in doubt.

### **3.3.3 Raters' Pack**

The raters' pack contained a protocol (Appendix C.1) designed to provide the raters with guidelines for assessing summary-responses so as to minimise potential scoring subjectivity and variation between them. This protocol provided instructions on how students' performance should be assessed using the analytic scoring scale with descriptors elaborated for this study (Appendix C.2) and the scoring sheet (Appendix C.3). An analytic scoring scale was used as it allowed the various features of the genre to be assessed separately. In fact, Hamp-Lyons (1991) argues that, since second language writing development is uneven, it is necessary to go beyond assigning students

a single holistic score. The fact that the different aspects of writing do not develop at the same rate suggests the need for specific feedback on a variety of dimensions. Although analytic scoring is labour-intensive for teachers, it is said to be more precise, give more information to students and offer greater reliability than holistic scoring (Ferris, 2001).

### **3.3.4 Data Collection Instruments**

This study employs a multi-method approach to assessing the effect of genre-based instruction. Multi-method research involves the combined use of quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis in order to achieve a fuller understanding of the phenomenon by looking at it from different angles (Dörnyei, 2011). This was achieved by means of the following data collection instruments: two summary-response writing tasks used as testing instruments, written questionnaires, self-assessment checklists, and teacher interview protocols. The ratings of summary-response writing tasks and the self-assessment checklists collected quantitative data, while the questionnaires collected both quantitative and qualitative data, and the interviews collected only qualitative data. The interpretive analyses of the information obtained from the open-ended items of the questionnaires and from the interviews were compared with the quantitative analyses of the test scores, self-assessment checklists and close-ended items in the questionnaires.

The value of multi-method studies that combine quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis is their capacity to produce a more comprehensive answer to the research question than a single-method approach would. According to Dörnyei (2011), mixed-method research draws from the strengths while minimising the weaknesses of monomethod approaches bringing out the best of both paradigms. This type of multi-level analysis that integrates numeric trends from quantitative data with specific details from qualitative data is useful for combining macro- and micro-levels of analysis. While quantitative research can tap large-scale trends, qualitative research can provide a micro-analysis of how these are perceived by individuals. In fact, qualitative methods are advocated because, as Erickson (1986) suggests, they enable the researcher to address the learners' perspectives and the classroom as a social environment, which broadens the scope of the investigation.

Another advantage of using a variety of data collection methods is that this allows for triangulation, "an attempt to arrive at the same meaning by at least three



different independent approaches” (Johnson, 1992, p. 90). Obtaining converging results from different methods enables the researcher to verify one set of findings against the others. This enhances the internal validity of the study and offers a more comprehensive means of corroborating the results (Johnson, 1992). On the whole, triangulation helps build a more holistic picture of the issue under investigation and strengthens the conclusions drawn. In this study, the type of triangulation used was by data (Johnson, 1992). That is to say, qualitative data were compared to and integrated with quantitative data in an attempt to cross-validate the findings.

The growing practice of utilising quantitative and qualitative data illustrates the fact that these two approaches should not be viewed as dichotomous but rather as complementary means of investigating complex phenomena in second language acquisition (Mackey & Gass, 2005).

#### **3.3.4.1 Testing Instruments: Summary-Response Writing Tasks**

One of the ways of assessing the effect of genre-based instruction was measuring the changes in the ratings of students’ performance by analysing the scores given to summary-response writing tasks in a pre-test and a post-test. The pre-test (Appendix D.1) ensured comparability of the participants prior to their treatment, that is, their initial level of ability, and the post-test (Appendix D.2) measured the effect of the treatment.

These testing instruments consisted of direct, timed and in-class summary-response writing tasks designed to evaluate the subjects’ performance in summary-response writing before and after genre-based instruction. In order to minimise the learning effect, two similar but not identical authentic texts were employed to elicit summary-responses. Parallel or equated forms of texts are required to avoid pre-test bias on instruction or *learner test-wiseness* (Brindley & Ross, 2001, p. 156). These texts were slightly adapted and of similar length. They were also equivalent from the discursive point of view since their superstructure was expository. No readability formula (i.e. Fry’s) was applied because, lately, the assumption that length determines text complexity and constitutes a source of reading difficulty has been challenged (Koda, 2008). In addition, authentic texts were chosen as simplified ones may not represent real language use, often lose meaning and do not prepare students for authentic situations (Flowerdew & Peacock 2001c). The pre-test prompt was related to

the syllabus unit Education whereas the post-test prompt was connected with the unit Media Studies. Students were requested to perform the following task in both testing situations:

As part of your classwork, your teacher has asked you to summarise and evaluate the information in the article below. Read the text and write a summary-response summarising, analysing and evaluating the information in it critically. Your summary-response will be scored on content, organisation, language use, contextual appropriateness (purpose, audience, register) and mechanics (spelling, punctuation, capitalisation and format). You will have one hour and 15 minutes to write your summary-response.

As the effects of genre-based instruction may be changes not amenable to observable changes in the ratings of students' performance, other instruments were also used.

#### **3.3.4.2 Written Questionnaires**

The interest in considering the changes in subjects' abilities and attitudes led to the use of survey-based research. Two written questionnaires gathered quantitative and qualitative data from the students. One was administered prior to the study and the other one after the study. Both instruments were written in English but, to diminish the subjects' tension, answers to open-ended questions could be provided in Spanish. Ethical issues in research involving human subjects were taken into account, and the subjects were debriefed at the end of the study. Students read a consent form that provided them with enough information about the purpose of the study so as to make voluntary decisions about participating. Although it was made clear that the information collected would remain confidential, questionnaires were not completed anonymously so that students who were doing the course for the second time and those that did not do the post-test could be discarded. However, to ensure anonymity, the subjects were assigned random identification numbers. The questionnaires were filled out in class and handed back on completion, so the response rate was 100%.

Designing the questionnaires involved the following steps: reviewing relevant literature and previous related research, submitting the instruments to an advisory panel of experts for review, pilot-testing and revising them. These questionnaires yielded three types of data: *factual* (demographic characteristics), *behavioural* and *attitudinal*

(Dörnyei, 2011, p. 102), and consisted of three parts: (a) a section to collect demographic information about the subjects, (b) a structured section with close-ended questions requiring respondents to select one from among a limited number of responses designed to gather quantitative information about students' ability to write summary-responses, and (c) a less structured section with open-ended questions allowing respondents to reply in their own words to collect qualitative information about their attitudes to summary-response writing and genre-based instruction.

The pre-study questionnaire (Appendix E.1) was a 3-page, 13-item questionnaire. It gathered demographic information (i.e. students' age, sex, native language, English studies before entering the School of Languages, and number of years spent in the English programme before the study), information about their ability to write a summary-response prior to instruction, and information about their attitudes to summary-response writing. It consisted of six questions about demographic information, five closed items in which students were asked to select one from several options by ticking the appropriate box, and two open-ended questions. Some of the questions about students' abilities and attitudes asked them to respond on a four-point Likert-scale.

The post-study questionnaire (Appendix E.2) was a 3-page, 17-item questionnaire. It gathered demographic information about the subjects, information about their ability to write a summary-response after genre-based instruction, and information about their attitudes to summary-response writing and the genre-based approach, materials and activities. It consisted of six questions about demographic information, seven closed items, and four open-ended questions that encouraged students to openly comment on their perceptions of the genre-based approach.

The questionnaire was chosen because it is one of the most common methods of gathering data on the abilities and attitudes of a large group. In addition to being more economical and practical than interviews, it results in more insightful data (Mackey & Gass, 2005). Closed-item questions for which the researcher determined the possible answers, together with open-ended items that allowed respondents greater freedom of expression, provided both quantifiable data and qualitative insights.

Although students' answers do not generally reveal an exact picture of reality, the data gathered were useful for triangulation, that is, for supplementing the information obtained from the other instruments. The answers to the questionnaires were compared to students' performance in the tests to determine if there was

consistency between their perceptions of their abilities and attitudes, and the ratings of summary-response writing tasks. In addition, because questionnaires do not necessarily provide evidence of students' actual performance in specific tasks, it was necessary to study their behaviour when engaged in the actual tasks through self-assessment checklists.

#### **3.3.4.3 Self-Assessment Checklists**

These were structured self-observation instruments (Appendix F) that aimed at the inspection of students' behaviour retrospectively. Self-assessment checklists were used to stimulate recall and help students' reflect on the cognitive processes carried out while writing. Immediately after the tasks, the students were asked to report on what they had done by completing a checklist designed to elicit data on the specific task at hand.

Introspection taps participants' reflections on mental processes and assumes that what goes on in the mind can be expressed. Some of the major advantages of introspective measures are that they can enhance the richness of the data obtained and thus increase the reliability of the analysis (Mackey & Gass, 2005). However, these methods are not immune to *social desirability bias* (Dörnyei, 2011, p. 151) as there is the chance that participants will say what the researcher wants them to say and the results may not correspond to how the task was actually carried out. In addition, there may be information loss due to the time lapse between the task and the introspective recall because the task is not sharply focused in students' memory (Dörnyei, 2011).

Introspective methods such as self-assessment checklists that encourage learners to communicate their own perceptions of a language learning experience can afford access to information unavailable from observational approaches (Mackey & Gass, 2005). This allows the researcher to view the effect of instruction from the learners' perspective to determine if they consider that they have improved.

#### **3.3.4.4 Teacher Interview Protocols**

Two teacher interview protocols with open- and close-ended questions were prepared (Appendix G). These protocols aimed at collecting information about the instructor's attitudes to the genre-based approach to teaching summary-response writing before and after the study. These guided interviews also aimed at collecting information about the

instructor's opinion about the genre-based classroom materials, activities and tasks used to teach summary-response writing. The semi-structured interview approach was followed. In this approach, a guide that provides a general plan to conduct the interview is prepared. In these protocols, structured questions were specified in order to ensure that the interviewee focused on the target topic area, but other topics that developed from the answers were pursued without adhering to the guide rigidly. Flexibility was allowed so that the researcher had the freedom to digress, elicit additional data, and encourage the interviewee to elaborate on certain issues.

### **3.4 Piloting**

Once the materials above had been designed, they were piloted to correct mistakes or ambiguities and obtain more reliable instruments.

#### **3.4.1 Genre-Based Classroom Materials**

The genre-based classroom materials were pilot-tested during a workshop offered by University Extension. This small-scale trial enabled the researcher to address problems and flaws in the design before the study was carried out.

#### **3.4.2 Instructor's and Raters' Packs**

The instructor's and raters' packs were supervised by the members of the Chair of English Language IV and trusted colleagues, and minor changes were made.

#### **3.4.3 Data Collection Instruments**

All the data collection instruments were pilot-tested. The summary-response writing tasks were piloted with a group of 43 students that was similar to that involved in the study and sat for a final exam of the course in which this investigation was carried out. The pilot testees were given the same source texts, instructions and amount of time the subjects were going to be given to carry out the summary-response writing tasks. This was done to evaluate whether these tasks were appropriate for the students' level. Students were asked to give their opinion as to the clarity of the instructions and the

difficulty of the texts. This piloting experience revealed that 95% of the pilot testees considered that the instructions were clear and 84% believed that the texts were suitable for their proficiency level. Their suggestions, for example, explaining what mechanics means in the rubrics and providing a glossary with the meaning of some vocabulary items in the source text to avoid ambiguity, were taken into account. The other participants in the study (i.e. the instructor and raters) and some colleagues were also asked to give their opinion about the instructions and texts and they agreed that these were appropriate. As a result, the pre- and post-test can be said to have face and content validity, which have to do with how easy it is to convince the students and other researchers that the test measures what it intends to measure (Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991).

The written questionnaires and self-assessment checklists were also administered to all pilot testees in order to find out whether the items were clear enough or they might be confusing or difficult. These instruments were also reviewed by the instructor, the raters and colleagues who provided their feedback, too. Based on this feedback, the questionnaire and self-assessment checklists were fine-tuned and the final versions were put together. This procedure involved taking into account students' opinions, checking missing responses which were possible signs that the items had been misunderstood, considering the range of responses elicited, and detecting problem items. This piloting experience resulted in minor changes, i.e. some items were worded differently and/or shortened to increase clarity, avoid ambiguity and ensure that the format was user-friendly.

The teacher interview protocol was also reviewed by the raters and colleagues and it was suggested that leading questions and cues that might lead the interviewee to respond in a particular way should be avoided. According to Dörnyei (2011, p. 75), field testing of the instruments on a sample of people that is similar to the target sample for which they were designed produces *good psychometric properties*.

### **3.5 Data Collection Procedures**

The study was carried out with official permission from the academic board of the School of Languages and spanned eighteen months. The planning phase took three months (January to March, 2010) and was divided into three stages: materials preparation, which entailed preparing the instructor's and raters' packs, the genre-based classroom materials, the testing instruments, questionnaires, self-assessment checklists

and teacher interview protocols; piloting, which consisted in trying out the materials to find out their effectiveness; and the instructor's training. The implementation phase took another three months (April to June, 2010), and was divided into three stages: pre-study questionnaire, pre-test and self-assessment checklist administration, and pre-study interview with the instructor; treatment; and post-study questionnaire, post-test and self-assessment checklist administration, and post-study interview with the instructor. The remaining months of the academic year were assigned to the raters' training and data analysis procedures. The first six months of the 2011 academic year were devoted to thesis writing. Table 3.1 shows the stages followed during the study.

**Table 3.1**  
*Stages of the Present Study*

<b>Phases / Months</b>	<b>January</b>	<b>February</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>April</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>	<b>July to December</b>	<b>January to June 2011</b>
<b>Planning phase:</b> Materials preparation								
<b>Planning phase:</b> Piloting								
<b>Planning phase:</b> Instructor's training								
<b>Implementation phase:</b> Pre-study questionnaire, pre-test and self-assessment checklist administration, pre-study interview with the instructor								
<b>Implementation phase:</b> Treatment								
<b>Implementation phase:</b> Post-study questionnaire, post-test and self-assessment checklist administration, post-study interview with the instructor								
<b>Raters' training and data analysis procedures</b>								
<b>Thesis writing</b>								

To determine the effect of genre-based instruction on summary-response writing, a pre-test was administered requesting students to write a summary-response prior to instruction. After genre-based instruction in summary-response writing over a ten-week period, a post-test was administered. Pre- and post-study questionnaires and self-assessment checklists were also administered to the students, and interviews were held with the instructor at the beginning and at the end of the study. The conditions under which the instruments were administered and the measurements were taken (i.e. time, place, and person who collected the data) were alike.

### **3.5.1 Instructor's Training**

Before the experiment, the instructor attended a training session on teaching summary-response writing following the genre-based approach in which she received the genre-based classroom materials (Appendix A) and the instructor's pack (Appendix B).

### **3.5.2 Administration of Pre-Study Questionnaire**

On the first day of class at the beginning of April, the subjects filled out the pre-study questionnaire (Appendix E.1). All the students attending English Language IV were asked to volunteer their participation in the study. In this first data-gathering session, students had to sign a written consent form (Appendix H) in which they were told about the purpose of the study and the use that would be made of the data. The instructor explained that the aim of the study was to investigate the effect of an approach to teaching summary-response writing and that the texts they would produce were not going to be used to evaluate their performance. They could use pseudonyms rather than their own names and those who did not want to participate were free to leave.

### **3.5.3 Pre-Test and Self-Assessment Checklist**

The instructor administered the pre-test (Appendix D.1) to all subjects on the same day as and together with the pre-study questionnaire and self-assessment checklist (Appendix F), that is, prior to the teaching of summary-response writing. During the test, the instructor did not answer students' questions about the generic structure of the summary-response. After the test, they had to complete the self-assessment checklist.



### 3.5.4 Treatment

The subjects received a ten-week (April to mid-June) period of instruction in summary-response writing that adopted the ESP genre-based approach. Approximately thirty minutes of each eighty-minute class were devoted to summary-response writing. The instructor raised students' awareness of the generic structure of the summary-response practising this genre in terms of its sections, the moves within them and typical lexicogrammatical features. The teacher also drew students' attention to the rhetorical dimensions of the genre such as the roles of the writer, the reader and the context.

The students engaged in genre analysis focusing on the connection between the purpose of the genre and the structural and linguistic choices that realise it. This was carried out by means of the genre-based classroom materials (Appendix A) prepared for this study based on *the cycle of teaching and learning* (Feez, 1998, p. 28), which involves: *building the context, modelling, joint construction of the text, independent construction, and linking related texts*. The five types of activities carried out during the treatment are described below.

**Activities aimed at building the social context of the target text:** The aim of these activities was to promote students' understanding of the genre by carrying out a contextual analysis to consider how the summary-response is organised in terms of purpose, audience, reader-writer relationships and register.

**Activities aimed at modelling:** The aim of these activities was to deconstruct the summary-response to provide its generic structure (i.e. prototypical rhetorical pattern or schematic structure) and language (i.e. lexicogrammatical features) through different language scaffolding tasks, e.g. familiarisation, model manipulation, controlled and guided composition. These tasks gradually increased learners' independence moving from basic familiarisation tasks that fostered noticing and consciousness-raising through manipulation of models to composition tasks that varied in their degree of guidance.

- **Familiarisation tasks:** These tasks raised students' awareness of the structure and language used to create the target genre without requiring production as learners needed support during the early stages of working with this unfamiliar genre. Within familiarisation tasks, **text-level tasks** helped students analyse the generic structure

of the summary-response, which has two sections that serve different purposes, and **language-level tasks** helped students analyse the lexico-grammatical features that realise the sections of a summary-response.

- **Manipulation of models:** These tasks provided students with a genre schema to prepare them for writing. Although the use of models is sometimes objected on the grounds that these focus students on the rhetorical patterns of texts at the expense of developing creativity, this was countered by ensuring that students were exposed to a wide range of genre examples and activities.
- **Controlled and guided composition:** These tasks developed learners' confidence by providing a supportive writing environment. As students gained familiarity with the genre, they moved away from manipulating models to creating texts with controlled and guided input. Learners moved towards their potential performance through interaction with the teacher, who contributed what they were initially unable to do on their own providing opportunities for guided practice.

**Activities aimed at joint construction:** The aim of these activities was to create the target text in collaboration with the teacher and peers. This allowed the teacher to gradually relinquish responsibility to the students as they gained control of the genre and confidence in writing. Learners created the target text with the teacher and their peers, and were guided through the process by means of strategies for generating content, planning, drafting, writing, revising and editing their texts.

**Activities aimed at independent construction:** The aim of these activities was to remove scaffolding and allow students to create texts by themselves. This shifted responsibility to the learners who created texts on their own working through several drafts, consulting the teacher and peers only as needed and evaluating their progress.

**Activities aimed at linking related texts:** The aim of these activities was to relate the summary-response to other texts and contexts comparing the use of other genres in the same context (e.g. essays from sources, book reviews, annotated bibliographies and literature reviews) and the same genre in other contexts. These activities provided opportunities for critiquing and manipulating the genre.

Formative assessment took place throughout the cycle described above with the teacher monitoring the activities and providing feedback. Students were also involved in this type of assessment. This was achieved by providing criteria for learners to evaluate their own performance and that of their peers. Summative assessment took place at the end of the period of instruction and served as post-test.

### **3.5.5 Administration of Post-Study Questionnaire**

The post-study questionnaire (Appendix E.2) was administered to the students on the same day as and together with the post-test.

### **3.5.6 Post-Test and Self-Assessment Checklist**

After the treatment in mid-June, the instructor administered the post-test (Appendix D.2) to all subjects on the same day as and together with the post-study questionnaire and self-assessment checklist (Appendix F). The post-test had the same layout and instructions as the pre-test and was given under the same environmental conditions. As in the pre-test, the instructor did not answer questions about the generic structure of the summary-response. After the test, students completed the self-assessment checklist.

### **3.5.7 Interviews with the Instructor**

Before and after the study, the researcher had an individual interview with the instructor. Interview protocols (Appendix G) were used to structure the interviews. These interviews were carried out in Spanish to diminish the instructor's tension while being recorded and to create a relaxing atmosphere. The main objective of the interviews was to find out the teacher's attitude to genre-based instruction. They yielded three types of data (McKay, 2006, p. 58): *experiential factors* (the instructor's educational and professional experiences), *pedagogical factors* (the teacher's attitude to genre-based instruction in summary-response writing) and *contextual factors* (her opinion about the specific context of instruction, the materials and activities used). In interviews of this kind, there is the danger of the halo effect, which refers to what happens when interviewees pick up cues related to what they think the researcher wants them to say and this influences their responses. To address this concern, open-ended

discussion was encouraged and the interviewee's responses were repeated neutrally to provide an opportunity for reflection as recommended by Mackey and Gass (2005).

### **3.5.8 Raters' Training**

The raters attended a training session in which they received guidelines for assessing students' performance. The researcher informed them about their role in the study, described the scoring criteria and explained how to use the scoring scale. Before they judged the actual data, five tests, one belonging to each of the five bands on the scale, were selected from the discarded samples to practise test-scoring. Each rater received the raters' pack (Appendix C) containing:

- (a) a protocol with instructions on how students' performance should be assessed and on how to use the scoring scale,
- (b) an analytic scoring scale with descriptors, and
- (c) a scoring sheet to record the scores assigned to each sample.

At the training session, the scoring scale was read aloud and the scoring criteria were discussed and agreed on. Next, the raters corrected the samples and assigned them analytic scores, which were compared. They explained why certain marks had been awarded in cases of discrepancies. Bare passes were also discussed and data about which disagreement arose were arbitrated by the Chair. Practising test-scoring helped raters become familiar with the scoring criteria and scale to be used. It also served to pilot the scale and guaranteed unified scoring criteria. After this initial training, raters corrected the rest of the tests independently.

## **3.6 Data Analysis Procedures**

Both quantitative and interpretive methods were employed to analyse the data. The ratings of students' task performance were analysed using statistical tests. The summary-response writing strategies used by students were examined by means of the quantitative method of analysing texts by counting the instances that fall into pre-determined categories. The students' responses to the questionnaires and self-assessment checklists were tabulated and percentages drawn from the answers. The

open-ended items of the questionnaires and the interviews with the instructor were analysed qualitatively. The information gathered was triangulated.

### **3.6.1 Analysis of the Ratings of Students' Performance in Summary-Response Writing Tasks**

The pre-test enabled the researcher to find out about the students' ability to write a summary-response before the period of instruction and was compared to the results obtained from the post-test to determine the effect of genre-based instruction on summary-response writing.

#### **3.6.1.1 Script Selection and Codification**

Although 100 summary-responses were collected at the first data-gathering session (pre-test), 54 samples had to be discarded for the following reasons: 23 students were doing the course for the second time and 31 students did not do the post-test. The students that did only the post-test were not included either. A codification system (S1 to S46), which was not revealed to any of the participants in the study, was used to assign random identification numbers to the subjects and identify the samples.

#### **3.6.1.2 Script Scoring**

For reliability purposes, two independent raters scored students' summary-responses using an analytic scoring scale with descriptors. This scale was elaborated for this study adapting existing scales on the basis of insights from genre analysis of summary-responses that were written by previous students in final exams and exemplify good practice. The *competency-based* scoring procedure that is common in genre-based assessment was used (Hyland, 2007, p. 164). This procedure uses an analytic approach based on the primary traits of a particular genre and helps teachers to identify the key features of the target genre (i.e. its moves and lexico-grammatical features). The scoring scale was based on 100 points. The raters scored each of the traits of the summary-response (i.e. content, organisation, lexico-grammatical features, context and mechanics) on a scale from 0% to 100% and recorded the scores given to the subjects on a scoring sheet (Appendix C.3). The full mark for each of the traits was a score of

100% and the pass mark was 60%. A final mark for the summary-response was obtained adding up the scores given to each trait and dividing the resulting number by five, the total number of traits. The percentage obtained was later transformed into a score on a scale from 1 to 10. The pass mark was 4=60% following the scoring scale used at the School of Languages, UNC, to score term tests and final exams. In keeping with genre-based assessment, the scoring criteria were made explicit to the subjects and used for peer feedback and self-assessment, so students knew how they were expected to perform the task. Basic assessment issues such as validity and reliability were considered. It was assumed that any difference in the ratings of students' task performance between the pre- and post-test could be attributed to instruction.

### **3.6.1.3 Statistical Analysis**

The present study used two statistical tests, Cohen's (1960) Kappa (simple unweighted coefficient) and Wilcoxon Rank Sums (matched pairs), to analyse the quantitative data collected from the pre- and post-tests. The former was used to measure interrater reliability. The two raters who took part in this study scored the scripts independently and their scores were corrected for chance agreement using this test. The latter was applied to the scores given to the scripts to compare students' performance in the pre- and post-test.

### **3.6.2 Researcher's Analysis of Summary-Response Writing Strategies**

Text analysis of students' summary-response writing strategies was carried out. The quantitative analytical method of examining texts that involves counting the instances that fall into pre-determined categories was used. These categories were used deductively, bringing codes to the data and gradually finding them in the data. This type of coding involves highlighting text segments and labelling them so that they can be classified and grouped (Dörnyei, 2011). Textual data were broken up into chunks using the clause as the coding unit of analysis. Each of these chunks was assigned a category label which represented a summarisation or a response strategy. This process was not linear but iterative. The resulting nominal variables were tallied in frequency counts, and the relative frequency of each category was shown as a percentage. Bar graphs were used to show these frequencies. Reliability checks of the coding through *peer checking*

(Dörnyei, 2011, p. 61) were conducted asking a second coder to code a part of the data and then reviewing the proportion of agreement. The researcher randomly selected 33% of the data (15 summary-responses from the pre-test and 15 from the post-test) to have it coded by a second researcher. Percentage agreement was calculated (the ratio of all coding agreements over the total number of coding decisions made by the coders). This process yielded an intercoder reliability percentage. Cohen's (1960) Kappa was also used to calculate intercoder agreement.

### 3.6.2.1 Analysis of Summary Writing Strategies

The analysis of the pre-test summary section enabled the researcher to identify the most frequent types of summarisation strategies used by students before instruction, and was compared with the analysis of the post-test summary section to determine if there was a positive change in the strategies employed. In order to analyse the summarisation strategies used, the main and secondary ideas of the source texts were identified, which enabled the researcher to examine students' summaries. Then, the summaries were segmented into textual units. The summarisation strategies used were detected by means of comparisons of these textual units with the source texts, an outline of their main ideas, and templates containing possible summaries. On the assumption that the analysis at the micropropositional level provides information about the type of transformations carried out, that is, that the linguistic elements are indicative of cognitive operations (Perelman, 2008), these summarisation strategies were categorised on the basis of van Dijk and Kintsch's (1983) macrostrategies. It is necessary to point out that, although these authors' explain that their model holds not only for the comprehension but also for the production of discourse, these strategies were originally aimed at characterising processes of text comprehension rather than production. On the basis of their application to text production, namely, to the written summaries analysed in this study, I have identified the following summarisation strategies used by students: copy, deletion, selection of main ideas, generalisation, and construction/integration. These strategies can be described in the following way:

**Copy:** Information is reproduced verbatim either by means of exact copy, namely, word by word repetition of the original sentences, clauses or parts of them (e.g. subject, predicate or complements) or by means of near copy of phrases or consecutive words

with some rearrangements of syntax and the use of synonyms. Attempted paraphrase was also included in this strategy. It consisted in paraphrased information with single key words copied from the original.

**Deletion:** Information that is not essential for the global meaning of the text is omitted. This means that, from a sequence of propositions, those that contain irrelevant information (i.e. secondary ideas) can be deleted. Typical cases of this type of information are examples, which can be eliminated by means of this strategy. The information deleted is irrecoverable, but this sort of accidental information may be left out without changing the meaning of the text. This rule manifests itself in activities such as underlining and using parenthesis to discard parts of a text.

**Selection:** Propositions that specify normal causes, consequences and components of events, preparatory and auxiliary actions, conditions or presuppositions can be deleted. In the same way as the previous strategy, when we apply selection, information is deleted. However, in this case, the relationship between the propositions is different since the proposition that is selected implies the deleted ones; for example, it is the topic sentence of the paragraph. If there is a thematic or topical proposition that expresses the main idea, it is possible to select it (i.e. by means of copy, near copy or paraphrase) and omit the rest. Here, the information that is deleted is not accidental but constitutional of a certain concept and is, at least, inductively recoverable.

**Generalisation:** A series of concepts is substituted by a superordinate concept that defines it. In the same way as the previous macrostrategies, generalisation also deletes pieces of information but, in this case, in such a way that these cannot be retrieved from the resulting proposition. Whereas in the previous operations the information deleted was accidental and constitutional respectively, the information deleted in generalisations is essential. A process of abstraction takes place because a list of concepts of the same class may be substituted for and referred to with the name of the superordinate class, for instance, a hyperonym, which replaces the series combining several lexical items into one. Generalisation includes the operations of nominalisation and superordination.

**Construction/integration:** A proposition that denotes the same information as a whole sequence of propositions substitutes it. In this case, instead of being deleted, selected or



generalised, the information in a sequence of propositions is constructed or integrated and replaced by a totally new macroproposition that is implied by the substituted propositions. This new proposition is absent from the text but can be deduced and derived from explicit information in the microstructure. This happens when a topic sentence that is not explicitly mentioned in the text is supplied or when the global meaning of a set of sentences is expressed in a single sentence. The deleted propositions are elements or integral parts, though not compulsory ones, of the proposition that works as a substitute. The information of the sequence is, in this case, recoverable because it is part of a more general concept.

These macrostrategies reduce information through several kinds of abstraction; irrelevant details, normal properties, essential properties and integral parts of events are not included in macropropositions. The first three strategies (copy, deletion and selection) are selective whereas the last three (generalisation, construction and integration) are constructive. The selective operations are of the deleting type whereas the constructive ones are of the substituting type. The most general restriction of these macro-operations is that they cannot omit information that forms presuppositions for the interpretation of the rest of the text, but must satisfy a principle called *semantic entailment* (van Dijk, 1977, p. 59). That is, after the application of any operation, the resulting macropropositions have to be entailed or semantically implied by the microstructure (i.e. the series of propositions to which the strategy is applied). Thus, the macrostructure must result from the microstructure. It is also important to carry out a process of abstraction but not in such a way that the meaning of the text is lost. This requires that the strategies operate in the most limited way possible. For example, when generalising, general concepts cannot be used arbitrarily but immediate superordinate concepts have to be chosen. According to van Dijk (1977), some other restrictions should be added to these operations of information reduction. First, it cannot be proved that these strategies are sufficient to account for semantic information reduction. Second, although the formation of macrostructures is based on a relation of entailment and has a deductive nature, it may often have an inductive nature. It is not necessary to have all the essential components of a concept in order to infer the general concept. Third, even though the principles of information reduction are general, they may be used differently for various types of discourse. Finally, these principles are not only general but also ideal and theoretical, so they merely provide predictions of actual

behaviour. In practice, not all language users apply strategies in the same way. Their actual application may be subjectively variable depending on purpose, context and prior knowledge.

### 3.6.2.2 Analysis of Critical Response Strategies

The analysis of the pre-test response section enabled the researcher to identify the most frequent types of critical response strategies used by students before instruction, and was compared with the analysis of the post-test response section to determine if there was a positive change in the strategies employed. In order to analyse students' response strategies, categories were established using the guidelines for critical analysis provided by Brehens and Rosen (1982), Browne and Stuart (1998), Dobson and Feak (2001), Podis and Podis (1984), Quitman Troyka (1987), Reid (1988), Swales and Feak (2009), and Wallace and Wray (2008). Then, students' responses were segmented into textual units and these were categorised into the pre-determined critical response strategies. The response strategies identified were the following:

**Evaluating content:** agreeing, partly agreeing or disagreeing with the author, evaluating source text content, identifying hidden assumptions, assessing the evidence provided, and recognising faulty reasoning.

**Presenting one's analysis:** carrying out a critical analysis of source text content and taking a position in relation to it.

**Justifying one's position:** providing examples, causes/reasons, consequences, conditions, explanations, facts/statistics, personal anecdotes, and references to background reading material to account for one's stance.

**Evaluating style:** evaluating the language and rhetorical devices used by the author.

### 3.6.3 Analysis of Questionnaires and Self-Assessment Checklists

The quantitative responses to the close-ended items of questionnaires and self-assessment checklists were tabulated, tallied and reported in raw frequencies (the

number of students responding in a certain way) and relative frequencies (percentages). These frequencies were compared between the pre- and post-test. This provided a thin description of the target phenomenon (McKay, 2006). The questionnaire was also descriptive, so it involved in-depth qualitative analysis, too. This type of analysis was chosen following the trend towards greater use of qualitative methods in L2 research conducted in educational settings (Hirvela, 2001).

The qualitative answers to the open-ended items of the questionnaires were transcribed and content analysis was carried out to establish patterns in the data. To do so, key ideas were highlighted looking for recurring themes. A list of categories was derived inductively from the emergent nature of the data in open-ended questions. This process in which the categories are based on a first pass through the data is known as *open coding* (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 241). The categories obtained were used to summarise students' answers and a typical response was selected to illustrate each major theme. This cyclical process of moving back and forth in a non-linear manner among data and interpreting the results is referred to as iteration, which follows the sequence of pre-coding for themes looking for patterns, higher-order pattern coding, and making interpretations (Dörnyei, 2011). Qualitative research of this type adopts an emic perspective that aims to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people attach to them; in this case, the method known as thick description, which involves general description of the patterns in the data, particular description with representative examples, and interpretive commentary of the meaning of the findings, was used (MacKey & Gass, 2005). The results of questionnaires and self-assessment checklists were examined in order to determine whether they coincided with and validated test results, the researcher's analysis of summary-response writing strategies, and the instructor's opinions.

#### **3.6.4 Analysis of Interviews with the Instructor**

During the interviews, the instructor's answers were recorded and relevant parts were later transcribed. Next, qualitative content analysis was conducted in order to identify and code key topics. The interview data were analysed in terms of the three central categories suggested by McKay (2006, p. 58): *experiential factors* (the teacher's educational and professional experiences), *pedagogical factors* (the teacher's beliefs

about writing instruction) and *contextual factors* (the teacher's opinion about the specific context of instruction).

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **Results and Discussion**

Chapter 3 described the design of this research study and explained the choices made for its implementation. It included the necessary information for the replication of the study in terms of the materials used, the methodology applied for data collection, and the analysis procedures carried out with the data. This chapter will present the results derived from the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data gathered. First, I will present the results obtained from the quantitative analysis of the data, namely, the results of the ratings of students' task performance, and then those obtained from the quantitative and qualitative analyses of the data, that is, the results of the researcher's analysis of summary-response writing strategies, the results of questionnaires, self-assessment checklists and interviews with the instructor. Next, I will compare these results by means of triangulation. Finally, I will discuss these findings and interpret the information brought to light by them.

#### **4.1 Results of Quantitative Data**

The present study used two statistical tests<sup>11</sup> to analyse the results obtained from the ratings of students' task performance. The first test was Cohen's (1960) Kappa, which was used to measure the interrater reliability of the two raters that participated in this study, and the second one was Wilcoxon Rank Sums (matched pairs) test, which was applied to the scores in order to compare students' performance in the pre- and post-test.

##### **4.1.1 Results of the Ratings of Students' Performance in Summary-Response Writing Tasks**

###### **4.1.1.1 Reliability**

Reliability refers to the accuracy of measurement, and indicates the extent to which the instruments, in this case the tests, produce consistent results when administered under

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<sup>11</sup> The data have been processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 15.0 and InfoStat Software Version 2011, *Facultad de Ciencias Agropecuarias, UNC*.

similar conditions. There are two types of reliability, namely, internal and external (McKay, 2006).

Internal reliability can be judged through intra- and interrater reliability and shows the degree of consistency with which scores are assigned to the same test by the same rater on different occasions or by different raters. It requires that the same results are obtained if the study is replicated. External reliability deals with whether another researcher undertaking a similar study would arrive at the same conclusions. To guarantee reliability in this study, interrater reliability was calculated. The general approach that provides estimates of reliability was followed calculating the percentage of agreement between two sets of scores given by two independent raters.

The raters' scores were compared to determine whether they agreed with each other and the degree of consistency was established. A value was assigned to the scores given by the raters to the same text. When the score coincided, a value of 1 was assigned, when it did not, 0 was assigned. These values produced the percentage of agreement, the ratio of all scoring agreements over the total number of scoring decisions made by the raters. The degree to which the two raters agreed indicated the level of interrater reliability. This process yielded an interrater reliability percentage of 74%. This indicated that the two raters agreed on their rating 74% of the time and disagreed 26%, which showed a good level of agreement between them. Although, according to Johnson (1992), percentages over 90 are ideal, a test is reliable when such a percentage is above 70 and anything approaching 75% may be considered good. Apart from the above-mentioned analysis, Cohen's (1960) Kappa was also used to determine interrater reliability. This test provides a measure of the degree to which two judges concur in their sortings of  $N$  items into  $k$  mutually exclusive categories. When such categories are nominal, as in this study, Cohen's simple unweighted coefficient is the only form of Kappa that can be used.

The two raters scored students' summary-responses separately with a scoring scale based on 100 points. This score was later transformed into a score on a scale from 1 to 10 ( $60\%=4$ ). In the pre-test, the minimum score assigned by each rater was 1 while the maximum score was 3. The percentiles  $P(05)$ ,  $P(50)$  and  $P(95)$  indicate that 5% of the students obtained a score of 1, 50% obtained a score of 2 or less and 95% obtained a score equal to or lower than 3 assigned by both raters. When analysing the agreement between the raters in the pre-test, Cohen's (1960) simple unweighted coefficient determined a statistically significant value of 0.451 ( $p < 0.0001$ ). This coefficient of

interrater reliability ( $K=0.451$ ) obtained from the ratings of students' task performance indicated a good level of agreement between the raters. For this reason, the average of pre-test scores assigned by both raters was considered to analyse the data. Table 4.1 below shows the descriptive statistics for pre-test scores and Table 4.2 shows the agreement between the raters in the pre-test.

**Table 4.1**  
*Descriptive Statistics for Pre-Test Scores (N=46)*

Variable	Median	SD	CV	Min.	Max.	P(05)	P(50)	P(95)
<b>Rater 1</b> Pre-test score	2.04	0.47	22.97	1.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	3.00
<b>Rater 2</b> Pre-test score	2.07	0.57	27.77	1.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	3.00
<b>Raters 1 &amp; 2</b> Pre-test score	2.00	0.56	27.89	1.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	3.00

**Table 4.2**  
*Agreement between the Raters on Pre-Test Scores (N=46)*

Rater	Rater 2 Pre-test scores			Total
	1	2	3	
Rater 1 Pre-test scores	1	2	0	4
	2	4	4	36
	3	0	5	6
Total	6	31	9	46

Coefficient of interrater reliability ( $K=0.451$ )

In the post-test, the minimum score assigned by each rater was 3 while the maximum score was 9. The percentiles P(05), P(50) and P(95) indicate that 5% of the students obtained a score of 3, 50% obtained a score of 6 or less and 95% obtained a score of 7 or more assigned by both raters. When analysing the agreement between the raters in the post-test, Cohen's (1960) simple unweighted coefficient determined a statistically significant value of 0.647 ( $p < 0.0001$ ). This coefficient of interrater reliability ( $K=0.647$ ) obtained from the ratings of students' task performance indicated a

good level of agreement between the raters. For this reason, the average of post-test scores assigned by both raters was considered to analyse the data. Table 4.3 shows the descriptive statistics for post-test scores and Table 4.4 shows the agreement between the raters in the post-test.

**Table 4.3**

*Descriptive Statistics for Post-Test Scores (N=46)*

Variable	Median	SD	CV	Min.	Max.	P(05)	P(50)	P(95)
<b>Rater 1 Post-test score</b>	5.65	1.25	22.13	3.00	9.00	3.00	6.00	7.00
<b>Rater 2 Post-test score</b>	5.46	1.13	20.70	3.00	7.00	3.00	6.00	7.00
<b>Raters 1 &amp; 2 Post-test score</b>	5.48	1.17	21.34	3.00	8.00	3.00	6.00	7.00

**Table 4.4**

*Agreement between the Raters on Post-Test Scores (N=46)*

Rater	Rater 2 Post-test scores					7 or more	Total
	3	4	5	6	7 or more		
<b>Rater 1 Post-test scores</b>	3	3	0	0	0	0	3
	4	0	4	1	0	0	5
	5	0	2	7	1	0	10
	6	0	1	1	14	1	17
	7 or more	0	0	0	5	6	11
<b>Total</b>	3	7	9	20	7	46	

Coefficient of interrater reliability (K=0.647)

Some of the ways of achieving greater interrater reliability include validating the scoring scale, using raters of similar background and training raters (Kolbe & Brunett, 1991). The present study observed these three issues. First, the scale used to score the summary-response writing tasks in this study was designed on the basis of the Cambridge ESOL Common Scale for Writing levels C1 (Effective operational proficiency, Certificate in Advanced English) and C2 (Mastery, Certificate of Proficiency in English)



of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* published by the Council of Europe, University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations (Shaw & Weir, 2008). This scale is widely recognised and has already been validated by the University of Cambridge Syndicate. Second, the raters who took part in this investigation work together and have approximately the same number of years of experience in teaching and assessing students' EFL writing at university. Third, before scoring the tests, the raters had a training session at which they practised test scoring and discussed scoring criteria. These factors may have contributed to the level of reliability achieved by the raters in this study.

#### 4.1.1.2 Wilcoxon Rank Sums Test

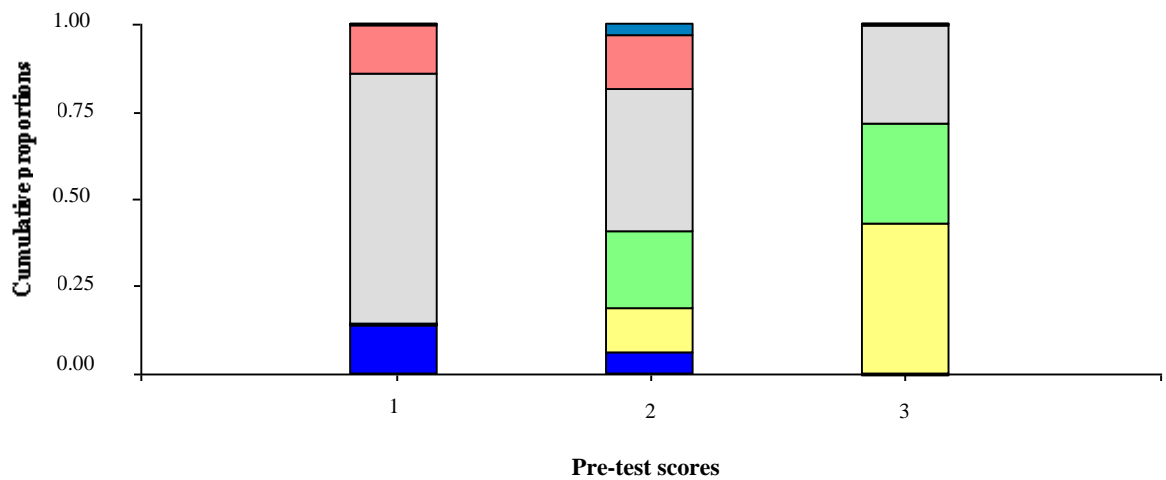
After establishing a good level of interrater reliability, the average of the pre- and post-test scores assigned by both raters was considered in order to determine whether the difference between these scores was statistically significant. The data represented by the ratings of students' performance in summary-response writing tasks (i.e. test scores) were not normally distributed. Therefore, a non-parametric test was used, namely, Wilcoxon Rank Sums (matched pairs). This test compares two sets of scores from the same group before and after the treatment. Results indicated that the mean difference between pre- and post-test scores was 3.48 points. This difference in means is statistically significant ( $p < 0.0001$ ). That is, it is big enough to be significant, so it cannot be said to have been produced either by the learning effect or the normal maturation of the students (See Appendix I, Table I.1 *Estimated p-value*). Table 4.5 shows the mean difference between pre- and post-test scores and Figure 4.1 shows the cumulative proportions of post-test score gains (See Appendix J. Cumulative Proportions of Post-Test Score Gains, Table J.1 *Quantity of Students according to Pre- and Post-Test Scores*, and Table J.2 *Percentage of Students according to Post-Test Scores for each Pre-Test Score*).

**Table 4.5**

*Mean Difference between Pre- and Post-Test Scores*

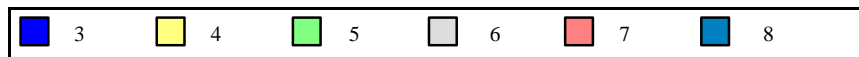
Mean difference	Pre-test mean	Post-test mean
-3.48	2.00	5.48

**Figure 4.1 Cumulative Proportions of Post-Test Score Gains**



## References

### Post-test scores



This figure shows that the students that obtained the lowest scores in the pre-test obtained the greatest gains in post-test scores. Significant within-subject mean differences and significant differences in the performance of the group between the pre- and the post-test may be considered direct evidence of the positive effect of genre-based instruction. In conclusion, the results reached statistically significant levels that confirmed the hypothesis of this study at a 0.0001 level of probability. As a result, the null hypothesis can be rejected with a high degree of confidence as students did better in the post-test after receiving genre-based instruction. It is then possible to assert that, for this group of EFL university students at an advanced level of language proficiency and in this particular context, genre-based instruction is an effective pedagogical tool to teach summary-response writing since it has a positive effect on the ratings of students' task performance. These findings coincide with those of Trebucq (2005) who found that the university students in an experimental group that received genre-based instruction in business report writing outperformed those in the control group in a post-test.

Although the non-parametric test used in this study does not allow generalisations of the results to other contexts as parametric tests do, it is a reliable test to compare nominal data such as the ones obtained in this study. Because the requirements for using this study for inferential purposes are not met, this non-parametric statistical test has been used for descriptive purposes. Therefore, it is not

possible to make causal claims (Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991). The descriptive statistics helped make tendencies or patterns in the data clear, which were confirmed by the results obtained from the other methods as recommended by Dörnyei (2011).

#### **4.1.1.3 Validity**

Research validity concerns the overall quality of the investigation, and the extent to which the interpretations generalise beyond the sample of the research study to other contexts. These two types of validity are known as internal and external (Dörnyei, 2011). According to Johnson (1992), in interpreting and evaluating research, both internal and external validity should be considered.

A study has a high degree of internal validity if one can claim that the treatment was the cause of the difference in the dependent variable. It involves the degree to which the research design has controlled for variables that could influence the outcome of the study, and the extent to which the results are a function of the factor that the researcher intended to measure. Therefore, a researcher must control for all the other possible factors apart from the treatment that could potentially account for the results and threaten the validity of the study. According to Mackey and Gass (2005), the ways in which internal validity can be compromised include participant characteristics (past language learning experiences), mortality or attrition (subject dropout reduction of sample size), history (unanticipated events), attitude (i.e. Hawthorne effect or the positive impact that may occur because participants know they are being studied), social desirability (i.e. the halo effect or the fact that subjects over-report desirable attitudes to please the researcher), maturation (in longitudinal studies), data collection (piloting, location, time, collector and consistent instrumentation), and test effects (washback effect or the effect of a test on teaching and learning). In this study, subjects who had already been taught how to write a summary-response were not included because that past learning experience would have compromised the internal validity of the study. Students that did only one of the tests (the pre- or post-test) were not included either. Other validity issues such as social desirability and consistent data collection were also taken into account.

Design validity is an aspect of internal validity specific to mixed methods research that refers to the extent to which the quantitative and qualitative components are combined in such a way that the design displays complementary strengths instead of

overlapping weaknesses (Dörnyei, 2011). In this study, the main rationale for the choice of mixed methods was the match of the research question and objectives with the methods, which were considered suitable for the purpose.

External validity involves the generalisability of findings; that is, the extent to which the results of the study can be generalised and are relevant to a wider population of language learners. In considering this type of validity, it is necessary to take into account the representativeness of the sample (Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991). Even though the sample in this study was representative, it was not drawn randomly from the population to which we hope to generalise, so the design of the study precludes generalisation. Therefore, such sample has been described so that other researchers can judge to whom and in what circumstances the outcome of this investigation may be meaningful and conduct replication studies using different designs, subjects and contexts so that, if confirmed, these results may later be generalised. In conclusion, the statistical tests employed in this study are only relevant to this group of students. Although it cannot be claimed that the same results would be obtained by other groups of similar students, the ratings of students' task performance seemed to indicate that these subjects did better in the post-test due to the treatment received. Methodological triangulation was used in order to arrive at the same findings by means of different methods, which reduces bias and enhances the validity and reliability of the data obtained (Mackey & Gass, 2005).

#### **4.2 Results of Quantitative and Qualitative Data**

This investigation triangulated the results obtained from the quantitative and qualitative data collected. The quantitative data analysed in this study came from three sources: the tests, the questionnaires and the self-assessment checklists, and the qualitative data came from three sources, too: the analysis of summary-response writing strategies used by the students, the open-ended answers to the questionnaires administered to the subjects and the interviews held with the instructor. In qualitative research, data are analysed by non-statistical methods such as qualitative content analysis and interpretive analysis (Dörnyei, 2011). The former is carried out to explore the participants' views on the issue studied, and the latter is the product of the researcher's subjective interpretation of the data. These types of analysis produce thick description and results

are arrived at through an iterative process of working with the data until *a goodness of fit* is achieved (Dörnyei, 2011, p. 55).

#### **4.2.1 Results of the Researcher's Analysis of Summary-Response Writing Strategies**

The analysis of students' summary-response writing strategies yielded nominal variables that were tallied in frequency counts. The raw frequency totals were calculated and the relative frequency of each category was shown as a percentage. Bar graphs were used to show the frequencies and a description of the strategies employed by students was provided.

The procedure of conducting reliability checks of the coding through *peer checking* (Dörnyei, 2011, p. 61) was followed asking a second coder to code separately a part of the data and reviewing the proportion of agreement. The researcher randomly selected 33% of the data (15 summary-responses from the pre-test and 15 from the post-test) to have it coded by the second coder. Percentage agreement was calculated, the ratio of all coding agreements over the total number of coding decisions made by the coders. This process yielded an intercoder reliability percentage of 78%, which means that there was disagreement over only 22% of the data. According to Mackey and Gass (2005), anything above 75% may be considered good although percentages over 90% are ideal. Cohen's (1960) Kappa was also used to calculate intercoder agreement. When analysing the agreement between the researcher and the second coder on their analyses of summary writing and critical response strategies, Cohen's simple unweighted coefficient determined a statistically significant value of 0.361 ( $p < 0.0001$ ) in the pre-test and of 0.800 ( $p < 0.0001$ ) in the post-test. These coefficients of reliability ( $K=0.361$  and  $K=0.800$ ) obtained from the analyses of students' summary writing and critical response strategies indicated a good level of agreement between the researcher and the second coder. In the pre-test, the strategies over which there was more disagreement between the researcher and the second coder were summarisation strategies whereas, in the case of response strategies, correspondence was higher. In contrast, in the post-test, there were higher levels of disagreement about response strategies while correspondence was higher in the case of summarisation strategies. The categories over which agreement was lower constituted the focus of discussion at a training session,

after which some categories were revised and correspondence between the researcher and the second coder was considerably higher.

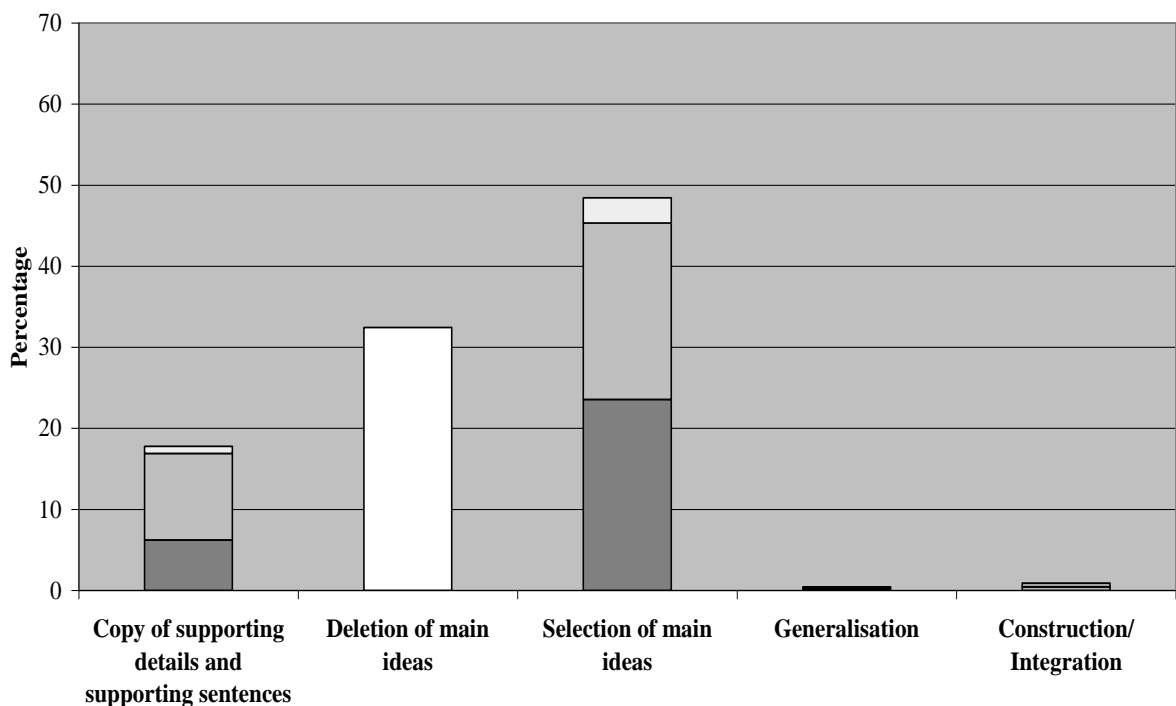
#### 4.2.1.1 Summary Writing Strategies

The comparison between the pre- and post-test summary sections enabled the researcher to identify the most frequent types of summary writing strategies used by students before and after genre-based instruction. On the whole, in the post-test students' summaries improved both qualitatively, in relation to the greater use of the more effective strategies of selection of main ideas by means of attempted paraphrase, generalisation and construction/integration, and quantitatively, in terms of length and main ideas included.

##### *Pre-Test Summarisation Strategies*

The pre-test summary section was characterised by the use of ineffective summarisation strategies that involved local or microstructural reformulations. Figure 4.2 shows the summarisation strategies used in the pre-test.

**Figure 4.2 Pre-Test Summarisation Strategies**



## References

### Copy of supporting details and supporting sentences

- Attempted paraphrase
- Near copy
- Exact copy

### Deletion of main ideas

- 

### Selection of main ideas

- Attempted paraphrase
- Near copy
- Exact copy

### Generalisation

- 

### Construction/Integration

- 
- 

Even though the most frequent strategy was the selection of main ideas, which represented 48.44% of the total of summarisation strategies used in the pre-test summary section, these main ideas were mostly presented by means of copy (i.e. exact copy and near copy with very little attempted paraphrase). The strategy of selection was followed in frequency by the strategy of deletion of main ideas, which represented 32.44% of the total of summarisation strategies. After this strategy, there came the strategy of copy of supporting details and supporting sentences (i.e. exact copy and near copy with very little attempted paraphrase), which represented 17.80% of the strategies used. The more effective strategies of generalisation and construction/integration were almost non-existent and represented a very small percentage of the total of strategies used, namely, 0.44% and 0.88% respectively. In fact, students' strategies were mostly

limited to exact copy and near copy with minimum attempted paraphrase, so the resulting summaries were basically literal. Some were a series of quotations and revealed the strategies of copy and deletion rather than the selection of main ideas, generalisation or construction/integration. The ineffective strategies employed in the pre-test were also evident in the use students made of the printed copies of the source text that they were given. Thirty-five per cent (16) of such copies showed no marks at all, and the remaining texts showed very few signs of underlining, highlighting or circling to identify main ideas. On the whole, these summaries were not a reflection of the comprehension of the main ideas in the source text. The following are examples<sup>12</sup> of the summarisation strategies used in the pre-test:

### **Copy of supporting details and supporting sentences**

#### **Exact copy**

Some of the global problems we can mention are: *degradation of the environment due to industrialisation and modern agriculture, global warming, the arms trade and the stockpiling of modern armaments, the immense differences in the wealth of populations across the globe and even the spread of AIDS made possible by the rapid growth of science and technology.* (S31)<sup>13</sup>

#### **Near copy**

*Science and technology* are the ones to blame for *global problems* such as *degradation of the environment*, (...) *differences in the wealth of populations* and even for spreading diseases like *AIDS in Africa*. (S5)

#### **Attempted paraphrase**

The author points out that present-day *problems* such as *pollution, the spread of diseases, wars* and the huge economic *differences* between *populations* have suffered a sudden *increase*. (S35)

### **Selection**

#### **Exact copy**

According to the philosopher Nicholas Maxwell, *changing the aims and methods of academic inquiry would help us tackle global problems.* (S30)

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<sup>12</sup> Some linguistic inaccuracies in these quotations have been edited without distorting their meaning.

<sup>13</sup> Student identification number.



**Near copy**

For the author, the *key* to solving these *problems* lies in a change in *the nature of science and in academic inquiry* in order to promote a *growth of global wisdom*. (S28)

**Attempted paraphrase**

The author also claims that there should be a modification of the goals and methodology applied at the *academic* level to *tackle* these *problems*. (S29)

**Generalisation**

To illustrate his theory, Maxwell provides examples of the way in which some extremely worrying situations of our days have come about as a result of irresponsible scientific experiments and the lack of moral standards in the use of new technologies. (S38)

**Construction**

Nicholas Maxwell's "The Crisis of Science without Wisdom" is a critical look at how easily humanity has given in to technological advances without the capacity to foresee the problems this knowledge could bring about. (S1)

**Integration**

"The Crisis of Science without Wisdom" gives us a general panorama of the two causes of global problems and what we can do to tackle them. (S4)

As a result of the use of ineffective strategies, pre-test summaries revealed serious problems in content, organisation, lexico-grammatical features and contextual appropriateness. In terms of content, most pre-test summaries were very poor and sketchy, with main ideas omitted, irrelevant details included and some additions. Some even reflected a tendency to expand rather than condense information. Thus, quantitatively, most summaries were too short and did not include all relevant ideas. Some summaries were barely coherent since they did not even present the topic of the source text. From the conceptual point of view, the interpretation of content was not evident in the selection of main ideas for the summary.

As regards organisation, pre-test summaries exhibited very poor and scarcely logical generic structure. In 52% (24) of the summaries, there was inadequate

organisation. Most students separated main ideas into paragraphs when the length of the source text required a single paragraph. In fact, most summaries were organised on the basis of the order of the information in the source text rather than being restructured, and those in which the information was restructured introduced unnecessary or confusing changes in the order of development of ideas. In addition, some summaries exhibited a list format. In 41% (19) of the summaries, the move to introduce the summary section (i.e. type of text, title, author's name and credentials) and state the main idea was missing. In 13% (6) of the summaries there was a critical response in the summary section that should have been objective. Some mechanical aspects related to layout such as indentation and word count were disregarded, too.

As to lexico-grammatical features, most pre-test summaries included very poor and inconsistent control of such features (e.g. reporting verbs, nominal *that*-clauses, linking words and appositives) with errors that hindered communication. From the linguistic point of view, pre-test summaries were characterised by marked literalness and insufficient autonomy. Students tended to borrow verbatim from the source text; that is, they copied literally from the original and included extensive language from it with little or no integration into their own words. As a result, students used only local or microstructural reformulations. There were few lexical and syntactic substitutions (i.e. use of synonyms, hyperonyms, paraphrase, anaphoric and cataphoric reference or ellipsis). There was excessive repetition of key words and minor syntactic transformations such as changes in word order that occurred within rather than between sentences. When anaphoric and cataphoric reference was employed, the relationship with the referent could not be established unambiguously, and when ellipsis was used, elided elements were not easily retrieved either. There was scarce use of linking words as students merely juxtaposed pieces of information with little articulation of the ideas selected, which resulted in lack of cohesion and coherence. Failed attempts at construction/integration were reduced to rearrangements of sentence structure (i.e. subordination or coordination of consecutive sentences) that could not be considered true construction/integration due to the presence of copy. The combination of copied segments with students' writing created sentences that were both semantically and syntactically unacceptable; for example, there were problems of reference and concord. This also generated problems in thematic progression, which hindered comprehension because some themes were announced but not developed. Moreover, there was absence of a voice or tone as lexical and syntactic decisions did not serve the purpose of the

genre. As a consequence, most summaries were not fluently written. It would seem that students considered summary writing as a task involving the selection of content and preservation of linguistic forms. This lifting of source text fragments is a typical strategy that reveals lack of self-confidence, which characterises novice writers (Perelman, 2008).

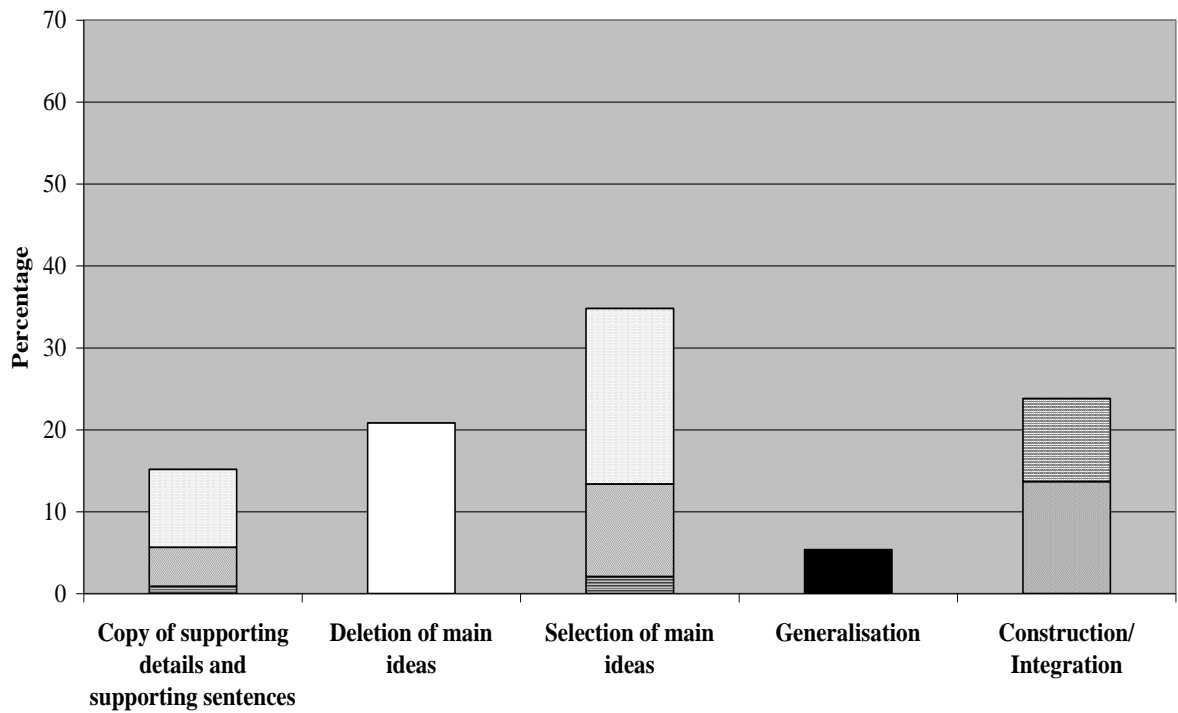
With regard to context, these summaries revealed very poor contextual appropriateness: lack of control of purpose, little sense of audience and inappropriate register. The lack of a topic sentence containing the main idea of the source text that serves as the basis for the structure of the summary showed that students did not take into account the purpose of the genre and neglected the audience's expectations. In 13% (6) of the summaries, students quoted main ideas, and in 33% (15) of them there was expansion rather than condensation of source text information, which indicated that students did not understand the aim of the text. As a result, most summaries did not achieve the communicative purpose of the genre. The register was not used consistently either as there were items belonging to informal style such as short forms and informal linking words and vocabulary. Students wrote without taking the academic context into account and, consequently, did not make the right decisions as to the appropriate purpose, audience or register for this genre.

These results revealed strategies of local or microstructural reformulation. Students' ineffective summarisation strategies were evidenced in the lack of macrostructural reformulation and the reproduction of the source text in summaries that exhibited problems in content, organisation, lexico-grammatical features and contextual appropriateness. These reproductive strategies showed not only misunderstanding of source text content but also lack of knowledge about the genre.

### ***Post-Test Summarisation Strategies***

The post-test summary section was characterised by the use of more effective summarisation strategies that involved global or macrostructural reformulations. Figure 4.3 shows the summarisation strategies used in the post-test.

**Figure 4.3 Post-Test Summarisation Strategies**



## References

### Copy of supporting details and supporting sentences

- ▤ Attempted paraphrase
- ▨ Near copy
- ▧ Exact copy

### Deletion of main ideas

- 

### Selection of main ideas

- ▤ Attempted paraphrase
- ▨ Near copy
- ▧ Exact copy

### Generalisation

-

### Construction/Integration

- 
- 

The most frequent summarisation strategy in the post-test was also the selection of main ideas, which represented 34.82% of the total of summarisation strategies used in the post-test summary section. However, unlike the main ideas selected in the pre-test, these main ideas were mostly presented by means of attempted paraphrase and near copy, with very little exact copy. The strategy of selection was followed by the more effective strategy of construction/integration, which represented 23.81% of the total. Students typically constructed the main idea in the introductory paragraph of the source text and integrated the main ideas in the concluding paragraph. After this strategy, there came the strategy of deletion of main ideas, which represented 20.83% of the total. Next came the strategy of copy of supporting details and supporting sentences, which represented 15.18% of the strategies used. Nevertheless, again, these supporting details and sentences were mostly presented by means of attempted paraphrase and near copy with very little exact copy. The effective strategy of generalisation was also used and represented 5.36% of the total of strategies. Students' strategies were not limited to copy and deletion, so the resulting summaries also revealed the strategies of selection of main ideas by means of attempted paraphrase, generalisation and construction/integration. The more effective strategies employed were also evident in the use students made of the printed copies of the source text that they were provided with, all of which showed marks such as underlining, highlighting, and circling to identify key words and main ideas. In addition, students used parenthesis and square brackets to select main ideas and numbered them or used marginal notes to outline them. They also employed other visual aids such as arrows, bullets, crosses or braces. On the whole, these summaries were a reflection of the interpretation of the main ideas in the source text. The following are examples<sup>14</sup> of the more effective summarisation strategies used in the post-test:

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<sup>14</sup> Some linguistic inaccuracies in these quotations have been edited without distorting their meaning.

### Copy of supporting details and supporting sentences

#### **Attempted paraphrase**

These systematic consent-making manoeuvres were developed in *World War I* with the intention of persuading *Americans* of the need to take part in that *war*. (S7)

We should ask ourselves whether the *mass media's* real *purpose* is *to inform* or to make us think about something all the time increasing our feelings of *uncertainty* and *fear* about reality. (S8)

### Selection

#### **Attempted paraphrase**

He wants people to realise that the goal of the *media* is to make people afraid and uncertain so that they have to be plugged to the *TV* and, eventually, be affected by commercials. (S3)

He puts forward the following argument: there are *a few* movers and shakers that *subtly* shape the rest of the population's view of the *world* by means of the *mass media*. (S18)

First, O'Shea explains *corporations'* stranglehold on *public opinion* by means of *Freud's* conception of how our attention can be diverted for *commercial* purposes. (S33)

### Generalisation

In his essay "The Doors of Perception: Why Americans Will Believe Almost Anything," essayist Tim O'Shea discusses how, by dint of marketing strategies, international corporations influence people's way of thinking about a product. (S2)

In his essay "The Doors of Perception: Why Americans Will Believe Almost Anything," essayist Tim O'Shea discusses the different techniques used by the media (supported by major corporations) to influence and shape public opinion. (S4)

### Construction

In his essay "The Doors of Perception: Why Americans Will Believe Almost Anything," Tim O'Shea takes readers on an exploration of the impact of the mass media on public opinion. (S16)

In “The Doors of Perception: Why Americans Will Believe Almost Anything” by Tim O’Shea, there is a sound attempt to make people realise that reality is not that which the mass media strive to make them believe. (S32)

In his article “The Doors of Perception: Why Americans Will Believe Almost Anything” Tim O’Shea addresses the issue of the pervading influence that means of mass communication have on shaping the thoughts and values of the American public. (S38)

### **Integration**

O’Shea moves on to state how credibility for a product is achieved: by hiring research companies, placing an emphasis on emotions, employing technical terms and gaining the support of the famous. (S2)

According to O’Shea, these companies achieve their goal by buying credibility from third parties, by using Freud’s model for persuading a large number of people, and by carrying out pseudo-scientific research. (S23)

He concludes his essay by suggesting that people should be more critical of media messages trying to detect their real aims, embedded values, and mainly rethinking the importance of these values for their lives. (S18)

In the article “The Doors of Perception: Why Americans Will Believe Almost Anything”, Tim O’Shea asserts that people should approach the media critically questioning the motives why a message has been constructed and the techniques used to produce it. (S35)

As a result of the use of these more effective strategies, post-test summaries revealed better content, organisation, lexico-grammatical features and contextual appropriateness. In terms of content, most post-test summaries were adequate, with most main ideas clearly stated, few irrelevant details included and no additions. Students stopped focusing on details to concentrate on important ideas, and their summaries did not reflect the tendency to expand rather than condense information. Thus, quantitatively, most summaries were of appropriate length and included most relevant ideas. They were also coherent since they presented the topic of the source text. From the conceptual point of view, the interpretation of content was evident in the selection of main ideas for the summary.

As regards organisation, post-test summaries exhibited good and fairly logical generic structure. Students made progress not only in the selection but also in the organisation of source text content. Most of them used the appropriate format and wrote a single paragraph. In addition, students’ summaries were restructured rather than being

organised on the basis of the order of the information in the source text, and did not introduce unnecessary or confusing changes in the order of development of ideas. In all cases, the move to introduce the summary section and state the main idea was present, and there was no response in the summary section, which was completely objective. Other mechanical aspects related to organisation such as indentation and word count were considered, too.

As to lexico-grammatical features, most post-test summaries included good control of such features (e.g. adequate range of reporting verbs, nominal *that*-clauses, linking words, and appositives) with some non-impeding errors that did not interfere with comprehension. From the linguistic point of view, post-test summaries were characterised by less literalness and sufficient autonomy; that is, students did not copy literally from the original but included little language from it, which was well incorporated into their own words. As a result, they no longer used local or microstructural reformulations but made global or macrostructural ones. Students used both lexical and syntactic substitutions. There was no repetition of key words but use of synonyms, hyperonyms, paraphrase and resources such as anaphoric and cataphoric reference and ellipsis. When anaphoric and cataphoric reference was employed, the relationship with the referent could be established unambiguously, and when ellipsis was used, elided elements were easily retrieved, too. There were also changes in word order both within and between sentences. Students used a wide range of linking words to articulate the ideas selected, which reconstructed the underlying logical relationships between such ideas. This resulted in increased cohesion and coherence. Integration was not reduced to subordination or coordination of consecutive sentences but involved synthesis statements that represented true summaries. These effective strategies created sentences that were both syntactically and semantically appropriate. This generated a clear thematic progression that enhanced comprehension, i.e. themes were announced and developed, and there were fewer problems such as reference and agreement. There was the presence of a voice or tone as lexical and syntactic decisions served the aims of the genre. Consequently, most summaries were fluently written and showed not only reading comprehension but also writing skills, namely, the ability to use lexico-grammatical features to demonstrate generic knowledge. It would seem that students considered the summary as a task involving the selection of content and reformulation of linguistic forms. This reveals the self-confidence that characterises expert writers (Perelman, 2008).



In terms of context, these summaries revealed very good contextual appropriateness: control of purpose, sense of audience and appropriate register. The presence of a topic sentence containing the main idea of the source text, which served as the basis for the structure of the summary, showed that students took into account the purpose of the genre and the audience's expectations. They did not quote main ideas as often as in the pre-test, and there were no cases of expansion, which indicated that they understood the aim of the text. As a result, most summaries achieved the communicative purpose of the genre. The register was used consistently and there were no items belonging to informal style. Students used devices such as impersonal syntactic structures and hedging that suggested a switch to a more formal register as opposed to the inconsistent use of register in the pre-test. They wrote taking the academic context into account and, as a result, made the right decisions as to the appropriate purpose, audience and register.

These findings revealed strategies of global or macrostructural reformulation. Students' effective summarisation strategies were evidenced in the absence of microstructural reproduction of the source text in summaries that exhibited fewer problems in content, organisation, lexico-grammatical features and contextual appropriateness. The use of strategies involving reformulation showed understanding of the source text and knowledge about the genre.

The results obtained from the comparative analysis of the summarisation strategies used by students in the pre- and post-test indicated that they performed better in the post-test as they used more effective strategies. The strategies used in post-test summaries were better both qualitatively, in relation to the greater use of the more effective strategies of attempted paraphrase of the main ideas selected, generalisation and construction/integration, and quantitatively, in terms of length and main ideas included. Whereas most summaries in the pre-test used rather ineffective strategies, were short and did not include all main ideas, most in the post-test showed more effective strategies, were of appropriate length and included most main ideas. Even if it is difficult to assert that these summarisation strategies really reflect students' comprehension and that the summaries are indicative of their interpretations, it can be assumed that the change from ineffective summarisation strategies to more effective ones can be attributed to the teaching of genre conventions. These findings seem to suggest that genre-based instruction in summary-response writing enhances students' performance in summary writing tasks.

The most important finding of the analysis of summary writing strategies is that, in pre-test summaries, subjects worked at a local or microstructural level using ineffective strategies of the copy and delete type whereas, in post-test summaries, they worked at a global or macrostructural level using more effective macrostrategies such as generalisation and construction/integration. This finding can be discussed in the light of the results of some of the investigations presented in the literature review. According to van Dijk and Kintsch (1983), mastering macrostructural strategies is harder than using microstructural ones as the macrostructural level presents difficulties for students who have relative command of macrostrategies. When they have to select main ideas, generalise and construct/integrate information to perform information reduction operations in order to construct macropropositions, the necessary strategic resources are not available. As a result, students make lists that are not articulated around a main idea or organised coherently. Thus, a possible explanation for the use of microstructural strategies in the pre-test is that students were unable to condense information by means of macrostrategies, so they forgot relevant ideas and inadvertently included irrelevant details in their summaries. These students had not automatised procedures such as lexical and syntactic substitutions and concentrated on the reproduction rather than the reformulation of ideas. Emphasis was placed on building a text model of comprehension as the ability to summarise information from a text to form a situation model of comprehension was absent. In contrast, in the post-test, after having received genre-based instruction focusing on effective summarisation strategies by means of activities aimed at modelling the genre and familiarisation tasks, students seemed to be able to condense information by means of macrostrategies. This enabled them to include relevant ideas in their summaries. Students had automatised procedures such as lexical and syntactic substitutions so they concentrated on the reformulation of ideas. The ability to summarise information from a text to form a situation model of interpretation was evident. This distinction between local and global strategies is common in diverse categorisations of text processing strategies.

In fact, the results of the analysis of pre-test summarisation strategies are consistent with previous investigations (Brown & Day, 1983; Brown et al., 1983; Campbell, 1990; Johns & Mayes, 1990; Kaufman & Perelman, 1997; Keck, 2006; Myers & Paris, 1978; Paris & Jacobs, 1984), which have found that L1 and L2 novice students use local rather than global strategies and rely more heavily on copy as the main method of text integration. On the other hand, the results of the analysis of post-

test summarisation strategies are in line with some of the above-mentioned studies and others (Afflerbach, 1990; Brown & Day, 1983; Brown et al., 1981; Brown et al., 1983; Chambliss, 1995; Morra, 1996, 1999, 2002, 2003; Taylor, 1984; Taylor & Beach, 1984; Winograd, 1984) that have revealed that instruction facilitates summarisation.

In addition, the outcome of this study supports the position of several authors (Anderson et al., 1980; Rumelhart & Ortony, 1977 as cited in Tierney & Pearson, 1994; Stein & Trabasso, 1982 as cited in Perelman, 2008; Thorndyke & Yekovich, 1980) who point out that the elaboration of a macrostructure is hindered by the lack of prior knowledge, which prevents students from making inferences and representing global coherence. In fact, van Dijk and Kintsch (1983) propose that the text world is the result of the *marriage between prior knowledge and text*. That is, the availability of background knowledge relevant to the text is vital to effective reading and writing. In this case, students were handicapped by a double bind. They were overwhelmed by new content and lacked knowledge about the genre. Students' lack of previous knowledge in the pre-test was also evidenced in their perceptions of their abilities and in their attitudes as reflected in the questionnaires. In the post-test, prior knowledge of the topic and the genre seems to have facilitated summary writing as it guided students' selection of content and organisation of their summaries, and thus enabled them to interpret the source text and summarise the information in it.

These findings enable the researcher to question the conception of the summary as a linguistic technique separated from the cognitive challenges entailed in the appropriation of content and genre knowledge in a specific social context. In the pre-test, students carried out the task of summarising as the linguistic reproduction of a source text. From the point of view of the epistemic function of writing, this revealed deficiencies in reading and writing to learn. In contrast, after receiving genre-based instruction, students carried out the task of reading and writing from a source text as the reformulation of the meaning of the original on the basis of their interpretation. Summary writing allowed students to appropriate content, linguistic forms, and generic conventions. As a result, the summary fulfilled the epistemic or heuristic function of writing according to which it is a tool to construct knowledge.

Pre-test summarisation strategies may be discussed in terms of what Ruiz Flores (2009) refers to as *dependence on literalness*. Pre-test summaries are examples of total and partial dependence on literalness. In this respect, this author points out that the clash of syntactic structures that results from the mechanical reproduction of the source text

with strategies of the copy and delete type (i.e. reference and agreement mistakes) is due to the procedure by means of which underlined fragments of the source text are added to sentences initiated by the student. This gives rise to mistakes that are not related to composing because the student has avoided doing so. They do not originate in inefficient language use either but in the mechanical manipulation of language. Students do not read and write in order to construct meaning since they underline sentences in which important information is found and copy them producing a summary not on the basis of understanding and condensing information but on the basis of chains of signifiers, which does not imply any interpretive effort.

Although it is difficult to determine the precise root of this problem and tease out the reasons for students' dependence on literalness and use of ineffective summarisation strategies, I will offer some that, according to Perelman (2008), seem to be plausible. First, literalness may reveal the intention of establishing the authority of the source text by means of copy and quotation. Faced with the task of reformulating the original, students' preoccupation with remaining close to it presumably reveals their attitude of respect towards the authority of the text. It seems likely that, in the pre-test, students considered that literalness ensured the validity of their summaries. In fact, a common problem in both L1 and L2 contexts is plagiarism. A number of authors (Cortazzi, 1990 as cited in Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001b; Pennycook, 1996; Scollon, 1996) have considered contrasting views on this issue and highlighted that different cultures can view the borrowing of others' words in diverse ways and this may lead students and teachers to hold divergent attitudes towards plagiarism. Although in our culture plagiarism is not accepted, perhaps students are encouraged to value the authority of texts and that makes them copy text segments literally. The second reason for dependence on literalness may be that reproducing the source text by means of copy and quotation prevents the distortion of meaning that interpretation might entail since, by reformulating the source text, students run the risk of changing its meaning. It is possible that, in the pre-test, students copied or quoted in order to keep the original invariable and enable the reader to interpret it first-hand. Therefore, their attitude may have been, at least in part, one of fidelity to the source text because saying the same as the original guaranteed semantic appropriateness. The third reason for dependence on literalness may be related to the fact that rewriting the source text entails the appropriation of the conventions of academic language and genres. Indeed, summarising is "not only a method to retain main ideas but also a method to learn to say what is said

(...) It is out of this kind of polyphony, in which others' words crisscross ours, that our own words can emerge"<sup>15</sup> (Teberosky, 1987 as cited in Perelman, 2008, p. 182). That is to say, an explanation for students' dependence on literalness in the pre-test may well be that using the language of the original evidences an attempt at imitating the source text so as to appropriate academic conventions. In this sense, Pecorari (2003) points out that most students use sources inappropriately before they learn how to do so properly without intending to transgress academic conventions but for reasons that are more related to their skills than to their honesty. In fact, several authors (Abasi, Akbari & Graves, 2006; Abasi & Graves, 2008; Ellery, 2008) maintain that students' inappropriate textual borrowing practices may not stem from a deliberate intention to deceive but from poor understanding of technical matters such as the construction of an authorial voice through referencing, and the authoritative view of source texts. Due to this, instead of identifying students' inappropriate textual borrowings as instances of plagiarism, recent scholarship suggests the notion of *transgressive intertextuality* (Abasi et al., 2006, p. 103). All these probable reasons for the presence of literalness in students' summaries show that it is part of students' process of learning since they make an effort to establish the authority of the source text, avoid distorting its meaning, and try to imitate academic language and genres. Therefore, according to Perelman (2008), summaries should be approached from the point of view of their process of construction without characterising them as deficient products.

In the light of the preceding results and discussion, it is possible to state that there have been positive changes in the summarisation strategies used by students in the post-test. After receiving genre-based instruction, students appealed to their knowledge of the genre, so their summaries evidenced greater comprehension of the source text, selection of relevant content, logical organisation, and linguistic and contextual appropriateness. Summary writing, far from being a process of mechanical reproduction, revealed a process of careful reformulation of source text content. These results correlate with the ones obtained in the response section presented below and lend further support to the positive effects of the treatment.

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<sup>15</sup> My translation.

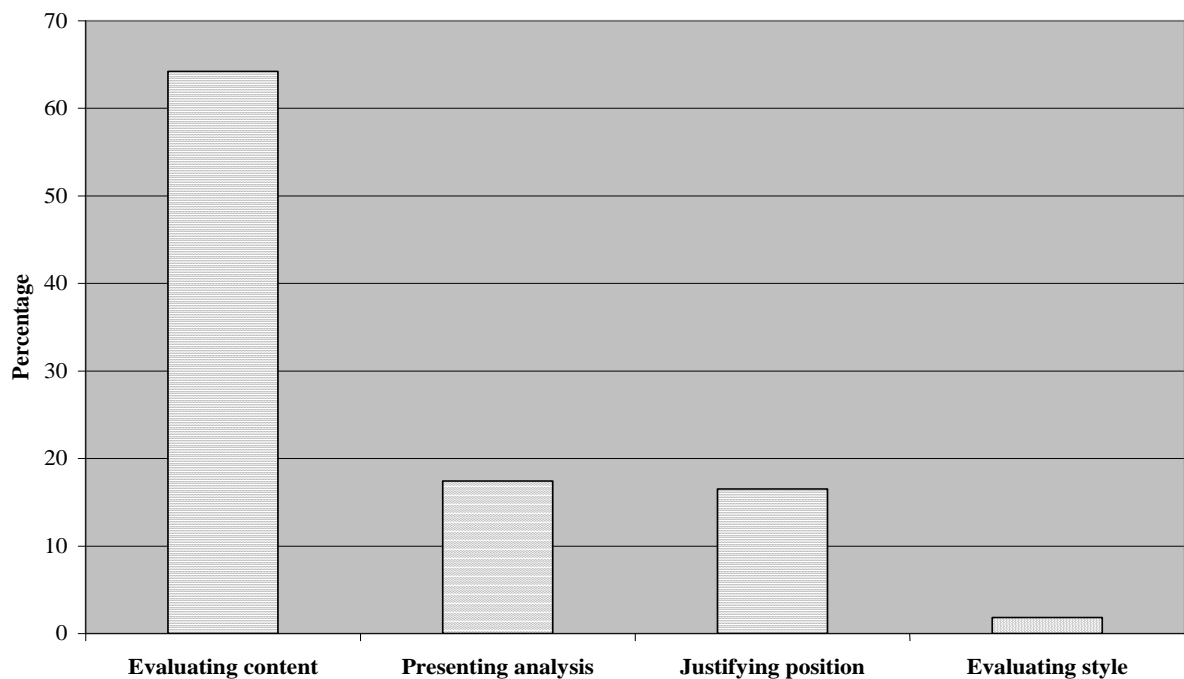
#### 4.2.1.2 Critical Response Strategies

The comparison between the pre- and post-test response sections enabled the researcher to identify the most frequent types of critical response strategies used by students before and after instruction. On the whole, in the post-test, students' responses improved both qualitatively, in relation to the use of the more effective analytical strategies of presenting and justifying one's position, and quantitatively, in terms of the length of the response.

##### *Pre-Test Response Strategies*

The pre-test response section was characterised by the lack of critical response or the use of ineffective response strategies, which were mostly evaluative but did not reveal critical analysis. Figure 4.4 shows the response strategies used in the pre-test.

**Figure 4.4 Pre-Test Response Strategies**



Thirty-five per cent (16) of the pre-tests lacked a response section and, in those that had one, the most frequent strategy was evaluating content, which represented 64.22% of the total of response strategies used in the pre-test response section. This

strategy was mostly employed by means of reference to the source text, agreement with the author and assessment of the evidence provided. There were virtually no responses that partially agreed or disagreed with the author, and there was no identification of hidden assumptions or recognition of faulty reasoning. The strategy of evaluating content was followed in frequency by the strategy of presenting one's analysis, which represented 17.43% of the strategies used. After this strategy, there came the strategy of justifying one's position, which represented 16.51% of the total of response strategies. These justifications were only provided by means of examples, causes and reasons, consequences, explanations and conditions. The strategies of evaluating style (i.e. language and rhetorical devices) were almost non-existent and represented a very small percentage of the total of strategies used, namely, 0.92% and 0.92% respectively. Whereas most students attended to the content of the text, they much less often attended to its stylistic features. They were more motivated to evaluate source text information than they were to analyse the style of the text reflecting on the author's choice of language or rhetorical devices. The lack of critical response and the scarce use of the more effective strategies of presenting one's analysis and justifying one's position revealed that these responses were not a reflection of critical analysis but only a superficial evaluation of the source text. The following are examples<sup>16</sup> of the response strategies used in the pre-test:

### **Evaluating content**

#### **Agreeing/disagreeing**

I agree with the author on the fact that this lack of wisdom has resulted in devastating global effects, which can be avoided with a change in the methodology and aims of academic inquiry. (S21)

#### **Evaluating source text content**

In my opinion, an increase in global wisdom is not only of vital importance but also the safest path to solving many of the environmental and social difficulties facing our century. (S8)

In this way, Maxwell succeeds in convincing the reader that scientific and technological knowledge will have negative effects unless it is attached to global wisdom. (S12)

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<sup>16</sup> Some linguistic inaccuracies in these quotations have been edited without distorting their meaning.

By the end of the article, Maxwell very convincingly states his point of view and provides a solution. (S38)

### **Assessing evidence**

He exemplifies his theory by listing many of the most serious problems caused by human action at present but he fails to analyse them deeply (...) I believe that the author lacks appropriate support to defend his theory. (S2)

However, how can this change be possible? How can it take place? Many people, I believe, have thought about this before but it is easy to suggest a change without specifying what to do. In my view, Maxwell should have given precise ideas to implement in reaction to this worrying matter. (S21)

The article provides us with examples which prove the point of the title, but the topic has not been developed correctly. There should have been more data about the problem itself and not so much focus on the examples. To conclude, the article is supposed to deal with wisdom and talk about the crisis of science but it only presents examples of what has been done wrongly and mentions the word wisdom a couple of times. (S41)

### **Presenting one's analysis**

Although it is true that the increase in scientific knowledge and lack of wisdom have created problems, the main cause of these global problems is selfishness. (S3)

In order to handle scientific knowledge properly, we should first be educated to be responsible citizens and human beings, that is, people prepared to understand that it is important to take care of the environment and to face any consequences technological power may bring about. (S18)

I believe that a change in education is necessary to increase global wisdom; it is there, in these institutions, that people are taught science and develop critical thinking. (S27)

I believe people should develop their critical thinking skills and become aware that, although we are progressing because of the developments in the field of science and technology, such knowledge should be applied wisely to avoid negative consequences. (S44)

### **Justifying one's position**

#### **Examples**

A clear example is the massive growth of soy fields, which eats up soil nutrients. (S23)



One of the most illustrative examples, in my opinion, is nuclear knowledge. Einstein did research on this, but people used it unwisely by creating a bomb which killed millions of innocent people. (S4)

For instance, the installation of copper mining operations has produced harmful changes in natural habitats. In Neuquén, Mapuche communities have tried to halt the mining project which is promoted by the local government and a company from China. (S43)

For example, when research on cloning was carried out, a lot of human fetuses were used to experiment and do research. (S45)

### **Causes/Reasons**

This is undoubtedly a very realistic point of view as it shows that the worst crisis lies in human beings' wrong use of their discerning capacities. (S9)

I believe this solution to the crisis is wise since it intends to treat and analyse the root of this problem that provokes so many negative situations. (S15)

I also believe that this may be a possible solution (...) because people worldwide need new ideas to focus their knowledge on, but how will they do so without the wisdom they need to invent new things or perfect already existing ones? (S25)

### **Consequences**

So I strongly believe that science and technology should increase systematically and in conjunction with different academic strategies to make the population learn. (S6)

Therefore, individuals with scientific and technological knowledge should focus their actions on trying to solve global issues rather than on causing them. (S35)

### **Explanations**

Although science fosters the present-day global problems, wisdom is a natural human capacity to deal with a myriad of issues. (S27)

### **Conditions**

If global wisdom is promoted from educational institutions, there are more possibilities that it will grow. (S27)

If we all knew the benefits and drawbacks of the technology used in farming, we could decide whether to use it or not considering the potential damage we could cause to the environment. (S14)

## Evaluating style

### **Language and rhetorical devices**

The author uses subjective language because he wants to emphasise that not only himself but also all the inhabitants of the planet should be aware of the situation. (...) The author goes back to the topic in order to reinforce his words. (S46)

As a result of the use of ineffective strategies, pre-test responses revealed serious problems in content, organisation, lexico-grammatical features and contextual appropriateness. In terms of content, most pre-test responses had very weak evaluative comments. The response section was underdeveloped and demonstrated poor understanding or misunderstanding of the source text as most students evaluated source text content but did not present their own analysis and, those that did, failed to justify their position satisfactorily or did so in a limited fashion. Thus, quantitatively, most responses were too short and irrelevant. Some were barely coherent since students distorted the meaning of the original, and copied from the source text or repeated the ideas in it. From the conceptual point of view, the interpretation of content was not evident in the critical response to the main ideas in the source text. Put another way, students were unable to evaluate the source text presenting their own analysis and justifying their position.

As regards organisation, pre-test responses exhibited very poor and inadequate generic structure as most of them were not organised to present the students' analysis or justify it. In 41% (19) of the responses, there was no clear statement of agreement or disagreement with the author's ideas, and in 11% (5) of the responses there were summary sentences in the response section. In addition, most response sections lacked a concluding sentence. Some students rounded off their response evaluating source text content but without presenting their analysis or justifying their position.

As to lexico-grammatical features, most pre-test responses included very poor and inconsistent control of lexico-grammatical features (e.g. evaluative language, emphatic structures such as unreal conditionals and inversion, hedges, and linking words) with errors that hindered communication. From the linguistic point of view, pre-test responses were characterised by marked literalness and insufficient autonomy; that is, students copied literally from the original and included extensive language from it with little or no integration into their own words. As a result, these responses exhibited the same local or microstructural reformulations as pre-test summaries. Some of them

revealed the strategies of copy and deletion rather than the construction of a critical response. There were few lexical and syntactic substitutions; there was excessive repetition of key words and scarce use of linking words. Students juxtaposed pieces of information with little articulation of their ideas, which resulted in little cohesion and coherence. There was also absence of a voice or tone as lexical and syntactic decisions did not serve the purpose of the genre. The resulting responses did not show critical analysis but only reproduction of source text content.

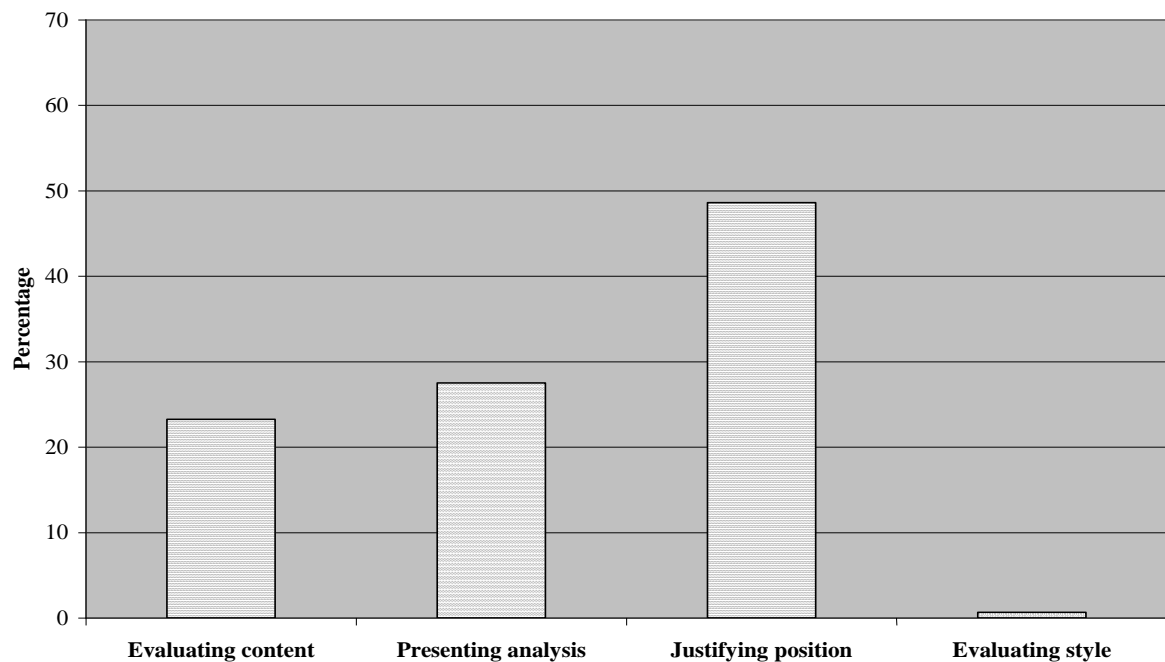
In terms of context, these responses revealed very poor contextual appropriateness: lack of control of purpose, little sense of audience and inappropriate register. The lack of a statement of opinion agreeing or disagreeing with the main ideas of the source text that serves as the basis for the structure of the response section revealed that students did not take into account the purpose of the genre or the audience's expectations. In 13% (6) of the responses, students distorted the meaning of the original, in 54% (25) of them, they copied from the source text, and in 56% (26) of the cases they repeated source text ideas, which showed that they did not understand the aim of the text. As a result, most responses did not achieve the communicative purpose of the genre. The register was not used consistently either as there were items belonging to informal register. Students wrote without taking the academic context into account and, consequently, did not make the right decisions as to the appropriate purpose, audience or register for this genre.

These results revealed uncritical response strategies. Students' ineffective strategies were evidenced in their lack of critical response and in responses that did not succeed in presenting the students' analysis or justifying their position and exhibited problems in content, organisation, lexico-grammatical features and contextual appropriateness. It would seem that students considered the response as a task involving the superficial evaluation of source text content. In fact, students' strategies were mostly limited to agreeing with the ideas in the source text and assessing some of the evidence provided with little analysis or justification of their position. These strategies showed students' poor understanding of the source text, difficulties to analyse it and relate it to their prior knowledge, and lack of knowledge about the genre. This reveals the lack of self-confidence that characterises novice writers (Perelman, 2008).

### *Post-Test Response Strategies*

The post-test response section was characterised by the use of more effective critical analysis strategies that involved presenting and justifying one's position satisfactorily. Figure 4.5 shows the response strategies used in the post-test.

**Figure 4.5 Post-Test Response Strategies**



All post-tests had a response section and the most frequent response strategy was justifying one's position, which represented 48.61% of the total of response strategies used in the post-test response section. Unlike the justifications in the pre-test, these justifications were not only provided by means of explanations, consequences, examples, causes/reasons, and conditions, but also by means of reference to background reading material, personal anecdotes and facts/statistics. The strategy of justifying one's position was followed in frequency by the strategy of presenting one's analysis, which represented 27.51% of the strategies used. After this strategy, there came the strategy of evaluating content, which represented 23.24% of the total of response strategies used in the post-test. However, this strategy was not only employed by means of agreement with the author, reference to the source text, and assessment of the evidence provided, but also by means of partly agreeing and even disagreeing with the author. The strategies of evaluating style (i.e. language and rhetorical devices) represented a very

small percentage of the total of strategies used, namely, 0.43% and 0.21% respectively. As in the pre-test response section, whereas most students attended to the content of the text, they much less often attended to its stylistic features. Nevertheless, on the whole, the wider variety of response strategies and the use of the more effective strategies of presenting one's analysis and justifying one's position revealed that these responses were a reflection of an evaluation of the source text based on a critical analysis. The following are examples<sup>17</sup> of the more effective response strategies used in the post-test:

### **Evaluating content**

#### **Agreeing/disagreeing**

I subscribe to the author's view that people should take a different attitude when they receive information from the media and start thinking critically about the real purposes of the messages that the media construct. (S13)

I partially agree with Tim O'Shea's ideas. I do agree that conventional wisdom is implanted and that some people can create public opinion; however, I disagree with the idea that pieces of news are only meant to keep people in fear. (S19)

I partly agree with the author (...) On the one hand, I concur with O'Shea's assumption that the media's only interest is to channel people's perception of reality to get economic benefits. (...) On the other hand, I strongly object to the author's advice to cut down on exposure to the media in order to get real knowledge. (S42)

#### **Evaluating source text content**

The main conclusion to be drawn is that the author succeeds in making us aware of the importance of having a critical attitude towards the messages that are constantly delivered in the media. (S16)

To conclude, I think the author succeeds in transmitting his point of view on the topic. If you have ever asked yourself why we keep coming across stories we once believed to be true but in fact are not, then O'Shea's article may help you. (S28)

Last but not least, I believe that the author of the article gives some sound advice to readers by telling them not to believe everything they hear and to challenge and rethink the values that have been imposed by people in high places. (S38)

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<sup>17</sup> Some linguistic inaccuracies in these quotations have been edited without distorting their meaning.

### **Assessing evidence**

However, the American essayist is not taking into account, first, journalists, TV channels and producers who are not corrupted by the system and who truly and honestly seek the truth (...) Finally, underestimating the power of an informed and critical audience is seeing the problem from one side only. (S11)

Although Tim O'Shea takes on the difficult task of shedding light on how people are massively manipulated by a powerful minority, the essay presents some weaknesses as regards a better and clearer identification of the situation, as well as further instances to exemplify the present-day issue. The essay also lacks more ideas and suggestions aimed at reversing the situation. He devoted a few lines to proposing some solutions. (...) In a nutshell, I praise Tim O'Shea for raising awareness of manipulation but I consider he might have been more convincing by including more examples such as the swine flu and a better-supported solution such as education. (S18)

O'Shea's view that American society believes everything the media inculcates in their minds may be true but it does not apply to all audiences of other societies in which media literacy exists and people are little by little becoming aware of that. (S31)

### **Presenting one's analysis**

In fact, an effective way of improving critical thinking could be through the introduction of media literacy in the school curriculum (...) I believe that, through media literacy, not only children and adolescents but also teachers and parents could be more aware of what is behind the mass media. (S13)

This phenomenon can be analysed in terms of marketing strategies. Through the use of different techniques, the media give salience to certain topics and leave other issues in the shade. (S17)

I believe that acquiring the skills of media literacy has become a vital issue nowadays and these skills can help the public analyse and evaluate a media message as well as producing it with a more critical attitude. (S38)

### **Justifying one's position**

#### **Examples**

For example, in Argentina there is a very powerful media corporation called *Grupo Clarín* that owns many television and radio stations as well as newspapers; some of them are *Diario Clarín*, *TN Noticias*, and *Crónica*, among others. Ernestina Herrera, Clarín's owner, has adopted two children whose parents disappeared during the military process so their origin is very suspicious. Herrera does not want to talk about this, and she does not publish any article

related to adoption in her newspaper but diverts people's attention to other issues. (S8)

A clear example of this is what happened with the swine flu and Tamiflu. In this case, a very rich and important laboratory, in theory, created a special medicine to combat this deadly flu (...) Tamiflu appeared everywhere in the media and people were made to believe that, without that medicine, they would die. (S22)

What happened at the time of Malvinas War is an example of this. The Soccer World Cup was broadcast on the news and everything that took place there was placed in the public agenda. As Argentinian soldiers were dying and losing the war, the media – influenced by the government – decided to give more weight to the World Cup instead of showing what was happening in the war. Nowadays, with the World Cup taking place in South Africa, we hear every newscaster giving his impression of the matches that have been played during the day or forecasting Argentina's next scores; that is what sells and what people want to watch. However, we should remember that the world keeps on spinning and that not because a ball is rolling have diplomatic relations with Uruguay due to Botnia's conflict improved, or has the natural disaster in the Gulf of Mexico been resolved. (S25)

The events that took place on September 11 illustrate how the media took control of people's minds by spreading stereotypes of possible terrorists throughout the country. (S36)

### **Causes/Reasons**

Media literacy empowers people to be both critical thinkers and creative producers of a wide range of messages since communication technologies transform society and have an impact on our understanding. (S39)

The incorporation of media literacy into the curriculum and, eventually, into society has further advantages as it fosters active debate of public issues and encourages free speech, all of which contribute to an active democracy where individuals can challenge authorities, hold political rulers accountable for their actions and demand true, unbiased information from the mass media. (S44)

### **Consequences**

As a consequence of this mediated world, the control of the media is being kept in the hands of a few transnational corporations (...) This leads to the fact that we need to be aware that all media messages are subjective, that they carry a stance and that we cannot rely on everything we hear or watch. (S20)

Therefore, fostering a critical attitude towards media information will enable individuals to analyse evidence, distinguish fact from opinion and interpret any media message effectively. (S40)

Thus, the creation of a more media literate population will lead to a more participatory citizenry that will be fully aware of the power the media can have over them to influence the way they think. (S43)

### **Conditions**

If people become media literate, they will be able not only to analyse and evaluate information, but also to communicate it in a proper way. (S2)

If people understand the grammar, syntax and metaphor system of the media, they will become less susceptible to manipulation and will actually decide what to think about different issues. (S7)

If we are critical media consumers, then we will always ask questions about the source of a particular message, its author, the expected audience and the purpose of the message. (S24)

### **Explanations**

Media literacy can be defined as the ability to understand, analyse and evaluate any media message in order not to be manipulated or deceived. This means that information is not only swallowed but also digested. (S3)

That is, the media are in charge of what the public will think about (the agenda-setting role of the media). (S29)

In other words, people deal with a pseudo-reality modelled by the editors and writers. That is, media producers want us to adopt the author's own ideas and beliefs. (S32)

### **Facts and statistics**

This is clearly shown in a survey conducted by Susan Ericsson. During the 1992 presidential election, people were asked about the size of the federal budget and over 70% said that more money was spent on foreign aid or on welfare than on the military. Now, in reality, the military is much bigger than the other two. This statistic successfully illustrates how most governments transmit a constructed reality through the media. (S30)

As shown in a study carried out in the US, 80% of the programmes broadcast violent scenes that may influence children's psyche. (S41)

### **Personal anecdotes**

As a matter of fact, I personally experienced having to make my articles fit the column inches that were available after all the advertisements had been placed when I worked in *La Voz del Interior* from 2006 to 2007. (S1)



I usually watch news programmes on TV in order to catch up with the latest news but what I watch is whatever the TV producer wants me to pay attention to. In this way, I end up knowing the reality the programme shows. (S26)

I used to believe that aspirins prevented heart attacks, so I started taking them daily. A few months later, I was having heart problems (...) To my surprise, the doctor told me that it was actually the preventive aspirin that was making me feel that way (...) After that episode, I did not trust what I watched on TV ever again. (S46)

### **Background reading texts**

French filmmaker Robert Bresson (1901-1999) once stated: “Cinema, radio, television and magazines are a school of inattention: People look without seeing, listen without hearing.” Most media consumers are far from being aware of the ways in which print and non-print media shape their perceptions of the world. (S12)

The statement that those who constitute the “invisible ruling power” do not want the population to participate in the democratic process is also underlined by Noam Chomsky (1997) when he says that people who set the agenda think of the general population as “ignorant and meddling outsiders” who have to be kept out of the public arena. He further explores the fact that what is being advertised in TV programmes and radio stations are not products but audiences. Therefore, the audience have to be conscious about what is really being sold and adopt a critical attitude towards all mass media. (S10)

Bernard Cohen, Professor Emeritus at the University of Wisconsin, once said, “the media doesn’t tell us what to think, it tells us what to think about.” This quote shows the power that the so-called elite media or agenda-setting media have. These elite media, such as the NY Times, are huge corporations which set the agenda, not only for people, but also for other smaller or local papers. (S34)

As an influential American media critic, writer, journalist and political commentator, Walter Lippman states: “For nearly all the concerns on the public agenda, citizens deal with a second-hand reality, a reality that is structured by journalists’ reports about these events and situations.” People deal with a pseudo-reality modelled by editors and writers. (S45)

### **Evaluating style**

#### **Language and rhetorical devices**

Rather than using technical terminology, the author uses simple and straightforward language so as to make sure every person understands his ideas (...) The writer also states his viewpoints in a very clear way: The media and other important corporations manipulate society and people are controlled by the information the media provide. Besides, O’Shea asks many rhetorical questions that make people think about the effects of not watching TV. (S5)

I think the author presents his ideas in a clear and effective way (...) A device he uses is the rhetorical question inviting us to think about the real purpose of the news. Finally, he presents his ideas using simple language, which makes the text easy to read. (S28)

As a result of the use of more effective strategies, post-test responses revealed better content, organisation, lexico-grammatical features and contextual appropriateness. In terms of content, most post-test responses had good evaluative comments. The response section was properly developed and demonstrated good understanding of the source text as most students presented their own analysis and justified their position satisfactorily. Students offered solid arguments and had a sense of authority in their writing. Thus, quantitatively, most responses were of appropriate length, and were relevant and coherent since they did not distort the meaning of the original. Few students copied from the source text or repeated the ideas in it. From the conceptual point of view, the interpretation of content was evident in the critical response to the main ideas of the source text. That is, students were able to evaluate source text content presenting their own analysis and justifying their position.

As regards organisation, post-test responses exhibited good and logical generic structure as most of them were structured to evaluate the source text and present and justify the students' positions. There was a clear statement of agreement or disagreement with the author's ideas, and there was no summary in the response section. All response sections had a concluding sentence to round them off.

As regards lexico-grammatical features, most post-test responses included good control of lexico-grammatical features (e.g. evaluative language, emphatic structures such as unreal conditionals and inversion, hedges, and linking words) with some non-impeding errors that did not interfere with comprehension. From the linguistic point of view, post-test responses were characterised by critical analysis and sufficient autonomy rather than literalness. They did not include extensive language from the source text but incorporated it into the writer's own words. There were lexical and syntactic substitutions, and there was a wide range of linking words to articulate ideas, which resulted in greater cohesion and coherence. There was also the presence of a voice or tone as lexical and syntactic decisions served the purpose of the genre. The resulting responses showed critical analysis of source text content.

In terms of context, these responses revealed very good contextual appropriateness: control of purpose, sense of audience and appropriate register. The

presence of a statement of opinion agreeing or disagreeing with the main ideas of the source text that served as the basis for the structure of the response section revealed that students took into account the purpose of the genre and the audience's expectations. Although, in some of the responses, students still repeated the ideas in the source text and copied from it, there was no distortion of the meaning of the original, which showed that they understood the aim of the text. As a result, most responses achieved the communicative purpose of the genre. The register was used consistently and there were no items belonging to informal style. Students wrote taking the academic context into account and, consequently, made the right decisions as to the appropriate purpose, audience and register for this genre.

These results revealed critical and analytical response strategies rather than evaluative comments without satisfactory justification. Students' effective response strategies were evidenced in responses that succeeded in presenting and accounting for their position convincingly and exhibited few problems in content, organisation, lexicogrammatical features and contextual appropriateness. It would seem that students considered the critical response as a task involving not only the evaluation but also the analysis of source text content. In fact, students' strategies were varied and included presenting and justifying their stance rather than being limited to evaluating source text content, agreeing with the author and assessing the evidence provided. The strategies used showed students' understanding of the source text, their ability to question it and relate it to their prior knowledge, and knowledge about the genre. This reveals the self-confidence that characterises expert writers who can create a representation of the author of the text and question it (Perelman, 2008).

The outcome of the analysis of students' response strategies shows that, in the pre-test, students appear to have written according to the *knowledge-telling model* reproducing the content of the text whereas, in the post-test, they wrote according to the *knowledge-transforming model* (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987) since they reformulated source text content instead. In this respect, Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) affirm that writing from sources, represented by the knowledge-transforming model, is a paradigmatic example of the construction of knowledge. In addition, in the pre-test students seem to have written *writer-based prose* as if they were writing a private text for themselves while, in the post-test, they produced *reader-based prose* (Flower, 1979) as they took into account the purpose of the genre and the academic audience's expectations.

The critical response strategies used by students have been described by several authors. The pre-test response strategies are in agreement with the ineffective strategies reported by Mathison (1996) who also found that students performed this task as a personal response instead of building an argument for or against the information in the text, and concentrated more on summarising than on responding to it. Likewise, Koda (2008) pointed out that low-proficiency students are predominantly involved in decoding and read and write nonstrategically devoting attentional resources to local information without reserving sufficient resources for responding to the text. In contrast, high-proficiency students can accommodate to text difficulty and task demands. The inefficient response strategies employed in the pre-test are also similar to those reported by Teramoto and Mickan (2008) who documented that students faced difficulties due to their misunderstanding of the critical analysis dimension and the purpose of the genre, too. Moreover, pre-test response strategies coincide with the tendency to privilege the author's interpretation instead of analysing the alternative interpretations that a text can have as reported by Di Stefano, Pereira and Pipkin (2006). These authors maintain that it is necessary to make students aware that they should not accept everything they read passively but question texts. As Spack suggests (1988), this requires that they move away from a personal to a more critical approach to their readings. The goal should not be the regurgitation of others' ideas but the development of an independent viewpoint. On the other hand, post-test response strategies support Parodi Sweis's (2010) claim that, when reading critically, students establish a dialogue with the source text taking a position either agreeing or disagreeing with it, which implies participating actively in the construction of text meaning. In his view, critical readers that learn from reading evaluate the content of the text, identify their position, and reflect on the way in which the content of the text challenges them. This author maintains that university students should see reading as a skill that involves a dialogue between the reader and the text in order to consider different interpretations in specific social contexts.

For some students, however, the kind of analysis and evaluation required to respond critically to texts can clash with their own educational traditions (Kern, 2009). Underlying the demand to critique the ideas in texts are the assumptions that knowledge is socially constructed rather than absolute, and that the goal of education is to help students become independent thinkers able to challenge existing knowledge. This critical attitude towards knowledge contrasts with the conservative attitude in many cultures in which the reproduction of knowledge is of great value. In fact, according to

Horowitz and McKee (1984), reading and writing that involve questioning the information in texts are particularly important because EFL students are sometimes “products of educational systems where unquestioning acceptance of books and teachers as the ultimate authority is the norm.” (p. 5). As a result of this, critical literacy skills may cause difficulties since such skills may be new to some students. For this reason, in Kern’s (2009) view, an awareness of differences between epistemological and pedagogical traditions can be useful when trying to understand learners’ critical responses to texts.

On the basis of the preceding results and discussion, it is possible to state that there have been positive changes in the response strategies used by students in the post-test. After receiving genre-based instruction, students appealed to their knowledge of the genre, so their responses evidenced critical analysis, relevant content, logical organisation, and linguistic and contextual appropriateness. Instead of the superficial evaluation of source text content, post-test responses revealed the more effective analytical strategies of presenting and justifying one’s position. These results correlate with the ones obtained in the summary section presented above and lend further support to the positive effects of the treatment.

In conclusion, the results of the analysis of summarisation and response writing strategies seem to indicate that there were gains in the post-test due to the treatment received. These findings correlate with the quantitative results of this study, namely, the ratings of students’ task performance. The following sections present the results of the questionnaires, self-assessment checklists, and the interviews with the instructor.

#### **4.2.2 Results of Questionnaires**

As explained in Chapter 3, the purpose of the questionnaires was to gather demographic information about the subjects and information about their perceptions of their abilities and about their attitudes. The results of the questionnaires show that students’ abilities to write a summary-response and their attitudes to genre-based instruction improved after the treatment as reflected in 4.2.2.2 and 4.2.2.3 below.

#### 4.2.2.1 Demographic Information about the Subjects

The 46 students that answered the pre- and post-study questionnaires were 22 years old on average, and their ages ranged from 20 to 27. The age that prevailed encompassed the 21-22 year-old range. Thirty-five (76%) of these students were female and 11 (24 %) were male. They had studied English for seven years on average before entering the School of Languages. Thirty-one (67%) of these students entered the School of Languages in the year 2007. This means that they were in their fourth year at university, which corresponds to the English Language IV course, when the study was carried out. According to information provided by the Teaching Department (*Área de Enseñanza*), School of Languages, and the Department of Statistics, UNC (2008), the demographic information gathered by means of the pre-study questionnaire reveals that the group of students that participated in this study constituted a sample that was representative of the population being investigated.

#### 4.2.2.2 Information about the Subjects' Abilities

##### **Question 1.a (pre-study questionnaire): What types of texts can you write properly in English?**

In the pre-study questionnaire, when students were asked what types of texts they could write properly in English, the following data were obtained:

Paragraphs: 42 students (91%)

Letters: 31 students (67%)

Comparison and contrast essays: 30 students (65%)

Cause and effect essays: 30 students (65%)

Opinion essays: 29 students (63%)

Argumentative essays: 20 students (43%)

Summary-responses: 1 student (2%)

**Question 1.b (pre-study): Have you ever received instruction in summary-response writing in English?**

In the pre-study questionnaire, 44 students (96%) answered that they had never received instruction in summary-response writing whereas the remaining two students (4%) responded that they had received instruction although not as part of their English Language courses in the English Language Teaching, Licentiate and Translation Studies programmes.

**Question 2 (pre-study): Choose from the options what summarising and responding critically to a text consist in.**

In the pre-study, when students were asked to choose from three options what summarising and responding critically to a text consisted in, the following results were obtained:

1. Summarising is:

- (a) An objective and paraphrased version of the source text: 9 students (20%)
- (b) A objective and abbreviated version of the source text in your own words: 25 students (54%)
- (c) A subjective and abbreviated version of the source text with an evaluation of its main ideas: 12 students (26%)

2. Responding is:

- (a) A personal evaluation of the text based on a systematic analysis: 32 students (70%)
- (b) A subjective evaluation of the main ideas in the source text: 14 students (30%)
- (c) A personal evaluation of the negative aspects of the source text: 0 (0%)

These results showed that the 21 students (46%) who chose options 1 (a) and (c) did not know what summarising a text consisted in, and the 14 students (30%) who chose option 2 (b) and (c) did not know what responding to a text consisted in. One issue arising from these responses was that these students clearly needed instruction in this genre.

**Question 3 (pre- and post-study): Evaluate your abilities to summarise and respond critically to a text.**

This question asked students to assess their general abilities to summarise a text and respond to it critically. Their answers are presented below in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6**

*Students' Abilities to Summarise and Respond Critically to a Text (N=46)*

	<b>Summarising</b>	
	<b>Pre-test No. (%)</b>	<b>Post-test No. (%)</b>
<b>Very good</b>	9 (20%)	8 (17%)
<b>Good</b>	29 (63%)	33 (72%)
<b>Fair</b>	7 (15%)	5 (11%)
<b>Weak</b>	1 (2%)	0 (0%)
	<b>Responding</b>	
	<b>Pre-test No. (%)</b>	<b>Post-test No. (%)</b>
<b>Very good</b>	6 (13%)	3 (7%)
<b>Good</b>	24 (52%)	28 (61%)
<b>Fair</b>	15 (33%)	14 (30%)
<b>Weak</b>	1 (2%)	1 (2%)

These results clearly showed that, in the pre-study questionnaire, students were aware that their abilities to summarise texts and respond to them critically were not very good and some of them were even aware that their abilities were fair or weak. A comparative analysis of students' perceptions of their abilities in the pre- and post-study questionnaires revealed that, after receiving instruction in summary-response writing, fewer students considered their abilities to summarise and respond to a text fair or weak and more students regarded these abilities as good. The number of students who found their abilities very good decreased slightly. Two observations can be made about these results. First, these responses are indicative of the fact that students perceived that their abilities improved. Second, given that students became aware of the generic conventions, it is not surprising that the number of students who considered their abilities very good decreased. A possible explanation for this is that students developed *genre knowledge* (Hyland, 2007, p. 56), that is, they became aware of the complexity of the genre and what it required.



**Questions 1 and 2 (post-study): After receiving genre-based instruction in summary-response writing, do you consider that your ability to write this genre improved? Why?**

In the post-study survey, 33 students (72%) answered that their ability to write a summary-response had improved, 13 students (28%) responded that their ability had improved partly and none (0%) reported that their ability had not improved. This question also called for qualitative responses from students. A survey of the comments given in response to this question is provided below.

**Most** of the 33 students (72%) who answered that their ability had **improved** after receiving instruction justified their answer explaining that, before instruction, they did not know that this type of text constituted a genre and could not write a summary-response because they were not aware of its structure. However, after having been taught the generic conventions, they learnt the steps to follow to write a summary-response properly, and became aware of its length, organisation, sections, and style. Besides, they pointed out that the information they received was clear and complete and that they improved thanks to practice. **Many** students expressed that the lessons, the material and the activities helped them improve as the genre was explained and exemplified. They maintained that the feedback provided was effective and enabled them to identify and correct their mistakes. These students also said that their ability improved because they learnt how to respond to a text critically. Before instruction, they did not know how to do so but, afterwards, they learnt how to analyse the content of the text, evaluate it, take a position in favour or against the author's ideas and justify it properly. **Several** students pointed up that they learnt how to express the ideas in a text objectively in their own words, how to paraphrase, quote and summarise. These students also noted that analysing models before writing was very helpful as they were guided through the process and built their knowledge of the genre progressively in a well organised way. A **few** students noticed that they had improved because they enlarged their vocabulary to report and evaluate. The following extracts from students' answers to this open-ended question reflect some of the reasons why they believed that their ability improved:

Before, I did not know anything about the genre and did not know the structure or steps to follow. The activities enabled us to build knowledge of the genre step by step. (S9)

When the classes started, I had never read or heard about summary-responses so I didn't know how to write them. But the guidelines and steps to follow were explained very well and in a detailed manner. (S25)

Our ability improved because we were given a handout with instructions and explanations of how to write it. Besides, we practised in class and homework assignments were corrected. Through practice and the application of the theory, it was easier to apply our knowledge of the genre. (S41)

Our ability to write a summary-response improved because the teacher explained the conventions to us and guided us during the writing process. (S44)

**Most** of the 13 students (28%) that responded that their ability to write a summary-response had **improved partly** accounted for their answer explaining that this was due to lack of practice. They pointed out that, although there was a lot of theory and plenty of opportunities to practise, they could not take advantage of them in order to receive feedback. They also acknowledged that they did not have enough time to devote to summary-response writing and thus go through a gradual process of learning. **Many** students expressed that they still found it difficult to identify main ideas and summarise them in the time allotted and space provided and tended to omit important information. They maintained that they improved their ability to summarise but not to respond to texts. In spite of having received instruction, they found it difficult to analyse and evaluate a text and justify their opinion. **Some** explained that they made mistakes because they did not remember the generic conventions and pointed up that, sometimes, their success in performing this literacy task depended on text difficulty. The following extracts from students' answers to this open-ended question reflect some of the reasons why they believed that their ability had improved partly:

I have improved in summary writing (I avoid plagiarism and can paraphrase) but I have problems in the response section. I don't know if the quotations I use are reliable and I need extra reading. (S31)

I need to write more summary-responses to be able to practise more. I haven't had enough time to do so although this is personal because the Chair gave opportunities for this. (S33)

The fact that the response to this question was mostly affirmative shows that the majority of students perceived that their ability to write a summary-response improved after receiving genre-based instruction. This finding is similar to that obtained by

Trebucq (2005) who also reported that the subjects in her study considered that genre-based instruction improved their ability to write a business report.

#### 4.2.2.3 Information about the Subjects' Attitudes

**Questions 1 and 2 (pre- and post-study): How difficult is the task of writing a summary-response? Why? Justify your answer.**

This question asked students to assess the difficulty of the task of writing a summary-response. Table 4.7 below summarises their answers to this question:

**Table 4.7**

*Difficulty of Summary-Response Writing Tasks (N=46)*

<b>Difficulty of the tasks</b>	<b>Pre-test No. (%)</b>	<b>Post-test No. (%)</b>
<b>Easy</b>	0 (0 %)	3 (7 %)
<b>Relatively difficult</b>	19 (41 %)	31 (67 %)
<b>Difficult</b>	26 (57 %)	10 (22 %)
<b>Very difficult</b>	1 (2 %)	2 (4 %)

These results revealed that, in the pre-study questionnaire, none of the students found summary-response writing easy and most of them considered it a relatively difficult or difficult task. In contrast, in the post-study questionnaire, although the percentage of students who regarded summary-response writing as very difficult increased slightly, at least a few students found the task easy and more students considered it relatively difficult rather than difficult. These results showed that, after receiving instruction, the difficulty of the task diminished. This question also called for qualitative responses from students. A summary of the comments given in response to this question is provided below.

In the **pre-study questionnaire**, **most** of the 45 students (98%) that found summary-response writing **relatively difficult** or **difficult** justified their attitude explaining that the task was (relatively) difficult because they did not know the genre summary-response, and had never been taught how to write it. Therefore, they did not know how to produce this type of text properly (e.g. what to include in each section). They acknowledged that becoming acquainted with the generic conventions takes time,

practice and instruction. These students also accounted for their attitude stating that it was hard for them to summarise a text without adding their own opinion, distorting the meaning of the original or copying from it. This implied identifying the author's point of view, the structure and main ideas of the text, and finding the right words to summarise it objectively, which required knowledge of cohesion and a wide range of vocabulary. In addition, these students pointed out that it was easier for them to add information to a text than it was to summarise it as they tended to expand on the topic instead of condensing information. **Many** students justified their attitude explaining that the difficulty lay in reading comprehension, which implied understanding the implicit and explicit messages of the text. This depended to a large extent on previous knowledge of the topic, and general knowledge of the world, which some of them felt they did not possess. This prevented students from responding to texts properly. They found it difficult to analyse and evaluate the author's ideas critically (e.g. drawing inferences and identifying bias), give their opinion and justify it convincingly (e.g. with background reading texts). They explained that they could not relate the author's ideas to their own and organise them in a coherent text. **Some** students accounted for their attitude saying that writing a summary-response required a lot of concentration, and was not easy in Spanish, so writing in a language that was not their mother tongue was an additional challenge. To a certain extent, the difficulty of the task depended on their ability to express ideas in the foreign language, which became even more difficult in an exam situation. Moreover, students maintained that there were cultural aspects reflected in texts that hindered their ability to understand, summarise and respond critically to them. The following extracts from students' answers to this open-ended question reflect some of the reasons why they believed that the task was relatively difficult or difficult:

Because, to write a summary, it is necessary to have knowledge of cohesion and of text structure among other things. It is also necessary to have critical analysis skills to be able to justify one's position in relation to the text properly. (S7)

Since it is a second language, text comprehension is more difficult and this leads to misunderstanding in the second stage of the task. (S18)

The objectives of a summary-response are not clear to me. I do not know the structure I have to use or what I have to include in the summary – if I can copy parts or have to quote. (S36)

Not all authors write in a way that is easy to understand, so there can be difficulties in identifying the purpose and main ideas of their texts. Besides, my

knowledge of the world is not extensive enough to be able to have an opinion about all topics. (S42)

The only student that considered the task of writing a summary-response **very difficult** accounted for this attitude stating that he/she had never carried out this task, and that it was very hard to identify main ideas, summarise a text objectively and respond to it critically as it required a thorough analysis of the text and knowledge of the topic. This student maintained that he/she did not feel comfortable expressing opinions about the ideas in a text. He/she tended not to react to such ideas and had not developed the ability to take and justify a position.

In the **post-study questionnaire**, **most** of the three students (7%) that found summary-response writing **easy** justified their attitude explaining that, as they knew the theory and generic conventions, they could apply them easily. It was only a matter of being able to identify main ideas, summarise them concisely and respond critically. These students pointed out that their ability improved with practice.

**Most** of the 41 students (89%) that considered summary-response writing **relatively difficult** or **difficult** accounted for their attitude stating that it was hard for them to identify main ideas, delete irrelevant details and write an objective summary without copying, distorting the meaning of the original or including their opinion, and using the right words (i.e. without the wrong connotation, either positive or negative). These students also pointed out that it was difficult to condense information to keep to the word limit when they were keen on expanding. Moreover, they justified their attitude explaining that they found it hard to respond taking a critical stance on the topic especially when they were not interested in it or did not have enough prior knowledge as this genre tested their knowledge of the world. It was also difficult for them to organise the response section without repeating the author's ideas mainly when they agreed with him/her. In this respect, students observed that it was difficult to take a different stance from that of the author because they were afraid that their own position would be off the topic, and did not know how to justify it with adequate evidence. **Many** students accounted for their attitude stating that it was necessary to relate the source text to background readings in order to be able to respond and justify their position. **Several** students justified their attitude explaining that the degree of difficulty depended on the complexity of the text, for example, whether it contained unknown words. **Some** students explained that the task of writing a summary-response was

difficult because it required a lot of concentration and taking different aspects into account, and they did not have enough time to do so, mainly in an exam situation. It was particularly difficult for students to time themselves; they took too long to summarise because they had to read the text several times, and did not have enough time to respond. They also admitted that they had not devoted enough time to practising the genre. Although they knew the generic conventions, they agreed that the process of learning them takes time and reflection. A **few** students acknowledged that, even though they had received instruction, it was difficult for them to internalise the structure of the summary-response and follow the generic conventions. They also recognised that it was necessary to have a large vocabulary to be able to do this task. The following extracts from students' answers to this open-ended question reflect some of the reasons why they believed that the task was relatively difficult or difficult:

Besides making a concise summary and an analysis, we have to be prepared to defend our position and, many times, this transcends the class material and tests the general knowledge of the world we need to have at this stage. (S6)

Because several aspects need to be taken into account: not omitting important ideas or including unnecessary details, not misunderstanding the author's ideas or the emphasis he puts on them, etc. In the analysis, it is difficult not to repeat the author's ideas, especially when you agree with him/her. (S35)

In spite of having the theoretical knowledge, it is difficult to be able to express the information in the text in a condensed way. It is difficult when one enjoys expanding on the topic instead. (S41)

It is difficult to respond when we are not interested in the topic and it doesn't provoke any reaction either in favour or against it. (S42)

The two students (4%) that found summary-response writing **very difficult** justified their attitude explaining that it was very hard for them to put their theoretical knowledge of the generic conventions into practice and relate the source text to their prior knowledge in order to respond. They also considered it very difficult to write a summary-response when they did not know the author of the source text and believed that this task would require doing further research.

The fact that at least a few students considered the task of writing a summary-response easy and more students regarded it as relatively difficult rather than difficult in the post-study questionnaire showed that, after receiving instruction, the difficulty of the task diminished. This finding is connected with that obtained by Trebucq (2005) who

also found that the difficulty of writing a business report diminished after genre-based instruction.

**Questions 3 and 4 (pre- and post-study): How important is the ability to write a summary-response for your academic and professional future? Why? Justify your answer.**

This question asked students about the importance of their ability to write this genre for their future. Their answers to this question are summarised in Table 4.8:

**Table 4.8**

*Importance of Summary-Response Writing (N=46)*

<b>Importance of the ability</b>	<b>Pre-test No. (%)</b>	<b>Post-test No. (%)</b>
<b>Very important</b>	32 (69%)	36 (78%)
<b>Important</b>	10 (22%)	4 (9%)
<b>Relatively important</b>	4 (9%)	6 (13%)

These results revealed that, even if the number of students that considered their ability to write a summary-response relatively important increased slightly in the post-test, more students found the task very important, which indicates that they became aware of the relevance of this genre to their academic and professional future. This question also called for qualitative responses from students. A summary of the comments given in response to this question is provided below.

In the **pre-study questionnaire**, **most** of the 32 students (69%) that found the ability to write a summary-response **very important** justified their attitude explaining that it was an essential ability to develop their critical thinking skills and analytical capacities, react to texts actively rather than passively, and give and justify their opinion. They pointed out the need to be critical readers and writers. These students also considered that knowing how to write a summary-response was very important because it was a vital tool to understand texts and learn from their reading, that is to say, build knowledge of a topic. **Many** of these students acknowledged that academically, in their degree programme, and professionally, in their future as experts in the language, they relied to a large extent on their ability to work with texts (i.e. understand and transmit

the information in them properly). They also recognised that they had to know how to write all types of texts and this was a genre that every professional needed. Furthermore, these students accounted for their attitude stating that writing a summary and responding to a text were useful when studying for an exam, giving a presentation or teaching a class as they were effective ways to remember main ideas, which saved time and effort. These abilities also helped them establish links with prior knowledge and with other subjects. **Some** students justified their attitude explaining that identifying main ideas and the author's intention without distorting the meaning of the source text were critical for translators as these abilities enabled them to transmit the information in texts accurately, which facilitated their work and improved its quality. These students also observed that the ability to write a summary-response was very important to consolidate their linguistic knowledge (e.g. grammar, vocabulary, etc.) and their writing skills, and thus improve their language proficiency. A **few** students expressed that this ability was also useful for those that were interested in doing research because it opened the door to more complex genres such as abstracts, which would enable them to attend congresses and exchange their ideas with colleagues. The following extracts from students' answers to this open-ended question reflect some of the reasons why they believed that the ability to write a summary-response was very important:

When it comes to studying, the ability to write a summary-response is very important to make the most of time by concentrating on main ideas. The response is very important since we have to approach every text taking into account that there are different perspectives and it is possible to learn from them. (S9)

Being able to distinguish main ideas and writing summaries is an essential tool for translators when it comes to understanding a text. This analysis is essential to identify the author's intention. (S10)

I believe it is useful to learn to identify the main ideas in a text and the author's point of view, and to be able to have a critical outlook on the text. Besides, this ability is useful to write summaries in the other courses we are doing such as Culture. (S11)

My academic and professional future depends to a great extent on my capacity to understand texts and analyse them critically. (S21)

**Most** of the 10 students (22%) that found the ability to write a summary-response **important** justified their attitude explaining that it was useful to develop both the teacher's and the students' critical thinking skills and analytical capacities. They



also pointed out that this ability enabled them to express and justify their points of view refuting other positions not only in writing but also orally. **Many** students expressed that writing a summary-response was important as it contributed to their understanding of texts, which was a problem for students and a necessary skill for translators. **Some** students stated that this ability was important because it enabled them to identify main ideas and summarise them. They also maintained that their profession depended on their ability to analyse texts critically, which was indispensable for future teachers and researchers. Moreover, they said that this ability enabled them to develop their linguistic knowledge and writing skills. A **few** observed that writing summaries enabled them to study other subjects. The following extract from students' answers to this open-ended question reflects some of the reasons why they believed that their ability to write a summary-response was important:

It fosters critical thinking among both teachers and students and contributes to our real understanding of the text, which is a problem for me and many students. (S13)

The 4 students (9%) that considered the ability to write a summary-response **relatively important** maintained that they had not found any advantage to it yet. They did not consider it practical and did not know whether this ability would be useful, but acknowledged that it was an important part of the course and that being able to summarise a text demonstrated comprehension. They recognised that this ability enabled them to read and identify main ideas, make inferences and take a critical stance. At a professional level, they did not find it essential for a translator or teacher to be able to write a summary-response but to be able to make these cognitive operations mentally.

In the **post-study questionnaire**, **most** of the 36 students (78%) that found the ability to write a summary-response **very important** justified their attitude explaining that evaluating a text provided them with a new perspective to analyse texts and was an excellent way of developing their critical thinking and analytical skills as it required taking a stance on the topic of the text, justifying it and learning to express it in an organised way. This ability also helped them to be critical of the texts they come across in their everyday life. **Many** students also stated that summarising was very important to understand a text, identify its main ideas, structure and the author's intention, and to practise strategies such as paraphrasing and condensing information. **Some** students said that this ability was very important to study and to respond critically to the content of

the courses they did in their degree programme. They also maintained that, as professionals, they needed this genre as it was essential for them to work with texts, identify their main ideas and take a stance instead of accepting them passively. A **few** students expressed that their ability to detect the main ideas in a text and respond critically to them was essential when doing research, writing a thesis, and presenting papers in congresses. They also observed that being able to understand and summarise texts was an important strategy for translators and interpreters as it saved time. The following extracts from students' answers to this open-ended question reflect some of the reasons why they believed that their ability to write a summary-response was very important:

I believe this ability is very important because, as a future translator, I have to prepare documents before translating. This can be time-consuming and summary-response writing is an excellent strategy to save time. (S3)

I consider it very important since it offers a new insight into text analysis. (S7)

Summarising is useful to study, think critically about what we read, and write a thesis or final paper. (S37)

This ability is very important both to study and in our daily life. In our degree programme and profession, it is important to summarise and respond critically to the content of our courses, and it is also important to summarise and analyse texts that we come across daily, for example, in the media. (S39)

**Most** of the 4 students (9%) that found the ability to write a summary-response **important** justified their attitude explaining that it enabled them to analyse and evaluate a text critically, and provide a well-argued response. **Many** students accounted for their attitude stating that this ability enabled them to summarise a text and communicate the ideas in it briefly and accurately without changing their meaning. They also pointed out that it allowed them to understand texts better. A **few** students explained that this ability enabled them to carry out their duties as professionals of the language, e.g. to translate texts properly, and also to study and investigate, which required summarising and responding to the ideas of different authors.

The 6 students (13%) that considered the ability to write a summary-response **relatively important** justified their attitude explaining that they still could not see how to take advantage of the summary-response and did not believe that this ability could be helpful in their future. However, they admitted that the ability to interpret the ideas in

texts would be useful. The following extract from students' answers to this open-ended question reflects some of the reasons why they believed that the ability was relatively important:

I do not know what this ability is going to be useful for but the good thing is that it makes me reflect and think critically, which is something I do not do very often in other courses in which I only have to repeat. (S15)

The fact that more students found the ability to write a summary-response very important in the post-study questionnaire indicates that they became aware of the relevance of this genre to their academic and professional future. This finding is connected with that obtained by Trebucq (2005) who also informed that the subjects in her study considered the ability to write a genre such as the business report important.

**Questions 5 and 6 (post-study): Do you consider that the way in which you learnt to write a summary-response (i.e. analysing its purpose, generic structure and lexico-grammatical features) is effective and enhances your academic literacy?**

**Why? Justify your answer.**

In the **post-study questionnaire**, students were asked whether the way in which they learnt to write a summary-response was effective and enhanced their academic literacy. These results were obtained: 43 students (93%) reported that the way in which they learnt to write a summary-response was effective and enhanced their academic literacy, 3 students (7%) answered that it was partly effective, and none of the students (0%) responded that it was not effective. The qualitative answers they provided to justify their attitude are summarised below.

**Most** of the 43 students (93%) that reported that the way in which they learnt to write a summary-response was **effective** and enhanced their academic literacy justified their attitude explaining that, after receiving genre-based instruction, they were aware of the aspects to be taken into account and had the tools to write a summary-response since its sections were explained in a simple but detailed manner, and they knew the purpose and relevance of the genre. They also stated that genre analysis enabled them to correct the mistakes they made when they did not know the genre. Besides, these students maintained that the process of learning the genre was gradual, systematic and organised, so they learnt to write a summary-response step by step without being overwhelmed by

new information. In their view, learning the theory and then applying it was an effective way of acquiring knowledge about the genre. **Many** students expressed that the way in which they learnt was effective and enhanced their academic literacy because it enabled them to analyse texts and respond to them critically with their own point of view. They also observed that it allowed them to understand complex texts and broadened their general knowledge of the world. In addition, they noted that the manner in which they learnt enabled them to identify main ideas and summarise texts in less time. Moreover, summary-response writing allowed them to learn academic vocabulary since the lexicogrammatical features of the genre served as a guide to write academically. **Some** students pointed out that the way in which they were taught helped them to understand texts in order to study and translate them. The following extracts from students' answers to this open-ended question reflect some of the reasons why they believed that the way in which they learnt to write a summary-response was effective and enhanced their academic literacy:

Summary-response writing was approached from the point of view of the genre, its parts, the analysis of examples and corrections, so we were ready to write. It was a process that made progress in writing possible because we learnt to write this genre little by little and this enhanced our summary writing skills and critical response writing abilities. (S18)

I consider that the way in which I learnt to write a summary-response is effective since we studied each of its parts in a complete and detailed manner. The activities were effective since they increased their level of difficulty little by little. (S20)

It was effective because we did not learn about the summary-response in a superficial manner but we went beyond that carrying out a detailed analysis of how to write it. (S26)

I liked the way in which I was taught because we were guided through the process and, once we applied the techniques, we could detect and correct the mistakes we made when we did not know about the genre. (S40)

The 3 students (7%) that answered that the way in which they learnt to write a summary-response was **partly effective** justified their attitude explaining that they acquired the knowledge necessary for the course and they learnt this genre but they still needed to learn others. In addition, they did not understand how this genre could enhance their academic literacy. However, they acknowledged their lack of time and

practice. None of the students reported that the way in which they learnt to write a summary-response was not effective.

These results were encouraging because they revealed that most students considered that the way in which they learnt to write a summary-response was effective and enhanced their academic literacy. These findings are similar to those of Trebucq (2005) who also reported that students considered that genre-based instruction was effective and facilitated business report writing in a post-study questionnaire.

**Question 7 (post-study): Does the way in which you learnt to write a summary-response limit your creativity or make you feel self-confident?**

In the **post-study questionnaire**, students were asked whether the way in which they learnt to write a summary-response limited their creativity or made them feel self-confident. The following results were obtained: 36 students (78%) answered that the way in which they learnt to write a summary-response made them feel self-confident, and 10 students (22%) responded that it limited their creativity.

The finding that genre-based instruction made most students feel self-confident is in keeping with that of Trebucq (2005) who also found that genre-based instruction gave the subjects in her study confidence in business report writing according to their perceptions in a post-study questionnaire. This result also coincides with the teacher's opinion in the post-study interview, in which she reported that this type of instruction gave students confidence in summary-response writing. This may be attributed to the fact that *genre knowledge* (Hyland, 2007, p. 56) enabled students to acquire the generic conventions and writing skills needed to participate in their academic community.

**Question 8 (post-study): Evaluate the following aspects of the materials used for genre-based instruction in summary-response writing: (a) quantity of activities, (b) rubrics, and (c) quality of activities.**

The final question in the **post-study questionnaire** asked students to assess the materials used to learn the genre summary-response. Table 4.9 summarises their answers as regards the quantity of activities:

**Table 4.9*****Quantity of Activities (N=46)***

<b>Quantity of activities</b>	<b>No. (%)</b>
<b>Too many</b>	6 (13%)
<b>Appropriate</b>	40 (87%)
<b>Insufficient</b>	0 (0%)

Regarding the rubrics, 45 students (98%) replied that these were clear, and one student (2%) answered that they were confusing. Table 4.10 summarises their answers in relation to the quality activities:

**Table 4.10*****Quality of Activities (N=46)***

<b>Quality of activities</b>	<b>No. (%)</b>
<b>Very good</b>	24 (52%)
<b>Good</b>	20 (44%)
<b>Fair</b>	2 (4%)
<b>Weak</b>	0 (0%)

The fact that 40 students (87%) considered that the quantity of activities was appropriate, 45 students (98%) found that the rubrics were clear, and 44 students (97%) regarded the quality of the activities as very good or good showed that the materials designed for this study seem to have been suitable for this group of students according to their own perceptions. These findings are also in keeping with the results obtained by Trebucq (2005), and the interviews with the instructor in this study.

On the whole, the students' perceptions of genre-based instruction were favourable. In fact, 43 out of 46 respondent students (93%) indicated that the way in which they learnt to write a summary-response was effective and enhanced their academic literacy. In general, students' answers to the post-study questionnaire revealed that their abilities and their attitudes improved after the treatment. These results were used to complement the information obtained from the quantitative data as they evidenced congruity with students' actual performance in tests. Moreover, questionnaire results supplemented those obtained from the researcher's analysis of summary-response writing strategies, the students' self-perceptions in self-assessment checklists,

and the interviews with the instructor. Therefore, the information gathered by means of questionnaires can be said to corroborate the other results of this study.

It must be taken into account, however, that surveys have a number of limitations (Johnson, 1992). First, answers to questionnaires only reflect students' perceptions but are not intended to yield cause-effect relationships. It is for this reason that they can only suggest a tendency that should be confirmed by further research, yet they cannot be considered evidence to confirm that the students' perceptions were actually the case. Second, no survey is value-free. It is crucial to bear in mind that the way in which questions are worded might shape the answers provided. Third, surveys are generally not as useful for illuminating the complex factors involved in language learning and teaching situations as ethnographic approaches and case studies are because they sacrifice depth for breadth and representativeness. For these reasons, survey data were further interpreted in the light of the rest of the data collected.

#### 4.2.3 Results of Self-Assessment Checklists

Immediately after the pre- and post-tests, students were asked to assess their performance in summary-response writing by putting a tick (✓) next to the activities that they considered they had done properly to complete the task, and a cross (✗) next to those activities they were not sure if they had carried out properly or believed that they had not done correctly and should be improved. Table 4.11 summarises students' answers:

**Table 4.11**

*Differences in Self-Assessment Checklists between Pre- and Post-Test (N=46)*

Checklist question		Frequency of response		
		Pre-test	Post-test	Gains
		No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)
<b>Content and organisation:</b>	✓	30 (65%)	34 (74%)	4 (9%)
Summary section	✗	16 (35%)	12 (26%)	
<b>Content and organisation:</b>	✓	22 (48%)	30 (65%)	8 (17%)
Response section	✗	24 (52%)	16 (35%)	

<b>Language use:</b> Lexico-grammatical features	✓	32 (70%)	36 (78%)	4 (9%)
	✗	14 (30%)	10 (22%)	
<b>Context:</b> Purpose, audience and register	✓	33 (72%)	38 (83%)	5 (11%)
	✗	13 (28%)	8 (17%)	
<b>Mechanics</b>	✓	35 (76%)	36 (78%)	1 (2%)
	✗	11 (24%)	10 (22%)	

These results revealed that, as expected, overall, there were gains in students' self-assessment between the pre- and post-test. There may be two possible explanations for the fact that the gains were not very considerable. First, even if many subjects considered that they carried out the activities to complete the summary-response writing task effectively in the pre-test self-assessment checklist, this may be due to the fact that students may have initially underestimated the difficulty of the task. Another possible explanation is that the high number of ticks in the pre-test self-assessment checklist may have been the result of the *desirability effect* (Dörnyei, 2011, p. 54) by which subjects respond with the desired attitude and give positive answers in order to meet the teacher's expectations. Nevertheless, in all aspects, there were gains in the post-test checklist, which demonstrates that, on the whole, students believed that they improved. These perceptions are in agreement with the results of the questionnaires and also run parallel to students' actual performance in tests. Furthermore, these results supplement those obtained from the researcher's analysis of summary-response writing strategies, and the interviews with the instructor. Consequently, the information gathered by means of self-assessment checklists can be used to strengthen the other results of this study.

#### 4.2.4 Results of Interviews with the Instructor

The analysis of the interviews with the instructor in terms of the three central categories suggested by McKay (2006, p. 58): *experiential factors* (the teacher's educational and professional experiences), *pedagogical factors* (the teacher's beliefs about L2 teaching and learning) and *contextual factors* (the specific context of instruction) yielded the results presented below.



#### 4.2.4.1 Experiential Factors

The instructor is an EFL teacher who holds the Chair of English Language IV, and was chosen on the basis of her broad educational and professional experience. She graduated from the School of Languages, UNC as an English Language Teacher and did a Master of Arts in English at Texas Tech University, US. She is well-trained in composition theory and practice, has experience in teaching EFL university students at an advanced level of language proficiency, and has taught writing to such students for more than ten years.

#### 4.2.4.2 Pedagogical Factors

As regards pedagogical factors, in particular, the approach the teacher used to teach summary-response writing to EFL university students before this study, in the pre-study interview, the instructor explained that, throughout the years, she had witnessed great changes in paradigms. Therefore, she had moved from approaches centered on the product to approaches centered on the process of writing. She felt that, intuitively, she had always employed diverse methodologies in an eclectic manner. Although she had not used the genre-based approach to the teaching of writing in an exclusive way, she had considered some of its contributions. She believed that genre-based instruction could be an effective pedagogical tool to teach summary-response writing to EFL university students at an advanced level of language proficiency and thus enhance their academic literacy. Therefore, she agreed to implement the teaching of such genre from this perspective during the 2010 academic year.

After having participated in this experience, in the post-study interview, the instructor confirmed that the genre-based approach was an effective tool to teach summary-response writing to EFL university students at an advanced level of language proficiency. She maintained that the *teaching-learning cycle* (Feez, 1998, p. 28) was an efficient way of sequencing tasks in the process of teaching and learning summary-response writing as long as there was time available within the general schedule for the course in which it was implemented. In the instructor's view, the greatest strength of this cycle was that it allowed for gradual progress in the development of the necessary skills providing useful guidelines for the step-by-step teaching of the genre. Its weakness is that it requires enough time to be developed, and its effectiveness may vary

depending on the size of the class. Nevertheless, she stated that the scaffolding and intervention on the part of the instructor required by the cycle in the early stages of learning a genre reflected a teacher role that was necessary in the development of EFL writing rather than restrictive.

The instructor regarded genre analysis as vital for the teaching of EFL academic literacy, and considered that it is very important to train teachers in the application of genre theory to enhance the EFL academic literacy teaching and learning process. In her view, genre-based pedagogies serve to strike a balance and counteract some of the negative consequences of focusing the teaching of writing on methodologies that have resulted from communicative approaches to the teaching of EFL, and emphasise the process of writing at the expense of the final product and the conventions of academic writing.

According to the teacher, genre-based instruction provided greater self-confidence to the subjects in this study who wrote a summary-response for the first time. She pointed out that focusing learners' attention on the generic structure and lexico-grammatical features of the summary-response was beneficial as it gave students the possibility of producing the genre on the basis of pre-established patterns. The instructor also suggested that genre-based instruction provided self-confidence to students that were not motivated to write but were aware that they had to develop their writing skills in an academic context and within a specific discourse community. On the other hand, she admitted that genre-based instruction might be limiting for advanced students who already have good writing skills and are used to writing in a variety of contexts. As with almost all methodological proposals, for the instructor, the final outcome depends on several factors, among which personal preferences and learning styles are very important.

#### **4.2.4.3 Contextual Factors**

As to the difficulties the instructor found when teaching the genre summary-response in the specific context of this investigation, in the pre-study interview, she mentioned the following: difficulties to distinguish main and secondary ideas and condense the source text effectively, problems to paraphrase and summarise the author's ideas avoiding plagiarism, serious mistakes in syntax and unidiomatic expressions, lack of critical reading of the source text, poor content and organisation, and little contextual

appropriateness both in the summary and response sections. In general, when carrying out summary-response writing tasks, students evidenced perception of their problems to summarise adequately, but were unaware of their difficulties in the other areas mentioned.

In the post-study interview, the instructor expressed that both the genre-based materials and activities designed for the context of this study were very efficient in addressing the above-mentioned problems. She believed that these materials and activities facilitated both the teaching and learning processes for three main reasons. First, the materials were elaborated taking into account the objectives of the course and the level of the students, and reflected awareness of the difficulties that advanced EFL university students face. Second, the materials were directly relevant to the thematic content units of the course, and the activities were adequately graded. Such activities were developed in an integrated manner, with a theoretical framework to support them, and clear instructions. Third, all the tasks proposed were presented in a single set at the beginning of the academic year, which was beneficial from the point of view of organisation, class planning, time management and sequencing. On the whole, this approach, the materials used and the activities carried out enhanced both the teaching and learning processes.

The teacher emphasised that the genre-based approach seemed to have had a positive effect on students' performance in summary-response writing tasks and, therefore, on their scores. She also noted that it had a considerable impact not only on students' abilities, but also on their attitudes and self-perceptions in relation to summary-response writing and genre-based instruction. These learners showed interest in the teaching method employed and valued the opportunity to learn the genre summary-response. They understood that there are typical conventions of academic writing and that it is important to follow them.

Finally, the instructor concluded that this study was an important contribution as it represented a thorough investigation of genre theory and its practical application to the teaching of summary-response writing to students at an advanced level of language proficiency. The teacher's comments illustrate this:

For this practical application of genre theory, original materials have been elaborated and adequately sequenced according to the stages proposed in the teaching and learning cycle. The activities are supported by an adequate theoretical framework, and have as a point of departure the careful analysis of

the texts produced in a real learning situation and keen observation of the difficulties faced by the teachers and students who work with the genre summary-response at a specific level. I believe this highly comprehensive work contributes to improving the performance of both teachers and students.

In summary, it can be said that, for the instructor, genre-based instruction in summary-response writing, and the genre-based materials and activities designed for this study were both pedagogically and contextually appropriate for teaching summary-response writing to EFL university students at an advanced level of language proficiency. The results of the pre- and post-study interviews complemented the other data collected in this study as the teacher's views reaffirmed the results obtained from the other methods.

The triangulation of the results of the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data collected makes it plain that genre-based instruction is an effective pedagogical tool to teach summary-response writing to EFL university students. The results of the researcher's analysis of summary-response writing strategies, together with the data collected from the questionnaires, self-assessment checklists, and interviews with the instructor, support the quantitative results of the tests. In short, the triangulation of the findings of this study seems to demonstrate that the genre-based approach to teaching summary-response writing accounts for the positive changes obtained in the post-test. Thus, the effectiveness of genre-based instruction can be established.

Taken together, these results provide evidence that supports and extends previous work. These findings are consistent with earlier studies (Belcher & Braine, 1995; Clark, 1992; Dudley-Evans, 1995; Hedge & Gosden, 1992; Hyland, 2003; Jacoby et al., 1995; Johns, 1995; Martínez, 2005; Trebucq, 2005) that report that the genre-based framework of instruction is effective in teaching academic literacy to EFL learners. Contrary to previous research that also found limitations of the genre-based approach, such as inadequate improvement in move accuracy (Henry & Roseberry, 1998), limited attention to vocabulary items in genre exemplars (Hyon, 2002), problems in organisation and failure to follow the conventions (Mustafa, 1995), overgeneralisation and misapplication of genre features (Hyon, 2001), and teachers' concerns with the prescriptiveness of genre teaching (Kay & Dudley-Evans, 1998), in this study, genre-based instruction had positive effects on the ratings of students' task performance, on their use of summary-response writing strategies, on their attitudes, abilities and self-perceptions, and on the teacher's attitudes to genre-based instruction

and materials. One explanation for this discrepancy may be that the studies that highlight the limitations of the genre-based approach concentrated mainly on the product rather than the process of teaching and learning genres and paid little attention to the ways in which students develop knowledge of genres in specific contexts. In contrast, the present study focused on the process of building genre knowledge in a concrete academic context in which students used their knowledge of the summary-response for a specific purpose taking their academic audience into account. In addition, this study differs from genre-based literature (e.g. Hyland, 2007; Johns, 2002; Swales, 1990) that often assumes that genre-based instruction is effective to address the needs of advanced L2 graduate students but is not so suitable for undergraduate students. In fact, this study has found that genre-based instruction can also be effective for less advanced undergraduate students. On the whole, the results discussed above confirm that summary-response writing appears to be susceptible to genre-based instruction in the context of this study.

## CHAPTER 5

### Conclusion

The intent of this closing chapter is to review the objectives, research question and hypotheses of this study, summarise its findings, and present the pedagogical implications and limitations of the results discussed in the previous section. This chapter also offers directions for further research and makes final considerations.

#### 5.1 Summary of Research Findings

Based on the preceding discussion of results, it seems reasonable to conclude that this study has fulfilled its general and specific objectives. First, the general aim of investigating the effect of genre-based instruction on the process of teaching summary-response writing to EFL university students at an advanced level of language proficiency has been met. As to the specific objectives, the present study has provided evidence that confirms that genre-based instruction in summary-response writing has positive effects on:

- (a) the ratings of students' task performance;
- (b) observable performance;
- (c) students' abilities and attitudes towards genre-based instruction, and their self-perceptions; and
- (d) teacher attitudes towards genre-based instruction and materials.

The results of the ratings of students' task performance (collected via tests) showed that the mean of scores obtained by two independent raters was significantly higher in the post-test as the subjects improved their performance in summary-response writing after receiving genre-based instruction. The triangulation of these statistical results with students' observable performance (via the researcher's analysis of summary-response writing strategies), students' attitudes to genre-based instruction, their abilities and self-perceptions (collected via questionnaires and self-assessment checklists), and the teacher's attitudes to genre-based instruction and materials (via interviews) enabled the researcher to verify each set of findings with the others. Thus, the conclusions drawn have been validated by means of converging results obtained from different methods.

Therefore, the null hypothesis of this study can be rejected, and the hypothesis that genre-based instruction is an effective pedagogical tool to teach summary-response writing to EFL university students at an advanced level of language proficiency can be confirmed.

In conclusion, the genre-based approach to teaching summary-response writing seems to have facilitated students' production of the genre in the course of this study by developing their awareness that writing a summary-response is a linguistic and cognitive activity that takes place in specific social contexts. Students wrote summary-responses in a real academic setting with a particular purpose and audience. As a result of this pedagogical intervention, these learners seem to have realised that the structural and linguistic choices that characterise this genre are governed by conventions established within the academic community as its members interact to achieve certain communicative goals. Consequently, the students appear to have developed the four types of genre knowledge that are essential for successful participation in an academic community: knowledge of *the communicative purposes* of the genre, knowledge of *the appropriate forms* (schematic structures and lexico-grammatical features) needed to construct and interpret texts, knowledge of *content and register*, and knowledge of *the context* in which the genre can be found (Hyland, 2007, p. 56). Such knowledge empowered students to take part in their academic community because they acquired the writing skills needed in an academic setting.

This investigation was intended to play a role in larger efforts to help university students enhance their EFL academic literacy. It is hoped that this study will give insights into the possibilities that genre-based instruction offers to this area of language teaching, so that the gap between students' literacy practices and academic literacy may be bridged. I expect that the outcome of the present study can fruitfully inform practice and further research in this field.

## **5.2 Pedagogical Implications**

There is a symbiotic relationship between research and educational practice. On the one hand, classroom problems suggest areas of inquiry that promote investigation; on the other hand, knowledge obtained from research studies has an effect on the teaching and learning processes (Pipkin, 2010). This section considers the practical applications and pedagogical implications of these research findings in the hope of fleshing out ways of

enhancing EFL literacy instruction. I explore the challenges that arise for effective teaching in the light of current theoretical views of reading and writing and the outcome of this research, and present recommendations that may be useful for EAP practitioners, EFL teachers, applied linguists, and researchers as well as others interested in reading and writing at advanced levels. These suggestions may also be of value to curriculum developers, syllabus designers and administrators of literacy programmes.

In terms of practical applications, the findings of this study could contribute to enhancing the teaching of EFL reading and writing in the English Language courses offered at the School of Languages, UNC. They could also be applied to other academic literacy courses aimed at developing awareness of effective summary writing strategies and ways of responding critically to texts. As regards the implications of these findings for the teaching of EFL academic literacy in a university context, several authors (Kern, 2009; Parodi Sweis, 1999; Perelman, 2008; Ruiz Flores, 2009) and this study stress the importance of following a linguistic, cognitive and social approach to literacy instruction. Attempts to teach academic reading and writing need to be based not only on students' linguistic and cognitive needs but also on the particular social context in which they are learning. Students should become researchers in their academic culture and be exposed to a wide range of texts and contexts, which will enable them to see academic literacy as a social activity. In this way, learners can develop the linguistic, cognitive and social abilities required to negotiate a place in their academic environments. When considering the three dimensions of literacy discussed in the introductory chapter, it becomes evident that the genre summary-response involves taking into account not only the linguistic forms and cognitive processes involved in summarising and responding to a text, namely, summarisation and critical response strategies, but also the social dimensions of the genre such as its purpose, and the roles of readers and writers in a particular academic context. Indeed, a summary-response is not the product of the linguistic and cognitive processing of text information, but a social practice that poses a conceptual and generic challenge to students in a specific context. Therefore, when teaching this genre, the various skills that come into play – linguistic, cognitive and social – should be taken into account. In fact, the challenge that teachers face involves the identification of the linguistic, cognitive and social demands of academic reading and writing because expectations vary in different institutions, disciplines and contexts.



The second straightforward implication of this study is that, as many authors (Cumming et al., 2000; Hale et al., 1996; Hamp-Lyons & Kroll, 1996; Horowitz, 1991; Leki & Carson, 1997; Weigle, 2002 as cited in Cushing Weigle, 2004; Morra, in press) emphasise, reading and writing are connected. Therefore, these abilities should not be taught in isolation but from an integrated-skills perspective. It is vital to adopt approaches to reading and writing that relate these skills. In fact, the goal of literacy instruction should be to bridge the traditional divisions among the four skills. However, in practice, the connection between reading and writing usually varies with students' level. Beginning students often do more reading with relatively simple writing tasks. Intermediate-level students do more complex reading and writing tasks, and advanced students work with several texts summarising and synthesising information from multiple sources. In general, critical literacy, reading to learn, and writing from sources are reserved for advanced-level courses. As a result, learners become quite uncritical since they do not explore their critical responses to texts in the early stages of their language development. It is my contention that students need to develop their ability to read to learn and write from sources early on in their language development if they are to succeed at more advanced academic levels. For instance, it is important for students to learn how to write a summary-response at initial stages rather than wait until advanced levels to approach this academic genre. Even if students may not be ready to learn from reading complex texts or write from them, it seems feasible to assign summary-response tasks that have an adequate level of difficulty. Reading and writing are closely intertwined and are tools for learning; therefore, teachers should exploit the benefits of interrelating them.

Academic reading and writing are not merely linguistic activities but constitute cognitive tools for the construction of knowledge in particular social contexts. If students' literacy goals are reading to learn, writing from sources and responding critically to them, then instructional practices need to centre around these aims. Some of the tasks that provide strong support for reading comprehension and can help students read to learn are: previewing a text using titles, subtitles, captions and illustrations, answering pre-reading questions and predicting to activate prior knowledge, answering post-reading questions to check comprehension and promote critical thinking (i.e. classifying information, comparing and contrasting, considering the author's point of view, inferencing), and focusing on how the main ideas in a text are signalled (e.g.

recognising signalling devices such as pronouns, key words, synonyms and linking words, and recognising patterns of discourse organisation and generic structure).

It cannot be assumed that learners will intuitively know how to write from sources and use effective summary writing strategies. Step-by-step demonstrations of the procedure involving deleting irrelevant details, selecting main ideas, generalising and constructing/integrating information can help students learn how to write summaries. Some suggestions to teach them how to summarise are the following: summarising on the basis of graphic representations of text information (i.e. charts, time lines, Venn diagrams, bar graphs, spider maps, outlines, etc.), elaborating questionnaires about a text using heuristics (e.g. who, what, when, where and why), removing inappropriate sentences from a summary, matching main ideas and supporting details, deciding on the best summary statement, analysing the superstructure and generic features of a text, using text organisation clues (e.g. headings, paragraphing), reformulating the stylistic features of a text, reframing a genre (i.e. purpose, audience and register), reordering scrambled paragraphs of a text paying attention to cohesive devices, elaborating introductory paragraphs, choosing a title or topic sentence, providing a concluding sentence for a paragraph, writing subheadings for the paragraphs of a text, carrying out syntactic transformations combining simple sentences by means of subordination, nominalisation and absolute constructions, carrying out lexical transformations using synonyms and hyperonyms, paraphrasing a text segment, recognising discourse markers that signal microstructural and macrostructural relationships between ideas, recognising key words that form a conceptual network, bracketing off irrelevant information (i.e. embedded clauses and modifying phrases), and making generalisations based on textual details.

It should not be taken for granted that students will know how to respond critically to texts either. Some suggestions to teach them how to write critical responses are the following: reading with different viewpoints, e.g. argumentatively the first time and sympathetically the second time, making notes in the margins with reactions and questions, reading two texts with opposite points of view and arguing for one of them after summarising both, exploring the lexical, structural and stylistic choices writers make in terms of their effects on the reader, keeping a reading log to respond to texts, and exchanging dialogue-journals to react to other students' responses and explore alternative points of view. These suggestions are selective rather than exhaustive; they

are only a sampling of options available meant to provide guidelines for enhanced literacy teaching practices and improved quality of student learning.

Finally, the results of this study have implications for curriculum planning and syllabus design. It should be noted that genre-based instruction does not require changing what is taught since the basics of language teaching remain the same. It is, however, a matter of changing teachers' and learners' stance towards what is taught. This involves a shift in teacher and learner roles, and in instructional materials and activities that allows for genre analysis of academic literacy practices.

A contemporary teacher role is represented by the well-known motto: "the teacher is the guide on the side, not the sage on the stage." That is, teachers design and organise activities and then get out of the way. In genre-based instruction, even though teachers initially play an interventionist role, they gradually remove scaffolding and become a guide. Responsibility is shared as the teacher provides input and feedback, but students also play an active role that involves a considerable degree of autonomy. During the treatment in this study, the teacher first guided the students' analysis of the generic features of model texts and provided explicit teaching of the rhetorical and linguistic resources that realised the genre. Then, students were asked to take responsibility for their own learning and work independently.

As regards the role of the learners in this approach, they are encouraged to act as *apprentice discourse analysts* (Kern, 2009, p. 306), that is, as researchers in their academic culture in order to develop their knowledge of the generic features that expert language users employ to achieve their communicative goals. As a result, students are empowered to understand and produce the types of texts that the members of the academic community they belong to are expected to produce, and can interact effectively with that community. Moreover, learners become aware of the constraints that govern written production in their academic context. In this study, by analysing model summary-responses, the students learnt the lexico-grammatical features necessary to write this genre and became conscious of the context in which summary-responses are produced, the communicative purpose the genre serves and the academic audience's expectations. In other words, genre-based instruction provided learners with knowledge of the conventions that govern summary-responses, and enabled them to understand that they are written in reply to the expectations of the members of a specific community, which raised their awareness of the social nature of the genre. Consequently, they became familiar with the conventions of the academic community,

and the linguistic and rhetorical resources that characterise summary-responses. While it is not possible to assert that students will be able to use the genre at a professional level, this study suggests that genre-based instruction is effective to help them acquire knowledge about the genre.

As to genre-based materials and activities, their role is to develop students' knowledge of the communicative purpose of the genre, content knowledge (an understanding of the topics dealt with in the syllabus units), context knowledge (knowledge of the social context in which a given genre is written and read, i.e. its audience, roles and relationships of those who read and write it, and register), and genre knowledge (an understanding of the organisational structure of a genre and its lexicogrammatical features). The materials in this study seem to have developed the types of knowledge described above. They also seem to have been appropriate for these students as they provided them with the opportunity to learn the rhetorical and lexicogrammatical features of the genre summary-response in a gradual manner following the stages suggested by Feez (1998, p. 28) in *the teaching-learning cycle*. In fact, students reported that the quantity and quality of activities were appropriate, and that the way in which they learnt to write a summary-response was effective and enhanced their academic literacy. The teacher that participated in this study also valued the genre-based materials employed and the activities carried out. The results obtained confirm that such materials and activities contributed to achieving the goals of genre-based instruction.

To conclude, the genre-based approach to literacy instruction appears to be effective as it facilitates the learning of structures and lexicogrammatical features of target genres such as the summary-response. The overall implication of this study is that EFL university students at an advanced level of language proficiency need explicit teaching of the rhetorical patterns and linguistic features of academic genres. Due to their limited genre knowledge, these students are often unable to produce those genres properly. Therefore, it seems vital to create opportunities for learners to develop their knowledge of academic genres by means of multiple experiences with texts to improve their interpretation and production of such genres. In this study, explicit teaching helped students write summary-responses that adhered to the generic conventions and to the conventions of academic writing. At the beginning, the subjects were not aware of the social context or purpose of the genre summary-response and did not know its conventions. The analysis of model texts fostered by the genre-based materials and activities seems to have contributed to the development of the genre knowledge

necessary to write summary-responses. The outcome of this study, therefore, shows the effectiveness of genre-based instruction.

Some researchers have warned about the danger that this approach can become prescriptive leading students to see writing in terms of following rules or fixed forms into which they need to mould their ideas to imitate model texts. Nevertheless, the communicative purpose of a genre can be achieved by means of various linguistic resources. Indeed, the analysis of the summary writing and critical response strategies used in the post-test revealed that students chose a variety of lexico-grammatical features to perform the task. There is a clear implication that genre-based pedagogy fostered the use of a wide range of alternative forms to realise the purpose of the genre. Therefore, students should be encouraged to see conventions as resources that establish broad limits on how to understand and produce texts but also allow personal expression. Learners should be reminded that genres exist in communities of readers and writers and that there are social reasons for the linguistic choices language users make; however, it is also possible to negotiate the conventions.

As can be seen, a consideration of current literacy theory and research can improve teaching practices. Teachers should assess students' reading and writing needs, define meaningful instructional objectives, and develop instructional materials and activities accordingly. These implications can serve as a starting point for thinking about EFL academic literacy in specific contexts.

Research and instruction are symbiotic. Properly coalesced, they enhance each other in productive ways. Yet, translating research findings into practice is hardly simplistic because not all insights brought to light by this empirical study can be applied to other contexts. Hence, practitioners must be discerning in applying these pedagogical suggestions. What follows is a consideration of important precautions to take when adopting the genre-based approach.

### **5.3 Limitations of the Study**

These findings provide empirical evidence that indicates that, for these participants and in this particular context, genre-based instruction is an effective pedagogical tool to enhance the process of teaching summary-response writing. As regards the caveats of this study, this investigation is subject to limitations when attempting to generalise the findings from this particular context and participants to others. Although the subjects of

this study could be considered representative of the population under analysis, the results may not be generalised to a population outside this context. As this study was carried out with students at an advanced level of language proficiency, the results obtained cannot be applied to other levels. In addition, the subjects in this study were EFL university students, so they had previous knowledge of academic writing acquired in their programmes of study. Even though they did not have experience in writing summary-responses, they did have experience in writing other academic genres. This may have facilitated their acquisition of genre knowledge, and the positive effects reported may have been partly due to the students' previous academic background. Therefore, this approach might not be effective for learners without any prior knowledge of academic writing. We should bear in mind this limited generalisability and the corresponding need for replication. Indeed, these results may be best viewed as hypotheses to test with groups at different levels and from different backgrounds.

Furthermore, it must be pointed out that, even if these results provide evidence of the positive effects of genre-based instruction, this study was relatively small scale and no firm conclusions can be drawn on the basis of a limited sample. Replication of this research is again critical as it would be interesting to explore the effect of this approach on a larger sample. The goal is to find similar results with the same methods across multiple groups so as to better understand the effect of genre-based instruction. An additional caveat is that this design measures the short-term effects of genre-based instruction. Using the same instruments longitudinally could offer powerful insights into the effect of genre-based teaching over time.

In conclusion, four caveats should be taken into consideration. First, the generalisability of the current findings should be tested with EFL learners at a broad array of levels and from different backgrounds since the extent to which the implications presented are generalisable is uncertain. The shortcomings inherent in generalising these results to other levels and contexts aside, other concerns remain regarding the sample size and length of this study. Carrying out similar studies with larger groups of students over longer periods of time could provide further support for this approach. Given the reported benefits of genre-based instruction, much could be gained by replication studies as strong convergence of research results would enable researchers to make generalisations.

#### 5.4 Directions for Further Research

The implications and limitations discussed above open up possible avenues for further research into the effect of genre-based instruction, so the results of this initial study could be used to outline more comprehensive research.

First, a future line of investigation could assess the effect of genre-based instruction on the process of teaching summary-response writing to students at other levels of language proficiency. Second, since the subjects in this study had some experience in writing academic English, a follow-up study could be carried out including inexperienced subjects with no academic background, for example, secondary school students, and experienced subjects, for instance, graduate students. Postgraduate contexts where the problems unresolved at graduate level and the new academic requirements generate novel needs could create windows for investigating the specific effects of genre-based instruction. The present study could also be replicated in contexts similar to the one where it was carried out, i.e. other universities or tertiary institutions that offer Teacher Training, Licentiate and Translation Studies programmes in EFL. Investigations of this sort would throw light on the impact of students' level and background knowledge on the teaching and learning of writing following the genre-based approach, and could yield useful insights into ways to enhance academic literacy that pave the way for effective instructional programmes. Third, there is also need for studies with larger groups of students and longitudinal studies investigating the long-term effect of the treatment.

Moreover, further studies could focus on whether students transfer genre knowledge acquired through genre-based instruction to other contexts, courses and tasks, and on the more complex academic genre of the synthesis of information from multiple sources. This could provide stronger evidence in favour of the genre-based approach. Besides, future research could investigate the effect of genre-based instruction on writing in other languages apart from English. Finally, other studies may also investigate the correlation between teacher training in genre theory and the effectiveness of genre-based teaching. It should be acknowledged that teachers of courses other than language may not have experience in teaching to read and write in EFL at university, so they should be provided with the necessary resources for professional development.

According to Kern (2009), a context sensitive approach to literacy research should be guided by the question: “In what ways and to what ends do second language learners draw on the various linguistic and schematic resources available to them in particular contexts of reading and writing?” (p. 318). This author highlights the need for research into reading and writing across proficiency levels, genres, purposes, tasks and contexts, and also recommends close analyses of teachers and learners in literacy classrooms. His approach acknowledges the importance of textual analysis but widens the scope of inquiry and focuses on relationships – linguistic, cognitive and social – among readers, writers, texts and contexts.

## **5.5 Final Considerations**

The present study investigated the application of genre-based instruction to the process of teaching summary-response writing to students at an advanced level of English language proficiency. It was meant to be a contribution to research in the field of ESP in general and to the teaching of EAP in particular. On the basis of the results arrived at, this section provides the final considerations of this study.

It has been my intention to illuminate the potential of genre-based pedagogy for the teaching of EFL academic literacy. I hope that this approach will provide new insights into literacy instruction and into how to provide students with useful reading and writing experiences. Teachers should be informed decision-makers that integrate new research-based information into their classroom practices. However, according to Mazzoni and Gambrell (2003), although effective literacy instruction practices may be described, they cannot be prescribed, but can only be achieved when reflective teachers who are adept at implementing new instructional approaches adapt instruction to the needs of their classrooms. In fact, “Best practices involve a custom fit – not a simple one size fits all – approach.” (Mazzoni & Gambrell, 2003, p. 12). That is, before putting research into practice, teachers should analyse their students’ needs and adapt instruction accordingly. Even if research shows that a particular instructional approach leads to positive changes, effective instruction can only be achieved when teachers make pedagogical decisions that enable students to realise their literacy potential. Hence, it is teachers that ultimately have to adapt instructional approaches in meaningful ways for their own learners, and apply them in a contextually relevant manner.



Some students become successful EFL readers and writers because they are deeply involved with classroom topics, perceive the importance of reading and are motivated to write. These students often read with a high level of comprehension, learning from texts, synthesising information from multiple sources, evaluating the information in them critically and using it in their writing. However, less proficient students do not acquire the skills to read and write academic genres spontaneously, so explicit instruction is necessary. It has been the purpose of this study to draw upon recent developments in the field of EFL to examine ways of enhancing the teaching of writing and improving the effectiveness of literacy teachers. To achieve this, it seems indispensable to continue investigating how students read and write in EFL at university taking the genres used in that context as points of departure since literacy is “the means by which postsecondary learners can attain academic success” (Pugh et al., 2000, p. 38). In fact, students’ ability to work effectively with texts seems to be central to this success.

Reading and writing are not just language skills but also cognitive and social practices that provide learners with access to new discourse communities. The goals of literacy teaching should be extended beyond linguistic knowledge by considering its cognitive and social dimensions as well. Thus, literacy instruction should emphasise the development of learners’ ability to understand and produce texts, and think critically about how they are constructed in specific social contexts. By presenting reading and writing as social acts involving cognitive and linguistic dimensions, I have defined literacy not in terms of universal processes but in terms of dynamic, interactive processes where language and thought converge in particular social contexts. It is necessary to bear in mind that: “Any way of reading [or writing] involves apprenticeship to some social group that reads (acts, talks, values) in certain ways in regard to such texts (there is no neutral, asocial, apolitical reading [or writing])” (Gee, 1996, p. 44). If reading and writing are not only linguistic and cognitive processes but also socially embedded practices involving shared conventions established by discourse communities, they should be learnt within those communities in specific social contexts.

Literacy plays a key role in the process of construction of knowledge. Advancing from basic literacy to more complex literacy practices gives access to the elaboration of knowledge and develops critical reading and writing. For this reason, the responsibility for enhancing academic literacy to achieve high standards of reading, writing and critical thinking should be shared by the whole academic community

(Carlino, 2006). Indeed, teachers' long-range goal is to develop critical readers and writers outside the EFL classroom, whose purpose is to learn from the texts they read and use them as sources for their own writing. In fact, the development of literacy is a process that lasts throughout an individual's life. Thus, students can begin but not complete the development of their EFL academic literacy in the classroom. Teachers can only lay the foundations for literacy practices that will continue throughout students' academic and professional lives. I hope this study has contributed to a greater understanding of how literacy might most appropriately be taught, and thrown light on the complex processes of academic reading and writing, which are worth exploring further since only by doing so is it possible to move towards enhancing EFL academic literacy.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A. Genre-Based Classroom Materials

#### Genre-Based Classroom Materials The Teaching-Learning Cycle in Practice

The activities in these materials are based on *the cycle of teaching and learning: building the social context, modelling, joint construction, independent construction and linking related texts* (Feez, 1998, p. 28) and have been designed for English Language IV students. This class will complete two syllabus units during the first term: *Media Studies* and *Education*, which will provide the basis for work on the genre summary-response. The aim of these materials is for students to develop:

- knowledge of the communicative purpose of the genre: an understanding of the communicative goals it serves,
- content knowledge: an understanding of the topics dealt with in each of the units,
- context knowledge: an understanding of the social context in which the summary-response is written and read (its purpose, audience, register), and the roles and relationships of those who read and write it, and
- genre knowledge: an understanding of the organisational structure of the summary-response and its lexico-grammatical features.

**Note:** Most of the sample summary-responses included in these materials have been selected and/or adapted from students' answers to final exam questions.

- 1. Activities aimed at building the social context of the target text:** promoting students' understanding of the purpose of the text, audience, register and the roles and relationships of those who read and write it.

**Task 1.1:** Read the text below<sup>18</sup> and answer the questions that follow in pairs.

- a) What is the text about?
- b) Who can write such a text? To whom? What is the intended audience of this text?
- c) Why was this text written? What is its social purpose?
- d) What is the relationship between the writer and the intended reader?
- e) What is the style/register of the text (formal, semi-formal, informal)?

<sup>18</sup> The texts on which these tasks are based have not been included in this Appendix.

- f) What is the possible social context or location of the text?  
 g) Have you read or written a text like this one before?

**2. Activities aimed at modelling:** deconstructing the genre to analyse its generic structure (i.e. prototypical rhetorical pattern or organisational structure) and language (i.e. lexico-grammatical features) through **language scaffolding tasks**, i.e. **familiarisation, model manipulation, controlled and guided composition.**

- **Familiarisation Tasks**

**A) Text-Level Tasks: Analysis of Generic Structure**

**Task 2.1:** Writers seem to be fairly consistent in the way they organise a particular genre, that is, information is presented in a structured format. Even short pieces of writing have regular, predictable patterns of organisation, and the analysis of the rhetorical patterns of a genre reveals preferred ways of communicating intention. You can take advantage of these patterns to read and write texts. The communicative purpose of a summary-response is accomplished by means of two sections, which give this genre its typical generic or organisational structure. Read the summary-response in Task 1.1 again and answer the questions below:

- a) What is the visual layout of the text? Is it divided into paragraphs?
- b) Are there headings or a title?
- c) What are the necessary sections that form the generic structure of a summary-response and what are the boundaries between them? What are the stages or moves within each section?
- d) What function is served by each section and what language features help express these functions?

**Task 2.2:** Read the text below focusing on its similarities and differences in format with the summary-response in Task 1.1 and decide how likely it is to be an example of the same genre. What criteria would you use for the inclusion or exclusion?

**Task 2.3:** Sometimes, failure to adhere to the writing conventions of the academic community may render a text unacceptable. Read the source text and the summary-response below, which has an untidy organisational structure and format and does not follow the conventions of the genre, and comment on it. What changes would you make?

**Task 2.4:** Read the **Guidelines for Summary-Response Writing**. Then, read the source text and the two drafts of a summary-response, and answer the questions below.

- a) How closely do these drafts follow the guidelines?
- b) Does the first draft present the main idea of the original text. Is there adequate support?

- c) Does it demonstrate understanding of the text?
- d) Is the summary section in the first draft objective?
- e) Is the first draft long enough?
- f) Are there important ideas missing?
- g) What summarisation strategies have been used? Has the writer used his/her own words? Which vocabulary items have not been paraphrased?
- h) Is the response section in the first draft relevant? Does it make a good evaluative comment (e.g. agreeing or disagreeing with the author, identifying hidden assumptions and/or recognising faulty reasoning), present the writer's analysis clearly and justify his/her position convincingly by means of examples, causes/reasons, consequences, conditions, explanations, personal anecdotes, facts/statistics, or other readings? What response strategies have been used?
- i) What changes have been made from the first draft of the summary-response to the second?

## **B) Language-Level Tasks: Analysis of Lexico-Grammatical Features**

**Task 2.5:** Having considered the generic structure and sections that make up a summary-response, let us now consider the linguistic (lexico-grammatical) features that realise such sections. Read the source text and the summary-response below, and then answer the questions that follow.

- a) What expressions does the writer use to open and close this summary-response?
- b) This summary-response establishes a contrast between people's belief that the political system is responsive to the public and the reality that politicians ignore public opinion. Which words signal that contrast? Which linking word introduces the reason for this?
- c) How are examples introduced?
- d) Apart from linking words and phrases, the writer uses other cohesive devices to show that sentences are connected. Two other cohesive devices are repetition of key words and phrases and the use of pronouns. Find examples.
- e) The response section provides an evaluative comment on the information in the summary section. How is the writer's opinion introduced?
- f) Are there any words that qualify the strength of the claims made in the text? What function do they serve?

**Task 2.6:** Read the **Guidelines for Maintaining an Academic Style** in the use of lexico-grammatical features when writing a summary-response (**Appendix A**) and then do the tasks that follow.

- a) Taking into account the lexico-grammatical features conventionally used to realise the sections of a summary-response, read the source text and then complete the summary-response below supplying linking words and phrases, and other missing lexico-grammatical items that give this summary-response cohesion (i.e. pronouns and key words).
- b) Underline the reporting verbs in the summary-response above and decide if they are objective or have the potential to be evaluative.

c) Rate the adjectives that can be used in the response section of a summary-response to provide an evaluative comment as follows:

++ = very positive

+ = positive

0 = neutral, ambiguous

- = negative

-- = very negative

unusual	limited	ambitious	modest	innovative	interesting
academic	restricted	important	flawed	impressive	elegant
useful	simple	significant	traditional	complex	small-scale
careful	exploratory	competent	remarkable	preliminary	unsatisfactory
scholarly	original	sound	perceptive	rigorous	accurate

d) Read the source text and the summary-response that follows and substitute the lexico-grammatical features (strength of claims, linking words, verbs, *that*-clauses, etc.) that do not belong to the academic register for formal alternatives.

**Task 2.7:** After having identified some of the structural and linguistic devices that encode the purpose of a summary-response, prepare a generic description of its essential features. Organise it under these headings:

- Communicative purpose
- Expected audience
- Social context and register
- Key organisational structure and sections
- Key lexico-grammatical features

**Task 2.8:** Taking into account the features identified above, read the text below and choose the best summary-response. Justify your choice.

- **Manipulation of Models**

**Task 2.9:** Using your knowledge of the generic structure and linguistic features of the genre, read the source text below and reorder the scrambled strips of paper containing the sections of a summary-response into a coherent whole so that they follow a logical order.

**Task 2.10:** Read the source text and the summary-response below it, which has an unfinished response section, and combine the first part of the response section with an appropriate second part choosing from the options given. What position do the other two responses justify?

**Task 2.11:** Read the source text and edit the summary-response below it deleting and changing text segments to achieve succinctness and academic style.

**Task 2.12:** Both of the texts below were written by EFL university students at an advanced level of language proficiency. Most readers would consider one of them to be more acceptable than the other (not in terms of point of view but of logical development

of ideas). Read the source text and then say which summary-response you prefer and why. Rewrite the unacceptable one to improve it and justify the changes you make.

- **Controlled and Guided Composition**

**Task 2.13:** Read the source text and complete the summary-response below it, for which some sentences are given.

**Task 2.14:** Read the source text and the summary-response below it, write a parallel text which has a shorter summary section, and rewrite the response section from your own viewpoint.

**Task 2.15:** Read the source text below and write a summary-response using the skeletal outline of the text and the genre template given to prompt your writing.

**3. Activities aimed at joint construction:** creating a summary-response in collaboration with the teacher and peers.

**Task 3.1:** Read the text below and participate in the whole-class construction of a summary-response led by the teacher.

**Task 3.2:** In pairs, read the text below and write a summary-response. Compare your summary-response with that of another pair.

**4. Activities aimed at independent construction:** removing scaffolding and allowing students to create texts by themselves.

**Task 4.1:** Watch a video about the press and the dilemma between the need to inform and humanitarian concerns, and write a summary-response to the audiovisual stimulus. After you have finished, use the self-assessment checklist to assess your performance. Then give the peer feedback form to one of your classmates so as to receive feedback from them. Finally, complete the revision planning teacher-student conference form to receive feedback from the teacher. After receiving feedback, revise, edit and proofread your summary-response before handing it in to be corrected. (See **Appendix B. Self-Assessment Checklist, Peer Feedback and Teacher-Student Conference Forms**).

**Task 4.2:** Watch a video about teenagers discussing whether they learn to be violent from television or from their own parents and write a summary-response. Use the self-assessment checklist, peer feedback and revision planning teacher-student conference forms employed in Task 4.1 to assess your performance and obtain feedback.

**Task 4.3:** Read the text below and write your first draft of a summary-response. Use the self-assessment checklist, peer feedback and revision planning teacher-student conference forms to assess your performance and obtain feedback.

**5. Activities aimed at linking related texts:** relating the summary-response to other texts and contexts.

**Task 5.1:** Compare the use of the summary-response in this course to its use in other contexts and disciplines.

**Task 5.2:** Investigate how the summary-response is related to other genres that occur in the same or a similar educational institution (i.e. essays from sources, book reviews, annotated bibliographies, literature reviews).

**Task 5.3:** Much of what has been said about summary-responses so far applies to the writing of a film review. Read the film review below and say what features it shares with a summary-response.

**Task 5.4:** Reflect on the relevance of summary-response writing to your future academic and professional lives.

**Task 5.5:** If possible, interview an expert text user (i.e. a researcher that has to summarise and evaluate previous research in his/her own work) and share the information with the rest of the class.




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**Genre-Based Classroom Materials – Appendix A**  
**Guidelines for Maintaining an Academic Style:**  
**Lexico-Grammatical Features**

-  **Grammar**
-  **Linking words and phrases**
-  **Non-restrictive relative clauses and appositives**
-  **Reporting verbs**
-  **Nominal *that*-clauses**
-  **Summary reminder phrases**
-  **Beginning the response**
-  **Evaluative language**
-  **Unreal conditionals**
-  **Inversion**
-  **Qualifications and strength of claims**



**Genre-Based Classroom Materials – Appendix B**  
**Self-Assessment Checklist, Peer Feedback and**  
**Teacher-Student Conference Forms**

- ❖ **Self-Assessment Checklist** (See Appendix F. Self-Assessment Checklist, p. 206 for the complete checklist)

**Content and organisation:** Summary section

**Content and organisation:** Response section

**Language use:** Lexico-grammatical features

**Context:** Purpose, audience and register

**Mechanics:** Spelling, punctuation, capitalisation and format

- ❖ **Peer Feedback Form**

**Writer's questions:**

1. What part of my summary-response did you like best? What part did you dislike?
2. What did you learn from my summary-response?
3. What would you like to know more about?
4. Is there anything that does not make sense?
5. Can you tell what the main idea in the summary section is? Did I add my own ideas to the summary section?
6. Are the details relevant? Is there any irrelevant part I should do away with?
7. Is there any relevant information I should add?
8. Did I incorporate the source text into my own words or did I use words from the original?
9. Can you tell what my point of view is in the response section? Is there a good evaluative comment? Is the analysis clear and justified?
10. Is my summary-response logically organised?
11. Do I show control of lexico-grammatical features (e.g. vocabulary, linking words, grammatical structures)?
12. Do I show control of contextual features (purpose, sense of audience and register)?
13. Are there errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalisation and/or format?
14. What suggestions would you make to improve my summary-response?

**Reader's answers:**

1. I liked/disliked the part where...
2. Your summary-response taught me that...
3. I'd like to know more about...
4. I think the part that doesn't make sense is...
5. The main idea in the summary section is...
6. You should do away with...
7. You should add...
8. Some words you should paraphrase are...
9. Your point of view in the response section is that...

10. The organisation of your summary-response is...
11. Some lexico-grammatical features you should pay attention to are...
12. Some contextual features you should pay attention to are...
13. Some aspects of mechanics you should pay attention to are...
14. To improve this summary-response, I'd suggest...

❖ **Revision Planning Teacher-Student Conference Form**

1. The questions I would like to ask the instructor are:

- a) .....
- b) .....
- c) .....

2. I think the best part of my summary-response is....

3. I think the weakest part of my summary-response is...

4. According to the instructor's comments, the strengths and problems of this summary-response draft are as follows:

<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>PROBLEMS</b>
a) .....	a) .....
b) .....	b) .....
c) .....	c) .....

5. Based on this feedback, here is my plan for revising this summary-response (list the specific steps you intend to take)

- a) .....
- b) .....
- c) .....

## APPENDIX B. Instructor's Pack

Follow these guidelines to work with the Genre-Based Classroom Materials. Please, contact the researcher if you have any doubt. Thank you for your cooperation.

**Aim of the Genre-Based Classroom Materials:** The activities included in the classroom materials have been designed for English Language IV students. This class will complete two syllabus units during the first semester: *Media Studies* and *Education*, which will provide the basis for work on the genre summary-response. The aim of these materials is for students to develop:

- knowledge of the communicative purpose of the genre: an understanding of the communicative goals it serves,
- content knowledge: an understanding of the topics dealt with in each of the syllabus units,
- context knowledge: an understanding of the social context in which the summary-response is written and read (its purpose, audience, register) and the roles and relationships of those who read and write it, and
- genre knowledge: an understanding of the organisational structure of the summary-response and its lexico-grammatical features.

**Rationale for classroom activities:** The activities and tasks below are based on *the cycle of teaching and learning* (Feez, 1998, p. 28), which informs the planning and sequencing of genre-based classroom activities showing the process of learning a genre as a series of stages that involve: *building the context, modelling, joint construction of the genre, independent construction, and linking related texts*.

**Role of the teacher:** The teacher should assume the role of initiator, guide and resource when building the context; the interventionist role of an instructor, controller and guide when modelling; the role of prompter and resource at the joint construction stage; that of observer, responder and assessor at the independent construction stage; and that of observer and guide at the linking stage.

**1. Activities aimed at building the social context of the target text:** promoting students' understanding of the purpose of the text, audience, register, and the roles and relationships of those who read and write it.

**Aim:** The aim of these activities is to carry out a contextual analysis to consider how the summary-response is organised at the level of writer's purpose, audience, register and reader-writer relationships. The role of the teacher at this stage is that of initiator, guide and resource (See Genre-Based Classroom Materials: Task 1.1).

**2. Activities aimed at modelling:** deconstructing the genre to analyse its generic structure (i.e. prototypical rhetorical patterns or organisational structure) and language (i.e. lexico-grammatical features) through **language scaffolding tasks**, e.g. **familiarisation, model manipulation, controlled and guided composition**.

**Aim:** The aim of language scaffolding tasks is to gradually increase learners' independence moving from basic familiarisation tasks that foster noticing and consciousness-raising through manipulation of models to composition tasks that vary in their degree of guidance. The teacher's role is that of an instructor, controller and guide and is strongly directive and interventionist as he/she presents examples and introduces tasks to sensitise students to the structure and language of the genre.

- **Familiarisation Tasks:** As students require greater support during the early stages of working with an unfamiliar genre, these tasks focus on raising awareness of the rhetorical patterns and language used to create the target genre without requiring reproduction.

**A) Text-Level Tasks: Analysis of Generic Structure:** The aim of these tasks is to make students realise that summary-responses have two distinctive sections and each one serves a different purpose (See Genre-Based Classroom Materials: Tasks 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4).

**B) Language-Level Tasks: Analysis of Lexico-Grammatical Features:** The aim of these tasks is to help students recognise the connection between the two sections of a summary-response and the linguistic features that realise them as the latter respond to the function of the former, namely, to summarise the source text and to provide an evaluative comment (See Genre-Based Classroom Materials: Tasks 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8).

- **Manipulation of Models:** Models are a source of manipulation tasks that provide students with a reliable genre schema to prepare them for writing. The use of models is controversial and some teachers object to them on the grounds that they may focus students on the rhetorical patterns of texts at the expense of developing creativity. This can be countered by ensuring that students are exposed to a wide range of genre examples and activities (See Genre-Based Classroom Materials: Tasks 2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 2.12).
  - **Controlled and Guided Composition:** These tasks develop learners' confidence and fluency by providing a supportive writing environment. As students gain familiarity with a genre, they move away from manipulating models and create texts with controlled and guided input. Learners make progress towards their potential performance through interaction with the teacher, who contributes what they are initially unable to do alone providing opportunities for practice (See Genre-Based Classroom Materials: Tasks 2.13, 2.14).
- 3. Activities aimed at joint construction:** creating the target text in collaboration with the teacher and peers.

**Aim:** The aim of these activities is to allow the teacher to relinquish more responsibility to the students as they gain control of the genre and confidence in writing. They create the target text in collaboration with the teacher and their peers, and are guided through the process by means of strategies for generating content, planning, drafting, writing, revising and editing texts. The role of the teacher is that of a prompter and resource (See Genre-Based Classroom Materials: Tasks 3.1, 3.2).

- 4. Activities aimed at independent construction:** removing scaffolding and allowing students to create texts by themselves.

**Aim:** The aim of these activities is to gradually shift responsibility to the learners who create texts by themselves working through several drafts, consulting the teacher and peers only as needed and evaluating their progress. The teacher no longer directly intervenes but monitors and provides feedback. The role of the teacher is that of an observer, responder and assessor (See Genre-Based Classroom Materials: Tasks 4.1, 4.2, 4.3).

- 5. Activities aimed at linking related texts:** relating the summary-response to other texts and contexts.

**Aim:** These activities aim at establishing links to other texts and contexts, to compare the use of other genres in the same context (e.g. essays from sources, book reviews, annotated bibliographies and literature reviews) and the same genre in other contexts. This stage provides opportunities for critiquing and manipulating the genre. The role of the teacher is that of observer and guide (See Genre-Based Classroom Materials: Tasks 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5).

**Note:** This cycle is not a fixed procedure; it is possible to enter the cycle at any point, skipping stages if they are not necessary or returning to them for revision to suit learners' needs. However, when a genre is first introduced, teachers and students usually work through all the stages.

## **APPENDIX C. Raters' Pack**

### **C.1 Protocol**

Please, follow these instructions carefully to score the pre- and post-tests. Thank you very much for your generous contribution to this research study.

- 1) Get familiar with the scoring scale given.
- 2) Score the sample summary-responses and go over them with the researcher in order to unify assessment criteria.
- 3) Score the summary-responses based on the scoring scale provided. You will need to score each of the traits on a scale from 0% to 100%. The full mark for each of the traits is a score of 100% and the pass mark is 60%. A final mark for the summary-response will be obtained by adding up the scores given to each trait and dividing the resulting number by five, the total number of traits. The percentage obtained will be transformed into a score on a scale from 1 to 10. The pass mark is 4=60%. This will be figured out by the researcher.
- 4) Record the scores given to the subjects on the scoring sheet provided and hand in all the material.

## C.2 Scoring Scale

## Scoring Scale

Trait	Score	Descriptor
<b>Content and organisation: Summary section</b>	100%-81% <b>Excellent to very good</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Excellent to very good summary with all main ideas clearly stated, all relevant details included, and no additions.</li> <li>- Excellent to very good and logical organisation of the section.</li> <li>- Source text accurately incorporated into the writer's own words.</li> </ul>
	80%-61% <b>Good to average</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Good to average summary with most main ideas stated, most relevant details included, and no additions.</li> <li>- Good and fairly logical organisation of the section.</li> <li>- Little language from source text present and incorporated into the writer's own words.</li> </ul>
	60%-41% <b>Fair to poor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fair to poor summary with main ideas partially stated, some relevant details included, and some additions.</li> <li>- Fair and loose organisation of the section.</li> <li>- Some language from source text with an attempt to incorporate it into the writer's own words.</li> </ul>
	40%-21% <b>Very poor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Very poor and sketchy summary with some main ideas omitted, irrelevant details included, and several additions.</li> <li>- Very poor and fairly illogical organisation of the section.</li> <li>- Extensive language from source text with little or no integration into the writer's own words.</li> </ul>
	20%-0% <b>Inadequate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inadequate and scanty summary with several main ideas omitted, several irrelevant details included and many additions that distort the meaning of the original.</li> <li>- Inadequate and illogical organisation of the section.</li> <li>- Relies almost exclusively on source text language.</li> </ul>

Trait	Score	Descriptor
<b>Content and organisation: Response section</b>	100%-81% <b>Excellent to very good</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Excellent to very good evaluative comment demonstrating full understanding of source text content (agreeing or disagreeing with the author, identifying hidden assumptions, assessing the evidence provided, and/or recognising faulty reasoning), presenting the student's own analysis and justifying his/her position convincingly.</li> <li>- Very good and logical organisation of the section.</li> </ul>
	80%-61% <b>Good to average</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Good to average evaluative comment demonstrating good understanding of source text content (agreeing or disagreeing with the author, identifying some hidden assumptions, assessing some of the evidence provided, and/or recognising faulty reasoning), presenting the student's own analysis and justifying his/her position satisfactorily.</li> <li>- Good and fairly logical organisation of the section.</li> </ul>
	60%-41% <b>Fair to poor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fair to poor evaluative comment demonstrating partial understanding of source text content (agreeing or disagreeing with the author, identifying few hidden assumptions, assessing little of the evidence provided, and/or recognising faulty reasoning), presenting the student's own analysis and justifying his/her position but in a limited fashion.</li> <li>- Fair and loose organisation of the section.</li> </ul>
	40%-21% <b>Very poor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Very poor and underdeveloped evaluative comment demonstrating poor understanding of source text content (without agreeing or disagreeing with the author, identifying hidden assumptions, assessing the evidence provided or recognising faulty reasoning), presenting the student's own analysis without justifying his/her position satisfactorily.</li> <li>- Very poor and fairly illogical organisation of the section.</li> </ul>
	20%-0% <b>Inadequate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inadequate evaluative comment (or no evaluative comment) demonstrating misunderstanding of the text (without agreeing or disagreeing with the author, identifying hidden assumptions, assessing the evidence provided or recognising faulty reasoning) without presenting the student's own analysis or justifying his/her position.</li> <li>- Inadequate and illogical organisation of the section.</li> </ul>



<b>Trait</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
<b>Language use: Lexico-grammatical features</b>	100%-81% <b>Excellent to very good</b>	- Excellent to very good control of lexico-grammatical features (wide range of content-specific vocabulary, linking words and accurate grammatical structures) with minimal errors.
	80%-61% <b>Good to average</b>	- Good to average control of lexico-grammatical features (adequate range of content-specific vocabulary, linking words and grammatical structures) with some non-impeding errors that do not interfere with comprehension.
	60%-41% <b>Fair to poor</b>	- Fair to poor control of lexico-grammatical features (limited range of content-specific vocabulary, linking words and grammatical structures) with a number of non-impeding errors that are distracting.
	40%-21% <b>Very poor</b>	- Very poor control of lexico-grammatical features (poor choice of content-specific vocabulary, use of linking words and grammatical structures) with frequent errors that hinder communication.
	20%-0% <b>Inadequate</b>	- Inadequate or no control of lexico-grammatical features (lack of content-specific vocabulary, inadequate use of linking words and inaccurate grammatical structures) with too many errors that interfere with communication.

<b>Trait</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
<b>Context (purpose, audience, register)</b>	100%-81% <b>Excellent to very good</b>	- Excellent to very good contextual appropriateness: complete control of purpose, sense of audience and correct register.
	80%-61% <b>Good to average</b>	- Good to average contextual appropriateness: good control of purpose, some sense of audience and appropriate register.
	60%-41% <b>Fair to poor</b>	- Fair to poor contextual appropriateness: little control of purpose, little sense of audience and shifts in register.
	40%-21% <b>Very poor</b>	- Very poor contextual appropriateness: lack of control of purpose, lack of sense of audience and inappropriate register.
	20%-0% <b>Inadequate</b>	- Inadequate or no contextual appropriateness: no control of purpose or sense of audience and incorrect register.

Trait	Score	Descriptor
<b>Mechanics</b>	100%-81% <b>Excellent to very good</b>	- Almost no errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalisation and format (paragraphing, indentation, word count, no title).
	80%-61% <b>Good to average</b>	- Few errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalisation and format.
	60%-41% <b>Fair to poor</b>	- Several errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalisation and format.
	40%-21% <b>Very poor</b>	- Frequent errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalisation and format.
	20%-0% <b>Inadequate</b>	- Too many errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalisation and format.

**C.3 Scoring Sheet**

**Rater's name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Student identification number	Trait Scores				
	Content and organisation: Summary section	Content and organisation: Response section	Language use: Lexico-grammatical features	Context (purpose, audience, register)	Mechanics
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
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7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
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46					

## APPENDIX D. Testing Instruments

### D.1 Pre-Test

As part of your classwork in this academic context, your teacher has asked you to summarise and respond to the information in the text below. Read the extract from an essay by Nicholas Maxwell and write a summary-response summarising, analysing and evaluating the information in it critically. Your summary-response will be scored on content, organisation, language use, contextual appropriateness (purpose, audience, register) and mechanics (spelling, punctuation, capitalisation and format). You will have one hour and 15 minutes to write your summary-response.

#### **The Crisis of Science without Wisdom by Nicholas Maxwell <sup>19</sup>**

At present, the basic intellectual aim of academic inquiry is to improve knowledge. Much of the structure of academic inquiry is shaped by the adoption of this as the basic intellectual aim. Nevertheless, judged from the standpoint of making a contribution to human welfare, academic inquiry of this type is damagingly irrational. A revolution in the aims and methods of academic inquiry is needed so that the basic aim becomes to promote wisdom, conceived of as the capacity to realise what is of value, for oneself and others, including knowledge and technological know-how, but much else besides. This urgently needed revolution would affect every branch and aspect of the academic enterprise. It may seem surprising to suggest that changing the aims and methods of academic inquiry would help us tackle global problems. It is, however, of decisive importance to appreciate that global problems have arisen because of a massive increase in scientific knowledge and technology without a concomitant increase in global wisdom.

The world today is beset with problems. There is degradation of the environment due to industrialisation and modern agriculture. There is the impending problem of global warming. There is the problem of the horrific number of people killed in war. There is the arms trade and the massive stockpiling of modern armaments, and the ever-present threat of their use by terrorists or in war, whether the arms be conventional, chemical, biological or nuclear. There is the profound injustice of the immense differences in the wealth of populations across the globe, the industrially advanced first world of North America and Europe experiencing unprecedented wealth while three quarters of humanity live in conditions of poverty in the developing world, hungry, unemployed, without proper housing, health care, education, or even access to safe water. There is the long-standing problem of the rapid population growth, especially pronounced in the poorest parts of the world. All these have been made possible by the rapid growth of science and technology since the birth of modern science in the 17th century. Modern science and technology are even implicated in the rapid spread of AIDS in the last few decades. It is possible that, in Africa, AIDS has been spread, in part, by contaminated needles used in inoculation programmes and, globally, AIDS has spread so rapidly because of travel made possible by modern technology. In addition to these stark global crises, there are problems of a more intangible character, signs of a general cultural or spiritual malaise. There is the phenomenon of political apathy. The

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<sup>19</sup> Professor of Philosophy of Science at University College London, UK and published author.

problems of humanity seem so immense that each one of us seems impotent. The new global economy seems to be a monster out of control, with human beings having to adapt their lives to its demands. There is the phenomenon of the trivialisation of culture perhaps as a result of technological innovation such as TV and the Internet. Once, people created their own live music. Now it is pumped into our homes by our technology, a mass-produced culture for mass consumption. These more intangible global problems indicated above may also have come about, in part, as a result of the rapid growth of modern science and technology.

That the rapid growth of scientific knowledge and technological know-how should have these kinds of consequences is all but inevitable. Scientific and technological progress massively increase our power to act. In the absence of wisdom, this will have beneficial consequences, but will also have harmful ones, whether intended, as in war, or unforeseen and unintended (initially at least), as in environmental degradation. As long as we lacked modern science, lack of wisdom did not matter too much: Our power to wreak havoc on the planet and each other was limited. Now that our power to act has been so massively enhanced by modern science and technology, global wisdom has become not a luxury, but a necessity.

The crisis of our times, in short – the crisis behind all the others – is the crisis of science without wisdom. Having a kind of academic inquiry that is, by and large, restricted to acquiring knowledge can only serve to intensify this crisis. Changing the nature of science, and of academic inquiry more generally, is the key intellectual and institutional change that we need to make in order to come to grips with our global problems – above all, the global problem behind all the others, the crisis of ever-increasing technological power in the absence of wisdom. We urgently need a new kind of academic inquiry that gives intellectual priority to promoting the growth of global wisdom.

**Source:** Maxwell, N. (2008). From knowledge to wisdom: The need for an academic revolution. In R. Barnett & N. Maxwell (Eds.), *Wisdom in the university*. London: Routledge.

**Word count:** 757 words

## Glossary

**Concomitant:** existing or happening together.

**Stockpile:** to keep adding to a supply of goods, weapons, etc. that you are keeping ready to use if you need them in the future.

**Inoculation:** introduction of a serum, vaccine, or antigenic substance into the body of a human or animal, especially to produce immunity to a specific disease.

**Wreak havoc:** to cause a lot of damage, problems and suffering.

## D.2 Post-Test

As part of your classwork in this academic context, your teacher has asked you to summarise and respond to the information in the text below. Read the extract from an essay by Tim O'Shea and write a summary-response summarising, analysing and evaluating the information in it critically. Your summary-response will be scored on content, organisation, language use, contextual appropriateness (purpose, audience, register) and mechanics (spelling, punctuation, capitalisation and format). You will have one hour and 15 minutes to write your summary-response.

### **The Doors of Perception: Why Americans Will Believe Almost Anything by Tim O'Shea<sup>20</sup>**

Huxley's 1956 essay detailed the mind-expanding insights of his mescaline adventures. By altering his brain with psychotropics, he tapped into a world of indescribable beauty and power. He sought to remove all cultural conditioning from his perceptions and confront reality first-hand in its unedited rawness. Those bonds are much harder to break today; we are the most conditioned beings the world has ever known. Our thoughts are molded and our awareness of this design has been subtly erased. The doors of our perception are regulated and nobody cares. Conventional wisdom is implanted in the public consciousness by a thousand media clips per day. If everybody believes something, it is probably wrong. In America, conventional wisdom that has mass acceptance is usually contrived: somebody paid for it. These are some examples of it: pharmaceuticals restore health, vaccination brings immunity, flu shots prevent the flu, aspirin prevents heart attacks, the purpose of the health care industry is health. This is a list of illusions that have cost billions to conjure up.

The science of creating public opinion can be traced back to the work of Bernays, who applied Freud's ideas to mass persuasion to mask agendas and create illusions that deceive for marketing purposes. One of his assignments was to sell World War I to Americans in order to make the world safe for democracy. Later, Bernays popularized smoking cigarettes among women as a mark of liberation. He described the public as a herd to be led. This herdlike thinking makes people susceptible to leadership. The fundamental axiom is to control the masses without their knowing it. Mass persuaders think that they perform a service for humanity – democracy is too good for people; they need to be told what to think. Those who manipulate society constitute the invisible ruling power. Whether in the sphere of politics, social conduct or ethical thinking, we are dominated by a few people who pull the wires that control the public.

Since the possibilities of applying Freudian psychology to mass media were glimpsed, global corporations have courted image makers who created the opinions we were raised with on any issue of commercial value: drugs, vaccines, tobacco, global warming, etc. The most effective way to create credibility for a product is by independent third-party endorsement. Financed by the industries whose products are evaluated, "independent" research agencies churn out "scientific" studies whose mission is to advance the image of the corporations who fund them. This is done by means of press releases announcing breakthroughs to every radio station and newspaper. Media corporations have become sophisticated in their preparation of such releases attaching the names of famous scientists to research those scientists have not even looked at.

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<sup>20</sup> American essayist.

When creating public opinion, mob psychology focuses on emotion, not facts since the mob is incapable of rational thought. Words are carefully chosen for their emotional impact. For instance, the public is afraid of genetically modified foods so, to reassure them of their safety, the International Food Information Council – funded by Coca Cola – avoids words such as chemical and uses words like natural and organic instead. Further guidelines for mass control are not using plain English and getting endorsements from celebrities – anyone who has no expertise in the subject.

The public should start reading the newspaper and watching TV with a different attitude. People might even glimpse the possibility of ceasing to subject their brain to the media by wondering whether the stories that dominate headlines are what is going on in the world, whether there is nothing else besides the non-stories that the puppeteers dangle before us every day. What is the purpose of news? To inform? Hardly. The sole purpose of news is to keep the public in a state of fear and uncertainty so they will watch again tomorrow and be subjected to the same advertising. What would you lose if you stopped watching TV? Would your life suffer any financial, moral or intellectual loss? Do you really need to have your family absorb the amoral and phony values featured in the average TV program? Do you need to have your values spoonfed to you? Is TV amusing or a distraction to keep you from figuring things out for yourself? This is the only life we get. Why waste it allowing our values to be crafted according to the whims of the mass panderers? The decisions that are crucial to our social, physical and mental well-being require information but remember, if everybody knows something, that image has been bought and paid for. Real knowledge takes a little excavation down one level below what everybody knows.

**Source:** O'Shea, T. (2001). The doors of perception: Why Americans will believe almost anything. Retrieved from <http://www.rense.com/general12/believe.html>.

**Word count:** 765 words

## Glossary

**Endorsement:** formal support or approval for someone or something.

**Churn out:** to produce large quantities of something, especially without caring about its quality.

**Mescaline:** a drug made from a cactus plant that makes people imagine they can see things that do not really exist.

**Phony:** false or not real and intended to deceive.

## APPENDIX E. Questionnaires

### E.1 Pre-Study Questionnaire

This questionnaire belongs to the initial stage of a research project on academic literacy in English as a foreign language. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of genre-based instruction on summary-response writing. Data collected from this survey will be used for completion of a master's degree in English. There are no risks or benefits to you from participating in this investigation. Your answers will only be used for research purposes and your name will remain anonymous. If you do not wish to participate, you may simply return the blank survey. If you choose to participate, completion and return of this survey indicates your consent to do so. Please, answer the following questions or tick the boxes as required. This questionnaire should take approximately five minutes to complete. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

#### A) Demographic information about the subjects

1. Name: .....
2. Age: .....
3. Sex:  Feminine     Masculine
4. Native language: .....
5. How long did you study English before entering the School of Languages?:.....  
.....
6. When did you enter the School of Languages?: .....

#### B) Information about the subjects' abilities

##### 1. a) What types of texts can you write properly in English?

- Letters     Paragraphs     Opinion essays     Comparison and contrast essays
- Cause and effect essays     Summary-responses     Argumentative essays

##### b) Have you ever received instruction in summary-response writing in English?

- YES     NO



**2. Choose from the options what summarising and responding critically to a text consist in (tick only one box in each case).**

**1) Summarising a text consists in:**

- (a)  An objective and paraphrased version of the source text
- (b)  An objective and abbreviated version of the source text in your own words
- (c)  A subjective and abbreviated version of the source text with an evaluation of its main ideas

**2) Responding critically to a text consists in:**

- (a)  A personal evaluation of the text based on a systematic analysis
- (b)  A subjective evaluation of the main ideas
- (c)  A personal evaluation of the negative aspects of the text

**3. Evaluate your abilities to summarise and respond critically to a text. Please, tick the appropriate box.**

**1) Ability to summarise a text:**

- (a) Identifying the topic and selecting main ideas  Very Good  Good  Fair  Weak
- (b) Identifying secondary ideas and omitting irrelevant details  Very Good  Good  Fair  Weak
- (c) Identifying text organisation and cohesive devices  Very Good  Good  Fair  Weak
- (d) Making generalisations  Very Good  Good  Fair  Weak
- (e) Paraphrasing  Very Good  Good  Fair  Weak
- (f) Integrating information  Very Good  Good  Fair  Weak

**2) Ability to respond critically to a text:**

- (a) Identifying the author's intention and point of view  Very Good  Good  Fair  Weak

- (b) Evaluating the source text and agreeing or disagreeing with the author  Very Good  Good  Fair  Weak
- (c) Identifying hidden assumptions, assessing the evidence provided and recognising faulty reasoning  Very Good  Good  Fair  Weak
- (d) Presenting a critical analysis  Very Good  Good  Fair  Weak
- (e) Justifying your position  Very Good  Good  Fair  Weak
- (f) Connecting the text with previous knowledge  Very Good  Good  Fair  Weak

**C) Information about the subjects' attitudes**

**1. How difficult is the task of writing a summary-response?**

- Easy  Relatively difficult  Difficult  Very difficult

**2. Why? Justify your answer.**

.....

.....

.....

**3. How important is the ability to write a summary-response for your academic and professional future?**

- Very important  Important  Relatively important

**4. Why? Justify your answer.**

.....

.....

.....

## E.2 Post-Study Questionnaire

This questionnaire belongs to the final stage of a research project on academic literacy in English as a foreign language. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of genre-based instruction on summary-response writing. Data collected from this survey will be used for completion of a master's degree in English. There are no risks or benefits to you from participating in this investigation. Your answers will only be used for research purposes and your name will remain anonymous. If you do not wish to participate, you may simply return the blank survey. If you choose to participate, completion and return of this survey indicates your consent to do so. Please, answer the following questions or tick the boxes as required. This questionnaire should take approximately five minutes to complete. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

### A) Demographic information about the subjects

1. Name: .....
2. Age: .....
3. Sex:         Feminine     Masculine
4. Native language: .....
5. How long did you study English before entering the School of Languages?: .....  
.....
6. When did you enter the School of Languages?: .....

### B) Information about the subjects' abilities

1. **After receiving genre-based instruction in summary-response writing, do you consider that your ability to write this genre improved?**

Yes         Only partly         No

2. **Why? Justify your answer.**

.....

.....

.....

**3. Evaluate your abilities to summarise and respond critically to a text after receiving genre-based instruction in summary-response writing. Please, tick the appropriate box.**

1) Ability to summarise a text:                     Very Good     Good     Fair     Weak

2) Ability to respond critically to a text:  Very Good     Good     Fair     Weak

**C) Information about the subjects' attitudes**

**1. How difficult is the task of writing a summary-response after receiving genre-based instruction?**

Easy             Relatively difficult             Difficult             Very difficult

**2. Why? Justify your answer.**

.....

.....

.....

**3. How important is the ability to write a summary-response for your academic and professional future?**

Very important             Important             Relatively important

**4. Why? Justify your answer.**

.....

.....

.....

**5. Do you consider that the way in which you learnt to write a summary-response (i.e. analysing its purpose, generic structure and lexico-grammatical features) is effective and enhances your academic literacy?**

Yes             Only partly             No



## APPENDIX F. Self-Assessment Checklist

Immediately after finishing this test, complete the following self-assessment checklist by putting a tick (✓) next to the activities you consider that you have done properly to complete the task, and a cross (✗) next to those activities you are not sure about having carried out properly or you believe that you have not done correctly and should be improved.

- **Content and organisation: Summary section**

- I stated main ideas clearly.
- I included relevant details.
- I did not add my own ideas or opinions.
- I organised this section logically.
- I incorporated the source text accurately into my own words.

- **Content and organisation: Response section**

- I demonstrated full understanding of source text content.
- I made a good evaluative comment clearly agreeing or disagreeing with the author.
- I identified hidden assumptions, assessed the evidence provided and/or recognised faulty reasoning.
- I presented my own analysis clearly and justified my position convincingly.
- I organised this section logically.

- **Language use: Lexico-grammatical features**

I demonstrated control of lexico-grammatical features using:

- A wide range of content-specific vocabulary.
- Appropriate linking words and phrases.
- Accurate grammatical structures.

- **Context: Purpose, audience and register**

I wrote a summary-response with contextual appropriateness demonstrating:

- Control of purpose
- Sense of audience
- Correct register

- **Mechanics**

I checked errors in:

- Spelling
- Punctuation
- Capitalisation
- Format (paragraphing, indentation, word count, no title)

## APPENDIX G. Teacher Interview Protocols

### G.1 Pre-Study Interview

1. How long have you taught summary-response writing to EFL university students at an advanced level of language proficiency?
2. What approach have you used to teach summary-response writing to these students?
3. What difficulties have you found when teaching this genre?
4. What difficulties do students have when carrying out this writing task?
5. Have you ever used the genre-based approach to the teaching of writing?
6. Do you believe that genre-based instruction could be an effective pedagogical tool to teach summary-response writing to EFL university students at an advanced level of language proficiency?

### G.2 Post-Study Interview

1. After having participated in this experience, do you consider that genre-based instruction is an effective pedagogical tool to teach summary-response writing to EFL university students at an advanced level of language proficiency?
2. What is your opinion about the genre-based classroom materials designed for this study and the activities carried out?
3. Do you think that the *teaching-learning cycle* is an effective way of sequencing tasks in the process of teaching summary-response writing in EFL? What are its strengths and weaknesses? To what extent does its implementation depend on the teaching context?
4. Effective scaffolding requires considerable intervention on the part of the teacher in the early stages of teaching and learning a genre. Do you believe that this type of teacher role is necessary in the development of EFL writing or is it restrictive?
5. Do you consider that this approach, the materials used and the activities carried out facilitated both the teaching and learning process? Why?
6. Do you think that this approach had a positive effect on students' performance in summary-response writing tasks and, therefore, in their scores?
7. Do you believe that this approach had a positive effect on students' abilities, attitudes and self-perceptions in relation to summary-response writing and the genre-based approach?
8. Do you consider that genre analysis is important for the teaching of EFL academic literacy?
9. How important is training EFL teachers in the application of genre theory to enhance the EFL academic literacy teaching and learning process?
10. Do you think that the students participating in this study understood that there are typical conventions of academic writing and it is important to follow them?
11. Do you believe that genre-based instruction provides advanced EFL students with greater self-confidence when writing or that it limits their creativity?
12. Do you consider that this study provides EAP teachers with useful teaching material?

**APPENDIX H. Written Consent Form****Nombre:** \_\_\_\_\_

Por la presente, presto mi consentimiento para la utilización de la siguiente prueba en el trabajo de investigación realizado por la Prof. Natalia V. Dalla Costa en el marco de la Maestría en Inglés con Orientación en Lingüística Aplicada dictada por la Facultad de Lenguas, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba. La información ha sido obtenida en forma libre y gratuita, será utilizada con fines puramente científicos y los nombres de los sujetos no trascenderán.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Firma



APPENDIX I. Estimated *p*-valueTable I.1 *Estimated p-value*

Pre-test average score	Post-test average score	N	Sum (R+)	Expected value (R+)	Variance (R+)	Mean Dif.	SD Dif.	z	<i>p</i> (2-tailed)
2.00	5.48	46	0.00	540.50	8287.00	-3.48	1.39	-5.94	<0.0001

## APPENDIX J. Cumulative Proportions of Post-Test Score Gains

**Table J.1** *Quantity of Students according to Pre- and Post-Test Scores*

Scores	Post-test scores						Total	
	3	4	5	6	7	8		
Pre-test scores	1	1	0	0	5	1	0	7
	2	2	4	7	13	5	1	32
	3	0	3	2	2	0	0	7
<b>Total</b>		3	7	9	20	6	1	46

**Table J.2** *Percentage of Students according to Post-Test Scores for each Pre-Test Score*

Scores	Post-test scores						Total	
	3	4	5	6	7	8		
Pre-test scores	1	14.29	0.00	0.00	71.43	14.29	0.00	100.00%
	2	6.25	12.50	21.88	40.63	15.63	3.13	100.00%
	3	0.00	42.86	28.57	28.57	0.00	0.00	100.00%
<b>Total</b>		6.52	15.22	43.48	43.48	13.04	2.17	100.00%