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Integrating the communicative modes: Teaching writing through genre

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Integrating the Communicative Modes: Teaching Writing Through Genre

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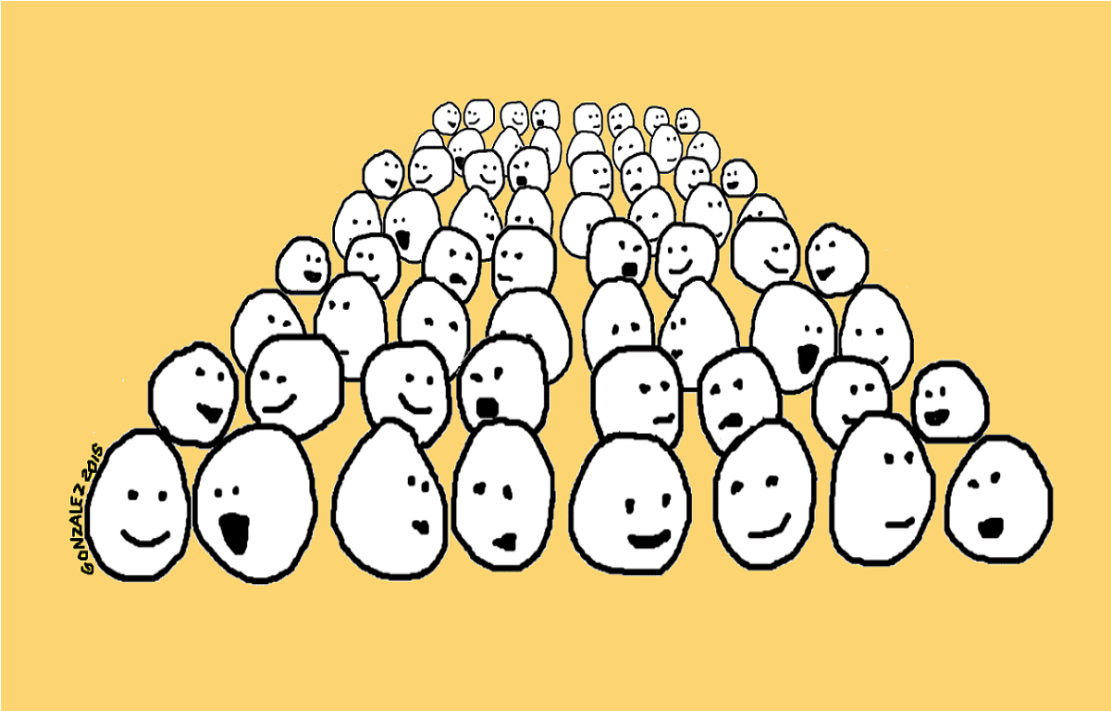
Objectives

1. Reflect on one’s own and other’s experiences related to teaching presentational writing in FL courses
2. Understand the current state of writing instruction in postsecondary contexts
3. Learn how genre-based pedagogy can be used to rethink presentational writing instruction and integrate communicative modes
4. Examine sample instructional materials used to carry out genre-based writing instruction
5. Consider benefits and challenges of genre-based writing instruction

Turn to the person sitting next to you and discuss the following:

1. What types of FL writing instruction do you implement?
2. What pedagogical tools or strategies make FL writing instruction easier for you?
3. What challenges do you face in teaching FL writing?

Choose <u>one idea</u> to share with the presenters and audience.



WORLD-READINESS STANDARDS FOR LEARNING LANGUAGES

GOAL AREAS	STANDARDS		
COMMUNICATION **Communicate effectively in more than one language in order to function in a variety of situations and for multiple purposes**	**Interpersonal Communication:** Learners interact and negotiate meaning in spoken, signed, or written conversations to share information, reactions, feelings, and opinions.	**Interpretive Communication:** Learners understand, interpret, and analyze what is heard, read, or viewed on a variety of topics.	**Presentational Communication:** Learners present information, concepts, and ideas to inform, explain, persuade, and narrate on a variety of topics using appropriate media and adapting to various audiences of listeners, readers, or viewers.

Purposes of Writing Instruction

- **Lower-level courses**: writing as a means of language practice (Hubert & Bonzo, 2010)

- **Upper-level courses**: writing as a means of presenting interpretation and analysis of texts

- **Across levels**: no unified sense of purpose (Reichelt, 2001; Hubert, 2014); few opportunities to analyze and appropriate various types of FL discourses (Sagnier, 2016)

Perspectives on the Communicative Modes

●**Magnan et al (2012)**: interpersonal and interpretive modes rated highest by post-secondary students; *presentational mode rated lowest*

● **Mills & Moulton (2017)**: interpersonal mode rated highest by post-secondary teachers and students; *presentational mode rated lowest* by students

● **ACTFL (2011)**: interpersonal mode rated highest by K-12 teachers; *presentational mode rated lowest*

Prioritization of interpersonal and interpretive modes over the presentational mode suggests that students may feel *"that understanding is a prerequisite for expression"* (Magnan et al., 2012, p. 179)

Types of Writing Knowledge (Hyland, 2011, p. 31)

1. **Content**: The ideas and concepts in the topic area that students' writing will address
2. **System**: The grammar, vocabulary, and writing conventions needed
3. **Process**: How to prepare and carry out a writing task
4. **Genre**: Communicative purposes of the genre and its value/use in particular contexts
5. **Context**: Readers' expectations, cultural preferences, and related texts

ACTFL Performance Descriptors for Language Learners | **Presentational**

Domains	Novice Range	Intermediate Range	Advanced Range
	Communicates information on very familiar topics using a variety of words, phrases, and sentences that have been practiced and memorized.	**Communicates information and expresses own thoughts about familiar topics using sentences and series of sentences.**	**Communicates information and expresses self with detail and organization on familiar and some new concrete topics using paragraphs.**
Functions	Presents simple, basic information on very familiar topics by producing words, list, notes, and formulaic language using highly practiced language. May show emerging evidence of the ability to express own thoughts and preferences.	Expresses own thoughts and presents information and personal preferences on familiar topics by creating with language primarily in present time. May show emerging evidence of the ability to tell or retell a story and provide additional description.	Produces narrations and descriptions in all major time frames on familiar and some unfamiliar topics. May show emerging evidence of the ability to provide a well-supported argument, including detailed evidence in support of a point of view.
Contexts/ Content	Creates messages in some personally relevant contexts on topics that relate to basic biographical information. May show emerging evidence of the ability to create messages in highly practiced contexts related to oneself and immediate environment.	Creates messages in contexts relevant to oneself and others, and one's immediate environment. May show emerging evidence of the ability to create messages on general interest and work-related topics.	Creates messages fully and effectively in contexts both personal and general. Content areas include topics of personal and general interest (community, national, and international events) as well as work-related topics and areas of special competence. May show emerging evidence of the ability to create messages in more abstract content areas.
Text Type	Produces words and phrases and highly practiced sentences or formulaic questions.	Produces sentences, series of sentences, and some connected sentences.	Produces full paragraphs that are organized and detailed.

Genre-Based Writing Pedagogy

Views writing as an apprenticeship:

- Learning to appropriate new discourse expectations and norms relevant for language use in specific contexts through interpretation of model texts
- Identifying features for *textual borrowing* at the discourse, sentence, and word levels for use in learners' own writing (Maxim, 2009)
- Developing a sense of what makes writing in a particular context appropriate, effective, and interesting

Why Genre-Based Writing Pedagogy?

“Effective writers know how to deal with a wide variety of genres. Within a single day, an individual’s writing tasks might include genres such as academic papers, technical reports, memos, personal reflections, emails, visual and oral presentations, notes on reading, and research documents. The 21st century requires writers who can move easily between genres, think critically about new writing tasks, exercise audience awareness, and be able to identify and improve areas of weakness.” (Writing Now: A Policy Brief, NCTE, 2008)

Implementing Genre-Based Writing Pedagogy

Stage	*interpretive communication*	*interpersonal communication*	*presentational communication*
1. Introduction to genre	✓	✓	
2. Textual analysis	✓		
3. Pre-writing	✓		✓
4. Writing a new text			✓
5. Collaboration to refine the text & reflection		✓	✓

Teaching with Genre-Based Pedagogy: Context

- First-year, second semester collegiate French course
- Multi-section language program
- Taught by French Lit or SLA graduate TAs
- Multiliteracies & communicative approaches
- Combination of textbook materials, culture-oriented interpretive communication activities, & genre-based writing & oral projects
- Project 4 occurs in the final course unit on student life & housing with a focus on French-speaking Canada

Teaching with Genre-Based Pedagogy: The Study

- *What are the benefits and challenges of engaging in genre-based pedagogy for instructors* (N=3) *and learners* (N=14)?
- Collegiate second-semester elementary French course, Spring 2017
- Data: instructor interviews, lesson plans, teaching materials, audio recordings of writing workshops, written reflections on genre-based pedagogy; learners' genre-based writing, reflections on their writing, and writing portions of two exams
- Focal participant: Karin, 3rd-year graduate student in French Literature

Model text: *Jeunes à l'étranger* testimonial

JEUNES À L'ÉTRANGER

Rechercher sur le site

ETUDES STAGE TRAVAIL VOYAGE HUMANITAIRE BONS PLANS [PAYS

JEUNES À L'ÉTRANGER → ÉTUDIER À L'ÉTRANGER → INTERVIEWS ÉTUDIANTS PARTIS ÉTUDIER À L'ÉTRANGER → VIVRE À MONTRÉAL : LE TÉMOIGNAGE DE NATACHA

Vivre à Montréal : le témoignage de Natacha

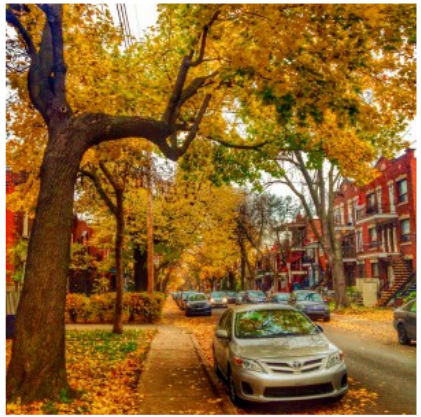
2 DÉCEMBRE 2014 BÉRÉNICE

Natacha, étudiante en communication, est partie faire un **vivre à Montréal**, au **Québec**. Elle revient sur son expérience datant de l'année dernière et vous donnera quelques conseils pour vous aider à partir étudier à l'étranger !

Portrait de Natacha lors de son échange universitaire à Montréal ©Natacha

Comment se passe la recherche de logement à Montréal ?

Il faut savoir qu'à **Montréal, il est très facile et rapide de se loger**, donc beaucoup d'arrivants font le choix de rester quelques jours en auberge de jeunesse et de chercher une fois sur place. Mais c'était ma grande angoisse avant le départ, j'avais besoin de savoir où j'allais ! Grâce à des groupes Facebook spécialisés, j'ai trouvé ma coloc de rêve depuis la France. Nous étions 5 français, logés dans le quartier populaire de Côte-des-Neiges, non loin de l'Université de Montréal... cependant la vie en colocation m'a permis de rencontrer des gens de tous les horizons !



Logements à Montréal ©Natacha

Quel est le coût de la vie à Montréal ?

Les loyers en colocation sont très corrects : **on peut se loger pour 350$ par mois**. Mais il faut rajouter les charges Hydro-Québec (électricité pour chauffer l'eau et la maison) qui peuvent être assez importantes en hiver. Les abonnements internet sont aussi plus chers qu'en France, d'où l'importance de **prévoir environ 500$ par mois pour les dépenses liées au logement**. Jusqu'à 25 ans, les étudiants peuvent bénéficier d'un abonnement au métro et au bus au tarif spécial de 180$ pour 4 mois... pile le temps d'une session ! La nourriture reste plutôt abordable, même si cela dépend des produits et des magasins : **350$ par mois reste un budget confortable**. La « surprise » se situe plus au niveau de l'achat des vêtements d'hiver. Il faut être prêt à investir un peu dans un bon manteau, des bottes et des gants capables d'affronter l'hiver québécois !

Stage 1: Introduction to Genre

- Sensitizing learners to a text's social context and purpose; establishing comprehension of main ideas

- Example 1: Scan the "Jeunes à l'Étranger" (Youth Abroad) homepage and discuss the context, audience, and purpose of the model text. What types of texts do you imagine are found on this site? What audiences would benefit from this site?

- Example 2: Read the model text. Which university did Natacha chose for her studies abroad? What responsibilities of student renters were mentioned in the interview with Natacha?

Stage 2: Textual Analysis

- Analyzing the model text for its generic components, organizational patterns, and language use

- Example 1: Consider the textual content categories listed below. Indicate which categories correspond with each paragraph in the model text (e.g., lodging logistics, Natacha's recommendations, personal reaction).

- Example 2: Analyze how Natacha's personal experiences are explained in the model text through specific language (e.g., How did she find a roommate? Find an expression in the text to express this).

Stage 3: Pre-Writing

- Scaffolding the move from reading to writing by making connections between the model text and students' own writing

- Example:Using language related to informative content in the model text, write a phrase that describes a personal experience of finding housing in Madison.

Stage 4: Writing

- Applying new knowledge as learners construct their own texts in the same genre

- Example: You will write a blog entry in the style of the model text. Create a 350-word text in which you respond to the five questions found in the model text and focus on the experience of living as a student in Madison.

Stage 5: Collaboration & Reflection

- Refining learners’ texts based on the first draft and on reflections on the writing process

- Example: What elements of your blog entry are you most satisfied with? What elements of your blog entry are you least satisfied with? What did you learn about writing in French through completing this assignment?

Theme 1: Scaffolding Genre-Based Writing	
Benefit	*Challenge*
K: [T]hese activities really help them not only to understand the model text and its content, um but how is the content communicated within this genre and they can gain tools in terms of language in terms of like format on the page, um, content, again…it needs to be a little guided. They need the activities to go along with it in order for them to be able to find those tools that they can then use to recreate.	K: I created a specific activity…for students to kind of decide what certain expressions were informative, what certain expressions were argumentative. It wasn't as successful as I would have liked it to be…

Theme 2: Developing Understanding of Textual Borrowing	
Benefit	*Challenge*
K: I did have another question on my PowerPoint asking them to think about what strategies and what um elements of the text they would use then in their own texts…so hopefully what structures, forms…Yeah, so think about the structure, the visual stuff, language, forms, and then rhetorical strategies.	Interviewer: So do you think that textual borrowing always involves some kind of transformation or personalization by the student, or what if a student lifts something directly from a text and puts it into their own text. Is that also textual borrowing? K: Nnn…yes. Interviewer: Okay K: Yes, I would say all of that is.

Theme 3: Selling Learners on Genre-Based Writing Strategies	
Benefit	*Challenge*
K: How do I also sell it to my students as a very useful strategy in their language learning and in their writing process? So they knew what to expect a little bit and I said this in [the first workshop], “Just like we did for project two, we’re going to work with this model text in order to understand it, understand the genre, so that it’s easier to recreate your own.”	K: The article made me think particularly about my own explanation of textual borrowing to my FRE 102 class when we did Project 2. I thought that an explicit explanation of the strategy would help students understand the purpose for engaging with the model text. I wanted to communicate, in a way, these ideas on the rationality and the utility of textual borrowing. However, I know that my explanation was incomplete and perhaps less nuanced than it needed to be.

Implications / Conclusions

1. Mastery and implementation of genre-based writing emerges over time
2. Instructors need multiple, mentored opportunities to identify genre features, create scaffolded activities, and implement and revise instructional practices
3. Talking how they conceptualize and implement of genre-based pedagogy may help teachers solidify their understanding
4. Genre-based writing can facilitate integration of the communicative modes to more fully develop students’ engagement with textual content and language abilities

Questions? Comments?

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