

**Exploring consciousness-raising impacts of a genre-based  
pedagogy in the context of an Iranian university students'  
academic writing**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	viii
DECLARATION.....	x
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	xi
LIST OF TABLES .....	xiii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xvii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	xix
<b><u>CHAPTER 1Introduction and background</u></b> .....	<b>1</b>
<u>1.1 Introduction</u> .....	1
<u>1.2 Situating the study</u> .....	2
<u>1.3 Rational</u> .....	3
<u>1.4 Context of the study</u> .....	4
<u>1.5 Aims and objectives of the study</u> .....	5
<u>1.5.1 Aims of the study</u> .....	5
<u>1.5.2 Objectives</u> .....	5
<u>1.6 Research questions</u> .....	6
<u>1.7 Justification of the study</u> .....	7
<u>1.8 Key findings</u> .....	7
<u>1.8.1 Findings with respect to generic structure</u> .....	8
<u>1.8.2 Findings with respect to paradigmatic realisation of GM</u> .....	8
<u>1.8.3 Findings with respect to syntagmatic realisation of GM</u> .....	8
<u>1.9 Organisation of thesis</u> .....	8
<b><u>CHAPTER 2Literature review and theoretical background</u></b> .....	<b>11</b>
<u>2.1 Introduction</u> .....	11
<u>2.2 The genre approach</u> .....	12
<u>2.2.1 The notion of genre</u> .....	12
<u>2.2.2 The Sydney-school taxonomy of genres</u> .....	14
<u>2.2.2.1 Exposition genre</u> .....	16
<u>2.2.2.2 Discussion genre</u> .....	20
<u>2.2.3 Genre-based pedagogy</u> .....	22

2.2.4 Studies on students' problems in developing argumentative genres .....	22
2.3 Genre and Systemic Functional Linguistics .....	24
2.3.1 Modes of meaning.....	24
2.3.2 Register .....	25
2.3.3 Genre and register .....	26
2.4 An overview of the literature on consciousness-raising case studies for literacy development.....	27
2.4.1 Definitions of, and rationale for, consciousness-raising studies .....	27
2.4.2 Similarities and differences between C-R and SFL.....	29
2.4.2.1 The first phase in defining GM .....	32
2.4.2.2 The second phase in defining GM.....	35
2.4.2.3 The third phase in defining GM .....	36
2.4.3 An overview of critics of GM .....	37
2.4.3.1 An overview of case studies in relation to GM.....	39
2.4.3.1.1 A brief account of Phylogenetic case studies in relation to GM.....	39
2.4.3.1.2 A brief account of Ontogenetic case studies in relation to GM .....	41
2.4.3.1.3 A brief account of Contextual case studies in relation to GM .....	45
2.4.3 Academic literacy and the deployment of consciousness-raising among Iranian students .....	49
<b>CHAPTER 3 Methodology .....</b>	<b>51</b>
3.1 Introduction .....	51
3.2 Theoretical framework and syllabus design .....	51
3.3 Teaching and learning cycle .....	53
3.3.1 Teaching and learning in more detail.....	56
3.3.1.1 Introductory stage.....	56
3.3.1.2 Teaching and learning exposition genre .....	58
3.3.1.3 Teaching and learning discussion genre .....	65
3.4 Data analysis and presentation .....	73
3.4.1. Analysis of textual structure and genre staging.....	73
3.4.2 Analysis of students' deployment of nominalisation.....	74
3.4.2.1 Statistical tallies.....	75

3.4.2.1.1 <u>Statistical tallying according to Ravelli’s (1985, 1999) categorisation</u> .....	75
3.4.2.1.2 <u>Statistical tallying according to subtypes of nominalisation and transitivity function of nominalisation</u> .....	81
3.4.2.2 <u>Syntagmatic realisation of GM</u> .....	86
3.4.2.2.1 <u>Division into elements</u> .....	87
3.4.2.2.2 <u>Division into figures</u> .....	89
3.4.2.2.3 <u>Division into sequences</u> .....	90
3.5 <u>Summary</u> .....	91

**CHAPTER 4 Exploring generic structure deployment in the EFL students’ argumentative texts on plausible influence of the genre-based pedagogy**..... 92

4.1 <u>Introduction</u> .....	92
4.2 <u>Overview of key findings</u> .....	92
4.2.1 <u>The pre-test writing</u> .....	92
4.2.2 <u>The exposition writing</u> .....	93
4.2.3 <u>The discussion writing</u> .....	93
4.4 <u>Writing Context I– Pre-test</u> .....	94
4.4.1 <u>Conformity structure to the Sydney genre school</u> .....	94
4.4.1.2 <u>Macro genre</u> .....	98
4.4.2 <u>Non-conformity to the Sydney genre school</u> .....	100
4.4.2.1 <u>A Cyclic Way Approach</u> .....	100
4.4.2.2 <u>Author’s advice for argument</u> .....	103
4.4.2.3 <u>Rejection</u> .....	104
4.4.2.3.1 <u>First type of Rejection</u> .....	104
4.4.2.3.2 <u>Second type of Rejection</u> .....	106
4.4.2.3.3 <u>Third type of Rejection</u> .....	107
4.5 <u>Writing Stage II (Exposition Text-type)</u> .....	107
4.5.1 <u>Conformity to the Sydney genre school</u> .....	108
4.5.1.1 <u>Prototype exposition</u> .....	108

4.5.2 Non-conformity to the Sydney genre school.....	112
4.5.2.1 An instance of offering advice.....	112
4.5.2.2 Rejection.....	113
4.5.2.2.1 First type of Rejection.....	114
4.5.2.2.2 Second type of Rejection.....	115
4.6 Writing context III (Discussion Text) .....	117
4.6.1 Conformity to the Sydney genre school.....	117
4.6.1.1 Prototype Discussion genre .....	117
4.6.1.2 Instances of Macro genre.....	119
4.6.2 Non-conformity to the Sydney genre school.....	122
4.7 Summary.....	123
<b>CHAPTER 5 <u>Exploring consciousness raising influence of a genre-based pedagogy on GM deployment (1)</u></b> .....	125
5.1 Introduction .....	125
5.2 Overview of key findings .....	126
5.2.1 GM and its frequencies across three texts .....	126
5.2.2 Rate and accuracy of GM .....	127
5.2.3 Trends and rates in the nominalisation of processes.....	127
5.2.4 Trends and rates in complex processes construed as Things .....	127
5.3 Findings in detail.....	128
5.3.1 An overview of the semogenetic and contextual categorisation of GM.....	128
5.3.2 A comparison between two categorisations of GM in English language .....	129
5.3.3 Analyses and the discussion of contextual categorisation of GM.....	134
5.3.4 The analysis of the shift from verbal to nominal group in students' texts .....	137
5.3.4.1 The average rate of Marked Nominalisation across three texts .....	137
5.3.4.2 The average rate of Verbal Nouns across three texts.....	138

5.3.4.3 <u>The average rate of Non-morphologically Marked Nominalisation across three texts</u> .....	138
5.3.4.4 <u>The average rate of Nominalisation in Pre-modifiers across three texts</u> .....	139
5.3.4.5 <u>The average rate of Nominalisation in Post-modifiers across three texts</u> .....	140
5.3.4.6 <u>The average rate of Nominalisation in Theme across three texts</u> .....	140
5.3.4.7 <u>The average rate of Nominalisation in Rheme across the three texts</u> .....	141
5.3.5 <u>Transitivity functions and the shift from congruent to metaphorical mode</u> .....	143
5.3.5.1 <u>The overall transitivity pattern of complex processes construed as Things</u> .....	144
5.3.5.2 <u>Mental processes construed as Things across students' texts</u> .....	144
5.3.5.3 <u>Verbal processes construed as Things across students' texts</u> .....	144
5.3.5.4 <u>Material processes construed as Things with a presumed human actor</u> .....	145
5.3.5.5 <u>Material processes construed as Things with a presumed non-human actor</u> .....	146
5.3.5.6 <u>Relational processes construed as Things across students' texts</u> .....	146
5.3.5.7 <u>Behavioural processes construed as Things across students' texts</u> .....	147
5.4 <u>Summary</u> .....	148

**CHAPTER 6 Exploring consciousness raising influence of a genre-based pedagogy on GM deployment (2)** ..... 149

6.1 <u>Introduction</u> .....	149
6.2 <u>Overview of key findings</u> .....	151
6.2.1 <u>An overview of the development of elements as macro-things</u> .....	151
6.2.2 <u>An overview of the metaphorical deployment of figures</u> .....	151
6.2.3 <u>An overview of the metaphorical deployment of sequences</u> .....	152
6.3 <u>Findings in detail</u> .....	153
6.3.1 <u>The metaphorical deployment of elements as macro-things</u> .....	153
6.3.2 <u>The metaphorical deployment of figures with process as Thing</u> .....	160
6.3.3 <u>The metaphorical deployment of sequences</u> .....	169
6.4 <u>Summary of findings</u> .....	178

**CHAPTER 7 Discussion, implications and conclusions ..... 180**

7.1 Introduction ..... 180

7.2 Final discussion and answer to the research questions ..... 180

7.2.1 The genre-based pedagogy and its impact on generic features ..... 181

7.2.2 The genre-based pedagogy and its impact on GM deployment ..... 182

7.3 Limitations of the study ..... 185

7.4 Directions for future research ..... 185

7.5 Conclusions ..... 186

**BIBLIOGRAPHY ..... 187**

Appendices ..... 199

Appendix A: Course syllabus and teaching plan ..... 200

Appendix B: Teaching syllabus ..... 208

    Appendix B part 1: The exposition writing ..... 209

    Appendix B Part 2: The discussion Writing ..... 231

Appendix C: Essay questions ..... 270

    Appendix C1: Pre-test questions ..... 270

    Appendix C2: Mid-term – Exposition questions ..... 270

    Appendix C3: Final exam – Discussion questions ..... 270

Appendix D: Students’ Written Texts ..... 273

    Appendix D1 Pre-test texts ..... 273

    Appendix D2: Exposition texts ..... 275

    Appendix D3: Discussion texts ..... 281

Appendix E: Genre staging analyses of texts ..... 288

Appendix F: the analysis of GM ..... 319

Appendix G: Statistical tallying ..... 367

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the pagination of the print copy



## ABSTRACT

This paper explores the consciousness-raising impact of a genre-based pedagogy which was deployed in the context of undergraduate EFL students at Tabriz as a means of improving students' argumentative writing. The consciousness-raising impact was explored from the linguistic perspective only: generic structures at the level of genre and grammatical metaphor (GM) at the level of lexico-grammar. The communicative impact of GM deployment in making 'a reasoned argument' and its qualitative and quantitative complementarities with the generic structures and the type of genre were explored across the students' texts, respectively.

This study was carried out at three stages of pre-test, exposition and discussion genres. The pre-test examined the students' level of English language proficiency without any feedback or the teaching and learning activities. In the exposition and discussion genres a cyclical way of teaching and learning which was mainly based on modelling of text, joint construction of text, and independent construction of text (Martin and Rose 2007; Feez 1998; Christie 1999; Knapp and Watkins 2005) were deployed.

The key findings from the analysis of generic structures revealed that the selected samples indicated major reflection of the recruited genres in the post-test texts. That is, the introduction of genre-based pedagogy in this context has enabled the students to deploy the generic structures appropriately in comparison with the pre-test texts. Therefore, diverse execution of generic structures was found across the three stages of the pre-test, exposition and discussion text-types. While in the pre-test texts only some of the students' texts complied with the Sydney genre school convention, in the exposition and discussion text-types nearly all of the students employed these features. In addition, some of the pre-test samples indicated a kind of rejection of topic in which they developed their own stories and shifted away from arguing to offering advice as an evident deviation from the standard structures in the literature. However, after the application of pedagogy the kind and frequency of rejection decreased in the post-test texts.

The analysis of GM was carried out quantitatively and qualitatively. In quantitative analysis, three distinct but interrelated statistical analyses were carried out across the selected samples. In the first step the analysis was based on Ravelli's (1985, 1999) categorisation of GM. All of the selected texts were analysed according to this model. The second step was the analysis of subcategories of nominalisation in the pre-test, exposition and discussion genres. The last step devoted to the statistical analysis of complex processes construed as Things. It was found that nominalisation is the major kind of GM and its subcategory in the form of complex processes construed as Things co-varies with the type of genres.

The qualitative analysis was based on Halliday (1998) and Halliday and Matthiessen's (2006) notion of realisation of GM at syntagmatic orders: element, figure, and sequence. The analysis of elemental metaphors according to Halliday and Matthiessen's (2006) taxonomy of types of Things revealed that the students have largely developed 'macro things' over 'simple things' across the post-test texts. This finding which indicated the complexity of students' post-test texts was also compatible with Ravelli's (1985, 1999) distinction of 'Macro' metaphors. The analysis of figure and sequence also indicated the development across the students' texts. More specifically, through the deployment of these features the students shifted the "*intraclause*" reasoning in the congruent realisation of figures and sequences to "*inter-clause*" reasoning in the metaphorical forms. This in turn enabled the students to develop 'buried reasoning' in their post-test texts and gain better control over the causality relationship and making arguments which correlated with the generic structures at the level of genre. However, there were also cases where the students showed the lack of control in nominalising, particularly in substituting unrelated derivational morphemes, post-positioning modifiers, using unrelated epithets and leaning back into word-to-word literal translation as an indication of the mother tongue interference.

**DECLARATION**

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the university of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint-award of this degree.

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## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table 2.1</b>	A summary of types of genres and their social purposes.....	15
<b>Table 2.2</b>	A sample of exposition text-type.....	17
<b>Table 2.3</b>	A sample of discussion genre: Recycling.....	21
<b>Table 3.1</b>	The comparison between generic structures in exposition and discussion genres.....	57
<b>Table 3.2</b>	A sample of exposition text-type.....	58
<b>Table 3.3</b>	The explicit teaching of functional role of generic structures in exposition text-type.....	62
<b>Table 3.4</b>	A sample of discussion text-type.....	66
<b>Table 3.5</b>	The explicit teaching of functional role of generic structures in discussion text-type.....	69
<b>Table 3.6</b>	Sample text analysis according to Ravelli's (1985, 1999) categorisation of GM.....	78
<b>Table 3.7</b>	An analysis of subtypes of nominalisation in pre-test text by HGS1.....	82
<b>Table 3.8</b>	An analysis of subtypes of nominalisation in exposition text by HGS1.....	83
<b>Table 3.9</b>	An analysis of subtypes of nominalisation in discussion text by HGS1.....	84
<b>Table 3.10</b>	Syndrome of GM and syntagmatic complexity of elemental metaphors.....	87
<b>Table 4.1</b>	A prototype discussion genre by HGS3.....	95
<b>Table 4.2</b>	A sample of basic exposition text by MGS1.....	96
<b>Table 4.3</b>	A sample of basic exposition text by LGS2.....	97
<b>Table 4.4</b>	An example of embedded exemplum in the pre-test text by MGS3.....	99
<b>Table 4.5</b>	An instance of author's advice for argument by LGS1.....	103
<b>Table 4.6</b>	A sample of Rejection of Thesis in the pre-test text by HGS1.....	105
<b>Table 4.7</b>	A sample of Rejection of Topic by LGS3.....	106
<b>Table 4.8</b>	An example of prototype exposition text by LGS3.....	109
<b>Table 4.9</b>	An example of prototype exposition text by MGS1.....	111
<b>Table 4.10</b>	An example of Rejection in the exposition text by MGS3.....	114
<b>Table 4.11</b>	An example of prototype discussion text by HGS1.....	118
<b>Table 4.12</b>	Conformity and non-conformity to generic structure in students' texts.....	123

<b>Table 5.1</b>	Ravelli's (1985, 1999) categorisation of GM.....	130
<b>Table 5.2</b>	Halliday's (1998) categorisation of GM.....	131
<b>Table 5.3</b>	Items excluded as non-metaphorical in the analysis of twenty-seven texts.....	132
<b>Table 5.4</b>	A comparison between Halliday's (1998) and Ravelli's (1985) model.....	133
<b>Table 5.5</b>	Trends in the deployment of GM across the three texts.....	136
<b>Table 5.6</b>	Statistics for Marked Nominalisation.....	138
<b>Table 5.7</b>	Statistics for Verbal Nouns.....	138
<b>Table 5.8</b>	Statistics for Non-morphologically Marked Nominalisation.....	139
<b>Table 5.9</b>	Statistics for Nominalisation in Pre-modifiers.....	139
<b>Table 5.10</b>	Statistics for Nominalisation in Post-modifiers.....	140
<b>Table 5.11</b>	Statistics for Nominalisation in Theme.....	141
<b>Table 5.12</b>	Statistics for Nominalisation in Rheme.....	141
<b>Table 5.13</b>	Statistics for Mental processes construed as Things.....	144
<b>Table 5.14</b>	Statistics for Verbal processes construed as Things.....	145
<b>Table 5.15</b>	Statistics for Material processes construed as Things with human actor.....	145
<b>Table 5.16</b>	Statistics for Material processes construed as Things with non-human actor.....	146
<b>Table 5.17</b>	Statistics for Relational processes construed as Things.....	147
<b>Table 5.18</b>	Statistics for Behavioural processes construed as Things.....	147
<b>Table 6.1</b>	Pre-test text by student LGS3.....	155
<b>Table 6.2</b>	Pre-test text by student HGS2.....	161
<b>Table 6.3</b>	Pre-test text by student LGS2.....	164
<b>Table 6.4</b>	Exposition text by MGS2.....	165
<b>Table 6.5</b>	Discussion text by HGS2.....	167
<b>Table 6.6</b>	Pre-test text by HGS1.....	171
<b>Table 6.7</b>	Exposition text by LGS1.....	173
<b>Table 6.8</b>	Discussion text by MGS1.....	175
<b>Table E1.</b>	Pre-test text by IELTS high group student 1 (HGS1).....	288
<b>Table E2.</b>	Pre-test text by IELTS high group student 2 (HGS2).....	288
<b>Table E3.</b>	Pre-test text by IELTS high group student 3 (HGS3).....	289
<b>Table E4.</b>	Pre-test text by IELTS middle group student 1(MGS1).....	291

<b>Table E5.</b> Pre-test text by IELTS middle group student 2 (MGS2).....	291
<b>Table E6.</b> Pre-test text by IELTS middle group student 3 (MGS3).....	292
<b>Table E7.</b> Pre-test text by IELTS low group student 1 (LGS1).....	293
<b>Table E8.</b> Pre-test text by IELTS low group student 2 (LGS2).....	293
<b>Table E9.</b> Pre-test text by IELTS low group student 3 (LGS3).....	294
<b>Table E10.</b> Exposition text by IELTS high group student 1 (HGS1).....	294
<b>Table E11.</b> Exposition text by IELTS high group student 2 (HGS 2).....	295
<b>Table E12.</b> Exposition text by IELTS high group student 3 (HGS3).....	297
<b>Table E13.</b> Exposition text by IELTS middle group student 1 (MGS1).....	298
<b>Table E14.</b> Exposition text by IELTS middle group student 2 (MGS2).....	299
<b>Table E15.</b> Exposition text by IELTS middle group student 3 (MGS3).....	300
<b>Table E16.</b> Exposition text by IELTS low group student 1 (LGS1).....	301
<b>Table E17.</b> Exposition text by IELTS low group student 2 (LGS2).....	302
<b>Table E18.</b> Exposition text by IELTS low group student 3 (LGS3).....	304
<b>Table E19.</b> Discussion text by IELTS high group student 1 (HGS1).....	305
<b>Table E20.</b> Discussion text by IELTS high group student 2 (HGS2).....	306
<b>Table E21.</b> Discussion text by IELTS high group student 3 (HGS3).....	308
<b>Table E22.</b> Discussion text by IELTS middle group student 1 (MGS1).....	310
<b>Table E23.</b> Discussion text by IELTS middle group student 2 (MGS2).....	311
<b>Table E24.</b> Discussion text by IELTS middle group student 3 (MGS3).....	313
<b>Table E25.</b> Discussion text by IELTS low group student 1 (LGS1).....	314
<b>Table E26.</b> Discussion text by IELTS low group student 2 (LGS2).....	316
<b>Table E27.</b> Discussion text by IELTS low group student 3 (LGS3).....	317
<b>Table F1:</b> Pre-test text by HGS1.....	319
<b>Table F2.</b> Pre-test text by HGS2.....	319
<b>Table F3:</b> Pre-test text by HGS3.....	321
<b>Table F4.</b> Pre-test text by MGS1.....	323
<b>Table F5.</b> Pre-test text by MGS2.....	323
<b>Table F6.</b> Pre-test text by MGS3.....	324
<b>Table F7.</b> Pre-test text by LGS1.....	326
<b>Table F8.</b> Pre-test text by LGS2.....	326



<b>Table F9.</b> Pre-test text by LGS3.....	327
<b>Table F10.</b> Exposition text by HGS1.....	328
<b>Table F11.</b> Exposition text by HGS2.....	329
<b>Table F12.</b> Exposition text by HGS3.....	332
<b>Table F13.</b> Exposition text by MGS1.....	334
<b>Table F14.</b> Exposition text by MGS2.....	336
<b>Table F15.</b> Exposition text by MGS3.....	338
<b>Table F16.</b> Exposition text by LGS1.....	339
<b>Table F17.</b> Exposition text by LGS2.....	341
<b>Table F18.</b> Exposition text by LGS3.....	343
<b>Table F19.</b> Discussion text by HGS1.....	345
<b>Table F20.</b> Discussion text by HGS2.....	347
<b>Table F21.</b> Discussion text HGS3.....	350
<b>Table F22.</b> Discussion text by MGS1.....	352
<b>Table F23.</b> Discussion text by MGS2.....	355
<b>Table F24.</b> Discussion text by MGS3....	357
<b>Table F25.</b> Discussion text by LGS1.....	359
<b>Table F26.</b> Discussion text by LGS2.....	362
<b>Table F27.</b> Discussion text by LGS3.....	364
<b>Table G1.</b> The analysis of subtypes of nominalisation in pre-test text by HGS1 .....	367
<b>Table G2.</b> The analysis of subtypes of nominalisation in exposition text by HGS1.....	368
<b>Table G3.</b> The analysis of subtypes of nominalisation in discussion text by HGS1.....	369
<b>Table G4.</b> The analysis of subtypes of nominalisation in pre-test text by MGS1.....	371
<b>Table G5.</b> The analysis of subtypes of nominalisation in exposition text by MGS1.....	372
<b>Table G6.</b> The analysis of subtypes of nominalisation in discussion text by MGS1.....	374
<b>Table G7.</b> The analysis of subtypes of nominalisation in pre-test text by LGS1.....	377
<b>Table G8.</b> The analysis of subtypes of nominalisation in exposition text by LGS1.....	378
<b>Table G9:</b> The analysis of subtypes of nominalisation in discussion text by LGS1.....	380
<b>Table G10.</b> Comparison of 9 texts by HGS1, MGS1, and LGS1.....	383

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure 2.1</b> Structure of the exposition from Martin.....	19
<b>Figure 2.2</b> Register.....	26
<b>Figure 2.3</b> The relationship between Grammar, Syntax and Semantics.....	31
<b>Figure 2.4</b> The early definition of GM with one meaning and different realisations.....	34
<b>Figure 2.5</b> The definition of GM as a semantic compound.....	35
<b>Figure 2.6</b> Stratification of child language in transition to mother tongue.....	42
<b>Figure 2.7</b> Stratification in mother tongue: the ideational and interpersonal metafunctions.....	43
<b>Figure 2.8</b> The interplay at the level of context and resultant impact on semantics and lexicogrammar.....	47
<b>Figure 2.9</b> Unmarked and marked relationships in Theme, Rheme and Given, New relationship.....	49
<b>Figure 3.1</b> A teaching and learning cycle for secondary school .....	52
<b>Figure 3.2A</b> summary of three stages of teaching cycles (left) and learning cycles (right).....	56
<b>Figure 3.3A</b> conceptual presentation of exposition text-type through diagram.....	61
<b>Figure 3.4A</b> conceptual presentation of discussion text-type through diagram.....	69
<b>Figure 3.5</b> The metaphorical (a) and a possible congruent representation of figure with process and figure with process as Thing.....	89
<b>Figure 3.6</b> The congruent and metaphoric realisation of sequence.....	90
<b>Figure 4.1</b> A conceptual representation for “ <i>A Cyclic Way Approach</i> ”.....	102
<b>Figure 4.2</b> The complication in the typology of ‘Macro genre’ by MGS2.....	116
<b>Figure 4.3</b> A consciousness-raising impacts of the genre-based pedagogy in forming a Macro genre.....	122
<b>Figure 6.1</b> Taxonomy of the types of Things.....	154
<b>Figure 6.2</b> The metaphorical realisation of element in the participant role.....	156
<b>Figure 6.3</b> The metaphorical realisation of element in the participant role.....	157
<b>Figure 6.4</b> Halliday and Matthiessen’s (2006) semantic system of the ideation.....	159
<b>Figure 6.5</b> The metaphorical realisation of figure in the exposition text by LGS3.....	160

<b>Figure 6.6</b> The congruent and metaphorical realisations of figure from the pre-test text by HGS2's.....	162
<b>Figure 6.7</b> Form (a) and function (b) in literal and idiomatic translation.....	167
<b>Figure 6.8</b> A metaphoric realisation of sequence in HGS2's exposition text and a possible congruent form.....	170
<b>Figure 7.1</b> “ <i>A cyclic way approach</i> ” and its function in students' texts.....	181
<b>Figure 7.2</b> The system potential and the complementarities between GM and generic structures in the students' text .....	184
<b>Figure A. 1</b> Following Martin's (1992) stratified model.....	200

## ABBREVIATIONS

- EFL** English as a Foreign Language  
**ESL** English as a Second Language  
**EAP** English for Academic Purposes  
**ESP** English for Specific Purposes  
**FDG** Functional Discourse Grammar  
**IELTS** International English Language Testing System  
**SFL** Systemic Functional Linguistics  
**HGS1** High group student 1  
**HGS2** High group student 2  
**HGS3** High group student 3  
**MGS1** Middle group student 1  
**MGS2** Middle group student 2  
**MGS3** Middle group student 3  
**LGS1** Low group student 1  
**LGS2** Low group student 2  
**LGS3** Low group student 3  
**LAD** Language Acquisition Device  
**L1** First Language  
**L2** Second Language  
**MN** Marked Nominalisation  
**VN** Verbal Nouns  
**NMMN** Non-morphologically Marked Nominalisation  
**NPRM** Nominalisation in Pre-modifiers  
**NPOM** Nominalisation in Post-modifiers  
**NT** Nominalisation in Theme  
**NR** Nominalisation in Rheme  
**mnT** Mental processes construed as Thing  
**vT** Verbal processes construed as Thing  
**mhT** Material processes construed as Thing with human agency  
**mT** Material processes construed as Thing without human agency

**rT** Relational processes construed as Thing  
**bT** Behavioural processes construed as Thing  
**SLA** Second Language Acquisition  
**UG** Universal Grammar