平成 23 年度研究チーム活動中間報告（第 1 回目）

「The Impact on the L2 Writing Ability of Learners by Explicit Teaching of an ICT-mediated Genre-based Approach to Writing」

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Introduction

　As part of its ongoing research, our team carried out an extensive literature review (March to August 2011), while observing the teaching of writing and learning of writing in the Japanese context. From September 2011 onwards, the team began the process of running workshops to instruct teachers in genre-based writing, presenting academic papers in Japan and at conferences overseas, and conducting formal classroom observations. The lessons learned thus far are to be put into practice from April 2012. Students have already submitted a writing sample, and some of them are to be instructed explicitly with a genre-based writing approach supported by technology. Preliminary results will be measured at the end of the period of instruction in July 2012. A brief overview of some of the research team's activities over the last 12 months follows.

Progress Report

　The first workshop, *Teaching Writing through the Genres*, was run as part of a teacher-training seminar at Bishkek Humanities University in Kyrgyzstan in September 2011, on behalf of Teachers Helping Teachers, a designated Special Interest Group within the Japan Association of Language Teachers (JALT). The workshop was conducted for teachers new to genre-based pedagogy. It established a simple classification of genres as different types of texts with common features; it discussed what the purpose of each written text type is (such as a fictional account, or a cookery recipe, or a personal letter)and to whom it is addressed; and highlighted the kinds of language features typically associated with the genres.

　Subsequently, we presented a paper at the JALT National Conference in November 2011, *Genre-based Writing: Learning with Mediation*. The paper offered an insight into the social and cognitive processes at work and the desirability of redesigning writing course materials to help learners produce unsupported output demonstrating improved written communication with an awareness of genre. In common with lessons gleaned from the workshop (above), it was evident that instruction would need to

be staged carefully. Simply introducing target vocabulary and grammatical structures as the basis of language instruction, and then adding a particular genre at a subsidiary stage, would lead to frustration for learners. What they required was a flexible approach, whereby functional expressions and lexical items were taught as needed in the specific context in which a genre occurred. For students, becoming familiar with an English recipe and then writing one was a different proposition from reading an academic essay and then writing one.

Following that, we cemented our collaboration with fellow researchers and educators in Indonesia through conducting workshops, presentations, interviews, classroom observations and holding meetings to share know-how in late February and early March, 2012. We met with students and faculty at STIESIA Surabaya to discuss technology-enhanced writing instruction, visited their CALL Lab facilities, and analysed student written output created online or in the Lab as digital compositions and stored on DVD. In Semarang, we gave a presentation and led a workshop attended by 100 public junior and senior high school teachers. The presentation, *ICT with Genre-based Writing for Teachers and Learners*, sought to advance the debate on where and how technology fits into writing for L2 learners, and in which contexts and what ways technological tools can enhance writing effectiveness and improve students' L2 communicative ability. By contrast the workshop, *Genre-based Writing Mediated by ICT: How it Works*, offered practical instruction in ways to teach the writing of the Narrative genre as compared with the Recount genre.

Significance for L2 Learners

Taken together, a number of strands are coming together. Genre is about texts and how they are grouped together, while genre is also concerned with how writers use language when responding to situations that recur. Increasingly, what is seen is that the artificial decoupling of reading and writing into language skills taught in isolation from one another, and in a decontextualised setting, is difficult for instructors to teach and ultimately counterproductive for L2 learners. Genre-based writing reestablishes the fundamental relationship between a text, the writer and the reader. Taken one stage further, our research into technological meditation is revealing marked differences in the online world of social networking and contemporary genres like blogs. Here, the connection is between a writer as creator - or numerous creators - of digital texts and countless consumers of the text, who not only respond as

reader but edit the digital content and recreate and disseminate new texts. In blogs, readers and writers are in a dynamic interplay with multiple agents. Standing back, writing is and has to be seen as socially situated, its communicative purpose must not be ignored or devalued, and it exists not in isolation, but for an audience to whom it addresses its message.