

# Procedural Rhetoric: An Alternative to Traditional Academic Writing Programs

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**Abstract**—A host of movements have been performed to broaden English language learners' writing scholarship. A major rethink of L2 writing materials is what syllabus designers should pursue in some collegiate contexts; all the more so because writing is considered as a scholarly skill for English language learners to do academic assignments and manifest their academic attainments in different academic areas. Having this in mind, the present study explored the implications of new English writing course syllabuses designed based on *procedural rhetoric*, which made English majors significantly outperform conventional syllabuses users in terms of *content, vocabulary, and language use*. The achieved results ensured that university writing courses can bring about more accomplishments when a multi-faceted program aligned with contemporary concerns of academic writing is adopted.

**Index Terms**—argumentation, discourse community, genre, procedural rhetoric, writing program

## I. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Most curricular decisions and innovations, most examination of texts, most exploration of writing strategies and difficulties have been allotted to North America inasmuch as it enjoys a variety of writing backgrounds and embraces state of the art concerns in teaching and learning writing skills (Cumming, 2009). Casanave (2009) notes that this western orientation of writing studies may cause an uncritical application of findings in other EFL contexts or marginalization of their writing curricula, hence a wide range of writing concerns in terms of teaching and learning. This marginalization has made Vanmaele and Lowyck (2005) see the writing performance of novice writers uninformative on the grounds that they find themselves confronted by 'the transformation of experiential reality in concepts, the identification of the right term and the construction of this 'abstracted reality' in a transparent text" (p. 393). Along with the fact that the role of teachers' knowledge to afford student writers instructional support should be emphasized, the development of a state-of-the-art curriculum which its constructive roots are formed in other courses such as grammar or reading is the basic measure that should be taken by curriculum developers. What seems clear, as Johnson and Roen (1989) believe, is that the organization of language materials is done through the interaction of policy-based and cultural concerns, and redressing the balance between them is a strategy that works for the purpose of improving the quality of writing as to new pedagogical movements.

Micciche (2004) asserts that teaching grammar and teaching writing are currently considered separate enterprises in English language curricula and grammar is viewed as "not empowering but disempowering, not rhetorical but decontextualized, not progressive but remedial" (p.718). This orientation naturally can affect the writing performance of language learners negatively. Having carefully investigated 42 articles authored on EFL college writing in *Journal of Second Language Writing* and 11 studies into EFL higher education writing in *TESOL Quarterly*, Ortega (2009) claims that the current ideological and socio-cultural outlook toward writing skill, which redefines literacy as strategies to produce a discourse tuned to audience and content, is often neglected by many EFL writing program developers.

A typical focus on one-paragraph development in the first writing course of English majors at university, normally in the first semester of the second year, can make teachers sacrifice some major principles of writing such as genre and discourse for intensive correction of grammar due to grammar and writing separation. Schoonen, Snellings, Stevenson, and Van Gelderen (2009) propose the *Inhibition Hypothesis*, which predicts that the high demands of linguistic dimensions of FL composition will draw upon resources and inhibit attention to conceptual or ideological perspectives of FL writing, such as content elaboration, monitoring and higher-order revisions. Non-integrative grammar and product-oriented writing courses wherein no serious reading practices come to assist learners can aggravate their asymmetric use of bare writing essentials (Hinkel, 2002). Upon comparing L1 and L2 academic texts written by native speakers of American English and non-native college students (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Indonesian, and Arabic), Hinkel (2002) has found specific divergences in the use of linguistic and rhetorical features and reported that most non-native speakers' writings in several EFL contexts are not well off for *nominalization, passive structures, clauses, hedging, discourse and organizational features*, and finally *collocations or fixed strings*. The poor presentation of these features has made a linguistic gap between the writings of natives and non-

natives which should be bridged by reforming the syllabuses designed for university students. According to Hinkel (2002), writing problem developers should come up with the a knowledge transforming curriculum wherein grammar is not isolated, reading is provided for discourse and lexical items, and various types of academic genres in writing are taught by teachers who have attended writing-specific training programs.

A longitudinal critical evaluation of writing programs in six EFL contexts, Japan, Poland, China, Germany, the USA, and Spain performed by Reichelt (2009) has exposed the fact of applying classical writing pedagogy at university levels of most EFL communities, except Germany which is enriched by its L1 composition curriculum. In Germany, English writing concentrates on audience, contexts, creativity, critical reading, and genres. Nevertheless, other five contexts have not deployed modern writing movements.

Along with Reichelt's critical investigation revealing the paucity of writing practice for authentic and social purposes in several EFL contexts, serious curricular mismatches and pedagogical inadequacies in learning and teaching writing at college level revealed by several studies (Abu Rass, 2011; Al-Sharah, 2007; Lee, 2003; Reichelt, 2001; Wu, 2008; Xinghua, 2010;), entail an investigation into academic writing dynamics in Iran. Rubrics of academic writing courses in Iranian EFL programs approved by Ministry of Science, Research and Technology have not fully been represented. Looking at revised writing rubrics approved in 2007, we can understand that the current writing curriculum undertaken in Iran has kept its distance from new writing movements such as *nonliterary discourse genres*, endorsed by Swales (1990) and Reid (2001), which emphasize inclusion of various rhetorical, contextual, and linguistic tasks and skills across the broad spectrum of disciplinary genres accompanied by specificity and restrictions on contents and forms. In particular; for the first writing course of discontinuous BA studies (Advanced Composition), mainly basic practices such as *outlining* or *punctuation* and a *one-coherent paragraph development*, which could be simply included in an integrative grammar course, have formed the principles of the syllabus. The rubrics for the syllabus of the second writing course, Essay Writing, have also been offered through nine categories emphasizing the text type of *explanation*, *summarizing*, *restatement*, *writing a five paragraph essay*, and *citation in written performances*. Turning to continuous undergraduate courses, for the first writing course Advanced Composition -contrary to what its name suggests- primary practices such as *outlining*, *writing topic sentences*, and *summarizing* have received focused attention. Definition of different essays, presentation of essay samples and practice in composing essays have been cited as the main goals of the second writing course, Essay Writing,. Simply put, language students at university level are being introduced into a narrow writing curriculum whose pedagogical features are limited as new concerns of writing such as discourse, voice, readership, and genres are missing and assessment framework is not clear. The quality of language students' writing performances can also be linked to isolated grammar courses syllabuses designed for the first year of their university education.

To recapitulate decontextualized grammar courses and allocating two writing courses to classical writing exercises make instructors pass over the new demands of writing pedagogy. To come up with a solution; thus, this research was undertaken to introduce new writing syllabuses to English majors.

## II. STUDY

The paucity of modern writing concerns and traditional priorities assigned to the writing skill by Iran's Ministry of Science, Research and Technology entailed an innovative alteration to the writing courses materials provided for Iranian English majors. To do so, the current study introduced new materials, according to *procedural rhetoric* investigated by Fulkerson (2005), which has three emphases: Genre-based composition, composition as argumentation, and composition as introduction to an academic discourse community. Several approaches have been proposed to teach composition through genre-based instruction. The Systemic Functional perspective which implies several texts with a single purpose share the same textual features has widely been embraced. Hyland (2009) pedagogically finds this approach to genre teaching the most developed one which demands control of grammar and awareness of rhetorical features of texts. The second subdivision of procedural rhetoric is argumentation to which two models for academic essays have been allotted. Johnson (2000) refers to argumentation both as *informal logic* to seek the truth through acceptability and as *rhetoric* to run fictionalized dialogue with a possibility of leaving aside the truth for the sake of audience acceptance. "Informal Logic should tend to favor the truth requirement over the acceptability requirement, whereas rhetoric will take the reverse view" (p.271). Simply put, reasoned persuasion to defend the stance taken and arguments coupled with supported counter-arguments are two ways to deal with beliefs and ideas in essay writing. The former perspective focuses on a cognitive presentation of ideas and discourse but the latter fosters a social atmosphere and produces a dialectically live discussion in writing. An introduction to discourse community is the third subcategory of procedural rhetoric which invites student writers to write on specific areas of world knowledge which enjoy a clear commonality of language and generic conventions and expectations in their respective produced texts. This term differs from audience because the discourse community takes account of writers, texts, and readers together but audience focuses on readers.

## III. MATERIALS ADAPTATION FOR PROCEDURAL RHETORIC

Authentic texts are available but a creative exploitation of them to effectively engage student writers and maximize the potential of the material can be a substantial burden falling on instructors (McDonough, Shaw & Masuhara, 2013). Modifying textbooks is a significant expertise for all writing teachers in enhancing the resources available to students and their professional development. Teaching is mostly “a process of transforming content knowledge into pedagogically effective forms and this is most in evidence when teachers are considering both their learners and their profession in modifying and creating materials” (Hyland, 2004, p.100).

Inasmuch as the major prophesy of Grammar I to which college instructors adhere is teaching basic grammatical rules, the Grammar II course was selected as the starting step of the experiment to provide integrative grammar lessons in which writing exercises could be included. For the Grammar II course, an edited version of Focus on Grammar series published by Longman was assigned. This decision was made by a three-member team who carefully did a content study. Focus on Grammar owing to its focus on English grammar through contextualized reading and writing activities assist students in bridging the gap between comprehending grammatical structures and actually using them. Each unit progresses through four steps: Grammar in Context, Grammar Presentation, Focused Practice, and Communication Practice, using a new color-coded format that makes the program easy for students to understand, and for teachers to implement.

The carefully compiled version derived from Focus on Grammar 3, 4, and 5 for the Grammar II of the Experimental Group included 12 chapters as following:

- 1-The Passive
- 2- The Passive to Describe Situations and to Report Opinions
- 3-Modals to Express Degrees of Necessity
- 4- Models to Express Degree of Certainty
- 5-Adjective Clauses
- 6-Adjective Clauses with Prepositions; Adjective Phrases
- 7-Adverb Clauses
- 8-Adverb and Adverbial Phrase
- 9-Connectors
- 10- Noun Clauses: Subjects, Objects, and Complements
- 11-Direct and Indirect Speech
- 12-Conditionals; Other ways to Express Unreality

All of these chapters were initiated with reading texts and ended with review tests and paragraph writing practices in terms of how to consider parallelism, write topic sentences, punctuate phrases or sentences, and keep coherence through using examples.

For the first writing course normally offered in the third term, 20 newly published textbooks were probed by four faculty members teaching at Payme Noor University, Islamic Azad University of Rasht, and University of Guilan. Materials adaptation was carried out according to categorical demands of procedural rhetoric through a brief checklist developed by the researchers. It included (a) writing exercises designed for real life tasks e.g. diary; (b) task-specific text types such as writing a piece of advertisement; (c) authentic writing practices embedded with relevant reading texts designed for specific text type or genre; (d) diverse areas of discourse communities such as education, media, health, the environment, occupations, and family; (e) iterative writing practices such as reproduction or summarizing; (f) contents enriched with topic-specific lexical knowledge. The contents accommodating these criteria were extracted from only four textbooks of the twenty probed ones: Real Writing With Readings authored by Susan Anker published by Bedford/St. Martin's in 2010, Bridges to Better Writing written by Luis A. Nazario, Deborah D. Borchers, and William F. Lewis published by Wadsworth in 2010, Stepping Stones by Chris Juzwiak published by Bedford/St. Martin's in 2009, and Academic Writing: A Handbook for International Students written by Stephan Bailly published by Routledge in 2006. The included chapters for the first writing course were: Introduction and Conclusion, Narration (How to write a diary), description (Visual information and writing reports), Paraphrasing and Sentence Variety, Problems and Solutions (writing a critical note to officials) Comparison and Contrast (advertisement).

The second writing course offered to college students was designed for the purpose of expanding students' academic writing knowledge with a focus on argumentation by which students move one step beyond persuasive writing as they need to gather evidence and present a well-reasoned argument along with counter-arguments on a debatable issue. The same materials adaptation team working on materials development for the first writing course focused particularly on *argument* and *evidence citation* techniques. Word associations and advanced grammatical structures such as *reduced clauses*, *inversion*, and *cleft sentences* were other course criteria which were extracted by the team and then were introduced to students in separate chapters to be applied in their advanced writing practices. These lexical and grammatical structures were chosen to raise students' awareness of the rich language needed to present arguments and ideas. Students were encouraged to write argumentative paragraphs and essays on several global issues and language related fields such as teaching and translation.

Included chapters for the second writing course were: (a) Developing your essay through argumentation; (b) Argument and Discussion; (c) Argument reading for writers; (d) Balanced discussion; (e) Topical vocabulary 6- Useful Grammar.

#### IV. METHOD

This section imparts the main part of the study in which two groups of subjects underwent two different writing programs during three semesters to field the research question which was: *Does the newly introduced syllabuses which rests on the Procedural Rhetoric perspective bring about statistically significant outperformance for the experimental group undergoing it?* The respective null hypothesis was as follows: *There is not any statistically significant difference between the writing performances of English majors who undergo newly introduced writing syllabuses resting on Procedural Rhetoric and those who experience current collegiate writing pedagogy in Iranian universities.*

**Participants.** Two hundred and ninety-seven students in two groups, experimental and control groups took part in this curricular study. Participants ranged in age from 19 to 41 and attended the experiment from the outset of the course Grammar II. Virtually all students in both control and experimental groups had been successfully finished with the course Grammar I. One hundred and thirty-two first-year English majors of three universities (Islamic Azad Universities of Rasht and Lahijan branches and University of Guilan) were in the experimental group and underwent the main research phase working with the new writing program over three semesters. Two instructors were assigned to the Experimental Group attending six and five separate classes, respectively for grammar II and writing. One hundred and forty-seven participants of six classes attended the control group classes. This group was included and investigated mainly for the purposes of observing the norms of experimental studies and neutralizing the maturation impact in a longitudinal study. This group was also faced with a cut in the number of subjects who were one hundred and seventy at the beginning of the study. All of these classes underwent traditional university writing instruction in Iran offered by three lecturers and one assistant professor. The students were studying in four universities (Islamic Azad Universities of Rasht, Lahijan, and Tonekabon branches and University of Guilan). It should be noted that Islamic Azad University of Tonekabon was included in the study only for one of control group classes.

**Instrument.** One writing test was administrated for choosing the subjects of the study and ensuring the homogeneity of them regarding their writing ability. Performances were scored as to ESL Composition Profile proposed by Jacobs, Zinkgraf, Wromuth, Hartfiel, & Hughey (1981) (see Appendix). Jacobs et al. claim that this assessment profile is reliable if the writings are rated by two raters. Another writing test was employed at the outset of first writing course once all subjects were finished with their second grammar course. This test was to pretest their writing ability to be finally compared with their post-test results. The timed essay test included an unseen topic (*Do you think children should have free access to the Internet?*) to be used for writing a composition of three or more paragraphs. T-test was applied to two groups' pretest writing ability as their grammar courses had been run differently in terms of contents.

**Procedure.** Having finished the grammar course I, three hundred and fifty-three subjects of four universities were examined in terms of their writing ability through composing a timed essay (two or more paragraphs) on *the features of a good language learner* within 50 minutes. All writings were scored analytically by two raters. An inter-rater reliability analysis regarding the two sets of scores through Spearman Rank-order correlation coefficient was carried out to find out if there was a high consistency between the two raters' scores. The average of each rater's scores turned out to be the writing score of each student. Those students who scored 1.5 SD above and below the mean (334 subjects) were assigned to experimental and control groups. Curricular obstacles posed by departments made randomization of students unfeasible. However, classes of three universities were randomly assigned to two groups. SPSS output for one-way analysis of variance exposed the fact that two groups were not significantly different in terms of their writing skill. The Grammar II course lasted for three months or 12 sessions in the spring semester.

Initial chapters of *Understanding and Using English Grammar* authored by Betty Azar, which were focused on basic grammatical rules, and *Oxford Practice Grammar (Basic Level)* had been applied to teaching the first grammar course to students of both groups before the study. The experimental group divided into six classes attended 12 sessions of Grammar II in the spring semester. However, it took 13 sessions for the control group. The experimental group underwent integrative grammar classwork and homework after reading introductory texts enriched with the intended grammar. It is worthy of note that this group's students were provided with post-grammar writing exercises such as *parallelism, writing topic sentences, punctuating phrases or sentences, and keeping coherence through using examples*. However, the control group experienced normal grammar exercises which were more complex than what had been taught in the earlier term. *Understanding and Using English Grammar* authored by Betty Azar and *Oxford Practice Grammar (Intermediate and Advanced levels)* by George Yule were applied to teaching grammar to this group. Two groups of the study were pretested before attending the first writing courses. Sixty minutes were allotted to the writing test whose topic was *Do you think children should have free access to the Internet*. A t-test was applied to check the homogeneity of subjects. Writing practices experienced by the students of the experimental groups in their second grammar course could have made the two groups not start on equal footing.

The first writing course in the third term lasted for 15 sessions for both groups in the fall semester. Finally, the second writing course offered for the sophomores in their fourth term lasted for 13 roughly ninety-minute sessions. All experimental classes were run by three instructors who all were Ph.D. candidates and attended an orientation session before each course. Turning to the first writing course, the experimental group was taught how to write several text types for different genres. On the other hand, the control group practiced paragraph writing mainly focused on writing topic sentences and considering cohesion and coherence for several text types such as *description, process, and comparison and contrast*. Three classes' main course book was *Paragraph Development* written by Martin Arnaudet

and Mary Barrett and other three classes were instructed through *Writing to Communicate* written by Cynthia Boardman and Jia Frydenberg. The second writing course commonly entitled *Essay Writing* was run using *Academic Writing Course* written by R.R. Jordan applied to three classes and *The practical Writer with Readings* written by Edward P. Bailey and Philip A. Powell assigned to two classes of the control group. Nevertheless, the experimental group received instruction on argumentative writing, citations, and evidence in essays. They were also provided with word associations such as collocation and rhetorical grammatical structures such as *cleft sentences* and *reduced clauses*. The argumentative essence of the writing course could make students take a serious excursion into a discourse community of language studies as the adapted book enjoyed a wide range of topics.

In sum, the control group was mainly taught to master the writing skill through a quantitatively developmental sequence of writing components from sentence to paragraph and finally to essay. The process orientation was adopted differently by instructors as it was allocated varying degrees of effort and time to cover texts types such as *process*, *definition*, *description*, *expository essays*, and finally *argumentative essays* for some classes.

## V. RESULTS

Initially, a writing test was administrated at the outset of the study before the course Grammar II to select those students who enjoyed the same level of writing ability. Three hundred and thirty-seven students whose scores were within 1.5 SD above and below the mean (See Table 1) were selected as participants of the study as their scores fell into this domain. Table 2 shows the results of interrater reliability.

TABLE 1  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ON SAMPLING RESULTS

	Mean	Total Mean	Total SD
Content	10.06	40.8	8.1
Language Use	10.01		
Vocabulary	9.3		
Organization	8.4		
Mechanics	3.1		

TABLE 2  
INTER-RATER RELIABILITY OF SAMPLING TEST

Raters	Mean	Variance	Rs
Rater 1	41.2	71	.93
Rater 2	40.5	66	

The pretest of the two groups were analyzed to see through their writing level after they were finished with two different grammar courses (See Table 3).

TABLE 3  
PRE-TEST WRITING RESULTS

						CONTENT	LANGUAGE USE	VOCABULARY	ORGANAZATION	MECHANICS
Control Group' Mean score						12.26	11.19	9.53	10.12	3
Experimental Group' Mean Score						14.45	12.91	10.44	11.74	3.16
Group	N	Mean	SD	SEM	DF	Standard Error of Difference		t-observed	t-critical	Two-tailed p value
Experimental	132	52.73	6.68	.58	277	.85		2.32	1.62	.0001
Control	147	46.12	7.55	.62						

A significant difference regarding the writing ability of the two groups was found as the resulted p-value (.0001) could not exceed .05, and the t-observed appeared much higher than its critical value. This preexisting difference functioning as a covariate before the main phase of the study could stem from different grammar instruction which two groups received i.e. the experimental group' course was integrated with writing exercises.

To statistically compare the scores of pre-test and post-test, an ANCOVA was employed. The descriptive statistics of the post-test are brought in Table 4.

TABLE 4  
PRIMARY STATISTICS OF POST-TEST RESULTS

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD
Post-test scores	Control	147	64.34	14.64
	Experimental	132	75.54	13.69

According to Table 5, the mean score of the Experimental group far exceeded the Control's. In particular, the scores of pretest as a concomitant variable did not significantly affect the post-test scores ( $F=2.683$ ,  $Sig.>0.05$ ). However, the Group variable had a statistically significant influence on post-test scores ( $F=28.083$ ,  $Sig.<0.05$ ), revealing a significant difference between the writing post-test scores of two groups.

TABLE 5  
TESTS OF BETWEEN SUBJECT EFFECTS

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
TOTAL_pretest	537.388	1	537.388	2.683	.103
group	5625.219	1	5625.219	28.083	.000
Error	55284.416	276	200.306		
Total	1417539.000	279			
Corrected Total	64542.437	278			

a. R Squared = .143 (Adjusted R Squared = .137)

The results of the LSD test ( See Table 6 ) could afford us a better understanding of the two groups' mean score, indicating a statistically significant outperformance of the experimental group' performance over the control groups' ( $Sig.<0.05$ ).

TABLE 6  
LSD PAIRWISE COMPARISONS OF POST-TEST RESULTS

Dependent Variable: TOTAL_post						
(I) group	(J) group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. <sup>a</sup>	95% Confidence Interval for Difference <sup>a</sup>	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
control	experiment	-9.911 <sup>*</sup>	1.870	.000	-13.592	-6.229
experiment	control	9.911 <sup>*</sup>	1.870	.000	6.229	13.592

The mean difference between the two groups and multivariate nature of the main variable, writing, made a MANCOVA analysis appropriate for detecting the areas of difference.

TABLE 8  
THE RESULTS OF MULTIVARIATE TESTS

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
<b>LANGUAGE USE</b>	Pillai's Trace	.023	1.288 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.269
	Wilks' Lambda	.977	1.288 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.269
	Hotelling's Trace	.024	1.288 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.269
	Roy's Largest Root	.024	1.288 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.269
<b>VOCABULARY</b>	Pillai's Trace	.005	.292 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.917
	Wilks' Lambda	.995	.292 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.917
	Hotelling's Trace	.005	.292 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.917
	Roy's Largest Root	.005	.292 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.917
<b>ORGANAZATION</b>	Pillai's Trace	.025	1.391 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.228
	Wilks' Lambda	.975	1.391 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.228
	Hotelling's Trace	.026	1.391 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.228
	Roy's Largest Root	.026	1.391 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.228
<b>MECHANICS</b>	Pillai's Trace	.021	1.165 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.327
	Wilks' Lambda	.979	1.165 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.327
	Hotelling's Trace	.022	1.165 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.327
	Roy's Largest Root	.022	1.165 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.327
<b>CONTENT</b>	Pillai's Trace	.021	1.173 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.323
	Wilks' Lambda	.979	1.173 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.323
	Hotelling's Trace	.022	1.173 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.323
	Roy's Largest Root	.022	1.173 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.323
<b>group</b>	Pillai's Trace	.419	38.580 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.581	38.580 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.000
	Hotelling's Trace	.720	38.580 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.000
	Roy's Largest Root	.720	38.580 <sup>a</sup>	5.000	268.000	.000

According to the obtained data mainly through four multivariate tests, namely, Wilks' Lambda, Hotelling's Trace, Roy's Largest Root, and Pillai's Trace ( See Table 8), pre-test scores of each variable did not exert a statistically significant impact on five variables of post-test scores (Sig.>0.05), unlike Group variable which significantly affected post-test scores. On another reading, the experimental and the control group were remarkably different at five variables (Sig. < 0.05). All tests (Sig. < 0.05) showed significant differences between the two groups' performances in five writing variables.

Finally, Post-hoc pair wise comparisons using LSD method revealed the exact area of differences. The differences in mean scores of *content*, *vocabulary*, and *language use* were statistically different in favor of the experimental group. Despite enjoying higher mean scores in *mechanics* and *organization*, the experimental group's writing performances were not statistically at higher standard compared to those of control group' subjects. This conclusion was drawn from achieved p-values of *content*, *language use*, and *vocabulary* which were respectively .000, .001, and .012 < .05 and higher p values of *organization* and *mechanics* (.598 and .976 respectively) which exceeded .05.

## VI. DISCUSSION

*Content*, *vocabulary*, and *language use* were three areas which were significantly enhanced by the procedural rhetoric approach to teaching writing. Statistically remarkable outperformance of Experiment Group in in terms of *content* in the post-test can imply the potential of procedural rhetoric to foster the idea of *writing to learn* since *content* mainly refers to knowledge of subject, a collection of facts (evidence) ,and opinions in compositions. Argumentations as one component of procedural rhetoric can be a pushing factor to acquire more knowledge about a wide range of ideas and be aware of audience. Thus, when applied in students' writing, arguments can expand the circle of their thoughts. This positive incidence also stands true when it comes to teaching genre since this subdivision of procedural rhetoric applied to writing pedagogy of Experimental Group helped students pursue social purposes in their writing by means of specific rhetorical structures. Samples of genre-specific reading practices could also appear as helping tools to broaden the world and language knowledge of student writers. It has been claimed that accredited L2 writing programs aim at enhancing knowledge construction. Ryshine-pankova and Byrnes (2013) note that the success of German L2 college

writing program lies in their tendency toward content-based writing and readership diversity, which is endorsed by procedural rhetoric. This approach can enrich writers' world knowledge through writing for several real-life purposes such as argument and critique and on several social issues such as crime, the environment, and media.

Turning to *language use*, students attending experimental group showed better performances in effective complex constructions such as compound-complex sentences, passives, and reduced clauses and fewer errors of syntactic structures such as agreement, tense, and prepositions. Schleppegrell (2004) sees the academic discourse of written production in the complexity of sentence structures and density of the language applied. Density refers to the usage of content specific, abstract, and dependent vocabulary. These concerns could be broadly accommodated through procedural rhetoric as its one of central focus is an introduction to discourse communities. Granger and Paquot (2009) believe the insufficient knowledge of verbs typically used in writings of student writers is a serious issue as it prevents expressing their thoughts. They claim novice and most EFL college writers underuse the academic discourse in their lexical presentations. Thus, they recommend academic verbs such as *argue*, *criticize*, *include*, and *report* to be introduced to learners to redress the discursual balance in their compositions and essays and consequently to project more rhetorical functions. They add that it should be coupled with teaching pragmatic appropriacy. Similarly, Shaw (2009) suggests explicit teaching of linking adverbials and their contextual appropriacy because they open the gate to academic discourse for novice writers. To illustrate, it can be said to students that in functional terms, *however* is frequently written to introduce a problematic issue followed by a situational description.

There is hardly any doubt that procedural rhetoric can bring about a broad writing curriculum across which both lecturers and language majors can academically benefit inasmuch as it can work as a pushing factor to enrich students' written output in terms of lexical, grammatical, and discursual knowledge, making teachers take task-specific pedagogical actions. However, this academic writing framework may spell some trouble for program developers. First, course books and syllabuses should be carefully developed. Suitable reading texts for modeling or familiarity with genre and discourse should be carefully included in the course books. Another issue which needs thoughtful considerations is the timing of instruction, that is to say a proper curricular timetable allotted to each subdivision of procedural rhetoric. A smooth transition to higher order writing skills is what should not be downplayed while developing the syllabus. Finally, for the last two or three decades, writing pedagogy has embraced process-oriented and context-specific approaches that deals with students' individual cognitive repertoire and their socially positioned identities as members of culturally bound groups. In contrast, college writing assessment has remained a contextless or generic measurement activity which is rarely conditioned by context, task specificity, and inherent discursual and functional specifications (Huot 2002; Moss 1994). Thus, an assessment framework tuned to procedural rhetoric must be developed by language testing experts.

A procedural rhetoric -oriented curriculum can inseparably embody the grammar course as a preliminary component before three subdivisions. On another reading, an integrated grammar course in the second term of university education could accommodate the discursive writing pedagogy to make students prepared for more challenging composition practices. In the following terms, a pedagogical transition to academic discourse with a practical focus on voice, arguments, reasoning, and style could be implemented.

Some genres can be integrated with teaching required structural and lexical items. Indubitably, genres limit the possibilities of what a writer should write since they are situation-oriented. For instance, writing a lab report makes a writer use passive structures within an exclusive organizational pattern and shy away from using personal pronouns. Whether the linguistic and organizational constraints imposed by a genre are pedagogical obstacles has been discussed by Devitt (2004). She believes these limitations breed creativity and genre writing is not "filling in the blanks" (p.139). Genre -based writing enjoys a kind of inherent variation which allows for an individual choice by which both functions and appropriateness can be maintained. Two descriptive sentences by two students of a writing class (a and b) retaining the genre through different linguistic structures have been brought.

- a) The lightening was a row of meager electric bulbs, unscreened, yellow, and coated with filth.
- b) Dirty Small lamps made a yellow atmosphere on the walls and ceiling.

These sentences show that a teacher can keep a generic context in her teaching writing to students despite their language proficiency differences. In addition, students have an individual option to select the needed grammar and vocabularies from their linguistic repertoire.

Argumentation with its more complexities can follow teaching genre-based compositions. That which type of argument writing teachers should pursue in their classes has raised a big question. A contemporary concept of argumentation in students' academic writing has been proposed by Tindale (2004) which takes a completely rhetorical stance and is seen "as a central human activity "in which writers can address the audience and anticipate their likely discussions (p.19). Sperber (2001) who asserts that argumentation is related "to communication rather than to individual cognition" and is to help listeners or readers think about the acceptance of ideas and generate their own likely acceptable arguments. Therefore, it is juxtaposition of both persuasion and evaluation coupled with a "knowledge production mechanism" (p.410). In the argumentative genre students should be trained to look at the argument as a context to provide opportunities for readers to evaluate their arguments easily.

Familiarity with academic discourse of some communities can be the final episode of teaching writing within a program based on procedural rhetoric. Thonney (2011) believes community-oriented instruction is more likely to



concentrate on reality of writing through engaging with social and communal issues, making decision, planning, thinking critically, finding readership, and solving problems. The original concept of introduction to a discourse community refers to preparation for another field of study which will seem far to students to meet if they are not provided with a rich syllabus and pedagogy. To illustrate this issue, the study of Hewings and Hewings (2001) is reported in which impersonal functions of *it-clauses* and their frequencies have been investigated in four fields of history, astronomy, business, and geography. Functions of attribution (*it has been proposed, it is estimated*), hedge (*it is unlikely, it could be argued*), and attitude markers (*it is of interest to note, it was shocking*) can be taught to language major students to raise their consciousness of diversity of one structure. English for tourism, for example, needs impressive and persuasive discourse to attract the audience. Adverbs and adjectives are embedded in this writing to show the aesthetic appeal of the tourist spot. A comparison of two students' writings show how the writer has entered the discourse community of tourism through careful selection of grammar (reduced clauses, passives) to be laconic and vocabulary (*unspoilt, carnival, picturesque, spot, excursion*) to be expressive.

A) Although unspoilt by civilization, it has now been transformed into a carnival center of entertainment. The picturesque cottages equipped the cyber world of this newly discovered spot makes you have an excursion into it.

B) This place is an entertainment location but it has long been far from human destructive interference. Its beautiful cottages which have an access to the Internet encourage any tourist to have a visit to it.

These two performances share the features of a descriptive genre but it is the first performance that makes a student writer a member of tourism discourse community. So, rarely does keeping generic features guarantee entering a discourse community.

These three pedagogical components should not necessarily be included completely separately. At any level of learning it is the flexibility of syllabus designed and capability of teachers that can raise students' awareness of these three features. The suggested organization of procedural rhetoric can be manipulated systematically, that is, time and resources allotted to different components of procedural rhetoric vary by priorities assigned by official stakeholders and program developers.

## VII. CONCLUSION

Two types of writing syllabuses designed for English majors were compared: a conventional writing program and procedural rhetoric-oriented writing syllabuses. Different grammar materials and instruction experienced by the experimental group made a preexisting significant difference between the writing ability of two groups, causing an ANCOVA and a MANCOVA to be applied to post-test results. The first statistical test revealed that the Experimental group outperformed the other group. This mean difference between two groups and multivariate nature of main variable, writing, made a MANCOVA analysis be employed to detect the areas of differences. The Experimental group and the Control group, were remarkably different at five variables (Sig. <.05). However, mean scores of content, vocabulary, and language use saw a significantly wider gap in favor of the Experimental group, revealed via the LSD test.

The findings and information divulged in the current study can have potential for affording program developers and language instructors a practical step to broaden the writing scholarship of students as to the current dynamics in the field of L2 writing in English. All the more so because this study mainly introduced a writing program in which writing is handled as social construction by attaching importance to discourse communities, as a situated act by fostering actual performance of writing through multiple genres, and as a rhetorical medium in which argumentation is applied. Weigle (2005) believes knowledge is not told but transformed with the help of well-rounded writing courses which act as a solution to foster the knowledge of topic, discourse, and genre. Therefore, one of the potential significance assumed by current study can lie in offering a writing plan for the college instructors which moves beyond training novice writers with a merely central focus on cognitive and linguistic aspects of writing by setting a threshold level in a linear process.

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