Adopting the ESP approach to Senior High School: Generating students' motivation through the development of writing skills

Η χρήση της διδασκαλίας της αγγλικής για ειδικούς σκοπούς στο Λύκειο: δημιουργώντας κίνητρα στους μαθητές μέσω της ανάπτυξης του γραπτού λόγου

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The present paper aims at illuminating the implications of adopting the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) approach to a class of 3rd-grade pre-adult learners who are learning English within the context of a Greek senior high school. The research's main purpose is to generate the particular learners' motivation; hence, the English course is linked with the Written Expression subject so that learners could upgrade their Greek writing skills for the forthcoming pan-Hellenic exams. Strictly speaking, the study proposes two English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP) lessons which adopt the genre-based approach to writing and aim at catering to learners' short-term needs. The research includes a combination of qualitative and quantitative data obtained from focus group interviews, classroom recordings and an evaluation questionnaire. According to the research findings, the majority of the students welcomed the idea and found the materials interesting and relevant to the target situation. Secondly, the materials managed to satisfy a great number of their needs and lacks in writing. Finally, adopting the genre-based approach to teaching writing proved more than effective as it achieved in raising learners' genre awareness by rendering them able to apply and distinguish pertinent features to each text type.

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Η παρούσα εργασία έχει ως στόχο να διερευνήσει τις συνέπειες από την χρήση της Διδασκαλίας της Αγγλικής Γλώσσας για Ειδικούς Σκοπούς (ESP) στους μαθητές της 3ης τάξης ενός ελληνικού δημοσίου Ενιαίου Λυκείου. Ο κύριος σκοπός της έρευνας είναι να δημιουργήσει κίνητρα στους συγκεκριμένους μαθητές, επομένως, το μάθημα των αγγλικών συνδέεται με το μάθημα της έκφρασης-έκθεσης ούτως ώστε οι μαθητές να μπορέσουν να αναβαθμίσουν τις γραπτές δεξιότητές τους στα ελληνικά για τις επερχόμενες πανελλαδικές εξετάσεις. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, η έρευνα προτείνει δυο μαθήματα γραπτής έκφρασης γενικού

ακαδημαϊκού σκοπού (EGAP) τα οποία υιοθετούν την διδασκαλία κειμενικών ειδών και αποβλέπουν στην κάλυψη των βραχυπρόθεσμων αναγκών των μαθητών. Η έρευνα περιλαμβάνει ένα συνδυασμό από ποιοτικά και ποσοτικά δεδομένα τα οποία αποκτήθηκαν από την ομαδικά εστιασμένη συνέντευξη, τις ηχογραφήσεις της διδασκαλίας στη τάξη και το ερωτηματολόγιο αξιολόγησης. Σύμφωνα με τα ερευνητικά αποτελέσματα, η πλειοψηφία των μαθητών επικρότησαν την ιδέα και θεώρησαν ότι το υλικό ήταν ενδιαφέρον και ανταποκρινόταν στον επιδιωκόμενο στόχο. Δεύτερον, το υλικό κατάφερε να ικανοποιήσει ένα μεγάλο μέρος των αναγκών και των ελλείψεων τους στην γραπτή έκφραση. Τέλος, η υιοθέτηση της διδασκαλίας κειμενικών ειδών αποδείχθηκε κάτι παραπάνω από αποτελεσματική διότι κατόρθωσε να αυξήσει την επίγνωση των μαθητών ως προς τα διάφορα είδη κειμένου καθιστώντας τους με αυτόν τον τρόπο ικανούς να εφαρμόζουν και να διακρίνουν τα συναφή χαρακτηριστικά του κάθε είδους.

1. Introduction

Recent trends in educational psychology have suggested the emergence of learner-centered curriculums that aim at catering to students' needs, wants and interests; thus, keeping their motivation levels high. In the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) this tendency was translated in the terms of ESP courses which go to great lengths to promote learner autonomy and learner-centeredness in the language classroom.

However, the teaching of English in Greek secondary education is a far cry from encouraging such practices as still retains a general-purpose orientation, totally disregarding learners' needs. The present study aspires to adopt the ESP approach to the particular context so as to generate pupils' motivation and give them a real reason for attending the course by combining the English course with Written Expression, a 'high profile' subject in senior high schools, and developing a number of writing lessons that will potentially assist them in ameliorating their writing skills in Greek for the pan-Hellenic exams.

2. Delineating the teaching context

The class that was used for the completion of the particular study is one of the four classes of the 3rd grade in the 1st senior high school of Edessa. It consists of 26 pupils, 15 girls and 11 boys, aged between 17 and 18 from all academic orientations. It is a heterogeneous class and different proficiency levels co-exist[1]. The teaching of English occurs under adverse conditions. The vast majority of the learners do not participate during lessons and either engages in discussion with their peers or is preoccupied with doing homework exercises for other subjects.

Taking into consideration Robinson's (1991) criteria, the course can hardly be considered as "goal-directed" and it has not been organized around needs analysis which would specify

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[1] The majority of the students has obtained a B2 level certificate, 7 students have been awarded a C1-C2 certificate whereas the rest of them either find themselves in B1 level or they exhibit no knowledge of English at all.

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what exactly it is that students have to do through the medium of English. Strictly speaking, learners seem as belonging in a situation where no obvious learning objective is envisaged, termed teaching English for no obvious reason (TENOR) (Abbot, 1981).

However, based on the assumption that nearly every teaching and learning situation can turn into an ESP one, further classification of the context needs to take place. According to Robinson's diagram (1991), the course constitutes an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) situation and falls into the Type 4 description of EAP situations around the world (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998) where the national language is used for the teaching of all subject courses whereas English is mainly used for ancillary reasons. In terms of specificity, the particular course can be defined as English for General Purposes (EGP) at the intermediate level focusing on the common core language with emphasis on specific skills holding position 2 in Dudley-Evans & St John's (1998) specificity continuum.

3. The research method

3.1. The purpose of the research

The research hereby was designed in an attempt to examine the implications of adopting the ESP approach to the students of the 3rd class of a senior high school. In this vein, the research questions emerged are the following:

- Is adopting the ESP approach to a class of pre-adults effective in generating their motivation?
- What are the specifications of the Written Expression subject that the English course should meet so as to cater for the learners' needs in academic writing for the end-of-the-year Pan-Hellenic exams?
- What are learners' needs and wants in writing in Greek and to what extent the existing ESP program catered to them?
- Is the genre approach to teaching writing effective in assisting students in their academic writing skills for the Pan-Hellenic exams?

The study followed the steps of ESP syllabus design which, according to Graves (1996), consist of: needs analysis, determination of goals and objectives, conceptualization of the content, materials design and evaluation. Firstly, a detailed examination of the target situation, the present curriculum for the Written Expression subject, was conducted so as to define the necessities of the Pan-Hellenic exams. Moreover, a research on students' needs regarding academic writing was undertaken via focus groups interviews. The information obtained from these analyses helped the researcher design two lessons tailored to the specific situation and group of learners. After the writing lessons had been taught and recorded, a questionnaire was designed and administered to the students in order to investigate the extent to which their writing needs have been addressed and, consequently, the lessons' effectiveness towards motivating them in attending the English subject with more eagerness.

3.2. Data collection

3.2.1. The focus group interview

The focus group interview was chosen as it can extensively investigate the educational needs of the participants, it is time- and cost-effective, participants are regarded and treated as

individuals rather than as mere numbers and it facilitates the exploration of new ideas and perceptions (Cohen & Manion, 1994). The focus group interview, used for the purposes of the research, is divided into five sections which seek information on learners' attitudes, present abilities, wants from the course, preferences in learning, target situation needs, lacks, strengths and weaknesses.

3.2.2. Recordings

In order to gather empirical material regarding the students' reactions and their performance during the teaching of the writing lessons, recording the teaching sessions seems to be more than crucial. The density and wealth of the collected data allow the researcher not only to better approximate the issues under question but also to capture aspects that otherwise would have gone unnoticed. Whatever happens in the classroom is recorded, details are spelled out simply by replaying or reviewing the audio recordings and a full account of the lesson is there for the taking (Richards & Lockhart, 1996).

3.2.3. The Evaluation Questionnaire

A questionnaire was administered to the particular students after the completion of the lessons aiming at the evaluation of the course. The questionnaire "enables teachers to collect a large amount of information relatively quickly about learners' preferences, attitudes, beliefs or motivation" (Richards and Lockhart, 1996, p. 10) in addition to being a fairly systematic, rigorous, focused and tightly controlled procedure that, more often than not, elicits reliable and valid data (Dornyei, 2003). The particular evaluative questionnaire is divided into four parts: materials/lessons' evaluation, learner motivation, lacks in the Written Expression in Greek and the genre-based approach in writing.

4. Presentation and analysis of results

4.1. Target Situation Analysis: The Written Expression subject

According to the curriculum provided by the Ministry of Education (10/88/Γ2/05-03-1999 Y.A., ΦΕΚ Β' 521), language is seen as a communicative product that is strongly linked to society; therefore, it should be taught in an active, interactive and communicative way. Additionally, learners come across and are expected to produce a variety of genres[2]; most importantly, though, learners are trained to express themselves having a specific audience and purpose in mind and raise an awareness of the various communicative settings as well as of the characteristics of the register that is required.

In pan-Hellenic exams, there are two sections that target at an overall assessment of the learners' language skills. Firstly, the section on reading, comprehending and writing requires students to read a text and answer questions regarding a) its content b) its structure and c) its use of language. Moreover, learners are asked to produce written discourse in the form of a summary based on the text that was given to them.

As far as the second section, learners are expected to produce a text, no more than 600 words, within a given context on a topic which has been taught during the academic year. Three criteria should be taken into consideration: a) the content b) the ways of expression

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[2] Essays, articles, formal and informal letters, diary entries, leaflets, newspaper columns, announcements, speeches and lectures

and c) the structure. Learners should aim at relating their thoughts and ideas to the topic, justifying their opinions based on arguments, developing the topic in depth, putting forward original ideas, expressing themselves in a clear and accurate way, using rich vocabulary, choosing the right register for the particular genre, complying with the morphosyntactic rules, using appropriate spelling and punctuation, following a sequence in the meanings to be expressed, creating cohesion and coherence on the paragraph level and writing the text in the given communicative context.

4.2. Learner's needs: The findings from the focus group interviews

A great number of students characterized the English course as uninteresting, boring and useless, having no actual reason to exist. Exploring the reason they feel this way, a lot of them raised the issue of having acquired certificates and their need to focus more on the subjects that are assessed in the Pan-Hellenic exams. On the contrary, others placed the responsibility on the teacher, whereas only in the last focus group the problem of different proficiency levels in the same class emerged (Table 1).

Feelings	Interview data
No reason to exist	○ *"It's the time when we do other things, exercises from other lessons. Basically, we shouldn't have had English this year, it should have been optional",* ○ *"We have the Pan-Hellenic exams and it doesn't seem so important, we don't give much attention"*
Blame the teacher	○ *"The teacher can't control the class, it's chaos",* ○ *"Sometimes the teacher is to blame, if you don't like the teacher, you may not want to attend the lesson at all"*
Different proficiency levels	○ *"In this class there are different levels, so one student that doesn't know English well may feel bad and one student that knows the language well may feel that he/she does not make any progress".*

Table 1: Feelings

Writing subskills	Interview data
Vocabulary skills	○ *"I'd like to learn to use richer vocabulary, a variety of words"* ○ *"I think if I knew and used rich vocabulary, I would write better"* ○ *"Maybe to be able to organize my writing logically, it should follow an order. We have to know where to put the ideas and in what order"*
Paragraph structure	○ *"I'd like to be able to write a more concise summary"* ○ *"I need to work on how to create good paragraphs; the ideas should follow a logical order, from the topic sentence to the examples".*

Table 2: Writing Subskills

Proceeding with what writing subskills they would like to improve by the end of the year, learners placed special emphasis on improving their vocabulary skills. Moreover, organising ideas logically in addition to constructing paragraphs effectively is something the students need to work on (Table 2).

As for the teaching of the writing skill, there was a broad consensus that writing instruction is to focus on the teaching of specific genres assessed in the exams and the majority of the learners supported the use of a model text and the drawing of an outline or plan prior to writing. Additionally, students would like the teacher to provide them with more ideas for topic development and discuss in depth the themes they are required to write. However, a rather surprising issue that arose during the interview was that learners do not practice writing in class and they are left alone to do the writing at home; hence, they insisted on practicing writing at school as they feel they need to gain experience (Table 3).

Writing instruction	*Interview data*
Model text-outline	o *"The teacher can bring us many model texts to see the words they use, how they are structured, the forms of reasoning they follow, in that way we could have an idea of what the exams ask".*
Topic development	o *"We need to talk about the topics before we write about them, to prepare the essay in class, to discuss ideas, the structure, the teacher could give us relevant words for the topic".*
Writing in class	o *"The teacher could write, show examples and ask us how we could syntax our ideas, correct our responses, we could create an article all together, not like take it home and do whatever you want. Because at home every student gets help".*
Interactive instruction	o *"The teacher could use an interactive board, write a piece of writing and ask students if they agree, disagree, ask for suggestions and not to hurry all the time, let's get over with".*
	o *"If it was possible to get in touch with other schools and see how those students write, to compare for example how a student in England or in other country writes an essay with how we write it", "To see how the others write so I can get some ideas".*

Table 3: Writing Instruction

The next question focused students' attention on the ways the English course could actually help them in improving their writing skills for the Written Expression subject. Not all learners saw the possibility of being benefited from such an idea and abruptly stated that English cannot help them in any way. Nevertheless, there was a great number of participants who welcomed the idea acknowledging the fact that there should be similarities in writing in both languages (Table 4).

Concerning the most challenging tasks the students encounter in the Pan-Hellenic exams, almost every focus group mentioned the summary part in addition to issues of cohesion and coherence (Table 5).

How English can help	Interview data
No help	○ *"The thing is that the essays we write for the Pan-Hellenic exams is of another level from that in English because the level of the proficiency, for example, corresponds to that of the 2nd class of Senior High School so the ideas and the ways of expression we use in English will not be sufficient for Greek"*
Similarities	○ *"I think writing introductions and conclusion is the same in both languages and also the techniques to follow in order to structure a text is again the same".*
	○ *"It would help to be aware of cohesion and coherence, as I guess a text that has continuity if we transfer it to Greek it will still have continuity"*
	○ *"Since we have plenty of time here we could practice how to develop a paragraph, techniques for example or how our text to have coherence and cohesion, some words maybe that can help us in Greek".*

Table 4: How English Can Help

Challenging tasks in exams	Interview data
Summary	○ *"To understand the text they give us and make a good summary is difficult for me, sometimes I don't include all the main points"*
	○ *"Most of the times, it is the summary that it's the most difficult but of course it depends on the text they give us"*
Means or persuasion	○ *"We have to be careful about the ways of persuasion we can use in a text. Probably, it depends on the text and what we have to write", "We need to use some form of persuasion in our texts and we need to be careful about it".*

Table 5: Challenging Tasks in Exams

Later, participants were asked to brainstorm topics that they will be required to write in the Pan-Hellenic exams. Several topics that emerged are: immigration, racism, environmental issues, fanaticism, human rights, arts and culture, religion and more precisely Messianism, violence, the phenomenon of bullying at schools, unemployment, homophobia, education, terrorism, health – nutrition and death penalty.

Finally, students were required to think of specific genres that could be addressed in the English course. Some of the responses included the article in the school's or community's newspaper, in a magazine or on the school's website taking the forms of for and against, compare and contrast, cause and effect, offering suggestions, giving examples or responding to an announcement. Other genres that were put forward were the speech either in the Youth Parliament or within the school context and the formal letter addressing or responding to someone in authority. What is more, the essay and the newspaper column were mentioned by numerous students.

5. Materials design

5.1. The summary

The first lesson revolves around writing a summary (Appendix I) of an original text which revolves around environmental issues. Relevant schemata about the summary are activated, students' metacognition skills are exercised and contextual analysis is performed. Examination and analysis of two model texts occurs and as one of them is a deliberate false provision, this can develop a more critical sense among the learners leading them to discover why a text may not be effective in the particular situation (Macbeth, 2010). The lexico-grammatical features of the summary are under scrutiny with learner autonomy being promoted as learners will eventually become able to notice and think about new situations with sophistication and strategic awareness (Bazerman, 1997). Learners jointly improve the false summary and independent construction of text follows. Next, learners focus attention on aspects that need special treatment through a peer evaluation and, obviously, this revising does not simply involve checking for language errors; however, global content and organization come to the spotlight (Widodo, 2006). Finally, students revise and redraft their summaries taking into account the peers' comments from the previous feedback session.

5.2. The problem-solution article

The second lesson stress the article's problem-solution structure as well as the typical language found in it (Appendix II). Learners, once again, recognize the fact that language occurs and is formed in a social context through the context analysis tasks. Relevant schemata from the Greek context are activated and learners are practicing their text analysis skills. The situation-problem-solution-evaluation pattern is made apparent whereas language issues are also practiced. The sample texts are treated again as a source of input and the teacher can scaffold for students the distinctive use of the language appropriate (Henry and Roseberry, 1998). Students don't just jump into writing but recognize the importance of framing the structure of the text in addition to becoming increasingly aware of the readers' needs, the social purposes and the linguistic features of the specific genre (Ahn, 2012). Lastly, individualization is overcome, students are trained to co-operate by checking each other's work (Wingrad, 1981) and the final draft is produced taking into consideration the partner's comments.

6. Revisiting the research questions

6.1. Is adopting the ESP approach to a class of pre-adults effective in generating their motivation?

The designed ESP course seemed to have had an impact on altering the students' stance towards English. As it was apparent from the actual teaching sessions, the majority of the learners in both classes engaged in the lessons and participated eagerly and willingly. The idea of linking the, according to students, meaningless English course with the Written Expression subject was more than welcomed and, ultimately, the English class worked towards the specific goal to assist learners in improving their writing skills for the pan-Hellenic exams. The findings from the questionnaire also contribute to the above conclusions (see Figure 1; Appendix IV). Learners unanimously responded that the whole learning experience was deemed positive and clearly stated that the English course took on a more meaningful character acknowledging that their immediate needs are being addressed and satisfied. According to Kiely (2009, p. 108), a positive experience that is

holistically satisfying has the capacity to "engage, motivate, generate effort and lead to desired outcomes". Thus, adopting the ESP approach to a general education class succeeded in turning the learners into active participants and rendering the learning and teaching procedure more learner-centered (Kaur, 2006).

6.2. What are the specifications of the Written Expression subject that the English course should meet so as to cater for the learners' needs in academic writing for the end-of-the-year Pan-Hellenic exams?

Communicative writing tasks are a sine qua none for the English subject and it is imperative that learners be involved in interaction with their potential audiences, achieve the defined communicative goal and produce texts that will ultimately reflect reality. Secondly, the English course ought to provide practice to a variety of genres and genre awareness activities need to be adopted with the students considering specific criteria for identifying and classifying the various text types.

Moreover, students in the Pan-Hellenic exams are to be engaged in writing academic discourse; hence, forming powerful arguments using the various means of persuasion is of the utmost importance. Paragraph development and the proper sequencing of thoughts is another point to consider and the English course should provide pupils with ample practice in devising and linking paragraphs so that a coherent body of a text to be created. Lastly, learners' summary skills ought to be exercised given that writing a summary constitutes a crucial academic ability and it is assessed in the first part of the examination.

6.3. What are learners' needs and wants in writing in Greek and to what extent the existing ESP program catered to them?

The NA findings showed a clear necessity for ameliorating their topic development skills as well as practicing the effective use of linking words. Paragraph development also emerged. Lastly, improvement in their summary skills was required. In other words, learners expressed a demand to critically analyse the original text, distinguish the main points from supporting ones, paraphrase the initial ideas and eventually be able to write an accurate summary. As far as the teaching of writing is concerned, an approach based on the genres that are assessed in the pan-Hellenic exams was extremely favoured with learners putting forward the analysis and scrutiny of model texts in terms of vocabulary, syntax, grammatical features and ideas. In addition, learners would like to draw an outline right before venturing into writing. Finally, pupils demanded that writing be performed in class more often; thus, giving them the chance to engage in practice and ameliorate their writing skills.

The results obtained from the evaluation questionnaire (see Table 6; Appendix III) showed that a significant number of learners' needs were addressed and satisfied by the two writing lessons. Learners admitted having been assisted in paragraph development and, more precisely, how to place their thoughts in order; thus, achieving a great level of cohesion. What is more, it seemed that vocabulary exercises were more than welcomed as students reported to have been made conscious as to the words and expressions each text type should include. Lastly, their genre awareness was reported to have been enhanced to a large degree with learners acknowledging the importance of conforming to the conventions of a particular text type.

6.4. Is the genre approach to teaching writing effective in assisting students in their academic writing skills for the Pan-Hellenic exams?

During the ESP lessons, the genre approach managed to focus students' attention on the lexical, grammatical and discourse choices that should be made so as communication to be accomplished (Shushua et al, 2009). The questionnaire data showed (see Table 7; Appendix V) that pupils were assisted in noticing the most salient features of both genres. More precisely, they became fully aware of the genre's internal organization and of the fact that features vary from genre to genre (Lee, 2012), noticed several discrepancies deliberately provided to them, successfully composed a cognitive map of each genres' inventories and appreciated the value of context, audience and purpose in writing effectively.

These results came in total harmony with Chaisiri's (2010) findings which stressed the positive attitudes of students having experienced genre-based writing lessons. Nevertheless, the learners refused to write an actual piece of writing; therefore, the researcher does not possess any tangible data confirming an actual improvement in their writing skills. What is clear, though, is that learners managed to be benefited from genre pedagogy in developing deep awareness of the genre's rhetorical structure and discourse, enhancing their autonomy levels as they gained control over language, as well as perceiving language as contextualized communication that occurs in an identifiable context (Amogne, 2013).

7. Concluding remarks

Overall, based on the results of the study, investigating and addressing target learners' needs led to enhanced motivation levels; thus, students escaped the TENOR situation and a real purpose for attending the English course was given to them. In other words, a thorough needs analysis of what the learners want and lack as well as an examination of the target situation where students will be using the English language constitute a prerequisite for a successful course. Secondly, since linking English with the Written Expression was highly welcomed, it is imperative that the teachers establish direct correlations with the particular subject and cater to the learners' short-term demands. Lastly, adopting the genre-based approach brought out considerable benefits concerning learners' writing skills. Therefore, it is advisable to expose learners to such practices that will ultimately make them genre aware through noticing and anticipating pertinent features or discrepancies.

To conclude, generating and enhancing learners' motivation in the 3rd class of senior high school presupposes the design of curricula and the adoption of practices aligned with students' target and learning needs. The English course ought to gradually withdraw from its general-purpose orientation and attain a more specific character that will ultimately trigger students' interest.

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Appendix I
Summary Task Sheets

Contextual Analysis

TASK 1:
What comes into your mind when you hear the word "**summary**"? What are the features that make a summary effective? Work with your partner for a minute and come up with a list of characteristics in your notebook that a good summary should include!!!

TASK 2:
Here is a list of the most important features of a summary:

> ✓ It uses an **objective** tone, comments on or evaluation of the original text are not included
> ✓ It mentions the **source** and the **writer** of the original text
> ✓ It points out the **thematic centre** of the original text
> ✓ It reproduces the text in a **brief** yet **clear** way
> ✓ It follows the **organizational pattern** of the **original text**
> ✓ It presents the **main ideas** of the text omitting unnecessary details and examples
> ✓ It **paraphrases the ideas** of the original text
> ✓ It is written for a **purpose** and addresses a **specific audience**
> ✓ It runs **smoothly** (we don't want a collection of sentences that do not flow!)
> ✓ It uses **reporting verbs**

    a) Compare your answers to the list above! What things did you include? What things did you miss?
    b) Is there anything else you would like to add to the particular list?

TASK 3:
Here is a task on summary writing along with the original text (text 1)! Read both of them and with your partner answer the questions below:

> You've recently come across an interesting article on climate change in http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/magazine/science-and-technology/climate-change-facing-future and you thought that it would be a great idea to write about it on your school's newspaper. Read the article and summarize it in no more than 100 words so that you can raise your peers' awareness about the consequences of this phenomenon.

    a) Who will read your summary?
    b) What is your purpose for writing?
    c) What is the channel of communication?
    d) What is your relationship with the readers? Have you got equal status?
    e) What style of language should you use? (formal, informal, neutral)
    f) What will be the subject matter of the summary?

TASK 4:
These are two summaries of the original text:
    a) Which, according to your opinion, is more appropriate for the particular task? Why? (Take into consideration your answers in the questions in task 3!)
    b) Look again at the features of a good summary in task 2! Which summary of the two appears to be more effective? What characteristics are missing from the "bad" summary?

> 1) Emma Douty in her article "Climate Change: Facing the Future" puts forward her concerns about the possible consequences climate change can have both on us and on the future generations to come. According to her, climate change is an undeniable fact and unless the earth's temperature stops to go up, the situation will get even worse. More specifically, the world will experience severe weather conditions in addition to the rising sea levels caused by the melting of the ice in the poles. As she claims, this could actually lead to the point that several places will be covered by water; thus, forcing people to search for other places to settle down. Towards the end of the article, she urges people to act immediately and start realizing the huge impact this phenomenon can have on their lives. Otherwise, as she humorously concludes, we could start finding a way to become mermaids!

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2) The article I have recently read and I would like to talk about discusses the phenomenon of climate change. Many people talk about the phenomenon of climate change, the fact that the earth is becoming warmer and that if we carry on living like that, the global temperatures will rise even more. The writer questions about the future of the planet and goes on to offer a rather implausible solution to the problem: people to move somewhere else such as the poles of the Arctic and Antarctica where the ice would have been melted and the climate would have been warmer. This devastation is rather scary and people should realize how their actions can have an impact on the future generations. So, we need to start thinking about the environment.

Modeling - Deconstructing

TASK 5: Reporting Verbs
a) A range of reporting verbs should be used in summary writing. However, some of them are objective while others seem to reveal the summary writer's personal attitude towards the original text and should not be used frequently. Look at the examples below:
- Marcia Barinaga in her article "Is There a Female Style in Science?" _alleges_ that men and women exhibit differences in the way they pursue science.
- Marcia Barinaga in her article "Is There a Female Style in Science?" _assumes_ that men and women exhibit differences in the way they pursue science.
b) Do these verbs allow the writer of the summary to convey his/her attitude?
c) Look at the table below. Can you identify which verbs are objective and which verbs tend to be evaluative?

Reporting Verbs

	Objective	Evaluative	Followed by that-clause
Describe			
Discuss			
State			
Present			
Explain			
Maintain			
Examine			
Affirm			
Argue			
Reveal			
Presume			
Assume			
Assert			
Contend			
Allege			
Claim			
Imply			

d) Look at the summary 1 again and try to identify the reporting verbs. Are they Objective or Evaluative? Add them to the table above!

e) A lot of reporting verbs in English are followed by a that-clause containing a subject and a verb. Look at the table above and tick the verbs that are followed by a that-clause.

TASK 6: The First Sentence in the Summary

    a)   Have a look at summary 1 again. How does the writer begin the summary? What tense has he/she used?

        Most summaries begin with a sentence containing two elements a) the source and b) the main idea. Here are some examples:

- In Anthony Tyson's article "Mapping Dark Matter with Gravitational Lenses,"_____(main idea)
- According to Yvonne Boskin in her article "Blue Whale Population May Be Increasing off California," _____(main idea)
- Young and Song's 1991 paper on fluoridation discusses_____(main topic)
- Author Peter Bernstein in his book *Capital Ideas* states /claims/argues/maintains that _____(main idea)
- Marcia Barinaga, in her article "Is There a Female Style in Science?" states/ argues/maintains/suggests/claims that_____(main idea)

    b)   Here are some introductory statements for a summary of the "Climate Change" text in Task 3. Which, if any, would you prefer to have written? Why? Edit the weaker sentences.

- Author Emma Douty in "Climate Chance: Facing the Future" states that how the world can be changed as a result of the rising temperatures.
- "Climate Chance: Facing the Future" by Emma Douty claims that changes in climate have led to a rising sea level.
- According to "Climate Chance: Facing the Future" Emma Douty suggests that the world's climate has been changed.
- Douty in "Climate Chance: Facing the Future" mentions that increasing temperatures will have an impact on the environment and the population.
- In Douty's "Climate Chance: Facing the Future", the global temperatures will rise even more if we carry living on the way we do.

<div align="center">Joint Construction</div>

TASK 7:

It's time to have a look at summary 2. Now that you now what a good summary should look like, how to begin your text and what reporting verbs to include, work with your partner and correct the false points.

<div align="center">Independent Construction</div>

TASK 8:

Here is another task for summary writing:

> You've recently come across an interesting article on recycling in http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/magazine/science-and-technology/climate-change-facing-future and you thought that it would be a great idea to write about it on your school's newspaper. Read the article and summarize it in no more than 100 words so that you can talk your peers into recycling.

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a)   Read the task and the text (text 2) and discuss these questions with the class:

- Who will read your summary?
- What is your purpose for writing?
- What is the channel of communication?
- What is your relationship with the readers? Have you got equal status?
- What style of language should you use?
- What will be the subject matter of the summary?

b)   The main points of the article have been summarized for you.

- ✓ Many people consider recycling too hard for them
- ✓ Countries have encouraged recycling by offering financial incentives to those who recycle
- ✓ A great variety of things can be recycled
- ✓ Recycling saves on energy and leads to decreased production
- ✓ Lack of recycling leads to increased landfill
- ✓ Lack of recycling causes deforestation
- ✓ Recycling can have a negative aspect as well
- ✓ A solution to the problem should be found

c)   Write your summary taking into account the context and pay great attention on how you will refer to the main idea of the text at the beginning of the summary and what reporting verbs you will use. Good luck!

Peer Evaluation

TASK 9:
It's time to exchange summaries with your partner! Spend 10 minutes to read and evaluate each other's texts and make some suggestions for improvement. While evaluating the summaries, consult the following checklist:

Evaluation Questions

→ Is the summary appropriate for the particular audience? (readers of the school newspaper, peers)
→ Is the summary appropriate for the particular context? (published in the school's newspaper)
→ Does it achieve its purpose? (to talk peers into recycling)
→ Does it involve all the main points raised in the article? (see list in task 8, b)
→ Are the reporting verbs used objective?
→ Are the source and the main idea mentioned at the beginning of the summary?
→ Does it follow the structure of the original text?
→ Does the writer of the summary use his/her own words as much as possible? (Paraphrasing)
→ Are the examples and the unnecessary details omitted?
→ Does the summary flow? (are the ideas and sentences connected?)

TASK 10:

Taking your partner's comments into account, revise your summary. Make sure you include your partner's suggestions for improvement and don't forget to pay attention to spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Note: Tasks 5 and 6 were adopted and adapted from: Swales, J. M. & C. B. Feak, (1994). *Academic Writing for Graduate Students – Essential Tasks and Skills*. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.

Appendix II
Problem-Solution Article
(For economy reasons only sample tasks are included)

Contextual Analysis Sample tasks

TASK 1
   a) What does the writer hope to achieve?
   b) Who will read it?
   c) What text type are you asked to write?
   d) What is the channel of communication?
   e) What is the writer's relationship with the readers? Is he/she of equal status?
   f) What style of language should you use?
   g) What is the subject matter discussed in the article?
   h) What pattern of organization should you follow?

TASK 2
   a) Create an outline of the article
   b) Make a list of the features you would include in your text so that it achieves its purpose.

TASK 3
   a) Compare articles with your outline.
   b) Discuss a checklist on the features of the article and compare it with your own lists.

Modeling – Deconstructing sample tasks

TASK 4:
Complete the flow charts below with relevant sentences from the articles:

Situation: Introduction of general topic, specific areas to be coved in the article

↓

Problem: Describe the problem (effect, consequences)

↓

Solution: Provide responses, offer evidence

↓

Evaluation/Conclusion: Which is perhaps the best response? What might be the end result of applying each response? Final statement
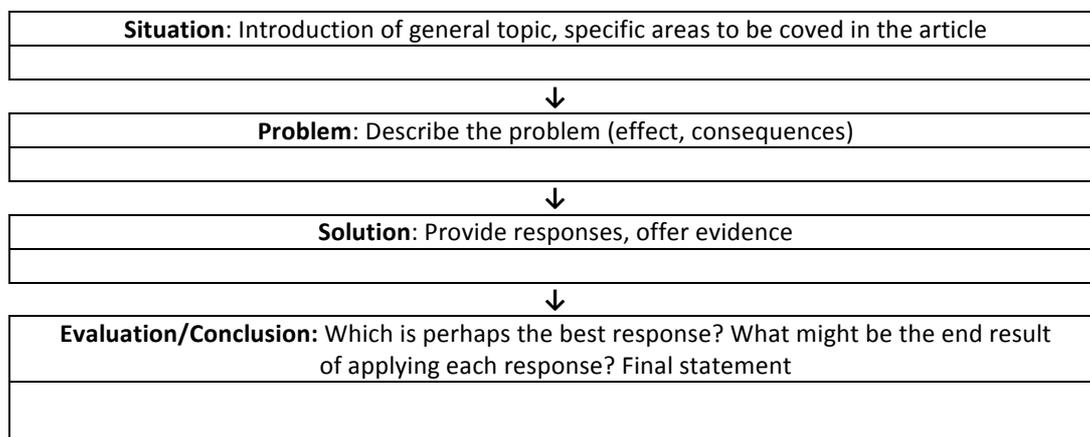
TASK 5:

The following problem – solution paragraphs have been jumbled. Work with your partner to place the sentences in order so that a coherent paragraph is formed following the pattern of: Situation, Problem, Solution, Evaluation.

TASK 6:

Read texts and notice how the problem and solutions are introduced and fill in the table below with the relevant expressions! Can you think of other ways to introduce a problem in an article? Add your ideas to the table:

Introducing a problem
•

Introducing solutions
•

Joint Construction

TASK 7:

You have been given the introduction and conclusion of the article; however, the body seems to be missing. Look at the notes below and with your partner construct the main body keeping in mind the things that we discussed above (pattern of organization, introduction of problem and solution, style, audience, features of the article etc):

Independent Construction

TASK 8:

Now it's the time for you to respond to the first task! Take on the role of the editor-in-chief in the school's newspaper and write an article on bullying for the next month's issue.

Peer Evaluation

TASK 9:

Exchange your text with your partner. Spend 15 minutes to read and evaluate each other's article and make some suggestions for improvement.

TASK 10:

Taking your partner's comments into account, revise your article. Make sure you include your partner's suggestions for improvement and don't forget to pay attention to spelling, punctuation and grammar. Good luck!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Appendix III
Materials/Lesson Evaluation

Materials / Lesson Evaluation	5= I strongly think so	4= I think so	3= I'm not sure	2= I don't think so	1= I don't think so at all
1) The material was interesting	13 (29%)	17 (38%)	9 (20%)	2 (4%)	4 (9%)
2) The instructions were explicit	25 (55%)	11 (24%)	5 (11%)	3 (8%)	1 (2%)
3) The writing steps were clear	17 (38%)	18 (40%)	8 (18%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)
4) The materials were relevant to my needs in writing in English	8 (18%)	14 (31%)	12 (27%)	9 (20%)	2 (4%)
5) The materials were relevant to my needs in writing in Greek	13 (29%)	16 (35%)	10 (22%)	3 (6%)	3 (6%)
6) The lessons gave me important information about writing the specific genres	6 (14%)	24 (53%)	11 (25%)	2 (4%)	2 (4%)
7) The lessons provided me with information I didn't know before	10 (22%)	8 (18%)	7 (16%)	8 (18%)	12 (26%)
8) The lessons addressed the specifications of the Pan-Hellenic exams in the Written Expression subject	11 (24%)	20 (44%)	6 (13%)	4 (9%)	4 (9%)
9) The tasks resembled those of the Pan-Hellenic exams in the Written Expression subject	14 (31%)	15 (33%)	16 (35%)	0	0
10) The topics chosen are often assessed in Pan-Hellenic exams in Written Expression subject	19 (42%)	9 (20%)	9 (20%)	8 (18%)	0
11) The tasks were appropriate regarding my level in English	12 (26%)	18 (40%)	9 (20%)	3 (7%)	3 (7%)
12) The materials promoted writing practice, not only theory	9 (20%)	17 (38%)	13 (29%)	6 (13%)	0

Table 6: Materials/Lesson Evaluation

Appendix IV
Learner Motivation

Learner Motivation

- ☐ 1) The English course became more meaningful
- ☐ 2) I found a real purpose for attending the English course
- ☐ 3) It was a positive learning experience
- ☐ 4) I want the English courser to be linked with the Written Expression subject
- ☐ 5) I really liked the way writing was taught
- ☐ 6) I think the English course will help me to perform better in the Pan-Hellenic exams in the Written Expression subject
- ☐ 7) I think I will be able to use what I learnt in the Greek context
- ☐ 8) I'm confident that after the lessons I can write an effective summary/article

Figure 1: Learner Motivation

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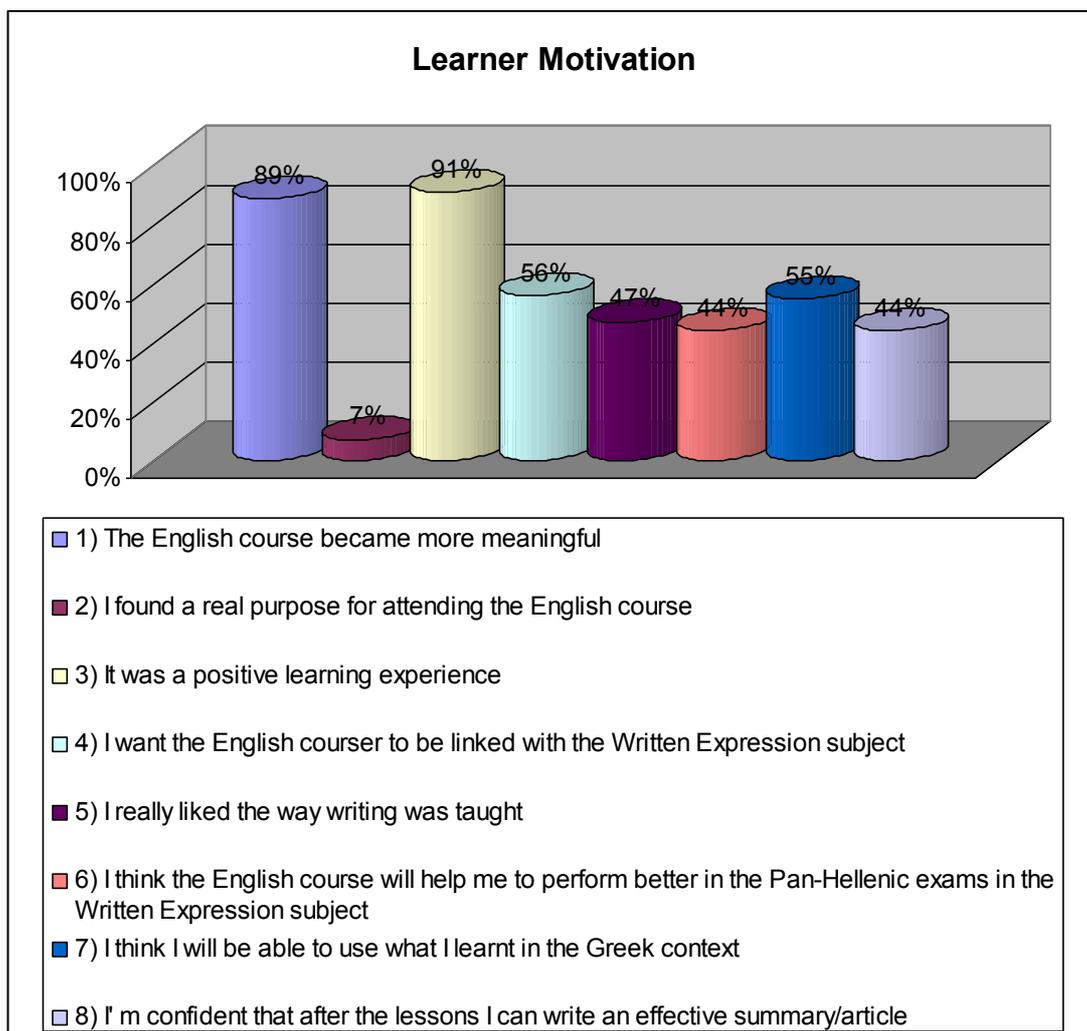
Appendix V
The Genre-based Approach in Teaching Writing

The Genre-based Approach in Writing	5= I strongly think so	4= I think so	3= I'm not sure	2= I don't think so	1= I don't think so at all
1) The genre approach helped me to improve my writing skills in English	7 (16%)	15 (33%)	11 (24%)	9 (20%)	3 (7%)
2) The genre approach helped me to improve my writing skills in Greek	6 (13%)	11 (25%)	14 (31%)	9 (20%)	5 (11%)
3) The genre approach helped me to understand the discourse structure of the summary/article	9 (20%)	20 (45%)	6 (13%)	8 (18%)	2 (4%)
4) The genre approach helped me to notice the typical vocabulary found in a summary/article	15 (32%)	18 (40%)	5 (11%)	5 (11%)	3 (6%)
5) The genre approach helped me to notice the typical grammar structures found in a summary/article	11 (25%)	18 (40%)	10 (22%)	2 (4%)	4 (9%)
6) The genre approach helped me to notice the typical features of the summary/article	11 (25%)	25 (55%)	5 (11%)	4 (9%)	0
7) Analyzing the model texts helped me a lot to write my own text	19 (42%)	15 (33%)	11 (25%)	0	0
8) The checklists were useful in reminding me the typical features that should be present when writing a summary/article	23 (51%)	13 (29%)	9 (20%)	0	0
9) The genre approach helped me to get autonomy over writing	9 (20%)	15 (33%)	13 (29%)	5 (11%)	3 (7%)

Table 7: The Genre-based Approach in Teaching Writing

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