Using Unconventional Genres For University Writing Courses

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Abstract: Mainstream university language courses in Hong Kong are mostly academic or discipline-related (e.g. Academic English, Workplace English, English for Specific Purposes). They aim to develop essential language skills for work and study. However, learning about these academic and workplace genres may not result in immediate improvement of writing ability, which requires continuous exposure and practice to develop. With the change of the university curriculum from three to four years starting from 2012, students will have more time to develop their language proficiency. The new curriculum will also be more inclusive of a variety of other non-language educational outcomes related to all-round development, such as lifelong learning, critical thinking skills, cultural understanding, global outlook, social responsibility and ethical conduct. There is a need to go beyond the conventional university writing genres with an academic or practical orientation to include other genres which encourage more personal, subjective or creative expressions. This paper discusses the rationale and benefits for using more unconventional journalistic and literary genres in designing elective writing courses for the new university language curriculum, with reference to two new courses being developed. Using these genres can facilitate the development of students' writing ability and general proficiency through a more content-based and integrated approach to language learning, and encourage students to develop an extensive reading habit. Data were collected from the process of piloting one of these courses to examine whether these unconventional genres help to scaffold the writing ability of students and cultivate their interest in writing.

Key Words: curriculum development; materials design; genre pedagogy; writing skills; extensive reading

Introduction

In most of the universities in Hong Kong where English is both a second language and a medium of instruction, much emphasis is often put on language courses to enhance students’ ability in using English. They are mostly Academic English (e.g. English for Academic Purposes (EAP)), or Workplace English/Discipline-related English courses (e.g. English for Specific Purposes (ESP)) with the aim to develop essential language skills for work and study. Usually, they have either an academic or practical orientation, covering writing genres/text-types such as academic essays, workplace reports or business correspondence. However, acquiring knowledge about these academic and workplace genres in English courses may not result in immediate improvement in language ability. Mastering these genres and writing them correctly, appropriately and expressively require continuous exposure and practice. It also requires the development of high language proficiency, with good ability to make use of a wide range of expressions and structures.

According to language learning theories, acquiring declarative knowledge of language forms may not immediately result in successful language production. Continuous opportunities to practise using the forms are required to proceduralise the knowledge before automatisation in language production is achieved (DeKeyser, 1998). Students need to take language courses not only for the purpose of learning about major academic and workplace genres, but also to be continuously exposed to the language in order to enhance their general proficiency. After taking the core university language courses, students may still need to take other language courses which do not repeat similar academic and workplace content in order to maintain learning motivation for developing their language ability.
Writing in the university curriculum

With the change of the Hong Kong university system from a three-year to a four-year curriculum, the development of generic and language skills has been receiving more attention in the curriculums of most of the universities. In the university where this study took place, the development of reading and writing skills, in particular, has become a major focus in the new curriculum. In response to the new developments, a number of reform initiatives have been implemented. One example is a common reading programme which is conducted by this university library to encourage first-year students to read a common book and share ideas in small-group discussion sessions. Another initiative is a writing-across-the-curriculum project which aims to integrate writing activities in courses of different subject areas.

The development of writing ability has also become more important with the increasingly inclusive curriculums in universities nowadays. Aside from learning about their own subjects and developing good language skills, university students are also expected to attain a wide array of non-language generic learning outcomes such as all-round development, creativity, sense of ethical and social responsibility, cultural understanding and global outlook (The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, 2013). Writing has an important role to play in facilitating the attainment of these learning outcomes. As a means of communication and presentation through effective use of language, writing involves inquiry, discovery and meaning-making (Hillocks, 1995). It is closely related to the dialectical skills of interaction and discussion (Vygotsky, 1978), which can facilitate the development of critical thinking – an essential skill for university studies.

Writing, in particular, is a core ability that students need to develop in order to attain high academic performance. As one of the core language production skills, it is more often featured in academic assessments compared to speaking. Written papers, reports and examinations are often the mainstay for universities to evaluate the achievements of their students. As an integrated approach is usually adopted in current practice for teaching and learning English, the development of writing skills is often connected to the development of the other core language skills. It is most closely related to the development of reading skills, as the exposure to reading materials helps students to gradually acquire the language structures and expressions they need to use in writing. Some researchers even believe that reading is the backbone for the development of language proficiency. According to Krashen’s Input Hypothesis (1985), being continuously exposed to “comprehensible input” in reading which contains structures that are a little beyond the learner’s current level of competence facilitates gradual language development.

In response to the changing needs of the new curriculum, Hong Kong Polytechnic University Language Centre has introduced a number of new courses to enhance students’ language skills, aside from revamping the conventional Academic English courses. One of these is an advanced reading and writing course which targets advanced English learners who have a relatively higher language proficiency than the average students and who have completed the required EAP course for all the first year students of the university.

The next section will discuss current approaches to university writing. This will form the basis for exploring the rationale for using unconventional genres such as literary and journalistic writing in designing the reading and writing course launched in the first semester of 2012-13.

Current approaches to teaching writing

The process approach has been a popular approach for teaching second language writing in the past two to three decades. This approach emphasises the importance of the writing process over the writing product. Learners are expected to engage in the various stages of planning, drafting, editing and revising their writing for continuous improvement (Seow, 2002). It is often believed that this inductive and learner-centred process of discovery and reformulation will help learners develop their writing skills gradually. In recent years, some researchers and practitioners have questioned the adequacy of this approach in helping learners to develop their writing ability. Hyland (2003), for example, believes that the process approach over-emphasises the writer’s internal cognitive processes and neglect the underlying social contexts for effective written communication.

To redress these inadequacies in facilitating the development of writing ability, a genre approach has been proposed for teaching writing. As defined by Swales (1990), an early researcher on genre pedagogy, a genre comprises a class of communicative events, where participants share the same set of communicative purposes within a discourse community. Examples of a genre exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience. Learning about the special features of different genres helps students to understand the social and cultural contexts in which genres occur for making appropriate linguistic choices in their writing.

With reference to Halliday’s (1985) ideas on field, tenor and mode, Macken-Horarik (2002) stresses the importance of context in communication and in language production, and the need to use genre-
Advocates of genre pedagogy believe that learning should be based on explicit awareness of language, rather than through experimentation and explanation; teachers need to provide students with opportunities to develop their writing skills through analyzing ‘expert’ texts which serve as models (Hyland, 2003). Using writing models helps to support the development of writing skills making use of scaffolding strategies, when the teacher provides temporary assistance to learners with a view to helping them develop the abilities to write independently later. Through a process of “gradual approximation” described by Widdowson (1978, 91-93), involving the provision of a language model and a communicative context to support language development, the teacher can guide the learners to understand and create new texts based on sample texts. For the millennial students of today who are often exposed to writings of varying styles and qualities and may feel confused about standards, deductive instruction or guidance for writing development based on explicit models is likely to be beneficial.

Among the genres that can be exploited are the more unconventional journalistic and literary genres. The benefits of using these in the teaching materials for the reading and writing course will be discussed in the following section.

**Using journalistic and literary genres in language courses**

Two major types of unconventional genres have been used in the course materials: literary and journalistic genres. Literary writing is used mainly to arouse students’ interest in extensive reading by exposing them to common literary genres like short poems and fictional writing (e.g. short stories and extracts from novels). Journalistic writing, such as feature articles, is used to support students’ writing development. Students are exposed to various types of writing models and guided to analyse different strategies for use in writing their own feature article.

Journalistic and literary writings are more often used in courses which specifically focus on English literature or journalism. They are less often employed in language enhancement courses which aim to develop students’ language skills for work and study. The type of expressive writing strategies used in both journalistic and literary writing are often less formal and more personal and creative compared to the more factual and objective writing strategies usually employed in academic writing. These expressive writing strategies can help to enrich the use of vocabulary and language structures and cultivate students’ interest in reading and writing. These in turn can support students’ long-term language development to achieve higher competence for work and study.

Journalistic writing, especially the feature article, receives particular attention in this course, as students are introduced to different types of feature articles and they need to write a feature article making use of strategies employed in the sample articles for one of the assessments. Although the writing style of feature articles is not as formal as that of academic writing, it is often based on facts and actual experience, and the use of expository and discursive strategies are similar to those often used in academic writing. As a type of content-based writing, it also provides opportunities and meaningful contexts for students to practise and consolidate the skills they have learned previously in the more conventional university language courses.

The feature article is also a suitable genre for achieving non-language learning outcomes advocated in the present-day inclusive university curriculums, such as all-round development, creativity, sense of ethical and social responsibility, cultural understanding and global outlook (The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, 2013). The need to analyse and imitate models of writing may stimulate students’ interest in extensive reading of different feature articles, which cover a wide array of topics and employ different types of presentation formats and writing styles. As suggested by Garrison (2010), feature articles may vary from the more descriptive and personal human interest stories, personality sketches and profiles, to the more factual and objective travel writing, how-to-do-it articles, and the more technical and specialised features.

The following section will give a brief description of design of the new reading and writing course which makes use of these unconventional genres. The methods for collecting data from piloting the course on two classes of first-year students will also be presented.

**Course description and data collection**

The reading and writing course covers three major focuses, extensive reading, critical reading and expressive writing. Literary and journalistic writing materials are used throughout the course, especially for the extensive reading and expressive writing focuses.
Sample feature articles from popular general interest magazines such as Time, Newsweek and National Geographic are used as writing models for students to analyse and imitate. Activities are designed for guiding students to write different parts of the feature article, such as the title, the introductory and closing paragraphs, and the body paragraphs. Relevant sample articles are used to illustrate the following types of text organisation and writing strategies.

A. General principles of text organization such as narration, description, exposition, argumentation
B. Common types of analytical or expository writing strategies such as using facts and statistics, reference to other sources, definition, comparison and contrast, cause and effect, and examples
C. Creative writing strategies making use of literary and rhetorical devices, such as simile, metaphor, pun and anecdote.

To find out whether the materials suit the needs and interests of the students, a small-scale action research study was conducted on two first-year classes of a total of 38 students. Data from the implementation of the course were collected from

- students’ written work for practice
- their graded assignments
- their feedback from a questionnaire survey
- field notes taken from observation of their performance and responses in classes and the writing tutorial.

Findings and discussion

A. Observation of performance and writing analysis

The following analysis will examine students’ participation and performance in their in-class and out-of-class writing practice and assessment in three areas: the degree of engagement and interest students have shown in participating in the writing activities; evidence of learning from writing models in their written work; and their ability in reflecting on and improving their own writing.

(a) Engaging participation

Students’ practice and performance demonstrated their engagement and participation throughout the course. The following are three major types of practice and activities they have accomplished. These do not contribute to course grades but are mainly voluntary contributions to class activities or additional practice students do outside of class.

- Class writing practice (e.g. picture captions and descriptions)
- Additional writing practice (short writing practice in response to teachers’ prompts, e.g. limericks; paragraph writing practice on e-learn platform, which is an online learning platform providing supplementary learning resources for students to carry out further practice on their own or according to the instructions of the teacher)

• Extensive reading on e-learn to prepare for sharing sessions of around 20 minutes, for which each small group of two to three students needs to give a short presentation and lead a class discussion on some reading materials.

Students wrote short interesting and creative pieces of writing in the class writing activities. One example is the picture captions and descriptions they wrote in small groups for one of the sample feature articles, ‘Time for a Sea Change’. The captions and descriptions are relevant to the pictures and the article, although with different focuses compared to the original captions and descriptions. Two examples of students’ writing are included in Appendix 1. Students’ writing in Example A provides less factual detail compared to the original version, but it captures the gist of the issue and conveys the impact of the problem clearly. Example B also conveys the main focus of the photo well. Writing a caption from the perspective of the fish rather than that of the author deviates from the approach of the original version, but it demonstrates the students’ creativity and autonomy in writing feature articles.

Aside from class activities, a small number of students participated in the e-learn activities put on the e-learn platform for students’ voluntary practice, or they did additional writing in response to the teachers prompts for additional practice. For example, one student wrote an ending for the science fiction short story written by Phillip K. Dick, and another student wrote a limerick (Appendix 2). These additional practice works also demonstrate interest and creativity. While the ending of the short story follows the original story smoothly and logically, the limerick expresses clear and meaningful ideas following the rhyme scheme used in the sample limericks the student read on the e-learn platform.

(b) Modelling on writing samples

Students’ works also demonstrate evidence of following models according to the genre pedagogy of scaffolding students’ writing ability (Hyland, 2003). In both the e-learn writing activities and the feature article assessment, there is evidence of influence by the writing models provided in the course. Students’ writing clearly demonstrates attempts to model on the writing skills used in the sample articles the teacher analysed with them. For
example, after they learnt about creative writing strategies such as the use of similes and metaphors, student were asked to use at least one metaphor in writing a paragraph of a feature article. They were given details in the paragraph to re-construct the paragraph in their own language. After they completed the task, they were asked to compare their paragraph with the original paragraph to analyse the writing techniques. Appendix 3 gives examples of students’ writing. Although the metaphors they used may not be as vivid and appropriate as the ones used in the original feature articles, they suit the contexts of the writing and convey the main ideas quite clearly.

Another example is writing the leads (introductory paragraphs of feature articles) which often include narrative and descriptive details different from the largely expository or discursive introductory paragraphs they have often written for academic essays. Appendix 4 includes two examples of leads for articles. These are based on students' own choice of topic for the feature article writing assessment. They are quite similar to the writing style of the lead for the sample article, 'Time for a Sea Change', in putting more emphasis on narrative and descriptive writing instead of expository or discursive writing.

(c) Critical reflection and improvement on writing draft
To provide scaffolding for writing improvement, the course requires students to attend a tutorial for their writing draft. With the help of a tutorial guidance sheet, students in the two pilot classes reflected on their own writing at the beginning of the tutorial, focusing on the areas of language, content and organization. They had to refer to their strengths and weaknesses in the three areas, and give examples of language problems that might occur in their article.

Most of the students could suggest at least one or two problems in the three areas similar to what the teacher had identified in their writing, such as:

- The content of my essay is quite rich, but some of the paragraphs are not well-organised.
- My article looks like an academic essay; it does not seem very special or interesting.
- My draft is not complete; I am not sure how I can develop my ideas further.
- My ideas are quite well-organised, but I am not sure if have enough ideas for the whole article.
- I have not used a good range of vocabulary in my article.
- There may be quite a number of tense mistakes in my article.

They were also able to ask pertinent questions which could help to further improve their writing. Examples of these questions are:

- Is there sufficient content for my article?
- My ideas do not seem too special. How can I further enrich the content of my article?
- My feature article looks like an expository academic essay. Is this acceptable for this assessment?
- How can I improve the structure/organization of my article?
- Are my sub-headings suitable? Do they help to better structure my article?
- How can I make my article look more creative?

Students were also able to improve their writing by following prompts or suggestions from the teacher (both verbal and written) for improving the language, content and organization of their writing. Appendix 5 gives examples of improved writing compared to their original writing. Improvements in areas of language, content and organization were evident. For example, in Example A, a verb is added to improve grammar; more appropriate and precise words are used to convey the intended meaning; distracting words and ideas not focusing on the topic are deleted. In Example B, more information to contextualise the topic is given by moving insufficiently discussed ideas at the end of the introductory paragraph to another paragraph for further elaboration.

B. Student feedback from questionnaire survey
Section A
Students’ feedback from a questionnaire survey on the course shows their views regarding the course in various aspects of interest and usefulness. In section A of the questionnaire, students were asked to indicate the extent that they agree with the statement regarding five areas on a Likert scale of 1 to 5. The following are the average scores for the five investigated areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investigated areas</th>
<th>Relevant questions</th>
<th>Average scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feedback &amp; tutorial</td>
<td>Q.9, 10</td>
<td>4.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensive reading</td>
<td>Q.12, 13</td>
<td>3.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usefulness of skills learned</td>
<td>Q.1, 3, 4, 5, 11</td>
<td>3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in writing</td>
<td>Q.2, 6, 7, 8</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web work</td>
<td>Q.14, 15</td>
<td>2.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using unconventional genres for university writing courses
In general, the scores show fairly positive response in all the five areas. The areas with the closest scores are interest in writing, usefulness of skills learned and attitude towards extensive reading, which are all above 3.6. While students’ attitude towards the tutorial and the teacher’s feedback on their writing drafts is most positive with the highest score of 4.23, they did not seem to be too enthusiastic about the web work activities, which have the lowest score of 2.98.

Section B
Students’ responses to the open-ended questions in section B of the survey give details relating to students’ perceptions of interest and usefulness about different aspects of the course.

The following are the major factors concerning why they consider the course as interesting and useful:

- They like the course because it is different from the formal academic English course they have taken previously
- They like extensive reading as they can be exposed to different genres which they have not learned before
- The course (e.g. the feature article writing assignment) allows more personal and creative expression
- They enjoy learning about and writing feature articles as they are different from academic essays (not so formal)
- They learn about different types of writing skills and strategies, e.g. simile and metaphor (more creative)

Activities they enjoyed most

- The task on writing captions (creative) and descriptions for pictures in a feature article
- Sharing session to research for reading texts they enjoy and to listen to their classmates’ presentations
- Guessing the titles of feature articles
- Writing short paragraphs for posting to a blog or forum: e.g. writing the lead for a feature article
- Analysing different genres in class
- Writing online feedback in class: e.g. to respond to limericks written by teacher and classmates; to respond to classmates’ writing (e.g. paragraphs for feature articles)

Reasons why they liked extensive reading

- Exposure to other genres different from academic essays
- Reading texts are good models to demonstrate different language features
- Can learn creative writing strategies and vocabulary in order to write better pieces

Reasons why they liked the tutorial

- Face-to-face interaction with the teacher and individual attention from the teacher
- Useful feedback/advice for improving the draft
- Able to ask relevant questions for improving their writing skills
- Analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of writing helps to develop awareness and improve writing skills

Reasons why they did not do much web work on their own

- In-class writing and sharing of writing on the web are already sufficient
- Too busy to do additional voluntary practice due to their heavy workload
- Not very useful activities
- Web work can feature more interesting activities, e.g. include more visual and more interactive material (provide answers for self-access and more interaction with teacher, and indicate the progress or completion of activities)
- Technical problems, e.g. system is not user-friendly

Their suggestions for further improvement

- Include a wider variety of reading texts (e.g. feature articles) to suit different interests (e.g. more classic, more contemporary texts)
- Improve the assessments, e.g. for Assessment 2 so that they know more clearly what to do
- Improvement of the e-platform to make it more user-friendly and interactive

Discussion

Data from this study show that the use of the unconventional genres of journalistic and literary writing helps to engage students’ interest in extensive reading of works different from the formal academic writing they are expected to learn well at university. Writing on topics of their own choice, while making use of more personal and creative writing strategies, is also motivating. So is the opportunity to share one another’s works and ideas in class and on the e-learn platform. Students also perceive the writing skills they learn from these unconventional genres as useful for their day-to-day communication and future writing development. They consider analysing writing models as beneficial for developing their writing skills. Scaffolding of writing development in a tutorial where they can discuss their writing draft with the teacher face-to-face and
individually is particularly useful.

Students also pointed out the problems in the e-learn system of delivering the web work materials. The interface design needs to be more interactive and user-friendly. More materials which better suit students’ interest can also be included.

**Conclusion**

The experience of piloting the new writing course shows that unconventional genres like literary writing and feature articles can be used beneficially in language courses for university students. Students enjoy learning about a variety of different genres different from formal academic writing. They find that the feature article allows more personal and creative expression which is closer to communication in their daily life. It also helps them enrich their vocabulary and language structures which are useful for their future writing development. Learning from these genres also encourage students to develop their interest in reading extensively.

Students’ writing performance also shows the benefits of modelling on sample feature articles. They are able to apply the creative writing strategies they have learned in their writing and they enjoy the experience of writing less formally and more personally. Reflecting on their own writing and discussing their writing drafts with the teacher also help to scaffold their development of writing skills. The process and genre approaches can be best used complementarily to facilitate writing development.

Well-designed e-learn platforms have a potential to facilitate the sharing of students’ works and learning from writing models, especially if they are user-friendly and interactive. Students can be both readers and writers in sharing their own writing or responding to others’ work. This will help to cultivate students' interest in reading and discussing their works and to sustain their long-term language development. However, technical problems need to be overcome and the design of activities needs to be improved in order to provide a more favourable environment for students to share their works conveniently.

**Acknowledgements**

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**References**


**Appendix 1: Samples of students’ writing on caption and description activity**

**Example A**

Caption: High-level fish for high-level people only

Description: The seafood deficit keeps worsening. If the situation continues, only the wealthy can enjoy salmon and tuna which are at the top level of food chain while the poor have no choice at all. The problem should be solved immediately.

**Original caption and description for Example A**

Caption: What We Eat makes a Difference

Description: A top predator requires exponentially more energy to survive than does a fish at a lower level of the food chain. When wealthy nations catch or buy top predators, they increase their impact on the ocean compared with poor nations, which tend to eat smaller fish.


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**Example B**

Caption: Keep us alive.

Description: The workers are spraying water into the fishing net to keep fishes fresh and alive.

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The wub stopped breathing, with its eyes remained silent. He numbly watched the wub shot and dragged away. While this is going on, Peterson justed seemed to have guessed that a successful business owner like Zhou is in fact, a philosopher rather than live down-to-earth can never make a difference in the world. Come with us and enjoy our meal!” The captain walked out of the door while speaking.

Example B: Limerick in response to reading on e-learn and prompts from the teacher

I've been left completely alone,
With a smart but lifeless phone.
All my friends are separated away from me,
Leaving my heart drowning in the sea.
How happy I am now to be back "home".

Appendix 3  Use of metaphor (underlined in the paragraphs below)

Example A

Today, Zhou is about 27 years old (he doesn't know for sure). Using the name Huang Jie, Zhou is now an entrepreneur in Lanzhou. He gains profits through buying building materials from mines on the Tibetan Plateau in West China and selling them to the east coast of China for construction projects. He pushes the steps of China's fast-developing economy greatly, but who has ever thought that he was the name Huang Jie, Zhou is now an entrepreneur in Lanzhou. He gains profits through buying building materials from mines on the Tibetan Plateau in West China and selling them to the east coast of China for construction projects. He pushes the steps of China's fast-developing economy greatly, but who has ever thought that he was one of the victims of Chinese kidnapped children who were sold to unknown families? As a severe tragedy in China, the kidnapping phenomenon is a result of China's moving towards modernity.

Example B

Today, Zhou is about 27 years old (he doesn't know for sure), using the name Huang Jie. He works as an entrepreneur in Lanzhou, a city in Western China, purchasing building materials such as granite and marble from mines on the Tibetan Plateau and supplying them to projects along the East coast. His business contributed to the adenalizing of the country's fast-developing economy. Who would have guessed that a successful business owner like Zhou is in fact, one of the numerous victims of kidnapping- he was abducted and sold to unknown families, leaving his childhood an irrecoverable wound? Not only is the phenomenon of kidnapped children a tragedy, it is a part of China's development as it moves towards modernity as well.
In front of the mirror, here is a couple. The young lady is posing in front of the mirror and her husband, feeling pleased with her beautiful slender figure. She is planning to have the further stage of slimming diet in order to lose weight. Besides her, the young man was sitting with his upper body naked. He seems to be appreciating with his strong arms and strapping upper body. Both of them consider themselves as healthy. Is this really true? In our society, health has become one of the major concerns of the general citizens. Exercise, which easy to be performed becomes the major tool of keeping fit. However, with exaggerated advertisements from the commercial sector, people seemed to have a poor understanding of health, which leads them to have wrong plans of exercise. For example, the concept of “slim beauty” is embedded to citizens’ mind. In the following, the importance of exercise to people with different body build will be illustrated.

After our graduation, we have to find a job to earn our living. Everybody wants the “best job”, but everyone would have his own definition of a “best job”. A best job can be a job with very high salary, or a job that satisfies your dreams. You may also find a job that is unique, or a job that you can make quick cash. In Australia, there is the “Best Jobs in the World” competition for people from all around the world to compete for 6 dream jobs. Why are these jobs called the “best jobs”? That is because they have big difference with our “usual jobs” in our society. For most of the ordinary jobs like in the commercial sector or industrial sector, they are repetitive work and require working indoors like inside offices which are usually full of stress and pressure, either from peers and superiors. However, the six “best jobs” requires the employee to go to different places to seek for discoveries or interesting facts. The employees’ jobs are to gather what they have seen that day and then upload and share their joy to blogs and social networking websites, so as to promote different sceneries to foreigners to attract them to travel to Australia. This also means that they are paid to travel and enjoy their lives while doing some comparatively easier jobs.

The topic is better contextualized by more elaboration concerning why the competition is attractive. This is achieved by adding another paragraph after the introduction to give more information about the competition. Unnecessary details in the first draft were deleted while main ideas to give further information about the competition are added to the revised draft.

About the author

Hazel L. W. Chiu teaches language courses at the English Language Centre, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Her professional/research interests include reading and writing, grammar teaching and learning, task-based language teaching, the use of language arts materials for language teaching, and independent language learning. She has published articles on extensive reading, university writing and independent language learning.