

## **ENHANCING STUDENTS' WRITING ABILITY IN LIBERAL STUDIES BY SUBJECT-SPECIFIC GENRE TEACHING**

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This paper aims at exploring the effectiveness of subject specific genre teaching to enhance students' writing ability in the subject of Liberal Studies (LS), which is one of the four compulsory subjects in the New Senior Secondary (NSS) Curriculum in Hong Kong since 2009. Based on Functional Linguistics (Halliday, 1994) and Genre theory (Martin, 1999), a research team lead by the presenter previously identified major genres in the subject and their characteristic linguistic features that students are expected to master. Based on the above research finding, the research team conducted genre teaching in three schools to enhance students' writing skills in Liberal Studies. This paper reports the strategies of the genre pedagogy and the outcomes of the genre based teaching by class observation, interview and students' text analysis. The study is part of a series of research on subject-specific genres across the secondary curriculum (Shum, 2006). The findings will have important implications for enhancing secondary students' mastery of the subject, in particular, their competence in expressing concepts and ideas. It will also throw light on issues related to teacher training and student high order thinking skills, which are essential components of the current education reform.