

An Overview of Genre Based Approach in Efl Writing Class

Dina Merris Maya Sari

STKIP PGRI Sidoarjo, email: merrisdina1@gmail.com

Abstract

Writing, as an English skill, encourages the students to interrogate one's interpretations of others' utterances as well as of one's own personal experiences and beliefs in order to add to the ongoing dialogue in some way that enriches the community's understanding of the relevant area of experience. This study aimed at developing some writing skills for second semester of English Education Students. The students are not enough well at writing. As a result, their writing skills are weak. Consequently, they develop a negative attitude towards writing. They need to be trained in the skill of writing and there is a direct need to use a genre-based approach to writing content. The study adopted the qualitative research. The instruction took place in the second semester of the academic year 2018/2019. The present study provided evidence for the implementation of using genre-based approach in developing students' writing performance. Further, the study highlighted the advantages of using genre-based approach in developing writing skills.

Keywords : *genre based approach, writing skills*

INTRODUCTION

English is still a foreign language for students in Indonesia, which until now the learning process is still ongoing (Sari, 2019). Writing for EFL students is simply difficult matter, especially when the students' English competence is not very well developed. It also faced by the students of university who learn English as foreign language (Sari, 2019). Learning and difficulties in writing different types of texts may come from the fact that writers have to understand the linguistic features of these different text types (Ahn, 2012). The practitioner in foreign language education should find any possible solution in delivering the best teaching methods and strategies in teaching English as a foreign language (Sari, 2016). It makes researchers to explore ideas and make them be encourages thinking and learning. When thought is written down, the ideas can be examined and changed.

In teaching and learning writing, there are four approaches such as: product approach, process approach, genre based approach, process and genre based approach.

The product approach is a traditional approach in teaching writing. In this approach, the teacher provide with a model and the students typically encouraged to mimic it, in order

to produce a similar product. The students are normally told to write an essay using the product approach, then the students are imitating a given pattern by the teacher (Rusinovci, 2015). The objective of the product approach is on the written product. The focus of such writing approach is not on how the student should approach or see the process of writing. Writing itself is viewed as mainly concerned with the knowledge about the structure of language, and writing development is mainly the result of the imitation input, in the form of texts provided by the teacher (Badger & White, 2000). The approach is considered as teacher-centered, as each teacher becomes the arbiter of the models used.

The process approach focuses more on using techniques such as brainstorming, exploring ideas, peer editing, and rewriting. a genre based approach depends on the type of the texts that the students write. The process approach does have a major impact on understanding the nature of writing and the way writing is taught (Hyland, 2003). This sequence of activities typically occurs on four stages, they are: “pre-writing, composing/ drafting, revising, and editing” (Badger & White, 2000). Prewriting is the gathering phase of idea. Drafting is the process of writing a rough outline of what will be addressed. The multipledraft process thus consists of: generating ideas (pre-writing); writing a first draft with an emphasis on content (to discover meaning/author’s ideas); second and third (an possibly more) drafts to revise ideas and communication of those ideas. The process approach is thus learner-centered. The narrow focus of the process approach seems to be on the skills and processes of writing in the classroom itself. And as a result fails to take into account the social and cultural aspects that have an impact on different kinds of writing (Atkinson, 2003).

On the other hand, in the genre based approach, the knowledge of language is intimately attached to a social purpose. It more focuses on the viewpoint of the reader rather than on that of the writer. Writing is mostly seemed as the students’ reproduction of the text based on the genre offered by the teacher. It is also believed that the learning takes place through imitation and exploration of different kinds of models. Accordingly, the students should be exposed to many examples of the same genre to develop their ability to write a particular genre. The students can detect the specialized configurations of that genre through exposure to similar text. And they also can activate their memories of prior reading or writing experiences whenever they encounter the task of creating a new piece in a familiar genre.

The genre based approach focuses on enhancing the students’ awareness of the different ways of organising information in writing. It could be done by discussing the distinctive features of different purposeful texts. The main aim of genre based approach is to use text analysis to enable students to understand and control the conventions and discourses of the

students' discipline (Wingate, 2012). Genre is a process of communication which has a certain goal (goal oriented) for its members in a certain event of communication due to certain social context. Consequently, the different of social context then, tends to lead to the different genre (Dirgeyasa, 2016).

Otherwise, in genre based approach, writing style means how something is written. The words that are used and the way the information is organized. The purpose and focus of genre writing is not only to enable the writer to write, but it focuses also the writer writes to pursue a certain goal. For example, how to describe, how to report, how to retell, how something is done or how something is carried out, etc. In this case, the writers need to use a certain social convention (communicative purpose), linguistic features (language feature), and rhetoric structure of the text (generic structure). The characteristics of genre-based approach in writing consists of a) certain communicative purpose, b) certain rethorical structure or generic structure and c) certain linguistic feature.

The term 'cyclic strategic' to define and stages of teaching and learning writing through genre based approach (Chaisiri, 2010). They also propose three stages which must be followed and implemented during the teaching and learning process. Those three stages on teaching learning process through genre based approach are as follows: a) modeling a text, b) joint construction of a text, and c) independent construction of a text. Each stage having some practical steps to follow systematically.

There are four practical steps in modeling a text, which must be implemented during the teaching and learning process. The four practical steps are: a) The teacher chooses a certain type of genre writing in order to develop the classroom activities. The teacher should provide only a certain type of genre., b) The teacher and the students discuss the text genre by modeling and deconstruction or even manipulating the text. The teacher and the students should be deconstruct or even manipulate the modelling of text., c) The students are directed in order to know and understand the communicative purpose of the text. The students are also situated in order to understand the communicative purpose of the text., d) The students then study the vocabulary usages of a certain genre procedure, grammatical or structural patterns of procedure, And then the students practice the procedure if necessary. The teacher should be facilitate and control the teaching and learning process.

In joint construction stage, the students start to do something more practical and operational dealing with writing as follows: a) The students reconstruct the certain genre writing given, b) The teacher continuously guides the students to discuss and order the students to remember so that they really understand well about the genre type given, c) Before going

forward to stage three, the independent construction of a text., stage modeling text and joint construction are important to review.

In the independent construction of texts, the students are ordered to write a certain type of genre as what they have learned before. The student write a given genre type independently. In this case, the teacher must be sure that the students really understand the features of a certain genre such as the communicative purpose, structure element of the text, grammatical patterns usage, relevant vocabulary usage, and textual devices as well.

The previous research related to this research has been conducted by Tangpermpoon (2008). It studied integrating approaches to increase students writing skills for English major students. Tangpermpoon explained that writing is considered as the most difficult skill for language learners, because they need to have a certain amount of L2 background knowledge about the rhetorical organizations, appropriate language use or specific lexicon with which the writer want to communicate to their readers. Kongpetch (2006) studied using a genre-based approach to teach writing to Thai students as a case study. Kongpetch study discussed issues that arose in teaching writing using the genre-based approach to students. It also provided insight into the impact of the genre-based approach on students' writing and the implications for applying it to other educational contexts.

Accordingly, this research aims at investigating the implementation of genre-based approach in writing class and the students' attitude in writing. Further, the study highlighted the advantages of using genre-based approach in developing writing skills.

METHODS

Qualitative research emphasizes that data analyzed by researcher are in the form of words (Ary, 2020). The descriptive qualitative method was applied by researcher while conducting this study. As descriptive qualitative research, this research used the description of words, phrases and sentences in process of representative the related data evaluated to show the conclusion for this research. It means that findings of this research were described in the form of narration.

The instruments used in collecting data were observation checklist and fieldnote, students' writing achievement and questionnaire. In qualitative research, a subject is identified as a number of people who have a similar characteristic. Obtaining valid and trustworthy data of the students' perception toward lecturers' written feedback in the thesis writing advisory,

this research used the entire subjects. In agreement with Esch (2013), says that 15 numbers as the sample of research are the smallest acceptable number in qualitative research. This study contained one class of second semester English Education students. The subjects of this research were 23 students of the second semester students at STKIP PGRI Sidoarjo who were learning in writing classroom.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Viewed from the research problems, this project was conducted in the second semester EFL classroom. At the beginning of the intervention, the quality of students' written texts did not reach the required standard of writing skill. The term "required standard" means an indicator measuring students' proficiency in writing. Some students reported that they felt confident about their reading, speaking, and listening skills but less confident about their ability to write because of the lack of grammar and vocabulary. They also faced difficulties in composing sentences, using tenses, choosing proper vocabulary, and spelling words correctly.

This project, implementation of genre based approach, intended to help students develop their ability to write and raise their understanding of contrary types of texts in order to achieve the required writing standard or writing proficiency. It studies existence of relation between the writing courses based on the genre approach and the students' subsequent writing skill improvements, after 70 days of teaching participation. Thus, in various contextual situations, this project tried to investigate how the genre approach had to be implemented effectively.

The lesson highlighted on one specific genre namely report text because this genre was essential on their thesis writing later. Essentially, the three phases of the genre approach such as modelling, joint negotiation of text and independent construction of text were applied as a guiding framework to organise and sequence the activities in the lessons (Fikrins, Sengupta, Sima, & Forey, 2007). It means that those phases provided the researcher in combining related activities in lessons and in making necessary plans in lessons. They were implemented flexibly to ensure that the tasks and activities the students engaged in were appropriate and relevant.

Modelling Phase

The modelling phase was carried out in the first few lessons devoted to the genre (i.e. report texts). Some lessons started with spoken discussion particularly that highlighted on the development of students' background knowledge by using the notion like field (the social purpose of the text), tenor (the relationship between participants of the event) and mode (the

medium of communication)(Thompson, 2004). For example, spoken discussion emphasized on the social purposes of the target genres such as to inform people. After that, the students were provided to view several different resources (like videos) of the same genres and were asked about how people communicate with one another in various ways. It was exciting to note that as the students already had a few ideas about genres, they did not know why it was essential to relate this kind of knowledge to their writing. After this first spoken discussion, the highlight of the courses moved to specific language use and some subject area terms, related to the two genres. Some students were asked such as *“what the words / phrases ‘therefore’ and ‘as a result’ actually do and what they thought the text would sound like if they were not there?.”* At the beginning, the teacher provided explicit information on the functions and usages of combining words by using a few model texts.

Joint Negotiation Phase

The intention of this phase was for the teacher in order to work with the students to develop a targeted text. The teacher, at the beginning lesson, informed and demonstrated the students the conventional structure specific to the selected genre. Teacher had to provide students with some examples. While this phase was working, teacher noted that the students started to acquire the importance of framing the structure of a text rather than just ‘jumping into writing’ and thereby shown that they were becoming increasingly aware of the reader’s inevitably, the social objectives and the linguistic features of those specific genres. Thus, the courses revisited the social and communicative purposes of those specific genre to focus on effective procedures of composing each kind of text and the kind of information needed to produce the target text.

The students’ efforts during the spoken discussion were monitored or observed. It was clear that the students developed a evident understanding of the various social aims and the requirement to differentiate the usage of language and structure consequently. After the students completed their research, they produced a structured report format with four paragraphs each with of a different function such as classification, description, identification, and so fourth.

Independent Construction Phase

Before this last phase started, sometimes, it was necessary to recall the materials or repeat some activities done in the previous phases. After that, the students started constructing their texts independently. Particularly, the teacher repeated courses examining grammatical features in order to strengthen students’ knowledge that was indicated as the most difficult part

to achieve. After teacher repeated grammar focused activities, the students' understanding of grammatical aspect was developed well.

In this final phase, students were given an opportunity to construct an instance of each text type independently. The teacher's role in the independent construction phase includes becoming available for consultation with individual learners who want especial feedback, instead of giving students with straight support. Learners were enthusiastic about the writing chance. The students' confidence of ability to write was improved. Lastly, when submitting their final copy of their texts to the teacher, the students felt confident about their texts.

Table 1. List of Writing Skills

Writing Skills	
Content:	
1.	Presenting accurate and well-chosen details to support main ideas
2.	Presenting coherent and important information in line with the topic
Organization:	
1.	Writing a strong topic sentence
2.	Using logical and effective structure
3.	Using smooth transitions
4.	Writing a suitable conclusion
Sentence fluency:	
1.	Using complete sentences
2.	Using different sentence lengths
3.	Using different types of sentence
4.	Using different sentence structures
Layout:	
1.	Using correct grammar
2.	Using correct punctuation
3.	Using correct spelling
4.	Using correct layout of the form of writing
5.	Using clearly formed letters and spacing between words

Data Analysis

The students' progress was measured or assessed in the formal and informal ways the choice in order to move on the next phase or to repeat a the previous course or the newest course again depended on the students' progress. Assessment criteria which were applied were made explicit and demonstrated to learners while the joint negotiation phase was conducted by the researchers (Knapp, 2005).

Student A's first draft

Smoking is dangers. You don't have to smoke. When you try to smoke, you'll never want to quite. It is really bad for your health. The smoke makes your lungs decreased. The cigar's smoke goes into lung and makes people hard to breathe.

Student A's final copy

Smoking should be banned. Smoking is very dangerous for your healthy, and of course for others. It could be active and passive smokers. There are many reasons for this. Firstly, it is an additive habit. Once you try to start, it is hard to quick. Secondly, many people suffer from sickness related to smoking such as lung cancer. Your smoke will be dangers for others, it could be your baby, your wife, your mom or another people. In order to stop smoking, the government should make a strong law against smoking. Smoking should be discouraged from the young age and it should be banned eventually.

Here is a concise analysis of the assessment of student A's final copy. Viewed from the beginning of the paragraph, according to the point 1 and the point 2 of the criteria shown in Table 1, the student composed a text with clear and appropriate proposition and that is shown in the sentence '*Smoking should be banned*'. This main statement of the position is supported by several statements that are indicated as supporting sentences. Supporting statements following main statement contains ideas elaborated by several supportive points. These supporting ideas were (1) '*Firstly it is an additive habit*,(2) *Secondly many people...lung cancer.*' and so fourth. They are effectively composed in a logical way by the use of appropriate selection of vocabularies in order to start the whole paragraphs; that is, the usage of connectives namely '*firstly*' and '*secondly*'.

The modality is applied and chosen in a number of ways through modal auxiliaries for example: '*should*'. Several connectives are used as the logical relations, they are (1) '*firstly*', '*secondly*', '*therefore*' and so fourth).

Thus, in the text, a movement from personal to impersonal voice indicating the movement from the subjective opinion to more objective opinion is used by the student. Approving those statements, the most of the sentences in the first draft are so simple and personal. Moreover, in the final copy, the sentences are more developed beginning with '*smoking*', '*government*', and '*current law*' and so fourth, and some passive sentences are also composed as in the sentence '*smoking should be discouraged*'.

Lastly, in the final copy, there is identification of using several abstract forms of language like nominalization (changing non-noun word to noun). the nominalization is shown in the using word '*sickness*'. The student A's final copy, the revision of previous text, uses correct and appropriate grammar and structure considering the formulas of sentences used. It shown that there is improvement on the previous text composed. The student successfully organizes the ideas of sentences considering the connection between the main sentence and the supporting sentences.

Based on brief personal observation, it can be stated that the students' proficiency in writing is improved well. It can be easily viewed from the changes of students' writing skill. At the final projects, there are some writing skills applied well. Students' attitudes towards writing course change positively.

A student, research subject, stated that '*writing genre became easier than the previous course, it was simple and clear*'. The students became confident about their ability to write after the course.

Based on students reflection, they understood the materials relating to the genre. They said that the course became simple and interesting because of the explicit explanations. The students' reflections indicated that this approach was successfully implemented. This approach eased students in understanding the topic.

The advantages of a genre based writing instruction that can be summarized as follows (Hayland, 2004): '*Explicit*' (it makes visible materials learned in order to facilitate the acquisition of ability to write), '*Systematic*' (it provides a coherent framework in order to emphasize on language and contexts used), '*Needs-based*' (it guarantees that course purposes and contents are based on what students need), '*Supportive*' (it gives teacher a main role in scaffolding learner learning and ability to create), '*Empowering*' (it serves ways to the patterns and possibilities of variation of texts that are valuable), '*Critical*' (it provides the resources for learners in understanding and also challenging valuable discourses), '*Consciousness raising*' (it is increasing the teachers' understanding of texts and suggesting students on their writing)

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, in EFL Writing class, genre based approach is effectively implemented. The students' ability to write could be improved. It can be viewed from the brief observation that students' proficiency could be increased.

REFERENCES

- Ahn, H. (2012, February). Teaching Writing Skills Based on a Genre Approach to L2 Primary School Students : An Action Research. *English Language Teaching*, 5(2), 2-16.
- Ary, D. (2020). *Introduction to Research in Education*. Wadsworth: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

- Atkinson, D. (2003). Writing and Culture in The Post-Process Era. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 12, 49-63.
- Badger, R., & White, G. (2000). Product, Process and Genre: Approaches to Writing. *ELT Journal*, 54(2), 153-160.
- Chaisiri, T. (2010). Implementing A Genre Pedagogy to The Teaching of Writing in A University Context in Thailand. *Long Education Asia* 1, 181-199.
- Dirgeyasa, I. W. (2016, July). Genre-Based Approach : What and How to Teach and to Learn Writing. *English Language Teaching*, 9(9), 45-51.
- Esch, P., & Esch, L. J. (2013). Justification of A Qualitative Methodology to Investigate The Emerging Concept: The Dimension of Religion as Underpinning Constructs for Mass Media Social Marketing Campaigns. *Journal of Business Theory and Practice*.
- Fikrins, G., Sengupta, A., Sima, & Forey. (2007). Teaching Writing to Law Proficiency EFL Students. *ELT Journal*, 61(4), 343-354.
- Hayland, K. (2004). *Genre and Second Language Writing*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.
- Hyland, K. (2003). Genre-Based Pedagogies: A Social Response to Process. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 12, 17-29.
- Knapp, P. (2005). *Genre, Text, Grammar: Technologies for Teaching and Assessing Writing*. Sydney: UNSW Press.
- Kongpetch, S. (2006). Using A Genre-Based Approach to Teach Writing to Thai Students: A Case Study. *Prospect*, 21(2).
- Rusinovci, X. (2015, October). Teaching Writing Through Process-Genre Based Approach. *US-China Education Review A*, 5(10), 699-705.
- Sari, D. M. (2016, April). The Use of Skimming and Scanning Techniques to Improve Reading Comprehension Achievement. *Edukasi*, 2(1), 59-68.
- Sari, D. M. (2019). An Error Analysis on Students' Translation Text. *Eralingua*, 3(2), 65-74.
- Sari, D. M. (2019, November). The Effectiveness of Corrective Feedback to The Students' Grammatical Construction on Paragraph Writing Class. *Journal of English Educational Study*, 2(2), 122-131.
- Tangpermpoon, T. (2008, August). Integrating Approaches to Improve Students Writing Skills for English Major Students. *ABAC Journal*, 28(2), 1-9.
- Thompson, G. (2004). *Introducing Functional Grammar*. London: Hodder Education.
- Wingate, U. (2012). Using Academic Literacies and Genre-Based Models for Academic Writing Instruction : A 'Literacy' Journey. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 1-12.