

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GENRE-BASED APPROACH IN TEACHING WRITING

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Abstract

This current research describes the application of GBA in teaching writing to university students. It was conducted by observing an English teacher in implementing GBA in his class. The result showed that he had fully implemented GBA which worked very well with the students in the beginner level. The roles of the teacher found were as an expert (BKOF, MOT), a resource person (BKOF), a director (BKOF), a facilitator (BKOF, JCOT), an observer (JCOT), feedback giver (JCOT, ICOT). The result implies that GBA is effective to improve the students' writing skill and should be considered to implement in writing classes.

Keyword: Genre-Based Approach, Writing, Teacher Role

1. INTRODUCTION

This article describes the application of Genre-Based Approach by an English teacher at Unipdu in general and the teacher's role in the implementation of GBA in teaching writing, as one of the important elements of teaching English as second language. Genre-Based Approach (GBA) was developed by Sydney School where the students are mostly the immigrants from Africa and English was not their first language. In GBA, writing is taught as a process and is a

complex combination of skills. Therefore the teaching of writing should break down the process. There are some steps to follow in producing a complete writing. By focusing on the writing process, students can learn to write successfully.

For many times, the Indonesian policy of education has continuously changed, from the curriculum starting in 1946 until the current curriculum 2013. The implementation of each curriculum influences as well the English language teaching practice in Indonesia (Fanani,

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Published in: <http://ejournal.stkipmpringsewu-lpg.ac.id/index.php/smart>

JurnalSMART : Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics.

2015). The main purpose of the changes was to improve the quality of ELT outcomes. One of the curriculums was Competence Based Curriculum which brought about a big change to the English language teaching In Indonesia that is Text Based Curriculum (commonly called Genre Based Approach).

In this curriculum the students' learning success is seen through the level of students' competency. In other words, the language teaching must also consider the importance of competency as the result indicator of the teaching(Maisarah, 2018). Communicative competence is likely to be the closest tangible competence which can be measured to determine the success of the language teaching. Therefore Genre Based Approach is seen as the best method for applying the text-based curriculum in order to attain the communicative competence.

This current article would like to describe how a teacher at Unipdu implemented GBA in teaching writing and his roles in the implementation. The teacher had implemented GBA for several years and proved to succeed in his teaching. Therefore revealing how

he implemented GBA is worth analyzing.

GBA was based on the theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics developed by Michael Halliday. The students should be taught various types of texts that may encourage them to succeed in school and even in college. GBA stresses on apprenticeship, scaffolding, and the zone of proximal development. GBA has already been implemented worldwide not only in Australia, but also in various countries in Europe, Latin America, the United States, Canada, Asia, such as Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Korea, Nepal, Japan, and China.

Text-Based Learning is a learning orienting to the students' ability in arranging texts. This method of learning is based on text modeling and analysis of text's features and focuses on the relationship between the text and the context of its use. The design of learning units directs students to be able to understand and produce both oral and written texts in various contexts. Therefore students need to understand the social function, structure, and linguistic features of a text.

The term text comes from the Latin meaning weaving. The text, according to (Halliday & Hasan, 1976), is a unity of meaning. Furthermore, the text is described as a language that is receptively produced and understood by people, that is what is said and written, and read and heard in everyday life. The term text includes both spoken and written texts. Strengthening the definition, Eggin (1994) suggests that the text is a socially and contextually complete language that may be in the form of spoken and written language.

Text is always created in context. The word context refers to the elements that accompany the text (Christie and Mason in Emilia, 2011). Context has a very important role in the use of language because what is written or said depends on the topic, when and in what occasion. Halliday & Hasan (1976) distinguish two contexts, namely the context of the situation and the cultural context. Both have an impact on language usage.

Emilia (2011: 21:22) mentioned some key principles in text-based instruction/Genre-based instruction. The principles are as follows.

a. Emphasizing the importance of developing students' awareness that

each text is a unique creation of a unique author as well as relative to a particular group of people and particular context (Hyland, 2002).

b. Considering learning language as a social activity. This requires dependence between students and society, which in this case can be friends, teachers or other adults, including parents, who can help students achieve better learning outcomes. Through this principle it is expected that students learn languages, students learn through language, and students learn about languages (Feez & Joyce, 1998).

c. Emphasizing that learning will work more effectively if the teacher explicitly explains the competencies expected to be mastered by the students after the learning process (Feez and Joyce, 1998). Explicit teaching does not mean a return to traditional grammar teaching that separates grammatical instruction from the use of authentic language. Explicit teaching aims to encourage learners' involvement in learning, self-reliance in writing, and the ability to discuss how language is used in authentic contexts, such as

the way in which language is used to persuade or convince.

d. Affirming that students are studying under the guidance of teachers within the framework of apprenticeship. Students act as those who are trained and teachers act as experts in language systems and functions. Therefore, in the learning process the teacher should act as an expert who can help students to learn the language.

e. Believing that grammar instruction is an important part of guiding students to the knowledge of how a language works. However, it should be born in mind that grammatical teaching in text-based learning is not a teaching of traditional language but a grammatical teaching at the text level when personal intent is filtered through the commonly available forms of rhetoric to fulfill the social purpose of language use (Hicks cited by Kim & Kim, 2005). In other words, text-based learning believes that we do not just write, we write something to achieve some purpose (Hyland, 2002). Grammar teaching allows students and teachers to be able to write, read, listen, and speak, and judge a text written by a person in the types of texts to be taught.

Hayland(2002) proposes the advantages of the implementation of GBA in writing instruction which can be summarized as follows: *Explicit* which means GBA makes clear what is to be learned to facilitate the acquisition of writing skills. *Systematic* which means GBA provides a coherent framework for focusing on both language and contexts. *Needs-based* which means GBA ensures that course objectives and content are derived from students needs. *Supportive* which means GBA gives teacher a central role in scaffolding student learning and creativity. *Empowering* which means GBA provides access to the patterns and possibilities of variation in valued texts. GBA provides the resources for students to understand and challenge valued discourses and Consciousness raising. GBA increases teachers' awareness of texts and teachers' confidence in advising students on their writing.

Hammond, Joyce, Brosnan, & Gerot (1992) explain that there are four stages and two cycles (Oral and Written) in the application of GBA. Each cycle may involve four stages called Building Knowledge of the Field

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(BKOF), Modeling of Text (MOT), Joint Construction of Text (JCOT), and Independent Construction of Text (ICOT). This article would like to describe how the English teachers at Unipdu apply GBA in teaching writing, more specifically about the techniques they apply.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

The descriptive approach was used in this study to know how a university teacher in Jombang implemented GBA to teach English writing. This current study was done at the English Department, Faculty of languages and Literature, in a university in Jombang in 2017. The teacher being observed is Mr. Adi (a pseudonym name). The data were collecting by observing the classroom being taught by the teacher as well as interviewing him. The collected data were then analyzed and presented by describing how the teacher implemented GBA in teaching English writing.

The English Department, Faculty of languages and Literature, university of PesantrenTinggiDarulUlumJombang is a department that stresses on the teaching of writing to their students.

Since 2013 it has advised all lecturers to implement various methods in teaching writing including GBA. The implementation of GBA has proven to significantly help the process of teaching writing.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

1) Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF) stage

Based on the observation, the teacher did this stage (Building Knowledge of the Field). In general, in this stage the teachers asked the students together with him to do some activities such as building cultural context, sharing experiences, discussing vocabulary, grammatical patterns, etc. In this stage, the teacher gave the students direct instruction because they were still progressively assimilating the task demands with the procedures for constructing the texts effectively. The teacher tried to link the students' own experiences with the text type they were studying. In other words, the students were expected to bring their own experiences to the learning process. In the classroom practice, students seemed to have different experiences of a certain text type that can be shared each other. The teacher used this stage as the

starting point for sharing information with his students. In this stage “shared knowledge” took place and was needed before going on to the next stage.

In building knowledge of the field, the teacher did some activities as follows: (1) introducing the social context of a particular authentic text type being studied, (2) exploring the features of the general cultural contexts of a certain type of text and the social objectives to be achieved, (3) discussing with students the context and situations used in the text. For example in exposition text, the teacher discussed with the students the role and relationship between people who were involved in a dialogue whether among friends, an employer and an employee, a teacher with students, and so forth.

In introducing both social and cultural contexts, the teacher used the following ways: (1) presenting the contexts through pictures and audiovisual materials, (2) determining the social objectives through discussion with students, (3) comparing the model text with other texts with the same or different text types, for example comparing a text of job interview with that of conversation between friends.

2) Modelling of Text (MOT) stage

After completing the BKOF stage, the teacher did Modelling of Text (MOT) which was the second stage in GBA. In this stage, the teacher and students discussed and explored a text and its key grammatical features. The main purpose was to make the students focused on the features of the target genre. Some examples of texts of a certain genre were analyzed, compared, and manipulated to make the students understand the generic structure needed to produce good pieces of writing. For example, if the main purpose was to make students able to produce procedural texts, then, the short functional texts, conversations, and the monologues were developed with one main communicative purpose, that is, giving instruction or direction.

At this stage an analysis and discussion of how and why a certain type of text was organized to express meaning. Through text deconstruction, it was possible for students to analyze the text components. To do so, the teacher commonly delivered the following questions:

- What is the social function of the text?
- Who uses it?
- Why does he/she use it?

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- What is the topic of the text?
- Who are the participants?
- How are they related to each other in the situation?
- Is the language spoken or written?
- What is the function of each section of the text?
- What are the linguistic features of the text?
- How can we know what the text is about?
- What is the relationship between the author and the reader?

3) Joint Construction of Text (JCOT) stage

After completing the second stage, the teacher went to the third one, Joint Construction of Text (JCOT). In this stage, he implemented scaffolding technique. By scaffolding, he gave the students initial explicit knowledge and guided practices. In this stage, he and the students worked together, with the teacher as a guide, to develop targeted texts until the students could do it by themselves. The students attempted to develop texts of the target genre with the help from teachers, with the teacher reduced his or her contribution gradually as learners gained greater control over their writing. In other

words, the teacher acted only as a facilitator for the shared writing activities and as a responder to student writing. The main purpose was to make the students show their writing ability and show confidence to write.

The activities done by the teacher during this stage were:(1) asking a complex question or problem that has several possible answers to stimulate students' curiosity about the material being taught. The questions delivered were about daily activities, ways of doing things, definitions, procedures, etc., (2) encouraging the students to think, make diagrams, and make common guesses, (3) sharing the text model to the students, along with several questions/problems sorted from simple to complex, (4) providing opportunities for the students to learn the text model independently, (5) providing an opportunity for the students to choose a partner, (6) providing different problems for each pair to complete, (7) asking each partner to exchange answers to each problem, and correcting each pair's answers, (8) providing opportunities for couples to compare answers from each pair with answers from other couples in the class, (9) asking all learners to choose the

right answer for each question and present their best answer, (10) giving reward to learners with best answer.

In stimulating the students to learn together in groups, the teacher did some activities as follows:(1) providing opportunities for learners to study text models in small groups or large groups, (2) providing group discussion opportunities to discuss some questions, (3) providing problem-solving tasks to each group, with clear instructions. For example, identifying the generic structure or linguistic features presented in the text, (4) specifying roles to group members to work in groups, e.g., as a facilitator, a writer, or a spokesperson, (5) providing an opportunity for each group to solve problems and present the results of the discussion in front of the class.

4) Independent Construction of Text (ICT) stage

After the third stage, the teacher went on the fourth stage that is Independent Construction of Text (ICT). In this stage, after collaborating with peers and the teacher, the students were expected to be able to produce their own texts independently and smoothly. In this final stage, the teacher

gave the students great opportunity to show what they had learnt and to write a text independently while the teacher observed and gave advice from the sidelines.

The following were the activities done by the teacher in this stage: (1) Establishing groups with with suitable number of students to have a discussion. (2) Giving each group a chance to develop ways of presenting or teaching their texts to other learners. (3) Providing an opportunity for the students to summarize or make an overview of the lessons of the day, (4) Motivating the students to re-learn the teaching materials and / or complete home tasks independently or in groups, (5) Giving each group a chance to present their lessons and giving appreciation for their efforts.

In closing the activity of learning, the teacher did the following: (1) asking the students to summarize what they had learned either individually or in group, (2) asking the students' opinions or feelings of what they had just learned, (3) informing teaching materials and or tasks for the next meeting, (4) giving a closing remark.

Discussion

Based on the explanation above, it can be inferred that GBA is very useful for teaching writing. The four stages that exist in the implementation of GBA may indicate that this approach may work very well with the students in the beginner level (Emilia, 2011) because the process starts from the very basic with the help from teacher and friends until the last stage in which students are expected to be able to work independently.

Based on the activities of the teacher described previously, it can be seen that there were some roles of teachers in Genre-Based Instruction applied. In the Building Knowledge of the Field stage, the teacher acted as an expert (Jarrett & Light, 2008) when describing expressions used in a particular type of text. The teacher also acted as a resource person on topics raised in ongoing learning. The teacher also acted as a director (Jarrett & Light, 2008) in a discussion that could encourage students to think critically and read the text critically. The teacher also acted as a facilitator when the students read the given text.

In the Modeling of Text stage the role of the teacher was similar to the

previous stage, the teacher acted as an expert in explicit teaching. The students, at this stage, actively analyzed the text structure and linguistic elements of the text being studied.

In the Joint Construction of the Text the teacher acted as a facilitator or mentor (Jarrett & Light, 2008) by providing assistance to the students when they needed it. The teacher also acted as an observer. The teacher observed the development of the students' ability in formulating the text that became the focus of learning. The other teacher's role was giving feedback to the texts compiled by the students to make the text better.

In the last stage, Independent Construction of the Text, the role of the teacher was the same as that in the previous stage (JCOT), which was to give feedback on the text compiled by the students to make the text better.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the teacher at Unipdu had fully implemented GBA in teaching writing as indicated by the activities done by him. The four stages that exist in the implementation of GBA may indicate that this approach may work very well with the students in the

beginner level because the process starts from the very basic with the help from teacher and friends until the last stage in which students are expected to be able to work independently.

Based on the teacher's activities, it can be concluded that the roles of the teacher in implementing this approach were as an expert (BKOF, MOT), a resource person (BKOF), a director (BKOF), a facilitator (BKOF, JCOT), an observer (JCOT), and feedback giver (JCOT, ICOT).

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