

The Use of Genre-Based Approach Instruction to Improve Students' Ability in Writing Short-Essays

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Abstract: *This paper presents a critical review of research on the use of the genre-based approach instruction in order to improve students' ability in writing short essays. Writing is one of the most difficult and important skills in learning the English language. Therefore, it is not an easy task for English teacher to teach writing to EFL students. It requires the English teachers to consider what approach they are going to apply in the classroom teaching. This paper reveals the potential benefit of genre-based approach for writing instruction in EFL contexts. The genre-based approach has been proved to serve as an influential and benefit writing tool both learning and teaching. A qualitative research display the outlines of the primary argumentations from the various theoretical orientations and empirical evidence within the confines of EFL learning and teaching, especially teaching and learning writing process. For the improvement of implementation the genre-based approach instruction, this paper attempts to theoretically justify the utilization the four stages of implementing the genre based, as well as the ways to solve the students' problems in learning writing through the implementation of the genre-based approach in order to improve students' writing skills.*

Keywords: Genre-based approach instruction, Teaching and learning writing process, improvement students' writing ability, EFL

1. Introduction

Writing is one of the language skills belong to the productive skills. As one of English language skills, writing is an important skill to be learnt by students at all levels. It is the most difficult skill because it is much more complex than the others. As it is a complex process requiring language skills in order to express the idea. For producing effective writing task the competence in variety of components are required, such as Grammatical competence: the competence in grammar, lexis and language system knowledge; Discourse competence: the competence in genre and rhetorical pattern; Sociolinguistic competence: the competence in using appropriate language in different contexts; and Strategic competence: the competence in using various communicative strategies. Therefore, writing itself has been identified as one of the essential skills in the world that is more than ever driven by text and numerical data [1, 2]. From the statement, writing is mental work for creating idea, thinking about how to express them, and organizing them into statements and paragraphs that will be explicit to a reader. Writing is a thinking process. Furthermore, writing can be planned and given with an unlimited number of revisions before its release [3]. Writing are provided many benefits and powerful to all people, in particular it is used in extensively in field of study and work, such as running businesses, explaining work tasks, official communication, education, and even job applications. All of these require writing skills to communicate in order to understand each other.

To improve student's writing English ability, practicing is required. Nonetheless, not only practice can allowed the students produce effective writing compositions, but the experiences and the communicative approaches used in writing process are also essential [3, 4]. Nonetheless, writing is perceived to be the hardest skill to acquire, it is

becoming more demanding in the age of entire communication via email and other communicative technologies. According to [5] explain there are three reasons making writing increasingly essential which are 1) more international linguists are promoting writing as their field of specialization, 2) more articles and journals are being published in English, and 3) more international students are pursuing their degrees in English speaking countries. Therefore, to improve and encourage the students produced the effective writing is one of the important tasks for teacher to seek for the appropriate approach in order to teach English writing. For these studies, it is clearly expected that one of effective ways to improve student's writing ability was through implementing the Genre-based approach instruction for language learning and teaching. Previous studies have been reported from writing instructions reveal successes in the Genre-based approach [6, 7, 8,]. Process writing is also reported to have effect in heightening the writing abilities and confidence of students [8, 9, 10].

On account of its important, many colleges and universities thus offer more writing courses, for example, Writing for Specific Purposes, Academic Writing, Paragraph Writing, and so forth to students who need to improve their writing. To become effective writers, students have to devote a great deal of time and effort to continuously practice writing, which makes them feel depressed and finally give up on writing accomplishment. In reference to this, the paper draws inferences from various theoretical orientations and empirical evidence within the confines of EFL learning and teaching, especially teaching and learning writing process. For the improvement of implementation the genre-based approach instruction, the genre is the text types that can be identified as a culturally specific text types which is result from using language both in written and spoken forms to help accomplish something. In the

Genre-based approach to writing, students study certain texts in genre they are going to write before they embark on their writing.

2. Methods

This paper uses a qualitative inquiry that is based on library documentation. Given the ground that the genre-based approach has considerably received a hefty of contending views, this paper finds it exceedingly important to review previous research and the theoretical underlying the significant contribution of genre-based approach to second or foreign language teaching and learning of writing process. Therefore, this library-based paper theoretically analyzes research that support genre-based as an approach in teaching and learning of writing classrooms. Firstly, the paper reviews the theories and previous studies that both corroborate and oppose the concept and the process of writing and the use of genre-based approach in teaching and learning second or foreign language classrooms. Secondly, it analyzes studies that underpin the incorporation of genre-based approach as regards to its functions in teaching and learning of writing process and particularly in order to ascertain its significant contribution to the improvement of students' ability in writing. In the final analysis, the paper ends with the improvement implications with a particular focus on how teachers and students should maximize the genre-based in their teaching and learning practices, much to the subsequent of production the writing work efficiently and effectively.

3. Theoretical Based

3.1 Concept and process of writing

Producing good writing is a challenging task for all language learners and even for native speakers of the language. Based on the six processes of writing which can be used for any kind of writing, i.e. getting ideas or information, choosing ideas or information, outlining, drafting, revising and editing [11]. The activity of getting ideas or information can be done using brainstorming techniques such as listing, mindmapping or free writing [12]. Listing is an activity where all ideas are listed without rejecting any of them, because they might turn out to be useful later on. Mind mapping is an activity where an idea or concept is linked to related information by drawing lines. Finally, free writing is an activity of writing down all thoughts continuously without worrying about organisation or grammar. The writing process is not only a structure for how to write, but also a procedure to follow [13]. This statement shows that writing is a procedure that the writers have to follow step by step in order to have good and meaningful content. The writing process contains seven subprocesses which are considering goals for the writer: having a model for the reader, gathering ideas, organizing ideas, turning ideas into written text, reviewing what has been written, and editing. Moreover, there are four steps of the writing process: planning, drafting, editing/revising, and the final version [14, 15].

3.2 Academic writing

Academic writing uses authentic text and examples taken from a wide range of discipline. Academic writing differs from other types of writing such as journalistic or creative writing. In most forms of academic writing a detached and objective approach is required. An academic argument appeals to logic and provides evidence in support of an intellectual position. It is important to present our arguments in logical order and to arrive at conclusions. However, academic writing can take many forms. we may be asked to write an essay, a report, a review or a reflective article. Different styles adhere to each of these types of academic writing, so always check with our lecturer. In academic writing, writers always interact with each other's texts and so there will be frequent references to the ideas, thinking or research of other authors writing in this field. What we would mainly get is tips like never use the first or second person, be formal in our own languages, things and so on. we must give credit to those with whom we are interacting and there are structured guidelines for referencing and citation. Also, in academic writing it is important that when a claim is made it is backed up by reasons based on some form of evidence; it is expected that the author takes a critical approach to the material being explored [16, 17].

In academic writing types, paragraph is one of the writing types that mostly have been taught in EFL, it is a group of sentences about a topic. A typical paragraph begins with a topic which introduces the topics. The supporting sentences that follow support the ideas in the topic sentences with explanations, reason other detail. The concluding sentences bring the paragraph to an end. Moreover, paragraphs are the one of important part of academic writing. Well-structured paragraphs help the reader understand the topic more easily by dividing up the argument into convenient sections [18].

Writing an academic essay means the manners of a consistent set of the ideas into argument, because of essays are essentially linear, they provide one idea at a time they must present their ideas in order to makes most sense to a reader. Successfully structuring an essay means attending to the readers' logics. In recent times, essay became a major part of a formal education. Secondary students are taught structured essay formats to improve their writing skills, and essay is often used by universities in selecting applications. In education, essays are used to judge the mastery and comprehension of material. Students are asked to explain, comment on, or assess a topic of study in the form of an essay. Academic essays are usually more formal than literature ones. In additional, essays writing are frequently more discursive, sometimes begin with a short summary and analysis of what has previously been written on a topic, which is often called literature review [18].

4. Writing in EFL

Writing is a skill that demands great effort and commitment. For this reason, it is often difficult for

students to master this skill in a foreign language. Writing is among the most complex human activities because it involves the development of a design idea, the capture of mental representations of knowledge, and of experience with subjects [19]. Without doubt, writing is considered a challenging task even in one's mother tongue. To be able to write is just as vital for "speakers" of a foreign language as it is for others who speak their native tongue. Despite the fact that writing is not learned naturally and needs to be systematically taught, it is essential for communication [13]. For this reason, it constitutes a fundamental aspect of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) courses. There is a demand today for teachers with a high level of pedagogical understanding and expertise in the different aspects of writing instruction, from curriculum development, to classroom pedagogy, to assessment [20]. Consequently, teachers should remain informed of these aspects of the teaching-learning process and acquire expertise in EFL writing instruction. One of the key problem areas is the mother tongue influenced, which is the tendency of the learners to employ the rules of the native language since they do not know the structures of the target language [21].

5. Genre-based Approach in Learning and Teaching Writing

Before we wrestle around the concept of genre-based approach, it is important to have a clear understanding of what the term "genre" means. The genre has been long considered and recognized as a word that refers to different literary discourse such as sonnets, tragedies, and romances. However, the term 'genre' now has shifted, in terms of what it is referred to. The genre is said to be different types of communicative events. When people are communicating with others in a specific situation, they have an intention or function that becomes the goal of their activity in that situation. This function, then, brings its own genre [22]. The genre, which is also known as a text, is the use of language in specific contexts. The text or genre refers to structured sequences of language that are used in specific context in specific ways [23]. People make text when they are communicating with others, which is different from each stage and depending on the context. The context and the way of people communicating are specific since differences in one or both points will bring different texts. For example, a conversational exchange with a friend is different from another one with a teacher on the phone. The differences among genres or texts could be in the form of, such as organization and content.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that genre or text is communicative events or languages applied which is occurred in a specific context. It bears a complete meaning or intention to convey. It has a function that comes with the goal of communication. Due to the fact that every genre has a different function or meaning, the genre is specific and it is different from others in terms of organization, content, and language features.

The genre-based approach is an approach which is also known as text-based instruction. It is an approach that uses texts as a means of learning a language. The genre-based

approach sees communicative competence as involving the mastery of different types of text [23]. It means that some people is considered to have communicative competence when he/she can create different text types. It is because language is supposed to occur within texts and language is spoken in the form of texts. Learners are required to master different types of texts since every type has its own purpose which is specifically different from others. The genre-based approach designed to encourage language learning as a social process.

The process of learning with the genre-based approach includes joint construction and scaffolding in which students and the teacher work together. At the stage, students are provided with opportunities to interact with other students through activities, and also consult with the teacher through guidance that given. The collaboration should be occurred among students, as long as between students and the teacher.

The Genre-based approach views writing as essentially concerned with knowledge of a language, and as being tied closely to a social purpose, while the development of writing is mainly viewed as the analysis and imitation of the contribution in the form of texts provided by the teacher. The process approach basically represents a reaction against the product-based approach whereas the genre-based approach represented a reaction to the so-called the progressivist curriculum [24]. In addition, the genre-based approach because of its limit focus on language and text and its lack of attention to the instructional and disciplinary contexts in which texts are constructed [25]. To point out how rhetorical instruction plays a role as pivotal in writing improvement as prior knowledge. In this context, the genre-based approach is really useful because it brings together formal and functional properties of a language in writing instruction, and it acknowledges that there are strong associations between them [26]. There is no doubt that writing tasks can be more demanding than other language skills, thus students at the low level of proficiency absolutely need something that they can depend on since they have limited exposure to English writing.

6. The Use of Genre-based Approach in Instruction

The genre-based approach instruction has come to be an important part of ethnographic research in the writing classroom [1]. The genre-based approach has as a goal the creation of "a conscious understanding of target genres and the ways language creates meanings in context". When used effectively, it can be seen as a more pointed version of ethnography in which students identify a community that they will be asked to join or are hoping to join in the future, and they look closely at the frameworks present in the written genres of that community [26].

However, the genre-based approach has the potential to point the majority of focus on the formal features of the genre, more specifically on researched essays rather than how to raise an understanding of the genre characteristics. The goal of the genre-based approach then becomes

instilling greater genre awareness in students, which will allow them to approach writing situations and determine how to succeed in those situations by following or disobeying the rules [27]. Therefore, the genre-based approach in teaching writing should help students become more autonomous writers who have agency and use that agency to accomplish goals with the strength of voice. Indeed, the current direction of L2 writing seems to be moving toward a focus on learner autonomy, which will lead students to pay greater attention to the processes involved in writing and how those processes can be applied to the world outside of the classroom.

The genre-based approach consists of the awareness of the particular cultures utilize different genres, which means that L2 students may not have the schema necessary for most academic writing in the English language. This knowledge, then, urges teachers to go further in writing instruction and challenge students to explore the specific contexts in which the genre is most often used. Such exploration allows students to see not only how texts are structured within the student's chosen discourse community but also to investigate why they are rewritten as they are [28]. In order to be successful writers, the learners must understand the patterns and expected characteristics of the writing task that he/she is approaching. This awareness is developed throughout the genre-based writing class.

7. To improve Students' Writing through Implementing the Genre-based approach

All the previous principles that mentioned are gathered in the teaching and learning cycle of the genre-based approach. They are integrated into the stages of the genre-based cycle. There are five stages in order to implement the genre-based to improve students' ability and that the teacher and students go through to achieve the objectives of the learning and teaching, that is, mastery of a text type and improve their writing skills [29]. Firstly, to build the context the students are introduced to the social context, explore features of the general cultural context and explore the immediate context of situation. Second is to model and deconstructing the text. In this stage the students investigate the structural pattern and language features of the model and compare the model with other examples of the text type. Third stage is joint construction of the text, the students start to contribute in order to the construction of the entire examples of the text type and the teacher gradually reduces the contribution to next construction while students move closer to being able to control the text type independently. Forth, independent construction of the text, the students work independently with the text in which their work will be used for assessment. Last, linking to related texts, in this stage the students are determined by what they have learned in this teaching/learning cycle can be related to other texts in the same or similar contexts and to future or past cycles of teaching and learning.

After all, students need to go through a cycle of all the stages to be able to have comprehension on a type of text. Students are led step-by-step, thus at the end, students are

expected to comprehend the text types in English. Since themastery of text types is involved in communicative competence, at this stage students' competence in communication is developed.

8. Conclusion

The principal argument of this paper stresses that use of the genre-based approach is one of the potential approach in teaching and learning of writing process, specifically English language, teaching and learning process in EFL environments. To illustrate its potentiality, the paper critically reviews relevant literature regarding the practicality of the functions of the genre-based approach plays in learning English as foreign language settings. In reference to the above examination, it clearly indicates that alternating approaches during the process of teaching and learning of writing, specifically in learning English writing, the genre-based becomes an approach that suitable for EFL learner in order to produce and practice in English language contexts. This observation puts aside the notion that the genre-based approach is practiced students to write sub-consciously by English teachers during their classroom teaching practices. While this paper acknowledges the notion that excessive use of genre-based in EFL classrooms may lead to students being overly dependent and confident with their writing works. It nonetheless encourages teachers to use it in a complete view of it as a teaching and learning tool that facilitates students' ability and knowledge of their writing skills in order to construction in the target language, and most significantly, that it enhances interpersonal interaction between themselves and the teachers, much to the ultimate increase of teaching and learning efficiency. Thus, it is on this ground that this paper suggests that the use of genre-based approach in teaching and learning of writing is the most significant approach. However, it can be conclude that the teacher is implementation of genre-based approach represents the well implementation of genre-based approach in the teaching of writing. The teacher implements the genre-based approach in his/her design of lesson plan, in the classroom teaching, and she/he should give more attention to the elements of teaching writing, such as feedback and scoring system. In addition, the overall the activities should be arranged and implemented them in relevant with the theory of genre-based approach. Thus, this paper is strongly of the view that further research may be needed to explore more on how the genre-based approach facilitates the improvement of students' ability in learning writing.

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