

AN ANALYSIS OF TEACHING WRITING THROUGH GENRE-BASED APPROACH AT SMAN 10 PEKANBARU

THESIS



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ABSTRAK

Aswir Astaman. 2009. An Analysisi of Teaching Writing through Genre-Based Approach at SMA 10 Pekanbaru. Tesis. Program Pasca Sarjana Universitas Negeri Padang State.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji bagaimana guru bahasa Inggris di SMA Negeri 10 Pekanbaru menerapkan pembelajaran berdasarkan pendekatan genre untuk keterampilan menulis dalam bahasa Inggris.

Penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif deskriptif. Informan dalam penelitian ini adalah 4 orang guru bahasa Inggris di SMA Negeri 10 Pekanbaru.. Data dikumpulkan melalui interview, study dokumentasi, dan observasi pembelajaran.

Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa banyak guru yang belum memahami sepenuhnya penerapan dan tujuan pendekatan berdasarkan genre meskipun sudah berlaku selama sekitar 4 tahun. Masih adanya ketidaksesuaian antara konsep Genre-based Approach dengan penerapan didalam kelas. Di samping itu, kesulitan guru dalam mengajar menulis adalah kurangnya penguasaan kosakata siswa dan lemahnya kemampuan siswa dalam menyusun kalimat.

Dari hasil penelitian ini, disarankan pada Depertemen Pendidikan Nasional untuk mengadakan pelatihan yang lebih memadai untuk penerapan Genre-Based Aapproach bagi guru-guru, dan pelatihan tersebut haruslah merata bagi guru-guru bahasa Inggris dan tidak terfokus hanya pada teori saja tapi lebih ditekankan pada penerapanya di dalam kelas.

Meskipun penelitian ini berhubungan dengan pengenalan Genre-Based Approach bagi guru-guru bahasa Inggris, namun implikasinya juga penting untuk penerapan Genre-Based Approach untuk keterampilan lain selain writing, seperti pengajaran bahasa Inggris secara terpadu.

ABSTRACT

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This study explores senior high school teachers' adoption and teaching practice of the Genre-Based Approach for teaching writing skills as a part of Indonesia's new curriculum initiative.

The research is qualitative descriptive research. The participants are a small group of senior high school English teachers. The data were collected through interviews, documentation and observation.

The result of this research demonstrates that despite the Genre-Based Approach has been introduced for three years, many teachers still did not fully understand the application and aims of this approach. There is still a mismatch between the conceptual theory of the Genre-Based Approach for teaching writing skills and these teachers' teaching practice in the classroom, particularly in selecting appropriate classroom activities for each phase of the curriculum cycle. In addition, the difficulties of teachers in teaching writing are the lack of vocabulary and the ability of students in constructing sentences.

Taking into account the findings of this research, it is suggested that the Indonesian government invest in training more appropriate to the task of training teachers in the Genre-Based Approach. This training should be available equally to all teachers of English, and should focus not only on the theory of the approach, but also on the practical applications in the classroom. On the other hand, teachers also should be more active to develop their professional achievement through any possible way.

Although this research deals exclusively with the application of the Genre-Based Approach for teaching English writing skills, the implications of this research could also be important to the application of the approach for teaching others skills such as teaching integrated language skills and critical thinking.

SURAT PERNYATAAN

Dengan ini saya menyatakan bahwa :

1. Karya tulis saya, tesis dengan judul “An Analysis of Teaching Writing through Genre-Based Approach” adalah asli dan belum pernah diajukan untuk mendapatkan gelar akademik di Universitas Negeri Padang maupun di Perguruan Tinggi lainnya.
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All praises, belong to Allah Almighty, the most compassionate, the most merciful who has given His blessing and mercy. Sholawat and Salam hopefully are sent to the prophet Muhammad SAW, who had been as the best model of human characters.

Alhamdulillah I could finish this thesis under the title “**An Analysis of Teaching Writing through Genre-Based Approach at SMAN. 10 Pekanbaru**”. It is written to fulfill one of the requirements to obtain the degree of magistrate education or *Magister Pendidikan* (M.Pd) at State University of Padang.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

Education policy for English language teaching in Indonesia has undergone several changes. The changes aim at improving the outcomes of English language teaching itself. In 2004, the Ministry of National Education has decided to bring in a new curriculum in all subject areas, including English. The curriculum is known as Competence Based Curriculum or 2004 Curriculum which recommends a new approach, that is the Genre-Based Approach.

Genre-Based Approach can be defined as an approach in teaching English which views language as an open dynamic system, where knowledge about language is taught in an explicit manner; and genres (Types of the text) are used as the starting for modeling and developing four language skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing are developed in balance (Martin in Firkin, 2007: 1).

In Indonesian model, the Genre-Based Approach is conducted in two cycles; they are spoken cycle and written cycle. Parallel to Competence Based Curriculum, the result of the process of teaching and learning should be measurable and observable. For these reasons, at the end of both cycles every student must be able to produce their own texts either spoken or written texts. In

other words, at the end of spoken cycle students are expected to be able to produce monologue in the same of genre that they are learning. Similarly, at the end of written cycle every student must be able to produce written texts of genre they are learning. For instance, if the genre is narrative, at the end of written cycle every student must be able to write a narrative text or to tell a narrative story. Thus, if there are 40 students in a class, it means that the English teacher would have collected 40 narrative texts. If in one year a class is taught 5 genres by the teacher, she or he will have 200 texts which are kept in the students' portfolio as the indicators of the successful in teaching writing. In addition, each student at least has produced 5 texts of various genres. It means, a Senior High School student will produce at least 15 texts of 12 type of the texts in three year periods of learning. The 12 type of the texts are: recount, report, discussion, explanation, exposition analytical, exposition hortatory, news item, anecdote, narrative, procedure and descriptive as well as review. If a student has produced about 15 text in 12 types of the text, logically he or she has adequate exercise in writing. It means that, the students will have adequate competence in writing English.

However, it was hard to find students' collection of texts. From several Senior High Schools which researcher visited, the teachers did not have the texts which were written by their students. The Senior High Schools which researcher visited were : SMA Negeri Minas, SMA Negeri 1 and 3 Tualang, SMA Negeri 1 Siak Sri Indrapura, SMA Negeri Sungai Apit, SMANegeri Lubuk Dalam, SMA

Negeri 1 Selat Panjang and SMA Negeri 1 Pekanbaru. From those 8 Senior high schools, only the English teachers of SMA Negeri 1 Pekanbaru showed the collection of their students' text.

The absence of students' collection of texts led to the problem of how those teachers assessed, measured and observed their students' learning progress. As mentioned before, the texts that students produced play important role in measuring and observing students' learning progress. Those texts can be used as the tools of the measurement and observation.

In addition, there was a tendency among English teachers in Indonesia's schools to ignore teaching writing. Teachers provided students with less opportunity to practice writing English. In other words, The English teachers in general were more concentrate on teaching the skills such as reading and listening, and language components such as vocabulary and grammar. The main reason for this preference is predicted because writing skill is not evaluated in National examination .

The facts mentioned above had aroused the researcher's interest to do the research on the implementation of teaching writing using the Genre-Based Approach. In particular, it focused on teachers' adoption of the new approaches and the problems they encounter during the process.

B. Identification of the Problem

Genre-Based Approach is an approach which is recommended to be used by English teachers at Senior and High School in Indonesia nowadays. Through this approach the teachers develop four language skills listening, speaking reading and writing based on the genre or type of the text. The process of this approach is carried out in two cycles, spoken and written cycle. The result of each cycle should be measurable and observable but in many schools the result is not as the expectation.

The researcher identified the central problem for the research that was the teachers used the approach inadequately so that the result of written cycle in form of collection of texts which were written by student were found. He noticed teachers did not follow the stages recommended consistently because of the limitation of their understanding and knowledge about the approach.

C. Limitation of the Problem

There are 12 genres to be taught at Senior High School starting from class 1 to class 3. Considering the limits of time for conducting this research the researcher limited only 4 genres. They were descriptive, narrative, recount and procedure. These genres were chosen with the consideration that they were taught at the first and the second year.

D. Statement of the Problem

Based on the background, identification and limitation of the problem stated in the previous sections, the statements of the problem in this study were as follow:

1. How well do English teachers at SMA 10 Pekanbaru understand about the Genre-Based Approach for teaching writing English.?
2. How do English teachers at SMA 10 Pekanbaru teach writing through Genre-Based Approach?
3. What difficulties do English teachers at SMA 10 Pekanbaru face in using Genre-Based Approach for teaching writing?
4. How do English teachers at SMA 10 Pekanbaru overcome the difficulties in teaching writing?

E. Purpose of the Research

Referring to the statements of the problem mentioned before, this research generally aims to explore English teachers' adoption of using the Genre-Based Approach for teaching writing English at SMA 10 Pekanbaru. Specifically, it aims at:

1. Identifying how well English teachers at SMA 10 Pekanbaru understand Genre-Based Approach for teaching writing.

2. Identifying how English teachers at SMA 10 Pekanbaru teach writing using Genre-Based Approach in their classrooms.
3. Identifying difficulties of English teachers at SMA 10 Pekanbaru in teaching writing through Genre-Based Approach.
4. Identifying how English Teachers at SMAN. 10 Pekanbaru overcome the difficulties in teaching writing through Genre-Based Approach.

F. Importance of the Research

In accordance with the objectives mentioned above, this research is expected to contribute positively to the development of teaching writing English and the implementation of a Genre-Based Approach in particular for :

1. Teachers, as an input for enhancing their theoretical knowledge of Genre-Based Approach and improving their quality of teaching practice especially writing skill.
2. Policy maker and curriculum designer, as an input for improving quality and practicality of the English language curriculum.

3. The researcher, to get a lot of information about the implementation Genre-Based Approach at Senior High School and the information will be useful as an input for researcher to design training for English teachers at the Institution where the researcher works.

G. Definition of Key Terms

1. Genre : a staged, goal oriented, purposeful activity in which speakers engage as members of our culture (Martin, 1984, cited in Paltridge, 2001: 11)
2. Genre-Based Approach : An approach in teaching English which views language as an open dynamic system, where knowledge about language is taught in an explicit manner; and genres (Types of the text) are used as the starting for modeling. (Martin in Firkin, 2007: 1)

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter presents the conclusion and recommendation based on the finding and discussion presented in the previous chapter. It sets out some significant findings in relation to the research objectives, and describes suggestions and implications for future research.

A. Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions are made:

1. There is a limited understanding about the concept of the genre based approach among these teachers. They only see this approach as teaching English using twelve different types of texts. However, the participants considered this approach quite effective for developing students' vocabulary, grammar and ability to write a particular text. There are positive attitudes towards this approach among the teachers' who participated in this study.
2. In the practice the genre based approach for teaching writing, particularly in the application of the curriculum cycle, these teachers tend to use several modeling activities in joint construction phase for ease of students' initial

writing process. The research has also found that there is a significant shift in the focus of teaching writing using the Genre-Based Approach and the other writing methods or approach previously used. The findings show that these teachers have begun to move from focusing on teaching grammar and vocabulary to understanding text as a whole beyond the sentence level. However, it is also found that the practice teaching of writing is still a product based approach which is concerned on the final output of the learning process.

4. Regarding difficulties in the application of this approach, it found that the problems lay heavily on students' English language mastery. Students' limited vocabulary mastery is the major obstacle in the application of this approach to EFL learners. It also found teachers' difficulties in translating the theoretical concept of each phase of the cycle into effective classroom activities. Concerning the way to overcome students' limited vocabulary mastery, the findings show that paying more time and attention for vocabulary building as the common solution that these teacher used. However, since the teachers do not realize their own limited understanding and practice using the genre based approach for teaching writing, therefore, there were no suggested solutions for them regarding this problem.

B. Implications

Regarding the teachers' difficulties in translating the theoretical concept of each phase of the curriculum cycle into effective classroom activities, these teachers should be more active themselves in seeking for more information and learning opportunities to develop their expertise in this approach. One way of doing this is by continuously conducting professional development either independently or collaboratively. Conducting independent learning, actively involving themselves in teachers' networks or teachers' centers and reflective learning from teaching practice using this approach are some examples of professional development available for teachers. Thus, teachers should not merely depend on the formal training provided by the government in developing their expertise in this approach. Teachers should view their professional learning not only as a learning for acquiring necessary skills for teaching but also learning that involves cognitive process, personal construction and reflective practice (Richards & Farrell, 2005). Furthermore, teachers working group can be considered as a good way for teacher to develop their expertise and professionalism in teaching.

Training provider, such as LPMP, need to focus more in designing training program for the practical application of the genre based approach for teaching English particularly teaching writing skills despite the theoretical concept of the approach. It is also necessary to conduct action research on the effective teaching

models of the genre based approach. In addition, the training designers should consider other forms of training which are financially affordable and have a wider range of accessibility, such as online training and electronic training. As we know, for teachers' professional learning and development, the government has provided in-house trainings program for all teachers conducted by LPMP as one of the government training providers. However, this program has some limitations such as financial shortages and the large number of in-service teachers in Indonesia.

The curriculum designers also need to consider aspects such as suitability and practicality of this particular approach to be implemented in Indonesian secondary school curriculum. The genre-based approach is an approach that is initially designed to develop ESL students' literacy skills such as reading and writing, in this context, ESL students are supported with the benefit of more exposure with the English language itself. Thus, the curriculum designer should consider any difficulties that EFL teachers and students might encounter in the process of teaching and learning using this approach. Problem such as students' low mastery of vocabulary most of these teachers find it hard to teach due to particular learning situations and circumstances in their classrooms.

C. Suggestions

This research has revealed some perspectives and experiences of a small group of Senior high school English teachers concerning their teaching practice using the genre- based approach for teaching English writing skill. Due to the scope of the issue and the limitations of the study, the results are not able to represent the generalized condition for all teachers in Riau province. This study only looks at the experience of four teachers. In my experience as a teacher trainer, these experiences are quite common. However, further studies would need to be conducted with different groups of participants so that generalizations can be made.

Finally, this study has indicated that the curriculum changes in the Indonesian educational system for the teaching of English place a lot of stress and need for learning on teachers. Therefore, planning for this learning is critical for the success of the new program and the intended improvement in students' learning. The planning should involve sequence of stages from training need assessments to designing appropriate training program based on the result of the training need assessment.

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