

**Improving Students' Speaking Skills through the Genre-Based Approach
in Grade X of Chemistry Analysis-A of SMK SMTI Yogyakarta**

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Abstract: This research was aimed to improve the students' writing skills through the genre-based approach in grade X KA-A of SMK SMTI Yogyakarta in academic year of 2016/2017. The study was action research that consisted of two cycles and was done collaboratively with an English teacher and the students. The research was carried out in February 2017. The subjects of this research were the students of class X KA-A in SMK SMTI Yogyakarta. The data were collected by conducting the observation, interviews, and administrating tests on the students' writing performance using observation guideline, interview guideline, and writing scoring rubric. The data from the observation and interviews were analyzed qualitatively and the students' test scores were analyzed using quantitative analysis. The validity criteria used were democratic validity, outcome validity, process validity, catalytic validity, and dialogic validity. The reliability criteria used were time triangulation, space triangulation, and investigator triangulation. The steps of the research were reconnaissance, planning, actions and observations, and reflection. The results of this study establish that the implementation of the genre-based approach was able to improve students' writing skills. Students' problems in writing could be lessened by implementing the stages in the genre-based approach. The building knowledge of the field, the modeling and deconstructing of the text stages improved the students' vocabulary and knowledge on the topic and context of the text, as well as their mastery on the text type including the text structure and language features. The joint construction and the independent construction of the text stages improved the students' aptitude in discovering the ideas and developing them into a good text. Scores of the students' performance also showed an improvement in the students' writing skill. The students' mean scores gradually increased from 57,55 in the pre-test, then 72, 17 in the Cycle I, 79,56 in the Cycle II, and 81,28 in the post-test. In other words, the implementation of genre-based approach successfully improved the students' writing skills.

Keywords: genre-based approach, students' writing skills

Introduction

English as one of the international languages plays an important role in the world of communication. It gives an easy link for people from any different background and mother tongue to be able to communicate with one another. In any field of life such as economics, politics, business or education, English language becomes an aspect which cannot be separated to make the communication flows easier. In line with the need of communication skill, many countries put English in their formal education, not only in

English speaking countries, but also in non-English speaking countries such as Indonesia.

There are many aspects to make students good in English. Four basic skills often mentioned are reading, listening, speaking and writing. English has been taught since the elementary level. The lessons aim to produce good English speakers with good communication skills. Therefore, students should be good in communicating in both oral and written forms in English. Meanwhile, the curriculum puts more emphasis on high schools both in junior and senior levels. While in the elementary level, students are introduced with English in daily basis, in high schools, they are expected to use English in their daily life and to get access for knowledge and information.

Those high requirements of English language curriculum for Indonesian students mostly do not run smoothly as expected. In order to create good outcomes, the teachers should provide proportional materials. On the contrary, most teachers put more focus on what is required in final examination rather than on giving balanced-skill exercises for students. Most teachers give more reinforcement to receptive skills (listening and reading) and limit many activities regarding to productive skills (speaking and writing). This condition absolutely results the students who mostly find difficulties in expressing their idea and lack of ability in producing texts both in spoken and written form. This situation has been actually happened in SMK SMTI Yogyakarta.

From the observation, There were several problems were found at the observation by the researcher in grade X KA-A of SMK SMTI Yogyakarta. The problems were the teaching and learning process, the students, and the use of media in the classroom. it can be found that most of the students in SMK SMTI Yogyakarta had low English proficiency level. They also had low mastery in English grammar and vocabulary. These made it difficult for them to write sentences. They also have bad attitude toward English. They got bored easily in the class and did not give enough attention to their teacher. Regardless the problems in the class caused by students and teacher, writing is an important productive skill to be implemented in real life. One of the examples of real life activities done by the students is writing messages in a memo or in a text message, or writing an application letter to apply for a job, making an itinerary for the manager, or writing a letter in an office that they will do in the future. As a student in the Chemical Analysis study program, they would also make many reports of anything happened in the laboratory.

The problems above problems needed to be addressed. The improvement could be done by minimizing those problems as well as improving the quality of the teaching and learning process and encouraging the students to get more involved to the English class. Genre-based approach in language teaching and learning could be one good solution. According to Feez and Joyce (1988), genre-based approach sees language learning as the outcome of a joint collaboration between the teachers and the students. The research was conducted to improve the students' writing skills in grade X KA-A of SMK SMTI Yogyakarta through the implementation of genre-based approach.

Nunan (1993) defines that genre has been long recognized as a word that refers to different literary discourses such as sonnets, tragedy, and romances. However, the term of genre has changed in terms of what it is referred to now. When people communicating in a specific situation, they have an intention to get a goal from their activity. This function brings its own genre. Harmond and Derewianka in Trong Tuan (2011) states that genre is not only a type of literary texts but it is more to be a pattern of academic and literary texts in a certain/particular culture which is predictable and frequently happens.

Hyon in Tong Tuan (2011) finds that a genre-based approach has a special role in gathering the text genres and their context. Richard (2006) also states that this approach put someone's language proficiency through the development of his mastery in distinguishing different type of text. Shortly, genre-based approach or text based instruction is an approach which aims to make text as a means of learning language.

There are five stages of genre-based approach according to Feez and Joyce (1998): 1): Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF); 2) Modeling and Decosntructing of the Text (MOT); 3) Joint Construction of the Text (JCOT); 4) Independent Construction of the Text (ICOT); and 5) Linking to Related Texts (LTLR).

Research Method

The research was conducted in class X KA-A SMK SMTI Yogyakarta. There were 25 male students and 7 female students with the range of age 15 to 17 years old. The research procedure was using the phase of teaching according to Stringer et al (2010). The research procedures of this research were planning, instruction, and assessment and evaluation.

There were two data in this action research. They were qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data were obtained through the observation and interview, in the forms of field notes and interview transcripts. Meanwhile the quantitative data were collected using scores of students' writing performance during the actions which were then converted into the mean scores.

The instruments to collect the data were an observation guideline, interview guidelines, and the writing tests in pre-test, Cycle I, Cycle II, and post-test of recount texts. The same writing scoring rubric were used to score the writing tests. There were three data collecting techniques in the research, they were class observation, interview, and assessing and evaluating students' performance in writing. The data analysis techniques were gathering the data, coding the data, comparing the data, building the understanding, and reporting the result.

This research fulfilled the criteria of some research validity; they were democratic validity, outcome validity, process validity, catalytic validity and dialogic validity. Meanwhile, this research also fulfilled the reliability of the data such as time triangulation, space triangulation, and investigator triangulation.

Findings and Discussion

The first step of this research was the reconnaissance. The activities in this step were identifying the field problems and selecting problems to solve. After the problems were identified, plans to overcome the problems in the class were formulated. The planning covered designing the course grid, and making the lesson plan.

The action plans covered the pre-teaching, and five stages of actions in each cycle. In Building knowledge of the field, the students would get an understanding about the recount text. In Modelling and deconstructing of the text, students were given an input text to observe and some techniques to make a good recount text such as the grammar, vocabulary, and the text structure. In Joint construction of the text, the students had a discussion to make the framework of writing and their own text. In this phase, the researcher gave them feedback. Then, in Individual construction of the text, having been sure with their framework, the students made their own text individually. Lastly, in Linking to related text, the students were asked to differ the text they made with another similar text, namely the narrative text.

The next phase was about actions and observations. In this phase, actions planned under the topic of Holiday in Cycle I and Unforgettable Moment in Your Life in Cycle II were implemented. This phase was closed with a reflection in each Cycle.

The actions resulted in the changes of behavior regarding to the students' participation in the class. It showed that the implementation of the actions could solve the first problem. Meanwhile, the students' performance was gradually improved. It could be seen from their mean scores. At the pre-test the students' mean score was 57.55, then 72.17 in Cycle I, 79.56 in Cycle II, and 81.25 in the post test. It could be concluded that the implementation of the genre-based approach successfully improved the students' writing skills.

Conclusion

After the implementation of the actions, it can be concluded that the genre-based approach improved the students' writing skills. The five stages of activity planned by the researcher gave significant improvement to the students' writing skills. Besides, the mean score achieved by the students also showed that they skills in writing were improved, from 57.55 in the pretest to 81.25 in the post test.

Some suggestions presented to several aspects in the teaching and learning process. It should be the teachers' responsibility to make a series of activities to make the students participate actively the class, including interaction among the members of the class. In any lesson, the students need to have good attitude toward the teaching and learning process.

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