

IMPROVING RECOUNT TEXT WRITING ACHIEVEMENT OF THE EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMP N 11 PALEMBANG THROUGH GENRE-BASED APPROACH (GBA)

Putri Purnama Sari
putri_sari03@ymail.com

Zuraida
zuraida.blani@gmail.com

Fiftinova
fiftinova.hakim@gmail.com

Abstract: The objectives of this study were to find out (1) whether or not there was any significant difference on recount text writing achievement between the eighth grade students of SMPN 11 Palembang who were taught through Genre-Based Approach (GBA) and those who were not, and (2) the aspects of writing that the students mostly improve after they were taught through Genre-Based Approach (GBA). In this study, the writer used quasi-experimental design. The population of this study was 357 eighth grade students of SMP N 11 Palembang in academic year 2013/2014. The sample of this study was 80 students taken from the population by using purposive sampling method in which 40 students belonged to VIII.2 and 40 students belonged to VIII.3. Class VIII.2 was the experimental group and VIII.3 was the control group. The results of the analysis by using independent sample t-test showed that there was significant difference on recount text writing achievement between the eighth grade students of SMPN 11 Palembang who were taught through GBA and those who were not taught through GBA ($15.202 > 1.991$, $p < 0.05$). Besides, the aspects of writing that the students mostly improve after they were taught through GBA was spelling and grammar aspect ($77.91 > 35.41$, mean difference = 42.49). Therefore, it is suggested for the English teachers to use GBA to teach recount writing.

Key words: *Genre-Based Approach (GBA), Improve, Recount Text, Writing*

English is one of the most important languages and becomes an international language. Thus, English is given a greater attention in every educational level all over the world, including Indonesia. English, then, becomes an obligatory subject for students in Junior High School, Senior High School, and University level.

Unluckily, based on the data found by Education First-English Proficiency Index EF EPI (2012) which involved 54

countries and more than two million learners, Indonesia was on the 27th rank and at the very low proficiency level with 53,31 EF EPI score. It shows that Indonesian students are still weak in reading, speaking, listening, and writing. This condition must be improved by giving a good education program. According to the school based curriculum of 2006, the purpose of teaching English in Junior High School is to develop language and

communicative competence in spoken and in written form to deal with the technology and science development and to enable the students to compete with other people in this globalization era through four basic language skills.

One of the four basic language skills is writing. According to Harmer (2004), through writing students are able to express their ideas, thought, and feeling into written symbols. Furthermore, writing is the primary basis upon which our work, our learning, and our intellect will be judged—in college, in the workplace, and in the community. Writing is also portable and permanent which makes our thinking visible, and helps us refine our ideas when we get others feedback (<http://www.marquette.edu/wac/WhatMakesWritingSoImportant.shtml>).

However, writing is considered as the most difficult skill to be taught and learned since there are several variables that need control at once, such as grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure, and cohesion. Indah (2010) mentions, “Writing is perhaps the most demanding skill of English. Unlike listening and speaking which are natural to human, writing is skill which has been develop in civilized society to pass on knowledge or messages beyond constrains of here and now” (p. 11). Ahmed (2010) supported this view, he says, “EFL lecturers and students face certain problems in teaching and learning writing as many teachers of English have noted, acquiring the writing skill seems to be more laborious and demanding than acquiring the other language skills” (p. 211). Besides, Leki (as cited in Ahmed, 2010) states that the structure, style, and organization often differ from the conventions in other languages. It requires effort to recognize and manage the differences. Thus, that was not surprising the outcome of learners writing ability was always faced unsatisfactory.

According to Richard and Renandya (2002), there are some difficulties for learners in writing. For example; (1) generating and organizing ideas using an appropriate choice of vocabulary and (2) putting such ideas into an intelligible text. It is also supported by Mychelle (2009) who noticed about his students who were weak in written expression skills. Written expression requires motor planning, social thinking, organizational skills, spelling, grammar and punctuation to dance together simultaneously. In fact, behavior and mental health problems in the form of anxiety and bouts of frustration were detected during tasks requiring written expression.

Students’ weaknesses in writing are also indicated by two previous studies conducted by Inayah, Yulia, Rufinus, and Novita. Inayah (2013) in her study entitled “Improving Writing Achievement in Recount Text of the Tenth Grade Students of SMA Srijaya Negara Palembang through Writing Diary” found that the mean writing of the result of pre and post-test was less satisfactory from 57.9 to 61. In addition, Yulia, Rufinus, and Novita (2012) found that the score of experimental class had increased from 50.97 (pre-test) up to 67.8 (post-test) in their study entitled “Improving Recount Text Writing Ability by Guided Question-Word Questions”. The score above shows that there is only a small increase from pretest to post-test.

Dealing with the problems of writing, GBA can be an alternative option. According to some previous research, Tuan (2011), Anggaira (2012), and Changpueng (2009), Genre-Based Approach which focuses on models and key features of text written, can be an effective approach to enhance students’ writing performance and perhaps to solve writing problems. Richards and Schmidt (2002), point out, “Genre is a type of discourse that

occurs in a particular setting, that has distinctive and recognizable patterns and norms of organization and structure, and that has particular and distinctive communicative functions” (p. 224). Therefore, there is no doubt that understanding knowledge of genres will help students to be able to produce different kinds of texts.

In line with Richards and Schmidt, Tuan (2011) demonstrates that the result of analysis on students’ attitude towards three phases of GBA had created a great impact on these student participants. In phase 1 (modeling of the text of recount genre), 91.1% student participants reckoned that this activity was necessary and useful for them in the latter phases of learning writing. In phase 2 (joint construction), 90% of the students respondent thought that the activities in the joint construction phase were necessary and useful for them in learning writing. Finally, in phase 3 (independent construction), 90% of the respondents expressed that it did really help them improve their writing skills.

Similarly, Anggaira (2012) in her paper explained that the GBA could improve students’ writing competence. The result of the improvement can be seen from the comparison of the pre-test result and the post-test result. The mean score of the pre-test result was 55.05, while the post-test result was 76.1. Changpueng (2009) also mentions about the effectiveness of GBA in improving engineering students’ writing achievement, the mean scores of the post-test were higher than the pre-test. It was also found from the t-test results that the students writing achievement scores from the post-test were significantly higher than those obtained from the pre-test ($p < 0.05$). This means that GBA was effective as a method of teaching writing.

Besides, Genre Based Approach (GBA) has its own uniqueness in teaching and learning process,

compared to other methods. In GBA, the knowledge of language is intimately attached to a social purpose, and more focus is on the viewpoint of the reader than on that of the writer. Writing is mostly viewed as the students’ reproduction of text based on the genre offered by the teacher. On the other hand, there are many methods about writing which focus on compositional processes of writing (such as prewriting, drafting, editing and publishing) rather than focus on the cognitive processes that underlie various kinds of textual relationships (mean-purpose) (Kim, 2005, p. 35).

Furthermore, GBA is appropriate for teaching writing since the mastery of text types is absolutely required. One of the text types is recount text. Based on the junior high school syllabus, writing recount is taught in grade VIII of both semesters. In the first semester, as stated in section 6.2, the basic competence is to “express the meanings and rhetorical steps of simple short essays by using various written language accurately, smoothly, and well to interact with surroundings in the forms of *descriptive* and *recount* text.” Again, in the second semester, the basic competence, as stated in section 12.2 is to “express the meanings & rhetorical steps of simple short essays by using various written language accurately, smoothly, and well to interact with surroundings in the forms of *recount* and *narrative* text.”

Meanwhile, based on the interview with one of the English teachers of SMP N 11 Palembang, the passing grade especially for writing recount which is shown by the syllabus of SMP class 8 section 6.2.2 stating “express the meaning and rhetorical steps in the forms of recount”, the score is only 66,6. This result is considered low. Thus, the writer was interested to find out whether or not there was any significant difference on recount text writing achievement between the

eighth grade students of SMPN 11 Palembang who were taught through Genre-Based Approach (GBA) and those who were not. Besides that, the aspect of writing that the students mostly improve after they were taught through Genre-Based Approach (GBA) was also investigated.

METHODOLOGY

This research used quasi-experiment, namely non equivalent control group design. The design involved experimental and control group, which were given a pre-test and post-test. The population of this study was all the eighth grade students of SMPN 11 Palembang in the academic year 2013/2014 with 357 students. To select the sample, the writer chose two classes, VIII.2 and VIII.3, which had the same average score (which is 70) in English achievement.

In collecting the data, writing test for both pre-test and post-test were used. The test was about writing a personal recount text which was designed based on the level of appropriateness of the writing test. In this test, the students should write about what they did in last weekend. The validity of the test was checked by having expert judgment from two lecturers and one teacher who have expertise in teaching English writing. These three teachers stated that the writing test of this present study was valid to be tested. In addition, the test was checked its reliability. In this case, inter-rater reliability was used to measure how extent to which two or more individuals (raters) agree. The consistency of scores by two raters was analyzed by using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient in SPSS 21. Based on the calculation, it was found that the correlation coefficient was 0.847. According to Wallen and Freankel (1991, p.99), the reliability coefficient of the best should be at least 0.7 and preferably higher.

Since the reability of the scores was higher than 0.7, the scores of the two raters were considered reliable.

In analyzing the data, paired sample t-test to analyze the score of pre- and post-test for each group was applied. Besides, independent sample t-test was also used to analyze the means between two unrelated groups on the same continuos, dependent variable or in another word to find out whether there is any significant difference between students who were taught through GBA and those who were not. If $p < \alpha$ (0.05) or $t\text{-obtained} > t\text{-table}$, it means that there is significant difference between experimental and control group. On the other hand, if $p > \alpha$ (0.05) or $t\text{-obtained} < t\text{-table}$ means that there is no significant difference between experimental and control group. To calculate the result of t-test, Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software version 21.0 was utilized.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Result of the Pre-Test and Post-test in The Experimental Group

Based on the result obtained in the experimental group, the lowest score of the pre-test in the experimental group was 33.33, the highest score was 66.66, and the mean score was 39. The lowest score of post-test in the experimental group was 33.33, the highest score was 96.66, and the mean score was 75.39. Table 7 below shows the score distribution of the experimental group.

Table 1
The Score Distribution of Experimental Group

Category	Pre-test		Post-test	
	Fre.	Per	Fre.	%
Excellent (86-100)	0	0%	8	20%
Good (71-85)	0	0%	20	50%
Average (56-70)	3	7.5%	10	25%
Poor (41-55)	6	15%	1	2.5%
Failed (<40)	31	77.5%	1	2.5%
Total	40	100%	40	100%

Table 1 indicates that in the pre-test, there was no student (0%) in excellent and good category. Three students (7.5%) were in average category; five students (15%) were in poor category; and thirty-two students (77.5%) were in failed category. Meanwhile in the post-test of experimental group, there were eight students (20%) in excellent category; twenty students (50%) were in good category; ten students (25%) in average category; one student (2.5%) was in poor category; and one student (2.5%) was in failed category. It can be concluded that the mean scores from pre-test to post-test of experimental group was significantly improved after the students were taught through Genre-Based Approach (GBA).

The Results of Pre-test and Post-test in the Control Group

Based on the result obtained in the control group, the lowest score in the pre-test was 33.33, the highest score was 60, and the mean score was 38.33. The lowest score of post-test in the control group was 33.33, the highest score was 60, and the mean score was 41. The following table 2 explains the score distributions of the control group in terms of frequency and percentage.

Table 2
The Score Distribution of Control Group

Category	Pre-test		Post-test	
	Fre	Per	Freq	%
Excellent (86-100)	0	0%	0	0%
Good (71-85)	0	0%	0	0%
Average (56-70)	1	2.5%	5	12.5%
Poor (41-55)	4	10%	8	20%
Failed (<40)	35	87.5%	27	67.5%
Total	40	100%	40	100%

Table 2 shows that in the pre-test of control group, none of the students (0%) were in excellent and good

category; one student (2.5%) was in average category; four students (10%) were in poor category; and thirty-five students (87.5%) were in failed category. Meanwhile in the post-test, none of the students (0%) were in excellent and good category; five students (12.5%) were in average category; eight students (20%) were in poor category; and twenty-seven (67.5%) were in failed category. Conclusively, the scores of control group did not really increase.

Paired Sample T-test

The data calculation between the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group by using paired sample statistics showed that the mean of pre-test was 39.16, and the mean of post-test was 75.39. The mean difference was 36.23, standard deviation was 11.03 with the standard error mean of 1.74. The t-obtained was 20.763 at significant level of $t < \alpha$ 0.05 in two tailed testing and the df was 39, and the critical value of t-table was 2.023. It shows that t-obtained was higher than critical value of t-table, that is $20.763 > 2.023$. Since the value of t-obtained 20.763 exceeded the critical value of t-table 2.023, and the probability level was below 0.05, it could be stated that there was significant difference on recount text writing achievement before and after students taught by using GBA.

Table 3
Paired Sample T-test of Both Groups Control and Experiment

Group	Test	Mean	Std. Dev	t	Sig.
Exp	Pre-test	39.16	11.037	20.76	.000
	Post-test	75.39			

Paired Sample T-test was also used in order to find out the improvement of each aspect of writing

namely audience awareness and purpose, content inclusion, sequencing ideas and linking, language features, and spelling and grammar. The summary of statistical analysis for writing sub skills is presented on Table 4 below.

Table 4
Writing Score Per Aspects on the Experimental Group by Using Paired Sample T-test

Sub skills	Pre-test	Post-test Score	Diff. Mean	Sig.
Audience Awareness and Purpose	46.6	84.5	37.91	
Content Inclusion	40.8	67.9	27.08	
Sequencing Ideas and Linking	37.4	75.8	38.33	
Language Features	35.8	71.6	35.83	
Spelling and Grammar	35.4	77.9	42.49	

The data shown in table 4 reveals the enhancement of writing score from the five sub skills. All the five sub skills were significantly enhanced, they were audience awareness and purpose (t-value 16.987, p value 0.000), content inclusion (t-value 13.274), sequencing ideas and linking (t-value 17.046, p value 0.000), language features (t-value 11.439, p value), and spelling and grammar (t-value 15.198, p value 0.000).

The highest score was the spelling and grammar sub skill and it went down to sequencing ideas and linking sub skill, audience awareness and purpose sub skill, language features sub skill, and content inclusion sub skill. In other words, the five sub skills were influenced by the use of GBA since their t-value was above t-table and p value < .005.

Independent Sample T-test

The statistical analysis on the post-test both the experimental and the control group is described in the following Table 5.

Table 5
Independent Sample T-test

	Post-test		
	Equal Variances Assumed	Equal Variances Not Assumed	
F	3.620		
Sig	0.61		
t-obtained	15.202	15.202	
t-table	1.991	1.991	
Sig (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
Mean Differences	33.65	33.65	
95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	Lower	29.25048	29.6
	Upper	38.06652	38.0

The statistical on the independent sample t-test in Table 5 showed that the significant of f-obtained is 3.620, since the f-obtained, 3.620 was more than 0.05, so the group data had the equal variances. Therefore, the writer used equal variance assumed in analyzing the t-test result. The mean difference of post-test between the experimental and control groups was 33.65. The t-obtained was 15.202 at significant level of $p < 0.05$ in two tailed testing and df was 78, the critical value of t-table was 1.991. It shows that that t-obtained was higher than the critical value of t-table that is $15.202 > 1.991$. Since the value of t-obtained was higher than the critical value of t-table, and $p < 0.05$, it could be concluded that there was a significant difference in the recount text writing achievement between the students who were taught through GBA and those who were not. In other words, the null hypothesis (H_0)

was rejected and the research hypothesis (H_1) was accepted.

Based on the findings presented in the previous sections it can be stated that the students can write better after they were taught by using Genre-Based Approach, which was shown by the mean score of the experimental group from pre-test to post test. The score had increased from 39.16 up to 75.39. This result supports the previous study done by Tuan (2011) entitled "Teaching Writing through Genre-Based Approach". He stated that a Genre-Based Approach based on the three phases of the teaching learning cycle has created a great impact on these student participants. It is also relevant with Firkins; Forey; and Sengupta (2007) who mention, "The genre approach, paired with a sequenced and well-structured teaching methodology, within a motivating theme of activities, can be an effective way to teach writing to students" (p. 11).

Subsequently, this study revealed that the students who were taught through GBA got higher score than the students who were not taught through GBA. This means GBA has its own uniqueness in teaching and learning process. As Firkins; Forey; and Sengupta (2007) state, "The approach of genre clearly assists students to organize their writing and understand the nature of a text within an activity based context with texts that can be deconstructed and reconstructed using concrete examples" (p. 11).

Furthermore, dealing with the aspects of writing, it shows that the score of each aspect (audience awareness and purpose; content inclusion; sequencing ideas and linking; language features; and spelling and grammar) improved. It is likely that students' success in writing recount text is influenced by the teaching cycles of GBA. Through the teaching cycles of GBA, the students have opportunity to improve organization and the language

use of their writing. For example, in building knowledge of the field, the students got deeper understanding about the basic knowledge of the genre that they will write. Secondly, in modeling of the text, the students could see the good model of the text-typed learned and tried to write as well as an example text given by the teacher. Furthermore, in jointly construction of the text, the students and the teacher jointly produced a text by generating their ideas. Then, students tried to write his/her own writing individually. Those activities had given some improvement for each aspect of writing. This is in line with Changpueng (2009) who said that the GBA was effective in enhancing writing abilities, the students learned how to write from explicit teaching and developing cognitive processes, which helped them become aware of the outline of each genre, communicative purposes, linguistic structures, and sociolinguistic knowledge. Genre Based Approach (GBA) was effective in improving students' achievement in writing recount text.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results and discussion, it can be inferred that there was a significant difference on the recount text writing achievement between the students who were taught through GBA and those who were not. The students who were taught through GBA got better score than those who were not taught through GBA. In addition, spelling and grammar aspect were the aspects of writing which the students mostly improved after they were taught through GBA.

In order to improve the writing skill in learning English, some suggestions are offered for the English teachers and the students. First, the teachers should teach the students with an effective way, for example, teaching writing through GBA. In this case,

some of the stages in GBA help the students understand not only grammar but also audience awareness. Second, the teachers should give more warming up to the students based on the material that teacher will do in the classroom like Building Knowledge of the Field (BkoF) as the first step of GBA so that, the students will get more information about the material. Third, the teachers should teach writing to the students step by step, since there are many aspects of writing that the students need to learn to support their writing. For example, they have to know about grammar, linguistics features, and audience awareness. Here, the second and the third stage of GBA, Modeling of the Text (MoT) and Joint Construction of the Text (JcoT) will help students to have good writing organization. Fourth, the teachers are expected to give feedback to students' writing. This activity will let students know their mistakes. Independent Construction as the last stage of GBA offers it. In this stage, the teachers give some comments on students' writing. Finally, the students should attend every meeting since there are some stages in teaching writing (Building Knowledge of the Field, Modeling of the Text, Joint Construction of the Text, and Independent Construction of the Text). If they miss one of the stages, those students will get problem to join the next stages.

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About the Authors

Putri Purnama Sari completed her undergraduate study at the English education Study Program, FKIP, Sriwijaya University in 2015.

Fifitnova, S.S., M.Pd., and Dra. Zuraida, M.Pd are the lecturers at the English education Study Program, FKIP, Sriwijaya University