

UTILIZING DIFFERENT KINDS OF TECHNOLOGY AND GENRE-BASED APPROACH FOR TEACHING WRITING IN AN ESP CLASS

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Abstract: Since English is gaining important concern nowadays, it is being instructed according to the specific needs of the students. In the case of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) class, one of the problems in teaching and learning English deals with the low writing skills. This study attempts to share a model of teaching writing in which utilize different kinds of technology (video, computer, Internet) and genre-based approach to facilitate the teaching of writing. This approach can be applied in three steps: 1) building knowledge of the field and modeling of the text, 2) joint construction of the text, and 3) independent construction of the text. In the first step, teacher can use video and computer when digging the students' background knowledge and presenting the teaching materials. Then, teacher can also use computer when leading the students to construct a text collaboratively. In the last step, the students write a text independently and submit their work via email to the teacher. Then, the teacher gives some feedbacks using the computer (comment bar) and sends it back to the students. The students must revise their work and email it back to the teacher again. This teaching model is more interesting for the students, more efficient, and helps the students to produce better results in writing.

Keywords: *technology, genre-based approach, ESP students*

It is well known that the developing of technology as medium teaching and learning has influenced the mode of delivery in foreign language classrooms. Technology plays an important role in providing effect on students' language achievement. Technology is claimed as one of the potential and practical medium as well as authentic and contextual material to facilitate teaching. It also provides teachers and students with various sources of information, ideas, and data to enhance classroom instruction. Moreover, it accommodates students to learn language skills; writing, reading, listening, and speaking independently and collaboratively. It is in line with the statement of Crawford (2002) that technology provides flexibility and choice to education. Based on this fact, it is necessary to take advantage of technological facilities in aiding the task of language teaching. By using technological facilities, language classrooms have become more effective in improving students' language skills and language components. As shown by Canning (2000) who did investigation on technological empirical study in which the result of his study shows that there is a considerably higher attempt from students in technology-based language instruction than students in teacher-based language instruction.

On the other hand, since English is being instructed according to the specific needs of the students, this fact has contributed to the development of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) as mentioned by Kutlu (2012). Different from general English, ESP is designed to meet specific needs of the students. In other words, ESP lies on students and their purposes for learning English (Dudley, 1998). In general English, all four language skills - speaking, reading, listening, and writing - are stressed equally, while in ESP, it is a needs analysis that determines which language skills are most needed by students, and the syllabus is designed accordingly. However, basically the teaching of English in ESP classrooms, the four of language skills are instructed in integrated manner.

Regarding to this fact, writing is placed as an essential part together with the other three language skills - reading, speaking, and listening. However, among the four language skills, learning to write in English as a foreign language seems an uphill struggle for most of the ESP students. They find difficulties in conveying their idea - selecting proper words, using correct grammar, generating ideas and developing them into a suitable organizational pattern. In line with this, Richards & Renandya (2002:303) mention that writing skill is not easy to master due to its difficulty in generating, organizing, and translating ideas into readable text. Similar with Richards & Renandya (2002:303) regarding the teaching of writing, Widiati & Cahyono (2006:139) also identify that writing is the most difficult skill to be mastered when it is compared to other skills.

Another aspect that contributes to the students' problems in writing is due to the lack of confidence to write in English, limited teaching time, and big classes. However, according to Mukminatien (1991), all these problems are not merely caused by the students themselves but they can also be caused by monotonous and uninteresting techniques of the teachers in teaching writing. In respect to this fact, a teacher of writing should apply a suitable approach, provides medium teaching, and prepare teaching activities that provides opportunities for students to write in order to make the teaching and learning of writing meaningful and effective. It is in line with Harmer (2007) suggestion that a teacher of writing should apply a method, strategy, as well as teaching medium in which can encourage students to be more active and motivated in the teaching and learning of writing. In addition, Wang (2008) in Kutlu (2012) also suggests that teachers should try to use the teaching medium that contains aspects of pedagogy, social interaction, and technology use.

Concerning the teaching strategies and medium that is believed to solve teachers and students' problem in writing classrooms is genre-based approach and technology. It is motivated by the fact that genre-based approach promise very real benefits for students as they pull together language, content, and contexts, while offering teachers a means of presenting students with explicit and systematic explanations of the ways writing

works to communicate (e.g. Christie & Martin,1997). However, since teaching writing due to the amount of time available for its implementation, this limitation can be anticipated by conducting out-of-class and online consultations. In other words, teachers can utilize both genre-based approach and different kinds of technology as one of the solutions. Technology with its varieties provides some advantages in assisting students to produce better results in writing. Thus, technology is considered as an excellent way to combine genre study with work on the writing process.

This proposed model is expected to be beneficial for writing teachers particularly ESP teachers as an alternative teaching strategy in teaching students to write – in this case procedure text. Therefore, this study attempts to share a model of teaching writing in which using both genre-based approach and different kinds of technology; video, computer, and Internet to facilitate the teaching of writing. In this paper, the discussion begins with a brief description of genre-based approach, followed by reviewing different kinds of technology used in this teaching model. Finally it presents a teaching model that utilizes both genre-based approach and different kinds of technology in ESP classroom, particularly Chemistry classroom.

Genre-Based Approach

Basically, genre can be defined as “abstract, socially recognized ways of using language for particular purposes” (Hyland, 2003:18). It means that the students, when they write, should have certain goals and intentions, certain relationships to the readers, and certain information to convey, and use the forms of a text as resources. Thus, the central aspect of the situation in genre-based approach is purpose. The different kinds of genre, such as procedure, arguments, report, functional texts, descriptive provide a place for different purposes (Badger & White, 2000:155).

In the ESP context, the genre-based approach offers a teaching methodology enabling teachers to present explicit instruction in a highly systematic and logical manner, which assists students with the cognitive organization of information. In line with this, Hyland (2004) states that genre-based approach provides a coherent framework focusing on both language and contexts, provides access to the patterns and possibilities of variation in valued texts, provides the scaffolding to help students to transition from spoken to written language use, and increases teachers’ awareness of texts to confidently advise students on writing. In other words, genre-based instruction views language as an open dynamic system, where knowledge about language is taught in an explicit manner where it is in line with the ESP curriculum.

Concerning the typical model of genre-based approach, as stated by Richards (2003:21), it is presented in cycles of learning stages namely; 1) building knowledge of the field (BKoF) followed by modeling of the text (MoT) in which the activities discusses and analyzes text structure, context, and language, 2) joint construction of a text (CoT) in which teacher and students construct text together, and 3) independent construction of the text (ICoT) where students write own essay independently followed by teacher – student conferencing. A typical model of genre-based approach is illustrated in figure 1.

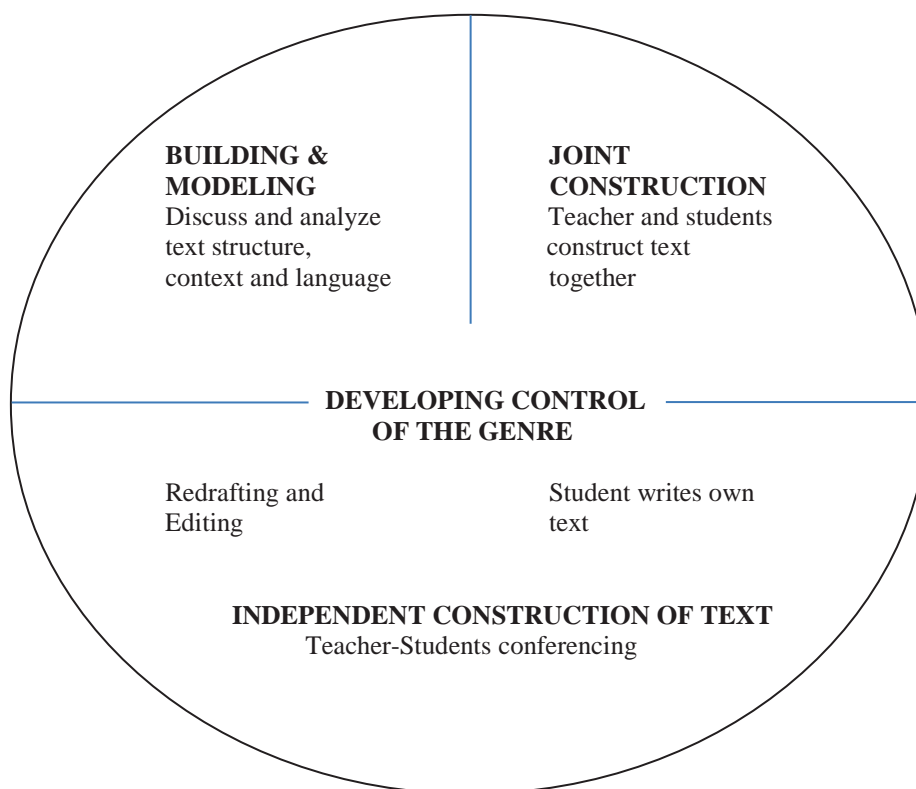


Figure 1: The Teaching Learning Cycle (Richards, 2003)

Figure 1 shows that at the beginning of this learning cycle direct instruction is crucial, as students gradually assimilate the task demands and procedures for constructing the genre effectively. The teacher here adopts a highly interventionist role, ensuring that students are able to understand and reproduce the typical rhetorical patterns they need to express their meanings. At later stages students require more autonomy. Importantly, writing is the outcome of activity, rather than an activity itself (Richards, 2003: 21). In this stage, the classroom is characterized by talk, by many kinds of writing, and by the development of a linguistic features by which students can describe and control the structure and grammatical features of the text they write. Lastly, redrafting and editing which the students write own text followed by teacher – students conferencing and finally, publishing the real writing products so that students realize that they do something meaningful.

Genre-Based Approach and Different Kinds of Technology in ESP Writing Classrooms

Fundamentally, in ESP context, using genre-based approach in teaching of writing implies that the role of this strategy is important. It is driven by the fact that genre-based approach has great advantages to give students repeated opportunities to engage in activities which require them to reflect on and critique their learning by developing understandings of texts, acting on these through writing or speaking, reviewing their performance, and using feedback to improve their work.

Although the genre-based approach appears to aid students in organizational skills, it is suggested that it needs to be used in combination with medium teaching – technology - as part the approach to writing instruction. This is in line with the belief that technology can help teachers to teach writing. Through technology, students have a chance to have new vocabulary and grammar in which taught explicitly and they require the knowledge of lexicon to produce better results in writing (Hinkel, 2006 as cited in Kutlu, 2012).

Along with the use of technology with its varieties that can be combined to teach new types of genre in writing classrooms; video, computer, and Internet are technology that is believed can assist students to improve their writing. Video is an educational technology that has become affordable since the late 1970s. It is a relatively new option for the language teacher when compared with textbooks, the blackboard and audio tapes. It is designed to make every day English accessible to students. The speech, material, and language are real or authentic (Flynn, 1998). In line with this, Canning (2000) also mentions that video is an instructional medium that generates excitement that offers ESP students a chance to improve their ability in English language skills and language components.

Regarding the use of computer in writing classroom, it is not only used to help teachers in delivering the materials of teaching, but it also used to help students to express their thoughts and make the writing task much easier and enjoyable. Through computer, grammar skills can also be improved with the aid of word processing programs. Besides, the student can highlight a specific part of the written text through underlining, bolding, italicizing, or changing the font size and color of the text with the aid of these programs which have the capability of automatically checking the spelling and grammar. This statement is in line with Ybarra & Green (2003) statement that the use of the computer as a tool in studying grammar is much more motivating for the student than the process of traditional writing with a paper and a pencil.

With regard to the use of Internet in teaching writing, e-mail or electronic mail as one of internet facilities is a modern way and very effective in assisting both teacher and student outside classroom. Student can use email to submit their work and to do consultation with teacher. This teaching model can break the limitation due to the lack of time in teaching writing.

The following discussion gives a model of teaching writing by combining genre-based approach – procedure text which highlights the importance of writing for ESP students (Kroll, 2001) and three different kinds of technology – video, computer, and Internet to support all the important aspects of teaching writing to be more efficient and meaningful.

The Cycle Of Learning by Utilizing Both Genre-Based Approach and Different Kinds of Technology

Dealing with utilizing both genre-based approach and different kinds of technology, then, it is necessary to make a clear explanation for the teachers what kinds of technology should be included in every step in the implementation of this strategy. First of all, the teachers can begin with the implementation of the important elements of genre-approach; 1) building knowledge of the field (BKoF) followed by modeling of the text (MoT), 2) joint construction of a text (JCoT), and 3) independent construction of the text (ICoT) as proposed by Ricards (2003).

Secondly, different kinds of technology locate in all of the cycle; BKoF, MoT, JCoT and ICoT. The instructional sequence for each activity is illustrated in Figure 2.

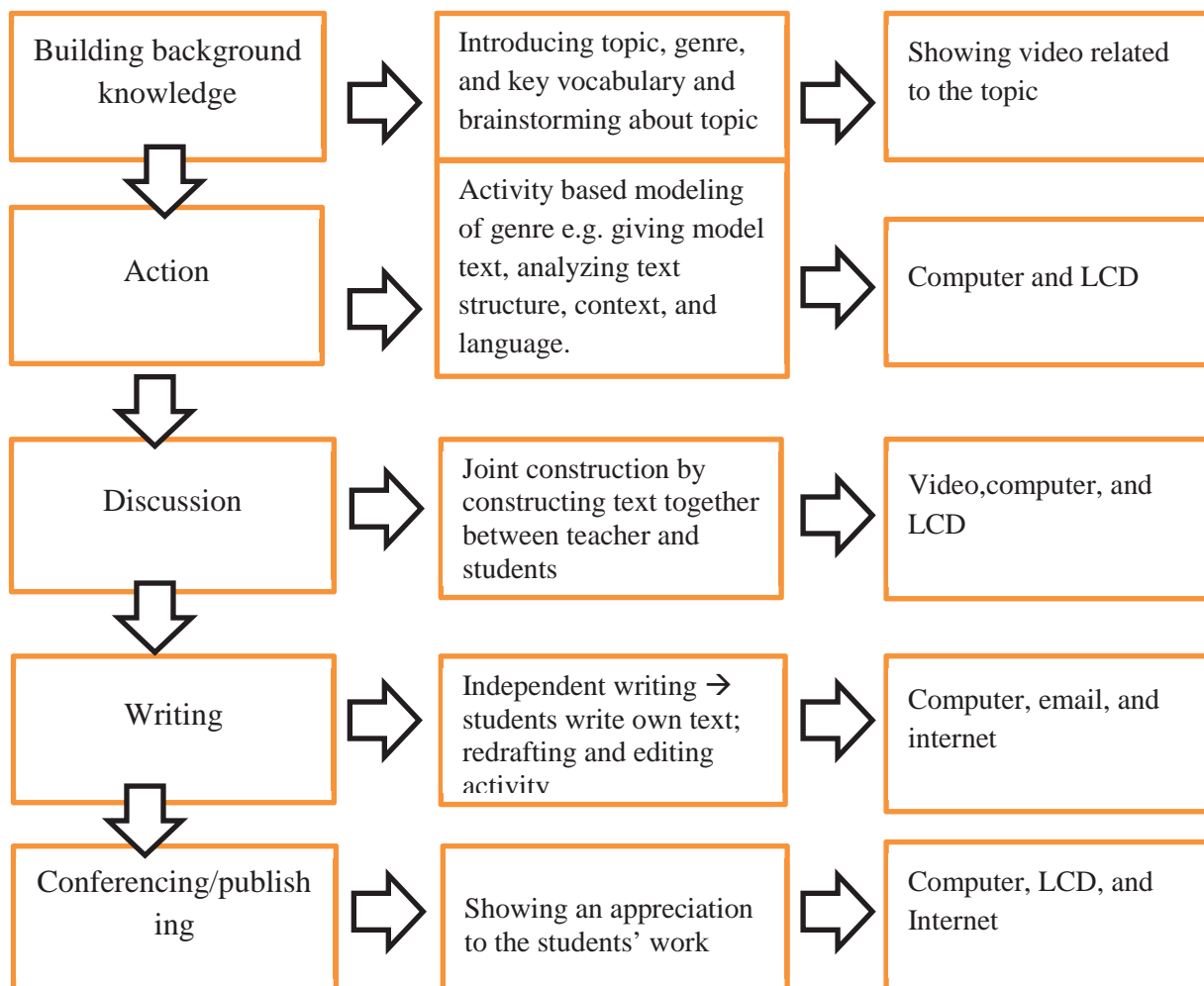


Figure 2. The Instructional Sequence

The learning-teaching cycle applied (see, Figure 1) with reference to one instructional sequence where different kinds of technology also used are outlined below.

Description : The students are going to learn to write a procedure essay.

Model Text : How to make Goat Milk Soap (authentic essay taken from internet by an e-How Contributor.

Goal : The students are able to write a procedure essay accurately and fluently.

1. Building Knowledge of the Field (BKoF) & Modeling of the Text (MoT):

- By using video containing description on how to make milk soap, teacher explores the students' background knowledge about procedure essay.
- By using computer and LCD, teacher mentions what procedure essay is, explains the linguistics features, and shows model essay.
- Students read model essay and analyze the features within the model essay. (appendix 1)
- Teacher leads students to classify information and write the organization of model essay in a procedure scaffold. (Appendix 2)
- Teacher invites the students to show and tell their procedure scaffold orally.

2. Joint Construction of a Text (JCoT):

- Teacher tells the students that they with their pairs will work together to make an outline of procedure essay.
- Teacher shows a video through LCD as a topic to the students.
- Teacher invites the students' ideas through brainstorming and writes them down on the board.
- Students, in pair, begin to do the planning, drafting, and editing the essay.
- Students complete their work and consult it to the teacher.
- Teacher gives a feedback on the students' work.
- Students with their pairs publish their revised work in front of the class.

3. Independent Construction of the Text (ICoT):

- Teacher gives the topic to the students.
- By using Internet, students gather the data, and develop a procedure essay individually by firstly to do planning, drafting, and editing the essay.
- By using or via email, students consult their essay to the teacher.
- By using computer (comment bar), teacher gives feedback and sends it back to the students via email.
- Students revise the essay based on the teacher's feedback and email it back to the teacher.
- Finally, the students publish the final product in front of their classmates and teacher so that the students realize that they do something meaningful.

Based on the model teaching above, it implies that three of the learning steps; BCoF, MoT, and JCoT are repeated based on the students' need before independent construction is introduced to the students. During the making the procedural written text, it is clear that the role of medium of learning; video, computer, and Internet provides lot of benefits to assist teaching and learning writing processes. It gives students a chance to exposure them to write without any problem in regard to the limitation in implementing writing in the classroom since they can write and revised their writing at school or home any time. Thus, utilizing both genre-based approach and different kinds of technology provide students meaningful experience as well as improve students' ability in writing.

Conclusions and Suggestions

The genre approach, combined with different kinds of technology, can be an effective way to teach writing to ESP/Chemistry students since it assists students to organize their writing and understand the nature of a text. Besides, by utilizing both genre-based approach and different kinds of technology in ESP writing classroom will likely to work best since it provides a rich educational experience with an emphasis on helping them to improve their writing skill with the technological opportunities in which more easily than the traditionally teaching method. In addition, it also makes language learning more interesting, motivating, and providing a chance to become an independent student. Finally, it is suggested that ESP teachers to combine both technology and genre-based approach in the teaching of writing since it provides many advantages.

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Appendix 1: Model Text
How to Make Goat Milk Soap



Homemade soap can be a welcome addition to anyone's bathing routine, especially for someone with sensitive skin. Goat milk soap is a very moisturizing, soft soap and not that difficult to make. Follow some simple instructions and make goat milk soap for home use or to give away as gifts.

First of all, prepare soap molds. Soap molds can be found at most crafts stores. Don't use molds for soap that will be used for food later. Grease the molds well with Vaseline. Secondly, melt 1½ half pounds of fat; this can be lard, tallow or even vegetable shortening. This should cool to a temperature between 85 to 90 degrees.

Thirdly, carefully pour out 6.5 oz. lye into a paper cup. Use a stainless steel bowl, again being sure to have one for making soap only and not to be used for food. Add 3 cups of goat's milk and slowly add the lye. Mix this with an old hand mixer set aside for soap making. This will cause a chemical reaction that makes the mixture hot and causes the milk to turn golden. Let the mixture cool to 85 degrees. A dairy thermometer can be used to check the temperature.

Forth, mix together 2 oz. of glycerine, 1 cup of baby oatmeal and 2 tsp. of borax. Add this to the fat and then add the mixture to the lye and milk. Use the mixer for 15 minutes and then let the soap mixture rest for 5 minutes. Mix again for 5 minutes and let rest again for another 5 minutes. Keep doing this until the soap noticeably changes consistency.

Fifth, pour the soap mixture into the molds. Cover the top of the molds with a cloth such as cheesecloth. Keep the soap at a constant room temperature for 24 hours. And finally, peel off cloth and take soap out of molds. If using a big mold, cut into bar-sized pieces. Let the soap cure by air-drying it for a month to 6 weeks before using or giving away. In brief, that's the way how to make goat milk soap.

Appendix 2: Student worksheet
How to Make Goat Milk Soap

MATERIALS	
1.	_____
2.	_____
3.	_____
4.	_____
5.	_____
6.	_____
DIRECTION	
Step 1.	_____
Step 2.	_____
Step 3.	_____
Step 4.	_____
Step 5.	_____
Step 6.	_____
Step 7.	_____
Step 8.	_____