Genre-Based Approach and Digital Flashcard: Enhancing Pre-service English Teacher Students' Speaking Capability

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Abstract. In 2020, the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia published the newest curriculum, *Kurikulum Merdeka,* which demands EFL teachers implement a genre-based approach during teaching and learning. In response to this call, this research aimed to investigate the implementation of a genre-based approach to enhance EFL pre-service English teacher students' speaking ability. This research employed classroom action research to investigate whether the approach could improve students' speaking ability. This research was conducted at STKIP Al Hikmah Surabaya, and the participants of the research were selected through purposive sampling. In order to answer the research questions, the researcher used a post-test, an interview, a questionnaire, and an observation as data collection techniques. Furthermore, the interactive data analysis model proposed by Miles and Huberman was implemented to analyze the data. The study concluded that the genre-based approach can improve EFL pre-service English teacher students' capability in speaking. The pre-service English teacher students' significant enhancement in their speaking capability is exhibited by the generic structure of the descriptive text, such as the social function, the organization, and grammatical features. All informants could fulfill relatively all parts, which is fundamental to composing a descriptive text.

Keywords: pre-service English teacher students, genre-based approach, EFL-speaking classroom

1. INTRODUCTION

In the English language teaching (ELT) context, speaking is undoubtedly considered one of the most challenging skills to master (Harmer, 2007). It is because in speaking, students have to consider grammar and other aspects of speaking skills, such as pronunciation, vocabulary, and the content of what is being uttered, to produce meaningful communication. In particular, the EFL students are presupposed to be able to develop their ideas and organize the elements of speaking to be uttered well.

Regarding the aforementioned problems, pre-service English teacher students of STKIP Al Hikmah Surabaya also encounter similar barriers and challenges in speaking English. During the pre-research, it was found that they need much time to express their ideas in utterances. This problem could be caused by some factors, such as needing ideas due to their limited vocabulary range, low motivation, and limited time to practice. Additionally, there are other problems concerning classroom teaching and learning activities. It was found that they were not motivated to practice their skill and were passive. On another side, the lecturer seemed to dominate the class and needed to give the students adequate time to express their idea. Those problems are

unquestionably going to be the influencing factors towards the condition of the students' speaking ability. They result in the state that the classroom needs to be improved, both for the teacher and the students.

Due to the aforementioned problems, the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) is considered to be one of the approaches that might be appropriate to enhance students' English speaking skills. Recently, GBA has been widely employed in the Indonesian ELT Curriculum for the last two decades. According to Joyce and Feez (1998), the Genre-Based Approach perceives language learning as the result of a reciprocal collaboration between the teacher and learners. It means that both the students and the teacher play an equally important role during the learning activity; neither the teacher nor students ascend in the classroom (Setiadi, 2014). By employing genre as the means of communication and pedagogy, GBA contemplates the learning situation in a language context, and it is used as a tool to achieve the social and textual function of the language.

Regarding the contribution of GBA in ELT classrooms, some previous studies, such as Rifpriyandi & Sudartini (2017), have also shown that GBA positively improves the students' speaking capability. Moreover, the other studies on the implementation of GBA in the EFL speaking context also show that GBA is accurately affirmed to be practical for enhancing students' speaking ability (Khatibi, 2014; Hapsari, 2017). This research focused on how English teachers employed the GBA in speaking. This scope area of research is considered to be less to be analyzed. Moreover, this current research looks similar to the previous research because it aims to support the previous results of the researches. After all, the novelty of this research could be shown due to the type of research methodology, which was using a mixed method of classroom action research. This research focuses on the application of GBA and its implication on the students' capability to speak English.

2. METHOD

This research design is action research, which begins with the problem that must be solved. Kemmis in Hopkins (1993: 44) argues that action research is a form of self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in social (including educational) situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of (a) their own social or educational practices, (b) their understanding of these practices, and (c) the situations in which the practices are carried out. Action research is a type of research that should be done collaboratively between the researcher and the collaborator to deeply investigate the phenomenon and find the best way to make better changes.

This action research occurred through an interconnected process that involves four basic steps in the process, such as; (a) planning, (b) action, (c) observation, and (d) reflection. Moreover, this research used qualitative and quantitative methods to collect the data. The qualitative data were categorized into two: observational technique (observation, field notes, and audio/video recording) and non-observational technique (interview, document, and questionnaire). Then, the quantitative data was gathered from the pre-test and post-test data.

The research subject was English education department students of STKIP Al Hikmah Surabaya in the academic year 2022/2023. The subject was chosen purposively due to the

problems found in the English-speaking class. In analyzing the data, the interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman (2004) was employed to analyze the qualitative data. Moreover, the quantitative data were investigated by contrasting the pre-test and post-test mean scores by using the descriptive statistic technique.

3. RESULT

During pre-research, the researcher conducted a questionnaire, interview, and pre-test and observed the teaching and learning process. To identify the students' capability in speaking, the researcher did the pre-test by asking them to describe a thing. During the pre-test, the aspects of speaking being scored were pronunciation, grammar, fluency, vocabulary, and content. The pre-test showed that the students had low capability or competence in speaking. The pre-test result showed 44 for the lowest, 72 for the highest, and 60 for the average score. The pre-test score can be seen in the table below.

No.	Indicator	Students' Score
1	Highest score	72
2	Lowest score	44
3	Average score	60

That score could be analyzed in more detail by looking at the five speaking indicators, such as pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and content. The result of the average pre-test scores of each speaking indicator can be seen in the table below.

No.	Indicator of speaking skill	Average Score
1.	Pronunciation	66
2.	Vocabulary	66
3.	Grammar	60
4.	Fluency	51
5.	Content	57

From the result of the pre-test, the students' speaking competence was considered to be relatively low. It could be seen when the researcher gave questions orally, only one student could answer them well, with a theoretically correct answer, sufficient vocabulary, satisfying pronunciation, and correct grammatical forms. On another side, they just answered it in short, with insufficient vocabulary and incorrect grammatical forms. Many of them still needed to be fluent, and their speaking was understandable in content. Additionally, they also needed more motivation to learn and practice speaking. This situation made the classroom not alive.

The detailed procedure and job description of the research is described in table below.

No.	Procedure	Activities	Doer	Specific Activities
1	Pre-research	Observing-Class	R	Observing and identifying the problems in the teaching and learning process, especially in speaking class.
		Interviewing	R and C	Identifying conditions and situations in the teaching and learning process, students' problems in learning

				English, especially in speaking class, and techniques used by the lecturer in the class.
		Questionnaire	R and all students	Identifying EFL pre-service English teacher students' problems in learning English, especially in speaking, and students' response towards the class activity.
		Pre-Test	R and all students	Identifying students' speaking capability
2	Research Implementation			**Cycle 1**
		Planning	R and C	Planning the action and things supported for cycle 1
		Action	R	Applying GBA in two meetings
		Observation	R and C	Observing the action on cycle 1
		Reflecting	R and C	Reflecting on the observation data
3	Result Discussion	Discussion	R and C	Discussing the result of the research as a conclusion

Note
R: Researcher
C: Collaborator

During pre-research, the observational data (observation and field notes) showed that the condition of the observed class could have been more conducive. There was no positive engagement between the lecturer and the students. Moreover, they tended to be passive in presenting and discussing the material. In addition, the result from the questionnaire found that most of the students were not interested in the activity in the class. They also got bored with the techniques applied by the lecturer.

In the first cycle, there were some improvements. Firstly, the students' engagement and participation increased during the teaching and learning process. Some of them actively participated in the discussion by asking questions and sharing their opinions. They responded positively when other students delivered their ideas and gave appreciation or reinforcement with applause. Their self-confidence increased significantly. They looked enjoyed the teaching and learning process, although some of them still looked getting difficulties expressing their ideas orally. However, despite the improvements shown in the first cycle, some problems were found after the first cycle had been done. The students were still noisy, and some of them still needed help pronouncing some words related to the topic. Moreover, it was also found that some activities were not done by the students.

By considering the results of the first cycle, the researcher decided to do the second cycle. The second cycle was conducted to deal with the problems found in the first cycle. At the end of the second cycle, every student took part in completing all tasks given by the teacher. They also prepared for their presentation by developing creative media, and they could deliver

their ideas fluently according to their part. Their motivation, enthusiasm, and participation increased more significantly. They tend to be more interested in improving their speaking skill. Students also enjoyed the activities during the learning process. The teacher and students could build satisfactory engagement. It was proven by the increasing number of students involved in the discussion.

At the end of the second cycle, the researcher shared a questionnaire, chose some students to be interviewed, and asked some questions to the lecturer. From the result of the questionnaire, it was found that students were getting more interested during the speaking activity and the media which were applied by the teacher. However, they also stated that the situation in the classroom was still noisy. Secondly, the researcher also interviewed some students and the English teacher as the observer to give some critical comments about the teaching method and media used in the classroom. The results showed that they responded well to the activities and enjoyed the situation of the class. They were also motivated to improve their speaking skill. They do like to work in pairs since it makes it easier to understand the material.

The result of the pre-test and post-test tests scored by the researcher and the collaborator in cycle I and II showed significant enhancement of speaking skills, including vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and fluency. It can be seen from the graphic below:
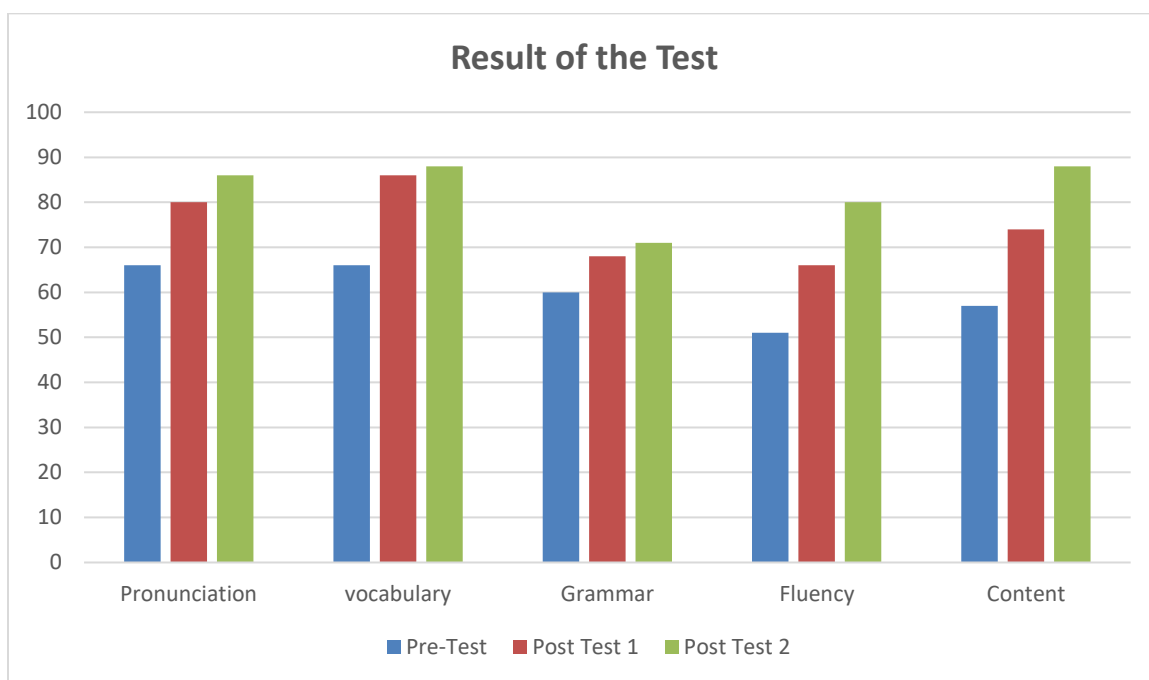
The students' speaking ability improvement can also be seen from the increasing mean score. The mean score increased from the pre-test which was 60 became 75 in cycle I and improved to 83 in cycle II.

Mean Score
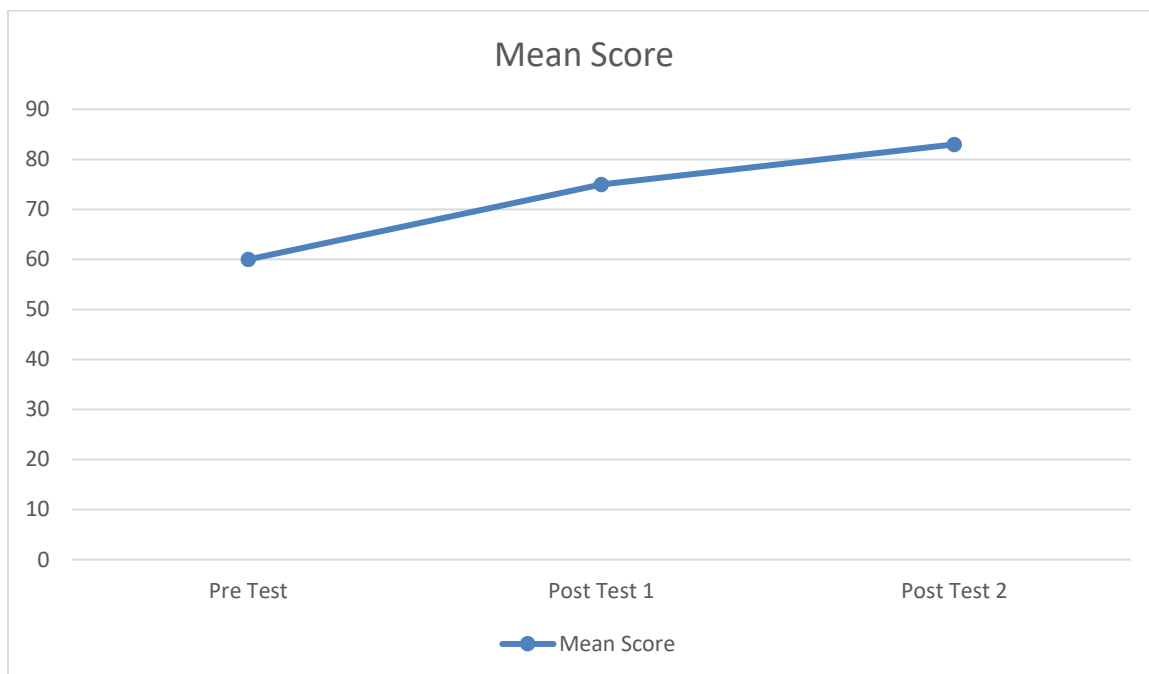
Furthermore, from the observational data, interview, questionnaire, and test above, the EFL pre-service English teacher students' motivation, enthusiasm, and participation developed well. They were motivated and interested in boosting their capability to speak. Additionally, they also delighted to follow the teaching and learning activity. The engagement between the teacher and the students were also better when working in a group. It seems that they enjoyed working in pairs since it could give them equal participation during the classroom discussion.

Considering the discussion above, the implementation of a genre-based approach and digital flashcards in the classroom could bring good effects during the process of teaching and learning since the condition of the classroom became conducive. The students can also improve their self-confidence and responsibility. The genre-based approach could make the students feel more comfortable and confident to express their ideas in front of the class. Additionally, the students' motivation to take part in the discussion also increased. The students always tried to practice their English speaking skills during the classroom activity.

EFL pre-service teacher students' speaking improvement

After analyzing the qualitative data of the students regarding their improvement in speaking skills, it could be stated that students showed improvement in speaking skills, especially in descriptive text. Due to the social function of descriptive text, all informants could explain the objectives of the descriptive text they had during the post-test. As an example, one of the students could clearly mention the objectives of his speech at the beginning, where a detailed explanation could be shown in the following stage of his speech. This enhancement is clearly seen in his previous performance, where he could not explain his ideas well.

Due to the previous discussion, all informants were able to state the objectives of the descriptive text clearly, as it was known that the objective of descriptive text is to describe particular objects, people, or things. It is in line with the previous research findings that descriptive text aims to describe someone or something (Hyland, 2004; Knapp & Watkins, 2005; and Emilia, 2011). Moreover, the other participants have also shown improvement after being taught using GBA. The improvement could be seen in the way they structured their text, and the students' fluency while expressing their ideas. While previously, they could not compose even the general part of the text clearly.

Considering to the aforementioned findings, it can be argued that most of them had an understanding of the organization of descriptive text (Derewianka & Jones, 2012; Emilia, 2011; Thai, 2009). Additionally, the previous related research also showed that GBA may enhance students' speaking capability into meaningful communication (Emilia, 2011). To conclude, most EFL pre-service teacher students could improve their capacity to use the complete grammatical features in their descriptive text after they were taught using this approach. These results are also in line with previous research, which found that this approach could contribute to students' improvement in speaking (Novianti, 2011; Abdullah, 2015).

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, GBA brings impact to improve students' capability to speak. This result is based on the comparison mean between the pre-test and post-test, which shows significant improvements in the students' scores. These data depict that GBA is considered to be an effective practical approach to be implemented in teaching speaking of descriptive text. The improvement of their capability in speaking could be seen from the aspects of generic structure, such as the social function, the text organization, and the grammatical features. Lastly, it assumes that all participants could fulfill almost all features which is needed in order to construct descriptive text.

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