

## THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROCESS-GENRE APPROACH TO TEACHING WRITING BUSINESS LETTER

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**Abstract:** This paper reports on the results of a study on the implementation of the process-genre approach to teaching writing business letters. The study aimed to find out whether the implementation of the process-genre approach can improve students' ability in writing business letters and to investigate students' responses to the use of the process-genre approach. This study used Classroom Action Research (CAR) design and the participants were twelfth graders at one vocational school in Cianjur. The results demonstrate improvement in students' writing ability, evidenced in the increase in scores obtained at the end of the teaching program. Moreover, the results of the questionnaire also show the students' consciousness that the process-genre approach could help improve their writing ability, especially writing application letters.

**Keywords:** *Process-genre approach, writing, application letter*

### Introduction

In language teaching context, writing is one crucial skill which is necessary to be possessed by students. This skill involves the students in meaning-focused use, language-focused learning and fluency development (Nation, 2009) to tell the readers about something and position them to accept the information said (Knapp and Watkins, 2005). In learning this skill, students are frequently demanded to master diverse types of texts. For vocational school students, one of texts which have to be mastered by them is business letter. Writing business letter is actually useful as a preparation step for one's future particularly in business field (Chi, 2000).

In the case of writing business letter, the problems often dealt with by students are mistakes in formatting, planning and using the language (Chi, 2000). Regarding mistake in formatting, most students do not pay attention to the

structure of letters, so this mistake type is often found in the exercises. Moreover, in terms of planning, students usually do not put the ideas, information and figures clearly and properly, so those matters cannot help the readers to understand the letter correctly and persuasively. Finally, concerning the language, students always make mistakes in terms of style, in that they tend to use colloquial style (ibid).

Due to those problems, the teacher has to pay more attention to those matters and take into account a proper way to teach writing. One way out to overcome those matters is by employing the process-genre approach in teaching writing. Process-genre approach is basically a synthesis of concepts both from the process-based approach and the genre-based approach (Badger & White, 2000; Kaur & Chun, 2005; Kim & Kim, 2005; Yan, 2005; Gao, 2007; Nordin & Mohammad, 2007; Babalola, 2012). Through the process approach, recursive writing process such as prewriting, drafting, revision and editing is implemented while through the genre-based approach, the ideas such as knowledge of the context, the purpose of writing and certain text features are adopted (Badger & White, 2000).

Regarding the elaboration above, the aims of this study are:

1. To find out whether the implementation of the process-genre approach can improve students' ability in writing business letters in the twelfth grade of vocational school.
2. To investigate students' responses to the implementation of the process-genre approach to teaching writing business letters in the twelfth grade of vocational school.

### **Literature Review**

Three approaches such as product-based, process-based and genre-based approach are criticized due to its weaknesses to the students (Badger and White, 2000; Hyland, 2003; Nordin and Mohammad, 2006). That reason makes Badger and white (2000) propose process-genre approach. This approach is basically a combination of process models and genre theories (Badger & White, 2000; Kaur & Chun, 2005; Kim & Kim, 2005; Yan, 2005; Gao, 2007; Nordin & Mohammad,

2007; Babalola, 2012). Through process approach, recursive writing process such as prewriting, drafting, revision and editing are implemented while through genre-based approach, the ideas such as knowledge of context, the purpose of writing and certain text features are adopted (ibid). Furthermore, the learners are also provided the input in developing their writing ability (Badger & White, 2000 and Kim & Kim, 2005).

### **Methodology**

The study used classroom action research (CAR). The participants involved were an English teacher, a student from Indonesia University of Education who was conducting the action research and 28 twelfth graders at one vocational school in Cianjur.

To collect the data, three instruments such as observation sheet, writing test and questionnaire were employed. Observation sheet was used during the implementation of the process-genre approach. Meanwhile, writing test and questionnaire were distributed at the end of each cycle.

The data were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitative data were gathered from the observation sheet and students' answers to open-ended questions in the questionnaire while quantitative data were gathered from students' writing scores and students' answers to close-ended questions in the questionnaire. The data from observation sheet were analyzed and interpreted to describe the activities during the implementation of the process-genre approach. The results of students' writing test was analyzed using scoring rubric developed by Rose (2007, as cited in Emilia, 2011). Meanwhile, the data from questionnaire were analyzed using percentage formula and some procedures determined in the study.

### **Data Presentation and Discussion**

In cycle 1, the students' mean score was 75, with 86.5 as the highest score and 64 as the lowest score. It means there were 16 students (57.1%) who got the score above *KKM*. The teaching and learning process in cycle 2 was continued since the students obtaining the score above *KKM* in this cycle was less than 80%.

In cycle 2, the students' mean score was 82.5, with 90 as the highest score and 74 as the lowest score. It means there were 23 students (82.1%) who got the score above *KKM*. It can be indicated that there was an improvement in students' writing scores in cycle 2.

In response to the results, the targeted-score had been achieved since the students obtaining the score above *KKM* in cycle 2 were 82.1% from the students' number in class. Therefore, the cycle was ended and considered to be successful.

Moreover, students' responses to the implementation of process genre approach to teaching writing business letter showed mostly positive responses. The students revealed that process-genre approach is able to help them in comprehending and creating application letters. Besides, they found out not only how to write the text but also what purpose of the text is as well as what forms of the language in the text are. Most of them also admitted that both teacher feedback and peer feedback given are helpful and useful for them. In addition, by employing process-genre approach, students felt already much better in process of writing application letter.

The results of this study demonstrate that there was an improvement in students' writing scores after conducting process-genre approach. This is proven by the students' scores and students' mean score were increase. It is also similar to the results of the studies conducted by Kim & Kim (2005), Gao (2007), Noviantoro (2011) and Babalola (2012).

Moreover, students' responses to the implementation of process genre approach to teaching writing business letter are mostly positive. For most of the students, the implementation of the process-genre approach to teaching writing business letter can help them in comprehending what application letter is, how to write the application letter, what the purpose of the application letter is and what the forms of language in the application letter are. It is relevant to the studies of Gibbons (2002) and Derewianka (2004) that in modelling stage, students are explained about what the purposes of the text are, how the text is structured, what the function of each stage of the schematic structure is as well as what linguistic features of the text are.

The results of the study also demonstrate that feedback given by the teacher during writing process is helpful. In this case, type of feedback given was teacher-student conferencing. This is in line with the study of Hyland (2000; as cited in Hyland, 2003) that teacher-student conferencing can assist the students not only in giving them a clearer idea of their strengths and weaknesses but also allowing them to raise questions on their written feedback as well as helping them construct their revisions.

Moreover, peer feedback helps the students in writing the application letter since such feedback is useful for them both to assist them about what they do not understand in writing an application letter and to recall them if there are mistakes in their writing. This is relevant to the study conducted by Gao (2007) that through peer feedback, the students are helped to enhance their writing skill by peer.

The results also show that by the implementation of the process-genre approach, the students can gain guidance during writing process. The finding is in line with the statement of Boughey (1997; as cited in Tangpermpoon, 2008) that the teacher will be available to guide the students step by step during writing process by giving feedback and enough time so that they can both reflect upon their previous writing and have consideration of other viewpoints.

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Moreover, students' responses to the implementation of process genre approach to teaching writing business letter showed mostly positive responses. For most of the students, the implementation of process-genre approach to teaching writing business letter can help them in comprehending what application letter is, how to write the application letter, what the purpose of the application letter is and what the forms of language in the application letter are. It is relevant with the studies of Gibbons (2002) and Derewianka (2004) that in modelling stage, students are explained about what the purposes of the text are, how the text

is structured, what the function of each stage from schematic structure is as well as what linguistic features of the text are in order that they become familiar with.

The findings gained also demonstrated that feedback given by the teacher during writing process is helpful. In this case, type of feedback given was teacher-student conferencing. This is in line with the study of Riley (1997) and F. Hyland (2000; as cited in Hyland, 2003) which state that teacher-student conferencing can assist the students not only in giving them a clearer idea of their strengths and weaknesses but also allowing them to raise questions on their written feedback as well as helping them construct their revisions.

Based on the findings, peer feedback helps the students in writing the application letter since such feedback is useful for them both to assist them about what they had not understood yet in application letter and to recall them if there were mistakes in their writing. This is relevant with the study conducted by Gao (2007) that through peer feedback, the students are helped to enhance their writing skill by peer.

The result also showed that by the implementation of process-genre approach, the students were helped during writing process. The finding is in line with the statement of Boughey (1997; as cited in Tangpermpoon, 2008) that the teacher will be available to guide the students step by step during writing process by giving feedback and enough time so that they can both reflect upon their previous writing and have consideration of other viewpoints.

## **Conclusions**

This study is concerned with the implementation of process-genre approach to teaching writing business letter. The findings of this study show improvement in students' writing scores after they were involved in the teaching program using the process-genre approach. Moreover, students' responses to the implementation of process genre approach to teaching writing business letter are mostly positive.

Furthermore, having finished conducting the research, there are several suggestions that might be useful for teachers and next researchers in implementing the process-genre approach to teaching writing.

Teachers should be well-prepared before conducting the teaching learning process. In addition, they should facilitate and guide the students during writing process. Moreover, teachers should also determine time allocation for carrying out the process-genre approach in order to make the instructional process more conducive.

Moreover, researchers in the similar area of study can implement the process-genre approach not only in vocational school but also in senior high school. Other researchers can also conduct a study on the implementation of the process-genre approach in other grades such as in the tenth and eleventh grades. Finally, the process-genre approach can be applied in teaching other texts such as recount, narrative, report, or argumentative text.

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