ENHANCING THE STUDENTS' CREATIVE WRITING ABILITY THROUGH GENRE AND INTERTEXTUALITY-BASED APPROACH

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Abstract

It is not an easy task for language students to write creatively. The students usually have insufficient knowledge of what they have to write. In respond to this gap this paper shows how genre and inter-textuality- based approach was implemented to develop the students' creative writing ability through a series of writing assignment. The research participants included 20 students taking 'Advanced Genre-Based writing" course in 2010/2011 academic year. The data were obtained from the students' writings and classroom observations. The finding showed that teaching writing using genre and intertextuality approach could enhance the students' creative writing. This evidence could be identified through students' improvements in their writings' assignments. Another finding revealed that the approach could enhance the students' motivation to express themselves through pieces of writings. Based on the findings, the presenters argue that the introduction of genre and inter-textuality to creative writing programs is an important issue that writing teachers should take into account.

Keywords: *creative writing, genre, intertextuality, students'writings, students' motivation*

Writing is fundamental in learning to think and express one's thoughts in ways that reach others. The ability to use language coherently and powerfully and to write in ways that connect with others across cultural boundaries and within communities is essential to active citizenship and to success in almost any profession. The writing course enables students to inquire, to discover, to inform, to persuade, to think, and to write creatively. The result of this is called creative writing.

A course in Creative Writing can do many things. It can give students opportunities for self-expression and catharsis. It can allow them to record emotions in words and explore human interaction and the workings of the human psyche. It can also provide nuanced ways of sending messages. Teaching creative writing is not easy because unlike its academic counterpart of writing classes that teach students to compose work based on the rules of the language, creative

writing is believed to focus on students' self-expression. But it is not an easy job to ask students to write creatively. The students usually have insufficient knowledge of what they have to write. To fulfill this purpose, students are invited to write based on genre and intertextuality.

Genre is one of the most important and influential concepts in language education, signifying what Ann Johns in Hyland (2004:3) has recently referred to as " a major paradigm shift" in literacy studies and teaching.

Genre-based writing teaching is concerned with what learners do when they write. An understanding of the concept allows writing teachers to identify the kinds of text that students will have to write in their target occupational, academic, or social contexts and to organize their courses to meet these needs. Curriculum materials and activities are therefore devised to support learners by drawing on texts and tasks directly related to the skills they need to participate effectively in the world outside the ESL classroom.

For writing teachers, genre pedagogies promise very real benefits. The concept of genres enables teachers to look beyond context, composing processes, and textual form to see writing as an attempt to communicate with readers – to better understand the ways that language patterns are used to accomplish coherent, purposeful text. For writing teachers, therefore, genre is a useful concept because it pulls together language, content, and contexts, offering teachers a means of presenting students with explicit and systematic explanation of the ways writing works to communicate.

In genre-based writing teaching, the students study in contexts where English is taught as a second or foreign language and they learn to write for different purposes and in different genres.

In teaching Writing, especially in Genre-Based Writing, the students are asked to write texts in certain genre. In this case the students are not only to write texts they want, but they have to consider the texts' social function, schematic structures, and their linguistic features.

In genre-based writing teaching, the teaching-learning cycle is based on the assumption that in order to write effectively, students first need to have an extensive understanding of and familiarity with the topic they are writing about. They also need models of the genre they are learning to write, in order to have clear idea of what it is that they are working towards. They need some support and guidance in learning how to organize what they know about the topic into an appropriate written text. They need opportunities to apply what they have learned about writing the text, as they 'go it alone' and write independently (Hammond, 1992: 21)

There are four stages in genre-based writing teaching.(Hyland, 2004:128) They are:

1. Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF)
   This stage is the point at which overall knowledge of the cultural and social context of the topic is built and developed. It is important for all learners to have an understanding of the topic before being expected to write about. Classroom tasks and activities at this stage enable learners to:

   a. Explore cultural similarities and differences related to the topic or text type.
   b. Practice grammatical patterns relevant to the topic or text type.
   c. Build up and extend vocabulary relevant to the topic or text type.

2. Modeling of Text
   This stage involves introducing the learners to a model of the genre they will be writing. In this stage, there is explicit focus on analyzing the genre through a model text related to the course topic. This stage involves preparing the learners for writing by:
   a. Focusing on genre
   b. Discussing the social function/purpose of the genre
   c. Discussing the schematic structure of the genre
   d. Discussing the grammatical features of the genre.
3. Joint Construction of Text
   At this stage, the aim is for the teachers to work with the learners to construct a similar text. The teacher first need to access the extent of the learners' knowledge and understanding of the field. Further work may need to be done before the actual construction of the texts begin. For example: gathering relevant information, researching the topic through additional reading, etc.
   The emphasis at this stage is on the teacher providing guidance and support in order to convert and reshape language from spoken to the written mode.
4. Independent Construction of Text
   Before moving on to this stage, the teacher needs to assess if the learners are ready to construct the text independently. Independent construction occurs only after group or pair construction has shown that the learners have gained control of the field and the mode. Classroom tasks and activities at this stage enable learners to: incorporate knowledge of schematic structure and grammatical features into their own writing, produce written texts that approximate control of the genre, read other examples of the genre in contexts outside the classroom, feel confident about writing the genre in contexts outside the classroom.

   Intertextuality, on the other hand, concerns the factors which make the utilisation of one text dependent upon knowledge of one or more previously encountered texts. (de Beaugrande& Dressler 1981: ll)

   A text therefore is a permutation of texts. In this sense, intertextuality is an indispensable feature of every text. A text emerges with its new identity from the past citation referring to further elements within the cultural periphery. Every text therefore stands by other texts. Intertextuality therefore is about the interplay of different kinds of texts maintaining a dialogic relationship between two or more texts in which one text resides and echoes within another text creating a new effect.

   By implementing genre and intertextuality-based approach in the teaching of writing, it is expected that the students are not only able to write certain genre

(text type) but also to create another text in which every text is related to and generates other texts.

METHOD
Subjects
This research was conducted in the Advanced Genre-Based Writing course of the fourth semester English department students of Faculty of languages and Letters Dian Nuswantroro University in 2010. The subjects were 20 students taking the course.

Research Procedure
The research was done by implementing genre and intertextuality-based approach in the teaching of writing. Genre-based writing teaching was implemented by applying four stages, they are building knowledge of the field, modeling, joint construction, and independent construction. While intertextuality-based approach was implemented by giving the students the knowledge of intertextuality and   asking them to write texts intertextually, meaning that every text they write should be related to and generates other texts.

Technique of Data Analysis
The data, in the form of students' writings, were scored and analyzed based on their social functions (idea development), schematic structures, linguistic features, and their intertextuality.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION
Kinds of Genre Written by the Students
As mentioned in the previous part, genre-based writing teaching approach which consists of four stages was implemented in order that the students are able to write several text types correctly.

In the first stage, the students were given explanation about certain text type they have to write; in the second stage, they were given a model of certain text type; in the third stage, they have to present certain text type in a group and explain it in front of the class, and in the last stage they were asked to write certain text type individually. In this study the students were asked to write four text types (genres), they are: argument, exemplum, narrative, and poetry. Their writings then were scored based on their idea development, schematic structure, linguistic features, and intertextuality . There is no score of intertextuality for argument text because this text becomes the basic text they should generate to. The scores of the students' writings can be seen on table 1.:

Table 1. Scores of the Students' Writings

Students' Number	Text Types			
	Argument	**Exemplum**	**Narrative**	**Poetry**
1	65	65	80	80
2	60	70	60	60
3	70	75	85	75
4	60	65	75	80
5	70	80	83	70
6	60	65	70	70
7	60	65	65	70
8	60	65	60	50
9	60	65	65	60
10	75	85	75	70
11	80	83	85	85
12	80	75	80	75
13	70	70	80	80
14	75	70	70	88
15	70	75	70	80
16	75	85	85	85
17	65	87	87	86
18	70	77	80	80
19	60	65	67	75
20	65	65	75	78
Average	**67.5**	**72.6**	**74.85**	**74.85**

Table 1 shows that the knowledge of genre and intertextuality is effective to improve the students' competence in writing texts. It can be seen from the increased mean score in every kind of genre. The mean score for argument was 67.5. In the exemplum text, the mean score increased by 5,1 point into 72.6, and it increased by 2.25 in narrative into 74.85. In the poetry , the mean score didn't increase because poetry was considered to be the most difficult text for the students.

Students' Arguments

Argument is a text type aiming at taking a position on some issue and justify it. It should have the following schematic structures: thesis, arguments and summing up.

Of 20 arguments written by the students, 10 arguments are categorized into good (the score is 70-84) and the rest are fair (the score is 60-69). The mistakes commonly found in their arguments are about the idea development, the schematic structures and linguistic features. The argument they wrote is not clear enough, some grammar mistakes such as tenses are still found in their texts.

Students' Exemplums

It is a text type which deals with incidents that are in some respects out of the usual, the incidents are dealt with so that they point to some more general value in the cultural context, and it invokes a moral judgement about a noteworthy

event. The schematic structures of this text should be (Abstract or Synopsis), Orientation, Incident (s), Judgement (s), (Reorientation plus Coda).

The score in the students' exemplums is better than those in arguments. Kinds of mistakes made by the students deal with schematic structure and linguistic features especially about tense. Some students wrote their arguments in present instead of past.

Students' Narratives

It is a non-factual text used in a variety of modes to amuse, entertain, and to deal with actual or vicarious experience in different ways. Stories deal with events that are problematic and which lead to a crisis or turning point of some kind. Unlike exemplum, the significance of the events lies in the manner of their construction in the text (how the story is told). The schematic structure of narrative should be orientation, complication, and reorientation.

There are only five students who made mistakes in schematic structure. The mistakes occurred in the absence of resolution, and utterances within their narratives. The wrong linguistic features are also found in their texts.

Students' Poetries

Poetry is a short piece of imaginative writing, of a personal nature and laid out in lines. The poetries the students wrote are interesting. But some students still neglected the rhymes or patterns of their poetries.

Intertextuality in the Students' Writings

As stated before, Intertextuality concerns the factors which make the utilisation of one text dependent upon knowledge of one or more previously encountered texts. In this study, the students were asked to write several text types, but the texts should be related to and generates other texts. 20 students being asked to write several genres were writing them intertextually. The topics they chose are *drugs, HIV Aids, rape, video game, TV program, robbery, abortion*, and *facebook.*

The first text type sthe students have to write is argument text. One of the evidence that students wrote intertextually can be seen in the following examples:

ARGUMENT

DANGER OF USING DRUGS
Thesis

Drugs is very dangerous for us. It can cause several bad effects to our body. Consuming drugs is also forbidden by our religion and our country.

Arguments

Commonly, when someone consumes drugs, they become unconscious and full of hallucination. Drugs also makes someone addicted. For our health, the bad effect of using drugs is very dangerous such as depression, liver disease, brain damage and others and finally it can cause death. So we must be aware to keep our body and stay away from drugs.

In moslem, drugs is forbidden because using drugs only get bad effect. If we use drugs, it means that we do the forbidden thing in our religion, so we will be sinful. Not only that, when someone consumes drugs, then, he will be drunk and do anything that may be against the rule in our religion such as doing free sex.

Drugs is also dangerous for teenagers' future. Drugs will destroy their future. Our generation will be destroyed and finally it will destroy our nation.

Summing up

So from now, we must be careful with drugs because it is very dangerous in terms of health, religion, and nationality.

After the students finished writing the first text, they have to write the second text, that is the exemplum text. The topic written for the examplum should be generated and related to the previous text. The following is an example of the students' exemplums.

EXEMPLUM

DRUGS IS NOT SOLUTION

Orientation

My story began when I was 17 years old. I joined with group motorcycle. I had many friends there with different characteristics. Almost everyday I met them. They taught about friendship, love and anything.

Incident

One night when I got a problem with my boyfriend, they gave me alcohol. I refused but they told me it could make me forget my problem. It was true I forgot my problem for a while. Since then, I always drank alcohol when I got problem.

One day, my father was angry with me because I went home late. He stopped me when he realized that my breath smell alcohol. Since that time my father was always angry with anything I done. I left my home and didn't want to go home again.

I met my friend, he knew that I got problems and he gave something that made me 'fly' and forgot my problem. He said that I could be happy forever if I consumed it. I was interested and tried it. I felt flying in the sky, I forgot my problem and made me smile all of the time until I was unconscious, I was addicted.

Judgement

Someday, I used drugs with my friends, suddenly the police came and took us into police office. I called my father but he didn't want to take me out from there. Finally I was in the jail for 3 years. I felt so embarrassed with my friends in the school, with other people who knew me and also with my family.

Reorientation

Since that time, I promise not to consume drugs or alcohol again although I got problems. Since in the jail, I got many experience which make me realize that I must be a good girl.

Then, the exemplum must be changed into narrative, but the content generate and related to the previous text. This is the result:

NARRATIVE

ALICE

Orientation

There was a young girl named Alice. She was 17 years old. She got sad experience in that age. She lived only with he mother. When her father still alive her family looked very happy but then it changed. Her mother was rarely at home, almost every night her mother left her alone. She believed that her mother left home because of work, but she still curious about her mom's job.

Complication

One night, she saw her mother with a man in the hotel. They looked very intimate. "Mommy" she yelled, "What are you doing here and who is he?" Alice was very angry to look her mother wear sexy dress. "Dear, I will explain it at home, Ok?" her mother replied. "No, mommy, I am very embarrassed to see your appearance like that!" she was angry and yelled but her mother left her to enter the hotel. "I will never go home! I hate you!" Her mother still ignored her, she was disappointed with her mother. Since that time she didn't want to listen anything! " I disappointed with you", she yelled. "Dear please listen, we need to talk, I will explain everything", her mother said. "No mommy, No!, she yelled. "Dear please, come back, I miss you please"

"You sell you body, you wear sexy dress, I am embarrassed mom!, She cried. "Listen dear, I am forced to do my job but I can't stop it because I need money.", her mother cried. Finally Alice turned off her mother's call because she was very angry.

Suddenly someone called her. "Alice". She looked around. "Peter!". She didn't believe that a man stood up in front of her. He looked more handsome, he was 22 years old. She loved him but he didn't know. "Alice, would you join with me in my friend's birthday?", Peter asked. "Okay, actually I need refreshing. Peter invited her to his house, Peter lied to her, but Alice wasn't angry. When Alice was sleeping, Peter injected liquid in her hand. "Oh, Peter, what are you doing?, she asked. "Just fell baby", he laughed. After that her head felt so hard, then she slept. The next morning she asked Peter to inject her again and again. She became drugs addicted. Almost everyday she used drugs. Drugs made her like 'fly' in the sky but actually she didn't feel happy forever. She felt headache until unconscious. She also ever drank her blood because she didn't get drugs. It made he powerless, high temperature, weak and couldn't think that drugs destroyed her body.

Resolution

Five months later, her mother found her. She saw that Alice cut her hand and drank her blood. Her mother cried and hug her. Alice couldn't feel anything. Her body was so cold. She just wanted to say to her mother that she loved her and said 'sorry'. But her mouth could open, her eyes were only tearing. She passed away in her mother's lap.

Finally, the narrative must be change to the poetry. Again, the content must be generated and related to the previous one. This text is, for the students, is considered to be the most difficult because writing a poetry needs a talent. This is an example of the students' poetries.

POETRY

I AM YOUR MASTER

I am your master
I will give you a sorrow
You are my slave
I will control your mind
Try me…
You will forget your problem
You will forget your dream
You are mine

> *It is easy to find me*
> *I am around you*
> *I have great power to destroy your life*
> *I am your master*
> *You are my slave*
> *Call me 'drugs'*
> *Take me….*
> *And let me to lead you go to hell.*

Applying intertextuality approach in the teaching of Writing enables the students to be more creative and motivated. Students are more involved, personally and imaginatively, in what they read by producing all kinds of writing

Discussion

The knowledge of genre and intertextuality can not be isolated from the teaching of writing. There are several advantages can be taken from the genre-based writing teaching. They are:

- Explicit. It makes clear what is to be learned to facilitate the acquisition of writing skills. The instructions given in genre-based writing teaching seek to offer students an explicit understanding of how the texts are structured and why they are written in the ways they are.
- Systematic. It provides a coherent framework for focusing on both language and contexts. The social purpose, schematic structures and the linguistics features are given clearly to the students to make them easy to write texts.
- Supportive. It gives teachers a central role in scaffolding student learning and creativity. It can be seen from the fact that the early stages of learning genre the teacher gives explanation and model, discusses the text, and analyzes the language features of the text the students have to write.
- Empowering**.** It provides access to the pattern of possibilities of variations in valued texts.
- Critical. It provides the resources for students to understand and challenge valued discourse.
- Conscious raising. It increases teacher awareness of texts to confidently advise students on their writing.
  While intextuality gives students the following advantages:
- It gives students more freedom to write what they want to write, not what they feel they should write;
- Students are more involved, personally and imaginatively, in what they read by producing all kinds of writing;
- It improves students' creative writing ability.

CONCLUSION

From the previous explanation, it can be concluded that teaching writing through genre and intertextuality-based approach gives the students several

advantages because it is explicit, systematic, supportive, empowering, critical, and conscious raising. By using genre-based approach, the students are able to analyze the social function, the schematic structures, and the linguistic features of several genres, and also to write several kinds of genres.

By intertextuality-based approach, the students are able to write a new genre that are related to the previous one. Students are also more involved personally and imaginatively in what they read by producing many kinds of genre, and it also improves their creative writing ability.

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