

Teaching English Grammar through a Genre-Based Approach for Students in a History of Islamic Civilization Department

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ARTICLE INFO

Received
18/11/23
Revised
15/12/23
Accepted
14/01/24

Keywords:

English Grammar,
Genre-Based
Approach, Song
lyrics, Teaching.

ABSTRACT

English learning for foreign learners continues to be necessary even formally up to the university level. One of the attempts to actualize this is by requiring undergraduate students to take English language learning courses at any degree. On the other side, teaching English has many approaches and methods, among the approaches to teaching English is the Genre-Based Approach. Therefore, this research aims to describe how was a Genre-Based Approach implemented in teaching English Grammar courses for first-year students at the History of Islamic Civilization department, at the State Islamic University of Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. This research indicates that integrating a Genre-Based Approach into teaching English Grammar courses enhances students' comprehension and production of grammatical structures within authentic communicative contexts. This research uses qualitative methods and observation techniques in collecting and analyzing the effectiveness of the Genre-Based Approach in teaching English Grammar. The results of the implementation of this genre-based approach showed a significant improvement in the writing ability of students of the history of Islamic civilization. Therefore, teaching English grammar through a genre-based approach opens up the way for the development of meaningful and relevant writing skills for the history of Islamic civilization students, preparing them to communicate effectively in academic and professional contexts.

How to cite: Saehu, A., Hanifah, A. (2024). Teaching English Grammar through a Genre-Based Approach for Students in a History of Islamic Civilization Department. *English Teaching and Linguistics Journal*, 5(1), 78-83.

I. INTRODUCTION

English is an indispensable global language in the globalization era, enabling individuals to communicate and participate in the global community. For those learning English as a second or foreign language, the learning process is often fraught with complications that require a profound comprehension of effective learning methods. English learners frequently face difficulties in comprehending grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation that are different from their native language. Likewise, they are faced with the complex task of comprehending and utilizing English idioms properly (Ellis, 2015).

In English learning, motivation serves a crucial role in students' progress. Solid motivation increases students' involvement in learning and accelerates their progress (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2018). Moreover, the utilization of technology in English learning has created new

opportunities for learners, providing access to apps, websites, and online resources that were designed to enrich the English learning experience (Chapelle, 2018).

English is a skill that is not only learned theoretically but also needs to be practiced so that the language develops (Warmadewi et al., 2021, p. 745). Teaching English to foreign learners is getting more important as globalization grows, and international mobility and business relations intensify. Various educational institutions and programs provide English courses for foreign learners, both in academic and business contexts. The major purpose of learning a foreign language is to prepare learners to attain the ability to communicate significantly (Maduwu, 2016, p. 5).

According to Harmer (2007), English teaching is an ‘art’ that demands a skill combination, comprehension, and appropriate application of methods to accomplish optimal effectiveness. In English teaching, some different approaches and methods have emerged through time, in line with the progression of learning theories and teaching and learning understandings. One way to facilitate English language teaching is the Genre-Based Approach. The Genre-Based Approach is a teaching method that emphasizes the use of genres or text types as the main foundation in learning English. The Genre-Based Approach emphasizes developing students’ understanding of a variety of unique ways to organize information in writing (Sari, 2019, p. 32).

There are several previous studies that the authors refer to. First is Ningsih’s (2015) article entitled “The Implementation of Genre-Based Approach in Teaching Reading: A Case Study at SMPN 17 in Pekanbaru”. Through the observation method, Ningsih’s research aimed to describe English teachers’ experiences of applying the Genre-Based Approach in teaching reading and identify teachers’ difficulties in teaching reading text types using the Genre-Based Approach. Second, this research was provoked by an article entitled “Genre-Based Approach to Writing Instruction for Students at an English Language and Literature Department” by Almacioğlu & Okan (2018). This research discusses the implementation of a Genre-Based Approach that affects English Language and Literature students’ capabilities in interpreting and composing academic texts. The last ignition is an article by De Oliveira & Lan (2014) entitled “Writing Science in an Upper Elementary Classroom: A Genre-based Approach to Teaching English Language Learners”. This research has two aims, how genre-based pedagogy impacts (1) to provide scaffolding on teaching procedural recalculation in science content areas with multiple English language learners (ELLs); and (2) to identify instructional practices for teaching upper elementary ELLs to write school-based genres.

Based on the research background and previous studies above, this research aims to describe how was a Genre-Based Approach implemented in teaching English Grammar courses for first-year students at the History of Islamic Civilization department, at the State Islamic University of Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. This research has its significance; it is the application of the Genre-Based Approach in teaching English to foreign learners has revealed its substantial impact on language learning outcomes. Moreover, this research will underscore the positive influence of the Genre-Based Approach on students’ writing skills and critical thinking abilities. The distinguishing between this research and the previous studies above is the use of a Genre-Based Approach in teaching English Grammar courses for undergraduate students is conducted by providing the text type from song lyrics.

II. METHODS

This research applied a qualitative method involving observation techniques and teaching practice in an attempt to gain an in-depth understanding of English Grammar courses for the History of Islamic Civilization students through the Genre-Based Approach. According to Silverman (2004), qualitative methods are defined as a research approach that aims to

comprehend the social meaning of human phenomena through the interpretation of non-numerical data. This research method is designed to specify in a detailed way how the process of teaching and learning English Grammar in the History of Islamic Civilization department is implemented in the Genre-Based Approach. Involving student participants as research subjects, this research aims to identify effective teaching practices and challenges that students may face in understanding this complex material through the Genre-Based Approach.

Then this research also used observation techniques to directly document the interaction between the author as a lecturer and students during the English Grammar course for students in the History of Islamic Civilization department. Observation techniques permit researchers to directly collect data from real-life situations, and facilitate observing behaviors, interactions, and contexts without significant interference (Mills & Gay, 2019). These observations include the use of genre-based approaches, student responses, and class dynamics. Through direct monitoring of the learning process, the observation technique in this study was able to identify effective teaching strategies and respond more quickly to students' requirements.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

According to Truong (2017, p. 193), the genre-based approach highlights that language is utilized and comprehended within a context. In the genre-based approach, four techniques were applied in teaching English Grammar to students in the History of Islamic Civilization department. There are (1) Building knowledge of the field, (2) Modelling of the text, (3) Joint construction of text, and (4) Independent construction of text. These concepts work together to create a well-rounded and progressive learning experience, allowing students to build their understanding of the genre, internalize the necessary structures and language, and ultimately become more skilled and independent writers in the context. For this teaching session, the authors occasionally had to teach about Adverb, one of the parts of speech in English grammar, through a genre-based approach using song lyrics as the type of text.

First, the Building Knowledge of the Field technique refers to the attempt to help students understand specific content or areas of knowledge related to a particular genre. Teachers help students build their knowledge of the context, terminology, and relevant information for the genre being studied. This ensures that students have a solid base of knowledge before they start creating texts in that genre. This technique constructs the students' knowledge of the topic to be learned about (Saksono, 2022, p. 404). So in this first technique, the authors explain the basic material of the Adverb such as its definition, function, and types of Adverb to the students. In this method, students are also explained the position of adverbs in the sentence structure and basic analysis of the characteristics of sentences containing adverbs.

Second, the Modelling of the Text technique involves presenting suitable examples of texts that are appropriate to the genre being studied. The teacher models how the structure of the text is formed, how the language is used, and how the communicative purpose is achieved. Through this modeling, students can observe and understand the key elements of the text. In this technique there are four procedures, the teacher selects a particular genre of text to build the classroom practices, then discusses, and deconstructs, the students are expected to gain understanding, and then the students acquire the vocabulary and grammatical of the language (Dirgeyasa, 2016, p. 48). In this technique, students are given several texts that contain adverbs, and then the teacher points out and clarifies the position and function of adverbs in those texts. For example, "*Sofia bought a bouquet at her friend's florist yesterday after school.*" The phrases that include adverbs in that sentence are "*at her friend's flourish*" as an adverb of place and "*yesterday after school*" as an adverb of time.

Third, the Joint Construction of Text technique is a collaborative activity where teachers and students work together to analyze texts in a particular genre. The teacher provides guidance and support, while students actively participate in analyzing and composing the text. This approach allows students to practice and get immediate feedback while continuing to build their

understanding of the genre. This technique is conducted so that students collaborate and discuss texts containing adverbs in the context of song lyrics. Knowledge is best built when students collaborate, and support each other to stimulate new ideas, and develop and reflect on new knowledge (Tuan, 2011, p. 1472). To enhance further understanding, students are directed to collaborate to determine the function of adverbs in song lyrics text. For example, the song lyrics "I Love You So" by The Walters, said, "*I just need someone in my life to give it structure.*" In this first exercise, students were generally capable of explaining that the phrase "*in my life*" is an adverb of place. But rarely students can explain that "*to give it structure*" is a conjunctive adverb.

In the fourth technique, students are allowed to create texts independently in the genres they have learned. This reflects the culmination of the learning process, where students can apply the knowledge and skills they have developed during the learning. Students are expected to produce genre-appropriate texts with a higher level of independence. Once students are given an understanding and example of a text, they will gain a firm grasp of the material and will find it easier to construct other texts independently (Wijaya et al., 2020, p. 96).

Participant Students	Data Texts	Types of Adverb
S1	<i>You'll never walk alone</i>	Adverb of frequency
S2	<i>Yesterday, love was such an easy game to play</i>	Adverb of time
S3	<i>I really really really really really really like you</i>	Adverb of degree
S4	<i>That I miss you badly?</i>	Adverb of manner
S5	<i>I don't belong on this planet</i>	Adverb of place
S6	<i>Maybe, we can be each other's company</i>	Adverb of modality
S7	<i>Don't stop me now</i>	Adverb of time
S8	<i>Maybe one day you'll feel lonely</i>	Adverb of modality and of time
S9	<i>Light will guide you home</i>	Adverb of place
S10	<i>I wish you were here with me</i>	Adverb of place

Table 1. Students Responses for Independent Construction of Text

The teaching of English grammar is a critical issue in language education, and a firm grasp of grammar is the basis for students' ability to communicate effectively. In an attempt to improve grammar teaching, a systematic and holistic approach is needed, in this teaching a genre-based approach is used. The following are the procedures conducted during the teaching of English Grammar with the genre-based approach:

Holistic Approach, the genre-based approach creates holistic grammar learning by positioning grammar in the context of texts that are appropriate to students' communicative requirements. Genre Analysis, the teachers assist students in analyzing the structures and language features commonly found in a particular type of text, opening up opportunities for an in-depth comprehension of grammar in real-world contexts. Field Knowledge Building is the process initiated by constructing students' knowledge of specific terms and concepts in a particular field of study associated with the genre being studied. In text Modeling, the teachers provide concrete examples of how grammar is implemented in specific text contexts, guiding students through the modeling process. Active Learning, students are invited to actively participate in the learning process, engaging in the analysis and understanding of genre-based texts. Shared Activities involve collaborative activities between teachers and students in composing texts that are appropriate to the genres that have been learned. Feedback, the teachers

offer feedback in a directed manner, and provide constructive guidance related to the use of grammar in the text. Contextual and Relevant, grammar education becomes more contextual and relevant as students correlate grammar principles with communicative purposes in specific genres. Applying Skills in Everyday Contexts, the genre-based approach allows students to apply their grammar skills in relevant daily or professional contexts. Peaking at Independent Text Creation, the process culminates with students being able to create texts independently, combining their grammar knowledge with their understanding of a particular genre.

Effective teaching of English grammar requires a careful and structured procedure. In following these steps, teachers may create a deep learning experience and develop a firm comprehension of grammar in students. This process is not just about comprehending grammar rules, but also about empowering students to utilize grammar as an effective communication tool in various contexts.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the discussions above, it can be concluded that the use of a Genre-Based Approach in teaching English Grammar to students in the History of Islamic Civilization department proved to provide a contextual and relevant approach. By integrating an understanding of grammar through song lyrics, students can develop writing skills that not only meet academic standards but also prepare them for effective communication in their field of study. This approach offers a solid foundation for the development of writing and analyzing skills, as well as creating a close connection between English and historical studies. However, the challenge and difficulty for students in learning English Grammar is the lack of awareness to acquire English vocabulary.

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