

The Effectiveness of Integrated Writing Lesson with Genre-based Approach to Improve the Students' Writing Quality

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ABSTRACT

University students are commonly assigned to write a paper after gaining some information from either written or spoken sources or both. Unfortunately, many students still find it difficult to write such a paper. They are usually confused about generating and constructing their ideas based on the information they gained from the sources. They are also reluctant to consider the correct structure of the text they should develop. The purpose of this study was to determine how well-integrated writing classes using the genre-based approach may raise students' writing proficiency. The study employed a quasi-experimental design in order to address the research inquiries. The researcher examined whether the combination of explicit integrated writing, which included reading-listening-and-writing activities, and a Genre-based Approach could help the students write better compared to the traditional separated-skills product-based approach. 180 first-semester students from various study programs participated in this research. The findings indicated that the student's writing quality in the experimental class outperformed the students' writing in the control class. The modelling of the text and joint-construction steps in the Genre-based Approach worked well in assisting students' writing process. It noticeably suggested the importance of giving an exemplary model of text and facilitating group discussion before the students finalized their writing.

Keywords: *Genre-based Approach, integrated writing, joint-construction, writing quality*

INTRODUCTION

The idea to integrate two or more skills in the English class has long been raised. However, it is still rarely implemented in real practice. Some teachers are not familiar with it yet (Sumarno, 2015; Thuong et al., 2020) and just teach the skills separately. There are many benefits of presenting the skills integrated into the classroom (Al-Dosari, 2016; Mazulfah et al., 2023; Walsh Dolan, 1985; Yang & Plakans, 2012), considering that some skills, such as reading, listening, and writing are similar and can be made interactive.

To begin with, integrating the skills can provide real language experience for students by interacting naturally using English (Akram & Malik, 2010). When doing communication daily, it is impossible to apply speaking or listening skills only. A person needs to comprehend the message from his interlocutor by listening attentively, and then respond to it by speaking. Hence, at least two skills are required to conduct successful communication in the natural setting. Teaching the skills separately will not train the students in real-world circumstances. A teacher should consider integrating the skills during the teaching and learning process in order to provide the students with and get the students accustomed to natural real language experiences.

Secondly, students will learn the content knowledge and skills practice simultaneously (Akram & Malik, 2010; Heritage et al., 2020; Mahan, 2022). When integrating the skills, the teacher can insert

content knowledge in the receptive skills and then being evaluated whether the students comprehend it or not via productive skills. By doing so, the students will not only exercise the skills but while practicing their skills their knowledge also increases.

Next, it enables students to analyze information, construct arguments, and develop their ideas through the integration of skills (Erdoğan, 2019; Mahan, 2022; Pardede, 2020). Integrated skills teaching can be implemented by combining at least one receptive skill and one productive skill. As explained before, content knowledge can be inserted in the receptive skills to be analyzed and later on be reconfirmed or responded to by the students. Information gained from the receptive skills will be the basis for the students can construct their argument and develop their ideas. These simultaneous practices are higher-order thinking skills exercises in nature which should be broadly applied (Akram & Malik, 2010; Pardede, 2020; Walsh Dolan, 1985). For example in reading-listening-writing integrated skills, the students are given opportunities to analyze, compare, and contrast information from the reading passage and listening. After that, they are asked to construct their responses about the content of reading and listening in written form.

Fourth, integrated skill lesson involves students actively in the learning process because they are both receiving information and then producing their responses actively. They are not only passive consumers of information but also producers of texts either spoken or written. This way will make the students actively engage during the teaching and learning process. Finally, integrated skills will improve reading, listening, and writing skills simultaneously as those skills are practiced at the same times (Newton et al., 2018).

Furthermore, several studies have shown that proficient readers also become proficient writers (Spivey, 1983; Spivey & King, 1989) and Good readers are usually good writers. (Gillespie & Lerner, 2008; Strickland & Morrow, 1991). It entails that reading and writing are connected and affect each other. The research have validated the strong correlations between the growth of reading and writing skills (Kroll, 2003; Tierney & Pearson, 1983). Similarly, reading-based writing is a crucial part of academic instruction across disciplines, as evidenced by research (Baba, 2009; Carson, 2001). Tierney & Shanahan (1991) concluded that when reading and writing are taught concurrently, students are exposed to a wider range of reasoning processes than when they are taught separately. The combination varies the learning activities and invite students to explore more thus their skills improve more.

Integrated reading-writing (IRW) lessons also had been a big project of teaching method alternation in the US schools. Many studies tried to reveal the best practices and challenges when implementing this integrated lesson (Pierce, 2017; Saxon et al., 2016; Stahl, 2017). They noted the IRW approach is thought to be a developmental education. Additionally, IRW was clearly effective in the setting in which it was provided, as evidenced by the fact that, in the first two semesters, course passage rates increased to nearly double the levels of the preceding academic year's separate developmental reading and writing passage rates (Pierce, 2017).

Considering this success, this research examined the integrated skills lesson during the English course to help the students improve their English skills. Furthermore, a Genre-based Approach was also implemented in this research by the integrated lesson. It refers to a method of teaching and learning that focuses on the recognition and use of text structures and language patterns in different genres (Almacioğlu & Okan, 2018; Sari, 2019). Several researches have indicated the benefits of implementing this approach for any kind of subjects (Mazulfah et al., 2023; Sumarno,

2015; Thuong et al., 2020), including writing classes, yet few studies try to examine its effectiveness in the integrated reading-listening-writing lesson.

Nagao (2018) found the awareness of generic structure and interpersonal meaning in writing argumentative essays among EFL students may be improved by using a genre-based approach to writing education. This is helpful for instructing students on how to write detailed reports (Nagao, 2022). Similarly, Montero-Arévalo's (2019) findings showed that following the adoption of the genre-based approach, students' writing, motivation, autonomy, and reading comprehension all increased. Consequently, the students demonstrated their ability to comprehend, elucidate, and replicate the genres included in the study. Many other studies also noted that the use of the Genre-based Approach has been found to support students with problems in writing (Chen, 2021; Herman et al., 2020).

This background underlies this study which was conducted to investigate the effectiveness of integrated reading-listening-writing lessons with a Genre-based approach to improve the students' writing quality. Precisely, this research observed the effects of each step in the Genre-based approach, namely (1) Building knowledge of the field, where the teacher gives background to relate the current topic to the precious ones; (2) Modeling of the text, where the teacher provides some models of exemplary texts; (3) Joint construction of the text, where the teacher put the students into groups to discuss and do some projects related to the topic; and (4) Individual construction of the text, where finally each student develop their text, and is evaluated to see whether they understand the material or not. These all steps may influence the students' writing hence the researcher took notes to see the effect of each of these. In comparison, the traditional (separated-skills) product-based writing approach was implemented in the control class to observe the difference.

METHOD

This research implemented a quasi-experimental design. 180 students from various study programs participated in this study. They were randomly selected and divided into the experimental and control classes. Their English competence was varied, but based on their initial institutional English proficiency test, their level of English ranges from low intermediate to moderate intermediate levels.

The instruments used in this study were reading-listening-writing assignments for the post-test of both classes, a writing evaluation rubric, and researcher's observation notes. The genre being taught in both classes was compare and contrast essay.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This study aims to describe the effectiveness of integrated writing lessons with a genre-based approach to improve the students' writing quality. The results of data analysis based on students' writing ability score data, showed that the average for the experimental class that implemented integrated writing lessons with a genre-based approach was much higher than the control class that used traditional separated-skills product-oriented. This can be seen in Table 1 and the distribution of data can be seen in Figure 1 which is presented in histogram form.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

	Class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Writing_score	Experiment class	91	83.91	3.711	.389
	Control class	89	80.31	4.420	.469

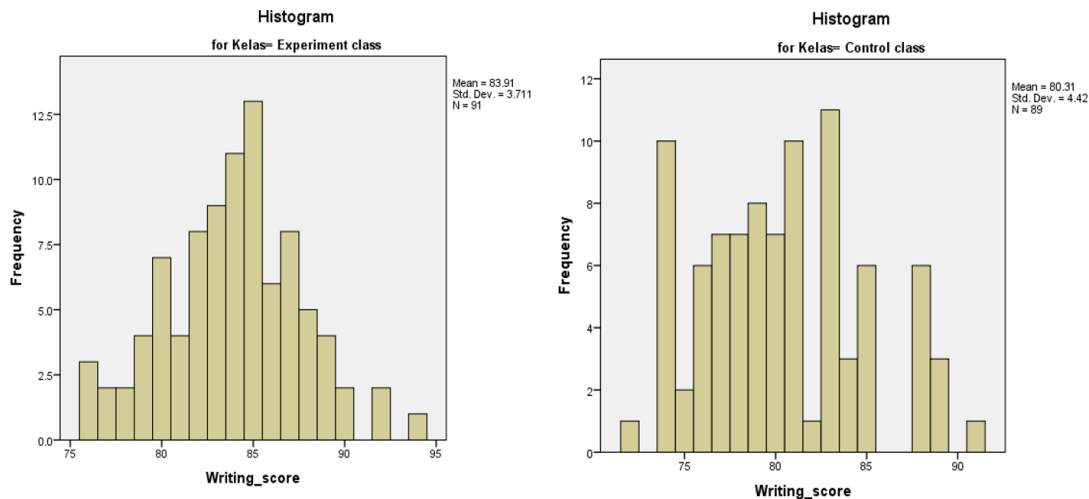


Figure 1. Distribution of data on students' writing abilities in the experimental and control classes

Table 1 shows that the average writing ability of experimental class students reached 83.91, which was superior to the control class which only obtained 80.31. Even though it is superior to descriptive statistical calculations, it cannot be ascertained whether this difference is significant or not. To ensure that the difference in average student writing ability is indeed significant, further statistical analysis needs to be carried out. In this case, a parametric test was carried out on the average difference in students' writing abilities. To determine which statistical test is suitable for the data obtained, it is necessary to test the normality and homogeneity of the data first, as the results are shown in Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 2. Tests of Normality

	Class	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Writing_score	Experiment class	.081	91	.189	.986	91	.460
	Control class	.090	89	.072	.964	89	.015

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 3. Test of Homogeneity of Variance

		Levene			
		Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Writing_score	Based on Mean	3.819	1	178	.052
	Based on Median	3.579	1	178	.060
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	3.579	1	175.883	.060
	Based on trimmed mean	3.666	1	178	.057

Table 2 shows that from the normality test with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, data on students' writing abilities in both the experimental and control classes had a normal distribution. Next, the data variance homogeneity test was carried out using the Levene Test (based on mean) showing that the data variance was homogeneous. Because the data is normally distributed and homogeneous, testing the average difference in students' writing abilities in the two classes was carried out using the t-test. In this test, the "Equal variances assumed" option was chosen because it had been tested based on the data homogeneity test in Table 3. The t-test results are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	<i>Mean Difference</i>	<i>Std. Error Difference</i>	<i>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</i>	
								Lower	Upper	
Writing _score	Equal variances assumed	3.819	.052	5.919	178	.000	3.597	.608	2.398	4.797
	Equal variances not assumed			5.908	171.471	.000	3.597	.609	2.395	4.799

Table 4 shows the significance value of the "t-test for Equality of Means" reaching $0.000 < 0.05$. This means that there is a significant difference between the writing quality of students taught using integrated writing lessons with a genre-based approach compared to students taught using traditional separated-skills product-oriented learning.

Discussion

The findings indicated that the student's writing quality in the experimental class outperformed the students' writing in the control class. It means that integrated reading-listening-writing lesson with the Genre-based approach effectively helps the students improve their writing qualities compared to the traditional separated-skills product-based approach. This is similar to several other research results (Ganapathy et al., 2022; Montero-Arévalo, 2019; Nagao, 2018, 2022).

The researcher's notes showed in detail that among the steps in the Genre-based approach, the modeling of the text and joint construction of the text stages, have a lot of positive impacts to overcome the students' writing problems. It was obvious compared to the traditional method in which the students gained limited exposure to exemplary texts at the beginning of the class. In the Genre-based Approach class, the students were given numerous models of essays and were asked to analyze some of the samples to make them more cognitively engaged. Besides, the joint-construction stage also provided students with group activities, in which they could discuss their problems more comfortably with their friends to overcome their difficulties. This result is in line with Herman's et al., (2020) study which noticed that the use of the Genre-based Approach has been found to support students with problems in writing.

Furthermore, the integrated reading-listening-writing class also trained the students to be more accustomed to higher-order thinking skills. The activities enable students to analyze information from reading and listening, construct arguments, and develop their ideas through the integration of reading, listening, and writing. This result is similar to some research results (Baba, 2009; Carson, 2001; Perkins & Jiang, 2020) which highlight the function of integrated skills practices as a crucial element of academic instruction across disciplines that support rapid learning (Saxon et al., 2016).

Compared to the control class in which the skill being taught is only writing or in other words, the students were directly writing after the explanation, integrated skills give students more opportunities for their literacy development as told by Graham et al. (2012) who said although writing is regarded as a key literacy ability, many children routinely perform below expectations because mastering complicated writing abilities takes time and high-quality education (Graham et al., 2012).

Related to the writing evaluation rubric, it is also obvious that the students in the experimental class wrote more complex ideas rather than the control class students. This is because they can synthesize information from reading and listening before writing. They could also organize their ideas properly because they have practiced analyzing the role models. In terms of vocabulary, since the experimental class received inputs from the passage and listening, their choice of words became more varied too. However, for the grammar, students in both classes showed almost similar competence. It suggests future studies and instructions to provide students with a more explicit grammar discussion to train their grammar usage in writing.

CONCLUSION

Writing papers for university students typically involves gathering knowledge from spoken, written, or both sources. Sadly, a lot of students still struggle to compose these kinds of papers. The purpose of this study was to determine how well-integrated writing classes using the genre-based approach may raise students' writing proficiency. The results showed that the experimental class students' writing fared better than the control group kids' writing. The Genre-based Approach's text modelling and collaborative creation phases were effective in supporting students' writing. It made a clear recommendation on how important it is to provide accurate examples and facilitate group discussions before students complete their written work.

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