

## THE TEACHING WRITING APPROACHES: GENRE: SOLUTION TOWARD “UN” READING TEST PHENOMENON

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### Abstrak

*Kemampuan menulis Bahasa Inggris adalah salah satu kemampuan berbahasa yang dianggap paling kompleks karena melibatkan berbagai kemampuan kognitif dan linguistik. Secara konvensional, pembelajaran menulis dilakukan dengan pendekatan genre dimana siswa mengembangkan karangan secara bertahap mulai dari penggalian ide hingga merevisi karangan. Proses itu sendiri tidak terlalu jelas tahapannya, namun secara umum meliputi kegiatan penggalian ide, penyusunan draf, dan perbaikan/revisi. Pengamatan terhadap pembelajaran menulis tersebut menunjukkan bahwa tidak ada pemantauan yang pasti terhadap proses menulis, dalam arti, proses yang dilakukan dengan susah payah tersebut hanya diakui melalui penilaian terhadap produknya, yaitu draf terakhir atau hasil karangan. Dalam mata pelajaran Bahasa Inggris, menulis paragraf merupakan keterampilan yang paling mudah diukur dengan menggunakan test obyektif sehingga paling banyak digunakan dalam Ujian, seperti Ujian Nasional, Ujian Tengah Semester, Ujian Akhir Semester, Ujian Kenaikan Kelas, dan bahkan Ulangan Harian. Ini membuktikan bahwa kemampuan menulis harus dipandang sebagai keterampilan yang sangat penting sehingga peserta didik perlu mendapat pembelajaran yang baik supaya mereka mahir dalam memahami wacana berbahasa Inggris.*

*Kata Kunci: Teaching Writing, Genre Approaches, “UN” Reading Test*

### A. INTRODUCTION

The implication of approaches to the teaching of writing with the participation of Genre toward the current issues and evidences of teaching writing in Indonesia have resulted is using writing in authentic meaningful communicative purposes. Additional approaches and theories would possibly be included due to the certain importance. Our ancient had written a lot of master pieces for us the recent generation so that we know what existed in the past that we dig for our future development. Scientists found evidences of ancient tracks in the shape of writing. Through long evaluation, it is recently decided that those evidences were on purpose of communicative writing, meaning writing was a media of communication in meaningful authentic way. Writing has been surviving its original value until the nowadays in the instances of journalistic report, letters and correspondence, publications and advertisements, notions and

announcement, and so forth. Interestingly, those writings are applied differently in the styles of heterogeneous communities and societies that eventually generated genre.

### **1. The Current Teaching Writing at Secondary School in Indonesia (The UN Paradigm)**

In the new curriculum of Indonesian education KTSP which applies the integration of English skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing which are generally divided into two major parts both receptive and productive skills are not exactly performed as the basic purpose of integrated skills that it is only receptive skills given strong emphasize than the productive. This imbalance emphasize was shown in the activities of most literatures, students worksheets, and even how it is assessed in the national examination (UN). Clearly the productive skills; speaking and writing receive less exposure than listening and reading. In addition, writing gets less attention than speaking. In short, writing takes delivery of least disclosure out of those four skills.

However, when it is analyzed in deeper consideration regarding many aspects affecting the achievement and understanding of those two receptive skills especially reading that is most tested in numerous counts of questions in UN, students' knowledge of writing will surely help students accomplish the UN successfully. This phenomenon is raised because most of reading materials used in UN have strong relationship with writing knowledge. For instance; the reading text was about understanding the form of letter, invitation, advertisement, narrative, argumentative, expository, persuasive, and other types of writing that are considered as authentic reading materials since they are applied communicatively in daily life. Hence, since the basic form of those authentic reading materials are activating writing as it's foundation, emphasizing the teaching of writing should contribute extra benefits on answering UN test which mostly testing authentic reading materials. The following elaboration is expected to be able to give details on how writing skills knowledge support students in answering reading texts test:

#### **a. First, Paragraph Texts (Narrative, Expository, Persuasive, Argumentation, etc)**

Narrative text frequently is tested in UN, however it is only in reading not in writing since there is no writing test in UN. Subsequent to my investigation on some UN test sheets through sequenced years from 2010 to 2015, narrative text was tested in following instance of questions; candidate (student who joined UN) was asked to determine what kind of text is it

(narrative text). Though for the test maker, this was a simple question that there is no need to think any longer; however, for some students it is tricky enough to decide this kind of text. Possibilities for students who have learned in reading class about the types and indicators of narrative text may answer this question easily. Indeed, in reading class, students usually merely remembering this style of text through reading. However, this narrative text would surely easily recognized by students if they have adequate exposure and involved in the process of producing narrative text through writing since students know many details of narrative text from their direct experiences. Other questions such as finding the main idea of the text, deciding characters, and so forth would be easily answered by the students since they were experienced to be a writer of narrative text, so that they know what mostly writer expected the reader to know on what the writer mainly about. Furthermore, the students are already familiar with the structure of the text. This is technically equal with the rest of paragraph texts like expository, persuasive, descriptive, and the like.

**b. Second, Short Texts (Advertisements, Invitations, Business Letter, Announcements, etc)**

The remaining texts tested in UN are about advertisements, invitations, business letter, announcements, memo and so forth. Frequently asked questions in UN represented in these subsequent instances; candidate was asked to decide what is the type of the text (advertisements, invitations and the like), mention the purpose of the text, pointed who is inviting and who is receiving (invitation letter), what is the purpose of this text (advertisement), and other form of questions that involved both literally and inferentially which was modified and combined to those short text (advertisements, invitations, announcements, and so forth). Technically, this procedure is equally designed with the paragraph text, meaning, the students experience in creating and producing those types of text enable students pile off the details of the texts through their experience as writer of those types of texts.

Generally, this consideration is offered with the support of many wises that those practice will last longer than those who merely listen and read.

**B. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

**1. Approaches toward the teaching of writing**

The following description of theories in writing will focus on genre. It is intended to support the critics on the lack of writing exposure of Indonesian

teaching of writing in secondary school by providing meaningful variation, activities, importance, emphasis on the teaching of writing.

## **2. Genre: communicative events and communicative purposes**

Commonly, when a writer is attempting to match a text to a social purpose in which the readers are emphasizing on the form and content, he is organizing them that this phenomenon called genre. The basic idea of genre is a comprising of communicative events that shares communicative purposes John Swales (1990). Questions may appear on how the knowledge of genre help teacher teaches writing and students can use it in daily life. For the teacher, it is apparently evidenced that the importances of genre guide the students using it appropriately. For students, both the relationship in their need for academic demands like examinations and the implication in the social function would be best accommodated.

Contrasting to the phenomenon between the frequent availability of writing genre in the reading text of UN and the less volume of exposure on writing given in daily class, notion from Jim Martin (1989) is powerful enough to raise critics on the phenomenon. Martin (1989) says that school children should be aware of the genre core as they became writers, Jim also discusses various categories of writing done in school, for instance; report (impersonal account in facts), description (personal account of imagined of factual events and phenomena), recount (stories about the writer's own experiences), and procedure (objective of accounts of processes taking place in the world around the writer which generalize experience). In fact, Indonesian curriculum for secondary school student does not provide that kind of instruction in the teaching of writing.

Through out the Martin's opinion, it is clearly concluded that many kinds of writing need to be taught in the school system. Martin also emphasis students need attention of the fundamental differences between descriptions and report that teacher can help students to write consistently in each genre. Consequently, if the instruction is not given, students will have a capacity to express only their views of the world.

The phenomenon of UN demand and the existence of teaching writing in secondary school also invite the factor of "Reader expectation and Schematic structure" to appear. As stated by Swales (1990) that the rationale of genre shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style. This idea shares reader's expectation relates to the "schematic

structure". The schematic structure is used by the students when they are negotiating meaning in writing.

The subsequent elaboration will reasons the relation between "schematic structure" of writing and the demand of UN phenomenon. Let's begin with what so called "formal schemata". Formal schemata here are schemata for a writer to produce appropriately worded and organized texts for specific social purposes. In negotiating meaning in writing, formal schemata is combined with procedural and content schemata so that it is possible for both writer and reader to identify the examples of specific genre. The idea is like working in an investigative way, writer and reader can begin to draw some conclusions about what happens in the texts, what stages frequently found in such texts, what verb forms are most common, how measures of liquids and solids are described so that they can experiment with their own ideas. This investigation can accomplish process oriented approaches to writing to powerful effect as the writer and reader. Then, when it is negotiated with the phenomenon of UN, the obvious statement raised will be that there is a strong relationship between writing and reading that by accomplishing writing procedures the one is converted automatically to be investigative reader. Clearly, when students are faced to those kinds of texts which are basically the subjects of writing area, they will easily recognize any features of those texts as they master how the texts are configured. In short, when students know the system, they know how to fix problem by identifying how the system works.

### **3. Reading and Writing**

Through out the preceding evidences, hence it is quite sufficient to state the relationship between "writing and reading". There two possibilities on how both writing and reading influence one another. First, reading influences writing. Commonly stated that a good writer is a good reader, writers begin writing when they have enough knowledge to write. Second, writing influences reading. The better a writer master knowledge of composition, the better he recognize the features of text he reads. Although there are two possibilities on how "writing and reading" are related, the discussion will focus only the latter for the demand of the main discussed problem with the phenomenon of UN.

As cited from Strickland and Morrow (1988) that children construct their own knowledge of reading and writing through experimentation and discovery. By bringing the knowledge they already have to new situations, they make connections and look for patterns in printed words. Through this finding, how students

accomplish the UN test that mostly delegates reading material from writing subjects can be solved by providing enough exposure in writing class that they will read based on their experiment of discovery of writing conventions by identifying the patterns of the printed words as they learn it from writing class.

This is actually matching with the guideline of curriculum of Indonesian education that emphasis on meaningful communication that is converted into simple term called authenticity. Meaning the materials should be modified as authentic as possible for its real use of daily life. The guideline of Indonesian education curriculum is actually in line with Morrow arguments from his research in 1988 that children learn reading and writing by actively using them for real purposes. A major task for the teacher is to structure the environment so that children can explore language in meaningful ways. Interestingly, though the guideline is already clear, the implementation, strategies and development in its real field was almost totally indifferent. Though it is quite frequent experts in language teaching is ringing bells to the misconceptions how the curriculum is appropriately implemented, the fear of UN phenomenon, and other factors such as political importance, less of human resources of teachers and so forth, put aside the dedication of writing as the basic influence of reading test appear in UN.

Evidences through activities in school programs have spoken that they are trapped in anxieties and fear of failure in UN, so that they teachers are trapped in focusing the use of drilling method rather than meaningful strategies in classroom activities. These factors are considered to be the cause of the ignorance toward writing exposure out of reading drills by the creative less of frightened teachers.

#### **4. The Offered Solution: Teaching Writing Strategies Matches to the Need of the Current Condition**

The following teaching writing strategy is considered beneficial for both the need for UN and the origin of teaching writing purpose. The basic idea of this strategy is that it is not good to avoid the problems of UN phenomenon, but to face and tackle the problems by following the rule stream of curriculum with touches of modification rather than trapped in confusion that eventually do the drilling methods.

Considering to when children write to communicative meaning that their writing is purposeful, it is considerable to provide students activities that enable them use writing in real task. This kind of strategies is not applied in the school

program in Indonesia. There are no such both real writing activities and even classroom activities in academic setting.

Modifying writing class in a real situation could bring students challenges that contain so much fun rather than pressuring class task. Practicing writing such as memo, invitation letter, pamphlet, and other kinds of writing that appear in UN test should be modified and implemented in real task. For instance; the teacher to write invitation letter of a party to the other class, certainly the teacher must teach them first on how to compose invitation letters complete with its features and function and through the genres. Soon, they will apply it in a meaningful ways that they can remember longer with great comprehension rather than ends up with teacher's scoring. Another sample activity is when there is an event done by a class, they should participate in making such advertisement of their event and providing pamphlet, again teacher must give them enough armor on how that kind of writing is appropriately written, as soon as they practice it in real task, they will meant it longer. For writing of paragraph base text like narrative, expository, argumentative, and persuasive and so on, teacher can do these activities: In training students write narrative text, teacher can apply activity like journal writing, wall magazine and so on. For expository writing, let students to participate school magazine that they can share their knowledge. The remaining writing task would be about the same. The basic idea is to provide students enough exposure in the form of media that they find place to display their work. Their exploration of genres will facilitate them acquaintances in recognizing any kinds of texts.

### **C. CONCLUSION**

As stated by Hayes (1996) that writing is also a social artifact and is carried out in a social writing, what people write, how people write, and who people write to is shaped by social convention and by our history of social interaction. Hence, the genres in which people write were invented by other writers and the phrases people write often reflect phrases earlier writers have written.

Finally it comes to the short statement representing the whole passage. As the foundation of Indonesian curriculum is to provide authentic meaningful tasks, thus UN test mostly explore authentic writing materials although it is largely in the form of reading test. Hence, the combination of genre and writing exposure on real tasks will help students well comprehend features of genre and use it in real tasks so that consequently they easily recognize and analyze it though it is given in the reading test of

UN. The more they practice the genre, the more they familiar to the system, the easier they accomplish UN reading test.

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