

## INTEGRATING A DIGITAL WALL INTO THE GENRE-BASED APPROACH IN THE EFL CLASSROOM

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**Abstract:** It has been noted that using a genre-based approach in the classroom helps developing the writing abilities of students. However, as technology has advanced, the teacher and students can use technology as a tool to accomplish learning objectives. This study aims to look at the re-contextualization of the genre-based approach incorporating the use of a digital wall in classroom activities. The research method applied is qualitative and primarily phenomenological, focusing on the teachers' experiences using technology integrating a genre-based approach. The findings of this study show that the teachers had successfully carried out the stages of genre-based approach integrated with technological tools. The use of a digital wall in writing instruction can help students gain basic information about selecting texts within a particular genre and increase their ability to write creatively. Therefore, integrating a digital wall and the genre-based approach into writing instruction is suggested in order to improve students' writing skills.

**Keywords:** digital wall, genre-based approach, Padlet, writing

### INTRODUCTION

Imagine that students from kindergarten to university in daily classrooms will never separate from the whiteboard. Day by day they interact with this environment. It may cause some of them to be demotivated. Technology comes to support new learning environment in classrooms. Students will have a new atmosphere of learning by using a digital wall, where they can write anything on it. In traditional classrooms, it is generally the teachers who dominate using the white board, not the students. White boards provide limited space.

Starting from this problem, teachers can explore the use of technology to be infused in the teaching learning process. Felix (2001) claims that the intentional use of information and communication technology as a bolster for learning is defined by the addition of technology to face-to-face meetings, which can be said as complementary to face-to-face learning. Teachers can explore it as media to stimulate students' motivation to learn and help them teach the lesson more easily (Arsyad, 2006). A study by Okmawati (2020) proved that students react positively toward the integration of technology into classroom activities. Thus, teachers should apply the appropriate technology as media in teaching learning processes that suit the objective of learning and create a new learning environment.

Among the technological tools that support learning processes is by using a digital wall. An e-learning application that functions as a digital wall is Padlet. Padlet is an online tool that simulates the feel of a virtual bulletin board for sharing ideas through videos, documents, mind mapping and pictures (England, 2017). Compared to the traditional physical whiteboard or Power Point presentation, it provides students with a free and convenient platform that enables more fair involvement. This learning platform is free and easy to access via any smart phone, laptop or computer. Padlet offers a multimedia-friendly wall that may be used to promote active, real-time participation and evaluation from the entire class. In order to increase students' willingness to learn, it is extremely appropriate to provide them with a new learning environment that includes digital whiteboards instead of traditional ones.

Padlet can maximize sharing of ideas of students and it can be shared and seen by everyone at once. It is highly helpful when a teacher wishes to solicit thoughts and comments from the class (Chen, 2021; Fisher, 2017). Teachers can promptly obtain a variety of responses from students rather than the restricted responses from the more self-assured and outspoken students, so all students' participation can be seen clearly by the teacher (Fuchs, 2014). Padlet also has been proven beneficial to improve students' writing skill, present positive attitude and can be effectively used to facilitate collaborative writing (Affendi et al., 2020; Fadhilawati et al., 2020; Lestari et al., 2018; Lestari, 2017; Rashid et al., 2019).

In the latest curriculum, "Kurikulum Sekolah Penggerak" designed by the Indonesian Minister of Education and Culture, the approach which is suggested by the government is genre-based approach related to English subject. In this curriculum, the approach used in General English is a genre-based approach, namely learning focused on the text, in various modes, both oral, written, visual, audio, or multimodal (Kabalitbang dan Perbukuan, No 028/H/KU/2021). Therefore, the genre-based approach can be combined with technology to develop students' ability in creating texts in a variety of contexts and enhance students' digital literacy skills. In this case, Padlet can accomplish both skills which are really important aspects of 21st century education.

The term "genre-based approach" describes how to educate language so that students may use language patterns to create meaningful writing (Hyland, 2003). In other words, students are expected to be able to write texts in a variety of contexts appropriately under genre-based approach. There are four stages that should be implemented in the teaching and learning process when employing the genre approach: Building Knowledge of the Field (BKoF), Modeling of the Text (MoT), Joint Construction of the Text (JCoT), and Independent Construction of the Text (ICoT) (Derewianka & Jones, 2016; Kabalitbang dan Perbukuan, No 028/H/KU/2021). These stages can be integrated with the use of Padlet to give the students new learning experience and engage their motivation.

The studies of genre-based pedagogy in writing skills have been conducted by many researchers over the years. Those studies revealed that the implementation of genre-based approach can enhance students' writing abilities by enabling them to generate texts in a variety of genres in an appropriate manner (Haerazi & Irawan, 2019; Karimah et al., 2017; Mohseni, 2022; Nagao, 2018; Pham & Bui, 2021). Therefore, implementing genre-based approach into writing instruction is crucial to meet the needs of students in developing their writing abilities.

Furthermore, the use of technology incorporated into the genre-based approach has been applied by some researchers in EFL classrooms. Rohayati (2020) also found that the integration of digital storytelling and genre-based pedagogy in writing instruction can increase student engagement. Students can use interactive media to construct their writing and use images as text visualizations. Similar research was conducted by Wardani et al., (2021). They revealed that teachers applied the stages of genre-based along with the proper use of technology. When technology is used to teach writing, students can construct purposeful and creative writing.

Awareness of the success of genre-based approach in teaching writing and improving students' writing skill has been relevant to start implementing it assisted with technology in this current context. Referring to the previous research that has been conducted, it can be seen that no studies yet have incorporated Padlet with the implementation of genre-based approach. Then, prior research did not place a strong emphasis on how teachers deploy genre-based approaches in EFL classrooms. Most of study focused on the effectiveness of genre-based approach toward students' writing ability and achievement in the design of quantitative research. Therefore, the current research highlights teachers' experiences in applying genre-based approach incorporating with Padlet in teaching writing based on stages proposed by Derewianka (2003).

## METHOD

This study used a descriptive qualitative design. The qualitative design was used to guide the researchers to explore naturally occurring phenomena in the classroom. In this study, the researchers explored their experiences in implementing genre-based approach integrating with Padlet in teaching writing. This study took place in one school in Padang, West Sumatera. In this study, purposive sampling was employed because of two considerations; the school is one of the prominent schools in Padang and all students have the device and are familiar with the use of technology for learning. According to Sugiyono (2019) purposive sampling is a sampling technique with a certain consideration. The researchers selected the sample based on what the research needs. This study involved 36 students who were enrolled in the tenth grade. The students with mixed gender and ability were taught by using a digital wall, in this case, the teacher used Padlet application.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Implementation of Genre Based Approach using Padlet has been adapted based on the stages of genre-based approach conceived by Derewianka (2003). The procedure of teaching writing through Padlet was arranged according to the genre-based approach as follows:

### 1. *Building Knowledge of the Field (BKoF)*

This stage is used to introduce a new genre or topic to be discussed. The teacher guides the students to be familiar with the type of genre. To encourage students to be able to effortlessly develop the topic into a complete essay, it is crucial to activate their schema. When the schema is activated, students participate actively in a brainstorming exercise that encourages them to consider what they already know about the subject of their essay (Anderson & Cheng, 2004). In this case, the teacher uses leading questions about a picture posted in Padlet. And all students should comment to the teacher's posting. Here, the learning activity can save time because the students do not need to write all the comments on white board as in conventional class, because they can write their ideas at the same time on Padlet.

### 2. *Modelling of the Text (MoT)*

This stage is designed to help students learn about a specific genre. Students are introduced to characteristics of a specific genre, the goal, organization, and language features. In this level, the teacher can deliver the material through Padlet. A text is shown on the wall. Exploiting the text is the goal of this activity. The teacher gives students a specific graphic organizer such as mind mapping to introduce the text to the students. Students are further guided by the teacher to examine the text's generic structures. This practice is essential for giving students feedback on how to structure a text that they are going to write. After doing discussion, the teacher provided input from students regarding the goal, organization, and language features of the text. The merit of using Padlet in delivering material is the students can save the wall into PDF or image export. So, the students can review what they have learned at home.

### 3. *Joint Construction of the Text (JCoT)*

This step aims to construct a text in the form of the genre that was previously studied. At this step, the teacher guides the students to work together in their group to compose the text. Students will be guided to be in line with the genre of the text in the context of social function, text organization, and language features. In this stage, the teachers assisted the students to select the topics to be explored and developed into an essay. In this study, the teacher identified topics which were related to school surroundings. The students also

determined the types of essay that they would write. Discussing topics and types of essay were the starting point for the creation of the text. Before the students wrote the text collaboratively, they entail brainstorming and concepts in previous activity on Padlet resources for the subject of interest, collecting data, letting that data settle into a draft or an outline. Then, students are asked to construct their thoughts into a complete essay with an introduction, a body paragraph, and a conclusion following the generic structure of a certain text-type. The purpose of this practice is for collaborative writing, so the students are ready for independent writing. According to Ahn (2012) this step aims to stress efficient methods of creating the kind of information required to successfully produce the target text.

#### 4. *Independent Construction of the text (ICOT).*

Before moving on to this step, the teacher must determine whether the students are ready to compose the text on their own. It may be required to recycle some of the assignments and activities from earlier levels, depending on the needs of the students. Students are equipped for independent text construction in the same genre at this stage. In this step, the students are engaged to work independently. The role of the teacher is monitoring students to explore a topic, compose an outline, edit and revise the text. The last step, students publish their work to get feedback.

To summarize, all the stages of writing (pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing) are equipped by following the syntax on genre-based approach. This result is in line with Rusinovci (2015), who argued that elements in writing such as planning, drafting, editing, and peer review are components of the process of genre-based approach. Another crucial and challenging aspect to keep in mind when adopting genre-based writing instruction integrating with Padlet is to have students monitoring their work. By using Padlet, students can reflect on what they have written on Padlet. Students can see each other's posts and get feedback from the teacher and their peers. As suggested by Okmawati (2021) that monitoring can be understood as exercising control and taking the proper activities to ensure that learning is progressing toward a positive outcome. Moreover, students need to be familiar with the e-learning platform; in this situation, the teacher builds students' knowledge about the platform of Padlet. To use Padlet effectively and efficiently, the students have to know how to use it and what features are offered by Padlet. Both their writing and digital skills are improved by using Padlet as a digital wall.

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The implementation of genre-based approach integrated with digital media can enhance students' ability in creating text for a specific genre. Therefore, teachers must utilize the use of technology in classroom activities to promote an interactive and interesting writing activity. The overall steps in genre-based approach incorporating a digital wall lead students to write better and increase their engagement in writing.

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