

IMPROVING STUDENTS' SKILLS IN ACADEMIC ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY THROUGH THE APPLICATION OF GENRE-BASED APPROACH

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Abstract

This research is motivated by the challenges faced by students in writing academic essay. A method is needed to overcome these problems namely by applying a genre-based approach or genre-based approach (GBA) to writing academic essays especially in general courses (MKU) Bahasa Indonesia. This study uses a class action research method (CAR) with the aim of getting transformation and improve the quality of student achievement results. Analysis of research data carried out with a qualitative descriptive and quantitative approaches. The data in this study in the form of observations, recordings, interviews, documentation taken from the RPP. Source the data of this study are students who took the MKU Indonesian (32 people) and documentation. The data collection technique used is the validation of data obtained from data triangulation results. The results of the research show that the use of the genre-based approach in writing academic essays is significantly increasing the ability to write student argumentative essays. This can be seen from the students' pre-test and post-test scores. The average value of the pretest is 61, 156 and the post-test is 76,375. This shows an increase in the ability to write argumentative text is equal to 15.219 point. The results of this study are expected to be used as a consideration for improving students' writing skills and also producing essay teaching guides in producing academic essays.

Keywords: GBA; Writing; Academic Essay; Argumentative

INTRODUCTION

There are four language skills to achieve, they are listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Writing is the final stage as a manifestation of language skills of the three abilities. Writing is an absolute ability possessed by everyone to no exceptions the students. However, in reality, writing is considered to be a challenge due to its considered complex structural rigidity. The students would often make some writing in forms of report, articles, or other forms of academic writing. Oshima and Hogue (1999, p. 3) stated that "Writing, particularly academic writing, is not easy". This is also supported by Babalola (2012) stating that writing is one of the language competencies considered to be the most difficult competency as it requires the application of knowledge from the other three competencies like listening, reading, and speaking. The difficulties faced by students and students arise from several internal and internal triggers. From internal challenges, difficulties can be caused by the character, mentality, or personality of the learner while external factors encountered can be in the form of finding topics or writing ideas, finding or finding writing materials, composing effective sentences, compiling coherent and cohesive paragraphs, and mastering writing rules. Maslakhah (2005, pp. 21–28) and Buchori (2001, p. 142) also support that students have weaknesses in reading and writing which include orthographic, linguistic, and logical aspects. Alwasilah (2005, p. 193) shows that writing education from elementary to university is not successful in providing writing skills. This needs

to get full attention because one of the expected products from students is success in writing to express themselves and their knowledge.

In general courses of Bahasa Indonesia or called MKU in Universitas Katolik Parahyangan, writing is also applied in producing academic essay as the final product of its entire lesson plan. An essay is a piece of writing that contains opinions and arguments. In the context of writing, especially academic writing, students must prepare language skills and critical reasoning skills. Academic writing simultaneously requires student's writing and thinking skill. Karim & Mursitama (2015, p. 3) state that academic writing is one of the main pillars in teaching and learning activities at the university level, so writing skills are very important to improve. However, it cannot be denied that in academic writing, students face problems in making essays both from the structure of the discourse, the purpose of the discourse, and the use of sentences. So, with the use of certain methods it is hoped that students' writing competence will increase. It is on this basis that the authors propose a genre-based approach or GBA for general course Bahasa Indonesia in producing the academic essay. This approach is a learning approach that helps students to be more competent in language, able to communicate through mastery of language skills including listening, speaking, reading and writing activities. The application of GBA is in accordance with academic writing because it will be guided by the lecturer in writing essays based on the stages of the GBA approach starting from building context, modeling, guided exercises to independent performance after modeling given by the lecturer. Basically, the use of genre-based approaches may have been carried out in MKU Indonesian lectures. However, with this research, a more focused and comprehensive guide will be designed in hopes of providing a more precise picture for writing academic essays. Based on the background, this study formulates two research questions; How is the process of applying genre-based approach in writing academic essays in Bahasa Indonesia general course? How is the effectiveness of GBA to improve academic essay writing skills? The result of this study is expected to benefit students in their writing skill improvement and benefit the lecturers as to have guidelines and guidance of how to apply GBA in writing essay, which is focused on argumentative genre.

There were some previous researches to have applied genre-based approach in writing. The first relevant research was conducted by Budi, Sriati Usman, and Rofiqoh (2020) entitled *The Effect of Applying the Process Genre-Based Approach (PGBA) on Learning Outcomes of Writing FKIP FKIP Tadulako University Essays* (Usman & Rofiqoh, 2020). This research was conducted on students in the fourth semester (even) of the 2016/2017 academic year. The results showed that the ability of fourth-semester students of Class D English Education Study Program FKIP UNTAD in 2016/2017 in writing English essays through the Application of the Process Genre-Based Approach (PGBA) increased. The second relevant research is research conducted by Hendayanti, Aibonotika, and Rahayu (n.d.) entitled *The Effectiveness of Genre-Based Approach to Improve the Exposition Text Writing Skill for Student Class 2016/2017 of Japan Study Program Faculty Teachers Training in Education Riau University*. The results showed that students' writing skills increased, especially in writing exposition texts. Student essays become more structured and there is an increase in the quality of the content of the essays.

The two studies were conducted in the same department. Thus, this research is expected to bring novelty in the application of a genre-based approach to Indonesian general courses with heterogeneous scientific backgrounds, more scientific writing skills, academic essays, and specifications of text genres that are appropriate to scientific essays, and argumentative text. Research on the application of a genre-based approach has not previously been carried out at MKU Bahasa Indonesia. Therefore, through this research, it is hoped that students will be able to improve their essay writing skills and update teaching guidelines or syllabus.

In academic or non-academic writing, writers need several strategies as guidelines that can be used to improve writing skills and to complete writing well. One of the strategies that can be

used to improve writing skills is the genre-based approach (GBA). The Genre-Based Approach (GBA) is an approach to writing that was first developed in Australia and then popularized by Halliday. The application of this approach focuses on the importance of the teacher's role in learning through text and context recognition, text characteristics, text objectives, and the intertextuality of a text (Mufliharsi & Nurani, 2016). Furthermore, Fauziati (2009, p. 209) says that a genre or text-based approach can be implemented in the classroom to produce writing products and this approach resembles the product approach in model texts which are analyzed based on grammatical and text features. Badger and White (2000) said that writing in a genre-based approach can be in the form of developing a product-oriented approach because students have the opportunity to learn various writing patterns.

Roses and Martin, (2012) state that the application of a genre-based approach can be broken down into 4 stages.

- a) Building context: This first stage will be carried out by the teacher by creating a learning context. This stage can be done by raising a subject matter so that students can focus on what will be discussed. This can increase student interest and knowledge of the topics to be discussed.
- b) Modeling and deconstructing text: The next step is to provide a model text that will be used by students as a reference for writing.
- c) Joint construction of the text: The joint construction stage can be carried out in groups or independently to create text constructions in the form of brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing the text that has been given.
- d) Independent text construction: At this stage, students will be given the opportunity to independently create their own discourse based on what has been learned before. This stage will be a time of exploration and creation to create your own writing.

The focus of this approach is to integrate or combine knowledge from certain genres and communicative purposes. This will help students produce good composition or writing and be able to communicate well in society. The application of a genre-based approach is based on the principle of reaction that the teacher is a catalyst for students' academic writing skills by providing learning methods, providing responses and guidance, and guiding students to develop ideas to increase students' writing potential. The application of GBA in Indonesian courses is in line with the 2013 Curriculum which emphasizes the importance of attitude, knowledge, and skill competencies in students' language skills which are formed through continuous text-based learning. General purpose Indonesian language education and teaching in educational institutions according to Hidayat (Hidayat, 2001, pp. 4–5) is to strengthen the position and function of the Indonesian language.

An essay is a form of writing or composition which elaborates one event or issue of society from the writer's point of view. Academic essays are essays that are argumentative in nature, where it provides a point of view on an issue based on a literature review or research. Hunston (n.d.), Hyland (n.d.), Hyland (2009), stated that a main characteristic of academic discourse is the rigidity of the language terms, high in lexical density through its noun-dominated language. Writing academic essays means not only focusing on the themes discussed academically but also focusing on applying rigid language structures and using correct grammar. Academic writing will also apply nominalization to condense the conveyed information. Sirait, Seva, Lingga (2022) in their research about ideational metaphor scientific writing include highly technical terms that shift spoken text to more written text through nominalization.

Writing is an activity of communicating through a series of words, sentences, paragraphs, or discourse. Writing requires skills to express ideas, feelings, or thoughts so that the message to be conveyed can be captured by the recipient of the message or the reader. In this study, the

type of writing that is focused on is the academic essay of the argumentative genre. Argumentative essay is a type of essay that discusses a problem from the author's point of view which is supported by facts to strengthen the author's argument. Argumentative essays, the writer can argue by providing accurate facts so as to convince the reader to agree or agree with the author's opinion. In writing this academic essay, strategies are needed so that students can write arguments properly and precisely using a genre-based approach.

METHOD

This research was designed using the classroom action research (CAR) method with the aim of obtaining transformation and improving the quality of student achievement results. According to Mulyasa (2009) class action research or classroom-based research is an attempt to examine the activities of a group of students by providing an action that is deliberately given. The steps taken are (1) action plan, (2) action implementation, (3) observation, and (4) analysis and reflection. This study uses an action research approach proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart in Arikunto (2006, p. 95). Slamet (2011) states that social phenomena in society and objects are based on indicators which that the basis of the presence or absence of a phenomenon being studied is highly correlated on qualitative research methods. The research would be conducted at Parahyangan Catholic University, especially in General Subjects under the auspices of the Faculty of Philosophy. This research was conducted online through the Google meeting learning platform because the lecture process was still online after the pandemic. The population in this study were students who took Bahasa Indonesia courses with purposive sampling. The samples taken were class students taught by researchers with a total population of 33 people. By using a genre-based approach, this research is designed to improve writing skills with the following procedures:

- a) Planning: This stage is carried out to prepare for the application of genre-based in academic essay writing. The thing to do is to give a questionnaire before the implementation of the action to find out students' difficulties in writing, and choose material to be used in a genre-based approach. In this research, pre-test is given to see the students' background knowledge of writing argumentative essays.
- b) Action: At this stage, the application of GBA will be applied. The stages to be implemented are in accordance with the GBA stages: 1) Building context, 2) Text modeling 3) Joint construction of text, and 4) Independent text construction.
- c) Evaluation: The evaluation is conducted to see the improvement of students' writing skill by observing pre-test and post-test result.

The application of this genre-based approach is based on the approach proposed by Hammind et.al (1992) in Irwansyah (IAIN Raden Intan Lampung, 2016) that "four stages can be applied in teaching essays using a genre-based approach (GBA) they are building knowledge, modeling the text, join construction, and independent construction." The data in this study are in the form of observations, recordings, and documentation taken from lesson plans. The data sources of this research are students and documentation. in data collection, the researcher, as a human instrument, functions as a research focus setter, selects informants, collects data, performs analysis, interprets data and draws conclusions. The observation grids used in this study were taken from aspects of lesson plans in the form of aspects of planning, implementation, text modeling and time allocation. Data collection can be in the form of observation guidelines (used to observe student behavior during), teaching and learning activities include student attitudes and activeness, and Assessment sheet for writing essays.

The data analysis technique used in this study is a mixed method, using qualitative and quantitative approach. Qualitative descriptive analysis is used to describe writing skills before and after the implementation of the action of applying a genre-based approach and also the

results of observations and interview results. Quantitative analysis techniques are used to analyze the results of academic writing tests. The analysis technique is divided into two; process data analysis taken during the process of learning to write with a genre-based approach; while product data analysis is taken from the results of the assessment of essay writing assignments with the aim of knowing the skills of writing rhyme essays after being given an action.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Having collected the data through pre-test and post-test, the data is then analyzed to see the effectiveness of applying a text-based approach in writing academic essays. The pretest was carried out at the 8th meeting which was followed by treatment for 5 meetings. In carrying out this study, researchers carried out the steps for implementing GBA. To find out the effectiveness of applying GBA in writing argumentative academic essays, the stages of the research will be described as follows. In the early stages, the researcher pre-tested students to see their initial writing skills before applying a genre-based approach. The results of the pre-test were evaluated by assessing and analyzing several aspects such as content, text organization, grammar, vocabulary, and writing mechanics.

Preliminary Research of Student Academic Essay Writing Skill

At this stage students are directed to write argumentative essays according to the theme chosen by the students themselves. The purpose of carrying out the pretest is to see students' writing abilities using their background knowledge. The table below shows the results of pre-action writing in class.

Table 1. Preliminary Score of Student Academic Essay Writing Skill

Name	Writing aspects					Total
	Content (30)	Organization (15)	Grammar (20)	Vocabulary (20)	Mechanics (15)	
Student 1	15	7	12	12	7	53
Student 2	22	10	15	15	9	71
Student 3	12	6	9	9	6	42
Student 4	19	9	14	13	8	63
Student 5	24	11	13	13	8	69
Student 6	25	12	14	14	9	74
Student 7	26	12	13	15	8	74
Student 8	16	7	11	11	6	51
Student 9	14	8	12	16	7	57
Student 10	14	10	13	13	8	58
Student 11	14	10	12	12	7	55
Student 12	12	7	8	10	7	44
Student 13	16	11	13	12	8	60
Student 14	16	12	15	12	8	63
Student 15	14	12	14	12	7	59
Student 16	24	12	15	15	8	74
Student 17	22	12	14	14	8	70
Student 18	23	12	15	14	8	72
Student 19	18	11	12	12	7	60

Student 20	23	12	14	14	8	71
Student 21	14	10	12	13	7	56
Student 22	20	12	13	14	7	66
Student 23	18	11	13	13	7	62
Student 24	16	11	12	13	7	59
Student 25	11	9	11	13	6	50
Student 26	14	10	13	13	7	57
Student 27	22	12	14	15	8	71
Student 28	19	11	13	13	8	64
Student 29	18	11	13	13	7	62
Student 30	17	10	13	13	7	60
Student 31	16	9	11	13	7	56
Student 32	15	9	11	12	7	54
						195
						7
Total	569	328	407	416	237	61,1
						5
						17,78
						10,25
						12,71
						7,40

There are five aspects assessed from student pre-test essay writing, they are content, text organization, grammar, vocabulary and mechanics. To identify the level of success of students' abilities in writing argumentation texts, the writers used the following assessment.

Table 2. Essay writing success indicators

No	Achievement	Percentage	Qualification	Level of success
1	A	85-100	Very good	Succeed
2	B	70-84	good	Succeed
3	C	55-69	fair	Failed
4	D	0-54	Not good	Failed

Source: Adapted from Nurhadi (2004: 115) in Ratnasari (2017)

Based on the table of pre-test results, the average student score is 61.156 which is in the fair category but in the scale of 'failed'. There are 8 students or about 25% of students at the successful stage. Thus 75% of student scores are at 'failed' level. Genre-based application is expected to improve students' abilities in writing argumentative genre-based academic essays. At the next meeting, the application of a genre-based approach was then carried out.

The Implementation Genre-Based Approach in Classroom

This research is done in two cycles where each cycle is conducted through planning, implementation, observation, and evaluation. Planning is conducted by observing students' difficulty in writing. To improve students' writing, the researcher prepared 6 argumentative essays to be used as modelling text that would be made as the model of writing argumentative texts. Then, the implementation of action research would be conducted by exploring genre based approach as would be explained below.

Building Knowledge of the Field

Context building aims to help students understand the types of essays and what types of discourse will be the focus of learning. In addition, building a context can bring students closer and familiarize themselves with essay themes, issues that occur in society, topics that they will write about in essays later. Due to the diversity of majors of Indonesian MKU students, they were invited and directed to look at issues related to their respective majors. This is done to revive students' background knowledge and develop it on the current knowledge they have. The focus of essays that would be made by students is argumentative essays.

at this stage, students are given 6 choices of essays which would then be used as modeling essays for making academic essays in the argumentative genre. The selected essays are:

- Tren Green Building (Bondan Mazaya) published on detikNews on August 7 2020. This essay is an essay by an Unpar student while taking the Indonesian language course.
- POS PANCANA: Antisipasi selama Pandemi (Tasya Wijaya_6102001061) which was published on the online media Bandungbermoves.id on May 25 2021. This essay is an essay by an Unpar student when taking an Indonesian language course.
- Re-evaluasi Pembangunan Infrastruktur Pasca Banjir Bandang Sentani, Papua dengan sistem INDEVOR (Charels Earthquake L Wambrauw 6102001141) published in Parahyangan Magazine 2021 Parahyangan Catholic University). This essay is an essay by an Unpar student while taking the Indonesian language course.
- Infrastruktur Hijau untuk Pembangunan Kota (Naga Wijaya) published by DetikNews on Friday, 14 August 2020. This essay is an essay by an Unpar student while taking an Indonesian language course.
- Wayang Hip Hop' sebagai Media Rekonstruksi Karakter Masyarakat Modern Indonesia (Nuriyanti). The essay is taken from the HIMAPSIKAFKIUNLAM competition.
- Mahasiswa Dukung Indonesia Berkarakter dengan Gerakan 5M (Nurul Atqiya). This essay is also taken from HIMAPSIKAFKIUNLAM essay competition.

The reason for taking the essays was because the essays were written by Unpar students (1-4) successfully published in online and printed media. The last two essays were competition essays expected to become modeling essays for the students. By providing these essays, students are expected to be able to observe, imitate and modify essays that would be made in the learning process.

To progress the next GBA stage, students were given the assignment to choose one of the essays above which students would then study and dissect. Students were instructed to provide comments and positive sides that could be learned to be applied in writing their own essays, such as titles, introductory paragraphs, grammar, language choices, content, and concluding sections. This activity would be the basis for students in the text modeling stage. The following table presents information about the essays chosen by students to be used as models in making argumentative essays.

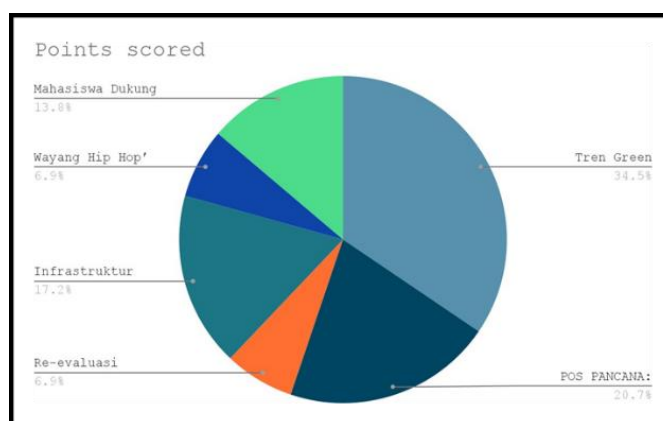


Figure 2. Student Essay Preferences

The and diagram above shows students' preferences in choosing modeling texts which they will explore in the next meeting as modeling texts in making essays. From the data it can be seen that the majority of students chose the essay entitled 'Trend Green Building'.

Modelling/Text deconstruction

Having chosen the type of essay in the previous stages, students used the text as a model to create essays in the independent performance stage. The purpose of modeling this text is to provide sample essays that students can modify. At this stage, students are expected to be able to apply the ATM method (Observe, imitate, and modify). Methods of observing, imitating, and modifying are carried out so that students can develop a model that has been observed before. Also at this stage, to deepen the modeling of the essay that has been chosen, students will present it with the points that have been instructed. There are six aspects that would be reviewed by students and affirmed by researchers, they 1) the attractiveness of the title (yes/no) 2) introduction (contains a thesis statement or not), 3) use of grammar (standard/no), 4) appropriate language used (formal/not), 5) essay content (how it is structured whether it contains the author's arguments and is supported by facts), and 6) conclusion (contains a summary of the contents or not). The following graph will present information about the essay performed by students.

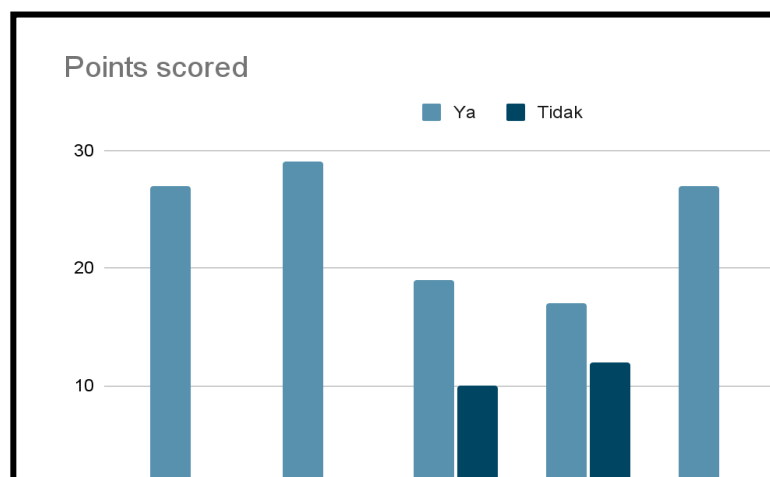


Figure 3: Elaborated Aspects of Essays

The information from the graph shows the ability of students to analyze the aspects mentioned for discussion by students. The data shows that the introductory aspect (whether it contains thesis statement) is the highest aspect that students get in the essay. Furthermore, at this stage it was also found that students were able to analyze essays by identifying argumentative essay elements through deconstruction text stages. The following is the temporary finding: After students dissect the essay, students can identify elements of academic essays that are in accordance with the rules through text deconstruction. The following is an example of an essay analyzed from an essay entitled POS PANCANA: Antisipasi selama Pandemi written by Tasya Wijaya.

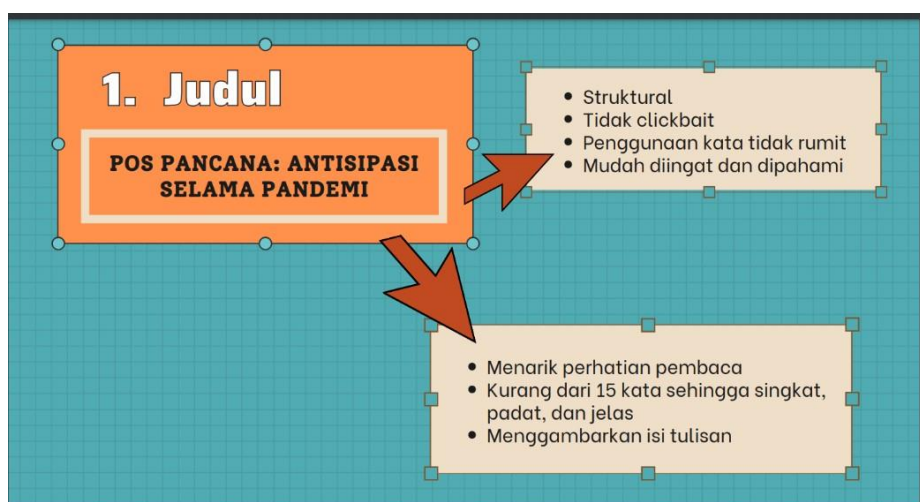


Figure 4: Screenshot of student essay review (title section)

From the picture above, students do whatever things students can learn in making academic essays in the argumentative genre. The findings of these students would be presented in groups according to the similarities in the selection of essay titles which will then be affirmed by the researcher. The ability of students to analyze sample essays is expected to help students improve their skills in writing academic essays.

Joint Construction of the Text

After analyzing the modeling essay, students progress to the brainstorming stage, drafting in creating text according to the modeling text that has been given. At this stage, students design their writing individually by conducting online guidance with researchers via Google Docs. The purpose of using this media is to make it easier for students to carry out assistance asynchronously without being in accordance with the availability of time outside of learning hours.



Figure 5: An example of student essay drafting

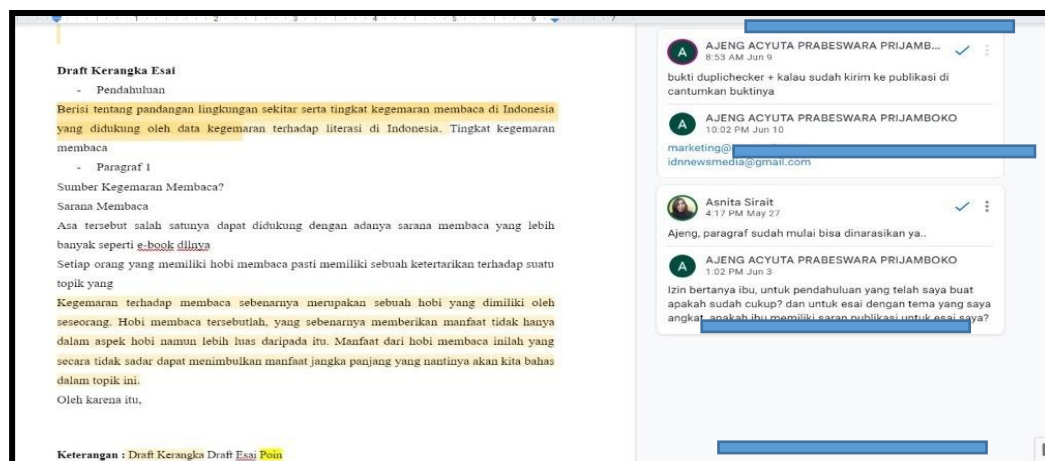


Figure 6: Guided practice examples

The guided exercise begins by providing input to students starting from the title and draft of an argumentative essay. After the drafting is considered appropriate, students proceeded to the stage of making an argumentative essay starting from writing the introduction, content and conclusions. In the introduction, the first emphasis is placed on students making a strong thesis statement at the end of the introductory paragraph. This thesis statement is then be developed in the contents.

Independent Construction of the Text

The students try to write independently by continuing to provide online assistance. Students are expected to be able to write essays in accordance with the aspects in argumentative essays. At this stage, the number of words in the essay that must be written is around 1,000 to 1,500 words. Furthermore, students also do proof-reading with fellow students to see interesting things and need to be improved - part from student's writing. The proof-reader in one essay is at least one student. After proof-reading, the researcher highlighted the parts that must be corrected by students. Students would make revisions from proof-readers as well as researchers.

Post-test

After carrying out the stages of the genre-based approach (GBA) in writing argumentative essays, a post-test was held to see students' abilities in writing argumentative essays. The post-test results were taken from the results of the essays that had been written by individual students during the treatment process. The following table will elaborate on student achievement.

Table 3: Post-test Score 1

Name	Writing aspects					Total
	Content (30)	Organization (15)	Grammar (20)	Vocabulary (20)	Mechanics (15)	
Student 1	20	9	13	15	8	65
Student 2	25	12	15	16	12	80
Student 3	25	10	16	17	11	79
Student 4	24	12	15	16	12	79
Student 5	25	12	16	16	12	81

Student 6	23	9	16	16	10	74
Student 7	25	13	16	16	12	82
Student 8	19	9	15	16	8	67
Student 9	26	10	15	18	12	81
Student 10	21	11	13	18	12	75
Student 11	18	11	13	16	9	67
Student 12	24	11	16	17	12	80
Student 13	26	13	16	17	12	84
Student 14	23	12	15	15	10	75
Student 15	21	10	14	14	11	70
Student 16	26	13	16	16	12	83
Student 17	26	13	16	17	13	85
Student 18	25	13	16	17	11	82
Student 19	24	12	17	15	11	79
Student 20	26	13	16	16	12	83
Student 21	25	12	16	16	12	81
Student 22	23	13	16	16	11	79
Student 23	25	13	16	15	12	81
Student 24	20	12	15	15	9	71
Student 25	17	10	14	14	9	64
Student 26	17	10	12	13	10	62
Student 27	25	13	15	16	13	82
Student 28	24	14	15	16	10	79
Student 29	24	12	16	15	11	78
Student 30	20	9	13	13	10	65
Student 31	23	11	17	15	12	78
Student 32	22	12	14	14	11	73
Student 33	24	9	14	15	10	72
Total	737	369	484	502	352	2516
Average	23,03	11,53	15,12	15,68	11	76,37

The data from the table shows that students' skills has improved in writing academic essays in the argumentative genre. From the results of the post-test it can be seen that the average final score is 76.375 which is an increase of 15.219 points from the pre-test value.

Discussion

From the data above, it can be concluded that the application of GBA is significant to improve students' ability to write academic essays in the argumentative genre. The difference in student achievement is 15,219 points. From the pre-test data, 24 students did not complete or were on a sufficient scale and were not successful in writing academic essays. After the post-test, good improvement occurred because only 8 students did not complete. This means that the genre-based approach to writing academic essays in Bahasa Indonesia courses is successful.

Therefore, this approach can be applied in the classroom to improve the ability to write argumentative genre academic essays by following the steps or procedures in the GBA.

Table 4: Comparison of Essay Scores on the Pre-test and Post-test

Writing Aspects	Pre-test	Post-test
Content	17,78	23,03125
Organization	10,25	11,53125
Grammar	12,71	15,125
Vocabulary	13	15,6875
Mechanic	7,40	11
Total	1957	2516
Average	61,156	76,375

CONCLUSION

As one of the productive skills, writing requires practice and the use of appropriate approaches or methods to improve students' abilities. The results of this study indicate that the use of a genre-based approach in writing MKU Indonesian academic essays significantly improves students' ability to write argumentative essays. This can be seen from the scores of students' pre-test and post-test. The average value of the pretest is 61, 156 and the post-test is 76,375. This shows an increase in the ability to write argumentative texts amounting to 15.219 points. In the pretest there were 24 students who did not complete essay writing, but after the post-test there were only 8 students who did not complete. Therefore, this approach would be appropriate to be applied in academic writing. Although successful, the weakness of this genre-based approach (GBA) lasts a long time (more than 4 meetings). So, it is better if learning planning should be maximized from the start.

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