

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING GENRE-BASED
APPROACH TO TEACH NARRATIVE WRITING
TOWARDS WRITING SKILL AND WRITING
APPREHENSION TO LOWER-SECONDARY
SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KOTA KINABALU**



PERPUSTAKAAN
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

UMS

FRANCISCA YONG FUI MUI

**SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH
2007**

UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

BORANG PENGESAHAN STATUS TESIS@

JUDUL : THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING GENRE-BASED APPROACH TO TEACH NARRATIVE WRITING TOWARDS WRITING SKILL AND WRITING APPREHENSION TO LOWER-SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KOTA KINABALU

IJAZAH: MASTER OF EDUCATION (TESL)

SAYA FRANCISCA YONG FUI MUI SESI PENGAJIAN : 2005-2007

mengaku membenarkan tesis (LPSM/Sarjana/Doktor Falsafah) ini disimpan di Perpustakaan Universiti Malaysia Sabah dengan syarat-syarat kegunaan seperti berikut:-

1. Tesis adalah hakmilik Universiti Malaysia Sabah.
2. Perpustakaan Universiti Malaysia Sabah dibenarkan membuat salinan untuk tujuan pengajian sahaja.
3. Perpustakaan dibenarkan membuat salinan tesis ini sebagai bahan pertukaran antara institusi pengajian tinggi.
4. Sila tandakan (/)

☐

SULIT

☐

TERHAD

☒

TIDAK TERHAD

(Mengandungi maklumat yang berdarjah keselamatan atau Kepentingan Malaysia seperti yang termaktub di dalam AKTA RAHSIA RASMI 1972)

(Mengandungi maklumat TERHAD yang telah ditentukan oleh organisasi/badan di mana penyelidikan dijalankan)

(TANDATANGAN PENULIS)

Alamat Tetap:

Disahkan Oleh
NORAZLYNNE MOHD. JOHAN @ JACKLYNE
PUSTAKAWAN
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

(TANDATANGAN PUSTAKAWAN)

Nama Penelia

Tarikh: 28 Jun 2007

Tarikh : _____

CATATAN: *Potong yang tidak berkenaan.

**Jika tesis ini SULIT atau TERHAD, sila lampirkan surat daripada pihak berkuasa/organisasi berkenaan dengan menyatakan sekali sebab dan tempoh tesis ini perlu dikelaskan sebagai SULIT dan TERHAD.

@Tesis dimaksudkan sebagai tesis bagi Ijazah Doktor Falsafah dan Sarjana secara penyelidikan atau disertai bagi pengajian secara kerja kursus dan Laporan Projek Sarjana Muda (LPSM)

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING GENRE-BASED
APPROACH TO TEACH NARRATIVE WRITING
TOWARDS WRITING SKILL AND WRITING
APPREHENSION TO LOWER-SECONDARY
SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KOTA KINABALU**

FRANCISCA YONG FUI MUI



PERPUSTAKAAN
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF EDUCATION (TESL)**

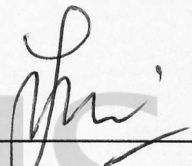
**SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH
2007**

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the materials in this thesis are my own except for quotations, excerpts, equations, summaries and references, which have been duly acknowledged.

16 April 2007




Francisca Yong Fui Mui
PS05-006(K)-046

UNMS
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH



NAME : FRANCISCA YONG FUI MUI

MATRIC NO : PS05-006(K)-046

TITLE : THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING GENRE-BASED
APPROACH TO TEACH NARRATIVE WRITING
TOWARDS WRITING SKILL AND WRITING
APPREHENSION TO LOWER-SECONDARY SCHOOL
STUDENTS IN KOTA KINABALU

DEGREE : MASTER OF EDUCATION (TESL)

VIVA DATE : 24 MAY 2007

This dissertation has been accepted by The Centre for Postgraduate Studies and School of Education & Social Development for the partial fulfilment/ requirement of Master of Education (TESL) programme in year 2007.

DECLARED BY: MALAYSIA SABAH

1. **SUPERVISOR**
MAJ. DR. HAMZAH MOHD OMAR

.....
Date: 04.06.2007

2. **DEAN / DIRECTOR**
PM. DR. ZULKIFLI MOHAMED

.....
Date: 04/06/07

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This academic writing owes its success to the many loving and thoughtful people. Here, I would like to take this opportunity to express my warmest gratitude and heartfelt thanks to the various individuals for their love in helping me complete this work:

My enormous thanks, to my respectful and dedicated supervisor for Academic Writing Maj. Dr. Hamzah Bin Md. Omar, from the School of Education and Social Development, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, for his approachable, patience, keen guidance, evolving thoughts on the topic, encouragements, and motivation.

I feel grateful and thankful, to the Principal and teachers of the school for their generosity of granting me the permission to have the class and permission to carry out the research in the school.

Thanks to the Form 2 students of the school, for their fullest collaboration and trying their best to complete the work and lessons for this purpose.

My deeply appreciation, to Mdm. Vivien Shim Kon Ken for her patience, in giving me guidance, suggestions and encouragements. Without any helpful discussion, I might not be able to complete this work.

I would also like to express my thanks to Ms. Susan Jong and Ms. Sandy Jong for giving me their best service in helping me to produce copies of questionnaires, worksheets and the write-ups. Without their commitment and patience, I might not be able to send in the work on time.

Thanks also to those who, in some way or other, have generously extended their kind advice, guidance, assistance and support in making this research a success.

Last but not least, to my parents, sisters, brother and nephew for their moral and spiritual support, suggestions and understanding and have unselfishly given me the time I needed to complete this writing.

To them, I offer my sincere and heartfelt thanks.

"Thank You"

ABSTRACT

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING GENRE-BASED APPROACH TO TEACH NARRATIVE WRITING TOWARDS WRITING SKILL AND WRITING APPREHENSION TO LOWER-SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KOTA KINABALU

This study aims to find out the effectiveness of using genre-based approach in teaching narrative writing in Form Two classrooms of a government school in Kota Kinabalu. The mixed-method design employing the quasi-experimental method is used in this study. 60 students participated in the experiment. The Treatment group and the Control group consist of 30 students respectively. Each group was taught for two weeks (3 times of 1½ hours, equivalent to 9-week writing lesson). Genre-based approach was used with the Treatment group and Non Genre-based approach was used with the Control group. The pretest and posttest were conducted to measure the achievement of students in writing. The Daly-Miller Writing Apprehension Inventory was used to measure the degree of anxiety among students before and after writing. A questionnaire on the effectiveness of the approach was given to the Treatment group at the end of the treatment. The hypotheses were tested at .05 significance level, using Paired Samples t-test and Independent Samples t-test. The technique is found to be successful and is able to push up the level of students in writing. The performance of students improved. Although the writing apprehension among students is not significant, it was found out that most of the students have the tendency to experience the degree of anxiety when asked to write. In addition to that, there is significant difference in the score of the posttest between the Treatment group and the Control group in learning to write after Instruction. The t-value obtained is 3.602 and the associated probability-significant is .001. However, for the Treatment group, there is significant difference in the score of the test before and after Instruction. The t-value obtained -5.827 and the associated probability-significant is .000. The two-tail significance for both (.001 and .000) indicates that p-value is less than .05 and thus is significant. The result of this study and the triangulation of the interview also proved that the approach is effective. Teachers need to motivate and encourage students to view writing positively so that they would be able to write better.

ABSTRAK

Kajian yang berbentuk kuasi-eksperimental ini meninjau keberkesanan Pendekatan "Genre" dalam penulisan karangan jenis cerita di kalangan pelajar Tingkatan 2. Lokasi kajian ialah di sebuah sekolah menengah di bandar, Kota Kinabalu. Seramai 60 orang pelajar terlibat dalam kajian ini, di mana 30 orang pelajar merupakan kumpulan rawatan manakala 30 orang lagi sebagai kumpulan kawalan. Setiap kumpulan diberi dua minggu pengajaran (3 kali - 1½Jam, bersamaan dengan 9-minggu masa penulisan) iaitu Pendekatan "Genre" untuk kumpulan rawatan dan Pendekatan "Bukan Genre" bagi kumpulan kawalan. Ujian pra dan pasca diberi untuk mengukur pencapaian pelajar dalam penulisan. Inventori Daly-Miller digunakan untuk mengukur tahap kegelisahan pelajar dalam penulisan. Satu soal-selidik keberkesanan diberi kepada pelajar di akhir rawatan. Hipotesis-hipotesis kajian diuji dengan analisis min, dengan menggunakan Paired Samples t-test dan Independent Samples t-test pada aras keyakinan .05. Didapati bahawa pencapaian pelajar-pelajar yang dikaji bertambah baik selepas pendekatan "Genre" digunakan. Walaupun tahap kegelisahan penulisan pelajar-pelajar tidak menunjukkan perubahan yang besar, kebanyakan daripada mereka mengalami kegelisahan apabila disuruh menulis karangan. Selain daripada itu, perbezaan skor bagi pascaujian di antara kumpulan rawatan dan kawalan, statistik t adalah 3.602 dan mempunyai nilai signifikan =.001. Bagaimanapun, kumpulan rawatan yang menggunakan pendekatan "Genre" memberi signifikan dengan statistik t -5.827 dan mempunyai nilai signifikan =.000. Kedua-dua nilai signifikan (.001 dan .000) menunjukkan nilai-p kurang dari .05 dan adalah signifikan. Berdasarkan hasil dapatan kajian dan ditriangulasikan oleh temu bual, didapati bahawa pendekatan tersebut adalah efektif. Hasil dapatan kajian memberi kesimpulan bahawa Pendekatan "Genre" dapat memperbaiki penulisan karangan di kalangan pelajar. Guru perlulah memberi motivasi dan dorongan kepada pelajar-pelajar supaya mereka mempunyai pandangan yang positif terhadap penulisan karangan.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

COVER / TITLE PAGE	i
DECLARATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iii
ABSTRACT (ENGLISH)	iv
ABSTRACT (BAHASA MELAYU)	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
LIST OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	ix
LIST OF APPENDICES	x

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1	Introduction	1
1.2	Background of Study	2
1.3	Statement of Problem	3
1.4	Significance of the Study	5
1.5	Aims and Objectives	6
1.6	Research Questions	7
1.7	Hypothesis	8
1.8	Limitation of Study	9
1.9	Definition	
	1.9.1 Conceptual Definition	9
	1.9.2 Operational Definition	13
1.10	Summary	15

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1	Introduction	16
2.2	Teaching of Writing Skill – Malaysian English Language Curriculum	17
2.3	Philosophical Underpinnings of Second Language Writing Instruction	19
2.4	L1 Composition Theories in developing Theories of L2 Composition	
	2.4.1 Process Approaches	23
	2.4.2 Interactive Approaches	24
	2.4.3 Social-Constructionist View	25

2.5	What is involved in Writing?	
2.5.1	Cognitive Aspects of Writing	26
2.5.2	Social Aspects of Writing	26
2.5.3	Motivation and Self-Confidence	28
2.5.4	The Role of Affect in Learning	28
2.5.5	Genres, Schemata and Acquisition	30
2.5.6	Available Designs: Reading and Writing acts	32
2.6	Critical Development Periods	34
2.7	Cognitive Models for Writing Processes	
2.7.1	The Hayes (1996) Model	35
2.7.2	Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) Model	38
2.8	Approaches to Teach Second Language Writing	41
2.9	Research on Writing Instruction	45
2.10	Genre-Based Writing Approach	48
2.10.1	Genre Theory and Learning Theory	50
2.10.2	Theory and Application to Teaching Narrative Genre	57
2.10.3	Textual Features of Narrative Essay	61
2.10.4	Features of Language in Narrative Writing	63
2.10.5	Narrative Text Format	64
2.10.6	Writing process	65
2.11	Genre-Based Approach in Malaysia	66
2.12	The Effectiveness of Genre-Based Approach to Teaching Writing	67
2.13	Problems Faced When Implementing Genre-Based Approach to Writing	69
2.14	Study on Writing Apprehension	70
2.15	Theoretical Framework	71
2.16	Summary	75

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1	Introduction	76
3.2	Research Approach	76
3.2.1	Experimental Study	77
3.2.2	Rationale for the Use of Experimental Study	79
3.3.3	The Samples	79
3.3	Research Design	80
3.3.1	Research Procedure	81
3.3.2	Research Schedule	82
3.3.3	Research Instruments	83

3.4	Method of Data Gathering	87
3.4.1	Data Collection Procedure	87
3.4.2	Pilot Study	92
3.4.3	Ethical Issues	93
3.4.4	Validity and Reliability of Data	93
3.4.5	Triangulation	94
3.5	Method of Data Analysis	95
3.5.1	Quantitative Data	96
3.5.2	Qualitative Data	97
3.6	Summary	99

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1	Introduction	100
4.2	Respondents' Information	101
4.3	Outcome of the Study	103
4.4	Analysis of Findings	
4.4.1	The effect of genre-based approach towards the writing skill in narrative essay.	104
4.4.2	The effect of genre-based approach in relation to writing apprehension.	106
4.4.3	The effect of writing apprehension on students' writing skill in narrative essay.	108
4.4.4	The effectiveness of genre-based approach in teaching narrative writing towards writing skill and writing apprehension.	109
4.4.5	The effect of learners' exposure to the rhetorical structures: textual and language features on the development of the writing process of the students.	114
4.5	Hypothesis Testing	
4.5.1	Null Hypothesis 1	116
4.5.2	Null Hypothesis 2	117
4.5.3	Null Hypothesis 3	118
4.5.4	Null Hypothesis 4	119
4.6	Data from Interview	120
4.7	Summary	127

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1	Introduction	129
5.2	Discussion of Results	131
5.2.1	The Effect of GBA on Writing	131
5.2.2	The Effect of GBA on WA	135
5.2.3	The Effect of Students' WA towards Writing	137
5.2.4	The Effectiveness of Using GBA	140
5.2.5	Problems in Using GBA	144
5.3	Suggestions and Further Research	145
5.3.1	Education Ministry	145
5.3.2	Teachers	146
5.3.3	Further Research	146
5.4	Conclusion	148

REFERENCES	149
APPENDICES	A - F



UMS
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

PERPUSTAKAAN
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	TITLE	PAGE
2.1	Elements of Second Language Writing	22
2.2	Relationship of Theory, Research and Practice in Second Language Writing Instruction	23
2.3	Genres, Schemata and Acquisition	32
2.4	Available Designs and Contextual Layers in Literacy	33
2.5	The Hayes Model	37
2.6	Knowledge-telling Model	39
2.7	Knowledge-transforming Model	40
2.8	Simple Narrative Genre	49
2.9	Simple Report Genre	49
2.10	A Functional Model of Language	51
2.11	The Relationship between Genre and Register	51
2.12	Teaching and Learning Cycle (TLC) Genre	54
2.13	Features of Narrative Essay	62
2.14	Language Features in Narrative Writing	64
2.15	Writing Format-Narrative Outline	65
2.16	Writing Process	66
2.17	A Genre Process Model of Teaching Writing	70
2.18	Theoretical Framework	74
3.1	Research Procedure	81
3.2	Research Schedule	82
3.3	Data Collecting	88
3.4	Scaffolding the Narrative Writing	91
3.5	Research Questions/Null Hypotheses and Instrument/Measurement Tools	98

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	TITLE	PAGE
4.1	Students' Race	101
4.2	Primary School	101
4.3	Results of English Language	102
4.4	Do you speak English during your English lesson? Teacher	102
4.5	Do you speak English during your English lesson? Friends	102
4.6	Do you speak English with your family?	103
4.7	Do you speak English outside your class?	103
4.8	Level of English Essay Writing	103
4.9	Criteria for Writing Scores	104
4.10	Scores on Pretest and Posttest for Treatment Group	105
4.11	Scores on Pretest and Posttest for Control Group	105
4.12	Score and level of Writing Apprehension	106
4.13	Writing Apprehension Level for Treatment Group	107
4.14	Writing Apprehension Level for Control Group	107
4.15	Level of WA and WS for Treatment Group	108
4.16	Level of WA and WS for Control Group	109
4.17	Effectiveness Questionnaire	110
4.18	Problems faced by Students while Genre-based Approach is used	116
4.19	Null Hypothesis 1	117
4.20	Null Hypothesis 2	118
4.21	Null Hypothesis 3	119
4.22	Null Hypothesis 4	120

4.23	Do you like writing? Why?	121
4.24	Why can't you write as well as most other people?	122
4.25	How do you find writing narrative essay now?	123
4.26	Do you like the mind-mapping of ideas as an activity in this technique? Why?	125
4.27	Do you like the technique or approach use by your teacher? Why?	126
4.28	Summary of analysis of outcome and test	127



UMS
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A	Agree
DA	Disagree
EPRD	Education Planning and Research Department
e.g.	Example
etc.	Etcetera
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESL	English as a Second Language
G	Gender
GBA	Genre-Based Approach
JPS	Jabatan Pendidikan Sabah
KBSM	Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah
KPM	Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia
LEP	Low English Proficiency
M	Modelling or Deconstruction Phase
MI	Multiple Intelligence
M/F	Male or Female
No.	Number
NSV	Negative
PSV	Positive
PMR	Penilaian Menengah Rendah
PPK	Pusat Perkembangan Kurikulum
Q	Question
RSPT	Respondent
SIC	Student Initiated or Individual Construction
SFL	Systemic-Functional Linguistics
SK	Sekolah Kebangsaan
SJK	Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan
SMK	Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan
SPM	Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia
SRK	Sekolah Rendah Kebangsaan
SRS	Sekolah Rendah Swasta
TIC	Teacher Initiated or Joint Construction
TLC	Teaching Learning Cycle
UPSR	Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah
&	And
WA	Writing Apprehension
WS	Writing Skill / Score

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX	TITLE	PAGE
A	Pre Survey Questionnaire	157
	Post Survey Questionnaire	161
	The Daly-Miller Test Score	168
B	Pre and Post Tests , Worksheets (Modules)	
	Theme: People, Environment, Social Issues, Health, Values, Science & Technology	172
	Marking Scheme for Questions 1 & 2	190
	Marking Scheme for Question 3	197
C	Worksheet A	198
	Sample Texts 1 – 8	199
	Features of Narrative Essay	203
	Mind-map & Sample Essay	209
	Worksheet B	211
	Lesson Plans – Genre-based Approach (1- 5)	213
	Lesson Plans – Non Genre-based Approach (1- 5)	238
D	Writing Checklist (Problems)	250
E	Questions for Interview Session	251
	Transcriptions of Interview	252
F	Results / Findings	257

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Writing has been a central topic in applied linguistics and remains an area of lively intellectual research and debate. The complex, multifaceted nature of writing and the significance of writing in our lives constantly evade description and explanation in helping to clarify how writing works and how it should best be taught. The three main approaches to writing are: product –, process –, and genre-based approaches. A major problem which students commonly faced in the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) English Language Paper 1 (2004) is the difficulties in writing essay especially in Section B on Continuous Writing. Students have a very hard time to produce an essay of 350 words in length. This study focuses on the effectiveness in using genre-based approach to teach one of the writing types evaluated in SPM examination (narrative, descriptive, expository, argumentative or reflective), that is, narrative writing. In order to improve students' achievement in the English Language Paper, students will need to learn how to write. Weigle, (2002) highlights that if the writing task involves a genre that is unfamiliar to writers, some writers who are otherwise skilled may not be able to perform well. This is also echoed in

Littlefair's in Riley & Reedy (2000) statement that "if pupils are to become competent readers and writers of both narrative and non-narrative genres, they must be able to discover information and reconstruct it for their own purposes They require a sense of the overall forms of these genres and of the language which is commonly used". Therefore, insufficient experience with a range of genres will lead to students facing difficulties in writing the texts.

1.2 Background of Study

The ability to write effectively has become increasingly important in our global community, and instruction in writing is thus assumed to have an increasing role in the second language education. Communication across languages becomes more essential as advances in transportation and technology allow people from nations and cultures throughout the world to interact with each other. As a result of this, the ability to speak and write a second language is becoming widely recognized as an important skill for educational, business, and personal reasons. Writing has also become more important as tenets of communicative language teaching – that is, teaching language as a system of communication.

The value of being able to write effectively increases as students progress through compulsory education on to higher education. Writing is an important part of the curriculum in schools from the earliest stage, and most children who have a formal education system will learn to write, at least at a basic level, in that setting.

Teaching students how to write is probably the least understood and least researched area in the traditional ESL/EFL curriculum (Paulston, 1972). Writing is the last and perhaps most difficult skill students learn if they ever do. Teachers are often confused about how to approach writing instruction; and many still see it only as a way to reinforce oral skills. Weigle, (2002) further stated that, "the traditional role of writing in an EFL/ESL classroom, especially for those near or at the beginning of their language studies, is to support and reinforce the learning of oral communication of knowledge about the structure and vocabulary of the language".

This paper describes a study of the effectiveness in using genre-based approach to teach narrative writing giving possible insights and implications to both teachers and students.

1.3 Statement of Problem

Genre-based approach to teaching writing focuses on getting students 'in' to new discourse communities by making them aware of the characteristically patterned ways that people in the community use language to fulfill particular communicative purposes in recurring situations. This fulfills our education paradigm of moving from teacher-centred to student-centred activities. For example, learners might learn that writing a sales letter typically involves seven moves: (1) 'establishing credentials' (2) 'introducing the offer' (3) 'offering incentives' (4) 'referring to enclosed documents' (5) 'inviting further communication' (6) 'using

pressure tactics' and (7) 'ending politely' (Bhatia, 1991 in Kern, 2000). These moves will involve activities moving from teacher-centred to student-centred activities. It is better if students in secondary schools be helped to cope with academic tasks and ultimately less problems faced in writing by mastering genres such as narrative, expository, descriptive, argumentative and reflective essays. As such the achievement is better for the writing skill (essay) in English Language. The researcher found out that students in the school are commonly faced with difficulties in essay writing especially for SPM examination purpose. According to (Paulston, 1972), writing is the last and perhaps the most difficult skill students learn. He believed that a strong foundation of the writing skills may sustain the learner's interest to further acquire other difficult writing skills. There are a lot of approaches to the teaching of writing. As a result, teachers are continually trying to find out the best method to teach composition. Apart from that, the English teachers in the school focus on a variety of writing approach instructions from Form 1 to Form 5. Each approach has its own features and strengths. Therefore, teachers are often in dilemma, which writing approach instruction is appropriate for their students. On the other hand, students are also facing a dilemma, which technique instruction to adopt and practise because the strengths in a particular technique might not appear in another technique. Moreover, through discussions with language department officers, little empirical research has been done on the outcome of genre-based writing instruction, particularly in second language contexts. Are these really what is happening in schools? Does the

genre-based approach help: teachers in teaching the writing skills; and students in learning how to write different types of essays? Will this in turn, affect their achievement of the English Language Paper in the SPM examination?

1.4 Significance of the Study

Previous studies by Raimes, 1983; Pica, 1986; Sampson, 1981; Schabacker, 1981; and Thiede-Gonzo, 1983 have suggested a number of ways to teach writing. So far, Malaysian researchers have paid little attention to investigating the effectiveness of the genre-based approach on writing performance produced by Malaysian ESL learners since courses had been carried out in the mid 1990s without any documented report.

A significant aspect of this study pertains to the subjects who are Malaysian ESL learners that have not been thoroughly exposed to the different types of genres in writing. A major factor in choosing narrative over other genres is because learners at this level have already developed the narrative schemata through their experiences, reading and listening to stories. Many linguists, psychologists and psychotherapists believe passionately that stories are the most important means by which individuals come to know the world and their place within it. Barbara Hardy (1977: 12-13) puts it this way:

“Narrative, like lyric or dance is not to be regarded as an aesthetic invention by artists to control, manipulate and order experience, but as a primary act of mind transferred from art to inner life. Inner and outer story telling plays a major role in our sleeping and waking lives. We dream in

narrative, remember, anticipate, hope, despair, believe, doubt, plan, revise, criticize, construct, gossip, learn, hate and love by narrative. In order really to live, we make up stories about others and ourselves, about the personal and the social past and future." (Riley & Reedy, 2000)

The key phrase for us is 'a primary act of mind transferred from art to inner life'. Storying is the human way of making sense, and the better we are at making stories, the more equipped we are to understand and make experience meaningful. It is not merely desirable, it is a psychological necessity. We, therefore, as teachers need to support our students in order that they construct their own narratives. (Riley & Reedy, 2000) As such, logically, narrative should be first exposed to students.

In relation to its significance, the results of this study help teachers to choose the correct approach for teaching writing. This method serves as additional way besides the product and process approaches. For learners, it is enjoyable learning to write narrative essays with less anxiety. Training among school teachers is also practical because this study comes with a prepared and complete module, ready for teachers to use with their students. It also serves as a documented, local research for Education Department to revise it for further courses or implementation. The findings may also assist enthusiastic researchers as they can use it as a basic or foundation for in-depth or further research in future.

1.5 Aims and Objectives

The English Language syllabus requires that students be taught to write effectively for various purposes. Feedback from teachers reveals that

students' efforts at writing are still unsatisfactory. Students appear to lack knowledge of text structure, linguistic features, the relevant content and suitable register to produce a good piece of writing.

The objectives of this study are:

- (a) To find out the effectiveness of using genre-based approach in teaching narrative writing in Form Two classrooms of a government school in Kota Kinabalu.
 - i. To find out the effect of genre-based approach towards the writing skill in narrative essay.
 - ii. To find out the effect of genre-based approach in relation to writing apprehension.
 - iii. To find out the effect of writing apprehension on students' writing skill in narrative essay.
 - iv. To find out the effectiveness of genre-based approach in teaching narrative writing towards writing skill and writing apprehension.
- (b) To look into the effect of learners' exposure to the rhetorical structures: textual and language features on the development of the writing process of the students.

1.6 Research Questions

This study seeks answers and replies to the following questions:

- a. What is the effect of using genre-based approach in teaching narrative writing towards students' writing skill?