

10.18686/er.v2i4.4477

The Practical Study of Genre-Based Teaching Approach in Argumentative Essay Reading and Writing for High School English

Siwei Dai

Kashi University, Kashi, 844000, China

Abstract: This paper discusses the integration model of argumentative essay reading and writing under the genre-based teaching approach in high school English instruction, and elaborates on the three implementation steps of this teaching model. Through practical verification, applying the genre-based teaching approach to English reading and writing instruction can effectively improve students' overall reading and writing abilities.

Keywords: Genre-based teaching approach; Argumentative essay; Integration of reading and writing

Introduction

Language acquisition relies on substantial language input as a foundation, which is reinforced through extensive language output. The integration of language input and output is key to effective language learning. The combination teaching method of reading and writing effectively links these two processes. Reading and writing are fundamentally interactive communicative processes. When learners can read and write within specific contexts to achieve communicative goals, they are considered to have effectively mastered the target language and possess certain reading and writing skills. Genre-based teaching, grounded in genre analysis theory, focuses on the structural analysis of discourse schemata. Applying genre-based teaching in reading and writing instruction helps students grasp the structural framework of texts, build textual frameworks, clarify the relationships between linguistic elements, and understand the functions of entire discourses. Additionally, this approach aids learners in internalizing knowledge and provides support for writing, thereby enhancing their confidence in creating texts. Therefore, the author applies genre-based teaching in integrated reading and writing instruction for high school English, providing reference for other educators.

1. Overview of Genre-Based Teaching

Genre-based teaching is a pedagogical approach rooted in genre theory, recognizing that different types of texts have unique genre characteristics that reflect specific communicative intentions and purposes, which has been influenced by the Australian school, ESP approaches, and new rhetoric schools. Australia is considered a successful model for the practice of genre-based teaching, with its genre teaching model aimed at helping learners recognize writing patterns, understand the communicative function of texts, and promote their reading and writing abilities in specific contexts. The model typically includes the following three stages: Model Analysis: teacher presents typical text samples to students and guides them in analyzing the structural framework and communicative function of the texts. Collaborative Composition: Based on the results of genre analysis from the first stage, the teacher collaborates with students to conceptualize and compose a text that conforms to the genre being studied. Independent Composition: Students select a topic for research and independently write a text that conforms to the genre.

Genre-based teaching not only emphasizes that students learn to analyze the structure and linguistic features of texts but also that they master the characteristics of genres to write independently, using genre as a tool to express personal viewpoints, thus truly improving their reading and writing skills.

2. Application of Genre-Based Teaching Model in High School English Reading and Writing Instruction

Based on the aforementioned genre teaching theory, the author implemented a combined reading and writing instructional study in high school English classes. This study was informed by the Australian school's genre teaching method and was adjusted to fit the specific needs of

the students at our school, resulting in the following genre-based teaching model for reading and writing. The steps are as follows:

2.1 Model Analysis

Teachers guide students in reading and deeply analyzing texts to construct the schematic structure of the articles. This phase not only helps students understand the overall architecture of the text but also provides a solid framework for subsequent collaborative learning. Teachers may use tools such as diagrams or mind maps to help students visualize the structure and logical flow of the text.

2.2 Collaborative Composition

Based on the genre analysis from the first step, teachers collaborate with students to co-create texts of the same genre as the sample texts. During this process, teachers should provide necessary guidance and support to students, such as offering vocabulary lists, sentence structure examples, and other linguistic scaffolding to assist students in imitating the genre characteristics and language style of the sample texts.

2.3 Independent Composition

After the training from the first two stages, students will independently apply the genre knowledge they have learned to write in the third stage, further deepening their understanding and internalizing the knowledge. This stage encourages students to creatively apply their acquired genre knowledge, and teachers can provide feedback to help students improve their work.

Through these three steps, students not only better grasp the characteristics of genres but also enhance their confidence and ability in independent writing. Moreover, this teaching model can be personalized to accommodate the different needs and progress of students, ensuring that every student benefits from it.

3. Practice of Genre-Based Teaching in Argumentative Essay Reading and Writing for High School English

The following uses the reading text "Habits of a Healthy Lifestyle?" from Unit 2 of the 2019 edition of the People's Education Press Senior High School English Elective Compulsory Course Three as an example. We will apply the genre-based teaching approach to reading and writing instruction in expository texts.

3.1 Model Analysis

Genre analysis encompasses both stylistic and discourse analysis, with the core purpose of studying the communicative intent and language usage strategies of texts. Different genres of discourse often have distinct communicative purposes and linguistic features, and their structures and lines of thought can vary accordingly. For instance, narrative essays typically revolve around six basic elements: characters, time, place, the onset, development, and outcome of events, conveying the author's emotions and thoughts indirectly through vivid and concrete narration. Expository essays are a type of discourse aimed at explaining, describing, or elucidating things, concepts, processes, or principles, characterized by clarity, accuracy, and objectivity. The title "Habits for a Healthy Lifestyle" clarifies the theme and is an expository text focused on problem-solving. This type of text typically emphasizes solutions to problems and has strong practical value. The author follows the structure of "posing a problem—analyzing the problem—solving the problem—summarizing" introducing the principles and methods for changing unhealthy habits and cultivating healthy ones. Thus, the whole text can be divided into four parts: the first part poses the problem (the first paragraph), the second part analyzes the problem (the second and third paragraphs), the third part solves the problem (the fourth and fifth paragraphs), and the fourth part summarizes (the sixth paragraph).

The first paragraph introduces the problem, which is the tendency for young people to develop unhealthy habits. The author points out that if these habits are not promptly curbed, they can cause more serious health issues when these individuals grow up. Therefore, it is essential to help teenagers change their unhealthy habits.

The second and third paragraphs analyze the formation and operation of habits, providing theoretical foundations and grounds for solving the problem. Specifically, the second paragraph explains how habits are formed. A significant characteristic of habit formation is the repetitiveness of behavior. Repeatedly doing the same thing eventually turns it into a subconscious and automatic action, becoming a habit. Once a habit is formed, it is difficult to break, but if we understand how habits operate, we can change them. The third paragraph introduces the psychological term "habit cycle" to explain the mechanism of habits. The habit cycle consists of triggers, routines, and rewards. The text uses specific examples to illustrate how the habit cycle operates.

The fourth and fifth paragraphs propose solutions to the problem. Specifically, the fourth paragraph illustrates how to use the principle of the habit cycle to change bad habits and cultivate good ones. The fifth paragraph highlights considerations during the process of breaking old habits and forming new ones.

The sixth paragraph summarizes the text, encouraging teenagers not to rush and to persistently strive to develop good habits, personally

shaping their own healthy and happy future.

While guiding students in constructing the schematic structure of the text, teachers should also focus on helping students understand the linguistic characteristics of the text. Since the genre of this text is expository, the author employs first-person writing techniques to bridge the gap with readers, making the presentation of rigid principles softer and more accessible. Additionally, expository texts generally use the present tense and concise language to convey information, avoiding long and complex sentence structures. To clearly explain concepts, expository texts use examples, such as: "For example, when we feel unhappy, we eat lots of unhealthy snacks." Furthermore, expository texts aim for objectivity, avoiding subjective coloration and focusing on presenting facts, such as: "According to modern psychology, we must first learn about the 'habit cycle'." In reading instruction, teachers should guide students to pay attention to these linguistic features and apply them in subsequent writing. At the same time, teachers should guide students to note that due to the nature of the expository genre, the language used should be objective, formal, and make frequent use of simple sentences.

3.2 Collaborative Writing

Based on the schematic structure of the discourse established in the first step and the understanding of the language features of the text, in this step, students and teachers need to co-create a text of the same genre. The teacher assigns a writing task to the students and provides writing scaffolds, guiding them to read and write based on the genre analysis methods learned in the previous step. The writing task given to the students is: How to apply the principle of the habit cycle to change one of your bad habits or narrate an experience of changing a bad habit, inspiring students to think and express themselves. The teacher asks students to refer to, borrow from, and imitate the discourse structure and language features of the model text, analyzing how the principle of the habit cycle can be applied to changing their own negative behaviors. First, the teacher guides students to refer to the schematic structure of the model text and draft an outline for their essay, providing writing scaffolds for the students. Second, the teacher guides students to pay attention to the language style and language features of the text they are writing. Based on the characteristics of the expository genre, students should avoid colloquial language in their writing and use relatively formal language. At the same time, they can imitate and borrow some sentence structures from the model text.

3.3 Independent Writing

The teacher provides two online posts related to overcoming bad habits and asks the students to choose one to respond to, giving specific advice and applying the knowledge they have learned through the writing task.

Post 1:

I have been struggling with the bad habit of overeating for decades. Every time I feel upset, I eat a lot. Overeating is the most effective way for me to temporarily relieve stress. It's ironic that I eat even more when I'm anxious about gaining weight. I am overweight and often have stomachaches. What should I do? I really want to get rid of this terrible habit.

Post 2:

My friends call me a night owl. I often stay up late and go to bed after 2 a.m. When I'm actually in bed, I still can't help playing with my phone for an hour or more. In other words, I fall asleep later than 3 a.m. I feel dizzy from time to time. I find it hard to work efficiently during the day. Staying up late even makes my skin look bad. I know it's an unhealthy habit, but I don't know what to do.

This step is a critical part of this study. During the independent writing process, students can engage in independent thinking and creation, integrating the knowledge they have learned. The teacher should emphasize the following writing norms to the students: First, the written essay should conform to the theme and discourse structure of the expository text; second, the language used must reflect the genre characteristics of the expository text.

4. Conclusion

Applying genre-based teaching in high school English reading and writing instruction can help students recognize that writing is an orderly process that follows certain rules. The three steps of genre-based teaching not only guide students towards independent writing but also provide them with effective support structures. When using genre-based teaching, teachers should first guide students in reading texts and gradually help them construct the schematic structure of the discourse. This not only provides important support for subsequent writing but also helps students analyze and understand texts from the perspective of genre and discourse structure, thus enhancing their reading abilities.

Secondly, collaborating with students to create texts of the same genre as model texts effectively cultivates students' cooperative skills and further stimulates their innovative thinking through interaction between teachers and students. After the thorough preparation provided by the first two steps, students gain a deep understanding of the structure and language features of texts, significantly boosting their confidence in writing. At this point, students naturally enter the final step of genre-based teaching—writing independently. Practice

has shown that applying genre-based teaching in high school English reading and writing instruction can comprehensively improve students' reading and writing abilities.

References

- [1] Qin Xiubai. "Discourse Genre Analysis." *Journal of South China University of Technology (Natural Science Edition)*, 1997(S2): 6-11.
- [2] Qin Xiubai. "A Review of Genre Pedagogy." *Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, 2000 (1): 42-46.
- [3] Li Changxiang. "Application of Process Genre Teaching Method in English Writing Instruction for Senior High School." *Campus English*, 2022 (45): 79-81.
- [4] Shen Xiaoting. "Practical Research on Genre Teaching Method in Argumentative Reading and Writing Instruction for Senior High School English." *Campus English*, 2022(23): 106-108.