

Once Upon a Time

The Essence of Mind Mapping within Genre-based Approach to Enhance Students' Writing Ability

Tiara Cita Maharani
Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia
tiaracita.maharani@gmail.com

Keywords: Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), Narrative, Writing Skill, Mind Mapping, Genre-based Approach.

Abstract: This study aimed to investigate the text structure and register of narrative text written by an expert and students. It employed Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) approach to analyse the texts. A narrative text written by an expert and three narrative texts written by the tenth grade of senior high school students were used as the primary data. The texts were analysed covering three metafunctions, namely interpersonal, ideational, and textual. The findings demonstrate that the expert's narrative text conforms the conventional narrative text structure which consists of orientation, complication, and resolution. The specific findings exhibit that the expert's text is dominated by Material Process and Finite Past. The result of students' text analysis reflects certain issues – one of which is disorganisation of narrative text structure. Thus, a pedagogical implication has been drawn to enhance students' ability in writing a more well-structured narrative text. Mind mapping has been chosen as the pedagogical implication under genre-based approach to improve students' narrative writing ability.

1 INTRODUCTION

Texts which share the same context of situation will administer the same experiential, interpersonal and textual meanings so they belong to the same register (Butt et al., 2000). To analyse such dimensions, systemic functional linguistics (henceforth SFL) has appeared to be a framework that accommodates how the grammar of a language functions as a resource for making and exchanging meanings. By understanding the making and exchanging meanings within a language, in this context, the texts produced by students, pedagogical implications of language learning can be comprehensively drawn to improve teaching and learning English. Therefore, this study emphasises the SFL analysis of narrative text that is one of the text types utilised in Indonesian educational context. The analysis covers the three main metafunctions, namely interpersonal, ideational, and textual which are realised by tenor, field, and mode.

Narrative has been chosen in this study because of its importance. First, as required by the Indonesian curriculum, narrative texts are taught both in junior and senior high schools. Thus, narrative texts written

by the tenth graders of senior high school have been selected to function as the source data. Second, as cited in a website of *Bright Education Services and Testing*, narrative writing allows students to tell an engaging story, foster their creativity and reading ability, develop a better understanding of language and other styles of narrative text. Last, according to Herman and Vervaeck (2001) narrative platforms have always been central in society since they are able to unveil fundamentally cultural perspectives about reality and humankind.

Nevertheless, in the real situation, students have been encountering difficulties in developing a narrative text. The most obvious one that the writer can spot is constructing a well-organised narrative text that affirms conventional text organisation, namely orientation, complication, and resolution. A well-constructed narrative text is central since it enables readers to comprehend the essence of the story presented in the text. As postulated by Meyer (1999, as cited in Ram and Moonman, 1999), the key of understanding the writer's ideas is organisational plan of text. Moreover, Meyer adds that readers possess limited ability to memorise every piece of information written in a text, thus, certain ways must

be considered to highlight vital points within the text, one of which is through text structure.

Based on the aforementioned background of the research, this study attempts to answer the following research questions (1) what is the text structure of expert's narrative text? what is the register of the text? how is it described? (2) what is the structure of narrative texts written by students? what is the register of the text? how are they different from the expert one? (3) what is the pedagogical implication drawn from the analysis of expert's and students' narrative texts?

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)

According to Eggins (2004:3), the growing interest of SFL has led the approach to advance four important theoretical tenets about language underlying functional language use, the function of language that is to make meanings, the meanings are conceptualised by the social and cultural context, and the process of using language is a semiotic process that is making meanings by choosing. Moreover, the systemic approach to language is functional in two essential domains, namely how people use language and how the language is structured.

Eggins (2004:8) further explains that how people use language covers the relationship between language and context. Language and context are interrelated. It is possible to depict how people are utilising language by comprehending the context of use, for instance, the language is used to write a recipe (Eggins, 2004:8). By reading the choice of words, people can easily interpret that the piece of text is a recipe since it employs the words commonly used to describe how to make a certain dish.

Context of language includes register, genre and ideology in SFL. Register is defined as the same context of situation that is shared by texts realised by the same goals and connections, also patterns of lexicogrammar. Register is important to construct a certain type of text (Butt et al. 2000:9). Register is a functional variety of language (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). It explains the impact of dimensions of the immediate context of situation of a language circumstance in which how the language is employed (Eggins, 2004:9). The context of situation can be realised by three main dimension, namely field, tenor, and mode (Butt et al. 2000:9). Field is defined as the topic or focus of a particular situation (Eggins, 2004:9). Tenor emphasises the relationship

between the language user and the receiver (Butt et al., 2000:5) and mode is the form of the language use.

2.2 Why Narrative?

Among many text types, narrative becomes an important text type to be learnt as it has always been central in life since any particular matter people say and think about at certain time or place would naturally become narrative (Herman and Vervaeck, 2005:1). Furthermore, they argue that narrative also unveils fundamental culture-specific opinions about reality and humankind. In a similar vein, Refnaldi et al. (2010:385) state that narrative deploys cultural values through unfolding the way characters behave to solve the problem or to act upon a crisis point in problem of the story.

Another definition of narrative is proposed by Derewianka (1990:34) who states that basically, narrative is a text type to entertain though it also may seek to teach or inform or embody the writer's reflections on experience, and to nourish and extend reader's imagination.

3 METHOD

Since the present study was aimed to identify the genre moves in narrative texts, document analysis using the framework of Halliday's SFL was employed as the tool for the analysis of text. Bowen (2009) defines document analysis as structure procedure for assessing documents (both printed and electronic) materials. Document analysis using SFL framework was employed to identify the genre moves: ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings in both expert's text and students' texts. SFL serves to provide insightful understanding into texts (Martínez Lirola, 2006, in Arancón, 2013). It has been explained as a functional-semantic approach to language which considers both how people use language in various contexts, and how they organize language to use it as a semiotic system (Eggins, 2004).

One narrative text written by an expert was selected as the sample for the study. The title is *The Origin of Cianjur*. The rationale for taking the text as the sample are: (1) the text was taken from a compilation of text types including reading exercises for students in English practice book entitled *Membongkar Habis 1000 Soal Bahasa Inggris*; (2) the text introduces the origin of a region; and (3) the text promotes culture. Moreover, three students' narrative texts from the tenth grade of one of senior

high schools in Bandung were selected to analyse. The selection was conducted in order to analyse the texts based on three metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal and textual and to compare them with the expert's text.

4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Expert's Text Structure and Register of Narrative

From the analysis, it is confirmed that the expert's text is an imaginary narrative text because it tells the readers about the story of the origin of Cianjur from writer's own perspective (since there are no data provided to support the story) and includes the character of villain (Mr. Stingy) and hero (Tetep), and some imaginative scenes to engage the readers and make them imagine it (water comes out from a hole and create unendurable flood). It is in line with Derewianka (1990) who states that the purpose of narratives is to entertain readers or listeners and hold their interest in reading or listening to the story, it may also aim to teach or inform, to embody the writer's or story teller's reflections on experiences, and, the most important, to nourish and extend the readers' or listeners' imagination.

The language features of the text fit the language features of narrative which are explained by Derewianka (1990) as follows:

- It is specific; it has individual participants with defined identities.
- The verbs are mainly action verbs, and also some of verbs which refer to what human participants said, felt, or thought.
- The verbs are past tense, except the verbs which are used in dialogue.
- Many linking words to do with time.
- Dialogues are included.
- Descriptive language chosen to enhance and develop the story by creating images in the reader's mind.
- It is written in third person's point of view.

Moreover, specific findings from the text can be summed up that Subject and Finite are the most frequent metafunctions used in this text. The Finite is mostly past tense, with a few modal Finite. Since the dialogues between characters are not analysed, the Finite Present can only be found in Coda.

4.2 Students' Text Structure and Register of Narrative

There were three students' narrative texts that were analysed in this study. The overall findings demonstrate certain issues such as confusion and inconsistency of the use of finite past, lack of pronouns, deficiency of lexical cohesion, and the most apparent one is disorganisation of the text structure.

4.3 Pedagogical Implication: Mind Mapping within Genre-based Approach

Having elaborated the SFL analysis of expert's and students' narrative texts, the issue of disorganized text structure faced by the students has caught the writer's interest. Thus, in order to decode the problem, the pedagogical implication has been constructively designed.

The utilization of mind mapping has been chosen as the implication to improve students' ability in producing a more well-organised and well-elaborated narrative text. If the students are able to write a well-structured narrative text, the purpose of the text can be achieved which enables the readers to fully understand the essence of information presented in the text.

Mind mapping has gained its popularity in promoting students' writing ability for over decades. Some researches on mind mapping have proven its strengths and fame (Khoiriyah, 2014; Buran and Filyukov, 2015; Bukhari, 2016). A mind map can be perceived as a visual construction of information which is mapped in a web-like structure supported by other elements, such as pictures, lines, and words (Green, 2014). According to Green, mind mapping is claimed to be 15%-20% more effective in memory development and successful learning compared to other methods, such as brainstorming, note taking, and studying. Another benefit of mind mapping is it enables people to digest certain tasks more easily so they are able to solve them faster.

Mind mapping has been utilised in various fields including education. Newman (2013) suggests that mind mapping is usually employed for educational goals in order to improve students' academic performances. Students are expected to improve their concept visualisations, decision-making ability, critical thinking, presenting skills, reading and writing qualities by integrating mind mapping in their

learning process. Therefore, a number of researches have focused on the importance of mind mapping in accelerating students' ability to grasp knowledge.

In Indonesian setting, a study of mind mapping technique to enhance students' writing was carried out by Khoiriyah (2014). The study was a classroom action research which involved 44 students of the first year students of English department at Nusantara PGRI Kediri University. It included observations, field note, and questionnaire to obtain the data. It had been done in two cycles and the result showed that students demonstrated significant progress in the last cycle which concluded that mind mapping technique is able to improve students' writing ability.

5 CONCLUSIONS

The present study aims to investigate the structure of narrative text and register written by expert and students under SFL framework, and the pedagogical implication of the study. After analysing and comparing the expert's and students' narrative texts, some findings have been obtained which leads to a crucial drawback – students' disorganised narrative text structure. Having insights of the issue, the pedagogical implication has been formulated to resolve the mentioned problem. Mind mapping has been selected to be the implication that is expected to enhance students' ability in organising narrative text, thus, they are able to construct more well-organised and well-elaborated narrative text.

This study only draws the pedagogical implication based on the SFL analysis of students' narrative texts compared to the expert's. Based on the pedagogical implication, the writer has proposed certain teaching and learning activities within genre-based approach (GBA) to be applied in the classroom. Thus, it is suggested that teachers can follow the formulated activities to teach narrative and analyse the result of students' narrative texts. The findings can be employed as feedback to the betterment of teaching and learning texts within GBA.

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