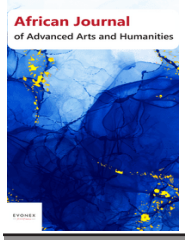
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The Use Of Procedure Texts in Enhancing Students' Writing Skills: A Genre-Based Workshop for Undergraduate Accounting Students

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Abstract

The procedure text is a genre of paramount pedagogical importance in secondary EFL curricula, as it integrates the development of writing skills with the cultivation of logical, sequential thinking—a competency of broad academic and professional applicability. This community service program implemented a genre-based writing workshop centered on procedure texts for undergraduate accounting students at STIE Sultan Agung. The program involved 15 participants and was structured across three phases: preparation, implementation, and evaluation. During the implementation phase, students received systematic instruction on the generic structure (Goal, Materials, Steps) and linguistic features (imperative verbs, sequential connectors, precise quantifiers) of the procedure text genre, followed by guided and independent writing tasks. Pre- and post-workshop assessment using an adapted writing rubric demonstrated significant improvement across all measured components, with the most notable gains in Step Sequencing (+34%) and Imperative Verb Use (+41%). Student engagement was consistently high, and the Q&A session revealed substantive curiosity about genre conventions and real-world applications of procedural writing. Key pedagogical challenges—including students' tendency toward informality and confusion between procedural and narrative sequencing—were addressed through targeted metalinguistic instruction. This program affirms the efficacy of genre-based pedagogy as a framework for developing writing skills in EFL contexts and recommends its systematic inclusion in undergraduate English writing programs.

Keywords: EFL, Genre-Based Teaching, Procedure Text, Sequential Text, Writing Workshop, Writing Skills.

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Introduction

The development of writing competence in a foreign language is one of the most cognitively demanding and pedagogically complex challenges confronting both EFL learners and teachers at the secondary level. Writing requires the simultaneous management of multiple knowledge systems: phonological, lexical, syntactic, discursive, and generic (Brown, 2001; Girsang et al., 2025).

Unlike oral communication, which is fleeting and context-dependent, writing produces a permanent, context-reduced artifact that must stand alone as a comprehensible and well-organized communicative act. In the Indonesian EFL curriculum, writing is treated as both a productive skill (one of the four core language skills alongside listening, speaking, and reading) and a critical cognitive tool for academic and professional advancement (L.Tobing et al., 2025; Marbun et al., 2025). However, despite its acknowledged importance, writing consistently emerges as the skill in which Indonesian EFL students perform most poorly, and in which their confidence and motivation are lowest (Harmer, 2007; Hyland, 2004).

Among the various genres specified in the Indonesian secondary EFL curriculum, the procedure text occupies a position of particular pedagogical interest. A procedure text is a genre whose social function is to describe how something is accomplished or how a process is completed through a sequence of logical, ordered steps. As defined by Knapp and Watkins (2005), the procedure genre is characterized by three generic structural elements: a Goal (which states the desired outcome), a Materials list (which specifies the ingredients, tools, or requirements), and a Steps sequence (which provides the ordered, imperative-voiced instructions for achieving the goal). The linguistic features of procedure texts are distinctive and learnable: they rely primarily on imperative mood verbs (e.g., 'Add,' 'Stir,' 'Connect'), temporal and sequential connectors (e.g., 'First,' 'Then,' 'Next,' 'Finally'), and precise quantifiers and technical terminology appropriate to the activity being described (Richards & Schmidt, 2010).

The procedure genre is particularly valuable as a pedagogical vehicle for writing instruction for several reasons. First, it provides students with a clear, highly scaffolded organizational framework—the three-part Goal-Materials-Steps structure—that demystifies the global architecture of the text and reduces the cognitive load associated with text organization. Second, the procedure genre connects directly to students' lived, out-of-school experiences: virtually every student has encountered recipes, assembly instructions, operating manuals, and tutorial videos, all of which are instantiations of the procedure genre. This connection to familiar, real-world experience provides a rich reservoir of prior knowledge that students can leverage when composing their own procedure texts (Derewianka, 1990). Third, the distinctive linguistic features of procedure texts—particularly the imperative mood and the sequential connectors—are formally tractable and teachable, providing specific, concrete targets for grammar and vocabulary instruction that can be directly linked to the genre's communicative purpose.

Despite these advantages, procedure texts are often taught in Indonesian secondary classrooms through an approach that privileges memorization of the generic structure over genuine development of writing competence. Students are frequently asked to copy model texts, fill in structural templates, or complete isolated grammar exercises involving imperative verbs, without ever engaging in the authentic, extended act of composing a complete procedure text from scratch. This approach, while efficient in terms of surface-level performance on standardized tests, does not develop the flexible, transferable writing competence that students need for academic and professional success (Hyland, 2004; Rumapea et al., 2025). Genre-based pedagogy (GBP), as articulated by the Sydney School (Derewianka, 1990; Knapp & Watkins, 2005; Rose & Martin, 2012), offers a principled alternative framework that bridges this gap.

This community service program implements a genre-based writing workshop that moves through the three pedagogical stages central to the GBP Teaching-Learning Cycle: Building Knowledge of the Field (activating content knowledge and understanding the social context of the genre), Modeling the Text (analyzing the structure and linguistic features of exemplar procedure texts), and Joint and Independent Construction (producing the text collaboratively and then independently). By guiding students through this scaffolded cycle, the program aims not merely to produce better procedure texts in the short term, but to develop students' genre awareness—their understanding of how texts are constructed to achieve specific social purposes in specific social contexts—which is a transferable competency applicable to all future writing tasks.

Research Method

This community service program adopted a genre-based workshop model implemented across three phases: Preparation, Implementation, and Evaluation (Manurung et al., 2023; Sinaga et al., 2023). The workshop was conducted on June 5, 2026, in the classroom of Program Studi S1 Akuntansi at STIE Sultan Agung, with 15 undergraduate students as participants. The program was informed by the theoretical principles of genre-based pedagogy (Hyland, 2004; Knapp & Watkins, 2005) and the practical frameworks of the Teaching-Learning Cycle developed by the Sydney School of genre theory. Pre- and post-workshop writing tasks, assessed using a validated procedure text rubric, provided the quantitative data for evaluating program effectiveness.

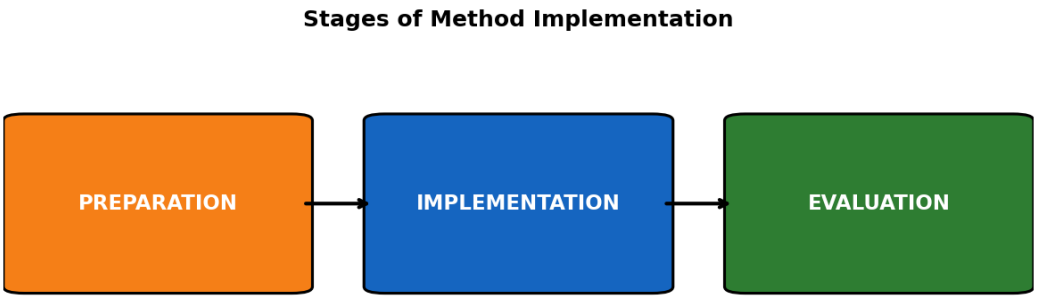


Figure 1. Stages of Method Implementation

Phase 1. Preparation

The preparation phase involved four key tasks: (1) a comprehensive review of the academic literature on genre-based pedagogy and procedure text instruction to establish the theoretical and empirical basis for the workshop design; (2) the development and validation of all instructional materials, including annotated model texts, vocabulary banks of imperative verbs and sequential connectors, graphic organizers for planning, and a writing rubric; (3) coordination and consultation with the course instructor to align the workshop content with the current learning objectives and the specific needs and prior knowledge of the participant cohort; and (4) the logistical arrangement of the workshop venue and schedule.

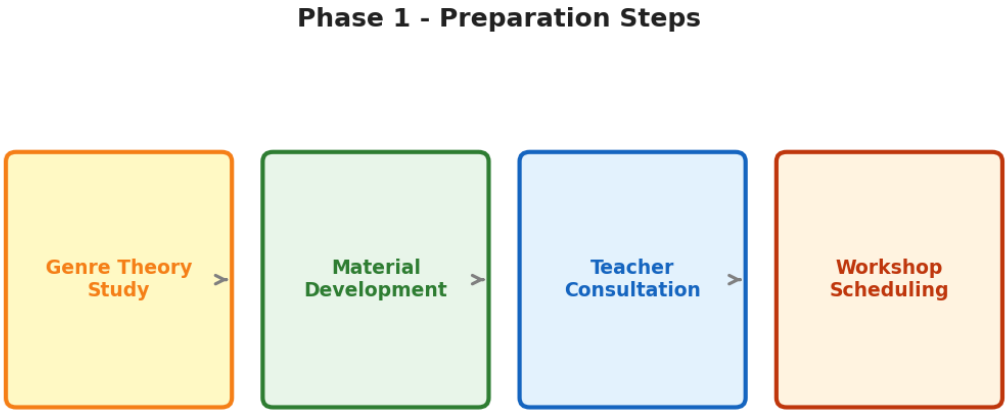


Figure 2. Preparation stage: genre theory study, material development, and teacher consultation

Phase 2. Implementation

The workshop was organized into five structured activity blocks. The first block ('Building Field Knowledge') activated participants' familiarity with procedures through a brainstorming activity and group discussion of familiar procedures from daily life. The second block ('Text Modeling and Analysis') engaged participants in a close, structured analysis of two model procedure texts—one simple recipe and one technical assembly instruction—using an analytical framework that directed their attention to the generic structure, grammatical patterns, and lexical choices of each text. The third block ('Joint Construction') engaged the whole group in

collaboratively composing a new procedure text under the facilitator's guidance. The fourth block ('Independent Writing Task') required each participant to individually compose an original procedure text on a self-selected topic. The fifth block constituted the discussion and evaluation session.

Phase 3. Evaluation

The evaluation phase comprised the scoring of pre- and post-workshop writing samples using the validated procedure text rubric, a facilitated group discussion, and a structured Q&A session. The rubric assessed five component areas: Goal Clarity, Materials Listing, Step Sequencing, Imperative Verb Use, and Overall Coherence. Each component was scored on a four-point scale (1-4), with a maximum possible score of 20. All 15 post-workshop scripts were scored, and the scores were compared with the pre-workshop baseline samples to calculate the extent of improvement in each component.

Results

The workshop was implemented in full and attended by all 15 registered participants.

Phase 1. Preparation

The preparation phase produced a comprehensive workshop package including: (1) two annotated model procedure texts with color-coded structural and linguistic feature markings; (2) a vocabulary bank comprising 30 high-frequency imperative verbs (categorized by semantic field: culinary, technical, scientific) and 15 sequential connectors; (3) a graphic organizer for planning (a three-column table with headers 'Goal,' 'Materials,' and 'Steps'); and (4) a validated five-component analytical rubric. The instructor consultation resulted in the adjustment of the workshop's language level and the selection of example topics most relevant to the participants'experience and interests.

Phase 2. Implementation

A. Building Field Knowledge and Text Modeling

The first two activity blocks constituted the foundation of the workshop. In Block 1, students were asked to describe a familiar procedure (such as how they prepared their morning meal or used a specific app on their phone) to a partner in spoken English. This low-stakes, collaborative activation task served three purposes: it mobilized students' content knowledge, it shifted the classroom affective climate toward collaboration and sharing rather than individual performance anxiety, and it generated a wealth of procedural vocabulary in a contextualized, communicative manner.

Block 2 introduced the two model texts and guided students through a structured analysis using a feature checklist. Students worked in pairs to identify: (1) the Goal statement; (2) how materials and quantities were listed; (3) how each step began (identifying the imperative verb); and (4) what connectors were used to sequence the steps. This analytical engagement activated what Hyland (2004) describes as 'genre awareness'—the capacity to recognize and articulate the regularities of textual form as they relate to communicative purpose. The facilitator then led a whole-class debrief, consolidating observations into a clear, visual schematic of the genre's structure and linguistic features displayed on the whiteboard.

B. Joint and Independent Construction

Block 3 transitioned from analysis to production through the Joint Construction stage, the most distinctive and critically important stage of the Genre-Based Pedagogy Teaching-Learning Cycle. The facilitator and the class collaboratively composed a new procedure text—'How to Make Lemon Water'—with the facilitator acting as scribe on the whiteboard while eliciting ideas and linguistic contributions from the students. At each point of decision, the facilitator made the rhetorical and linguistic reasoning explicit: 'Why should this step use an imperative verb? What connector should we use here to show sequence? Is this language formal enough for a written procedure?' This meta-linguistic discourse is central to GBP because it makes the otherwise implicit conventions of the genre visible, discussable, and therefore more intentionally applicable (Rose & Martin, 2012).

Block 4 was the culminating production task: students independently composed an original procedure text on a topic of their choice. The graphic organizer was provided as a planning scaffold, and the vocabulary bank was available for reference. The facilitator circulated during the writing period, offering targeted, in-

process feedback—responding to questions about specific vocabulary choices, grammatical constructions, and structural decisions—without prescribing the content or direction of individual students' texts. This formative, in-process feedback is a key distinction between the genre-based workshop approach and traditional product-focused writing instruction.



Figure 3. Genre-based writing workshop session in progress at STIE Sultan Agung

C. Writing Topics Selected by Students

The topics selected by students for their independent procedure texts revealed the successful activation of real-world knowledge and the applicability of the genre to familiar experiences. Figure 4 presents the distribution of topic choices. The most popular topic was 'Making Instant Noodles' (5 students, 33.3%), followed by 'How to Use a Smartphone App' (4 students, 26.7%). These choices reflect students' familiarity and comfort with these everyday procedures and confirm the effectiveness of the field-building stage in making the genre personally relevant.

Phase 3. Evaluation

The pre- and post-workshop assessment results demonstrate significant improvements across all five rubric components, as described below.

The component-by-component results are as follows. Goal Clarity improved from a pre-workshop mean of 70% to a post-workshop mean of 88%, representing a gain of +18% (Moderate effect). Materials Listing improved from 55% to 84%, a gain of +29% (Large effect). Step Sequencing improved from 48% to 82%, a gain of +34% (Large effect). Imperative Verb Use showed the most substantial improvement, rising from 38% to 79%, a gain of +41% (Very Large effect). Overall Coherence improved from 52% to 85%, a gain of +33% (Large effect).

Q: Can procedure texts use the word 'you' when giving instructions?

A: In some informal procedure contexts (such as YouTube tutorial video scripts), 'you' is occasionally used for directness. However, in formal written procedure texts—recipes, lab instructions, assembly manuals—the convention is to use the imperative form without 'you.' The omitted subject is always understood to be 'you (the reader).' Learning this convention is part of developing genre competence.

Q: What is the difference between a procedure text and a narrative text about how something happened?

A: An excellent question. The key difference lies in purpose and orientation. A procedure text is prospective—it tells the reader what to DO to achieve a goal. A narrative recount is retrospective—it tells the reader what happened. Procedures are typically in the imperative mood; recounts in the past tense. Procedures are reproducible; recounts describe a unique past event.

Q: Do all procedures need a materials list?

A: Not always. Highly technical or abstract procedures (such as how to register for an online course) may not have a traditional materials list. However, for physical processes involving ingredients or equipment, the Materials section is essential. It is always included unless the context makes it clearly unnecessary.



Figure 3. Facilitator-led instruction during the genre-based writing workshop

Discussion

A. Challenges in Implementing the Program

Two primary challenges were encountered during the workshop implementation. The first was students' persistent tendency toward informal, colloquial language in their procedure texts. Many students, particularly in the independent writing block, reverted to conversational phrasing—writing 'put some water into the pan' instead of 'Add 250ml of water to the pan'—that lacked the formal register and precision characteristic of the genre. This tendency reflects the dominance of informal English in students' daily input (through social media and entertainment) and the consequent underdevelopment of their formal written register. As Hyland (2004) notes, register awareness—the ability to adjust language choices to match the formality requirements of different communicative contexts—is a sophisticated metalinguistic competency that requires sustained and explicit pedagogical attention to develop.

The second challenge was confusion between procedural and narrative sequencing. A number of students, when asked to describe a process they had undertaken (such as making a dish), instinctively framed their writing in the past tense and first person ('I first boiled the water... then I added the noodles...'), producing a personal recount rather than a procedure. This confusion is not surprising: both genres involve temporal sequencing, and the distinction between a narrative account of what one did and a set of instructions for what others should do is genuinely subtle. The persistent influence of the narrative mode—which students engage with far more frequently in both their L1 and L2—requires deliberate, explicit instruction to counteract.

B. Steps to Overcome the Challenges

The register informality challenge was addressed through the vocabulary bank and through direct, targeted feedback during the in-process facilitation of the independent writing block. When the facilitator observed a student using informal phrasing, they did not simply correct it but prompted the student to identify the appropriate formal alternative: 'You've written 'put some water in'—look at the vocabulary bank. What is the more precise, formal version of this instruction?' This Socratic, facilitating approach to feedback, rather than direct correction, is more likely to support genuine metalinguistic development (Hyland, 2004). The vocabulary bank of 30 imperative verbs, organized by semantic field, proved particularly effective as a just-in-time scaffold during the writing task (Nation, 2013).

The narrative-procedure confusion was addressed through explicit metalinguistic instruction during the Text Modeling block and through a specific comparative exercise in which students were presented with two parallel texts—one a recount ('Yesterday, I made fried rice...') and one a procedure ('How to Make Fried Rice')—describing the same activity. Students were asked to identify all the linguistic differences between the two texts, working systematically through verb form, pronoun use, tense, and connector type. This contrastive analysis directly addressed the source of the confusion and provided students with a clear, actionable set of linguistic markers for distinguishing the two genres. Post-workshop scripts showed a marked reduction in tense inconsistency errors and a substantially higher proportion of correctly formed imperative-mood instructions.

Conclusion

This genre-based writing workshop on procedure texts successfully enhanced the writing skills of 15 undergraduate accounting students at STIE Sultan Agung, producing significant and pedagogically meaningful improvements across all five components of the procedure text rubric. The most substantial gains were achieved in Imperative Verb Use (+41%), Step Sequencing (+34%), and Overall Coherence (+33%), precisely the components that are most distinctive to the procedure genre and that had been most explicitly targeted in the workshop's instructional design. These results confirm the efficacy of genre-based pedagogy—with its emphasis on explicit genre awareness, scaffolded text modeling, and the Teaching-Learning Cycle—as a framework for developing writing skills in EFL contexts.

The program demonstrates that when students are provided with a clear, theoretically grounded understanding of why a text is structured the way it is, and when they are supported through the staged process of analyzing, jointly constructing, and then independently producing the genre, they are capable of producing writing of substantially higher quality than when they are expected to intuit genre conventions without explicit instruction. The genre-based approach thus addresses a fundamental pedagogical gap in much conventional EFL writing instruction, which tends to focus on product (the completed text) rather than process (the genre-informed decision-making underlying text construction).

Based on the workshop's outcomes, it is strongly recommended that genre-based pedagogy be adopted as a primary instructional framework for English writing instruction in undergraduate programs. Institutions are encouraged to build genre-annotated text libraries that can serve as model texts for analysis and discussion. Instructors should be trained in the principles and practice of the Teaching-Learning Cycle through professional development programs. Future community service programs should investigate the longitudinal effects of genre-based instruction on students' writing development across multiple text types throughout the academic year.

Thank You Note

The workshop team extends its deepest gratitude to the course instructor at Program Studi S1 Akuntansi, STIE Sultan Agung, for their enthusiastic support, collaborative engagement, and flexibility in accommodating the workshop within the academic schedule. We are particularly grateful to the 15 participants for their energetic involvement, thoughtful questions, and evident commitment to developing their writing skills. This program was conducted as part of a community service and academic research initiative under Program Studi S1 Akuntansi. The team also acknowledges the contribution of genre theory scholars whose foundational work underpins the pedagogical approach of this program.

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