

## INTEGRATING PROCESS-GENRE APPROACH WITH PROJECT IBUNKA TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' ENGLISH WRITING

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**Abstract:** This study goes into how an integration of process-genre approach and project ibunka improves students' English writing. Through Process-Genre approach, students put in writing essays by combining Process and Genre based writing. Meanwhile, Project Ibunka as an online collaborative writing project is deployed as a means of publishing the students' writing to be read and commented by other students from various cultures and countries. In the context of this study, Ibunka also provides sources used to explore the topic and as a writing model. This study is a classroom action research that involved 46 university students in two classes who learned to compose English essays in three learning cycles within twelve meetings. The integration of Process-Genre and Project Ibunka is implemented in four stages: introducing and exploring theme and topics of writing, modeling and determining genre, joint writing and independent writing. In joint and independent writing, the students go through several stages of writing process such as planning, drafting, writing, revising and editing. The result of essays scoring shows average score improvement in both classes from cycle 1 to cycle 2 and cycle 3. This students' writing improvement is also confirmed by students' positive responses revealed from observation, questionnaire and students interview.

**Keywords:** *process-genre; project ibunka; writing; classroom action research.*

### INTRODUCTION

Writing is claimed as a challenging skill for learners (Ali & Ramana, 2016; Cotos, Link, & Huffman, 2017) due to its complex processes (Gonzales, 2010). The writing complexity arises from requirements to master multiple skills of writing (Nyasimi, 2014) such as contribution of the writer's long-term memory, task environment, writing process (Flower & Tillema, 2013) and involvement of language knowledge, language contexts, and language usage skills (Tudor, 2017)

Furthermore, this complexity seems to affect learners' writing ability. Many learners encounter some obstacles in expressing ideas and thoughts in written text. These obstacles entails writer's block, low proficiency (Maolida, 2015), inadequate content mastery, incorrect use of grammar, first language interference, limited vocabulary and insufficient teaching and learning resources (Nyasimi, 2014). Additionally, based on the result of direct observation, it is found that learners' writing ability tends to be the lowest comparing to other English skills. It is reflected

in learners' difficulty to develop ideas and compose an organized and a cohesive text.

The above issues appear to be worrying when contrasted with the primacy of mastering writing since writing skill is a beneficial tool for learning, communicating, self-expressing (Khoeriah, 2018), assisting students in dealing with their academic demands and performing effectively in their professional contexts (Nyasimi, 2014). In academic settings, the writing skill is required to keep and store both information and literary works (Brindley, 2005). It is relevant to Bailey (2004) who states that the writing skill is indispensable to the composition of essays used in most academic courses.

In regard to the issues, teachers need to detect effective and innovative ways of teaching. One interesting way is by integrating teaching method of writing and technology. In this study, process-genre approach and Project Ibunka are integrated as the effort of conducting an effective and innovative way of teaching writing for tertiary level students.

Process-genre approach is the combination of process approach and genre-based approach. It is used since it facilitates students to “improve their knowledge of writing the genre, the structure, and the language features of a particular text, the social context (the purpose of the text), and the process of writing” (Badger & White, 2000). This approach encourages students learn the relationship of purpose and form of particular genres. Furthermore, process-genre approach also provides students to conduct processes of

prewriting, drafting, revision, and editing in order to make them get familiar with various text types and composing process (Saputra & Marzulina, 2015).

Moreover, Badger and White (2000) identify process-genre approach into six steps including preparation, modeling, planning, joint constructing, independent constructing and revising and editing. These steps can be seen in Figure 1.

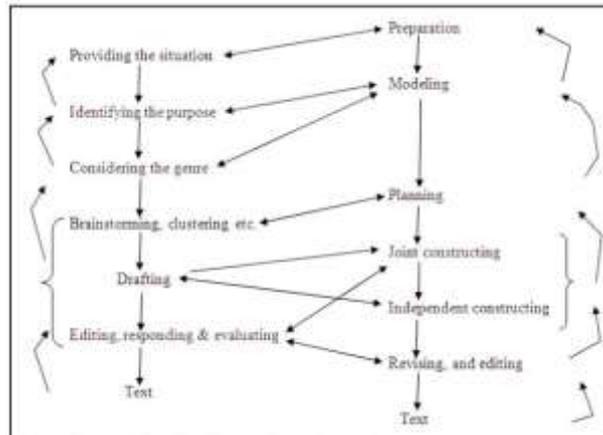


Figure 1. *Process genre approach (Badger & White, 2000)*

The first step of process-genre approach is preparation (Badger & White, 2000). Both process approach and genre-based approach begin the teaching steps by doing preparation (the term used in process approach) and background knowledge of the field (the term used in genre-based approach). In this step, the teacher provides the situation to be used as the topic (Pujianto, Emilia, & M.I., 2014) and puts it into a specific genre. Furthermore, the teacher can also facilitate students to practice other language skills relevant to the topic such as listening exercises containing specific words in the genre, reading comprehension tasks, and discussing the topic to increase students' speaking skill and their knowledge regarding the topic in context (Emilia, 2012).

The next step of this approach is modelling in which students are introduced to genre type, grammatical and rhetorical features of the texts (Hyland, 2007; Pujianto et al., 2014). This phase also allows students to begin to identify the purpose of the text (Badger and White, 2000) from myriad text sources and to understand of the organizational development of the text (Pujianto et al., 2014; Yan, 2005).

The third step is planning. This step deals with brainstorming ideas of the text, discussing,

and reading associated materials to help students develop their interest in the topic and relate it to their experience (Yan, 2005). This is also the step for preparing students to get involved in the joint-constructing phase.

The next step is joint-constructing which allows the teacher and students to start writing a text together. Yan (2005) avows that the aim of this phase is “to produce a final draft which provides a model for students to refer to when they work on the individual compositions”. Moreover, in this phase, the teacher introduces feedback towards writing to students (Emilia, 2010, 2012). The activities might include brainstorming, revising, and editing.

Additionally, independent constructing is carried out as the continuation of the joint-constructing stage. In this step, students start to write their text individually through teacher's guidance. Students also can decide the topic of their writing independently. This step can be conducted inside the classroom so that the teacher is “available to help, clarify, or consult with them individually during the process” (Yan, 2005, p. 22) or it is also very likely to be used as home assignments. At the end of the activity, students can produce a draft of their writing (Pujianto et al., 2014).

Finally, revising and editing are conducted as the feedback on students' draft. The teacher can facilitate students to check, discuss, and evaluate their work with other students (peer feedback) (Khoeriah, 2018). The teacher can also publish students' work for the sake of giving appreciation of students' achievement (Belmekki & Sekkal, 2018).

In relation to the stages of process-genre based, Project Ibunka can be a medium for students to obtain information vis-à-vis the topic, the source of text in the modelling stage, and to publish their final draft of writing. Project Ibunka also provides chances for students to share their ideas through writing essays on this website. Additionally, it is an internet-based collaborative project, initiated by Professor Watanabe, among students from various countries all over the world (Watanabe, Kasami, Chung, & Tsai, 2007). Furthermore, Watanabe et al. (2007) explain that Project Ibunka has three main features; 1) text-based bulletin board discussion, 2) chat sessions, and 3) video letter exchange. In this forum, students are able to freely write various topics of the text about three issues, i.e. school life, culture, and social issues.

Many studies show the strength of process genre approach in teaching writing as a study conducted by Pujianto et al. (2014) who explore teaching steps of process genre approach to develop senior high students' writing skills. The result of this descriptive qualitative study indicates students' writing skill development after process genre approach implementation. The writing development specifically appears in the genre knowledge, writing process, and feedback from peers and teachers. Another study was conducted by Tuyen, Osman, Dan, and Ahmad (2016) who implemented process genre approach to increase EFL students' ability in writing research papers. This study is restricted only to the provision of teaching modules including theory, practice and assessment through the progress tests. The result of this study shows the stages of process genre approach can successfully be applied for designing research paper program in tertiary level. Furthermore, a study of Agesta (2016) also shows another strength of process genre approach implementation in teaching writing. This study aims to offer solutions in helping EFL students to develop their writing ability by providing teaching scenarios using process genre approach. This study indicates that process genre approach can overcome students' writing obstacles.

In addition, Belmekki & Sekkal (2018) strengthen the prominence of process genre approach as they applied this approach to improve students' achievement in writing business letters. This study is aimed at investigating the effect of process genre approach on ESP students' writing achievement and to reveal students' responses to the use of process genre approach. This action research study reveals that there was a significant effect of process-genre approach on the students' writing achievement, covering four writing components: organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics.

Regarding the study on Project Ibunka, Watanabe et al. (2007) discuss the benefits of deploying Project Ibunka in developing students' writing ability and understanding culture, technology, and communication. Another study of Ayuningsih (2015) investigates the use of Project Ibunka in writing practice and the result indicates that students' writing skill has improved especially in the grammatical aspect. Furthermore, Maolida & Mustika, (2018b) explore students' writing process in conducting Project Ibunka. This study highlights students' various sequence and strategies during writing process. Additionally, Maolida & Mustika (2018a) discuss the benefits and challenges of writing in Project Ibunka. The result of this study indicated that students' challenges in writing were unstructured writing process and low proficiency. These obstacles become driving force to continue the research by integrating process-genre approach and Project Ibunka to improve students' writing ability.

## METHOD

This study employed three cycles of classroom action research (CAR) adapted from Kemmis & McTaggart (1988) by involving 46 students who participated in two writing classes (Class A and Class B) for one semester. Since each cycle consists of four meetings, this research is carried out in 12 weeks. The data were collected from classroom observation, questionnaire, interview and writing product (essays) scoring in each cycle.

Students' writing products published in Project Ibunka were scored to look into their writing improvement. In this case, students' writing product (essays) for theme 1 (My School Life) was considered as students' writing product for cycle 1, students' writing (essays) for theme 2 (culture) was considered as the writing product

for cycle 2, and students' writing (essays) for theme 3 (social issues) was considered as the writing product for cycle 3. The results of scoring were compared to denote students' writing progress.

The observation was conducted to describe in detail how the integration of process-genre approach and Project Ibunka was implemented. The observation was focused not only on the learning process in the classrooms but also on students' writing interaction in Project Ibunka. In addition, the observation was also used to support the data from writing scores about students' development on their English writing. Furthermore, the interview was administered and the questionnaire were distributed to support the data concerning the integration of process genre approach and project Ibunka as well as students' perspectives on their English writing progress and improvement.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study are divided into four sections: the activities during the integration of Process-Genre and Project Ibunka in the first cycle of CAR, the activities during the integration of Process-Genre and Project Ibunka in the second cycle of CAR, the activities during the integration of Process-Genre and Project Ibunka in the third cycle of CAR and students' writing improvement viewed from students' writing product scores in each cycle as well as students' responses from observation, questionnaire and interview.

### Learning activities in the first cycle of process-genre integration and project ibunka

In Cycle 1, the integration of process-genre and Project Ibunka started. The implementation of learning stages can be seen in the following figure:

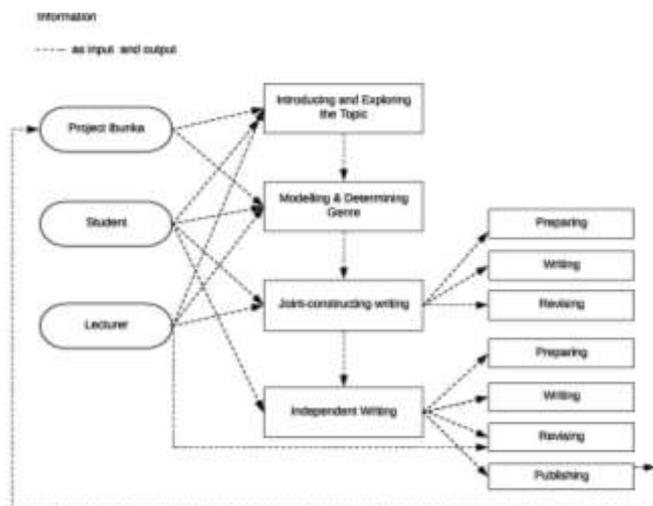


Figure 2. *Integration of process genre and project ibunka*

As depicted in the figure, the students underwent four stages of learning: introducing and exploring writing theme and topics, modeling and determining writing genre, joint writing and independent writing (Badger & White, 2000). In the first meeting, the students were introduced to Project Ibunka and all of them were very excited for knowing that they had an opportunity to write essays and their writing would be read and commented by other students from different cultures and countries. In spite of their excitement, most of them were confused about what to write. Even though Ibunka determined the theme 'My School Life' for the first cycle, the students looked puzzled. Then, the students explored the topics by reading various essays posted in previous Project Ibunka and other

sources. This stage of exploration aimed to familiarize students with the topics (Pujianto, Emilia, & M.I., 2014; Emilia, 2012). After that, they discussed the topics in small groups and the result of discussion was shared in a class discussion. At the end of the meeting, the students came up with several ideas about the topics they were going to write.

In the second meeting, the students and the lecturer discussed and decided to write descriptive and recount texts about 'My School Life'. Then, a descriptive text and a recount text posted in previous Project Ibunka were used as writing models. In this case, the students discussed the texts, analyzed the generic structures and linguistic features of the texts to make the students comprehend the text

organization and its linguistic features (Pujianto et al., 2014; Yan, 2005). At the end of the meeting, the students were encouraged to think about their ideas of the topic and think about how their chosen topic would be written.

In the third meeting, joint writing (it is already known as joint-constructing (Yan, 2005; Emilia, 2010, 2012) was conducted with the lecturer leading the process by writing the sentences on a whiteboard. In this case, the students and the lecturer discussed and decided a topic to be constructed together in the classroom. Then, the students and the lecturer constructed a text together by going through the writing processes such as pre writing through brainstorming, drafting, revising and editing. Through this stage, the students were expected to have prior experience of constructing a text using a specific genre.

The last stage of process genre approach, independent writing to produce a writing draft (Pujianto et al., 2014), was conducted outside the classroom with the students writing their first draft at home. In the fourth meeting, the first draft was brought to the writing class to be proofread, revised and edited by peer correction as suggested by Khoeriah (2018) and lecturer's review. After the process of editing and revision, the final draft was published in Project Ibunka. In addition to posting their writing, the students also commented and gave feedback to essays posted by other Ibunka participants.

The result of evaluation and reflection from the first cycle collected from observation, interview and questionnaire reveals that most of students struggled with the ideas, not to mention common writing problems such as writing structure problems, grammatical obstacle and vocabulary limitation (Maolida, 2015; Nyasimi, 2014). Some of them also admitted that they were anxious due to unfamiliarity with the system of Project Ibunka, the scoring system, the requirement to give and receive comments or feedback and insecurity toward other participants from other countries. In addition, few students experienced writer's block and they had not finished the draft in four meetings and were late in publishing their first essay.

### **Learning activities in the second cycle of process-genre integration and project ibunka**

The activities in the second cycle were arranged by considering the evaluation and reflection result of the first cycle. Basically, the learning stages conducted in the second cycle were similar

to those in the second cycle: introducing and exploring writing themes and topics, modeling and determining writing genres, joint writing and independent writing. However, several modifications were made as an effort to improve the students' writing.

In exploring topics, as an example, small group brainstorming was skipped so the students directly brainstormed in a class discussion. Each student then wrote their topic plan on the whiteboard. In the second stage of modeling and determining genres, explanation and procedure texts were added, reviewed, modeled and analyzed. The samples of the modeled texts were taken from texts posted in previous Project Ibunka. In addition, basic citing and referencing were introduced to avoid plagiarism.

In joint writing, the students were urged to express their ideas to construct sentences and paragraphs together. Compared to the stage of joint writing in the first cycle when the lecturer wrote the sentences on the whiteboard, the activity in Cycle 2 was more student-centered since a student replaced the lecturer's role in conducting joint writing. However, the lecturer was there to give feedback towards writing to students (Emilia, 2010, 2012). At the end of learning process, the students discussed their chosen topic and how the topic would be constructed in a specific type of genres.

The modification was also made in drafting, revising and editing stage. In the second cycle, the students did not only write their first draft at home but also edit and revise their own draft. It was expected that they came to the class with better drafts. The revised draft was then brought to the class to be proofread and corrected by their partner who was considered as having higher degree of writing proficiency. However, several students insisted that their writing needed to be proofread by the lecturer.

The results of evaluation and reflection in the second cycle yield that it was easier for several students in getting ideas of writing since they were more familiar with Project Ibunka so some students checked the topics in Ibunka web prior to classroom discussion. Besides, the theme of 'culture' allowed them to explore a high variety of writing aspects. In addition, in the stage of classroom brainstorming and joint writing, the students were more active. Most students participated in writing their topic plan and gave feedback to their friends' topic choice, and wrote their ideas on the whiteboard. However, some students still chose homogenous topics with

traditional food and festivals as their favorite. Some were also inconsistent with using grammatical form for their writing. In addition, few students copied and pasted some sources without giving any proper citations.

### **Learning activities in the third cycle of Process-Genre Integration and Project Ibunka**

In the third cycle, the activities were carried out by taking into account the reflection results of Cycle 1 and Cycle 2. Some adjustments were made to improve students' writing process and product. In pre writing stage, for instance, the students had independently searched and explored the theme and alternate topics given in Ibunka website. As a result, when the students came to the class for the first meeting in third cycle, most of them had been well prepared with some samples of the text and the sources. It resulted in the brainstorming stage more interactive and interesting. Moreover, the theme 'social issues' made topics exploration more challenging since some topics such as terrorism, abortion, LGBT and other controversial issues offered various perspectives. In this stage, the students expressed ideas orally (Emilia, 2012) by sharing their opinions supported with data.

In determining genre and its modeling, exposition and discussion texts were reviewed, discussed and analyzed. Different from Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 where the students discussed and analyzed the sample texts in terms of generic structures and linguistic features, in Cycle 3 the students also critically discussed the texts in terms of its objectivity, its source validity and its conviction.

The joint writing stage was also modified. Previously, the students and the lecturer constructed the text on a whiteboard together. In the third cycle, an LCD projector was used to make it more efficient for students and the lecturer in constructing the text by providing supporting sources. In this stage, the students were also reminded about citation rules and were given practice of citing and referencing. As a preparation of the drafting stage, students were required to print the source they were going to cite to avoid plagiarism. So, when the students submitted their draft they also submitted the printed source that they used for their writing.

After joint writing, the students made their own outline to write in the independent stage.

In line with the independent writing stage in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2, the independent writing stage in Cycle 3 was conducted outside the classroom with the students writing their text about 'social issues', self-editing their text, self-revising their text and asking their partner who was considered as a more proficient writer to proofread, edit and revise the text. The result of their writing and the printed sources were submitted in the last meeting of the third cycle. The lecturer checked and gave feedback to the draft, including the citing and referencing aspect.

In the third cycle, the students showed more excitement and learning autonomy in exploring the topics and supporting sources. In addition, the students were more reflective and critical of the issues and became more critical of reading the sources for their writing. The students also showed more involvement during joint writing and had better preparation for their writing. The progress of students' writing result and process is discussed in the next section.

### **Students' writing improvement**

The results of students' writing product average scores in Cycle 1, Cycle 2 and Cycle 3 are illustrated in Figure 3. In this case, the chart depicts two classes' average scores, class A and class B.

As depicted in the chart, class A's average score was 78.09 in Cycle 1, 79.27 in Cycle 2 and 80.59 in Cycle 3. The result of students' average score shows that the integration of Process Genre approach and Project Ibunka contributes to students' writing score improvement.

This result is confirmed by the result of Class B's average score of students' writing with the average score of 79.8 in Cycle 1, 82.45 in Cycle 2 and 83.05 in Cycle 3. Students' improved average score of writing in both classes corroborates the contribution of Process genre and Project Ibunka Integration in developing students' writing skills. This result confirms the positive influence of process-genre to students' writing in various contexts (Pujianto et al., 2014; Tuyen, Osman, Dan, & Ahmad, 2016; Agesta, 2016; Belmekki & Sekkal, 2018).

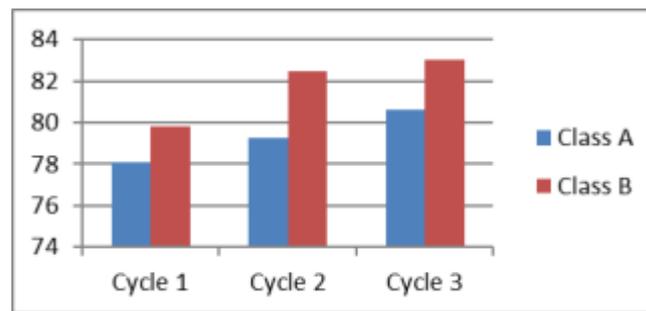


Figure 3. The average score of students' writing in each cycle

In the first cycle, most of the students were excited yet confused about what to write. The result of the questionnaire reveals that in the beginning, many students admitted that it was hard for them to decide on what topics to write. In this case, they came up with homogeneous ideas such as subjects they learn, extracurricular activities and classroom atmospheres. On the other hands, several students said they had 'too many ideas' but they were not focused in discussing the topic in their writing; they put and mixed several topics in an essay incoherently. In addition to those problems, common writing problems such as grammatical constraints and limited vocabularies (Maolida, 2015; Nyasimi, 2014) became two of other writing obstacles faced by the students. As a result, some students experienced writing anxiety that influences their writing quality as shared by one of the interviewed students:

I was worried about everything, I knew about descriptive text or recount text but my problem was the ideas, I had so many things to write but I did not know which idea would make an interesting essay, I did not know how to put my ideas in my writing, my English was not good. I was also worried about the readers' reaction to my essay, especially the readers from other countries. #student11#

The excerpt indicates a student's anxiety on various writing problems she faced in the first cycle. Furthermore, the questionnaire reveals several students' reflection in the first cycle toward their writing obstacles in terms of vocabulary choice and intercultural knowledge, as stated by one of them:

I should be more careful in composing my next essay. The students from different country misunderstood what I tried to say in my essay...I considered my story about my habit of borrowing pen to my classmates as funny since many students did that here but someone from another country considered this as a bad habit that would seriously influence people' trust on me. It did not only

happen to me, my friend used a term 'killer lecturer' in her writing and someone misunderstood the term. #student4#

The excerpt reveals that the student received an unexpected comment from an audience who came from different country that made him more aware that the aspects accepted in his culture might not be accepted in another culture. It also reveals that the student learned from his and his friend's choice of vocabulary/term that was ambiguous to the audience from other culture who did not share similar background with him. It shows that Project Ibunka can be used not only to publish students' writing to appreciate students' achievement (Belmekki & Sekkal, 2018), but also to provide students with contextual feedback.

In Cycle 2, students' writing score improved with Class A 78.09 in Cycle 1 to 79.27 in Cycle 2 and Class B with 79.8 in Cycle 1 to 82.45 in Cycle 2. In this case, most students improved their writing in terms of content, language usage and mechanic. The improvement of their writing content was likely to result from the students' improved engagement in the topic exploring stage. The observation reveals that they had more awareness, more involvement, more autonomy in preparing, searching, and exploring the topic to develop their ideas in writing. Meanwhile, the improvement of mechanic and language usage was likely generated from a more intensive revision process in which the students did self-editing and -revising before their writing was proofread, revised and edited by their more competent peer and the lecturer (see Pujianto et al., 2014). The improvement was also recorded vis-à-vis learners' more awareness of structure and language feature of text type as stated by one of the students:

In writing my second essay, I prepared it by reading some sources before discussing it in the class, it helped me to be more confident to write my draft. I wrote a report text about Sundanese fruit salad 'Rujak' so I made sure I used

appropriate structure, I asked my friend who got good score in writing last semester to check my grammar ...#student 3#

It can be seen from the excerpt that the student was more aware of language features of her text choice. Different from Cycle 1 when the proofread and revision were done by a random partner in the class, in Cycle 2 the students' writing was proofread and revised by a more proficient writer partner. However, many students in Cycle 2 had not properly cited the sources in their writing due to lack of citing practice and experience. Many also had not made coherent and logical sequencing in their essay.

Students' writing score improvement was also shown in Cycle 3 where class A's average score of 79.27 in Cycle 2 improved to 80.59 in Cycle 3 and class B's average score of 82.45 in Cycle 2 improved to 83.05 in Cycle 3. Even though the topic was considered as the most challenging topic by the students, they showed more excitement in exploring the ideas for their writing and they were aware that writing needs supporting valid and objective data.

My first essay explored my personal life at campus then the second essay explored culture so I needed to broaden the coverage of discussion in my essay and searched for more information and the third essay discussed social and global issue that pushed me to further learned about various issues in detail. I wrote this not for myself, students from other countries probably read my essay, they could disagree with me, so I should see something from both sides #student 2#

Besides showing student's awareness of preparing the objective content and justifiable data, the excerpt also shows that the student had audience or reader orientation. In this case, he did not only write his ideas but also considered the potential readers. Another student's perspective (student 22) well wrapped up the contribution of process genre and Project Ibunka toward students' writing improvement.

This pushed me to write with purpose, like when I wrote a discussion essay I put perspectives from two sides. My writing also improved, I think, because it was checked and rechecked by me and my friends before I posted it in Ibunka. I also tried to make interesting essays so I could get comments from other participants...#student 22#

The excerpt reveals that Genre approach helped the student to write her essay with clear purposes and with specific structure and language features. In the meantime, process approach

facilitated her to improve her essay quality through writing process, especially editing and revising stage. In this case, the integration of both process and genre approach allows students to be more purposeful in composing and at the same time experience recursive writing process (Deng, Chen, & Zhang in Saputra & Marzulina, 2015). Meanwhile, Project Ibunka served as a means to publish students' writing and get comments as meaningful feedback to their writing. As a result, the students did not only get benefits of process-genre approach for their writing improvement but also utilized their writing to exchange ideas in a contextual way and got useful and meaningful response from real audience.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study discusses the integration of process genre with project Ibunka to improve students' English writing. The results show that four stages of introducing and exploring theme and topics of writing, modeling and determining genre, joint writing and independent writing were implemented. In this case, writing process such as planning, drafting, writing, revising and editing were carried out by the students in joint writing stage and those steps were repeated in independent writing stage followed by the additional step to publish writing product in Project Ibunka. This integration results in students' writing improvement that is shown from the scoring results of students writing product published in Project Ibunka with class A's average score of 78.09 in Cycle 1, 79.27 in Cycle 2 and 80.59 in Cycle 3 and class B's average score of 79.8 in Cycle 1, 82.45 in Cycle 2 and 83.05 in Cycle 3. This improvement is confirmed by students' improved involvement and autonomy during their writing process and is also substantiated by students' responses revealing their writing improvement.

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