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Original Research

From Simplicity to Complexity: The Role of Genre Pedagogy in EFL Oral Storytelling

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Abstract

This study explores to what extent a genre-oriented approach impacts the complexity of EFL students' oral storytelling. Drawing on the Sydney school's genre-based approach, the study incorporates both macro and micro language features during the teaching and learning processes. Two undergraduate English language classes participated in this study: one received explicit instruction on the linguistic and rhetorical aspects of the English narrative genre, while the other followed a traditional teaching method without such focus. Data comprising students' monologue presentations were analyzed through a framework grounded in Systemic Functional Linguistics. A random selection of six recordings, three from each group, were transcribed for detailed analysis. Findings from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives revealed that students who were exposed to genre-based instruction produced more fluent and sophisticated spoken narratives, with fewer grammatical errors, pauses, and repetitive patterns in comparison with those who were taught via a traditional method. The findings suggest that integrating genre-specific strategies may be helpful in enhancing spoken English skills in EFL settings.

***Keywords*:** Oral Reproduction of Stories; Genre-based Approach; Narrative Genre; Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL); EFL Students.

1. Introduction

Among the four language skills, speaking is widely regarded as a primary indicator of L2 language proficiency (Florez, 1999). For EFL students, developing this skill is crucial, and yet, due to limited direct exposure to the English-speaking context, educators have sought innovative methods to improve speaking proficiency. Hermagustiana (2010) and Šolcová (2011) have highlighted the potential role of oral reproduction of stories in enhancing speaking skills. Šolcová (2011) posits that this approach is a powerful technique for developing speaking fluency, providing students with opportunities to practice extended discourse. However, a review of literature shows that there has been a lack of systematic approach for enhancing EFL students' speaking ability, including in teaching oral reproduction of stories.

Among language pedagogies, genre-based teaching and learning approach have been identified as a significant area of focus in language education (Feez, 2002; Hyland, 2003; Martin & Rose, 2008). Hyland (2007) emphasizes the importance of genre-based teaching and learning, and highlights its potential to enable teachers to provide explicit and systematic explanations of target language features. While genre pedagogy has been predominantly applied to writing instruction (Kay & Dudley-Evans, 1998), there is a lack of research on the impact of genre teaching on oral skills and the reproduction of stories (Khatibi, 2014; Yilong, 2016). Khatibi (2014) notes that teachers often neglect to explicitly teach learners about genre and text as a whole unit, and instead they just focus on speaking skills without a systematic approach. Yilong (2016) agrees that familiarity with and adherence to specific language genres can enhance one's ability to construct discourse structure (p. 36), which refers to how text components, including words and grammatical elements, are linked together.

One crucial aspect of constructing an appropriate discourse structure is the ability to produce complex language in both written and spoken language. Halliday and Hasan (1976) contend that spoken discourses are as complex as written language, with complexities arising from different modes. The use of complex phrasal constructions is a hallmark of progression in writing (Biber, Gray, & Poonpon, 2011), as writers employ such structures to convey information or advance their argumentation (Biber, 2006; Halliday, 1993; Martin, 1993). In contrast, the sources of complexity in spoken language are rooted in *processes* (verbs) (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014) and intricate language use, including pronunciation, intonation, rhythm, and pauses (Crystal, 1969). While numerous studies have investigated the sources of complexity in written English (Atak & Saricaoglu, 2021; Ortega, 2003; Vyatkina, 2012; Jodairi Pineh, 2022; Ravelli, 1999; Thomas & To, 2016), there is a scarcity of research investigating the complexity of spoken language and the role of genre teaching and learning in promoting students' use of these resources. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the impact of genre teaching and learning on the reproduction of storytelling in narrative genre among undergraduate EFL students.

2. Literature Review

In Iranian universities, undergraduate students generally enroll in a compulsory course on oral story reproduction during their third and fourth semesters. The main goal of this course is to improve students' speaking skills. Typically, the stories used span a variety of genres, such as short stories, novels, and occasionally abridged versions. Instructors adopt different teaching approaches; some focus on reading strategies, while others encourage students to memorize parts of the stories for presentation.

Unfortunately, reports indicate that students face difficulties in reproducing appropriate discourse structures (Yilong, 2016), along with challenges related to pronunciation, intonation, vocabulary, and grammar (Crystal, 1969). This suggests that the absence of a clear, explicit pedagogical approach hampers students' ability to develop effective speaking skills. Specifically, it negatively affects their capacity to reproduce stories orally, which is a crucial component of their linguistic competence.

Furthermore, the lack of structured teaching strategies seems to limit students' progress. Without explicit guidance, they struggle to organize their speech coherently and fluently, which diminishes their overall oral communication skills. Consequently, these challenges highlight the need for more targeted pedagogical interventions to better support EFL students in mastering oral story reproduction.

Within language pedagogies, the genre-based approach has gained recognition as an effective teaching and learning method. According to Martin (1992), the notion of genre is rooted in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which adds a layer of meaning-making beyond the immediate context of situation. Australian educational linguists, (e.g., Christie, 1999; Feez, 2002; Knapp & Watkins, 2005; Martin & Rose, 2008, & Rothery & Stenglin, 1997), have built upon this notion and incorporated it into teaching and learning practices. Initially, the genre-based approach was applied in primary and secondary schools in New South Wales, with a focus on supporting underprivileged students. Over time, however, it has been widely adopted in both native English and EFL contexts globally. This approach emphasizes attention to both macro-level (genres) and micro-level (linguistic features) aspects of language.

The concept of genre as a higher-order stratum has been central to many Australian educational linguists' pedagogical frameworks, especially in writing instruction (Feez, 1998; Knapp & Watkins, 2005; Rothery & Stenglin, 1997). Various genre taxonomies have been proposed; for example, Martin (1989) identified five genres: report, procedure, description, explanation, and narrative. Fahey et al. (1997) expanded this list to include seven genres, adding argumentation and instruction. Later, Martin and Rose (2008) developed a taxonomy comprising twelve genres, including report, procedure, description, explanation, and narrative. However, this study specifically focuses on the narrative genre for the teaching and learning in Iran's EFL context.

Gee (2010) defines narrative genre as "a type of discourse used to make sense of and give meaning to experiences, events, and situations" (p. 155). He emphasizes that narratives serve social functions, such as recounting past experiences, explaining current circumstances, or predicting future events. Within this framework, the narrative genre which operates as a macro-level language feature may influence micro-level language elements. This study aims to

investigate how deploying the narrative genre can enhance the complexity of EFL students' discourses by shaping relevant micro-level features at the lexicogrammatical level.

Genre-based pedagogies highlight the importance of teaching both cultural context and linguistic structures of genres. The Sydney genre school models, proposed by Rothery (1984) and Feez (1998), are among the most influential frameworks for integrating genres into classroom practices. Rothery's (1984) model comprises seven stages: introducing a genre, focusing on it, jointly negotiating its features, researching material before writing, drafting, peer and teacher consultation, and publishing. Feez's (1998) model involves five stages: building context, modeling and deconstructing texts, joint construction, independent construction, and the final stage (text production). These models provide systematic approaches for scaffolding students' understanding and production of genre-specific texts.

SFL outlines a comprehensive map illustrating how both macro and micro language features are realized. When it comes to micro features, SFL emphasizes that three metafunctions, ideational, interpersonal, and textual, are essential in shaping lexicogrammatical aspects within language (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, 2014). These metafunctions influence the micro-level by organizing how meanings are constructed in individual clauses. Meanwhile, for macro features, these same metafunctions operate at the contextual level, which encompasses field, tenor, and mode of discourse (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Building on this, Martin (1992) extends these contextual elements to a higher stratum, that is, genre. Additionally, Martin and Rose (2008) contend that a reciprocal relationship exists, one between the contextual features of field, tenor, mode, and the metafunctions, and another in genre, which illustrates the interconnectedness of these layers.

In this study, other than some linguistic features, the ideational metafunction is taken for account to investigate how vital it acts in producing complexity features in oral reproduction of EFL students. Ideationally, this complexity in written texts manifests through elaborate nominal groups, prepositional phrases, and attributive adjectives (Biber, 2006; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Conversely, spoken discourse relies heavily on processes, mainly verbs, participants (subjects), and circumstances (objects) to convey meaning effectively (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, 2014). Halliday (1994) highlights that, from an ideational angle, process types form the core of clauses, mostly identified by the verbal group. This idea is further elaborated by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), who describe a clause as a "goings-on process," consisting of three key components: a process that unfolds over time, the participants involved, and the circumstances surrounding the event. All actions or events are categorized as processes, which serve different functions across six primary process types in English: *Material, Mental, Relational, Verbal, Existential, and Behavioural.* These processes are grouped into three main categories: *being* (relating to abstract relationships), *doing* (pertaining to physical actions), and *sensing* (related to consciousness).

Based on Halliday and Matthiessen's (2004) taxonomy, events are expressed through six distinct process types: Mental, Material, Relational, Existential, Verbal, and Behavioural. These categories describe different "goings-on" within a clause, each serving a unique function in conveying meaning. For example, the Material process includes actions like "fell," illustrating physical events. The Relational process, on the other hand, involves relationships between elements, such as in "Her name is Mona." Mental processes are tied to psychological experiences, thoughts, emotions, perceptions. Examples include "I think," "I enjoy," "I feel," and "I fear." Verbal processes focus on communication, involving verbs like "speak," "ask," or "explain," which express acts of telling or questioning. Existential processes are characterized by the use of "there," as in "There is a book," indicating the existence of something. Lastly, Behavioural processes often blend aspects of Mental and Material processes, reflecting human psychological states like smiling or laughing. Each process type plays a crucial role in the construction of meaning. They capture the diverse ways humans experience and communicate their world.

Numerous studies have explored the impact of different approaches on oral storytelling on students' and their speaking skills. Most of these investigations center on how specific pedagogical approaches can enhance EFL students' language features and overall speaking abilities.

Samanhudi's (2013) research highlights that adopting a genre-based approach to teaching can significantly boost speaking skills. In this study, students first received background knowledge, summaries, and explanations before engaging with a text. This was followed by group discussions and individual presentations. The findings revealed notable improvements in comprehension, vocabulary, and linguistic development. Students demonstrated more effective speaking

skills during their presentations. When reflecting on their experiences, learners identified challenges related to task demands, linguistic factors, and non-linguistic influences. Importantly, the structured reading and discussion activities proved to be effective, as they helped students develop a deeper understanding of language forms, functions, and social meanings. Furthermore, learners found that integrating genre awareness was especially advantageous. This allowed them to access new vocabulary and other valuable language resources that supported their speaking development.

Cohen et al. (1996) emphasized that the primary aim of language learning strategies is to enable learners to understand and intentionally acquire the target language. Building on this idea, they conducted a study to explore how consciousness-raising strategies impact speaking skills in a foreign language. The study involved 60 intermediate students, randomly divided into an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group received specific consciousness-raising speaking strategies, whereas the control group did not. The findings revealed a significant improvement in speaking ability within the experimental group. They underscored the effectiveness of this approach for enhancing language proficiency.

Katuscáková and Katuscák (2013) investigated the role of oral reproduction of stories as a method for transferring knowledge. Their research revealed that this technique effectively conveys various types of knowledge: explicit (facts, information), implicit (attitudes, values), procedural (skills, procedures), and declarative (concepts, principles). Moreover, the study highlights that oral storytelling fosters better retention, recall, and transfer of knowledge, making it a valuable tool for knowledge management. Additionally, this method encourages community building and shared understanding among participants, which strengthen social bonds through storytelling.

Kimhi et al. (2022) examined oral reproduction abilities in children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) compared to typically developing children, after reading and listening to stories. The results indicated that children with ASD faced significant challenges when retelling stories after reading independently, often omitting details and adding irrelevant information. However, they performed similarly to their peers when retelling stories after listening, which suggests that their difficulties stem more from reading comprehension than auditory processing. This highlights the importance of considering individual differences in oral language skills when working with children with ASD and offers insights into the unique strengths and challenges faced by this group in oral storytelling.

Isbell et al. (2004) compared how storytelling versus story reading influences young children's oral language complexity and story comprehension. The story reading group relied heavily on illustrations in picture books to reconstruct the story, while the storytelling group created their own images to retell the story. The study found that children who engaged in storytelling excelled in providing clear endings, setting descriptions, morals, and character recognition, indicating that storytelling enhances imagination and recall. Conversely, children who read from picture books performed better when creating their own stories based on images. Interestingly, each group performed best when working within the same medium they experienced during the 15-week period. Overall, the research suggests that both storytelling and story reading support oral language development and comprehension, but integrating storytelling into literacy programs can add engagement and interactivity. The medium of presentation also plays a role, as children respond differently depending on whether they read or listen.

Despite extensive research on pedagogies influencing linguistic and non-linguistic factors in story reproduction, an important gap remains. Specifically, there is limited understanding of how stories guided by genre-based pedagogy impacts students' development of storytelling skills, comprehension, as well as specific linguistic features. This area warrants further investigation to explore how genre-awareness can enhance students' ability to reproduce stories effectively and develop deeper language competencies. Specifically, this study sought to investigate the following research questions:

1. To what extent does a genre-based pedagogy for producing narrative genre enhance the grammatical complexity, grammatical accuracy, and vocabulary knowledge of EFL undergraduate students in their monologue storytelling?
2. To what extent does this pedagogical approach influence the use of different process types in students' storytelling?

3. Which process type/s significantly contribute to the overall meaning-making and complexity of EFL students' oral reproduction of stories?

3. Methodology

3.1. Theoretical Framework and Syllabus Design

This study employs the SFL framework, which underpins the Sydney genre school model of teaching and learning. Over time, the genre-based approach has evolved significantly, from its initial application in primary and secondary curriculum models (Callaghan & Knapp, 1989; Murray & Zammit, 1992; Rothery & Stenglin, 1997) to its current use in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, covering multiple language skills. The model rests on a dual awareness: genre scaffolding and language knowledge (Martin, 2005). Building upon this foundation, Rothery and Stenglin (1997) and Feez (1998) introduced three key stages: *deconstruction*, *independent construction*, and *joint-construction*. A specific attention was on the deconstruction stage to guide our design. During this stage, various parts of the narrative genre were deconstructed to help students understand both macro and micro language features. At the macro level, the overall structure of narrative genres was identified through analysis of sample texts. At the micro level, students examined specific language features of narration in English, with particular emphasis on the use of process types (verbs).

The study involved two classes of English language students, both male and female, who specialized in English translation. The participants' ages ranged from 18 to 25 years at the time of data collection. One class received explicit genre-awareness instruction, tailored to facilitate oral story reproduction, while the other did not. For consistency, the focus was solely on narrative genre throughout the teaching and learning cycles.

Based on syllabus, 12 sessions were dedicated to these cycles. The first session aimed to assess students' speaking proficiency. To do this, we used the IELTS speaking module rubric, which evaluates four key areas: fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation. Based on IELTS bands, students were categorized into three groups: A (7-9), B (5-6), and C (1-4). Due to uneven group sizes, only students in group B (n=30) participated in this study.

The teaching and learning process was divided into three stages. First, a sample text was used to raise students' awareness of the language features specific to narrative genres in English. They learned about the rhetorical and linguistic characteristics, then identified these features in both sample texts and their own stories for class presentation. Second, students practiced speaking through individual or group presentations, sharing their stories with peers and receiving feedback from the teacher, both in class and on campus. Finally, in the independent construction phase, students prepared a 15-minute monologue, followed by a 10-minute question-and-answer discussion. Topics focused on the story's theme and moral implications, relevant to their immediate context. Only the students' monologue reproductions were analyzed in this study.

3.2. Data Source

The dataset comprised 30 voice recordings collected from two classes. Specifically, fifteen students from each class, all categorized within group B, delivered monologue presentations. For transcription and detailed analysis, we randomly selected six recordings, three from students who experienced the genre-based approach for oral story reproduction, and three from students who followed the conventional teaching method. Throughout the classroom activities and monologue presentations, the narrative genre served as the sole focus. The subsequent section provides a detailed account of the analysis process.

3.3. Data Analysis

The linguistic complexity, grammatical accuracy and vocabulary of the reproduced texts served as the main constructs through which we examined the impact of the genre-based approach on students' oral storytelling. According to Wolfe-Quintero et al. (1998), there are three measures which best capture linguistic complexity both in pedagogic and testing contexts: (1) the number of clauses per T-unit (the T-unit complexity ratio); (2) the ratio of dependent clauses to the total number of clauses (the dependent clause ratio); (3) the number of verb phrases per T-unit (the verb–phrase ratio). Specifically, in this study considering the third category, our focus centered on the use of process types within the

students' monologue presentations. To begin, we analyzed the data based on Halliday and Matthiessen's (2004, 2014) classification of the ideational metafunction, paying particular attention to the frequency of different process types across the two groups. In English, process types are categorized into *Material*, *Mental*, *Relational*, *Verbal*, *Behavioral*, and *Existential*. Following this, we compared the frequency of each process type relative to the total number of T-units produced in each group's story reproductions. It is noted that the features chosen represent sentence level phenomenon, rather than more complex discourse level analysis. A sample of each process type is provided in the table below.

Table 1. *Sample of Processes Types in English*

Process type	Examples
Material	The old man *got up*
Mental	I *thought*
Relational	yes he *was* dead
Verbal	and *said* nothing
Existential	*There was* 3 men *at the doors*
Behavioural	The police officers *smiled*

The recorded voice files of students who participated in the genre-based teaching and learning cycles, as well as those taught through the conventional approach, were transcribed. These transcripts were made verbatim, with no modifications. The following excerpt is a segment of a transcribed student text from the group that received the genre-based instruction.

Table 2. *A Sample Analysis from a Student's Reproduction of Story*

Clause	Process type	Participant	Process	Circumstance
It was about 4 o'clock in the morning	Relational	It	Was	in the morning
and there was a knocking at the door	Existential	There	Was	at the door
I went to open the door	Material	I	went to open	the door
There was 3 men at the doors	Existential	There	Was	at the door
and they introduced themselves as the police officers	Verbal	They	Introduced	as the police officers
they said that during the night	Verbal	They	Said	during the night
they heard the scream	Mental	They	Heard	the scream
A neighbour had heard a scream	Mental	A neighbour	had heard	a scream
and called the police officer	Verbal	----------	Called	the police officer

A similar analysis was performed on the texts from both groups to explore how different process types influenced the overall meaning-making during students' oral story reproduction. Following this, a frequency analysis of process types was carried out. This stage of analysis uncovered both similarities and differences in the use of process types between the two groups. To evaluate qualitatively how the use of these process types contributed to the overall complexity of students' story reproductions, we identified the dominant process types in each group. The detailed findings of the analysis will be presented in the results and discussion section.

For grammatical accuracy, there are two measurements: *global accuracy* (Skehan & Foster, 1999) and *specific types of errors* (Wigglesworth, 1997; Ortega 1999). Since the global accuracy has the advantages of including all types of errors, we selected this approach in analyzing students' monologue presentations. The features analyzed included verb tense, third person singular forms, plural markers, prepositions, and the use of articles. Overall accuracy was measured by determining the proportion of T-units that were free of grammatical errors, expressed as a percentage of the total T-units. A T-unit, as defined by Hunt (1970), consists of an independent clause and all its subordinate clauses. Error-free T-units are those that do not contain any grammatical mistakes, including incorrect word order or missing pronouns.

Cobb's (2002) web-based program, *VocabProfile,* which measures the frequency of high and low vocabulary was used to examine students' vocabulary knowledge. Type and token measures were calculated. The token measure can reveal to what extent the presenter has used the allocated time to take up in speech. The type measure was selected to estimate the range of vocabulary used.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. The Quantitative Phase

To answer the first research question, the analysis focused on students' vocabulary knowledge. Cobb's (2002) web-based program for analyzing types of vocabulary, that is, *VocabProfile*, was used to estimate *frequency*, *types*, *ratio*, and *lexical density* of students' spoken texts with and without treatment. The following table illustrate the details of analysis.

Table 3. *A Combined Use of Vocabulary by Two Groups of Students*

Metrics	Treated Students	Untreated students
Words in Text (tokens)	3842	3794
Different Word Types	1114	1124
Type-Token Ratio	0.87	0.90
Tokens per Type	10.36	10.06
Lexical Density (content words/total)	1.34	1.28

This combined table provides a clear side-by-side comparison. The differences are minimal but suggest that students without treatment slightly excel in lexical diversity and total word variety, while treated students show a marginally higher density of content words, potentially indicating richer or more substantive language use.

To analyze the grammatical accuracy of students' monologue spoken texts, Skehan and Foster's (1999) global accuracy model was employed. As explained, this model encompasses all types of errors. However, the analysis in this study specifically focused on features such as *verb tense*, *third-person singular forms*, *plural markers*, *prepositions*, and *article* usage. Two features, that is, *repetitions* and *pauses*, were added to this model, as they are indicative of fluency and control. Overall accuracy and fluency were determined by calculating the percentage of T-units that contained no grammatical errors, relative to the total number of T-units for each group. To gain deeper insights, a meticulous manual analysis was conducted to quantify students' errors. This allowed a better comparison between treated and untreated students. The results, summarized in the following table, highlight differences in error patterns and frequencies across these groups.

Table 4. *Expanded Error Frequency for Treated vs. Untreated Students*

Feature	Groups	Total T-units	Total errors	Errors per T-unit	Error %
Verb tense	Treated	429	12	0.028	2.80
	Untreated	561	58	0.103	10.33
Third-person singular	Treated	429	0	0.00	0.00
	Untreated	561	1	0.002	0.18
Plural Markers	Treated	429	0	0.00	0.00
	Untreated	561	1	0.002	0.18
Prepositions	Treated	429	0	0.00	0.00
	Untreated	561	10	0.018	1.78
Articles	Treated	429	2	0.005	0.47
	Untreated	561	11	0.020	1.96
Repetitions	Treated	429	3	0.007	0.70
	Untreated	561	34	0.061	6.06
Pauses	Treated	429	28	0.065	6.52
	Untreated	561	43	0.077	7.67

The analysis reveals notable differences in grammatical accuracy between the two groups. For *verb tense*, untreated students exhibited higher errors per T-unit, that is, 0.103%, compared to treated students, 0.028%, and a significantly larger error percentage, about 10.33% versus 2.80%. This trend suggests that untreated students make more tense errors, which affects a greater proportion of their T-units.

Similarly, for *third-person singular*, untreated students again show a slightly higher error rate, 0.002% errors per T-unit and a larger error percentage, 0.18%, compared to no errors among treated students. The same pattern appears with *plural markers* and *prepositions*, where untreated students have noticeably higher error densities and percentages.

For instance, the error percentage in prepositions is approximately 1.78% for untreated students versus 0% for treated students.

The differences are even more pronounced in *repetitions* and *pauses*, features that often reflect fluency and language control. Untreated students display errors per T-unit of 0.061 and 0.077, with error percentages around 6.06% and 7.67%, respectively. Treated students, however, maintain much lower rates, indicating better control over these features.

These findings demonstrate that genre-based approach appears to have a positive impact both on the complexity and proportion of errors across various linguistic features. The lower errors per T-unit and smaller error percentages among treated students suggest greater grammatical accuracy and fluency.

To address the second research question, the subsequent analysis focused on estimating the frequency of process types among students who received the genre-based instruction compared to those taught via the conventional approach. This calculation was based on the total number of T-units in each spoken text. Table 5 below presents the frequency distribution of process types for the students who experienced the genre-based instruction.

Table 5. *The Frequency of Process Types for Students Receiving Genre-based Instruction*

	No. of T-units	Mental	Material	Relational	Verbal	Existential	Behavioral
Student 1	92	26	24	27	11	4	0
		28.2	26	29.3	11.9	4.34	0.00
Student 2	198	46	55	47	42	5	3
		23.23	27.7	23.73	21.21	2.52	1.51
Student 3	139	46	47	23	16	7	0
		33.1	33.8	16.54	11.51	5	0.00
Total	429	118	126	97	69	16	3
		84.53	87.5	69.57	44.62	11.86	1.51

A preliminary examination of the table reveals that Student 1 exhibits a relatively low number of Mental and Material processes compared to the other students. His text comprises 92 T-units, with 28.2% Mental and 26% Material processes. In contrast, Student 2 has a significantly higher total of 198 T-units, including 23.23% Mental and 27.7% Material processes. Similarly, Student 3 produced 139 T-units, with 33.1% Mental and 33.8% Material processes.

The data also indicate that Relational and Verbal processes are common across all three students. Students 1 and 2 both show relatively high counts of these process types, whereas Student 3 has fewer. Conversely, Existential and Behavioral processes are less frequent among the students. Student 1 shows no Behavioral processes at all, while Students 2 and 3 have only a few. Student 2 has slightly more Existential processes than Student 1, but overall, all three students demonstrate relatively low usage of these process types.

Looking at the overall distribution, Mental processes account for approximately 27.5% (118 out of 429), and Material processes make up about 29.4% (126 out of 429). Relational processes represent roughly 20.4% (87.5 out of 429), while Verbal processes constitute around 16.1% (69 out of 429). In contrast, Existential processes are the least frequent, comprising about 3.7% (16 out of 429), and Behavioral processes are minimal at approximately 0.7% (3 out of 429).

This distribution shows that Mental and Material processes together make up almost 57%. Relational and Verbal processes collectively account for about 36.5%. Conversely, Existential and Behavioral processes are less prominent, less than 5% of the total, in the storytelling.

Table 6 below presents the frequency analysis of process types in the story reproductions of three students who did not undergo genre-based instruction.

Table 6. *The Frequency of Process Types for Students Not-Receiving Genre-based Instruction*

Student	No. of T-units	Mental	Material	Relational	Verbal	Existential	Behavioral
Student 4	176	53	50	61	8	3	1
		30.1	28.4	34.6	4.5	1.7	0.5
Student 5	215	67	57	55	27	5	4
		31.16	26.5	25.5	12.5	2.3	1.8
Student 6	170	78	27	35	21	5	4
		45.8	15.8	20.5	12.3	2.9	2.3
Total	561	198	134	151	56	13	9
		107.06	70.7	80.6	29.3	6.9	3.8

Similar to the treated students, Mental and Material processes are the most commonly used types. They constitute a significant portion of students' storytelling. For instance, Student 5 demonstrates the highest proportion of Mental processes at approximately 31.16% (67 out of 215 T-units), followed closely by Material processes at about 26.5%. Student 6 shows an even higher percentage of Mental processes at approximately 45.8% (78 out of 170 T-units) and 15.8% in Material processes. Student 4's Mental processes account for roughly 30.1% (53 of 176 T-units), with Material at 28.4%. Moving to Relational and Verbal processes, Student 5 utilizes Relational processes in about 25.5% of T-units and Verbal processes in approximately 12%. Student 6's Relational processes make up about 20.5%, and Verbal processes about 12.3%. Student 4's Relational processes are 34.6%, with Verbal at 8%. Lastly, in Existential and Behavioral processes, the percentages are relatively low: Student 5 has about 12.5% in Existential and 2.3% in Behavioral, while Student 6's figures are roughly 12.3% and 2.9%, respectively. Student 4 exhibits the lowest in these categories, with 4.5% in Existential and 1.7% in Behavioral.

The trend reveals that Mental and Material processes collectively comprise approximately 60-70% of the students' storytelling. Relational and Verbal processes make up roughly 20-30%. In contrast, Existential and Behavioral processes account for less than 10%of the overall process types. This distribution suggests that these students also favor narratives centered around internal reflections and actions, less descriptive depth and even less focus on existential or reactive content.

Research indicates that Mental processes, such as thoughts, feelings, and perceptions, serve as powerful narrative devices. They foster intimacy, immediacy, and emotional engagement with the audience (Bamberg, 2004). Additionally, studies have shown that Mental processes occur more frequently in personal narratives than in formal or fictional stories (Labov & Waletzky, 1967).

When contrasting the two tables, a remarkable difference emerges between students who received the genre-based instruction and those who did not. Table 5 above reveals a pattern of moderate process-type usage among the genre-instructed students, with Mental processes dominating. The prominence of Relational processes indicates an emphasis on establishing connections between ideas.

Conversely, Table 6 displays a different profile. These students demonstrate higher overall process frequencies, with Mental processes especially prevalent. While Relational processes are still significant, their occurrence is less dominant compared to the first group. Additionally, Material processes appear more frequently here, which maybe the sign of greater focus on concrete objects and tangible information.

A particularly striking contrast lies in the presence of Behavioral processes. Although relatively rare, Behavioral processes are more prominent among students who did not receive the genre-based instruction. This may reflect a tendency for these students to engage more in describing physical actions or context-specific language.

In spite of some similarities between the two groups, the analysis suggests that the genre-based instruction influences a moderate deployment of the ideational resources. The variation in process types points to distinct approaches in constructing meaning, with the instruction seemingly shaping students' focus toward more abstract, relational, and mental aspects of storytelling. The following table summarizes the interpretation of tables:

Table 7. *A Comparison Between Two Tables (5&6)*

Process Types	Treated Students (Table 3)	Untreated Students (Table 4)
Mental	Dominant	Less dominant
Relational	Prominent	Less dominant, but still significant
Material	Less frequent	More frequent, emphasizing concrete details
Overall	Moderate	Higher overall frequencies

4.2. Qualitative Phase

According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, 2014), *Relational*, *Material*, and *Mental* processes are typically the most frequently used process types in English language. The analysis of the selected students' spoken texts confirmed that these three processes were dominant in their story reproductions. Quantitative results revealed that Mental processes were significantly more prevalent among students who received genre-based treatment. However, the deployment of Relational and Material processes appeared to be similar across both groups, as shown in Table 7 above.

To address the third research question and in order to understand how these process types influenced the complexity of students' oral storytelling, two sets of data will be compared. The qualitative phase of analysis aims to explore the extent to which the introduction of the genre-based approach contributed to the complexity of students' story reproductions, particularly in relation to different process types. Consequently, the focus of this analysis centers on Material, Mental, and Relational processes, to investigate how their use have enhanced or shaped the students' storytelling complexity.

4.2.1. Material Processes

In SFL, Material processes are a vital category among the three primary process types in a clause, alongside Mental and Relational processes. Material processes are defined as "actions that involve the manipulation or transformation of physical or material things" (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). In other words, they highlight how entities interact with their environment.

In this study, Material processes, which constituted a significant portion of the data, primarily deal with experiences related to the physical world. They are often used to describe actions involving manipulation or interaction with objects or people. SFL categorizes several types of Material processes, including *creation*, such as building or growing; *transformation*, changing something from one state to another, like cooking or melting; destruction, damaging or destroying, such as breaking or tearing; *transfer*, moving objects from one place to another, like carrying or throwing; and *existence*, simply being or existing in a particular place or state, such as sitting or standing (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). For example, clauses like "I picked up a book" exemplify transfer, while "She cooked dinner" illustrates transformation.

In Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), the concepts of *agency* and *actor* are central to understanding Material processes, which describe actions of doing or happening. Agency refers to the capacity or power of a participant to initiate, control, or influence the process, essentially addressing who or what is responsible for the action. The actor is a specific participant role associated with the entity performing the action within the clause. For example, in *"The gardener planted the seeds,"* the gardener functions as the actor, actively performing the planting. Recognizing agency and actor helps analyze whose perspective is foregrounded, whether it is an internal or an external force causing the action. This distinction clarifies who is responsible for the process and whether the action is driven by internal decision or external influence. In order to clarify this process, the following extracts compare and contrast Material processes as reproduced by students in their storytelling. First, we consider student No. 3, who did not receive the genre-based instruction during the teaching and learning practices. A preliminary analysis of this student's transcribed text reveals some grammatical issues and inconsistency in her presentation. For example, at the beginning, she introduces her story as follows:

1. He *dragged* Mr. Strong's body into one of the rooms, then he *killed* that person. He *unlocked* the door to his house then he *entered* the home but something strange *happened*... He *searched* for his missing glove. He *found* his missing glove in his house. As he *was looking* at the glove, he suddenly *fell down* due to astonishment.

The narrative mainly features *external processes,* that is, *dragging*, *killing*, *unlocking*, *entering*, but the sequences are not clearly connected, which makes it confusing whether these are part of a cohesive action chain. When viewed through the lens of internal and external causality, the narrative shifts unpredictably between actions happening *inside* the protagonist's mind, and actions happening *outside* in the environment or to others. For example, the character drags Mr. Strong's body and kills, which involve external actions directed at others. Later, when he searches for his glove, the focus turns inward, which indicate internal processes like searching and observing. This inconsistency creates confusion because the story jumps from external actions to internal reactions and observations, without clear transitions or logical connection. The result is a narrative that feels disjointed, and makes it hard for the listener to understand whether the protagonist is engaged in external actions or internal reflections at each moment.

To improve clarity, the story should better differentiate between these types of processes, perhaps by emphasizing external actions when describing violent or overt movements, and internal processes when depicting thoughts or reactions. This way, the sequence would flow more naturally and help the listener follow the story's progression more easily.

Another extract is selected from a monologue presentation of student No. 5, who experienced the genre-based teaching and learning approach.

2. He went on and mentioned again that they were acquainted. He said my friend Alexander whom you know came to visit me as usual. We talk we talked a little and then sat down to tea. Suddenly my wife *cried out*. She *clutched* at her heart and *fell down*. We *carried* her to the bed. She seemed that she was dead. Then once more the stranger mentioned his wife illness. I can't come, my son *died* just five minutes ago. Oh, is it possible? Abogin said what an unlucky day I have come to you a wonderfully unlucky day. He *hold* the door and *waited* for a second. He didn't know what to do, whether to *continue* and treating the doctor or *go away*.

Contrary to the monologue storytelling observed above, this extract reveals a complex interplay between internal and external Material processes. The internal factors are evident in the characters' emotional reactions, such as the wife "crying out," "clutching her heart," and "collapsing," which reflect internal distress and personal tragedy. Similarly, the familiarity among friends and the internal conflict of the stranger, "whether to continue or leave", highlight internal states and relationships. Conversely, external influences are represented by events such as, "the stranger's sudden arrival," his mention of "his wife's illness," and "the death of his son," which are outside forces disrupting the scene. These external shocks influence the characters' internal responses, which create a dynamic tension that drives the narrative forward. The internal emotional Material processes interact with external events, which in turn shape the unfolding of the story by emphasizing how external tragedies can trigger profound internal reactions. This is supported by Fowler (2013), who states how external events and societal contexts influence discourse. While Fowler primarily focuses on media discourse, its theoretical insights into the interaction between external stimuli and internal processes are widely applicable to literary and narrative analysis as well.

Therefore, it can be concluded that this student's text carries a degree of complexity, especially when considering its layered emotional and situational elements. It weaves internal states, like *grief*, *hesitation*, and *internal conflict,* with external events, such as *the stranger's arrival* and *his tragic news*, and creates a multifaceted narrative. The shifts in tone, the rapid succession of tragic revelations, and the characters' internal dilemmas all contribute to the narrative.

4.2.2. Relational Processes

According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), Relational processes are a key category of the ideational component. They serve to establish relationships between *entities* and to attribute *qualities* or *identities* to them. Essentially, Relational processes describe states of being rather than actions. These processes are divided into two types: attributive and identifying. Attributive relational processes assign a characteristic or attribute to a participant. For example, in the sentence "The sky is gloomy," the relational process "is" links the subject "the sky" with the attribute "gloomy," which describes its state of being. On the other hand, identifying Relational processes connect a participant with an identity or classification. For instance, in "He is an engineer," the process "is" links "He" with the identity "an engineer." Eggins (2004) notes that Relational processes contribute significantly to text complexity by allowing writers to convey essential information about the entities involved, including qualities, identities, and relationships, thereby

enriching the narrative or argument. When combined with projection and other process types, Relational processes can also create more complex clause structures. For example, the sentence "The book is fascinating, and she believes that it will change lives" integrates Relational and Mental processes, resulting in a richer and more nuanced understanding of the subject.

Quantitative analysis of the students' monologue presentations revealed that Relational processes are among the most dominant types in their texts. To explore how this process type have contributed to students' text complexity, a sample of texts from both groups was extracted from the selected students' texts. The following extract comes from student No. 1, who was taught using the traditional approach.

3. The main character of this short story, Margaret, is a little sicky. *They are who* used to live in Orbio. *Who can remember* how the earth and the son look *what*. Another character is William. William is one of the Margaret's classmates.

The extract is a small section of the student's oral reproduction of story. It begins by identifying the main character of the story, "Margaret," as "a little sicky." This sentence effectively links "Margaret" with the attribute "a little sicky," which demonstrates the use of a Relational process. However, as the narrative continues, it becomes apparent that there are grammatical issues affecting the connection between sentences. The use of plural pronouns instead of singular ones in referring to "Margaret," creates confusion. Another shortcoming is the overreliance on the simple verb "is," which results in limited descriptive richness and variety. For example, stating "Margaret is a little sickly" provides basic information but lacks depth; using alternative Relational processes like "Margaret seemed fragile" or "her health was delicate" would create a more vivid picture. Additionally, the description, "how the earth and the sun look what," is grammatically unclear and could benefit from clearer Relational processes such as "looked like" or "appeared," to improve understanding. Furthermore, the opportunities are missed to express emotional states or dynamic qualities, which could deepen character portrayal, for instance, "William appeared curious" or "Margaret seemed thoughtful." Therefore, the limited variety of Relational processes constrains the clarity of the description, and makes the story less engaging.

To evaluate how much the adopted pedagogy has impacted the complexity of Relational processes, another extract was selected from a monologue presentation by student No. 4, who experienced the genre-based teaching and learning cycles. The following is an excerpt from her text:

4. His whole body was trembling and he didn't know what to do. He was really shocked and surprised and he started screaming like a wild animal. He then he (ummm) started thinking about solution. He walked along the hall but he was bewildered and he didn't know what to do and he said I can't go back to that hellish house again. He thought a lot but after an- half an hour he decided to go back to that hellish house. He was really frightened and he had lots of pain in his heart. He went to the house but this time he was feeling really uneasy.

In this text, Relational processes are used appropriately to describe the emotional and physical states of the subject, "he." For example, phrases like "His whole body was trembling," "He was really shocked and surprised," and "He was bewildered" highlight his internal experiences and physical reactions. These processes attribute qualities or states to him, and shows his emotional turmoil and confusion. Additionally, Relational processes like, "He had lots of pain in his heart" and "He was feeling really uneasy" further depict his psychological distress. Therefore, it becomes clear that how the use of Relational processes created a vivid portrayal of the character's intense emotional condition. This can help the audience to easily understand the character's reactions and the overall mood of the narrative.

4.2.3. Mental Processes

Mental processes of sensing are concerned with understanding the internal world of individuals and encoding meanings related to thinking and feeling (Eggins, 1994). These processes help us comprehend how narrators interact with their surroundings and the things within them. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), Mental processes can be categorized into four main types: *emotion* (related to feelings such as love or fear); *cognition* (involving thinking, understanding, or believing); *perception* (pertaining to seeing, hearing, or perceiving); and *desideration* (concerning wishes, desires, or intentions). Mental processes, such as thinking, seeing, wanting, and feeling, are frequently used in narrative texts to establish beliefs, perspectives, or ideologies. They serve to reveal a speaker's inner world. Halliday and

Matthiessen (2004; 2014) emphasize that these linguistic choices are vital in shaping a text's meaning, as they determine how different entities and ideas are represented.

The various types of Mental processes demonstrate a fundamental property: they can establish another clause or set of clauses as objects of thought. They can create ideas derived from cognition. This relationship is known as projection, where a mental clause projects another clause or set of clauses (Halliday & Matthiessen, 1999). Projection is a crucial concept in linguistics because it helps explain how we generate and articulate our thoughts.

In casual conversation, examples of projection are common; however, in formal or academic writing, they are less frequent. What distinguishes Mental processes from Material and Relational types is their capacity to set up another clause outside the mental clause as a representation of conscious content. This feature allows Mental processes to construct complex ideas and concepts, which is essential for effective communication.

In order to find out how this process type is unfolded in students' reproduction of storytelling, the following extract is taken from a student's voice file presentation, who has received the genre-based instruction:

5. He *thought* that it was because of his recognize and hatred… I *believe* and many other people *believe* that this is the great short story writer…She *seemed* that she was dead then once more the stranger mentioned his wife illness… She didn't *know* what to do, suddenly he said listen to me I fully *understand* your pain… and he *knew* that this time he was really looser of the game… and he *was looking* at him, he *had recognized* him and Mr. Donne was really shocked…

Mental processes project another clause or a combination of clauses. They serve as a T-unit, which combines content related to thinking, feeling, or perceiving. For example, in the sentence, "and he knew that this time he was really the loser of the game," the Mental process "knew" projects the clause "that this time he was really the loser of the game," expressing the content of his knowledge. Similarly, in the sentence, "He thought that it was because of his recognition and hatred," the verb "thought" functions as a Mental process that projects the clause "that it was because of his recognition and hatred," introducing an additional idea. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) refer to this systematic construction of clauses as "clause complexes." These projections enable narrators to build complex clause structures. They link multiple clauses in a meaningful and systematic way. The examples above illustrate how projections facilitate the creation of more intricate, cohesive, and effective narratives. When narrators combine many clauses through projection, the overall meaning is reinforced and enriched (Tam, 2012).

In narrative texts, the flow of events is typically understood as a series of episodes. Each episode is developed gradually, as a sequence of figures that are linked together. Therefore, the construction of clause complexes, by combining clauses, results in a tighter integration of meaning. This means that "the sequences realized grammatically in a clause complex are construed as sub-sequences within the entire sequence of events that comprise a whole episode in a narrative" (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 430). This approach aligns with Goffman's (1981) argument that the use of Mental processes can foster a sense of shared understanding and empathy between the narrator and the audience.

Below is an analysis of a sample text taken from a voice file presentation by student No. 2, who did not receive genre-based instruction for story reproduction.

6. She said I am very happy without him. It's I am (ummm) I think I felt more alive. I am having fun I see the sky more blue. I don't know it's very fun without him. I can handle things without him. Every year our marriage was worse, every year has it worth. I can't handle it anymore and I think that he is not gonna change anymore. He is not gonna change ever so I make up my mind I 'm gonna leave him. Lester came back grom the trip. Lester came back from trip that very different man. He was completely changed. He entered the house with smile and said hello dear. Your eyes are so beautiful and things like this. She was just shocked what's happened to you?

As it can be observed, there are some weaknesses in the use of Mental processes in this extract. Firstly, the descriptions of internal thoughts and feelings could be more consistent and clearer. For example, "I think I felt more alive" mixes perception ("think") with feeling ("felt"), which can create ambiguity. That is, the clarity could be improved by separating thoughts from emotions. Additionally, the phrase "I don't know" indicates uncertainty but does not elaborate further. It leaves the internal state somewhat vague. Another weakness is the inconsistent use of mental verbs;

for instance, "she was just shocked," describes an emotional reaction but does not specify the mental process behind it, such as "she was shocked because she could not believe what she saw." Moreover, the transition between her internal feelings and Lester's external change could be smoother, as the Mental processes are somewhat scattered and lack coherence. Consequently, while Mental processes are used to depict internal states, their effectiveness could be improved by more precise, consistent, and elaborated descriptions of characters' inner experiences.

5. Conclusion

The analyses show that the application of genre-based approach fostered more complex oral storytelling compared to students without such instruction. While students without treatment slightly excelled in lexical diversity and total word variety, treated students exhibited a higher density of content words. Significant differences appeared in grammatical accuracy: in comparison with those students who received the genre-based instruction, untreated students made more errors per T-unit, particularly in verb tense, third-person singular, plural markers, and prepositions, which is the sign of less control over language. Errors in fluency features like repetitions and pauses were also higher among untreated students compared with treated students. Therefore, it can be inferred that the genre-based instruction has been a vital approach in improving grammatical accuracy and fluency, as reflected in lower error rates for the treated group.

Further analysis of process types, considering their number per T-unit, revealed a higher use of Mental processes among the treated students. Those students who received instruction employed significantly more Mental Processes, which may be the sign of deeper and more complex meaning construction. However, the frequencies of other process types remained similar across both groups.

The qualitative analysis of dominant process types, Material, Relational and Mental, further suggests that the genre-based pedagogy may have played a significant role in fostering more complex oral storytelling. In all of these process types, students exposed to the genre-based approach produced more refined and detailed stories compared to those taught through traditional methods. This indicates that a tailored, genre-focused teaching approach can help EFL students improve the complexity of their reproduction of stories. Additionally, it may also ease their challenges, support effective language development and enhance their expressive skills.

Given that this study involved a relatively small sample size, caution must be exercised when generalizing these findings to broader populations. The analysis focused primarily on linguistic complexity, specifically grammatical accuracy, fluency, and process types, which provides valuable insights but also narrows the scope of the investigation. Future research could expand on this by incorporating additional aspects of language development, such as pronunciation, intonation, and overall oral fluency. Moreover, larger and more diverse samples would help establish the robustness of the genre-based approach across different contexts and learner profiles. Exploring these areas could deepen our understanding of how genre-based instruction influences various facets of oral language skills. This, in turn, can inform the adoption of more comprehensive teaching strategies for EFL learners.

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