Digital Text-based Teaching in EFL Classrooms

Debora Tri Ragawanti[1]

Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana Salatiga, Indonesia

debora.ragawanti@uksw.edu

Abstract

Having understandable pronunciation is the first thing to emphasize communicative competence. Regrettably, the mother tongue of the first language (L1) is one of the prominent factors affecting EFL learners, which will interfere with their pronunciation of English words, phrases, and sentences. On the other hand, research studies to date, indeed, have shown that digital technologies have become must-have tools that educators use to engage their students. The question is to what extent digital technology can help reduce interference, which continues to be a contentious issue. In my presentation, I will argue how to implement digital technologies to demote the interference of phonological and orthographic system of Javanese students. Hence, pronunciation will be seen as an eye-opening and amusing course the students will experience. As a result, the interference will be reduced and EFL learners will become more proficient in using digital technologies to optimize the target language.

This article aims at revisiting the implementation of text-based teaching to keep abreast with the use of educational technology in EFL classrooms. Text-based teaching has been extensively used in EFL classrooms. Moreover, it is believed to powerfully help EFL learners enhance their English communicative competence by understanding the social function, generic structure, and language features of a text and utilizing them for actual communicative purposes. The vast use of educational technology in EFL classrooms calls teachers and teacher educators for revisiting the implementation of text-based teaching to make it more meaningful, engaging, and communicative. This article presents online teaching materials that teachers and teacher educators can use to teach a variety of texts in English using various online learning applications.

Keywords: text-based teaching, educational technology, communicative purposes

Introduction

Using texts for teaching English has been extensively used in Indonesia. For example, at a university level, it is manifested through the use of "how to operate an appliance" texts in procedural writing and of "asking and receiving instructions" text in interpersonal speaking. At a secondary level, it is manifested through the use of a personal letter to develop learners' communicative competence in asking and giving information about oneself. The text-based teaching has even characterized our national curriculum (as stated in Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 64 the year 2013).

Apart from its wide use, text-based teaching is believed to be effective for English teaching and learning. First, it can develop learners' critical thinking (Callgan, 1993, & Derewianka, 1990, in Kusumaningrum, 2015). Second, it can improve learners' writing ability (Fanani, 2018 and Haryati, 2019). Third, it can enhance learners' communicative competence (Ardiansah, 2017, Hyland, 2004, Iftanti, 2017, & Nahid, *et.al*, 2018).

The advantages of using text-based teaching are not without any limitations. Ragawanti (2018) observed that teachers are likely to have difficulties obtaining and selecting authentic materials to facilitate learners' communicative competence and create fun activities. To cope with the problems and make text-based teaching more meaningful and engaging, we need to revisit it through educational technology or so-called digital text-based teaching.

This article aims to illustrate a digital text-based English lesson based on the main principles of text-based teaching. Various online learning applications are also discussed to see how we, teachers, can integrate them into our text-based teaching. This article is significant for English teacher-educators to equip their student-teachers with knowledge and practice of an effective and engaging online lesson. This article is also helpful for English teachers for enriching their practice of designing an effective and engaging online lesson. Lastly, it is advantageous for the EFL learners to understand the theory and practice of designing an effective and engaging online lesson.

Text-based teaching

Text-based teaching is an approach to teaching language that involves teaching the text structure and grammatical features of spoken and written texts through guided practices. The purpose is to develop learners' language skills for meaningful communication through whole texts (Feez and Joyze, 2002). Teachers commonly employ the approach by emphasizing the generic structure and language features or expressions of a text in the classroom. Most importantly, they provide ample exercises and practices of using them to achieve the communicative purpose of the text.

For example, the text type is a personal letter. The communicative purpose of the letter is to talk about oneself. The text-based teaching should emphasize the structure of a personal letter (e.g., salutation, pleasantries, body paragraph, closing, and signoff) and the language features used in a personal letter (e.g., to be, present tense, etc.). Moreover, the teaching should provide guided and individual practice of using both the text structure and language features for real-life communication (i.e., talking about oneself).

Text-based teaching follows the teaching and learning cycle as proposed by Feez and Joyce (2002). composing a text using the structure and language features of the text learned in the previous step. Independent construction of the text is for the learners to compose a text individually.

Digital educational technology for text-based teaching

Along with the vast use of educational technology in the classrooms, text-based teaching needs to be incorporated with the technology. Renandya (2021) stated that such an integration is for technology to meet pedagogy principles. In this way, the technology used in the classrooms can

2nd English Teaching, Literature, and Linguistics (ETERNAL) Conference   ISSN: 2828-7193
Universitas PGRI Semarang, Faculty of Language and Arts Education,
English Education Department
January 29, 2022

support content delivery. There are some benefits of using technology for supporting content delivery (i.e., text-based teaching. First, it can make effective teaching and learning (Evans, 2021). Second, it can promote engagement (Morris and Parker, 2013). Third, it can increase learners' motivation (Chuang, 2014).

There are some online learning applications that can be used for implementing text-based teaching. For example,

youtube (https://www.youtube.com/)	padlet (https://padlet.com/)
liveworksheet (https://www.liveworksheets.com/) learningapps (https://learningapps.org/)	google docs (https://docs.google.com/document)
wordwall (https://wordwall.net/)	canva (https://www.canva.com)
powtoon (https://www.powtoon.com/)	Facebook (https://www.facebook.com), instagram (https://www.instagram.com), twitter (https://twitter.com)
bamboozle (https://www.baamboozle.com/), googleslides (https://docs.google.com/presentation)	poster mywall (https://www.postermywall.com)
Google forms (https://docs.google.com/forms)	Quizziz (https://quizizz.com)

Figure 2: online learning applications for text-based teaching

In building the context, teachers can use videos such as *youtube* and *pictures* to introduce or build learners' knowledge about the context of text they will learn. Some other applications like *wordwall* and *liveworksheet* can be used to implicitly elicit the idea of text structure and language feature of the text. In modeling and deconstructing the text, teachers can explain the structure and language features of the text with *Powtoon*. The exercise on the structure and language features of the text can be created or accessed through *learningapps*, *wordwall*, *liveworksheet*, *bamboozle*, and *google forms*.

The step of joint construction of a text can be done through *google slides, google docs, padlet,* etc. They can use those learning applications to work together to practice composing a text based on the theory learned in the previous step. As for the independent construction text, the teachers can use *canva, postermywall, Google slides* when composing their text. Then they can post their text-composition into *instagram, facebook, or twitter*. Lastly, in the linking related text step, teachers can use padlet and mentimeter for discussing the connection of the text learned with their context and learning experiences together as the whole group. Or the teachers can use quizziz and google form if they want to see individual students' answer/ reflection.

Digital text-based teaching English lesson

The following illustration is an online English lesson designed to respond to the principles of text-based teaching.

Description of the lesson

Topic   : how to make chocolate

Text type   : analytical text

Level   : upper intermediate

Learning objectives:

Through the use of various online learning applications and text-based teaching instruction, learners will be able to:

- Identify the generic structure and language features of analytical text appropriately.
- to create a simple explanation text based on the appropriate generic structure and language features of an explanation text that have been discussed in previous learning steps.

Learning steps:

Step: Building the context

1. Answer the following questions:
   a. Do like chocolate?
   b. Do you know how chocolate is made?
2. Here is the video of how chocolate is made (https://youtu.be/pQX60p77uFQ). Pay attention to the steps of and the words used to describe the steps of making chocolate

3. Based on the video, please find six words in the following crossword puzzle that represent the process of making chocolate https://learningapps.org/display?v=pqh7p6iqa21

2nd English Teaching, Literature, and Linguistics (ETERNAL) Conference   ISSN: 2828-7193
Universitas PGRI Semarang, Faculty of Language and Arts Education,
English Education Department
January 29, 2022

4. Based on the video, arrange the process of making chocolate in the *learningapps* worksheet below into a correct order (https://learningapps.org/display?v=pcq1q4uxk21)
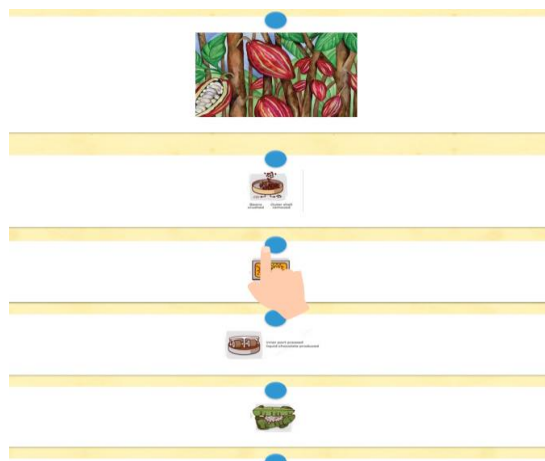
Step: Modelling of the text

5. After watching the video, now read the text entitled "How chocolate is made" (https://drive.google.com/file/d/1sSBdrIZt0_Ohf9vV2PQYXFS3gSYyoCD8/view?usp=sharing)

How Chocolate is Made

Have we wondered how we get chocolate from? Well this time we will enter the amazing world of chocolate so we can understand exactly how chocolate is made.

Chocolate begins with a tree called cacao tree. This tree grows in equatorial regions, especially in place such as South America, Africa, and Indonesia. The cacao tree produces a fruit about the size of a small pine apple. Inside the fruits are the tree's seeds. They are also known as cacao beans.

The beans **are** initially **fermented** for about a week and **dried** in the sun. After that, they **are shipped** to the chocolate maker. Then, **they are roasted** to bring out the flavour. Different beans from different places have different qualities and flavour. So they **are** often **shorted** and **blended** to produce a distinctive mix. The next process is winnowing. The roasted beans **are winnowed** to remove the meat nib of the cacao bean from its shell. Then the nibs **are blended**. The blended nibs **are grounded** to make it liquid. The liquid is called chocolate liquor. It tastes bitter.
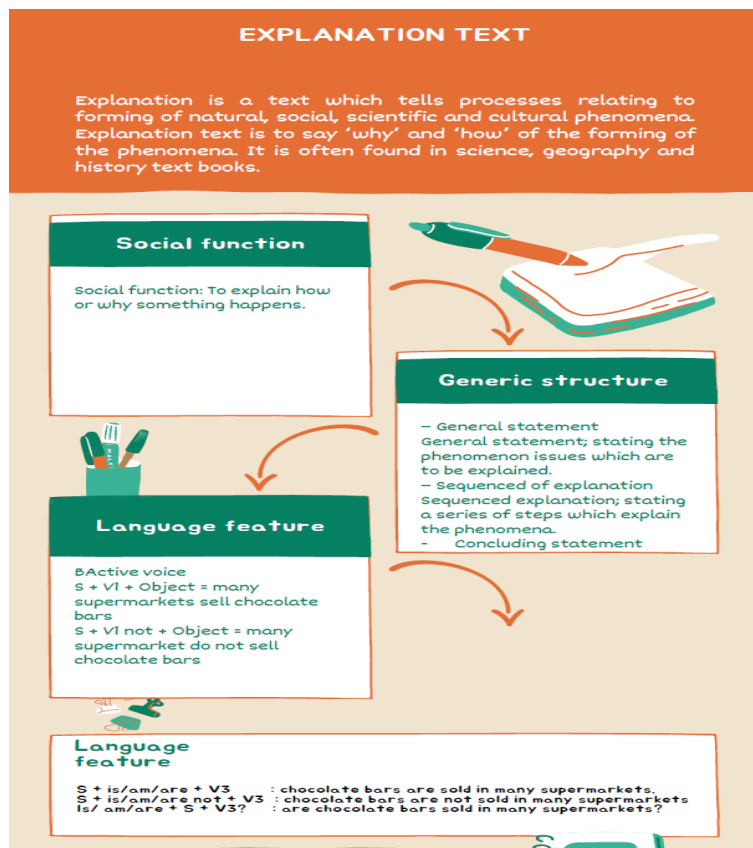
All seeds contain some amount of fat and cacao beans are not different. However, cacao beans are half fat, which is why they ground nibs from liquid. It is pure bitter chocolate.
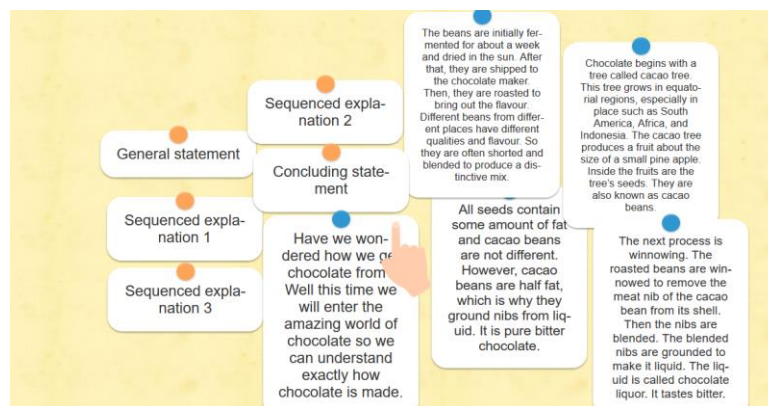
6. Pay attention to the structure an the language feature of an analytical text
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1h2AAp7mjbuxwL1P0U1Hh4TEkAFwE1B10/view?usp=sharing

EXPLANATION TEXT

Explanation is a text which tells processes relating to forming of natural, social, scientific and cultural phenomena. Explanation text is to say 'why' and 'how' of the forming of the phenomena. It is often found in science, geography and history text books.

Social function

Social function: To explain how or why something happens.

Generic structure

— General statement
General statement; stating the phenomenon issues which are to be explained.
— Sequenced of explanation
Sequenced explanation; stating a series of steps which explain the phenomena.
-    Concluding statement

Language feature

BActive voice
S + VI + Object = many supermarkets sell chocolate bars
S + VI not + Object = many supermarket do not sell chocolate bars

Language feature

S + is/am/are + V3   : chocolate bars are sold in many supermarkets.
S + is/am/are not + V3 : chocolate bars are not sold in many supermarkets
Is/ am/are + S + V3?   : are chocolate bars sold in many supermarkets?

7. Identify the generic strcuture of: How chocolate is made" in the following learning apps:
   https://learningapps.org/watch?v=py57npnx521

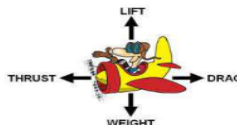
8. The sentences below describe the process of making chocolate. They are written in the passive voice. Change the sentence into active voice
   https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1NLe6onRjXxVuxc6yKR6l2gCQraHPjYnfIxsCuevenP8/edit?usp=sharing

Step: Joint construction of the text

9. Read the following explanation text
(https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Xk5cjHTuhi1M1QbKQGbE8pV8AFDXtaCZ/edit?usp=
sharing&ouid=115725323638323857497&rtpof=true&sd=true)

How airplanes fly?

Today, Everyone must see a plane flying. Even Some of the people have flown with an airplane. Have you ever thought why this heavy metal object can be lifted in the air? How can the airplane fly?

An airplane flies because it can generate a force. There are four forces which act on a flying airplane. They are Thrust, Lift , Drag and Weight.

Lift *moves* the heavy airplane *upward* through a forward motion. The most **Lift** comes from the wings. The **thrust** of the engine produces a forward motion. The **drag** force produces the resistence of the air to the forward motion of the airplane. The pull of gravity toward the center of the earth generate the **weight** force. When the **Thrust** produced by the engine(s) is greater than the force of **Drag**, the airplane moves forward. When the forward motion is enough to produce a force of **Lift** that is greater than the **Weight**, the airplane moves upward.

These are simple explanations, and the real systems are complicated machines that are designed by specially trained engineers.

10. Work with your group to:

a. analyze the generic structure of an explanation text:
https://app.mindmup.com/map/_free/2021/09/6078bcf00e0a11ec9d48d5b1a752efbc
b. change the sequenced process in passive into active sentences:
(HOTS: applying, analyzing and evaluating).
https://app.mindmup.com/map/_free/2021/09/ab350da00e0c11eca02907281e1c357f

Step: Independent construction of the text

11. Now, reconstruct the following explanation text. Please, make sure that your text contains the generic structure (general statement, sequenced process, and concluding statement) and use passive voice for the sequenced process.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1sSziUJSsaKFujZjKXt5MFu3yqtPikasG8g3aiJVTCA/edit?usp=sharing

Step: Linking to related text

12. Reflection:
    a. What have you learned about an explanation text?
    b. What other topics can be used for an explanation text?
13. Enrichment:
    https://forms.gle/TvEh547S7TinEaJg9

Conclusion

Text-based teaching is considered robust for making an English lesson effective through the teaching and learning cycle. However, it may cause difficulties for teachers to find engaging activities to avoid boredom in each cycle step. Using online learning applications in employing text-based teaching can help teachers overcome the difficulties. By doing so, the teachers can have an effective, organized, and engaging lesson.

References

Ardiansah, D. (2017). Teachers' perceptions on the process of genre-based approach in teaching writing. *EDUCARE, 10* (1). 33-42.

Chuang, Y. (2014). Increasing learning motivation ans student engagement through the technology-supported learning environment. *Creative education, 5,* 1969-1978. doi:10.4236/ce.2014.523221.

Evans, D. (2021). *Education technology for effective teachers*. Retrieved September 9, 2021, from https://www.cgdev.org/publication/education-technology-effective-teachers.

Fanani, A. (2018). The implementation of genre-based approach in teaching writing by a university teacher in Jombang. *Journal SMART, 4* (2), 132-141.

Haryati (2019). The use of genre-based approach to improve writing skill in narrative text at the eleventh-grade students of SMA Ethika Palembang. *English Community Journal, 3*(1), 280-288.

Hyland, K. (2004). *Genre and second language writing*. Michigan: the university press.

Iftanti, E. (2017). Text-based learning to active adult EFL learners in learning English: a narrative inquiry. *Jurnal Bahasa Lingua, 9* (1), 121-142.

Kusumaningrum, W.R. (2015). Genre-based approach to promote learners' critical thinking skills. *Transformatika, 11* (2), 96-107.

Morris, R.C. and Parker, L.C. (2013). Examining the connection between classroom technology and student engagement. *Journal of teaching and learning with technology, 3* (1), 1-15.

Nafid, A. *et.al.* Genre-based approach to teaching speaking of descriptive text (A case study at

Rural junior high school in South West Nusa Indonesia). *Pedagogy journal, 6* (1), 65-75.

Ragawanti, D.T. (2016). *Revisiting the use of Genre-based instruction for teaching writing: from teaching evaluation to material development.* The 63rd TEFLIN International Conference (331-340). Surabaya: Universitas Adi Buana Press.

Ragawanti, D.T. (2018). Text-based learning in EFL classrooms: problems and strategies viewed from the sociocultural approach. *Advances in Social science, education, and humanities research (ASSEHR), 188*, 141-146.

Renandya, W. (2021). *Language teaching today: where technology meets pedagogy*. A paper presented in Regional TEFLIN-UNNES. Retrieved September 8, 2021, from https://willyrenandya.com/when-technology-meets-pedagogy/

Stošic, L. (2015). The importance of educational technology in teaching. *International Journal of Cognitive Research in Science, Engineering and Education, 3*(1), 111-114. doi:10.23947/2334-8496-2015-3-1-111-114.