

IMPLEMENTING AN ECLECTIC APPROACH FOR EFFECTIVE EFL WRITING INSTRUCTION

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Abstract: *This study investigates the effectiveness of an eclectic approach in improving English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing skills among philology students. Drawing on multiple approaches and integrating strategies of diverse teaching methods, the study aims to address limitations associated with single-method instruction. The article describes the theoretical foundations of each method and demonstrates how they can be systematically combined in classroom practice. The findings suggest that such integration creates a balanced instructional model that supports idea generation, structural awareness, and communicative effectiveness in writing. The paper contributes a practical framework for EFL instructors seeking flexible and context-sensitive teaching strategies.*

Key words: *EFL writing, eclectic approach, process-based writing approach, genre-based approach, grammar translation method.*

Introduction:

Roy Harris in his book “The Origin of Writing” [1], describes writing system as a system of signs, and all systems of signs presuppose the communicational purposes for which they are used. Roy Harris classified various types of signs used in writing systems as alphabetic, syllabic, logographic, pictographic, and ideographic. The evolution of writing over time

facilitated its emergence as a medium for personal expression and communication [2].

There are plenty of views on understanding writing in teaching and researching nowadays. Different scholars view writing in a peculiar way. Ken Hyland, in his valuable book “Teaching and researching writing” in the “Applied linguistics in action” series edited by Christopher N. Candlin proposed a gathered, organized way of understanding views on writing, collecting perspectives in a triangular illustration. Hyland proposes three approaches to understand this complex area: Text-oriented understandings, Writer-oriented understandings, and Reader- oriented understandings. It is essential to mention that this triangle is illustrated as ‘Rhethorical situation’¹ in other sources, illuminating the relationships among the writer, reader, and subject matter in a particular act of writing.

Eclectic approach

The origin of the word “eclectic” derives from French ‘eclectique’ or from Greek ‘eklektikos’ which means "selective"². Originally the idea of ‘eclecticism’ referred to ancient philosophers who did not bound to one philosophical doctrine and chose most effective concepts from several ideologies. Later this mindset started to be applied in education, when teachers use the most effective strategies from different methodologies to meet the need of students.

Eclectic approach has a long history dating back to early 1930s. The ancestors who supported the eclectic approach are considered as prominent language teachers Henry Sweet and Harold Palmer. Sweet believed that a successful teaching strategy should be based on linguistic psychological ideas, and the teacher should avoid radicalism. Palmer argued that teachers should be open to use every method, exercise, drill, or device which leads to the

¹ Yagelski, R.P (2022) “Writing: Ten Core Concepts 3rd Edition” Boston, USA (27pp)

² <https://www.etymonline.com/word/eclectic>

objectives of the lessons and he called this “multiple line of approach” [3]. These ideas about adaptability, balance and collectivity in education laid the basis for the eclectic approach.

In scientific literatures eclectic approach or method is defined as a harmonious combination of advantageous principles and concepts from many existing methods. This method does not strictly bound to one paradigm or set of assumptions, and uses different theories to achieve the effective comprehension of the lesson [4], [5], [6]. Because it emerged from the realisation that every teaching method had merits and demerits and that no single method was adaptive to the evolving classroom setting. Eclectic approach is widely discussed in scientific pedagogical literature[[5], [7], [8], [9]]. This approach has evolved into different forms and interpretations over time such as effective and successful eclecticism, integrative eclecticism, new eclecticism, enlighten eclecticism and the most popular principled eclectic approach[10]. There is a notable implementation of “*Principled eclectic approach*” in English-language teaching literature, which means using different teaching methods in a systematic and consistent way. It is more disciplined and justifiable, focusing on connecting different language skills based on learners' real needs. Larsen-Freeman [11] introduced the term “*Principled eclecticism*” to promote a balanced and flexible approach to language learning. Comparatively, an eclectic approach involves using multiple teaching methods, according to the teacher's rationale and learners' specific needs.

This paper aims to describe how three writing approaches, grammar translation method, process writing, and genre-based instruction, can be effectively integrated into a unified teaching model. The study does not seek to test effectiveness experimentally but to provide a structured and theoretically grounded framework for classroom implementation.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive design, focusing on the development and explanation of an instructional model based on the eclectic approach.

When we refer to the genesis of the development of education it is hard to refrain from mentioning Grammar-Translation Method (GTM), though this approach is not explicitly accepted as one of the ideologies. It is essential to acknowledge that GTM dominated in language instruction before the emergence of those ideological models. The Grammar-Translation Approach was the first among the methodological options to be introduced in the classroom. It came to use around the 17th century by scholars to be able to translate ancient Greek and Latin texts, but not for the purpose of communication[12]. Grammar translation is an approach to language learning that begins by thoroughly analyzing the grammar rules of the language, then applying this understanding to translate sentences and texts between the target language and the native language.[13]. The students' role is passive, and their oral-aural skills remain quite dormant. Soon this approach received criticism for challenges in translation, creating frustration for students and being ineffective.

Genre based approach emphasizes the relationship between language, context, and social purpose. In this teaching approach learners are expected to produce texts with communicative goals in particular cultural and situational contexts[14]. According to Hyland[15] the genre is the certain conventions—like structure, tone, and vocabulary which helps readers easily recognize the type of text. The procedure of teaching-learning cycle follows five stages: 1) setting the context, 2) modeling, 3) joint construction of a text with teacher guidance, 4) students' independent construction, and 5) comparing genres. In language teaching the genre-based approach is blamed for challenging students to organize their ideas creatively, using appropriate language, and following genre conventions.

Process approach emerged as a response to the drawbacks of the product approach, emphasizing the necessity to match the students' natural writing processes in their L1. The process approach focuses on the steps involved in writing, invention, multiple drafts rather than focusing solely on the final product. It encourages students to develop their ideas gradually through prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. Students are encouraged to engage in peer collaboration and the teacher acts as a facilitator guiding through the stages of writing rather. However, despite the frequent use in language classrooms this approach was criticized for having no clear structure and models in writing, and over reliance on multiple drafts may challenge students' readiness for real-world writing tasks, including examinations[16].

In order to provide successful implementation of eclectic approach we relied on Gao's features of eclectic teaching. First, the distinct peculiarities and purpose of each method was carefully studied in our research. The effectiveness and appropriateness of each method and approach were studied to align with the aim of the study to develop philology students' writing skills. Continuity of the whole teaching process was provided by designing teaching models for developing writing skills of philology students of philology students.

The Genre-based approach views writing as a social activity emphasizing reader expectations. It makes textual conventions transparent, so the students can learn the structure, tone, and vocabulary of the written text. However, it challenges students requiring rhetorical understanding of the texts before acquiring linguistic aspects of writing. In this case, GTM can be a useful aid proposing grammar oriented, vocabulary and translation, correction exercises. GTM can serve as an effective complement, ensuring grammatical accuracy and translation of linguistic structures. In turn, GTM's limitation in communicative practices ideally compensated by the Process approach. Writing tasks with a focus on accuracy and real-world contexts fosters learner motivation. The PA is widely recognized effective approach for teaching

writing. The process approach teaches writing as a cyclical process that includes planning, composing, revising and reviewing. Moreover, the analysis of the text structure, language and grammar with translation beforehand according to the GTM and GBA conventions, helps learners reduce writing anxiety, fostering their metacognitive awareness. Publishing or sharing the final product with the audience which is common to PA is considered as a complete communication cycle, making the writing social and meaningful activity (Figure 1).

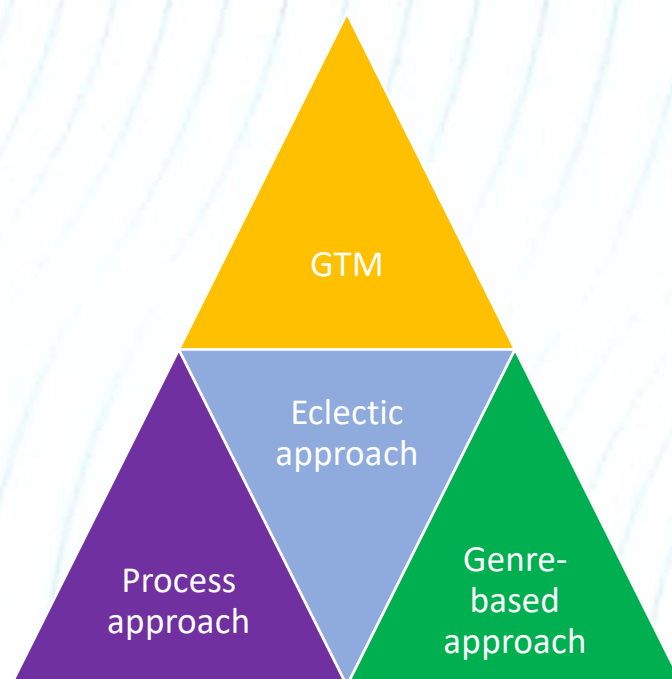


Figure 1. The combination of Grammar Translation Method, Genre-based approach and Process approach.

By integrating these methods, the eclectic approach creates a balanced framework that supports multiple dimensions of writing.

Furthermore, the model reflects core principles of modern pedagogy, emphasizing flexibility, learner-centeredness, and contextual adaptation. It allows teachers to respond to diverse learner needs and instructional goals.

This approach is particularly relevant in EFL contexts where students require both linguistic support and opportunities for authentic communication.

Conclusion:

This paper demonstrates that an eclectic approach combining process writing, genre-based instruction, and grammar translation method offers a practical and theoretically sound framework for teaching EFL writing. Rather than relying on a single methodology, teachers can benefit from strategically integrating multiple approaches to address the complexity of writing skills. The proposed model provides clear guidance for classroom implementation and can be adapted to different educational contexts. Future research may focus on empirically testing the effectiveness of this model across various proficiency levels.

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