Linguistic and Intercultural Communicative Competence Skills among EFL Learners in Timor through Genre-Based Modeling

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Abstract

This pilot study explores the effectiveness of the modeling stage within a genre-based teaching and learning cycle in developing linguistic and intercultural communicative competence (ICC) skills among EFL learners in Timor, Eastern Indonesia. The modeling stage employed an explicit instruction using a model text, followed by collaborative exercises. The study collected data through group writing samples, teaching observation and reflective journals. Data analysis involved textual analyses to analyze the group writing and thematic analysis on the teaching observation and reflective journals. Results indicated that, firstly, the textual analysis shows that students' revised reports articulate cultural information with clarity, coherence, and depth. The revisions also showcase improved ICC skills, notably in interpreting and relating cultural practices. Secondly, thematic analysis underscores scaffolded and contextualized learning through collaborative activities. The learning exposure advances the development of linguistic competence and ICC skills. The study further suggests that integrating culturally relevant content with genre-based instruction offers an alternative approach to fostering communicative competence skills and intercultural awareness among EFL learners.

Keywords: Linguistic competencies, Intercultural communicative competence, Genre-based approach, Modeling, Collaborative learning

Introduction

The development of EFL learning to weave both language and ICC skills has been a crucial area of research especially in multicultural settings. Genre-based pedagogy has emerged as a prominent approach in language and literacy education. It emphasizes the importance of understanding different text types or genres' distinct conventions, structures, and communicative purposes. Traditional approaches to writing instruction often focused on teaching general writing skills, without explicitly addressing the genre-specific demands of different contexts (Foley, 2012). However, research in the field of systemic functional linguistics and genre theory has demonstrated the value of a genre-based approach, which can mediate students to learn and compose different types of text (Xu, 2020).

One of the key strengths of genre-based pedagogy is explicit curriculum cycle or the teaching and learning cycle (TLC) stages. The body of literature has offered models of TLC (Foley, 2012; Martin, 1999) model. These models generally involve similar stages, including: 1) building the context, 2) modeling the target genre, 3) joint construction of the genre, and 4) independent construction of the genre. Permatasari and Andiyanti (2021) argue that TLC can be integrated into EFL learning to enhance ICC in EFL students. The relevance of the TLC models extends beyond English language learning, as it can also promote educational and social justice by empowering disadvantaged students to navigate academic discourse and cultural awareness (Xu, 2020). While studies have explored the implementation of the TLC models, there is a need to further investigate the effectiveness of each stage in enhancing language and ICC skills among EFL students.

This study examines the implementation of the modeling stage from Sharpe and Thompson's (1998, as cited in Foley, 2012) model with a group of EFL students in Timor, Eastern Indonesia. Timor, eastern Indonesia, is a region with a diverse linguistic and cultural landscape (Edwards & UBB, 2018). It is also shaped by the colonial history (Bire, 2016). The sociolinguistic and historical background presents some challenges for EFL instruction. A primary challenge lies in the exposure to English-speaking cultures, as limited interaction with native speakers makes comprehending sociocultural nuances challenging (Listyani, 2022). Similarly, Listyani (2022) suggests that ICC instruction is also necessary to fill the gap in the EFL learning in contextualizing local cultures and global sociocultural norms.

Therefore, the implementation of genre-based pedagogy in this context must consider the local educational environment, student language proficiency levels, and cultural diversity. Furthermore, the modeling stage, specifically, becomes a vocal point of intervention where teachers can introduce students to the complexities of English genres while grounding the instruction in culturally familiar content. Therefore, the study proceeds to explore the following questions:

Research Questions

1. How does incorporating modeling, culturally relevant content, and collaborative activities within a genre-based teaching cycle impact the development of linguistic and ICC skills among EFL learners in Timor?

2. What insights can be gained from analyzing students' work and perceptions about how well the modeling stage enhances linguistic and ICC skills for EFL learners in Timor?

Literature Review

Balancing linguistic competence and ICC is central to EFL instruction. Multicultural EFL contexts pose challenges to achieving this balance. It requires an integration of related pedagogical approaches. This review explores literature on the genre-based approach, focusing on its modeling stage and adaptation in EFL to enhance both linguistic and ICC skills.

Linguistic Competence in EFL Education

Linguistic competence refers to the ability to use language correctly and appropriately in various contexts (Celce-Murcia, 2007). This includes mastering grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and the ability to understand and produce texts in different genres. Celce-Murcia (2007) explains that possessing linguistic competence encompasses an individual's knowledge and understanding of the formal structure of a language, including its phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics.

The development of linguistic competence in EFL learning has gardened significant attention. Nevertheless, several challenges persist. An initial challenge concerns language interference. Studies have identified its impact on Timorese EFL learners' acquisition of English (Akoli et al., 2022; Sahan et al., 2022). These findings suggest that cross-linguistic influence significantly affects the EFL students. Another challenge lies in the limited exposure to the practice of English. This challenge is compounded by two factors. The initial factor refers to limited communicative settings that can facilitate the real-world use of the target language (Poedjiastutie et al., 2021). This, in turn, intensifies reliance on formal education for English (language) learning. However, the latter factor refers to the lack of creativity applied to foster communicative competence in students. A study by Listyani's (2022) in Timor EFL learning identified limited learning experience in formal instruction as a contributing factor. Although EFL emphasizes the learning of linguistic aspects, insufficient practice can result in a lack of understanding, potentially impeding practical language use.

Finally, a challenge arises from the interaction of different components of linguistic competence, such as grammatical accuracy, vocabulary, and discourse knowledge, and how they contribute to communicative competence. Moreover, given the diverse cultural and educational backgrounds of EFL learners, determining effective strategies and instructional approaches to address their unique needs in developing speaking ability, accuracy, and fluency remains an issue.

ICC in EFL Education

The prominence of English as a global lingua franca has necessitated a shift in the landscape of education, where the cultivation of ICC arises as a key focus (Liu, 2021). ICC encompasses not solely linguistic proficiency, but also the ability to navigate a nuanced understanding and effective intercultural interactions (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013).

Byram (1997) defines ICC as the ability to "interact with individuals from different national and cultural backgrounds using a foreign language" (p.71). Byram's (1997) concept highlights related

abilities, including language proficiency, cultural knowledge, and the ability to bridge cultural differences in an effective communication. Stemmed from this conceptual framework, Byram (1997) maps out five ICC traits, including attitudes, knowledge, skills, and cultural awareness. These traits are intertwined. Thus, the development in one trait reflects the growth in the other traits. Pedagogically, the multifaced nature of ICC underscores the importance of a holistic approach to its development.

Byram's (1997) framework is particularly relevant to foreign language (FL) students. The rationale lies in the notion that communication in a foreign language is key. Thus, FL teaching should extend beyond traditional communicative competence. Likewise, it should emphasize additional dimensions that can provide opportunities for intercultural learning experiences, where linguistic competence reinforced simultaneously.

In the context of EFL learning, ICC development is crucial for enhancing learners' ability to participate in intercultural exchanges. This view emphasizes an inherent relation between language, culture, and learning, as foreign language acquisition involves the assimilation of cultural knowledge and internalization of intercultural sensitivity (Liu, 2021). Studies (e.g., Permatasari & Andriyanti, 2021; Tran & Duong, 2018) suggest incorporating ICC into EFL learning by integrating cultural aspects of the target language into lessons. This approach can empower EFL students to manage the challenges of global communication and promote both linguistic proficiency and intercultural citizenship.

Genre-based approach in EFL Education

Genre-based approach, rooted in systemic functional linguistics and social semiotics, serves as a framework for developing both linguistic and ICC in EFL contexts (Hyland, 2007; Martin & Rose, 2008). Aligning with Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory, this approach views language learning as a social process (Foley, 2012). This approach employs structured instruction to teach text genres through stages like context building, modeling, shared practice, and independent application.

The GBA has evolved in various models. Martin (1999) reviews several models developed through the Australian DSP Language and Social Power Project. The initial models refer to Callaghan and Knapp's (1989) model and Murray and Zammit's (1992) expansion for primary students (deconstruction, joint construction, independent construction, negotiating field). Another model draws on Rothery and Stenglin's (1994 as cited in Martin, 1999) simplified work for secondary students, which includes deconstruction, joint construction, and independent construction. The second model emphasizes building of knowledge within the genre's subject domain at each stage.

Moreover, the model received further development. Sharpe and Thompson (1998, cited in Foley, 2012) developed a five-stage model, which encompasses preparing the context, developing the context, modeling, teacher-led construction, and student-led construction. This model centralizes assessment to evaluate student learning at each stage. Similarly, the model allows revisiting stages if necessary. The present study applied Sharpe and Thompson's model. In Timor, where EFL learning

occurs amidst sociolinguistic diversity, the application of these models can integrate students' local cultural wisdom.

Genre-based approaches, while beneficial for enhancing linguistic competence, significantly contribute to developing ICC in EFL students (Permatasari & Andriyanti 2021). Exploring diverse genres exposes students to varied cultural perspectives and communicative practices (Gómez-Rodríguez, 2018), fostering a nuanced understanding of the interplay between language and culture. For instance, comprehending the conventions of formal business emails necessitates awareness of cultural norms regarding politeness and hierarchy.

However, some challenges exist in practice. A key challenge lies in selecting relevant and authentic genres that reflect students' communicative needs. Language classrooms often comprise students with heterogeneous communicative needs shaped by their individual backgrounds, objectives, and anticipated language applications (Hyland, 2007). Consequently, discerning and choosing genres that adequately address this diversity poses a significant task for language teachers. Another challenge refers to pedagogical considerations. The adoption of genre-based instruction may require some adjustment in curricular and instruction (Tran & Duong, 2018). This requests language instructors to develop expertise to effectively implement these approaches in their classrooms.

In summary, GBA underscores engagement in analyzing and creating text across genre types. Similarly, this approach can enhance linguistic proficiency and foster understanding of the sociocultural dimensions of language. While challenges persist in the development of GBA, improvements in language teaching instruction are crucial for enhancing students' linguistic competence and ICC.

Modeling Stage and Linguistic/ICC Skills Development

In genre-based pedagogy, the modeling stage is crucial, with experts like Foley (2012) and Hyland (2007) emphasizing the teacher's role in demonstrating the composition of genre-specific texts. A core principle is enhancing students' comprehension of text structures and linguistic features (Foley, 2012). This explicit instruction strengthens both linguistic and content knowledge, enabling students to compose independently within specific genres. Hyland (2007) highlights that this stage should demonstrate a genre's social purpose and conventions, fostering an understanding of structure and language use.

This study employed Sharpe and Thompson's (1988, as cited in Foley, 2012) TLC model, which begins by building prior knowledge and then developing a specific understanding of the topic. The modeling stage introduces model texts, and the teacher acts as a facilitator, guiding students in composing texts based on these models. Ultimately, students gain opportunities to create their own texts independently. The lesson sequence involves context development, modeling, and training for autonomous learning, highlighting the intersection of modeling with both context development and autonomous learning.

Beyond linguistic skills, the modeling stage also enhances ICC skills. EFL students learn to interpret implicit meanings within specific cultures, refining their interpretive skills as emphasized by Byram (1997). This learning environment fosters collaborative interactions, encouraging discussion and reflection on intercultural similarities and differences. Consequently, the modeling stage provides a platform for EFL learners to create their own texts, confidently integrating ideas and adhering to learned conventions while expressing their understanding of culture through ICC skills.

Culturally Relevant Content and Linguistic/ICC Skills Development

Incorporating culturally relevant content in EFL instruction provides a holistic approach to language learning, enhancing both linguistic and ICC skills (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). Culturally relevant content, which includes educational resources and methodologies tailored to students' cultural backgrounds and experiences, leverages their cultural references and fosters engagement with personally resonant themes (Tran & Duong, 2018).

In terms of linguistic skills, students' engagement in conversational excerpts of cultural context can enhance their listening comprehension and speaking (Permatasari & Andriyanti, 2021). Similarly, their skills of reading and writing also improve when students are offered with authentic materials for scanning, skimming, and developing ideas for essay writings (Gómez-Rodríguez, 2018). Exposure to diverse cultural materials expands vocabulary by introducing culture-specific terms and studying such content deepens grammatical understanding by illustrating how language conveys cultural meanings (Mahardika, 2018).

Regarding ICC skills, exposure to diverse cultural perspectives cultivates cultural awareness (Tran & Duong, 2018). The exposure can enable students to recognize and navigate cultural differences. Liu's (2021) study shows that analyzing culturally relevant materials can enhance students' ability to interpret cultural cues and negotiate meaning across cultural boundaries. Models of related materials as in Wagner et al. (2018) can best demonstrate their use in fostering ICC and English language proficiency across age groups. As result, engaging with culturally relevant content can enhance cultural empathy and promote cultural appreciation.

In conclusion, incorporating culturally relevant content in EFL learning holistically develops linguistic and ICC skills. Thus, it may equip students to navigate an increasingly globalized world effectively.

Collaborative Learning: Impact on Linguistic and ICC Skills

Collaborative learning has emerged as a pedagogical approach that stimulates shared knowledge construction and mutual support among learners (Wang et al., 2023). Laal and Laal (2011) define collaborative learning as "an educational approach to teaching and learning that involves groups of learners working together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product" (p. 491). It departs from traditional competitive and individualistic learning environments by emphasizing social

interaction and interdependence. Key to its effectiveness is the structured integration of positive interdependence, individual accountability, promotive interaction, social skills, and group processing (Vygotsky, 1978).

Research indicates that collaborative learning enhances various linguistic abilities, including vocabulary development (Wichanpricha, 2020), grammatical accuracy and metalinguistic awareness (Gao, 2023). Similarly, research suggests that collaborative learning can enhance ICC skills (De Hei et al., 2020; Gómez-Rodríguez, 2018). These studies highlight that the application of collaborative learning can provide opportunities for students to articulate thoughts and engage in constructive dialogues. Similarly, they engage with intercultural topics, receive peer feedback, and apply their ICC skills. As result, there is improvement in their interaction and skills in analysis and interpretation. In other words, collaborative learning involves learning in communities organized to achieve educational objectives, enabling students to participate in discussions, assume responsibility, and become critical thinkers.

In summary, this literature review underscores the importance of genre-based pedagogy, collaborative learning, and culturally responsive teaching in developing linguistic and ICC skills in EFL learners. The modeling stage, in particular, serves as a crucial component in guiding students' understanding and production of texts within specific genres, while collaborative activities and peer feedback enhance both language and ICC skills. The integration of cultural content and responsiveness further enriches the learning experience, making it relevant and meaningful for diverse student populations.

Methodology

Research Design

The pilot study employed a qualitative case study design (Creswell, 2009). It aims to investigate the effectiveness of the modeling stage within Sharpe and Thompson's (1989, cited in Foley, 2012) TLC model to improve linguistic and ICC skills among EFL learners in Timor. This study is the part of a project of materials development aimed at enhancing ICC skills in these learners. The pilot study assessed the effectiveness of the developed materials and the TLC model in this specific learner context.

Data were triangulated from students' collaborative writing samples, classroom observations, and reflective journals to examine the impact of a genre-based approach on developing these skills. Analysis of the writing samples revealed insights into students' understanding and application of language features, as well as their ability to integrate culturally relevant content. Classroom observations captured the implementation of the modeling stage, classroom dynamics, and student engagement. Teacher's and students' reflective journals provided perceptions and experiences related to the learning stage, collaborative activities, and the development of linguistic and ICC skills.

Research Setting and Participants

This study was conducted within the English Education Program at a Christian university in Timor, Eastern Indonesia. Following Sharpe and Thompson's (1998, cited in Foley, 2012) TLC model, the modelling stage, focused on learning to write based on a model text, was implemented over 90 minutes. The modelling lesson involved group work, where students practiced writing reports on cultural events, followed by revisions. Both the initial drafts and revised versions were collected as sample texts for textual analysis.

Ten EFL students, out of a larger cohort of forty-six, voluntarily participated in this pilot study, with seven attending the modeling lesson. They were selected using a purposive sampling technique based on their willingness to participate in the study. The volunteer participants submitted consent forms, thereby validating their participation. Moreover, this study employed an observer to document the learning activities, while the researcher took on the role of the teacher.

Data Collection

This study employs a research design that combines multiple data collection instruments to ensure an understanding of the research topic. The primary data sources include teaching observation is employed to capture the modelling lesson and collaborative activities. The study adapted Piburn and Sawada's (2000) observation protocol, which covers lesson design, implementation, content, and classroom dynamics and interaction.

Moreover, writing samples of students' group work were taken during the modelling stage. The group sample writings were taken for examining the incorporation of culturally relevant content which demonstrate the linguistic and ICC skills. Additionally, there was adapted reflective journals for teacher and students from previous works (Li; 2017; Quyen, 2018). Areas of the reflective journals include feedback related to the modeling lesson, beneficial aspects of materials, language and ICC skills, and areas for improvement.

The primary data source was students' group writing samples. They were collected throughout the genre-based teaching intervention. Specifically, the study took the sample written work after the modelling stage. In addition, the researcher conducted regular observations of the classroom sessions where the genre-based teaching approach is being implemented. During these observations, an observer documented the implementation of the modelling stage. Further complementing the classroom data, the researcher collected the reflective journal throughout after the modelling stage from he himself as the teacher as well as from the students. By triangulating these multiple data sources, the researcher gained a comprehensive and contextualized understanding of the impact of the genre-based teaching approach on the development of linguistic and ICC skills among the EFL learners in Timor.

Data Analysis

The data analysis for this study was conducted in several phases to evaluate the impact of the modeling stage on EFL learners' linguistic and ICC skills. Initially, a textual analysis applied the model from Foley (2012). The textual analysis focuses on text organization and language features to assess writing skill development and the ability to interpret and relate information. Subsequently, thematic analysis, guided by Henwood and Pidgeon (2003, cited in Saldaña, 2009), was employed to analyze data from teaching observations and reflective journals. This aimed to identify evidence of the modeling stage's impact on linguistic skills and ICC skills. Thematic analysis involved matrix data displays, with primary themes, supporting data examples, and interpretive summaries. Triangulation was then used to verify the identified themes. This approach seeks an understanding of the modeling stage's pedagogical effectiveness within genre-based instruction in enhancing the linguistic and ICC skills in the research participants.

Results

This study applied Sharpe and Thompson's (1998, as cited in Foley, 2012) five stages of TLC model in teaching report of cultural topics in a pilot study for ICC materials development. Beginning with the preparing the context, the teacher built the students' prior knowledge of reports and cultural topic related to cultural events. In the following stage, the teacher attempted to enhance the students to establish specific knowledge of the cultural topics by asking them to unpack the information they have learned in form of writing. Moreover, the teacher began orienting the students to write by practicing the language features of report.

In the modelling stage, especially, the lesson focuses on how to write a topic of cultural events based on a model report text on "*Pasola Festival of Sumba*" (Explore Sumba, 2023). The text contains three headings, including "*What is the Pasola Festival?*," "*How is the Pasola Festival Celebrated?*," and "*When is the Festival?*". To introduce language features, the teacher emphasizes the context, generic structure. Subsequently, students, collaboratively, composed reports on culturally relevant festivals in assigned small groups. Both draft and revised versions of written work of the groups are included in Appendix A and B.

Textual Analysis on Group Writing of Report
Text 1

The analyzed text presents the '*First Food Harvest Festival*' report as a well-structured informational document. It employs a question-and-answer format to describe the festival's identity, celebration, and timing. The introduction defines it as a traditional food exhibition in South-Central Timor, East Nusa Tenggara, emphasizing its historical and religious significance, particularly the concept of Hulu Hasil. The body details stand decorations, traditional clothing, folk songs, and

performances like the Maekat and Bonet dances. The festival, lasting two weeks in March or April, involves diverse participants.

Linguistically, the report uses present simple tense for factual descriptions and generic participants to generalize information. Relational and action verbs define and describe the festival, respectively. Descriptive language, incorporating cultural terms like Ume kbubu, Maekat, and Bonet, enriches the description. Connective words maintain cohesion. The inclusion of historical context, artistic elements, and community participation enhances the cultural report.

Compared to its draft, the revised text demonstrates marked improvements over the original draft, exhibiting enhanced clarity, coherence, and depth. Structurally, the revised version employs coherent subheadings to delineate sections and foster ease of comprehension. Moreover, grammatical accuracy and sentence structure are improved. It refines errors present in the initial version. The revised text also provides more detailed and informative content, expanding on the festival's traditions and significance with specific examples. Furthermore, the use of more precise and sophisticated language enhances readability, while the integration of cultural elements adds contextual depth and engagement. Overall, the revised version showcases improvement in the organization and language use. Additionally, it fabricates some cultural insights to make the text more informative and engaging. Similarly, the paragraphs are structured and given topic sentences, which can mediate readers to follow the flow of ideas.

Moreover, the revised version demonstrates enhanced ICC skills, particularly in interpreting and relating information. Specifically, the students' ability to convey cultural significance, clarify meanings, and connect local traditions to broader contexts is markedly improved.

The revised version excels in interpreting cultural practices with clarity and making them relatable to a wider audience. Students moved from a basic description to a more detailed and accessible explanation, demonstrating a better ability to bridge cultural understanding. Skills of discovery, comparison and analysis play a significant role in ICC. The students demonstrated better organization, coherence, language precision, and depth in the revised version. The inclusion of cultural elements and clear explanations makes the text more informative and engaging.

Text 2

The second text analyzes on the Kebalai Festival provides some details on the festival's identity, celebration, and timing. The report employs a question-and-answer format for clarity. It defines the event as a traditional dance-festival of the Roteness in East Nusa Tenggara province of Indonesia. The description notes variations in names and attire across Rote regions. Moreover, it elaborates the historical association with mourning rituals and its evolution into a dance for festivities and welcoming guests. Additionally, it specifies the participant roles, such as the Soda (lead chanter) and Helo (dancers reciting verses of Ofalanga). The timing of the festival is outlined as occurring after deaths, during traditional events, and on national cultural occasions.

Regarding language, the report uses present simple tense for factual descriptions and generic participants to generalize information. Relational and action verbs define and describe the festival, respectively, while descriptive language, including terms like Po'u, Lafa, Lefa, and Lapahei, enhances cultural authenticity. Connective words contribute to coherence. Overall, the revised text exhibits a well-structured and informative account of the Kebalai Festival.

The revised version of the second text exhibits some improvement over the draft, particularly in clarity, cultural depth, organization, and linguistic accuracy. It demonstrates a coherent and structured explanation of the festival, which makes the cultural elements more understandable and engaging. Similarly, the festival's origins and purpose are well-explained, as it incorporates the historical and regional variations. Moreover, the sentences are grammatically correct and well-structured, with clear. The use of related vocabulary enhances comprehension. The organization of headings makes the text structured and easy to follow. Overall, the enhanced clarity, cultural depth, organization, and linguistic accuracy in the revised version collectively contribute to a more informative and engaging text.

Focusing on ICC skills, the revised version of *Text 2* demonstrates some enhancement through more effective interpretation and relation of cultural practices. The revised version provides a more detailed and accurate description of the festival's historical function, meaning, and cultural variations. This is evidenced from the inclusion of specific terminology, which helps preserve cultural authenticity while explaining it to a broader audience. Moreover, it compares its past and present functions, which makes it easier for readers to relate to the festival's evolution and significance. Overall, the revised version of text 2 demonstrates enhanced the skills of interpreting and relating cultural practices. The inclusion of national cultural events makes the second text more relevant and accessible to a wider audience.

Text 3

Text 3 offers an analysis of a report on the Wulla Poddu ritual. Structurally, the report resembles a typical informational document, commencing with a title and an introduction that defines Wulla Poddu as an annual ritual practiced by the Loli people of Sumba, linked to the Marapu belief system. The report is divided into two sections detailing the celebration's key ceremonies and the timing of the ritual, which occurs in October, lasts a month, and concludes with the Kalangngo gathering.

Linguistically, the report employs present simple tense for factual descriptions and generic participants to broaden applicability. Relational and action verbs are used to define and describe the ritual, respectively, while connective words enhance coherence. The inclusion of traditional terms adds cultural authenticity. Overall, the report exhibits good cohesion and readability, which renders it an effective cultural account.

Compared to its draft, the revised version of the Wulla Poddu Ritual from Sumba demonstrates marked improvements in language accuracy, clarity, organization, and cultural explanation. Grammatical errors have been corrected, and sentence structures have been improved, enhancing

readability. The revised text presents ideas more clearly and concisely, reducing confusion through better sentence flow and correct verb and noun agreement. The more logical paragraph divisions keep related ideas together, improving readability, while improved transitions between ideas remove redundancy, simplify wording, and make the meaning clearer. The revised version provides a more precise description of rituals while correcting cultural references, such as clarifying that Marapu is a religion. The final day, "*Kalangngo*," is now clearly explained as a gathering to celebrate the ritual's conclusion.

Moreover, the improvements in the revised version of Text 3 reflect an enhanced understanding of ICC skills. In terms of interpreting information, the revised version presents a clearer and more accurate description of the ritual, which makes it easier for readers who might be unfamiliar with Sumbanese culture to understand. Similarly, it avoids literal translations that might cause confusion. Regarding skills for relating information, the revised version connects cultural practices to broader contexts. It explains the importance of offerings and traditional performances. By clarifying when and why the ritual is held, it helps outsiders to relate to and appreciate the cultural significance.

Thematic Analysis Findings

This section presents the thematic analysis findings derived from teaching observations and reflective journals. The data are organized into three main themes for each set of findings

Theme 1 (Teaching observation): Scaffolded and Contextualized Learning for Intercultural and Communicative Competence.

The theme reveals that a supportive and collaborative learning environment, achieved through effective lesson design, is essential. Structured support during the modeling stage, as observer noted, "*writing after mapping, prompted questions*," aids in effective writing development. While instruction emphasizes fundamental concepts and report text structures, observer suggest incorporating more examples of contexts where reports are used to build abstraction. Teacher scaffolding, including prompted questions, monitoring, and discussions for concept mapping and sentence construction, is vital for students' growth in propositional and procedural knowledge.

Regarding ICC skills, students develop structural and linguistic awareness through text-based learning activities, as the observer wrote, "*identifying generic structure, language features*." The expose enhances their skills of interpreting and relating. However, fostering skills of discovery and interaction proves challenging, with students showing less initiative to ask questions in class, primarily engaging in group discussions, as noted, "*Found in group discussion*."

In terms of classroom culture, while students are involved in classroom discourse, teachers play an active role in encouraging participation. Concerning student/teacher relationships, the observer penned, "*Teacher provides contexts of report writing*." It is suggested that the teacher facilitates active,

inquiry-driven learning by providing contexts for report writing, and further emphasizes the importance of contextualized instruction.

Theme 2 (Teacher's reflective journal): Enhancing Language and Intercultural Competence through Structured Support and Collaborative Learning.

Active learning was evident as students engaged in discussions and group work, constructing model texts about cultural events, as noted by the teacher:

> 'This cycle is activating students.…students are taking part in understanding the topic, writing up model of text about a cultural event. Discussion and sharing among group members demonstrate classroom teaching and learning activities.'

The teacher also noted the content and organization of the learning materials facilitated effective lesson delivery. Furthermore, the teacher observed development of language skills, including effective listening demonstrated through accurate interpretation of information, and improved reading and analytical skills fostered by collaborative research and note-taking activities. The enhancement can be traced from teacher's feedback:

> 'Students, in their groups, have practiced the instruction that improves their reading skills. For example, reading by using research and note-taking skills. In practice, certain group uses fishbone, another one uses matrices. Besides, their reading skills improve from their scanning of relevant information. At the same time, almost all the groups have demonstrated interpreting skills among them as exemplified by sharing of ideas.'

These linguistic skill gains directly contributed to growth in ICC, particularly in students' abilities to discover and interpret information.

Moreover, the teacher underscores the role of structured support and collaborative learning in developing language and ICC skills. While students showed growth in speaking through idea-sharing, some hesitated to speak, which poses a challenge to find engaging techniques. Additionally, basic grammar skills presented some barriers. It requires teacher's scaffolding to facilitate students in structuring their ideas in English based on the model text.

Moreover, the teacher observed that students enhance their ICC skills through interpreting and relating by connecting cultural topics to their own experiences. They also improve discovery and interaction skills by finding factual knowledge from reliable sources before sharing ideas. This interconnectedness emphasizes the necessity of collaborative environments and tailored support to meet individual student needs.

To further refine the integration of language and ICC skills, the teacher suggested two key improvements. First, learning materials should incorporate diverse reading and listening resources

related to students' cultural backgrounds, fostering skills in discovery, relating, and interpreting intercultural information. Second, teaching practices should focus on better understanding students' existing knowledge of cultural topics and improving questioning techniques to enhance student engagement. The thematic analysis is based on teacher's reflective note:

> 'I have to improve my teaching in terms of understanding students' familiar
> knowledge of the topic from a reading text or listening section. I also have to
> improve my questioning skills to engage students being familiar with the topic
> of learning and those that they choose to write for their modeling of report.'

It is suggested that leveraging students' prior knowledge and cultural context to improve reading and listening skills, instructors can foster ICC and enhance learning through explicit instruction. In a nutshell, fostering ICC involves connecting cultural topics to students' experiences, promoting research skills, and refining teaching practices to better leverage students' knowledge and engagement.

Theme 3 (Students' reflective journal): Integrated and Culturally Engaged Learning for Language and Intercultural Development.

This theme encompasses several areas identified in students' reflective journals. Initially, the journals address their learning experiences during the modelling stage. The extracts below represent sample students' reflection:

> 'I learn about how to write a report use a mind mapping.' [SRHT]
> '… learned about culture from Sumba culture, namely Pasola, where the
> people of Sumba hold it to appease the spirits so that their crops are good, and
> this is also done by some people who ride horses while attacking with sticks.'
> [ARHH]

The feedback delineates students' understanding of report writing through mind mapping and gaining cultural knowledge, such as insights into the Pasola tradition of Sumba. The following is the feedback from two students,

Moreover, reflections on materials highlighted comprehensive learning resources and strategies, including report writing structure, mind mapping, and information search, which facilitated cultural knowledge growth. Furthermore, there are feedback on language skills. While positive feedback reflects listening, challenges and recommendations are identified in reading. Specifically, students requested extra time for in-depth topic understanding. Sample feedback requested, "*I need much time to read a whole text*" [ERM]. The feedback underscores an adjustment in time management that can facilitate effective learning experiences of reading activities.

Additionally, there are development of communicative competence in speaking and written expression in writing. In writing skill, especially, a student noted, "*My writing ability was better by*

using matrix that I can get new topics and think more broadly" [ARHH]. These reflections underscore the importance of English proficiency for effective writing. Reflective journals can be a tool to explore these intercultural encounters.

Similarly, the thematic findings regarding ICC skills revealed that students demonstrated cultural curiosity and engagement, connecting the Balinese Nyepi Day tradition to their own cultural practices, as noted from a student's feedback:

> 'In the culture of the NTT people, during the Easter celebration for the Catholic Christian community, a Pawe Carnival is held and guarded by security officers.' [ERM]

They also emphasized the importance of intercultural knowledge and attitudes for enhancing interaction and communication skills, aligning with the skills of discovery and interaction. A student, for example, suggested, "*Increase general knowledge about each culture characteristic of diversity values preserving and learning from that culture such as its language*" [SGRH].

For improving learning materials, students suggested incorporating diverse cultural topics to achieve holistic cultural learning and engagement. It is emphasized in their feedback, as a student wrote, "*I need to improve my ability to interact with other cultures, and find out more about them*" [LDP]. These findings highlight the need for clarity, depth, application, and balanced perspectives in cultural learning resources.

Discussion

This study employed the five-stage teaching and learning cycle model, as adapted from Sharpe and Thompson (1998, as cited in Foley, 2012), to cultivate linguistic and intercultural communicative competence skills among EFL learners. This pedagogical approach aligns with genre-based approaches prevalent in the literature, which underscore the significance of modeling in facilitating students' comprehension of text structures and linguistic conventions. Foley (2012) and Hyland (2007) particularly emphasize the role of modeling in this context.

During the modeling stage, explicit instruction was provided, focusing on the context, generic structure, and linguistic features of a cultural report text centered on the "Pasola Festival." This instruction aimed to provide students with a solid framework for composing their own reports. This strategy is well-supported in the literature. Hyland (2007) posits that the modeling stage should effectively demonstrate a genre's social purpose and established conventions. The intended outcome is for students to internalize and reproduce the target text structure and appropriate language use.

The textual analysis of the students' group reports supports the study's findings. The revised versions demonstrate enhanced clarity, coherence, and depth of cultural information compared to the initial drafts. This improvement aligns with the principles of the genre-based approach, which emphasizes the role of modeling in strengthening students' linguistic proficiency and content mastery

as Foley (2012) suggested. Furthermore, the revised texts exhibit enhanced ICC skills, particularly in interpreting and relating cultural information. This is evidenced by the appropriate inclusion of cultural terminology, detailed explanations of traditions, and clear connections to broader sociocultural contexts. This development of ICC skills strongly resonates with Byram's (1997) model of intercultural communicative competence, which underscores the ability to effectively navigate and mediate cultural differences in intercultural interactions. The findings suggest that the genre-based approach, with its focus on explicit modeling and collaborative learning activities, provides a valuable framework for cultivating these essential ICC skills.

The thematic analysis further elucidates the relationship between linguistic competence and ICC development. The first theme highlights the crucial role of a supportive and collaborative learning environment, facilitated through effective lesson design and judicious teacher scaffolding. This aligns with the work of Foley (2012) and Hyland (2007) on the GBA, which emphasizes the teacher's function as a facilitator in guiding students through the modeling and collaborative phases.

The second theme reinforces the significance of structured support and collaborative learning in fostering both linguistic and ICC skills. Teaching observations indicate that students' enhanced language skills, encompassing listening, reading, and analytical abilities, which contributed to the development of their ICC skills, particularly in areas of cultural discovery and interpretation. This finding reinforces the established understanding, as articulated by Liu (2021), that linguistic competence and ICC are interrelated, with language proficiency serving as a foundation for effective intercultural communication.

The third theme underscores the importance of integrating culturally relevant content into EFL instruction. Student reflections reveal their appreciation for learning about diverse cultural traditions, which, in turn, fostered their cultural curiosity and increased engagement. This approach finds support in the literature, which suggests that exposure to varied cultural perspectives fosters gains in both linguistic competence and ICC (Gómez-Rodríguez, 2018; Tran & Duong, 2018).

The literature review establishes a theoretical framework that underpins the findings of this study. The genre-based approach, with its emphasis on explicit modeling and collaborative learning practices, aligns with the study's pedagogical cycle model, which facilitated the development of both linguistic competence and ICC. Furthermore, the integration of culturally relevant content, as evidenced in the textual analysis and thematic findings, resonates with Tran and Duong's (2018) consensus on the importance of ICC teaching methodologies in EFL contexts.

The study's findings both corroborate and extend the existing body of research in several key aspects. First, it provides empirical validation for the studies by Hyland (2007) and Martin and Rose (2008) on the effectiveness of the genre-based approach, with particular emphasis on the modeling phase, in enhancing both linguistic and ICC skills within an EFL context. This lends support to the widely held view that the genre-based approach serves as a robust and adaptable framework for cultivating these interconnected competencies.

Second, the study's thematic analysis offers nuanced insights into the specific mechanisms through which collaborative learning and culturally relevant content contribute to the development of linguistic and ICC skills. The findings underscore the importance of carefully scaffolded support, active student engagement, and ample opportunities for cultural exploration and interpretive analysis, aligning with work from Gómez-Rodríguez (2018) that highlights the benefits of collaborative learning environments and culturally responsive pedagogical practices.

Finally, the study's contextualization within the specific setting of Timorese EFL education expands the scope of existing research, which has primarily focused on other EFL contexts. The findings suggest that the strategic integration of genre-based pedagogy, collaborative learning strategies, and culturally relevant content can effectively address the unique linguistic and intercultural challenges encountered by Timorese EFL learners, as identified in previous studies (Akoli et al., 2022; Listyani, 2022; Poedjiastutie et al., 2021).

Conclusion

This pilot study demonstrates the efficacy of the modeling stage within a genre-based teaching cycle for enhancing linguistic and ICC skills among EFL learners in Timor, Eastern Indonesia. Through explicit instruction, collaborative composition, and reflective practice, students internalized and applied key genre conventions and linguistic features, particularly in the context of culturally relevant materials. The study underscores the importance of integrating culturally responsive pedagogy into EFL instruction to cultivate not only language proficiency but also intercultural awareness and sensitivity. These findings suggest that a systematic design of modeling stage offers a crucial component in developing holistic language education programs adaptable to diverse cultural contexts. Future research can investigate the impact of each stage of the genre-based teaching and learning cycle models in understanding EFL learners' communicative competence and intercultural awareness.

Pedagogical Implications

Findings of this study offer several implications for enhancing EFL instruction through a genre-based approach. Initially, the integration of a modeling stage within the TLC fostered both linguistic and ICC skills. This suggests that explicit instruction using culturally relevant model texts can improve genre and language understanding. Moreover, collaborative writing during the modeling stage facilitated peer learning and feedback. Therefore, collaborative tasks should be central to encourage active peer interaction.

Furthermore, this study highlights the importance of culturally responsive pedagogy in affirming student backgrounds and enriching learning through enhanced relevance and engagement. EFL teacher may incorporate culturally diverse materials and contexts to broaden perspectives and improve intercultural competencies. Finally, the findings advocate for a balanced approach, which combines group and individual tasks to leverage the benefits of collective learning while developing

independent critical thinking and writing skills. These insights can inform the design of balanced EFL curricula aimed at developing holistic communicative competencies.

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Appendix A: Group writings

Group 1

The first food harvest festival

The first food harvest is an event held by the people of South Central Timor regency, Indonesia. When the harvest season arrives or people will collect what they called it the upstream yield. This festival has long been done around since the ancient times. At the old times people of this regency brought their first best harvest to the church as an offering to God.

At the festival, people set up special open space with isles of stand exhibition stand from different origins

Group 2

PADOA FESTIVAL OF SABU

- What is the Padoa Festival?
  Padoa festival is a traditional event mindly dance by the People from Sabu Island, East Musa Tenggara.
  During the Festival people wear traditional clothes, singing a repititifly traditional song with a harmonx's energetxc and enjoyfull dance in a circle form by a leader to stand at the middle of circle to sing a song.

+ How is the padoa festival celebrated?
  Padoa festival is always celebrated at nigh. at the time people are in a circle and hand into hand and also need a person to stand the middle of the circle to sing a song.

+ when is the padoa festival celebrated.
  Padoa festival celebrated at night before Buihi. Padoa is often celebrated by doing some cultural rituals. the ritual is put betel nut and fragrant coconut on offering stone at night.

Group 3

What is the Wulla Poddu ritual?

‾‾‾‾ MAP ‾‾‾‾

Wulla poddu is a traditional ritual that takes place annually on the island of Sumba. Indonesia. The ritual is perfome by a loli people that belong to Marapu.

How is the Wulla Poddu ritual celebrated?

The Wulla poddu ritual is began by the meeting between Rato Rumata to decide when will the wulla poddu ritual be started. Then start with Tuba Rato ritual. Padeddalana ritual, pogo mawo, muru luwa, toba wano, and there is a performed traditional dance that is call woleka. Lakawa

The ritual is looking for an offery. It's commonly a pig and a chicken. The person especially from the marapu believe is the one who responsible for searching that offering. He spent around three or more night going around the forest. On the last day of october, this ritual will be end. And it time the people who parsipated will gathered in one place to celebrate for the closing of the ritual.

When is the ritual?

The ritual is usually held in october each year. The ritual is carried ou. for a month. It's a time when people from different places in sumba com. to watch the ritual. This ritual is performed day by day for a month. and it's simply stop whe the participant are being tired. And the la. day called "kalangngo" people are regathering to celebrate the end of the ritual

Appendix B: Revision of Group Writing

Group 1

<div align="center">The First Food Harvest Festival</div>

What is the First Food Harvest Festival?

The First Food Harvest Festival is an Indonesian staple food exhibition by the people of South-Central Timor Regency, East Nusa Tenggara. When harvest season arrives, residents collect *Hulu Hasil* - the first best-harvested food. This event has been practiced since ancient times, in which people ought to bring the best food to the church as an offering to God. The most frequent food is dried maize, which is either sun-dried or kept over time in the traditional attic house of *Ume kbubu'*. Various supplements often include nuts, bananas, tubers, potatoes, beans, and numerous others.

How is the First Food Harvest Festival celebrated?

People manage the festival by setting stands with designated rooms to host participants of various origins. They ornament the stands in attractive and beautiful designs utilizing local materials such as palm leaves and petals of various types of flowers to attract visitors and purchasers. There are also art displays and performances, in addition to the food expo. People who attend the festival wear woven traditional clothing from various backgrounds. Contestants also do folk song singing. The *Maekat* dance, a battle dance depicting the return of the winning team of the local people from a battle against the colonials, is popular amongst visitors. *Bonet* is an exceptionally captivating attraction. It is a dance performed by twenty or more people forming a circle and holding hands demonstrating people's harmony and solidarity while reciting local poetry.

When is the First Food Harvest Festival celebrated?

The festival normally spans two weeks in March or April. Locals, tourists or visitors, and state and non-state government agencies are among the participants.

Group 2

<div align="center">Kebalai Festival</div>

What is Kebalai festival?

The Kebalai Festival is a traditional dance-festival performed by the Rote people of East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. Kebalai is known as *Kebak* in East Rote and *Heka* in Southwest Dengka of Rote. To participate in the Kebalai dance, men from East Rote often wear *Lafa* (sarongs) while men from Southwest Rote typically wear *Lefa* (sarongs). Interestingly, they stand out by wearing Lapahei, which are traditional sandals made of palm leaves. Women wear *Po'u* (sarongs), salendang, white kebaya, and traditional accessories such as crescent moon and bracelets.

How is the festival celebrated?

Previously, the Kebalai dance, which is featured in most today's cultural events, was only done after someone died to console others in grief. People, now, perform the dance during traditional festivities as well as when welcoming guests. *Soda*, the leading chanter, leads the participants in dancing to the song of Ofalanga. *Helo*- the dancers in a circle performing the Kebalai dance- takes the lead in reciting verse after verse of the song.

When is the festival?

The Kebalai festival is held every time when there is a death and other traditional events. On national cultural events, people get to watch Rotenese of all ages compete in inventive chanting ways of singing the song while dancing.

Group 3

Wulla Poddu Ritual

What is the Wulla Poddu ritual?

Wulla Poddu is an annual traditional ritual on the Indonesian island of Sumba. The ritual is performed by Loli people of Marapu belief.

How is the Wulla Poddu ritual celebrated?

The Wulla Poddu ritual begins with Rato Rumata meeting to establish when the ritual should begin. Wulla Poddu has several rituals, including Tuba Rata, Padaddalana, Pogo mawo, Mu'u luwa, and Toba wano. Woleka Lakawa, a traditional dance, is usually shown as the closing.

The ritual necessitates an offering, which is typically a pig or fowl. A Marapu believer is in charge of searching for the offering. The search might take three or more nights as it circles the jungle.

When is the Wulla Poddu celebrated?

The celebration normally lasts a month in October, with people traveling from all around Sumba to see the ritual's day-to-day cultural events. On the last day, a crowd gathers in a designated location for Kalangngo.