

Unit of study teaching report

Executive summary

This report presents a unit of study that is designed for an international student who enrolled in an English Language Preparation (ELP) program in Australia. These groups of learners are 18 to 25 years old and come from diverse of countries, cultures, and linguistic backgrounds. In addition, most of them are at an intermediate English proficiency level and they are preparing to enter undergraduate programs, majoring in journalism, media, and communication. While they have some experience with basic writing, they are unfamiliar with the structure and linguistic features of news articles in English. As a result, they require support in developing an academic and professional language knowledge and skills that are related to their future academic studies and careers. This unit, focuses on an academic writing genre that is commonly used in journalism, media, and communication fields. Learners need to have the knowledge and abilities that are required in their academic study and their careers in the future like producing narrative news articles effectively. The narrative news article is a main genre used in this discourse community, as it combines factual information with storytelling to convey information and engages the reader's emotions. Developing this ability supports learners to express their aspects clearly in their academic studies and future careers.

This unit was created by using a theoretical needs analysis that involved three strategies.

First, a Target Situation Analysis (TSA) help identify what learners are required to achieve in

their target context, such as writing narrative text in order to learn effectively (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, as cited in Mortazavi, 2016). Second is a Present Situation Analysis (PSA), which enables teachers to evaluate the current language abilities and challenges of learners, especially with unfamiliar writing structure and linguistics features (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, as cited in Mortazavi, 2016). Finally, learner self-assessment questionnaires help teachers to collect learners' information, such as their needs and their goals (Basturkmen, 2010). All of these strategies allow teachers to deeply understand learners' needs and help to design a unit that other Language for specific purposes (LSP) practitioners in similar educational contexts can adapt it. As a result, these theoretical needs analysis help to guide the unit design by emphasizing the importance of narrative news articles, which are directly connected to learners' academic and career goals in the future. This analysis support genre-based approach, especially the Teaching and Learning Cycle (Rose & Martin, 2012; Derewianka, n.d.) to support learners' understanding step-by-step of the structure of the article, and linguistics features that are used in the article to achieve their academic and career goals. This report consists of three main parts, which are the executive summary and LSP teaching context that was mentioned earlier and the last part is the unit of study or instructional guide that will be presented below. It creates to develop learners' knowledge of the genre structure and linguistic features that needs for their writing.

Unit of study (instructional guide)

This unit of study focuses on teaching the narrative news article genre by applying a Genre-based approach in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), especially using the Teaching and

Learning Cycle (Rose & Martin, 2012; Derewianka, n.d.). This teaching approach focuses on how language helps build meaning and links between the structure of the text, language choices, and social purpose. This is an effective approach for learners who are preparing to enter in journalism, media, and communication programs because it helps develop their language abilities and understand genre structure. The model text used in this unit is 'Tilting at windmills: the boy who harnessed the wind', which is a real-story article published by The Guardian (Vidal, 2009). This article is a great example of narrative news article genre that provides a personal experience conveyed through storytelling in an engaging way. Moreover, the structure of this article has three stages that are common in narrative news articles (Droga et al., 2012). It also provides various linguistic features in each stage to create the meaning and drive the story, which is helpful for learners to see it as a guide.

Building field knowledge activity:

1. Introduce learners to the context of the story by showing learners a short video of William Kamkwamba building his windmill which it depicts scenes of drought, a rural area, a homemade windmill
2. Ask students questions:
 - What do you see in this video?
 - What do you think is happening in this place?
 - Why does he build a windmill?
3. Encourage learners to make personal connections with the topic by asking
 - Have you ever experienced a situation like him?

- Have you ever tried to overcome the challenge by creating an invention?
- What would you do or any innovation would you create if you faced a similar situation like him?

This allows them to share their perspectives and experiences that relate to this context.

4. Teach key vocabulary through interactive games like Kahoot

- Present target vocabularies related to the context and explain the definition of each word before moving on to the activity
- Conduct a Kahoot game to engage learners and check their understanding of the words
- Included three question types in this game, such as vocabulary-definition match, fill in the gap, images-vocabulary match
- After they finished, the teacher goes over common mistakes that they made and provides a clear explanation of that vocabulary again.

This stage reflects the first step of Teaching and Learning Cycle (TLC) that focuses on develops the basic knowledge of learners and establish a shared understanding in the classroom (Derewianka, n.d.), so all of them are able to understand and familiar with the topic. Therefore, learners are prepared their basic knowledge and vocabulary to engage with the genre structure and linguistic feature in the following stage.

Modelled and Deconstruction activity



Genre structure activity

1. Introduce the model text, which is “Tilting at windmills: the boy who harnessed the wind” by The Guardian (Vidal, 2009)
2. Ask them to read and encourage them to highlight where the story shifts the purpose, or focus

For example:

- Orientation: describing the story setting, introducing the main character or providing story background
 - Complication: introduce the problems and efforts that the main character faced.
 - Resolution: Showing an outcome of the story
3. After they have read the model text, guide them to identify the three genre stages of the narrative genre and write the name of each stage

- Orientation: Who is the main character? Where is the location? When does it happen?
 - Complication: What challenge that the character faced?
 - Resolution: How did the character address the challenge? Or What impact did he make?
4. Using reflect questions helps to lead the learners' thinking
- Where does the story begin?
 - Where does the challenge start?
 - Which part of the text shows the outcome of the story?

This activity establishes students understanding the structure of the narrative genre, which is important before analyzing the linguistic features that are used to create the meaning in each stage.

Linguistic features analysis

5. Encourage students to read the model text again, and pay attention to how the linguistic features contribute to meaning across stages.
6. Ask students to analyze key linguistics features by using different colors to highlight in each stage.

For example:

- Noun group: using red (semi-educated 14-year-old)
- Past tense: using green (was)

- Time expression: using blue ([Back in 2001](#))
- Action verbs: using orange (**built**)

7. After they highlighted, the teacher asks them to discuss the function of these linguistic features in each stage starting in the orientation stage to the resolution stage

Example questions:

- Which key linguistics feature do you highlight in the first stage?
- Why does the writer use past tense in the orientation stage?
- How do noun groups help describe the main character?
- In the complication stage, how do conjunction words like ‘because’ help link the idea?
- Why does the writer use present simple in the final stage?

8. Provide further information about the functions of the linguistics features used in this article

For example:

- **Past tense** support readers’ understanding that events happen in the past
- **Expanded noun groups** provide more detail of the character, place, things, or setting. For example, “William Kamkwamba was *a semi-educated 14-year-old Malawian*”
- **Action verbs** support readers’ understanding of what the character did through physical action.
- **Conjunction words** help to link ideas logically and to explain why the action happened

In this second stage, it improves students' understanding of the narrative genre structure and can identify where the orientation, the complication, and the resolution stages in an article. Moreover, they also understand how are linguistic features used to create meaning and help build the story. As a result, understanding genre structure and how each key linguistic features use in the real article, helps them to express their idea in their writing more confidently (Nguyen & Truong, 2024).

Joint construction activity

1. Offer a new topic like "A student invented a water filter using local materials"
2. Ask students to brainstorm to think about what kind of information should be included in each stage of this article. Using this guide questions:
 - Who is the girl? How old is she? Where does the location that she lives?
 - When is it happen?
 - What is her challenge? Why would she like to build a water filter?
 - How does she build water filter?
 - What materials did she use?
 - What happened after she created it?
 - Are there any impacts on her invention? How?
3. Teacher and students co-write a narrative text together in three stages
 - In orientation, introduce the girl, personal background, and context of the story like time or place.

- Complication stages describe the challenge that she faced and what she decided to do.
 - The resolution stage, demonstrates the outcome of her story and her invention's impact.
4. During co-writing the text, guiding students in developing their linguistic features by asking scaffolded questions.
- For example, if students introduce the main character as a "Thai girl", the teacher might ask "Can we use a noun group to provide more detail and more specific of the main character? After that, guiding them to expand it to "14-year-old Thai girl from the northeast region."
 - Which conjunction word that we can use to connect these two sentences?
5. After we completed the text, asking students to reflect on their writing.

Asking reflective questions:

- Which stages in the text were the most difficult for you to write? Why?
- What linguistic features did we use in our writing?
- Did we use past tense in the first stage? Why?

This stage is an important stage in this Teaching and Learning Cycle because it offers learners an opportunity to apply their knowledge, their understanding of genre structure and linguistic features within a supportive environment such as receiving guidance from the teacher. As a result, it helps them become more confident before writing their own text (Nguyen & Truong, 2024).

Independent construction activity

1. Students plan, draft, and write their narrative news article by their own based on the narrative genre structure and key linguistics feature that they have learnt.
2. After they all finished their writing, peer feedback, and checklists will be used in this section. Thus, they can receive feedback from each other and review their own article through checklist whether they follow the genre structure and use accurate linguistics features.
3. Then, the teacher provides feedback on their writing by focusing on their structure and key linguistic features that are used to contribute to their story such as:
 - “You cover all of the structure, but Can you check your tense here?”
 - “Try to use more specific noun groups to introduce your main character”
4. Students revise their text that they receive from the teacher.

In the final stage, it promotes independent practice by providing them a chance to apply their knowledge of linguistic features and genre structure on their own. Peer feedback and checklists also help them to develop their critical thinking skills (Zeng & Ravindran, 2025).

By the end of this unit, learners will have a clear understanding of narrative news genre structure and how linguistic features create meaning in each stage. With step-by-step support, they learn to analyze and identify it, while also using it in their own writing. As a result, this builds their confidence and prepares them to write in their academic studies and future careers. According to Rose and Martin (2012) explain, understanding how structure and linguistic features work together offers essential support for learner learning.

Reference lists

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Appendix A: Annotated genre

To support learners understanding, the table below shows a summary of how key linguistic features help create meaning at each stage of the model text.

Stage	Example text	Key linguistic feature	Function and contribution to meaning
Orientation	"Back in 2001 William Kamkwamba was a semi-educated 14-year-old Malawian"	Time expressions, Past simple tense, and expanded noun group	Builds the setting with clear time and location and introduce the main character. This support readers' imagination of the story and understand the main character's personal background
Complication	"Sudanese innovators have developed what look like a metal syringe..."	Present perfect tense, action verbs, and conjunction words	Focuses on the problems and efforts that the main character faced. Present perfect tense is used to connect the past event to the

	<p>“He then built a rudimentary wooden tower”</p> <p>“... to extract the seed pods from hibiscus plants because the flowers earn more money...”</p>		<p>present by showing past innovation still have relevant today.</p> <p>Action verbs support readers’ understanding of what the character did through physical action. Also,</p> <p>conjunction words help to link ideas logically and to explain why the action happened</p>
Resolution	<p>“Kamkwamba shows that innovation and resourcefulness are not lacking in the poorest countries”</p>	Present simple tense	Shows the outcome of the story is still continuing in the present