

The Genre-Based Approach In Arabic Books Of *Madrasah Aliyah*

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Abstract

This study aims to discuss high school/ Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Arabic language books and analyze them in light of the Genre-based Approach (GBA) perspective. This learning approach began to draw scholarly attention after issuing the Decree of Minister of Religious Affairs (KMA) No. 183 of 2019 by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs concerning the Arabic Language Education (PBA) curriculum. Yet, scholars still must devote a specific analysis of MA Arabic books using a genre-based approach. This study found that (a) those books encompass only four types of text (descriptive, recount, exposition, and procedure text), far less than those presented in English and Indonesian books; and (b) contain several stages of a genre-based approach, modeling, joint construction, and independent construction, though implicitly stated.

Keywords: Genre-Based Approach; Arabic; Book; Islamic High School; Type Of Text.

INTRODUCTION

The study of genre-based approach is far from being a recent project in the language learning subject, especially English. Derewianka (2003) and Rodgers (2001) insisted that a trend commonly applied in learning English in the Millennium Era is the genre-based approach. In such countries as Singapore, South Africa, the United States, Australia, England, Canada, Sweden, and Thailand, this approach has been consistently used to develop curriculum, syllabus and materials (Derewianka, 2003).

In fact, neither is this the case in Indonesia in which learning English and Indonesian language has been long also using a genre-based approach. In learning Indonesian, among the characteristics of the 2013 curriculum include the use of material based on genre texts (Isodarus, 2017). In addition, Wijaya & Harmayanthi (2020) argued that GBA is an up-to-date approach that is congruent with the focus of curriculum objectives as to prioritize a certain genre as the basic material for teaching Indonesian language. Meanwhile, in learning English, Dirgeyasa (2016) stated that GBA is also popular, especially in honing students' writing skills.

The findings of a collaborative research by Melia Dewi Judiasri & Ahmad Dahidi (2018) showed that 70% of students believe that GBA has an impact in improving their foreign (Japanese) language skills. As many as 90% of students who have used this approach can simulate the intonation of the words/sentences that have been heard beforehand in understanding the meaning of the story. This shows that GBA helps them comprehending the intonation as well as the meaning of the target language. 60% of students feel being more fluent in speaking their target language after implementing this approach (Aji et al., 2018). Apart from being such significantly influential for writing skills, GBA also leads students acquire other language skills, *i.e.* speaking.

Nevertheless, in the context of learning Arabic GBA began to attract favorable attention after the Directorate General of Islamic Education in the Ministry of Religious Affairs published text genre-based Arabic books in 2020. The material that students will

consume contains explanations of text types and tends to be unpopular to Arabic language teachers. Therefore, this article is deliberately designed to contribute to the minimum treasury of references, especially for Arabic speakers.

A number of studies discussing this genre-based approach lately also appears among Arabic language scholars in Indonesia. In 2018, As a matter of academic discourse, I started an undergraduate research by a reviewing Alwasilah's opinion in his book *Pokoknya Rekayasa Literasi* (2012) on this approach who interestingly, instead of using "pendekatan berbasis genre" as the typical translation of genre-based approach, the Indonesian linguist uses the term "literacy approach" to refer to this language learning approach (Mutmainah, 2018). This is due accordingly to the fact that both terms shared a similar emphasis in the importance of cooperation between teachers and students in the attempt of advancing teaching and learning activities. In addition, by familiarizing themselves with numerous text genres, students will also have good language skills (literacy). This fact perfectly reveals mutual connection between the two terms (Mutmainah, 2018).

In 2021, Aminata analyzed genre-based Arabic speaking skills (*mahārah kalām*) in whose account, learning Arabic based on genre pedagogy can be an alternative for learning to familiarize students with using language according to social contexts. However, the success of learning Arabic based on this genre also depends on such other factors as enrichment of vocabulary (*mufradāt*), Arabic expressions, etc (Aminata, 2021).

Another research by Maimuna et al. (2022) found that genre-based language learning can improve the writing skills of UIN Malang Arabic Language Education students. This opinion corroborates the argument proposed by Prakoso et al. (2021) who contended that GBA can improve students' writing skills. Along with that, GBA can also improve students' reading skills. Ummah (2019) examined the Genre-based Approach as a method for building students' critical thinking skills. This is also shown by Hasanah et al's research (2022) who argued that a genre-based approach can improve students' critical reading skills and adequately equip them with a critical literacy. This critical literacy proved to be favorable for both foreign language lecturers and students to increase their language skills, including critical reading (Hasanah et al., 2022).

Those studies represent the first stage into the development of the Genre-based Approach discourse among Arabic language education scholars. This research conducts painstaking research on implementing and representing GBA in the Arabic language curriculum, as embodied in Arabic books for high school or Madrasah Aliyah levels. This study aims to analyze genre-based approaches in Arabic books of Islamic senior high school by first describing Arabic language books for high school and the genre-based approach. The study will identify the level of genre-based approach and the type of text in Arabic books at the MA level. The methodology will be discussed in the following section.

METHOD

This study applied a literature study to critically examine Islamic school text books in the national curriculum of Arabic lesson. Darmalaksana (2020) defined this textual approach as a type of qualitative research carried out by way of collecting literary sources, both primary and secondary. The primary sources from which data were gained

in this study were both Arabic books for grades X to XII of MA level published by the Ministry of Religion and mainly used in everyday learning activities and variety of scholarly research revisiting the genre-based approach. In a complementary addition, secondary sources were also taken into account such those come from articles and books on genre-based approaches in other languages, ranging from Indonesian (Atmazaki, 2013) (Fatonah & Wiradharma, 2018), English (Yudantoro, 2010) (Hasan, 2013) (Ummah, 2019) (Prakoso et al., 2021), and Japan (Aji et al., 2018). The data is then processed using content analysis.

In Diskro & Maschi (2016), content analysis implies one cluster of research techniques originating from text and other forms of communication to yield a systematic, credible and valid conclusion. This study investigated the MA Arabic language textbook within its role as a valuable source of the text. The data gained from the textbooks was then analyzed to identify the in-question representation of genre-based approach within them. Comparable research has been conducted by such Arabic language education scholars as Hadi (2018) who devoted a specific attention to Arabic textbooks for grade I of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah in 2014 and Suaibah et al. (2022) who focused on 2019 Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Arabic textbooks based on the Common European Framework of References (CEFR).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Arabic Language Books For High School/ *Madrasah Aliyah*

In this section, I will briefly provide an overview on the Arabic Language Books for Madrasah Aliyah before describing critically the representation of the GBA in their Arabic books. The Arabic language book for Madrasah Aliyah was published by the Directorate of KSKK Madrasah, Directorate General of Islamic Education in Ministry of Religious Affairs in 2020. This publication demonstrated a bureaucratic response to implementing the 2019 Decree of Minister of Religious Affairs (KMA) No. 183 regarding the Arabic language curriculum in Madrasah. Arabic Language textbooks are thereby mandatory books for educators and students in madrasah under the auspices of the Ministry.

This publication project produced three books in total with one book for each grade level. Each book is written by different authors and composed of six detailed chapters. Unlike the textbook for tenth grade that is authored only by one name, Moh. Ilyas, the textbook for eleventh and twelfth grade are co-authored by two names each, Risna Rianti Sari and Hasyim Amrullah and Alfiatus Syarofah and Muhammad Yasin Fatchul Barry respectively.

The Arabic books for tenth grade level consist of six chapters with the themes ranging from At-Taḥiyāt wa At-Ta'āruf, Al-'Usrah Wa Al-Bait, Al-Madrasah wa Al-Bīah Al-Muḥīṭah Biha, Al-Ḥayah Al-Yaumiyyah, Al - Hiwāyah and Aṭ-ṭ'ām wa Asy-Syarāb for each chapter (Ilyas, 2020). These themes are very much related to the lives of the students. Meanwhile, themes adopted in Arabic books for eleventh grade include At-Tasawwuq, Aṣ-ṣihah, As-Safar, Al-Ḥaj wa Al-'Umrah, Tiknūlūjiya Al-'ilām wa Al-Ittiṣāl and Al-Adyān Fī Indūnīsia (Sari & Mubaligh, 2020). A closer look at these themes reveals their diversity as well as complexity that are supposed to grant the students with a more advanced Arabic knowledge and vocabulary. Finally, the themes for twelfth grade are even broader as to include cultural aspects aimed to enrich students' knowledge

with Arabic vocabulary from a cultural context. This book covers themes as large as Ar-Riyādhāh, Asy-Syabāb, Asy-Syi'r Al-Arabiyy, Al-Hadhārah Al-Islāmiyyah, and Ad-Dirāsah fī Al-Jāmi'ah (Syarofah & Barry, 2020).

Having been shortly presented to those Arabic language textbooks, we can notice now that in terms of themes, those books for Madrasah Aliyah are quite excellent. They provide themes that range from simple to complex materials in accordance with the educational level of the students. At a lower level, the themes provided tend to be light, easy to capture, and straightly related to the daily lives of the learners. At a higher level, grades XI and XII, this book presents broader themes, up to accommodate cultural and technological backgrounds.

This latest Arabic language book is somewhat fascinating since this research found that it presents a genre-based approach in its every covered theme or chapter. This can be easily grasped by discussing the type of text or genre which is typical of this approach. Notwithstanding its relative delay compared to other language learnings, provided its current presence in 2020, a recent effort to bring this approach into high school textbooks by introducing students to the various genres in Arabic texts worth a sophisticated attention. The following discussion will explain why a genre-based approach is comparatively significant in high school language learning.

Genre-Based Approach

Firkins et al. (2007) argued that the development of the Genre-Based approach originated from systemic-functional linguistic theory by Halliday in 1978 and 1994 which was further developed by Christie in 1992, Mackenhorarik in 2001, and Martin in 2004. With respect to Indonesian case, since the implementation of the Education Unit Level Curriculum (KTSP) in 2006, a genre-based approach gained its popularity to the extent of which students are utterly enabled to study various types of texts (Hasan, 2013) (Wijaya & Harmayanthi, 2020). This approach allows students to understand the text comprehensively. The grouping of texts, both spoken and written, is called a genre (Hyland, 2004).

The text has its own structure and characteristics. Following the structure, proposed and agreed upon through a convention, is ultimately required for those willing to compose a certain type of text (Atmazaki, 2013). Conventions or rules has mainly something to do with the purpose of making the text. Every single type of a produced text has a communication purpose by which a certain structure is defined and set out. For example, when someone makes an official letter on behalf of an institution, it is simply unlikely for the text to contain rather the author's personal than institutional interests. This is also the case shown in the purpose of genre-based learning, namely that learners (students) can understand science through genres or texts in accordance with certain social goals (Derewianka, 2003). Aji et al. (2018) stated that genre-based methods can be in the form of exchanging information, knowledge, and social interaction. Texts used in genre-based language learning are texts used in everyday communication, such as asking for help, giving orders, telling amusing stories, and on.

Among GBA paradigms, according to Derewianka (2003), include: (1) Focus on the text. Unlike other language learnings that generally pay a deep concern on grammar, GBA places more emphasis on meaning at the text level. (2) Focus on the goals. Genre theory begins with an initial premise that a language is goal-oriented. GBA allows its

users to achieve their social goals. A variation in text genres, which has different purposes, will affect the use of language. (3) Focus on the meaning and choice. GBA is likewise concerned with the way a certain word or meaning is created in each phase. Lexical and grammatical choices help the process of meaning-making. (4) Language context. Apart from focusing on the meaning and choice, GBA is also mindful to the creation of a text based on the situation, context and culture wherein the genre is practiced. (5) Culture and Ideology. Genres are not something homogenous. In fact, they are always confined to the civilization of a certain group of people (Derewianka, 2003).

Genre-based language learning thematically addresses activities of understanding, creating, elaborating and revising various texts based on structure or convention. Each text possesses a specific purpose that requires a different approach. In the classroom, for example, as a mature person a teacher need to introduce the text to the students in ways and strategies that students can easily grasp using their own world framework (as children or adults) (Atmazaki, 2013). The genre-based approach is a learning that also heavily emphasizes the importance of the relationship between text types and their contextual underpinnings (Tuan, 2011). This approach inevitably enables students to produce texts with various contexts, let alone to understanding various types of texts (Martina & Afriani, 2020).

The Genre-based Approach is an approach in language learning that combines product and process approaches (Prakoso et al., 2021). While emphasizing the significance of collaborative work between teachers and students (Wijaya & Harmayanthi, 2020), thereof it continuously encourages the students to being actively involved in the learning process, this approach also pays a considerable heed to the importance of observing, instead of ignoring, the students' text works.

Hasan (2013) argues Genre theory is basically a theory of language use. The texts studied in this theory vary according to a certain situation, condition or context, which leads to the difference of language use based on the comprehensions and habits (Hasan, 2013). The purpose of the genre-based approach is to enable the students to communicate based on a goal by paying attention to language features and text structure.(Wijaya & Harmayanthi, 2020)

The Genre-Based Approach has several characteristics (Martina & Afriani, 2020), including the following: (1) Highlighting the significance of social and cultural contexts and situations embodied in the use of written language. From this context, students can recognize the purpose of the text, its general structure seen from the features of the used language (2) Observing the "readership" that is related to the target audience of the writing and based on linguistic rules prevailed in a society (linguistic conventions) in such a way that the resulting text can be accepted by the reader. For instance, while communicating with English-speaking readers, students must be able to produce writing that can meet the expectations of that audience and/or readers by being oriented towards grammar, organization and text content. (3) Upholding a paradigm that writing is a social activity. As such, when writing activities are organized in classes, students are asked to actively participate in exchanging ideas with fellow friends or teachers. This activity is instrumental for students to help them develop ideas, provided that they often feel isolated when writing on their own.

The next following characters are: (4) for learning writing, GBA is not simply related to "writing" but what further is that this approach helps creating a communication

from a text to its readers for which it emphasizes on how language should be used to such an extent that writing becomes coherent and has a delineated purpose. For that reason, in a genre-based approach the social purpose of a text must be understood by students given that the text in the GBA paradigm contains a complete meaning both socially and contextually. (5) GBA addresses the value of interaction between the writer and the reader of a given piece of writing. For example, at the beginning of the GBA stage, students are required to figure out who the target readers of an article are, only by which the content, language and level of formality can be adjusted. (6) The teacher's role in this approach is someone who is "authoritative" not "authoritarian". In this sense, authoritative means a teacher who takes a role as an expert and, on the one hand, trains students with a systematic education and provides them an inspiring stimulation through various activities while, on the other hand, also encourages them to contribute to the teaching and learning process. (7) For second (foreign) language learners, the GBA values the importance of explicit teaching of linguistic genre conventions (Martina & Afriani, 2020).

The genre-based language learning includes at least three stages; modeling, joint construction/collaborative construction, and independent construction in developing texts (Atmazaki, 2013) (Hasan, 2013) (Aji et al., 2018). The stages start with the teacher initially displays a sample of text to be made, then analyzes it with the students. When they begin to understand the schemes and characteristics of the displayed text that isolate them from others, the teacher along with his/her students composes the texts they are observing. The text is then discussed, and students are instructed to create a type of typical text that they learn independently. This learning strategy is expected to transform the class into a creative and productive space (Atmazaki, 2013).

Rothery, in Hasan (2013), argued that there are five stages in genre-based learning. The first stage is to introduce the students to the definition of the genre itself. The teacher or tutor will act as a model in reading the genres. The second stage is focusing on genre. The presented genre model must clearly match the type of genre, such as narrative, descriptive, etc. The third stage is determining the genre together. The teacher and students discuss and arrange the genres that have been set for discussion either in pairs or in large groups. The fourth stage is examining the genre. At this stage, material is selected, and information is assessed before carrying out writing activities. The fifth stage is independent construction during which students compose and write genres individually. These stages are the analytical tools of this study to determine whether Arabic books for MA students contain concern relevant to these stages.

Genre-Based Approaches In Arabic Books Of *Madrasah Aliyah (MA)*

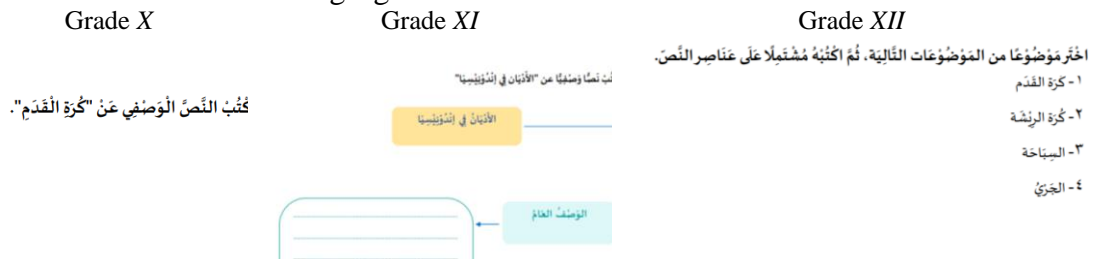
This section will discuss the representation of genre-based approaches in *Madrasah Aliyah* Arabic books. The first part is dedicated to the way the description of genre material is presented in that book. The second part will highlight the number of texts discussed in the MA Arabic language books for grades X, XI, and XII. Having been described earlier the three stages in GBA, ranging from modeling, joint construction/collaborative building stages, developing text and independent construction, I will now see how GBA is presented in the MA book, addressing the question of whether it performs those stages. To provide a short overview, I will describe the structure of the contents of the book chapters for each grade level, as follows:

Table 1. The Structure of Chapter in MA Arabic Books

Grade X	Grade XI	Grade XII
1. Basic Competencies	1. Basic Competencies	1. Basic Competencies
2. Basic Competency Indicators	2. Basic Competency Indicators	2. Basic Competency Indicators
3. Mind Map	3. Mind Map	3. Mind Map
4. Istimā' (Listening)	4. Istimā'	4. Istimā'
5. Qirā'ah (Reading)	5. Qirā'ah	5. Qirā'ah
6. Question and Answer	6. Question and Answer	6. Question and Answer
7. Qawā'id (Grammar)	7. Genre Text Description	7. Qawā'id
8. Genre Text Description	8. Example of Text Structure	8. Genre Text Description
9. Example of Text Structure	9. Qawā'id	9. Example of Text Structure
10. Kalām (Speaking)	10. Kitābah	10. Kitābah
11. Kitābah (Writing)	11. Kalām	11. Kalām
12. Summary	12. Summary	12. Rangkuman Materi

As illustrated in the table above, MA Arabic material consists of learning tools, language skills, grammar, and a summary of the material. The difference lies in the order in which the materials are presented. All these books contain a qirā'ah text which will be used as an example of modeling in a genre-based approach. The text is located right before the description of the explanation regarding the genre of the text. Between these two parts there is a dividing material which makes the text and material about the genre of the text seem to be separate. Consequently, this might distract students' focus to another material first before returning to genre-based text material. In fact, I find a sample of studied text that is different from the core material in the qiraah section. This principally betrays the GBA preposition which requires modeling (by giving examples of text) and at the same time understanding the material on what descriptive text is and how the structure in the text used as a model.

Having done with the text modeling, the next stage is joint construction. This stage is a communal during which a teacher and students learn and discuss the materials as to collaboratively create a text. This occurs while the teacher explains the description of the genre of the discussed text and then together with the students composes a text genre. Well-supplied with these experiences and examples, students move on to the self-construction stage. At this step, all books of grade X, XI and XII explicitly instruct students to create a text genre. This shows that at these three grade levels there is a "demand" for students to carry out independent construction of a text they have learned, as illustrated in the following figure:



Picture 1. Independent Text Construction Exercise

The picture above shows that each grade level has its own structure to encourage students carrying out independent construction. All of these assignments are included in the *Kitābah* materials since the GBA is creatively designed to help students improve their writing skills. For grade X, they locate the task immediately prior to the summary

that is, due to its later placement, prone to being skipped and, in consequence, the independent construction process will not be totally ignored. Yet, there is positively an improvement in assignments at the XI grade level where students are asked to create an independent text and determine which includes general and specific descriptions. By this exercise, students are expected to be able to write in such a structured manner according to the structural mode of the text. Likewise, grade XII was even required to determine one of the themes that had been listed beforehand. This study found that MA Arabic book *contains several stages of a genre-based approach, modeling, joint construction and independent construction, although this is implicitly showed.*

The Type of Text In Arabic Books MA

Madrasah Aliyah Arabic language books for grades X, XI, XII encapsulate a genre-based approach to all the material presented. There are at least four types text discussed within those books; descriptive text (النص الوصفي), recount text (النص السردي), procedural text (النص الإرشادي) and exposition text (النص البرهاني). The following will describe the representation of the GBA in the MA Arabic language books:

Table 2. Text Themes

No	Text Type	Grade X	Grade XI	Grade XII	Total
1	Descriptive	تلميذ جديد (p. 13) في البيت (p. 26) في السكن (P. 69) الهواية (p.39) الغذاء الصحي (p. 80)	المجمع التجاري (p. 13) دين الإسلام (p. 93)	الرياضة (p. 12) الشعر العربي (p. 40) تاريخ الحضارة الإسلامية (p. 57)	10
2	Procedure	-	الإجراءات للفحص (p. 28)	الشباب المتفائل (p. 27)	2
3	Recount	إلى السوق المركزي (p. 59)	السفر (p. 43) الحج (p. 61)	-	3
4	Exposition	-	الجوال (p. 78)	الدراسة في الجامعة (p. 70)	2

As obviously shown in the table, out of aforementioned four only descriptive texts are studied by students in every single level. In total, there are ten chapters of descriptive text (58.83%) accessed by students in grades X, XI and XII. As for the recount text, three chapters (17.65%) were provided in grades X and XI. As for procedural text and exposition text, two chapters (11.76%) are allocated grade 11 and 12 respectively. The distribution of these text types can be illustrated by the following chart:

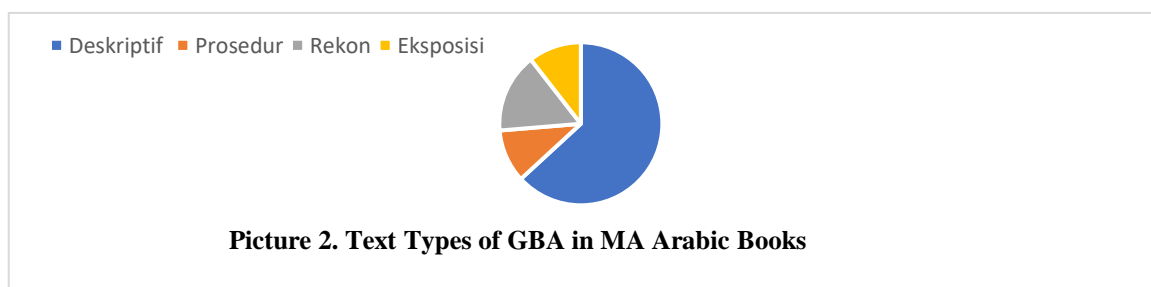


Table 2 explicitly points out that there is an uneven distribution in terms of the proportion of discussion of genre text types. Descriptive texts are delivered more than half of the presented materials. By discussing descriptive texts which are learned up to 10 times, students who study Arabic are supposed to recognize sophisticatedly this type of text. Unfortunately, a closer look at the description of the material from a certain class level to its upper class indicates the similarity of descriptive materials presented on

Unfortunately, variations of these texts are not found in Arabic language learning materials. Again, descriptive texts are imparted more than half of the total Arabic language learning for the MA/SMA (high school) level. As illustrated in table 1, only grade XI studied all types of text, which include descriptive text (33.33%), recount text (33.33%), procedural text (16.67%) and exposition text (16.67%). This overall percentage implies that genre texts are distributed equally for grade XI while unequally for grades X and XII since their learning material is centered more on descriptive text.

The apparent contrast in the distribution of text types between Arabic and Indonesian sounds reasonable from the fact that Indonesian is native to the students. Therefore, students need to be introduced to many text contexts that require the use of different languages. Arabic is a foreign language for Indonesian students due to of which the Government opt to only introduce and teach MA students four text genres. This is not the case in English learning that teaches a wider variety of texts coupled with a good distribution of texts.

Marpaung's study (2016) explained that in grade X, students studied Recount text 17.5%, Narrative text 29.8%, Procedure text 22.9%, Descriptive 15.8%, and News items 14.4%. In terms of genre types, according to Yudiantoro (2010), the texts that high school students need to understand are narrative, recount spoof, anecdote, descriptive, report, review, explanation, discussion, exposition (hortatory exposition and analytical exposition), news item, procedure, letter, message/ memo, vacancy and advertisement/announcement. This finding shows that even in English lessons, high school students in Indonesia also learn a variety of different text genres.

A different case is clearly shown in Arabic learning. This research discovers the genre of text studied consists of only 4 genres. This is possible on the ground that Arabic has only adopted a genre-based approach after the issuance of a decree by Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs in 2019. Optimistically speaking, this shows that there has been progress in our Arabic language education, where students are being introduced to various contexts of word usage (*mufradat*) that are manifold. However, having been exposed to the distribution of the studied texts, there remains a further work for scholars to do in the field of Arabic education; high school students need to be introduced to different types of text, as in the case of Indonesian and English learning.

CONCLUSION

The Genre-based Approach (GBA) in the Arabic language books of Islamic high school (MA) discussed in this study were analyzed by (1) matching the stages in the GBA with the material content presented in that book and (2) the representation of the texts distributed in that book. In general, Arabic books for grades X, XI, and XII contain stages in a genre-based approach; modeling, co-construction and self-construction. However, for the implementation of this genre-based approach to be successful, teachers need to carry out these three stages to the fullest. This is because this MA Arabic language book has not explicitly directed and arranged its material to suit the stages in GBA. The genre texts displayed in Arabic books for grade X, XI and XII are descriptive text (58.83%), recount text (17.65%), procedural text (11.76%) and exposition text (11.76%). This percentage shows an uneven distribution among those texts. In fact, students need to be introduced to other types of text in such a manner that they can learn the differences in language use and the various text structures in Arabic.

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