

# **A PROFILE OF STUDENTS' SKILLS IN WRITING LITERARY RESPONSES: REASONS FOR APPLYING EXPLICIT TEACHING OF TEXT TYPES IN WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE (A CASE STUDY)**

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**Abstract:** This study aimed to examine students' skills in writing literary responses through functional perspectives. It was conducted in a college level literature classroom, where one teacher and three students presenting a different level of achievement, were involved. Three methods of data collection were used: observation, documentation and interview. Data analysis were done by identifying the teaching and learning activities that facilitated the writing, by identifying the schematic structures and the linguistic features of the students' texts, lastly by categorizing students' perception of writing literary responses in their classes. The findings showed that the teaching and learning activities were to some extent successfully done by the lecturer. She had applied Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF), modeling stage, independence writing, and skipped joint construction. Modeling stage, however, was not conducted well since the lecturer did not explain clearly the schematic structures and the linguistic features of literary response text. As a result, the students' writings were not really successful in the way that it fails to develop context and background information, to present appropriate tense and connectives. Finally, data from interview indicated that the students were not really familiar with writing literary response text by recognizing its purpose, its schematic structures, and its linguistic features. Consequently, these results reveal that the teaching of content and its appropriate language use in this setting were still taught implicitly which was contrary to the concept of teaching genre recommended by the scholars.

**Key words:** *writing skills, literary response, functional grammar*

Literature teaching plays a very important role in language learning. Literature teaching enables the learners to explore the language used in literature and to use language for writing and talking about the literature (Parkinson & Thomas, 2000: 3). It is expected that literature teaching is able to invite the students to appreciate literary works and to invite them to use appropriate language for articulating their appreciation. It is in line with the goal of literature teaching in which students are expected to be able to have competence in literary response, which means that "a reader who is literary competent is able to communicate with and about literature" (Coenen, 1992 in Rijlaarsdam et al, 2006). In EFL context, the focus of language in literature teaching has long been

established. Both of them should be taught hand in hand. By doing this, students are capable of improving knowledge about literature and simultaneously enhancing their language skills such as reading and writing.

The integration of literature teaching and language teaching is very important, especially in EFL context. It is based on the notion that EFL students need to acquire English, as well as learn difficult subject matter through English (Christie, 1985, p.32; Lemke, 1985, p.30; Mohan, 1986, p.3; Hammond, 2001; Butt et al, 2000; Johns, 2002; Gibbons, 2009). In this case, if the students are involved in an English speaking community, i.e. literature subject, students will greatly enhance their capabilities in learning language. That is

the students will be aware of the language which is appropriate with the skills and ways of thinking expected by the literature subject.

Writing, as one of the important skills in literature subject, also requires a specific language use. It is specific because it has “ways of meaning or ways of organizing experience, information, and ideas in distinctively different language patterns” (Christie in Couture, 1986, p.221). In other words, writing in literature discourse appears as the result of distinctive expected skills and ways of thinking such as: to respond to literary texts; or to interpret and to analyze literary works (Marshall, 1990; Purves, Roger & Soters, 1990; Feez & Joyce, 1998; Gibbons, 2009). For this reason, students should be introduced with relevant writing text ranging from personal response to critical response. Specifically in higher level education, students are expected to be able to think critically and hence to write analytically (Purves, Roger, & Soters, 1990). In order to achieve this, they are often “asked to write a number of expository texts that must function in quite specific ways” (Christie in Couture, 1986, p.234). Therefore, literary response text which has similar nature with expository texts is considered as the most valued genre in higher level education. It invites the students to develop the language skills appropriate with its ways of thinking, particularly critical thinking. In this case, as Christie suggests, students in literature classrooms should be familiarized with literary response genre. By writing literary response text, the students will understand the purpose of writing and develop language necessary to it. Besides that, they have a chance to make sense literature analytically by practicing “reasoning, argument, and analysis” (p. 237). Also, their writings will be more effective and more reader oriented.

However, it is often the case that students’ writings are not as expected. The language used in students’ literary response is ineffective. It often uses awkward and inappropriate language. In

other words, the language used in the text often does not make meaning “work together as a unified whole” (Feez & Joyce in Emi, 2010). This makes students’ writings do not fulfill the purpose of literary response text.

According to Christie, this is so because students often “are not prepared to meet the special requirements of writing assignments in the upper grades” (Christie in Couture, 1986, p.234), as can be seen later in class observation (section 4.1) and analysis of text in section 4.2. Likewise, the teacher often does not explicitly guide the students to use appropriate language that is suitable for the literary response text. They tend to direct the students to write freely without considering the appropriate language use. Even if they concern with the language use of literary response text, they tend to have a little knowledge about it and about the way how to guide the students to write their responses. At this point, according to Christie in Couture, the teachers’ inability to explain clearly the conventional features (schematic structures and linguistic features) of literary response text to some degree brings about “students’ failure to meet the requirements of more sophisticated genre” (p. 234).

This article reports the findings of the investigation conducted to find out how college students perform skills in writing literary responses. Specifically, this article focuses on the following research questions:

1. What teaching and learning activities which facilitate students’ skills in writing literary responses?
2. What are the schematic structures and the linguistic features of the literary response texts made by students?
3. What are students’ and the lecturer’s perceptions about writing literary responses?

## **WRITING IN LITERATURE CLASSROOM**

Writing is an integral part of literature classroom. Writing and literature have a very close relationship (Marshall in

Nelms, 1988, p.45; see also Purves, Roger, & Soter, 1990, p.131). A literature classroom without writing activity will not optimally enhance the learning process. Purves, Roger & Soter assert that “the writingless literature classroom wastes a tremendous opportunity to have students write about” (p.132) their world.

Writing activity in literature classroom is also a space where students practice their language. It is where students “learn ways of meaning or ways of organizing experience, information, and ideas in distinctively different language patterns” (see Christie in Couture, 1986, p.221). Hence, the use of language in literature is different from other subjects. It is different because literature has its own objective and ways of thinking (Christie in Couture, 1986, pp.221-225; Mohan, 1986; Hammond, 2001; Johns, 2003; see also Gibbons, 2009, p.6. According to these experts, literature classrooms aim to encourage the students to respond, to analyze, to interpret or to criticize literary works.

The explanation above implies that the lecturers should realize this uniqueness. They need to understand the language demands of literature subject so that they can enhance their students’ awareness and ability in using language which is relevant with the thinking skill of literature subject. In other words, the lecturers should integrate writing about literature with language practice. Moreover, the lecturers should select genre which is suitable with the established learning objective of a literature subject.

In literature classrooms, students are often encouraged to write literary response. The purposes of writing literary response, as discussed above, are to respond, to appreciate, to interpret or to criticize literary works. These purposes can be realized by doing writing such as summary, reviews, analysis of literary aspects of the work, critical appreciation, critical arguments, or book reviews. These types of writings, according to Purves, Rogers, & Soter (1990, p.139), are called

analytic writing. An analytic writing concerns a more public and formal writing. The form of this writing, therefore, is mostly used in a formal essay which careful use of language is highlighted.

An extensive use of formal essay is found in many classrooms nowadays. It is used for articulating students’ experience, critical thinking and also students’ ability to generalize, to evaluate and to synthesize (ibid). Formal essay is often categorized as expository text (Horaric in Emi, 2005 and John, 2003). Its purpose is to give arguments on a certain case (Derewianka, 1999; Gerot & Wignell, 2000; Fairclough, 2003). However, lecturers often do not realize the difference of academic essay or expository texts in a certain subject. According to Christie in Couture (1986, p.233), in higher level education a number of expository texts must function in a quite specific ways. It is in line with Johns (2002) who states that expository texts are distinctive in different classrooms. In this case, it can be assumed that academic essay in literature classroom, specifically character analysis study, is more like interpretation or literary response texts rather than expository texts as formal academic essay is usually labeled.

## **GENRE IN LITERATURE CLASS**

The concept of genre derives from the term genre which is usually used in literary studies, film studies, art theory and cultural studies. In systemic linguistics point of view, however, genre is used to refer to the cultural purpose of a text (Eggins, 2004, p.54). Fairclough (2003, p.66) believes “Genre are the specifically discursive aspect of ways of acting and interacting in the course of social events: we might say that (inter)acting is never just discourse, but it is often mainly discourse”. To this point, ways above may refer to the common patterns or structures that are usually followed by people when acting or interacting in social community. In addition, genre is “a staged, goal-oriented, purposeful activity in which speakers engage as members of our

culture” (Martin, 1984 in Paltridge, 2000). While Bakhtin(as cited in Eggins, 2004, p.57) considers genre as a develop patterns which is specific and relatively stable in particular context:

We learn to cast our speech in generic forms and, when hearing other’s speech, we guess its genre from the very first words; we predict a certain length (that is, the approximate length of the speech whole) and a certain compositional structure; we foresee the end; that is from the very beginning we have a sense of the speech whole, which is only later differentiated during the speech process

It can be concluded that genre has a particular purpose which is cultural; it has specific stages which differentiate the beginning, the middle and the closing part; and it has a particular linguistic features.

The patterns discussed above, further, are elaborated in a schema called schematic structure. According to Martin: “Schematic structure represents the positive contribution genre makes to a text: A way of getting from A to B in the way a given culture accomplishes whatever the genre in questions is functioning to do in that culture” (Eggins, 2004, p.57). This schematic structure is like tips for people to be followed so that they find it easy and economical when finding the same cultural situations. Schematic structures of the written text are used by teachers as modeling text. Here, teachers have a chance to introduce many varieties of schematic structure of different genres such as interpretation, narrative, recount, expository, explanation, report, procedure, response, advertisement, etc.

Different subject requires a particular genre depending upon its learning goals and ways of thinking. Literature subject in this study for instance, demands the students to analyze or to interpret the literary texts they read (*My Cousin Clarette*). To do this, the teachers often ask their students to write in academic essay or expository texts whose purpose is more to invite the students to argue why a thesis is proposed rather than to interpret.

According to Christie in Couture (1986, p.234), it is better for the teachers to initiate literary response or interpretation text in literature classroom like character analysis study. Furthermore, it is expected that the teachers familiarize themselves with genre in different subject classrooms so that they will be successful in guiding their students to be successful writers. Therefore, in order to make the students to be successful writers, according to functional perspective, students in literature classroom, as in this study, should be introduced with literary response text. They should know the purpose of the text, its schematic structure and linguistic features.

Literary response text, as can be seen in the table below, has specific purpose, schematic structures and linguistic features. The purpose of the text is to summarize, to analyze, to interpret or to respond to a literary text, art work or performance (Gibbons, 2009, p.177; see also Feez& Joyce, 1998; Feez& Joyce, 2004). In order to fulfill these goals, the students should write by following three stages. They are introduction, expansion and summary or re-affirmation. In introduction stage, the students should provide background information about general themes of the work such as the setting, the characters, the topic or the author of the story. In this stage, the students are also expected to discuss preview of arguments to be presented. Afterwards, in expansion stage, the students should present arguments or reasons for a particular interpretation. At this point, evidence such as quotation should be presented in order to support the arguments (Feez& Joyce, 1998, p.45). Finally, in summary stage, the writer must give review on the interpretation or the judgment that s/he has made in the beginning.

**Table 1**  
Literary response (interpretation) proposed by  
Gibbons (2009, p.177)

Written Response	Purpose	Schematic Structure and Linguistic Features
Literary Response In Emma, Jane Austin is concerned with appearance versus reality: discuss in relation to Emma's journey of Moral awakening	To summarize, to analyze, interpret, or responds to a literary text, art work, or performance	<p>Schematic Structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction, with context and background information about general themes of the work (e.g., summary of narrative), preview of arguments to be presented</li> <li>• Expands on (1), argues for a particular interpretation using as evidence discussion of stylistic features of the text, artwork, or production; uses of close reference to text</li> <li>• Summarizes writer's judgment, reaffirms interpretation of work</li> </ul> <p>Linguistic Features:</p> <p>Connectives: first, finally, therefore, nevertheless,</p> <p>Reference to specific people and things</p> <p>Negative and positive evaluative vocabulary, indicating writer's personal belief or stance</p> <p>Simple present tense</p> <p>Quotations to support ideas</p>

Related to the linguistic aspects that become the features of literary response, literary response text should include connectives (i.e. first, finally, therefore, nevertheless), reference to specific people and things (i.e. she, name of a person), negative and positive evaluative vocabulary (i.e. bad, good, necessary) which indicates personal belief of the writer, and simple present tense. According to Feez & Joyce, simple present tense is used in order to "talk about incidents and characters who continue to exist in the text" (1998, p.54) or to "make generalizations about the topic" (Gibbons, 2009, p.111).

Another important linguistic feature of literary response text is quotation.

Quotation is useful for supporting students' argument. It can be attached either in the end of each paragraph, in the middle of the sentences or as a separate line which is not part of a sentence. From these two quoting techniques, the later is quite difficult because students have to "make it fit into the sentences as if it was a natural part of it" (Feez & Joyce, 1998, p. 52).

## THE TEACHING OF GENRE IN LITERATURE CLASS

Having found that subject teaching (i.e. literature) is interdependent with the language teaching, language specialists have several years ago suggested teachers to integrate them. This need is based on the notion that content classrooms have "the potential to be the best contexts for developing a second language in school" (Gibbons, 2009, p.9). Content classroom provides meaningful situations for subject-specific language use. Further she asserts that inviting students to learn subject content as they improve their English will in some fashion demand a more efficient time (p. 10). Through the integration, the students are able to handle language that best suited the content. In this case, in this study, the students are expected to be able to use language which is appropriate with literature classroom which focuses on character analysis study.

Based on the discussion above, it is clear that language and literature should be taught hand in hand. At this point, teaching genre, specifically in writing, should be induced in literature classroom. Genre teaching can be defined as an activity to direct students to recognize "particular structure and by grammatical forms that reflect the communicative purpose of the genre in question" (Nunan, 1999, p.280). According to Knapp and Watkins (2009, p.28), teaching genre, which is process oriented, has several importance when opposed to product oriented writing. They include:

1. Teaching genres enables students to be applicable to all text types written by students from infants to senior secondary. This enables a developmental approach to teaching that allows writers to build on and develop from what they already know about each of the genres.
2. Through teaching aspects of genres such as structure and grammar, writers will realize the generic purpose of their texts (rather than learning to reproduce 'rule-governed' formats).
3. Teaching genre enable the learner to handle generic and grammatical resources required to produce both simple and complex texts.

As for lecturers, particularly literature lecturers, teaching genre has some implications. First, lecturers are able to recognize what genre that is suitable for their classes. In this case, they should explicitly disseminate an effective writing of literary response which is appropriate with the goals of literature learning. As a result, teachers will be easier to make this effective writing "explicit to learners" (Gibbons, 2009, p.113). Another implication is lecturers can evaluate students' literary response writing. This means, through specified genre, they can judge students writing, whether it counts as a successful or unsuccessful writing. To do this, lecturers are expected to introduce the purpose of the writing, organization (generic structure), and language features of the text type chosen (literary response) as well as to guide and to scaffold them to be successful writer.

The concept above has explicitly been transformed by experts into a practice one. This practice is called genre-based approach or the teaching and learning cycle. It serves as an approach that relevant for content-based language teaching and explicit language teaching (see Gibbons, p. 114). Through this approach, teacher is to introduce, to model, and to let the students practice the text type chosen (Gibbons, p. 115; see also

Butt et al, 2000; Derewianka, 2000; Anderson et al, 1998).

In Indonesia, genre-based approach has been widely used by language teachers in schools. However, teachers or lecturers in subject classroom like literature seldom apply genre-based approach in the classroom. They thought that they are not responsible for the teaching of language. They concern more the teaching of literature itself rather than the language teaching (see Gibbons, 2009). Additionally, it is often the case they are not familiar with literary response texts which are considered as an appropriate text type in literature classrooms. Also they do not understand the concept of teaching genre in literature classroom (see Christie in Couture (1986, p.234). Further, as Christie suggests, an unsuccessful students' writing is partially triggered by the teachers' lack of ability to give clear explanation about the conventional features of the genre.

Ideally, in order to implement the teaching and learning cycle of writing in literature classrooms, the lecturer should follow four teaching stages (Derewianka, 1999; Butt et al, 2000, pp.264-265; Hammond, 2001, pp.54-55; Gibbons, 2009, p.115). These stages consist of:

1. Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF)

This stage requires the students to build up information or content that likely emerges from the subject learning. For character analysis study, as in this research, for instance, the students should develop the topics about the characters in the short story of *My Cousin Clarette*. This can be done by doing collaborative activities between the teachers and the students in order to "build up a shared experience of the context of the texts they are learning to use" (Butt et. al, 2000: 264, Gibbons, 2002). These activities may include hands on experiences, research tasks, discovery learning and problem solving activities, excursions and field trips (ibid).

Additionally, according to Gibbons (2009, p.116), all teaching and learning activities (i.e. practical tasks, discussions, IT use, excursions, and all speaking and reading activities) executed in subject classrooms are classified as BKOF stage. These activities were intended to scaffold the students' understanding for constructing information about the writing topic itself (see Derewianka 2000; Butt et al, 2000; Hammond, 2001) so that the students will familiarize themselves with words, expressions or terminology related to the subject topic (Gibbons, 2009). By doing this, students will be "confident" (Harmer, 2004) with what they want to write.

## 2. Modeling genre

In this stage, the activity is focused on the generic structure and the language uses which include both form and function. It is time for students to recognize overtly the purpose of literary response text, its schematic structure and its linguistic features. In order to do this, the lecturers can do some of the following procedures (see Derewianka, 2000, p.7; Hammond, 2001, Gibbons, 2009: 118, p.1) introduce a model of the genre to the class, 2) discuss with the students the purpose of the genre, 3) give a number of several different examples of the focus genre and ask them how they are alike, 4) ask the students to identify how the text is structured (schematic structure), 5) ask them to focus on the key language features, 6) discuss the function of each stage, 7) have the students do a text reconstruction, 8) ask the students to compare the structure and the stages of the genre with one previously examined or with one which has not achieved its purpose, and 9) display information about the genre (i.e. its purpose, structure and key language features) on the wall.

In order to have a more sophisticated literary response text, Christie in Coutoure (1986, pp.237-

238) argues that, in modeling stage, it is suggested that the teachers use argumentative text as an example text.

Teachers can experience greater success if they treat literary interpretations as simply particular examples of argumentative and persuasive essays and learn to generalize linguistic patterns that realize these kinds of meanings. If students are given assistance by their teachers in producing the kinds of linguistic structures needed to write in the essay genres, they can practice the skills of reasoning, argument, and analysis which, as my earlier discussion sought to demonstrate, most school subjects are intended to develop

## 3. Joint Construction

This phase invites students to be aware of language as well as the literature. Lecturers and students work collaboratively on the type of writing expected in the class. Both of them should discuss the literary response and the appropriate language use for the writing. This time, students have a chance to articulate their own ideas and expression while the teachers should correct, enhance, extend or elaborate what students' mean. Specifically, the joint construction stage incorporates activities like: 1) finding the topic to write about; this time the teachers work jointly with the students in deciding the topic; 2) during the process, ask the students to write, to organize ideas, to improve wording, to make corrections to grammar, spelling and punctuation; discuss the language and how it is used while students are composing the texts; 3) help the students revising the structure by correcting or deleting; 4) give the students the copy of the jointly construction text as a further model (Derewianka, 2000, p.8; Butt et al, 2000; Gibbons, 2009, p.119)

## 4. Independent writing

The final phase is to allow the students to independently work on their own text (see Derewianka, 2000; Butt

et al, 2000; Hammond, 2001; Gibbons, 2009). At this point, the students choose their own topics and write their first draft. This draft, then, can be improved by getting feedbacks from their peers and their lecturers. For giving feedbacks, the lecturers can have conferencing about the students' drafts.

Despite of those ideal and standard teaching cycle, there are also several recommendations for lecturers, especially subject lecturer like literature, to implement teaching cycle in the classroom. These suggestions are very important reminding that literature lecturers, as discussed above, tend to perceive language learning is not their responsibility and believed that students will learn language in other classroom (Langer & Applebee, 1988 in Gibbons, 2009, p.8). Adapted from Gibbons (2009, p.124), those recommendations are:

1. Subject lecturers (i.e. literature) must select a genre that is relevant to expected skills or ways of thinking of a content area. In this case the content area drives the choice of genre.
2. The teaching cycle should be done throughout a whole unit of work until the students are capable of doing independent writing. The teaching cycle is effective if it is done in a recurring of times during semesters. By this, students will progressively learn each stage and then will move to next stage if the previous stage is capable to cope with.
3. The cycle can be implemented flexibly. Once students have become familiar with a genre and are able to use it with some confidence, it may possible to skip stages 2 or 3, or cover them very briefly. However, it is important to remind the students about the schematic structure, the linguistic features of the genre, and the topic to be discussed in their writing.
4. Lecturers are allowed to encourage students to use their first language through out the stages. The use of first

language facilitate students to find appropriate vocabulary and to compare style of writing between two cultures

5. As the perception that integrating both language and content learning is time consuming, a solution should be made. At this point, it is better for subject lecturers to think in terms of "uncovering the subject" rather than "covering content". It means that the teaching and learning activity should make the ways of using language and the ways of thinking in the subject explicit to the students. As a consequence, lecturers will find it efficient on assessing students' texts because their writings change for the better.
6. As subject lecturers, lecturers should also be responsible for the teaching of language. Every lecturer is a teacher of language. Thus, they just can not hand over the teaching of genre to the lecturer of language skills.

## METHODOLOGY

This study is a qualitative case study. It was conducted in an English education program in one state university which is located in Bandung, Indonesia. It involved one teacher who taught literature and three fifth semester students. The teacher was selected for she teaches literature and uses the text type when inviting students to write response. The three students were chosen based on their achievement in writing. Each of them represents high, mid and low achiever respectively.

### Data Collection

The data were collected through observation, documentation and interview. The data that become the focus of observation are the students' and the lecturer's activity and talks in the class. The role of the researcher in the observation was non-participant observer or a "complete observer" (Cresswel, 1998, p.125). It means that she did not involve in the classroom activities. In other words she did not participate and intervene on the teaching and learning process. The data from documentation include documents

like syllabus, hands out from the lecturer, and students' notes. Particularly, these documents were collected during classroom observation. Besides that documentation was also conducted by collecting students' texts. Students written texts were a relevant data source for answering the first research question. That is giving evidence on the students' actual language use in writing literary response.

The text for the analysis was an individual take home assignment. After four weeks of learning how to respond to literary texts, the students were asked by the lecturer to have an individual take home essay writing assignment. They were asked to write an essay in minimally one of two page length. In this essay, they should respond and give analysis on the character in a short story which is entitled *My Cousin Clarette*. The instruction that the students should avoid any reproduction of any related texts from internet was considered to be very helpful in decreasing plagiarism which is potentially decreasing the validity of the research. This makes any act of copying was penalized with the decrease of the students' score.

The students' texts were collected one week later after they were completely done by the students. Afterwards in order to have authentic work of students' texts which increase the research validity, the researcher consulted the students' texts to the lecturer. Both of them worked together in determining which texts' that should be analyzed textually.

The final step of collecting data was doing interview. The purpose of doing the interview is to have "in-depth information" about the way the students write literary responses. The interview provides the data which do not appear in classroom observation. The interview was carried out both formally and informally, and was administered not only to the lecturer but also to the students. As the point of departure of doing interview, the respondent lecturer was interviewed informally. This informal interview is used to have information about the objective of the lesson, course schedule, students'

background, and any supporting information which is useful for doing the research. Beside informal way, the formal interview was carried out. The formal interview was conducted in the second week of observation. This aims at getting information about what the lecturer was going to do in the classroom. Specifically, the interview with the lecturer was used in order to seek the objective of the learning, the writing instruction, the lecturer's opinion about the class activities which facilitate the responses writing. The interview was a semi structured one in which open ended questions to be asked. Its advantage is to allow the respondent lecturer to share her opinions generously about the research problem (Nunan, 1992, p.149). Moreover, the researcher was able to use her responses as "the basis for further inquiry" (Yin, pp.84:83).

Interview with the students was conducted at the end of the research exactly after the students had submitted their individual assignment. The data to be obtained were focused on their perceptions and experience about the activities in reader response classroom and how they make meaning on their written response. The list of the questions of this interview is shown in appendices.

The interview was conducted individually to three students who have been selected as the respondents. Similar to the interview with the lecturer, the interview was a semi-structured in nature. The interview was audio taped and during that time, any important facts were noted down by the researcher. Immediately after the interview, it was transcribed so that any critical information was not lost.

### **Data Analysis**

The first step that researcher took for data analysis phase was determining general analytic strategy (Yin, 1984). As suggested by Yin, the general analytic strategy is helpful for deciding "among different techniques and to complete the analytic phase of the research successfully". Reminding that this study needed an explanation of causal

relationship between skills and the activities that led to the skills, developing a case description was chosen as a general analytic strategy. Developing a case description like this enabled the analysis of the data by following the phase of data collection (Yin, 1984, p.102) see also Winston Tellis at <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR3-2/tellis1.html>.

According to Alwasilah (2005), analyzing the data through out the data collection procedures embraces bottom-up process. That is to use principally information which is already present in the data. Thus, in this study, the researcher organized and examined the data from the beginning and during each procedure of data collection. By doing this, the researcher was able to consistently sharpen the focus of the study.

From the classroom observation, the researcher got field notes and the recorded audio video data of classroom observation. This recorded audio video, then, was transcribed to obtain a complete and detail picture of both the lecturer- students' activities and their talks. The transcriptions and field notes were studied to gain area of focus by referring to the first research question. Based on this area of focus, it was found that the categorization will be based on the activities which facilitated students' in writing literary responses. That is activities bear a resemblance to teaching cycle as suggested by experts like Derewianka (1998), Butt et al (2000), Hammond (2001) and Gibbons (2009). This categorization was then interpreted in order to explain the teaching and learning activities which facilitated students' skills in writing literary responses.

Data from documentation, students' texts, were analyzed textually by using Functional Grammar (FG). This data analysis denoted the second research questions. That is about the schematic structure and the linguistic feature used by the students. The schematic structures of the students' texts were analyzed by referring to the standard of interpretation

text as revealed by Feez and Joyce (1998), Feezand Joyce (2004) and Gibbons (2009). Having read the students texts for getting an area of idea, the researcher gave notes on the margin of the students' texts. Afterwards, she made the summary from these notes. Next the schematic structure of students' texts were categorized depending on students' achievement in order to find the pattern. In the end, these patterns were conceptualized by comparing and contrasting it with the standard one and with each individual trend.

The linguistic features of students' texts were transcribed by using two language systems in Functional Grammar (FG): transitivity and theme-rheme. The purpose of using these two systems was based on the notion that it is mostly appropriate to see how the students organize language suitable with the use (Bernhardt in Couture, 1986). These systems were tabulated in a table simultaneously. The result of the transcription, after that, was organized based on their emergence frequency. For instance, for the transitivity system, the frequency of participants, material, verbal process, relational process, behavior, mental process, existential process, circumstances were calculated so as to find what language pattern students tend to use. In this case, descriptive statistics tables were used for illustrating the frequency. On the basis of these patterns, next, interpretation through functional perspective was made.

The analysis of data from interview was also carried out consistently along with data collection. This phase started on the interview with the lecturer. When the researcher has done the interview, she immediately transcribed it and read the whole transcription for getting the general idea. Subsequently, the transcription was categorized by its theme. The theme included were the objective of the learning, the writing instruction held by the lecturer, the lecturer's opinion about the class activities, and opinion about the students' performance. In this

case, theme analysis was considered to be appropriate for this study since it allowed the analysis of respondents' experience (Mahrer, 1988; Spradley, 1979; Taylor & Bogdan, 1984 in Aronson as cited in <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/BackIssues/QR2-1/aronson.html>). Thus, every question in the interview session which indicated a certain theme was tabulated in a diagram so that how the lecturer responded to each theme could be figured out.

Similarly, the recorded audio video from the students' interview was transcribed immediately after the interview session. The transcriptions were categorized subject to its theme so that each student's experience could be compared and contrasted. The themes were students' understanding about the objective of the learning, the purpose of the writing, their difficulties in writing, their experience when writing literary responses, their opinion and knowledge about writing literary responses. Consequently, how high achiever, mid achiever and low achiever made meaning in the written text could be explained.

As a final point, all the arranged data coming from all phases of data analysis were correlated for building a logical chain of evidence. Next, those organized data were related with the conceptual framework which has been established before so that the answer to the grand tour question "How do students perform their skills in writing literary responses?" could be obtained.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Classroom observations were conducted four times in Exploring Prose class. Based on these fourth observations, as revealed in the following discussion, it is shown that the class activities done by the lecturer include building knowledge of the field (BKOF), modeling and independent writing. She skipped joint construction phase. It seems that lecturer had been quite successful in guiding students to write literary response by using the concept of genre. However, the

lecturer did not explain precisely and explicitly what to do in each phase of writing which led to students' less successful writing. It is better for the lecturer to give clear explanation about the conventional feature of the genre so that the students' writing will be improved (Christie in Couture, 1986, p.224). The following sections discuss in details how the lecturer conducted each phase of teaching and learning activities in guiding students' writing.

By using the theoretical frameworks in the previous section, the data from classroom observation indicated that in order to help the students to write literary responses, the lecturer, from classroom observation 1 to 2, invited the students to prepare the content of the topic which became the focus of the study. In this case, the focus of the study of this setting was to enable the students to respond to literary texts by analyzing the characters in the story (i.e. *My Cousin Clarette*). To do this, she instructed the students to read *My Cousin Clarette* as one of short stories which should be read by the students, then explained the theory of reading, invited the students to write personal response, performed class discussion, encouraged students to use adjective appropriately, asked the students to practice using adjective and textual evidence appropriately, and explained guiding questions. According to Derewianka (2000, p.6), and Butt et al (2000:264), those activities above can be comparable with Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF) in the teaching cycle of writing. Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF) embraces all activities which develop subject knowledge in content classroom, i.e. literature classroom (Gibbons, 2009, pp.115-116),

Scrupulously, to prepare students to write, or building the knowledge of the field in the teaching cycles of writing, the lecturer began by allowing the students to read *My Cousin Clarette*. The activity in the class, then, went on with the explanation of the theory of reading from the lecturer. At this point, to begin with,

the lecturer introduced two reading stances that should be followed by the students in the reading activity: efferent and aesthetic reading. These two stances, as the lecturer continued the explanation, derived from the notion that reading process is a transaction between the reader and the text. Based on this concept, the lecturer encouraged the students to choose aesthetic reading rather than efferent reading. Through aesthetic reading, the students have a chance to participate in an aesthetic experience by engaging their own experience with the experience existed in the literary texts.

Next, the lecturer gave details on two methods of reading fiction: conventional and nonconventional as suggested by McCormick et.al (1987) in Musthafa (2008, p.41). Here, she recommended the students to employ non conventional reading in which aesthetic stance should be involved. By this, she wanted the students to analyze the short stories by focusing on the character, plot, setting, theme and symbol. More to the point, the students were encouraged to analyze character, plot, setting, theme and symbol by taking an aesthetic view when reading for making meaning.

Further, in order to have a more complete understanding on such an analysis, the lecturer invited the students to compare and contrast the analysis between conventional, which is more traditional, with the non conventional one – leading to a more creative analysis. She began the comparison from the character analysis then went on with plot, setting, theme and symbol analysis. Following the comparison, the lecturer gave a slight discussion about character and plot analysis. The next activity was writing personal response. This time the lecturer asked the students to respond to *My Cousin Clarette* by analyzing the main characters of it. Through this personal response the students have shown their subjectivity view to the characters in *My Cousin Clarette* (Purves, Rogers, & Soter, 1990). For instance, they have made statements of evaluation (*i.e. Clarette is*

*annoying; or she has fragile side too*) and gave reasons or evidence to support the statements. The students in this class had a chance to communicate their thought, belief, attitude, feeling and emotion. Consequently, the students in this class were free in expressing what they felt and understood and more importantly they could write it without being afraid of making mistakes on the formal language use. Even though they did not concern the language use, asking the students to write personal response like this assisted the students to optimally build the knowledge about the topic being concerned. Consequently, this writing phase, later, potentially enhance the students' capabilities in writing literary response texts.

The next activity in this BKOF phase was class discussion. Here, the lecturer told the students the focus of discussion. Specifically, the discussion was emphasized on the analysis of characters in *My Cousin Clarette*. At this point, the lecturers offered several questions concerning with the story, *i.e. any one can tell us what the story is about, do you like the story, why?, or what do you like about the story?* Given these initial series questions, the students had an opportunity to have an interpretation on the literary text they read. They could share what is true related to the story read. It can be inferred that the questions assist them in constructing meaning from the texts or in Building the Knowledge of the Field (BKOF). Furthermore, the questions used potentially prepared students to think like the way of thinking as required in writing literary responses (see Gibbons, 2009). That is to interpret on a certain phenomenon existed in the texts. In other words, through class discussion, the students did have much chance to have extended talk around the substantive ideas inherent in a topic and focuses on creating understandings of subject matter (Gibbons, 2009, p.25). In this case, the questions being asked can probe or extend students' thinking or reasoning.

Class discussion went on with more questions which were posed by the lecturer. Those questions included: *who is the character in My Cousin Clarette?*, *Why Clarette is rude?*, *Victoria, how do you visualize her?*, *Why Clarette is innocent?*, *Do you agree that Clarette is annoying?*, *Why?* These questions allowed the students to show their feeling, attitude and thought as well. The questions later helped the students to write in order to show their interpretation about characters in *My Cousin Clarette*.

During class discussion, the lecturer explained several important conventions for making literary responses. Since the class activity in Exploring Prose was emphasized on the literary analysis i.e. character, plot, point of view, theme and symbol analysis of the literary texts, the lecturer always suggested the students to show textual evidence. By giving textual evidence, the students were able to explain more deeply and reasonable about the character they describe. This textual evidence is needed in the writing literary response, especially in second stage of interpretation text (Feez & Joyce, 2004 in Gibbons 2009). In the class, the lecturer often reminded her students to be careful in using adjective. This implies that the lecturer has introduced the students with vocabularies which are related to the topic being discussed. It is in line with what has been proposed by Butt et al (2000, p.266) who states that ‘vocabulary development’ is usually done in first cycle of teaching. After that, the lecturer asserted that when describing a character in the story with adjective, the students should explain the reasons of it. For instance, she often said “*How do we explain this character?*”, “*Can you show textual evidence for Victoria is said to be kind?*”, “*What page?*”, “*Do you agree that Clarette is annoying. Why?*”, “*Can you show textual evidence of it?*”, “*What does it say?*”, “*Can you read one more time?*” in order to make the students be aware of the textual evidence. Specifically, the textual evidences which should be presented are pages, paragraph and lines. Guiding

students to reason as such means that the lecturer prepares them to use language like the ways of thinking of subject learning (Gibbons, 2009, p.127; see also Christie in Coutoure, 1986; Hammond, 2001). That is students are invited to explain rather than just to describe the characters and the events in the story. In response to this learning activity, the students encouraged themselves to find the textual evidence for giving clarification on the chosen adjective for picturing the characters in the story. In class discussion, they started to give textual evidence in every occasion they tried to describe the character. They gave textual evidence by citing the page and reading it aloud in the class.

Another aspect concerning conventions which the lecturer provided for building knowledge of the field (BKOF) was to give students guiding questions for character analysis study. The guiding questions, as the lecturer explain it with an LCD, consist of four items. They are: *what are these people?*; *what is the history or their current situation?*; *what are their real motives, needs, or desires?*; and *what explains the way they act?* These questions certainly assisted the students in determining the topic for their literary responses. According to the theories as alluded to in Chapter Two, these questions helped the students to build “a share experience of the context” (Butt et. al, 2000, p.264) and to recognize related words, expressions and terminology for constructing the content of the writing (Gibbons, 2009, p.116). By using these questions, students have an opportunity to prepare or to find (Derewianka, 2000, p.6) and to develop (Hammond, 2001, p.28) the necessary knowledge for character analysis study.

Based on the explanation above, it can be inferred that the lecturer was quite successful in inviting students to develop the topics about the characters in the short story of *My Cousin Clarette*. She has offered a set of reflective questions which at this point help shape the content of character analysis study. It is in line with Harmer (2004, p.62) who asserts that in

order to promote students to be a confident writer it is better for the teachers to provide necessary and clear information for the topics they should write in the class.

The explanation above also indicates that the lecturer has, in some ways, had introduced the students about the ways of thinking in Exploring Prose class. That is she directed the students to analyze the literary texts (*My Cousin Clarette*) by referring to the non-conventional reading which includes character, plot, theme analysis (see Table 2). This “uncovering the subject”, as suggested by Gibbons (2009), allows the students to understand about literacy that is transferable to new contexts and hence causes students’ writing have a sense of authority. This finding revealed that the lecturer had considered the language use which is appropriate with character analysis study in her class. It is assumed that she attempted to integrate language and content learning in her class. Nevertheless, she failed to make this ways of using language and the ways of thinking in the subject explicit to the students. As a result, students’ writings were to some degree not very well developed in terms of the language use. Derived from this, it is suggested that the lecturer starts to concern the language use when teaching in literature classroom, particularly the teaching of language which is appropriate with literature contexts. In this case, it is better for the lecturer to induce explicit teaching of text type or genre in literature classrooms as suggested by the experts like Christie in Couture (1986, p.234), Butt et al (2000, p.264), Hammond (2001), and Gibbons (2009; 114-115).

In terms of the modeling phase, the data showed that the lecturer has modeled literary response text. It is indicated, as shown in observation 4 (see Table 2), that the lecturer explained the requirements of writing literary response. She showed the students to an example of literary response text- one she downloaded from the internet. She made the students in groups and invited them to analyze the stages

according to the stages she introduced. Through this activity, students will know the requirement stage for writing literary response. Then, she encouraged the students to write a five paragraph literary response but never told the label of the text, i.e. whether it is exposition, interpretation, personal response, recount etc. She did not state explicitly the purpose of the writing. What she did was to inform the students that writing literary response means public oriented writing. The lecturer motivated that exercising themselves with writing literary response would shun them from difficulties when one day they have to meet this kind of writing. This motivation, however, did not technically promote students’ writing. It is better for the lecturer to introduce a more sophisticated purpose of texts, for example to argue, to interpret, to retell, as suggested by Gerot&Wignell (1998), Butt et al (2000), Derewianka (2000).

Furthermore, the lecturer told the students that writing literary response would help them to be reasonable because it invites them to argue. Based on her experience in teaching literature, she explained again that, most of the time the students only describe, for instance stating *Clarette is annoying* but never explained *why Clarette is like that*. Departing from this view, the lecturer went on with modeling stage.

In this stage, first she told the students to take a stand or position to the text being read. She invited the students to be an observer in the story and to agree and disagree with it. She explained that every statement should be explained by reasons. Then, she explained that the first procedure of an essay is making thesis statement. She gave examples of thesis statement. Afterwards, she informed that there will be discussion after each thesis statement. So, for the second paragraph, there will be topic sentence. She encouraged them to choose an adjective that best describes the main character. She gave examples how to write topic sentence and textual evidence that should follow it.

Afterward the paragraph is ended with summarizing sentence like *So it is clear from the discussion that Clarette...*, whose function is to restate the addressed topic sentence. Next, she motivated that every topic sentence was better closed with summarizing sentence so that the flow becomes easy to understand. Paragraph 3 and 4 is similar with the second one; that is to describe an adjective that serves as character traits. So, as the lecturer explained, in paragraph 2,3,4 the students' writings have similar forms but different adjective. The last paragraph is where the students should reaffirm thesis statement. This closing part is used to conclude the discussion objectively. The lecturer reminded the students that thesis statement is the place where we direct what we want to write next. She also encouraged the students to consider the audience when writing. In this case, the addressee is the lecturer. Finally, she restated that thesis statement is like a blue print what students write and that it should be the track for different ideas.

Based on the data above, it can be assumed that the lecturer, to some extents, has succeeded in directing students to write literary responses because she has led the students to write responses by following the stages of expository texts. According to Christie in Coutoure (1986, p.237), the lecturer will be successful in guiding students in writing literary responses or interpretation texts if s/he follows the writing procedure of expository texts.

Apart from that, however, the lecturer did not familiarize students with linguistic features of the texts. This is contrary to the ideas from the experts that in modeling phase the teachers should introduce the linguistic features of the text so that the purpose of the text can be fulfilled. In this case, it can be said that the lecturer was not really succeeded in modeling the text. As a result, the students' writing, as can be seen later in the analysis of students' texts, was less successful. Furthermore, from the observation, it is indicated that the lecturer was not quite good in conducting the

modeling stage. She did the modeling phase only once out of the whole procedures. It is better for her to do the modeling phase in several meetings as suggested by experts (Derewianka, 2000; Butt et al; 2000; Gibbons, 2009). They state that modeling phase is not complete if it was only done in one meeting.

In terms of joint construction, data from classroom observation revealed that the lecturer never did this kind of collaboration. This naturally occurs in the teaching cycle of writing. Once students have become familiar with a genre and are able to use it with some confidence, it may be possible to skip stages 2 or 3, or cover them briefly (Gibbons, 2009: 126). So, it is reasonable that the lecturer skip this joint construction, because higher level education students tend to recognize a number of genres.

Finally, in the last phase of the teaching cycle, the lecturer invited the students to have independent writing. The students were asked to write literary response as their individual assignment. At this point, as shown in Table 2, the lecturer encouraged the students to follow the procedure of writing given in handouts. In this stage, there were some important practices that should be followed by the students in the process of writing, for instance conference and feedback.

However, clearly, from the observations the lecturer did not have any conference or give feedback to students' writing. Also, the lecturer never asked the students to have feedbacks from their peers. As a consequence, the students' literary response texts were not really successful. Thus, it is better for the lecturer to carry out independent construction appropriately as suggested by language specialists (Derewianka, 2000; Butt et. al, 2000; and Gibbons, 2009). That is to encourage the students to refer to the modeled text and to monitor students' writing by giving comments, conferencing, or editing.

**Table 2**  
Teaching-learning activities for guiding  
writing literary response

Teaching Cycle	Teaching and Learning Activities		Class room Observation
Building Knowledge of the Field	Reading Literary Texts	-The Mandarin Exam -The Masks -My Cousin Clarette -Enough is Too Much Already	Class room observation session 1
	Explanation of Theory of Reading	-Reader Response: aesthetic stance  - Nonconventional Reading: character, plot, setting, theme and symbol.	
	Writing personal response		
	Class discussion	-Any one can tell us what the story is about? -Do you like the story? Why? -What do you like about the story? -Who is the character in My Cousin Clarette? -Why Clarette is rude? -How do you visualize Victoria? -Why Clarette is innocent -Do you agree that Clarette is annoying? Why?	Class room Observation Session 2
	Encouraging students to use adjective appropriately		
	Encouraging students to use textual evidence	-Indicating page, paragraph and line	
	Practicing adjective and textual	-How do we explain this character?	
Modeling	evidence	-Can you show textual evidence for Victoria is said to be kind? -What page? -Do you agree that Clarette is annoying? Why? Can you show textual evidence of it -What does it say? Can you read one more time?	
	Explaining guiding questions	-What are these people? -What is their history of their current situation? -What are their real motives, needs and desires? -What explains the way they act?	
	Giving the students the sample of literary response text		Class room observation session 4
	Telling students the purpose of writing essay		
	Asking students to take a stance to the text being read		
	Introducing thesis statement and its function, and examples		
	Introducing topic sentences for each paragraph, its function, and its textual evidence		
	Introducing summarizing sentence, function and example	It is clear from the discussion that Clarette...	

	Encouraging students to consider the audience of the writing		
	Text Reconstructions by asking students to find out thesis statement, topic sentence, and conclusion of an essay to Macbeth. This becomes students' group assignment.		
Joint Construction	<b>Skipped</b>		
Independent Writing	Encouraging students to write by following procedure in hand out No Feedback or conference		Assignment

Lastly, based on data from observations, it can be inferred that though the lecturer did not explicitly teach writing literary response by using the concept of teaching cycle, she has adopted activities which resembles with it. The teaching and learning activities that facilitate students' skills in writing literary response include Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF), modeling and independent writing (see Table 2). These activities, as indicated in data from observations, to some extent, were not conducted successfully. As a consequence, as will be seen in section below, students' literary response texts were somewhat not satisfactorily good.

Related to the schematic structures and the linguistic features of students' texts, as indicated in the table 3, it was found that the schematic structures of the students' texts comprise all the stages of literary response text which include introduction, expansion stage, and reaffirmation.

**Table 3**  
Schematic Structure of Students' Texts

	Stages of Literary Response Texts		
	Introduction	Expansion Stage	Reaffirmation
High Achiever	√	√	√
Mid Achiever	√	√	√
Low Achiever	√	√	√

It indicates that the students had a good control in employing the schematic structures of literary response text. However, as can be seen in the table below, in introduction stage the students fail to develop context and background information about general themes of the literary work as suggested by Gibbons (2009), Feez & Joyce (2004), Christie in Coutoure (1986). According to these experts, introduction stage should present the summary of narrative work such as author, setting, or characters.

	Introduction Stage
Text KT-1	Mom hates dad, Dad hates mom, it all makes you feel so sad" (Kurt Cobain quotes (American Musician and Singer of Nirvana band. 1967-1994)). It may also what Clarette feels when her parents intend to get divorce. Clarette is a character in the story entitled "My Cousin Clarette" by Budge Wilson. The story tells about how Clarette stays in Victoria's house during the process of her parents' divorce. In that time, Clarette is visualized as a fashionable, annoying, and manipulative girl who also affects Victoria's life.
Text LT-2	My Cousin Clarette which was written by Budge Wilson is a story about two main characters that are Victoria and Clarette. I think Clarette's character was an annoying, moody and unhappy person.

Text MT-3	Clarette is described as a grown up girl, who was in unstable mental condition because of the condition of her family. She was annoying, sophisticated but sometimes fragile. Her character was different based on situations, sometimes she was annoying and sometimes she was very mature.
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Meanwhile, dealing with the use of linguistic features, not all the students use appropriate linguistic features of literary response text. Mid and low achiever, for instance, as shown in table 4 and 5 below, tend to use temporal finite past tense instead of present tense and use minimal connectives.

**Table 4**  
Linguistic Features of Students' Texts

	Linguistic Features				
	Connectives	Ref to Specific People and Things	-/+ Voc	Simple Present Tense	Quotation
Text KT-1	√	√	√	√	√
Text LT-2	√	√	√	-	√
Text MT-3	√	√	√	-	√

**Table 5**  
The Frequency of Connectives in Students' Texts

	Text KT-1	Text LT-2	Text MT-3
Connectives	Because (2) As (1) Therefore (1) But (2) In order to (1)	Firstly (1), Second (1), Third (3), but (2)	But (1), because (1), although (1), in conclusion (1)

Based on table 5 above, it can be inferred that the students have used connectives for building logical reasons of the texts. Nevertheless, the small amount of connectives used by mid and low achiever students indicate that they are not

quite successful in developing arguments about Clarette's character.

These findings above reveal that the students are not satisfactorily successful in realizing the appropriate linguistic features of literary response texts. At this point, it can be concluded that the students' skills in writing literary responses are not satisfactorily developed in literature classroom of this research setting. This lead to the assumption that, as recommended by the theories above, the teaching and learning activities in literature classroom of the setting have not optimally been used for inviting students to write by following the concept of genre which unify the teaching of the content and the language, because the teaching of genre has not been explicitly taught by the lecturer.

In terms of the students' perception, through the interview it was found that the students did not really understand about the purpose of writing literary response text. They tend to follow every instruction directed by the lecturer and also to consult every steps of writing to the hands out given by the lecturer. This causes them to be in "genre trap" (Harmer, 2004, p.29). That is they write in a more prescriptive way rather than creative writing. Regarding with the difficulty of writing, the mid achiever students perceive that finding vocabulary that best suited to the response is quite difficult. On the other hand, low achiever student states that the problem in reading literary texts makes him difficult to write the response. Additionally, he has significant difficulty in writing the closing part or the reaffirmation stage. In terms of their knowledge of text type, the analysis indicates that the students were not familiar with the literary response genre. Finally, the students claim that the teacher's explanation about the guidance of making response and the procedure of the writing (modeling) is very beneficial for them in writing literary response. These research findings reveal that the students had not yet been familiar with the writing of literary response genre. They

had not known well about the purpose of the texts, the schematic structures and the linguistic features of the text. Therefore, they should be familiarized with the writing genre by facilitating them with explicit teaching of text types.

## CONCLUSION

The result of this study portrays what really happened in literature subject classroom where the text type was also chosen as part of writing instruction. From the analysis above, it can be inferred that the writing instruction had not been optimally used for guiding students to become successful writers. As a result, this study has provided some rationales for teachers to promote teaching cycle as suggested by experts (Gibbons, 2009) in literature subject curriculum. The benefit is that students who learn content can also have a chance to learn language in their subject context. Furthermore, it will be very valuable for learners in English as a foreign language context like Indonesia, and also Asia.

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