

A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF THE GENRE-BASED APPROACH IMPLEMENTATION TO IMPROVE EFL STUDENTS' WRITING SKILLS

Vivi Aulia

Universitas PGRI Kalimantan, Indonesia
viviaulia@stkipbjm.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

The genre-based approach (GBA) was one of the writing approaches that helps and facilitates students to explore a focused piece of writing. When students were required to create such a writing form, most of them tended to have difficulties in constructing structured writing. The GBA approach allowed students to improve their writing skills by following specific steps. This systematic literature review reviewed research articles discussing the improvements made in students' writing outcomes by implementing the GBA. Fifteen research articles from nine different countries were selected from the ERIC, Google Scholars, and Semantic Scholars online article databases. They were analyzed to determine improvements in students' writing skills based on the results of the research in these nine countries. The results showed that students investigated from research articles in the nine countries showed three types of improvement in writing: writing performance, writing achievement, and writing attitude. Specifically, 8 of 15 research results show that the implementation of GBA provides benefits to improve writing performance. Meanwhile, 5 of 15 research results mention that the students' writing achievement in terms of their writing score is much better after implementing the GBA. Finally, two research showed an improvement in their writing attitude after the GBA implementation. The conclusion of this research indicates that the utilization of GBA can help and facilitate students to be more productive as well as improve their writing.

Keywords: *Systematic Review, Genre-Based, Improve, Writing Skills*

INTRODUCTION

Writing is considered a difficult skill for EFL students learning a language. Because it is categorized as a productive skill, such as speaking, writing needs more attention as a communication tool. For students with non-native English backgrounds, writing is undoubtedly the most challenging and crucial of the four language abilities (Almacioğlu & Okan, 2018). The activities of writing that seem to be challenges are because they require idea exploration, which sometimes makes them complicated. When writing, we need to come up with and arrange ideas, use the right terminology and diction, consider sentence structure, and organize paragraphs. In addition, we should incorporate such ideas into an understandable text.

According to Douangmala and Widyanoro (2018), the ability to produce effective writing tasks requires proficiency in a range of areas, including grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic abilities. Thus, it is a mental activity where we come up with ideas, consider how to communicate them, and organize those ideas into sentences and paragraphs that are clear to the reader. Because writing activities require more effort, students should practice. Not only should the students practice writing compositions, but they should also be aware of the experience of using particular approaches in their writing. Therefore, it is also the task of the English writing teacher to improve and help students learn to write by implementing an appropriate writing approach in the class.

One of the writing approaches that have been implemented by students and used by teachers in teaching writing is the Genre-Based Approach (GBA). In the 1980s, when it was realized that students would benefit from studying a diversity of text types in English learning, the GBA gained prominence. This technique was created in response to older writing techniques that tended to focus mostly on the narrative genre while largely disregarding other types of writing (Setyowati & Widiati, 2014). As a challenging and complex process, writing activities require the development of meaning-making choices. Different models of writing instruction have appeared, and GBA has come to fit a particular genre to represent the norms of different types of writing. It refers to pedagogy that involves examining and deconstructing the categories of text. The students are given a clear understanding of how genres of texts are arranged through the GBA by following some stages. Uday (2019) established that GBA has five stages: (1) Building the Context, (2) Modeling and Deconstructing the Text, (3) Joint Construction of the Text, (4) Independent Construction of the Text, and (5) Linking Related Texts and Comparison or Evaluation. Each stage has different activities with different purposes or focuses.

Specifically, building the context as the first stage of GBA introduces the social context of an authentic model of the text type being learned to students. After that, the students explore the features of the general cultural context in which the text type is used and the social purposes of the text-type achieves. Finally, this stage also allows students to explore the immediate context of a situation by investigating

the register of a model text that has been selected based on the basic of course objective and students' needs.

As the second stage of GBA, modelling and deconstructing the text invites the students to investigate the structural pattern and language features of the model text. Furthermore, the students should also compare the model text with other examples of the text type. Then, joint construction of the text in the third stage continues the activities where the students begin to contribute to the construction of whole examples of the text type. The teacher gradually reduces the contribution to text construction, as the students move closer to being able to control the text type independently.

Next is independent construction of the text as the fourth stage of the GBA implementation. This stage allows students to work independently with the text. In this way, students' performances are used for achievement assessment. Then, the last stage of GBA is linking to related texts. In this stage, students investigate what they have learned in this process that can be related to other texts in the same or similar contexts, as well as the future or past moments of teaching and learning. By following these five stages of GBA, the students are facilitated to explore different kinds of text models so that they can improve their writing skills.

Similar research has been conducted by previous researchers on the implementation of GBA in writing activities. Truong (2017) revealed research results on teaching writing using GBA at a Vietnamese University. The findings imply that the participants' writing skills improved because of the explicit teaching of a specific genre's goal, audience, social context, language, and structure. After 30 hours in the classroom, the participants' knowledge of context, selection of acceptable conventions, structuring of thoughts, and paralinguistic aspects demonstrated the most progress after the implementation of GBA. This research is in line with similar previous research conducted by Saksono (2022) who investigated the use of GBA to produce recount text in a German Literature class for graduate students. Students more accurately recognized the characteristics and variations among various types of recount texts. In addition, they pay close attention to the language style and structural components of the text when

reading and writing, determine the text's most important details based on the genre's components. Finally, the use of GBS also boosts their writing self-confidence.

Based on the results of both previous studies, the GBA is effective in improving students' writing skills. However, to ensure the successful implementation of this approach, systematic reviews need to be conducted periodically to evaluate its effectiveness and identify areas that need improvement. This research pays attention to the process of GBA implementation to the students' different levels in EFL writing activities so that the researcher can assess the extent to which the implementation of GBA has made a positive contribution in improving students writing skills. Thus, this systematic review becomes an important effort to ensure that the approach used in learning EFL writing skills is in line with the needs of the learners.

Since the GBA has been practically implemented in many countries, the objective of this systematic literature review is to analyze the specific findings of studies related to the benefits of implementing the GBA to improve EFL students' writing skills in nine countries. It is expected that the purpose of this research could also be used as a guideline for those who are concerned with the writing field in understanding the benefits and relationships of GBA and writing skills. The research question for this systematic literature review was expressed as: What are the improvements made in the students' writing outcomes by implementing the GBA?

METHOD

This research employed a qualitative approach using systematic literature review (SLR). A systematic literature review selected, identified, and evaluated research to respond to a specific research topic. There were four phases in this research. They were: the identification phase, screening phase, eligibility phase, and exclusion phase. Each of them was presented as follows:

1. Identification Phase

This phase referred to the activity in which the researcher selected and collected the investigated articles from a comprehensive database. The researcher used three types of worldwide article databases: Google Scholar, Semantic Scholars, and ERIC Education Resources Information Center (ERIC). Google Scholar was a freely accessible web search engine that indexes the full text or

metadata of scholarly literature. The website address of this tool was <https://scholar.google.com/>. Second, Semantic Scholar was employed as a research tool powered by artificial intelligence for scientific literature that can be visited in <https://www.semanticscholar.org/>. Finally, ERIC was used as a searchable full-text database of education research and information (<https://eric.ed.gov/>). Using three types of worldwide article databases, the researcher used the related keywords needed, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Keywords for Searching the Research Articles

No	Databases	Keywords for Searching the Articles
1	Google Scholar	Genre based AND writing, Genre based AND writing skill, Genre based approach AND writing skill
2	Semantic Scholar	Genre based AND benefit, Genre based AND benefit in writing, Genre based approach AND improve writing, Genre based approach AND improve writing skills
3	ERIC	Genre based approach, Genre based approach AND writing, Genre based approach AND improve writing

After searching for relevant articles related to the use of genre-based approaches to improve students' writing skills, the researcher then categorized the articles according to inclusion and exclusion criteria. It was carried out to make sure that the selected articles were in line with the framework that needed to be reviewed in this research. The criteria are presented in Table 2 as follows:

Table 2. The Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for Searching the Articles

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
a. Journal articles	a. Proceeding papers, literature books
b. Articles published between 2018-2023	b. Published articles beyond 2018-2023
c. The GBA implementation in improving writing skills	c. Non-English language published articles
d. Sample of respondents from both secondary school level and higher education level	
e. The types of the research are descriptive, case-study, action research, explanatory, and experimental with quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method	

Table 2 above showed that the researcher specified the criteria for the selected articles being investigated. The full articles that meet the criteria were downloaded and listed as having complete paper identities.

2. Screening Phase

The selected articles from the ERIC, Semantic Scholar, and Google Scholar databases were reviewed by the researcher. The titles of the articles were checked to see if they matched the keywords. Then, each article's abstract was analyzed and identified. While choosing the articles based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria, the abstracts of the publications were read. This activity was carried out to make sure that the abstracts of articles meet the research topic.

3. *Eligibility Phase*

This was the activity after the screening article process. All articles were examined, and their eligibility was verified during this phase. Articles must meet the inclusion and exclusion standards listed in Table 2. The full articles were downloaded, and the selected articles should meet the research questions.

4. *Exclusion Phase*

This is the last step to refine the searching process for the relevant articles of the GBA implementation to improve students' writing skills. All the articles that did not meet the inclusion criteria were removed. After this process was finished, the researcher has 15 articles in final selection that meet the inclusion criteria to be analyzed. They were presented in Table 3 as follows:

Table 3. Final Result of Selected Articles

No	Author(s)	Country	Research Method	Research approach	Research Subject
1	Almacioğlu & Okan (2018)	Turkey	Case study	Qualitative	14 undergraduates students
2	Arevalo (2019)	Columbia	Action research	Qualitative	36 secondary school
3	Ariyanfar & Mitchell (2020)	Iran	Experimental	Quantitative	12 undergraduated students
4	Ganapathy et al (2022)	Malaysia	Experimental	Quantitative	78 secondary school students
5	Bin-Hady et al (2020)	Yemen	Experimental	Mixed method	15 undergraduate students
6	Haerazi & Irawan (2019)	Indonesia	Action research	Mixed method	undergraduate students (no information about the number of students)
7	Haerazi et al (2020)	Indonesia	Experimental	Quantitative	64 undergraduate students
8	Harpiansi (2023)	Indonesia	Experimental	Quantitative	20 undergraduate students

9	Herman et al (2020)	Indonesia	Descriptive	Quantitative	undergraduate students (no information about the number of students)
10	He (2022)	China	Descriptive	Qualitative	57 indergraduates students
11	Nagao (2018)	Japan	Descriptive	Mixed method	14 undergraduates students
12	Nagao (2022)	Japan	Descriptive	Mixed method	23 undergraduates students
13	Rashtchi et al (2019)	Iran	Explanatory	Mixed method	72 undergraduates students
14	Sritrakarn (2020)	Thailand	Descriptive	Mixed method	22 undergraduate students
15	Thongchalerm & Jarunthawatchai (2020)	Thailand	Experimental	Mixed method	44 undergraduate students

Based on Table 3 above, it can be seen that all these final selected papers were the research results of various researchers from nine countries (Turkey, Indonesia, Japan, Iran, Malaysia, China, Colombia, Thailand, and Yemen). Moreover, they also have different types and approaches to research, like descriptive, experimental, action research, etc. Moreover, the level of students as research subjects also came from two different levels: secondary school and undergraduate students. All these articles were specified and categorized based on the types of students writing skill improvement.

RESULTS

There are 15 articles from three online article databases investigated in this research, as shown in Table 3 in the previous section. All the articles were then analyzed and categorized based on the types of students writing skills improvement as the benefits of the GBA implementation. They were specifically shown in Table 4 as follows:

Table 4. Types of Students' Writing Skills Improvement through GBA

No	Author(s)	Country	Types of improvement	Details improvement
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1	Almacioglu and Okan (2018)	Turkey	Writing performance	The students improved significantly in some areas of their writing.
2	Arevalo (2019)	Columbia	Writing attitude	With GBA, the teacher helps students get to the point where they can work independently, gain autonomy, and have confidence in their own abilities.
3	Ariyanfar and Mitchell (2020)	Iran	Writing performance	GBA results in better, more assured writers
4	Ganapathy et al (2022)	Malaysia	Writing achievement	The GBA was well received by the students since they thought it helped them become better writers, which led to higher test scores.
5	Bin-Hady et al (2020)	Yemen	Writing attitude	Students had positive perceptions towards the GBA that was applied by their instructors.
6	Haerazi and Irawan (2019)	Indonesia	Writing achievement	There was improvement of students' average writing scores after implementing the GBA
7	Haerazi et al (2020)	Indonesia	Writing performance	There is significant correlation between the GBA being applied and creativity in the teaching of writing skills.
8	Harpiansi (2023)	Indonesia	Writing achievement	There was improvement of students' average writing scores after implementing the GBA
9	Herman et al (2020)	Indonesia	Writing performance	The GBA helped students in

				overcoming their writing difficulties
10	He (2022)	China	Writing achievement	There was improvement of students' writing scores after implementing the GBA
11	Nagao (2018)	Japan	Writing performance	It may be possible to increase EFL students' understanding of generic structure and interpersonal meaning in argumentative essays by using GBA
12	Nagao (2022)	Japan	Writing performance	The students performed a better understanding in their writing activities
13	Rashtchi et al (2019)	Iran	Writing performance	The GBA allowed the students to write essays that were more cohesive and effective at expressing their opinions.
14	Sritrakarn (2020)	Thailand	Writing performance	The GBA has the ability to assist students in developing an understanding of the focused genre
15	Thongchalerm and Jarunthawatchal (2019)	Thailand	Writing achievement	The students achieved more in terms of grammatical rules, rhetorical structure, including holistic, and textual substance, respectively after implementing the GBA

Based on table 4 above, there are three types of students' writing improvement that can be concluded after the implementation of GBA. They are writing performance, writing achievement, and writing attitude. Specifically, 8 out of 15 research results show that the implementation of GBA provides benefits for improving their writing performance. Meanwhile, 5 of 15 research results mention

that the students' writing achievement in terms of their writing score is much better after implementing the GBA. Finally, two research shows an improvement in their writing attitude after the GBA implementation. All these results indicated that the utilization of GBA can help and facilitate students to be more productive as well as improve their writing.

DISCUSSION

As mentioned in the previous section, this research aims to investigate the improvements made in the students' writing outcomes by implementing the GBA. The results of reviewing fifteen research articles show that there are three improvements in students' writing skills through this approach. They are writing performance, writing achievement, and writing attitude.

As the GBA is facilitating students to be more active in constructing structured pieces of writing, it is more important to know students' writing performance as the implication of the GBA product. A total of 8 out of 15 research discussed writing performance improvement as the result of the GBA implementation. It indicates that the GBA promotes effective writing performance in improving writing skills. The students were assisted in learning and practicing exploring their ideas at their own pace. Hence, they became active in exploring and expressing the information based on the genre they wanted to write (Almacioğlu & Okan, 2018) and Nagao (2018) reveal the research result that the implementation of GBA increases students writing performance in some of their writing conventions like the generic structure of the text, content, organization, vocabulary, language use, mechanics, unity, smoothness, etc. All of them are vital components of writing

Nik et al., (2010) emphasize that writing requires a lot of skills and conventions, such as writing readiness and grammatical norms, to become competent and productive writers. Writing, then, is more than just putting pen to paper and recording ideas. It is also about successfully presenting or expressing ideas. Writing is a very demanding process that calls for a variety of abilities and conventions, such as: organization in the development of ideas and information, extreme precision in word choice to avoid ambiguity in meaning, and appropriate use of complex grammatical devices to highlight and focus ideas.

Additionally, writing requires the writer to understand grammatical patterns, carefully select terminology, and create sentence structures that are appropriate for the subject matter. Without the assistance of a specific strategy, approach, or technique that helps the students build a grasp of the focused text type, these writing performances cannot be accomplished effectively. The GBA has been utilized by researchers in some countries to reach these goals, as investigated by Nagao (2018), Rashtchi et al., (2019), Sritrakarn (2020), and Nagao (2022). The GBA also comes to help students overcome their writing difficulties when composing the text, as investigated by Herman et al., (2020). Several students made errors in their use of tense. Because it violates the conventions of the English language and writing, this type of grammatical error will detract from the quality of the writing. However, using GBA could at least increase students' desire to compose texts and expand their vocabulary.

Following the adoption of the GBA strategy, the students' writing achievements as shown by their writing scores showed the second improvement. It refers to the result of students' writing to know how successful the students have been in achieving the assigned writing activities. A total of 5 out of 15 research discussed on writing achievement as the result of the GBA implementation. Haerazi & Irawan (2019), Ganapathy et al., (2022), He (2022), and Harpiansi (2023) mention that the GBA was well implemented as indicated by the increase of students' test scores as well as the higher students' average writing scores. The GBA implementation contribute more in the measurement of their writing ability respectively which is tested through pre-test (before the GBA implementation) and post-test (after the GBA implementation). There is improvement of students' average writing scores after implementing the GBA.

The last improvement the students made after the implementation of GBA is writing attitude as revealed in the research conducted by Arevalo (2019) and Bin-Hady et al., (2020). It is found that students have positive perceptions towards the GBA approach that was applied by their instructors. Göçen (2019) mentions that students' attitude toward writing are formed at an early age and this attitude will most likely carry into the future. Students' attitude will affect their motivation for writing and their success in writing. Graham (2006) in Göçen (2019) also

emphasize that writing attitude is one of the most essential factors that directly influence and shape the writing skills.

As the writing attitude has close relationship with the success of writing, the students' positive perceptions toward the implementation of the GBA as shown in this research have also increase their confidence in writing. It is stated by Arevalo (2019) in his research that with GBA, the teacher can help students get to the point where they can work independently, gain autonomy, and have confidence in their own abilities. Particularly, the GBA helps students to improve their writing ability, so they have more confidence in writing. This factor make them feel comfortable and make it easy for them to practice writing. This result was in line with what other investigations had conducted by Elshirbini & Elashri (2013) and Changpueng (2017).

Since the application of the GBA resulted in a positive attitude, it is essential to understand that teaching writing as a process helped students to become writers. Instead of just passively absorbing knowledge, students gained knowledge by actively participating in the process. A GBA compelled students to take an active role in their education. Students had to take responsibility for their writing by choosing the topic they would write about, how they would develop those topics, and what the final product would look like.

In order to have recent results that extend the knowledge regarding GBA implementation, additional academic databases and search engines like Scopus and Web of Science should be used. This is due to the limitations of this research. Therefore, it may be necessary to carry out extensive and comparable research to investigate the students' writing challenges with GBA through numerous research articles published globally in the field of English teaching, thereby enlarging the perspective, offering insight, and updating knowledge about the implementation of GBA.

CONCLUSION

In order to enhance the writing abilities of EFL students, 15 articles on the application of the GBA were examined in this systematic literature review. Research indicates that students primarily benefit from the GBA in three areas:

writing performances, writing achievement, and writing attitude. The results demonstrated how this approach helps EFL students comprehend the conventions of the particular genre they are writing in. Students will become more motivated to write texts as a result of this. The use of the GBA then assists students in achieving the highest possible mark on their written work and cultivates favorable attitudes that will boost their writing confidence. There is no denying that the GBA encourages writing in a more comfortable environment. Thus, this review equips all EFL teachers with the knowledge they need to implement the GBA in order to sustain an efficient teaching and learning process when teaching writing skills.

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