INVESTIGATING THE EFFECT OF GENRE-BASED APPROACH ON SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' WRITING SKILLS

Raffialdi Anugrah Pratama[1], Yeni Rahmawati[2], Khusnul Khatimah[3]
[1]2211102421045@umkt.ac.id, [2]yr173@umkt.ac.id, [3]kk645@umkt.ac.id

UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH KALIMANTAN TIMUR

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effect of the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) on senior high school students' academic writing skills and identifies which writing aspects contribute most significantly to students' writing improvement, particularly in writing descriptive texts. Employing a quantitative pre-test–post-test experimental design, the study involved 31 Grade X students at SMK Negeri 15 Samarinda who received GBA-based instruction following the Teaching–Learning Cycle. Students' writing performance was assessed using an analytic rubric covering originality, content relevance, coherence, word choice, grammatical accuracy, vocabulary use, and mechanics. The results of the paired-sample t-test revealed a statistically significant improvement in students' overall writing performance after the implementation of GBA ($p < .05$). Further regression analysis showed that all assessed writing aspects significantly contributed to post-test performance, with word choice, content relevance, and originality emerging as the strongest predictors of improvement. These findings suggest that GBA is particularly effective in enhancing students' lexical control, content development, and clarity of expression. Pedagogically, the study highlights the importance of explicit modelling, scaffolding, and genre awareness in supporting students' academic writing development in Indonesian EFL secondary classrooms.

Keywords: Genre-Based Approach, Academic writing, Descriptive text, EFL students, Writing skills

A. INTRODUCTION

Writing plays a crucial role not only in the academic field but also in fulfilling various demands of daily life. It is a process that involves generating letters, words, and sentences to convey meaning. As a productive language skill, writing enables individuals to communicate indirectly without face-to-face interaction. This indicates that writing serves as a medium through which writers express their ideas, thoughts, and intentions. Therefore, students are expected to construct sentences using clear and comprehensible language and to have a clear purpose or objective for their writing (Siregar, 2022) In the context of English

language learning, mastering this productive skill is crucial for students to produce effective academic and professional texts. Learners are expected to use appropriate grammatical structures, writing conventions, and vocabulary choices to clearly and effectively express their ideas and thoughts in English as a foreign language through coherent and understandable texts (Haryanti & Sari, 2019).

Writing skill is a foundational component of language proficiency, encompassing not just the ability to generate text, but to organize ideas, use appropriate vocabulary and grammar, and meet the communicative purpose of the writing. Recent research underscores that writing is a complex, multi-dimensional activity that integrates cognitive, metacognitive, linguistic, and sociocultural processes (Nusivera et al., 2025). This suggests that writing skill cannot be viewed simply as a matter of linguistic competence but also requires learners' awareness of how they write, how they revise, and how they manage their writing processes. Studies further point out that learners often struggle to identify their own errors or to revise their drafts effectively without explicit guidance, revealing the importance of teacher feedback and opportunities for revision (Prakoso et al., 2021). In addition, Fitria (2024) shows that beyond correctness, writing skills involve the capacity to generate original ideas, engage readers, and adapt to different genres. This is consistent with findings that writing competence improves when learners are encouraged to compare their drafts with model texts and reflect on textual organization, language use, and meaning-making choices (Prakoso et al., 2021). In sum, effective writing skill in an EFL context involves not only mechanical accuracy but also higher-order control of meaning, genre awareness, and self-regulation.

However, many students struggle to express their thoughts effectively, particularly in initiating the writing process and organizing their ideas coherently (Haryanti & Sari, 2019). Additional classroom-based evidence highlights that students' difficulties often extend to lack of grammatical control, limited vocabulary, and challenges in maintaining text coherence, suggesting that writing development requires continuous scaffolding and exposure to model texts (Prakoso et al., 2021).These challenges are reinforced by findings showing that students often fail to follow the expected move step structure of academic genres, partly due to limited lexico-grammatical knowledge and insufficient exposure to authentic texts in EFL contexts (Pham & Bui, 2021).

Considering these challenges, it becomes necessary to implement an effective instructional approach that can help students develop their writing skills gradually. Consequently, by resolving these writing difficulties, students' overall competence in writing skills can be significantly improved (Lukmawardani & Badriyah, 2022). Related studies emphasize that strategies such as scaffolding, the use of model texts, collaborative learning, and integration of digital resources can significantly enhance learners' writing competence because these techniques provide gradual support that helps students understand the structure and social purpose of texts more (Istiqamah, 2024). Furthermore, recent investigations showing that genre-based writing instruction significantly enhances students' academic writing proficiency through structured modelling and explicit guidance (Rahman et al., 2025), and that learners benefit from consistent genre-focused support that clarifies text structure and improves their confidence in writing (Sari, 2019).

Moreover, Genre-Based Approach has been shown effective in improving the quality of students' descriptive writing, especially in relation to linguistic features, text structure, and accuracy (Masitoh et al., 2015). It provides a clear and systematic framework that helps

students in EFL contexts organize their writing more effectively and become more aware of text purpose, structure, and language features (Aulia, 2024). According to Haryanti and Sari (2019), GBA provides explicit teaching on text purpose, schematic structure, and linguistic features, helping students understand how meaning is constructed through stages of writing. Similarly, Rusmawaty et al. (2023) highlight that GBA involves four major stages Building Knowledge of the Field, Modelling of the Text, Joint Construction of the Text, and Independent Construction of the Text which allow students to learn collaboratively with scaffolding from the teacher before producing their own texts. These explicit instruction helps students develop genre awareness and understanding of why texts are structured a certain way and which language choices are appropriate for different communicative goals (Schwarz & Ortiz, 2020). Additional studies also emphasize that genre-based pedagogy helps learners understand the social and cultural dimensions of writing, including how communicative purposes, audiences, and discourse conventions shape the structure and linguistic features of texts (Siangsanoh & Chatpunnarangsee, 2024). This social perspective makes GBA highly relevant in supporting students' understanding of how academic texts function within broader communicative contexts.

Through this process, learners not only improve their grammatical accuracy and vocabulary but also develop awareness of the structural and rhetorical conventions of academic genres, enabling them to produce well-organized and contextually appropriate written works. Other findings show that the Genre-Based Approach significantly improves students' writing organization, coherence, and clarity, as the explicit teaching of each genre's features helps learners adapt language choices to different contexts and audiences (Dzukhriyah & Rini, 2023). Furthermore, recent research highlights that technology-enhanced implementation of GBA can further support writing development; for instance, the integration of digital applications and web-based tools during each GBA stage allows students to access model texts, expand their vocabulary, and engage in interactive writing activities that enrich the learning experience (Williyan et al., 2024).

Recent studies in the Indonesian EFL context also strengthen the theoretical foundations of GBA by emphasizing its dual impact on students' writing performance and learning attitudes. A quasi-experimental study demonstrated that GBA significantly improved students' recount writing performance, particularly in organization, language accuracy, and comprehension, while also fostering motivation and active engagement throughout the writing process (Listiyawati et al., 2025). Complementing this, another classroom-based study found that GBA's systematic stages, especially modelling and joint construction, helped learners better understand genre features and reduced difficulties in early drafting stages. Teachers likewise reported that GBA provided clearer instructional scaffolding and facilitated more confident independent writing among students (Yassin & Sood, 2024). Together, these findings highlight that GBA not only develops structural genre knowledge but also creates supportive learning conditions that enhance students' writing outcomes.

The genre-based approach (GBA) views writing not simply as an individual process but as a socially situated act. Learners write because they have communicative purposes, and they use genres (e.g., narrative, exposition, description) to fulfill those purposes. The pedagogy emphasizes stages such as building knowledge of the field, modelling the text, joint construction, and independent construction. For instance, Liu & Chen (2022) showed how student-teachers' understanding of genre influenced their instructional decisions and thus impacted students' writing outcomes. Locally, Gintings (2024) attest to the relevance of GBA in Indonesian EFL classrooms. The GBA framework helps students understand both

the structure of genres (schema) and the linguistic resources they need, enabling more effective writing across text types.

Recent evidence also shows that the Genre-Based Approach can be strengthened when integrated with broader pedagogical models, as demonstrated in studies where GBA was combined with project-based learning to enhance students' engagement and understanding of text structure. Classroom observations reveal that when students work through genre stages alongside meaningful projects, they develop a clearer awareness of how social purpose, audience, and linguistic features interact in constructing a text (Khasanah et al., 2023). The systematic use of modelling, guided practice, and independent production supports learners in identifying genre conventions more accurately while enabling them to apply these features in their own writing. Such findings underscore that the effectiveness of GBA lies not only in its explicit instruction of schematic structure but also in its capacity to situate writing within authentic learning tasks that encourage critical thinking and collaboration.

Evidence from classroom studies and empirical research indicates that the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) offers substantial pedagogical advantages in writing instruction. The scaffolded Teaching–Learning Cycle supports collaborative learning, builds learner confidence, reduces cognitive load through genre awareness, and enables a gradual transition from teacher-modelled texts to independent production, as reflected in increased writing confidence, critical thinking, and engagement (Gintings, 2024). Empirical studies further demonstrate that systematic implementation of GBA leads to statistically significant gains in writing performance from pre-test to post-test among secondary-level learners (Sani et al., 2023), while scaffolded genre instruction also fosters positive learner attitudes and improved proficiency (Nguyen & Truong, 2024).

Although numerous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of the Genre-Based Approach in improving students' writing performance across different contexts, its application at the senior high school level remains limited, particularly in the area of academic writing. For instance, Wicaksono et al. (2022) reported significant improvements in students' writing scores after implementing GBA in junior secondary classrooms, while Siregar (2022) found that this approach effectively enhanced students' descriptive writing ability in an Islamic senior high school setting. At the tertiary level, Latif et al. (2024) revealed that genre-based instruction not only improved students' writing performance but also increased their motivation to write. Similarly, research in Indonesian secondary schools shows that teachers generally perceive GBA positively, although they face several challenges, such as students' limited creativity, difficulties in generating original ideas, and issues related to internet accessibility when accessing model texts or references (Cholifah et al., 2022). Despite these constraints, teachers continue to emphasize that GBA supports students in understanding the structure, purpose, and linguistic features of each genre more comprehensively.

Despite these promising findings, the use of GBA in Indonesian senior high schools remains underexplored, particularly in terms of its impact on academic writing skills. To address this gap, the present study aims to examine the effectiveness of GBA and identify the writing aspects that contribute to students' writing improvement. Accordingly, the study is guided by the following research questions:

1. Does the implementation of the Genre-Based Approach significantly improve students' academic writing skills?
2. Which aspects of academic writing contribute most significantly to students' writing improvement after the implementation of the Genre-Based Approach?

B. METHOD

This study employed a quantitative pre-test–post-test experimental design to examine the effect of the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) on students' academic writing skills, particularly in writing descriptive texts. The research was conducted over six meetings: the first meeting was devoted to administering the pre-test to assess students' initial writing ability, meetings two through five were used to implement the GBA-based instructional treatment, and the sixth meeting was allocated for the post-test to measure students' writing performance after the treatment. The population of this study consisted of all Grade X students at SMK Negeri 15 Samarinda. One class was selected purposively as the research sample. The sample comprised 31 students from Class X-2 majoring in Automotive Engineering, all of whom participated in both the pre-test and post-test sessions. The main instrument used for data collection was a writing test, which was administered as both a pre-test and a post-test. The test required students to write a descriptive text based on a given topic within a limited time. The students' writing performance was evaluated using an analytic scoring rubric consisting of several assessment aspects adapted from the scoring table (Rukmini & Saputri, 2017). The rubric assessed the following components:1) Writing Authenticity, 2) Content Accordance with the Title, 3) Text Harmony, 4) Vocabulary Selection, 5) Grammar Options, 6) Vocabulary Writing, and 7) Writing Tidiness.

The quantitative data obtained from the pre-test and post-test were analyzed statistically to determine the effect of the Genre-Based Approach on students' writing performance. Descriptive statistics, including the mean, median, and standard deviation, were calculated to summarize students' pre-test and post-test scores and to illustrate overall improvement trends. Prior to inferential analysis, a normality test was conducted to examine whether the data met the assumptions for parametric testing. For inferential analysis, a paired-sample t-test was employed to compare the pre-test and post-test scores and to determine whether the observed improvement was statistically significant. The level of significance was set at $p < .05$. In cases where the normality assumption was not satisfied, the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test was used as a non-parametric alternative.

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Genre-Based Approach Affects Students' Academic Writing Skills
Table 2 below reports the results of the pre-test and post-test scores. The length of the data collection time has been reported in the previous table. It has 6 meetings, including the session of both tests. Table 2 below also shows the number of respondents during the data collection.

Table 2. Respondent Score

N	Pre Test	Post Test
1	37	74
2	43	83
3	54	71
4	46	86
5	37	69
6	37	66
7	46	83
8	37	69
9	54	83
10	40	69
11	51	74
12	49	89
13	37	69
14	40	69
15	49	86
16	37	71
17	31	66
18	34	69
19	51	86
20	46	77
21	51	86
22	43	83
23	51	77
24	37	71
25	40	71
26	46	77
27	34	69
28	31	74
29	49	77
30	31	77
31	31	66

The results of the students' writing assessments from SMKN 15 Samarinda, Class X TO 2, show a clear improvement after implementing the Genre-Based Approach. During the pre-test phase, many students demonstrated limited academic writing skills, with scores ranging from 31 to 54. This indicates that their initial writing performance was still far from the expected competency level. After receiving instruction through the Genre-Based Approach, the students' writing scores increased noticeably in the post-test, with score improvements ranging from 66 to 89. This significant rise reflects that students were able to organize their ideas better, use appropriate structure, and apply language features more accurately when writing academic texts.

Overall, the comparison between the pre-test and post-test results highlights remarkable progress in students' academic writing ability. The improvement suggests that the Genre-Based Approach effectively supported students in understanding and producing structured and meaningful written texts. This result is consistent with the findings from the statistical

analysis, which also confirmed a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores. Prior to conducting the paired-sample t-test, an assumption test was performed to ensure the normality of the data distribution using the Shapiro–Wilk test, as presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Normality Test

Test	Shapiro- Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pret Test	.949	31	.148
Post Test	.938	31	.071

As shown in Table 3, the results of the Shapiro–Wilk normality test indicate that both the pre-test and post-test scores were normally distributed (Sig. > 0.05). The Shapiro–Wilk test was employed because it is recommended for testing data normality when the sample size is less than 50, as it has higher power and accuracy compared to other normality tests (Sianturi, 2025). Therefore, the data met the assumption of normality, allowing the use of a parametric statistical procedure. Based on this result, a paired-sample t-test was conducted to examine the significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores, as presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Paired Sample T-Test of the GBA Pre-test and Post-Test

		Paired Differences					T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Pre Test – Post test	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Lower			
		-32.71806	6.29613	1.13082	-35.02750	-30.40863	-28.933	30	.000

The result of the paired-samples t-test indicates a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores (Table 4). The mean difference of -32.71 suggests that students' post-test scores were substantially higher than their pre-test scores, reflecting a meaningful improvement in their academic writing performance. This significant gain can be attributed to the systematic stages of the Genre-Based Approach, which provide explicit guidance on text structure, language features, and communicative purpose. As emphasized by Mahendra et al. (2025), the implementation of GBA through the stages of Building Knowledge of the Field, Modeling of the Text, Joint Construction, and Independent Construction enables students to develop ideas more coherently and organize their writing more effectively.

Furthermore, the high t-value (t = -28.93) with 30 degrees of freedom and a significance level of 0.00 (< 0.05) strongly confirms the effectiveness of the instructional intervention. This finding aligns with previous studies reporting that Genre-Based Approach significantly enhances students' writing quality, particularly in content development and organization, by scaffolding learners' understanding of genre conventions and linguistic resources. Therefore, the statistical evidence not only demonstrates a significant improvement but also supports the theoretical assumption that Genre-Based Approach facilitates meaningful learning in EFL writing instruction.

2. Aspects of writing after using GBA

The ANOVA table (table 4) shows that the overall regression model is highly significant: $F(7, 23) = 8288.602$, $p = .000$. This indicates that the combination of the seven predictor variables (Originality, Content Relevance, Coherence, Word Choice, Grammatical Accuracy, Vocabulary Use, Mechanics) significantly predicts students' post-test writing scores. In other words, the aspects of the writing rubric collectively have a strong effect on writing performance in the post-test.

Table 5. Analysis Variant

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1512.755	7	216.108	8288.602	.000[b]
	Residual	.600	23	.026		
	Total	1513.355	30			

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.814	.519		-1.567	.131
	O	3.142	.134	.224	23.444	.000
	CR	2.878	.092	.284	31.369	.000
	C	2.202	.124	.151	17.757	.000
	WC	3.033	.073	.246	41.470	.000
	GA	2.835	.142	.200	19.965	.000
	VU	3.065	.091	.205	33.536	.000
	M	3.022	.081	.173	37.187	.000

All seven predictors have p-values of .000, meaning that each aspect of the writing assessment significantly contributes to predicting the post-test writing score.

Table 5. Predictors

Predictor	Beta	Strength
Word Choice	0.246	Strongest predictor
Content Relevance	0.284	Very strong predictor
Originality	0.224	Strong predictor
Grammatical Accuracy	0.200	Moderate predictor
Vocabulary Use	0.205	Moderate predictor
Mechanics	0.173	Moderate predictor
Coherence	0.151	Weakest but still significant

Word Choice has the highest Beta (0.246), indicating that it is the most influential aspect of the rubric contributing to the improvement in post-test writing performance. Content Relevance also shows a high Beta (0.284), meaning it strongly affects writing outcomes. Originality also has a substantial impact ($\beta = 0.224$). The remaining predictors (Grammatical Accuracy, Vocabulary Use, Mechanics, Coherence) still significantly influence the post-test scores, but with relatively smaller effects.

The regression analysis reveals that all assessed aspects of the writing rubric significantly predict students' post-test writing performance. The ANOVA results confirm that the overall regression model is statistically significant, demonstrating that the combination of rubric

components provides a strong explanation for students' writing outcomes. Among the seven predictors, Word Choice emerges as the strongest single predictor of post-test writing achievement, followed by Content Relevance and Originality. Although the other aspects, Grammatical Accuracy, Vocabulary Use, Mechanics, and Coherence, also significantly influence writing scores, their predictive strengths are comparatively smaller. Therefore, these findings indicate that improvements in vocabulary structure, content development, and writing accuracy contribute most substantially to the enhancement of students' writing skills.

The findings of this study demonstrate that the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) produced a significant improvement in students' academic writing skills, as evidenced by a substantial increase in the post-test scores compared to the pre-test scores (mean difference $\approx$ +32 points; p = .000). Students who initially scored between 31 and 54 in the pre-test achieved scores ranging from 66 to 89 after receiving GBA instruction, indicating notable progress across nearly all participants. Regression analysis further revealed that the rubric components, particularly word choice, content relevance, and originality, collectively predicted post-test scores in a statistically significant manner. These results confirm the effectiveness of GBA in guiding students through explicit teaching of communicative purpose, schematic structure, and linguistic features, enabling them to transition from model analysis to independent production of well-organized and meaningful texts.

These findings align with and reinforce previous research. Latif et al., (2024) found that genre-based instruction significantly enhanced both writing performance and motivational factors such as writing self-efficacy among EFL university learners. Similarly, Nguyen & Truong (2024) revealed that scaffolding embedded in genre-based instruction significantly improved EFL learners' writing performance and fostered more positive attitudes toward writing. This is consistent with our regression findings, which show that aspects most influenced by linguistic scaffolding, such as word choice and originality, were the strongest predictors of post-test performance. Their study reinforces the notion that GBA's effectiveness is rooted not only in its genre framework but also in the quality of scaffolding provided during instruction.

Broader research conducted with younger learners also echoes this pattern. Zohbie & Bhowmik (2024) demonstrated that GBA improves elementary ESL students' writing development by making text purpose, structure, and linguistic features more accessible through step-by-step instruction. Although their study focused on elementary learners, the implication that GBA benefits writers across levels aligns with our findings in the vocational school context, where students with non-humanities backgrounds were still able to improve substantially through explicit genre teaching.

Furthermore, our results closely match Indonesian-based research. Nasution et al., (2022) found that GBA significantly improved students' descriptive writing skills, particularly in content development and vocabulary use. This directly reflects the pattern in our study, where vocabulary selection emerged as the strongest predictor of post-test performance, and content–title alignment also showed substantial improvement. Such similarities confirm that GBA is highly effective in EFL contexts where learners often struggle with vocabulary control and coherence.

D. CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine the effectiveness of the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) in improving students' academic writing skills, particularly in producing descriptive texts within an EFL vocational high school context at SMKN 15 Samarinda. The findings indicate that the implementation of GBA led to meaningful improvement in students' writing performance. Overall, students demonstrated better organization, clearer development of ideas, and more accurate language use after participating in the structured GBA instructional cycle. The study confirms that the structured stages of modelling, joint construction, and independent construction played a crucial role in enhancing students' understanding of text structure, linguistic features, and communicative purpose. In particular, improvements were evident in vocabulary use, content development, coherence, and overall clarity of expression, suggesting that explicit scaffolding and guided practice effectively supported students' writing development.

Overall, the study concludes that the Genre-Based Approach is an effective instructional method for enhancing students' academic writing skills in an EFL vocational school context. Its structured teaching cycle, supported by explicit modelling and scaffolding, helps students understand text structure, linguistic features, and communicative purpose, enabling them to produce more coherent, organized, and meaningful written texts. Although the study was limited to a single class with a relatively short treatment duration, the results provide strong evidence of GBA's potential to improve writing outcomes. Future research is recommended to explore the application of GBA across longer instructional periods, larger populations, and different text genres to further validate and extend these findings.

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