

IMPLEMENTING THE GENRE-BASED APPROACH IN NARRATIVE WRITING INSTRUCTION: STUDENTS' LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND RESPONSES

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Received: June 5, 2026; Accepted: June 30, 2026

ABSTRACT

For EFL learners, writing in English remains a significant challenge requiring pedagogical support. Although Genre-Based Approach is widely recognized for supporting student writing development, limited research has examined its implementation in junior high school under the Merdeka curriculum. This qualitative case study investigated how the GBA supported students' learning of narrative texts and explored students' responses toward its implementation in an Indonesian junior high school classroom. This research involved one English teacher and one class of eighth-grade students in Karawang. Data were collected through classroom observation and semi-structured interviews with the teacher and twelve purposively selected students and were analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings revealed that GBA supported students through explicit instruction, modelling through texts, collaborative learning, teacher assistance, vocabulary support, and feedback. Students responded positively, demonstrating active participation, interaction with peers and teachers, and increased confidence during learning activities. Although the Teaching-Learning Cycle was not fully implemented due to the omission of the Independent Construction of Text stage, the findings indicate that GBA still provided substantial support for students' understanding of narrative texts and their preparation for independent writing. These results highlight the flexibility of GBA in providing meaningful pedagogical support in Indonesian junior high school EFL classrooms.

Keywords: Genre-Based Approach, Narrative text, Pedagogical support, Students' responses

A. INTRODUCTION

Writing is widely acknowledged as one of the most challenging skills in English as a foreign language (EFL) learners to master (Palanisamy & Abdul Aziz, 2021; Riswanto, 2021; Sholihah et al., 2021). Unlike the other skills, writing requires critical thinking, accuracy, and specific skills that students must master to support their educational development (Dulay et al., 1982). In the Indonesian junior high school contexts, students are required to master various text genres, one of which is narrative text. Writing narrative texts is one of the

competencies listed in the Merdeka Curriculum for Indonesian education. According to Anderson (2003) a narrative text is a type of text which tells about a story or event to entertain or inform the reader or listener.

In practice, many students often experience difficulties in organizing ideas, building knowledge, and constructing coherent and cohesive text. Writing instruction sometimes more focuses on the final product rather than guiding students through the process of text construction. As a result, students may struggle to understand how a text functions within a specific genre and how its elements are organized. These challenges indicate the need for an instructional approach that provides guidance and scaffolding in teaching writing. To bridge this instructional gap, the Genre-Based Approach (GBA), rooted in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) by Halliday & Matthiessen (2013) adapted through the Teaching-learning Cycle (TLC) has been widely effective alternative (Emilia, 2016). This approach involves four main instructional stages: Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF), Modeling of the Text (MOT), Joint Construction of the Text (JCOT), and Independent Construction of the Text (ICOT). Through these stages, students are guided to understand the definition, communicative purposes, generic structure, and language features of narrative text (Emilia, 2016; Soraya, 2022). Furthermore, the genre-based approach (GBA) can support students in developing their ideas, organizing words, and elaborating them into well-structured narrative texts (Hitimala et al., 2024).

Previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) in various educational contexts. In writing instruction, Nagao (2022) found that a Genre-Based Approach grounded in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) improved Japanese EFL students' descriptive report writing skills. Similarly, Pham & Bui (2021) reported that GBA helped students understand the generic structure and linguistic features of expository essays. In the Indonesian context, Nugraha et al. (2025) found that GBA enhanced students' comprehension of discussion texts through guided instruction and collaborative learning activities. Moreover, Daniarti et al. (2020) revealed that GBA increased students' motivation in reading activities, while Helena et al. (2024) found that the approach positively influenced students' affective participation during creative writing activities. These studies collectively indicate that GBA contributes to students' linguistic development, comprehension, motivation, and engagement. However, most previous studies have primarily focused on learning outcomes, with limited attention given to how pedagogical support is enacted through the Teaching-Learning Cycle and how students experience the implementation of GBA in classroom practice, particularly in Indonesian junior high school contexts.

However, previous studies on the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) have predominantly focused on its effectiveness of the genre-based approach in improving students' writing performance across different educational levels and text types. While these studies generally report positive outcomes, less attention has been paid to how pedagogical support is enacted throughout the teaching-learning process and how students experience the approach in classroom practice. In particular, limited research has explored how the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) support students' learning of narrative writing in Indonesian junior high school contexts and how students respond to its implementation. To address this gap, this study aims to investigate how the Genre-Based Approach supports students' learning of narrative texts through the Teaching-Learning Cycle and to explore students' responses toward its implementation in an Indonesian junior high school classroom

B. METHOD

Writing is widely acknowledged as one of the most challenging skills in English as a foreign language (EFL) learners to master (Palanisamy & Abdul Aziz, 2021; Riswanto, 2021; Sholihah et al., 2021). Unlike the other skills, writing requires critical thinking, accuracy, and specific skills that students must master to support their educational development (Dulay et al., 1982). In the Indonesian junior high school contexts, students are required to master various text genres, one of which is narrative text. Writing narrative texts is one of the competencies listed in the Merdeka Curriculum for Indonesian education. According to Anderson (2003) a narrative text is a type of text which tells about a story or event to entertain or inform the reader or listener.

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C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and discusses the findings of the research in relation to the research questions: (1) the ways the Genre-Based Approach supports students' learning of narrative text through the teaching-learning cycle and (2) students' responses toward the implementation of the Genre-Based Approach. Regarding the first research question, the findings revealed that pedagogical support was manifested through five pedagogical mechanisms: explicit instruction, modelling through example texts, collaborative learning and peer interaction, teacher assistance and vocabulary support, as well as feedback. Concerning the second research question, the findings indicated that students' responses were reflected across three interactive domains: active participation and interest in classroom activities, interaction with teachers and peers, and confidence throughout the teaching-learning process. To provide an overview of the findings, Table 1 summarizes the main categories of pedagogical supports and students' responses identified during the implementation of the Genre-Based Approach.

Table 1. The Summary of Pedagogical Supports and Students' Responses in GBA Implementation

Research Focus	Category	Findings
Pedagogical Supports	Explicit Instruction	Teacher explained narrative text structured and language features systematically
	Modelling Through Texts	Teacher used familiar stories and example text to support student understanding
	Collaborative Learning	Students collaborated during worksheet analysis and peer discussion activities
	Teacher Assistance and Vocabulary Support	Teacher provided vocabulary guidance and direct assistance
	Feedback	Teacher provided corrective feedback and positive reinforcement
Students' Responses	Participation	Students actively participated during Q&A sessions and discussions
	Interaction	Students interacted with peers during group work and asked the teacher for assistance when facing difficulties
	Confidence	Students developed confidence as the learning became easier to understand during the learning process

1. The Ways Genre-Based Approach supported Students in Learning Narrative Text

The subsection outlines forms of pedagogical support provided by the teacher during the teaching-learning cycle in the classroom. The data revealed that this support can be seen in the form of explicit instruction, modelling using texts, collaborative learning activities, teacher assistance, as well as feedback and guidance.

Explicit Instruction

One form of pedagogical support identified during the implementation of the GBA was explicit instruction. Classroom observation and interviews revealed that teacher provided systematic explanations regarding the definition, purposes, generic structure, and language features of narrative texts. Based on classroom observations during the Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF) and Modelling of Text (MOT) phases, the teacher used the whiteboard to explain and describe the characteristics of narrative texts, visually separating the “Orientation,” “Complication,” and “Resolution” sections. The teacher explicitly pointed to each section while explaining its function in chronological order. An interview with one student reported that teacher explained the material “in a logical order and in full” which helped the student understand the structure of narrative text.

“Of course, in a logical order and in full” (S1)

Furthermore, the interview with the teacher also showed that the instructional process involved explaining the three generic structures of narrative text, which are orientation, complication, and resolution sequentially. To ground these, the teacher utilized familiar local stories, such as *Sangkuriang* and *Malin Kundang*, as examples during the explanation.

“We explain orientation, complication, and resolution one by one while providing examples from familiar stories such as Sangkuriang and Malin Kundang.” (T1)

These findings suggest that explicit instruction functioned as an important pedagogical scaffold during the learning process. By explicitly explaining the definition, social purpose, generic structure, and language features of narrative texts, the teacher made the characteristics of the target genre visible and understandable to students. This support appeared to help students understand how narrative texts are organized and how meaning is constructed within the genre. Such findings reflect a central principle of genre pedagogy, which emphasizes the explicit teaching of textual conventions rather than expecting students to acquire them independently (Hyland, 2007). The findings are also consistent with Alhammad (2025), who reported that explicit instruction in essay writing skills had a positive impact on Saudi EFL students’ writing performance. In the present research, explicit instruction not only facilitated students’ understanding of narrative text but also provided a foundation for subsequent learning activities throughout the teaching-learning cycle.

Modelling Through the Text

The second form of pedagogical support identified during the implementation of the GBA was modelling through the text. The data from classroom observations revealed that the teacher provided a model text before moving on to the core material on narrative texts. This activity mainly occurred during the “Modelling of Text (MOT) stage, when the example text helped students to recall their prior knowledge of narrative texts and transition from the BKOF stage. During learning activities, the teacher used various types of texts drawn from textbooks and other sources. During the MOT phase, observation notes indicate that the

teacher distributed printed copies of the “Malin Kundang” text to each student. The teacher then led a shared reading session in which students took turns reading paragraphs aloud. The teacher paused the reading at certain sentences to highlight past tense verbs (e.g., “stayed,” “left”), while also demonstrating how linguistic features function in the narrative text. An interview with the teacher revealed this strategy:

“We often use examples from other sources and begin with familiar stories such as Malin Kundang so students already have an initial understanding of the text.” (T1)

This instructional approach was further corroborated by a student during the interview session:

“As far as I can remember, examples were taken from other texts.” (S5)

The use of popular stories and discussion served as bridge between students’ prior knowledge and the new learning material. By introducing familiar narratives such as *Malin Kundang*, the teacher provided students with a meaningful context through which they could recognize the purpose, structure, and language features of narrative texts. This support appeared to help students understand how narrative texts are organized before they were expected to analyze or construct texts independently. This finding is consistent with Emilia (2016), who argues that Genre-Based Pedagogy emphasizes the importance of developing students’ contextual understanding before engaging with a target genre. Similarly, Osawa (2025) found that model texts helped learners become familiar with the typical characteristics of a genre prior to producing their own texts. From a sociocultural perspective, the use of model texts can also be viewed as a form of scaffolding within students’ Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where teacher guidance and shared classroom discussion support learners in developing new understandings (Vygotsky, 1978). In the present study, modelling through texts appeared to make the organizational patterns of narrative texts more visible to students, thereby preparing them for subsequent learning activities within the teaching-learning cycle.

Collaborative Learning and Peer Interaction

The third form of pedagogical support identified during the implementation of the GBA was collaborative learning and interaction with peers. The data from the students’ interviews revealed that students engaged in discussions with their peers during the learning process. The interview with the students indicated that they frequently collaborated with their classmates:

“I sometimes collaborate with my classmates when the teacher is explaining.” (S5)

The interview further revealed that the students felt significantly supported by this collaborative practice:

“Discussions with classmates help me learn narrative texts.” (S5)

Classroom observations further revealed that collaborative learning activities occurred during worksheet discussions and group tasks, where students exchanged ideas and worked together while analyzing narrative texts. Specifically, during the Joint Construction of Text (JCOT) stage, the teacher divided the forty students into six groups, each consisting of 6–7

students, to complete the Student Worksheet (LKPD). Field notes documented very intense interactions among the students; they were seen gathering together and reading "The Ant and The Grasshopper" text collectively to complete Task 1. Students were observed pointing to paragraphs to discuss the story elements, debating whether specific lines represented the characters' traits, the setting of place ("in the field"), or the setting of time ("one summer day"). In Group 2, for example, one student was seen explaining to a classmate why the grasshopper's choices marked the beginning of a problem (complication) in the narrative plot. These findings suggest that collaborative learning functioned as an important source of pedagogical support by enabling students to construct understanding collectively rather than working individually. Through peer discussion, students appeared to share ideas, clarify misunderstandings, and negotiate meaning while completing classroom tasks, which supported students' participation and understanding during classroom activities. These findings are consistent with Zheng et al. (2026) who reported that effective collaboration can enhance students' participation and writing performance through positive group interaction. Similarly, Abdel Latif et al. (2024) reported that collaborative learning helps students to understand text organization through the analysis of model texts and group-based learning. From a sociocultural perspective, the findings also reflect Vygotsky's view that knowledge is socially constructed through interaction and collaboration. In the present study, collaborative activities appear to create a supportive classroom environment, which enhances students' confidence and engagement during the learning process.

Teacher Assistance and Vocabulary Support

The fourth form of pedagogical support identified during the implementation of the GBA was teacher assistance and vocabulary support. Classroom observations during group work activities showed that the teacher continuously moved around the classroom, spending about two to three minutes with each group to monitor their analysis of the text and review their groups task. Rather than waiting passively, the teacher actively scaffolded students who encountered difficulties with sentence structures. Several students stated that they often asked the teacher for help with difficult vocabulary or sentences, whether translating from English to Indonesian or vice versa. An interview with a student revealed this reliance on teacher guidance:

"I usually ask the teacher to translate words or sentences that I don't understand. Just a few of them." (S3)

These findings suggest that teacher assistance and vocabulary support functioned as important pedagogical scaffolds during the learning process. By providing immediate assistance when students encountered unfamiliar vocabulary or difficulties in understanding sentences, the teacher helped reduce learning obstacles and enabled students to participate more actively in classroom tasks. This finding is consistent with Nguyen & Truong (2024), who reported that scaffolding embedded in Genre-Based Writing Instruction enhanced students' writing performance and confidence. Similarly, Chairinkam & Yawiloeng (2024) found that scaffolding strategies improved EFL students' writing abilities by creating a supportive learning environment where teachers could provide timely guidance and encouragement. In the present study, teacher assistance appeared to support students in overcoming language-related difficulties and facilitated their engagement in learning narrative texts.

Feedback

The fifth form of support identified during the implementation of the GBA was feedback. Data from student interviews showed that teachers provide feedback to correct errors in word placement within sentences. Interviews revealed that the teacher provided comments and corrections on students' writing, particularly regarding word placement and sentence construction.

"Yes, teacher usually let me know when the word placement is wrong." (S3)

This finding is also supported by the interviews with teachers. Teachers explained that, as well as correcting assignments, they sometimes praise and appreciate students who complete assignments on time and demonstrate consistency in their learning.

"We usually give praise and compliments when students complete assignments on time and show consistency in their learning." (T1)

Classroom observation data further underscores how this feedback is delivered. As students worked in groups on the grammar section of the worksheet, the teacher provided immediate verbal feedback as soon as she noticed errors in converting action verbs to the simple past tense. For example, field notes documented a moment when a group mistakenly wrote "the grasshopper singed happily" in their draft. The teacher immediately guided them by pointing out the irregular verb pattern (sing-sang). Additionally, during the presentation session, the teacher explicitly praised the groups that successfully identified past tense verbs such as "begged" and "realized" from the text, which significantly boosted student motivation. These findings suggest that feedback functioned as an important form of pedagogical support during the implementation of GBA. Through corrective comments and praise, the teacher provided students with guidance on how to improve their language use and control over the structural features of the target genre. In the present study, feedback effectively assisted students in identifying linguistic errors while maintaining their engagement throughout the teaching-learning cycle.

Overall, the findings indicate that GBA supported students' learning of narrative texts through multiple forms of pedagogical support, including explicit instruction, modelling, collaborative learning, teacher assistance, vocabulary support, and feedback. However, unlike (Nagao, 2022), the present study found that students had not yet fully engaged in independent narrative text production. Classroom activities remained primarily focused on developing students' understanding of narrative text structures, language features, and text comprehension. This may have been influenced by instructional priorities and time constraints during the implementation process. Nevertheless, the findings suggest that GBA played an important role in preparing students for more independent writing development by providing structured and scaffolded learning experiences throughout the teaching-learning process.

2. Students' Responses toward the Implementation of Genre-Based Approach in learning to write narrative text

This subsection presents findings on students' responses toward the implementation of the GBA in learning narrative texts. The data revealed that students' responses were reflected through their interest and participation in classroom activities, interaction with teachers and peers, as well as confidence during the learning process.

Student Interest and Participation

The students' response toward the implementation of the Genre-Based Approach were reflected in students' interest and participation in classroom activities. Classroom observations indicated that during question-and-answer sessions, students voluntarily raised their hands and actively responded to the teacher's prompts regarding the narrative text. Field notes documented that a majority of the students remained focused and engaged during the worksheet discussions. One student highlighted their active engagement during specific moments in the classroom:

"Q&A sessions. If I know the answer, I'll definitely put my hand up." (S3)

However, the teacher noted that students demonstrated varying levels of participation throughout the learning cycle. While high engagement was visible during interactive phases, some students occasionally lost focus or appeared passive during independent tasks, especially when the class was scheduled at the end of the school day. As one student (S1) admitted:

"Not really, I do not always participate actively in classroom activities." (S1)

These findings suggest that students demonstrated varying levels of participation during the implementation of GBA. While some students actively engaged in question-and-answer sessions and classroom discussions, others reported that they did not always participate actively. Nevertheless, the structured and interactive learning activities appeared to encourage students' involvement in the learning process. This finding is consistent with Helena et al. (2024), who found that GBA promoted positive student responses and increased classroom engagement. However, the teacher noted that students occasionally lost focus because the lesson was scheduled at the end of the school day. This indicates that students' participation may be influenced not only by instructional approaches but also by classroom conditions and learning readiness.

Students Interaction with Peers and Teacher

Student interaction with peers and teachers was another response observed during the implementation of the GBA. During group work, students dynamically exchanged ideas and consulted their peers when encountering difficulties in analyzing the story elements. Observational data also captured a cooperative classroom climate where students frequently approached the teacher's desk to seek clarification on unfamiliar vocabulary. One student highlighted the efficiency gained through peer interaction during group tasks:

"I feel like the work gets done faster." (S3)

In addition, students also interacted with the teacher during the learning process. Some students reported asking questions when they encountered difficulties during classroom activities.

"I ask [the teacher]." (S2)

These findings suggest that interaction with peers and teachers played an important role in supporting students' learning during the implementation of GBA. Through group discussions and teacher-student exchanges, students were able to seek assistance, clarify

difficulties, and strengthen their understanding of narrative texts. This indicates that learning was constructed not only individually but also through social interaction. The finding is consistent with Nugraha et al. (2025), who reported that collaborative learning and teacher guidance within GBA supported students' comprehension and engagement during classroom activities.

Students Confidence

Another response observed during the implementation of the genre-based approach was students developing confidence during learning activities. Observations during the final stages of the cycle showed that the students participated in text analysis and discussions without hesitation. Notably, during the presentation session, the students confidently presented their group's answers to the class. This budding confidence was reflected in the students' positive feedback:

"I'm really happy because we can exchange ideas." (S6)

"The material was easier to grasp during yesterday's lesson, and the writing assignment felt more natural." (S6)

Students reported that the learning activities were easier to follow and that they felt comfortable participating in classroom tasks. This confidence appeared to stem from the explicit instruction, modelling, and collaborative activities provided throughout the learning process. Such support enabled students to engage with narrative texts in a more structured and guided manner. The finding suggests that GBA created a supportive learning environment that fostered students' confidence during classroom activities. This is consistent with Sholihah et al. (2021), who found that Genre-Based Learning promoted students' confidence, motivation, and awareness of text structures during writing activities.

D. CONCLUSION

The research investigated how the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) supported students' learning of narrative texts and explored their respond toward its implementation in an Indonesian junior high school. The findings revealed that GBA support through several forms of pedagogical support, including explicit instruction, modelling through texts, collaborative learning, teacher assistance, vocabulary support, and feedback. These supports helped students develop their understanding of narrative text structures and language features while encouraging their participation during classroom activities. The findings also showed that students responded positively to the implementation of GBA as reflected in in their participation, interaction with peers and teachers, and increased confidence throughout the learning process. The research highlight that the Genre-Based Approach creates a structured and supportive learning environment through scaffolding and collaborative learning experiences. Although students had not yet fully engaged in independent narrative text production, the approach appeared to prepare them for more independent writing development by strengthening their understanding of the target genre. These findings suggest that GBA remains a valuable instructional approach for supporting narrative text learning in Indonesian EFL classrooms, particularly in contexts where students require substantial guidance during the writing process. Practically, English teachers may adopt GBA as a structured instructional framework to support students' understanding of narrative texts, especially in junior high school EFL classrooms where learners require substantial

scaffolding and guidance Despite these contributions, the study was limited to a single classroom context and a relatively small number of participants. Future research may involve a broader range of educational settings and explore how the complete implementation of the Teaching-Learning Cycle, particularly the Independent Construction of Text stage, influences students' writing development.

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