

THE USE OF GENRE-BASED APPROACH (GBA) TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL AT STIT PALAPA NUSANTARA LOMBOK

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Abstract

Writing is a productive skill that requires students to generate ideas, organize them into a meaningful text, and apply appropriate language features. However, students at STIT Palapa Nusantara Lombok still experience difficulties in writing English texts, especially descriptive texts, due to limited vocabulary, weak control of grammar, and lack of systematic writing guidance. This study aimed to improve students' writing skill through the implementation of the Genre-Based Approach (GBA). The research design was Classroom Action Research conducted in two cycles involving 35 students. Data were collected through observation, writing tests, and documentation. The data were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The results showed that students' writing performance improved significantly after the implementation of GBA. The mean score increased from 58.28 in the preliminary test to 81.03 in Cycle I and improved to 83.79 in Cycle II. In Cycle II, all students achieved the minimum mastery criterion (70). The classroom observation also indicated better student engagement, collaboration, and confidence in composing descriptive texts. Therefore, GBA is effective in improving students' writing skill at STIT Palapa Nusantara Lombok.

Keywords: *Writing Skill, Genre-Based Approach, Descriptive Text.*

INTRODUCTION

Writing is widely recognized as a central skill in English language learning, particularly in higher education where students are expected to communicate ideas, arguments, and academic information in written form ((Harmer, 2007). At the university level, writing is not merely a

classroom activity; it functions as a key academic skill for completing assignments, producing reports, composing reflective journals, and preparing scholarly papers (Brown, 2007). Students who possess adequate writing competence are more capable of organizing their thoughts logically and demonstrating critical thinking skills (Brown, 2007; Nunan, 2003). Conversely, students with weak writing skills often struggle to express ideas clearly, resulting in texts that lack coherence and academic quality.

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), writing is often regarded as the most challenging language skill because it requires the integration of multiple linguistic and cognitive components simultaneously, such as idea development, vocabulary selection, grammatical accuracy, text organization, and mechanics (Weigle, 2002). Writing also requires higher-order thinking skills, including planning, drafting, revising, and editing, which can be difficult for EFL learners with limited language exposure (Hyland, 2003; Nation, 2009). These complexities often cause students to experience anxiety and low motivation in writing activities (Graham, 2007).

At STTT Palapa Nusantara Lombok, similar challenges were identified through classroom observation and preliminary assessment. Many students encountered difficulties in developing ideas into coherent paragraphs, organizing texts logically, and applying appropriate grammatical structures. Some students were able to write sentences, yet their texts lacked unity and coherence. Common problems included limited vocabulary, incorrect verb usage, and weak sentence construction. These findings are consistent with previous studies which report that EFL learners often struggle with text organization and language accuracy in writing.

One genre that plays a crucial role in developing students' foundational writing competence is descriptive text. Descriptive writing enables learners to describe people, places, or objects by using specific details and sensory information (Gerot, 1994; Knapp, 2005). This genre is particularly suitable for beginner and intermediate learners because it introduces basic paragraph structure, topic development, and vocabulary enrichment (Anderson, 2003). Mastery of descriptive writing provides a strong foundation for learning more complex genres such as narrative, recount, report, and exposition texts (Derewianka, 2012).

However, effective teaching of descriptive writing requires an instructional approach that guides students not only on what to write but also on how to construct a text systematically. Many writing classes focus excessively on correcting grammatical errors, while neglecting explicit instruction on text structure and meaning-making processes (Hyland, 2003; Tribble, 1996). As a result, students are often asked to write independently without adequate modeling or scaffolding, which leads to frustration and slow progress in writing development.

To address these issues, this study implements the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) as a pedagogical model to improve students' writing skill at STIT Palapa Nusantara Lombok. GBA emphasizes explicit teaching of genre knowledge, including social purpose, generic structure, and linguistic features of texts. Moreover, GBA provides a systematic teaching-learning cycle consisting of Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF), Modeling of the Text (MOT), Joint Construction of the Text (JCOT), and Independent Construction of the Text (ICOT).

The selection of GBA is grounded in the theory of scaffolding and gradual release of responsibility, where learners are supported intensively at the initial stage and gradually encouraged to write independently. Through modeling and guided practice, students gain a clearer understanding of how texts are constructed and how language functions within specific genres. This approach is particularly relevant to Classroom Action Research, which aims to solve real classroom problems through reflective and cyclical improvement (Kemmis, 1988).

Therefore, this study aims to investigate whether the implementation of the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) can improve students' writing skill at STIT Palapa Nusantara Lombok, particularly in writing descriptive texts. The study focuses on students' writing performance in terms of content development, organization, vocabulary use, grammatical accuracy, and mechanics, as well as their participation and engagement during the learning process. It is expected that the findings will contribute to more effective writing instruction practices in EFL higher education contexts.

METHOD

This study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) to improve students' writing skill through the implementation of the Genre-Based Approach (GBA). CAR was chosen because it offers practical solutions to classroom problems through cyclical procedures: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The research was conducted collaboratively by the researcher and a collaborator lecturer at STIT Palapa Nusantara Lombok.

The participants were 35 students of STIT Palapa Nusantara Lombok. Data were collected using observation, writing tests, and documentation. Observation was conducted to monitor students' participation, collaboration, and learning engagement during the implementation of GBA. Writing tests were administered as a preliminary test and post-tests at the end of each cycle to measure students' writing improvement, especially in writing descriptive texts. Documentation included students' drafts/worksheets, attendance lists, and teaching materials.

The implementation of GBA followed four stages:

1. BKOF: brainstorming, vocabulary enrichment, and topic exploration;
2. MOT: analyzing model texts, discussing social function, generic structure, and language features;
3. JCOT: students constructed texts collaboratively under lecturer guidance;
4. ICOT: students wrote descriptive texts independently as the main assessment.

RESULT

Data Description

This classroom action research was conducted in two cycles, each consisting of four stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Before implementing the cycles, a preliminary study was conducted to identify students' initial writing skills, particularly in writing descriptive texts.

Prior to the preliminary test, the researcher obtained permission from the academic authority and the English lecturer at STIT Palapa Nusantara Lombok. The preliminary writing test was administered to measure students' ability to write a descriptive text before the implementation of the Genre-Based Approach (GBA).

The results of the preliminary test showed that only a small number of students achieved the minimum mastery criterion, while most students demonstrated low writing performance. The detailed scores of the preliminary writing test are presented in Table 1.

Table 01. Reading Score in preliminary study

No	Name	Preliminary
1	BG	50
2	DH	40
3	HF	40
4	AW	30
5	RA	80
6	JP	70
7	JN	90
8	WA	40
9	SH	70
10	DKS	70
11	KA	70
12	NA	80
13	NI	60
14	RG	50
15	RIF	50
16	RUS	30

17	SB	60
18	SS	20
19	SWTI	60
20	TA	70
21	UY	60
22	WA	90
23	RA	60
24	YII	40
25	YMA	60
26	ZH	80
27	ZK	60
28	ZM	60
29	ZW	50
Σx		1690
Mean		58,28

Mean score of the preliminary test was 58.28, indicating that students' writing skill was still low. Most students had difficulties in developing ideas, organizing the text structure, and using appropriate vocabulary and grammar in descriptive writing.

Based on the data, 24.14% of students were categorized as *very poor*, 41.38% as *poor*, while only 34.48% reached or exceeded the minimum mastery criterion. This result confirmed that improvement was needed through a structured teaching approach.

Cycle I

Planning

In Cycle I, the researcher prepared a lesson plan based on the Genre-Based Approach (GBA). The learning activities were designed according to the four stages of GBA: Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF), Modeling of the Text (MOT), Joint Construction of the Text (JCOT), and Independent Construction of the Text (ICOT). Instruments such as observation sheets and writing tests were also prepared.

Acting

Cycle I was conducted in two meetings.

Meeting 1:

The lecturer began the lesson by building students' background knowledge related to descriptive texts (BKOF). Vocabulary and ideas related to describing people were introduced. Then, a model descriptive text was provided and analyzed together with students (MOT), focusing on the generic structure (identification and description) and language features such as adjectives and simple

present tense. Students were then guided to construct a descriptive text collaboratively in pairs (JCOT).

Meeting 2:

Students were asked to write a descriptive text independently as the writing test for Cycle I (ICOT). This activity aimed to measure students' ability to apply what they had learned during the previous meeting.

Observing

During Cycle I, students showed better participation compared to the preliminary stage. However, some students were still passive and hesitant to express ideas. Several writing problems were still found, including limited vocabulary use, grammatical errors, and weak organization of ideas.

Reflecting

The result of Cycle I showed improvement in students' writing skill, but some students still did not achieve the minimum mastery criterion. Therefore, improvements were planned for Cycle II by strengthening modeling, providing clearer writing guidance, and increasing collaborative practice.

Mean score in Cycle I increased to **81.03**, indicating significant improvement compared to the preliminary test. However, **6.90%** of students still scored below the minimum mastery criterion.

Cycle II

Planning

Cycle II was designed as a revision of Cycle I. The lesson plan was improved by emphasizing clearer explanation of text structure, vocabulary enrichment, and more guided practice during joint construction.

Acting

Cycle II was conducted in two meetings.

Meeting 1:

The lecturer reinforced students' understanding of descriptive text through more explicit modeling and guided discussion. Students worked in small groups to construct descriptive texts collaboratively, receiving direct feedback during the process.

Meeting 2:

Students wrote a descriptive text independently as the final writing test of Cycle II. This test aimed to measure students' overall writing improvement after the full implementation of GBA.

Observing

In Cycle II, students showed higher motivation and confidence in writing. Most students actively participated in discussions and demonstrated better control of vocabulary, grammar, and text organization.

Reflecting

The reflection of Cycle II showed that the criteria of success had been achieved. Students' writing skill improved significantly, and all students met the minimum mastery criterion.

Table 02. Students' Writing Score in Cycle II

No	Score level	Category	Number	Percentage
1	0-49	Very poor	0	0%
2	50-69	Poor	2	6,90%
3	70-79	Fair	4	13,79%
4	80-89	Good	14	48,28%
5	90-100	Very good	9	31,03%
			29	100%

The mean score in Cycle II increased to **83.79**, and **100%** of students achieved scores above the minimum mastery criterion.

Improvement of Students' Writing Skill

To identify the improvement of students' writing skill through the Genre-Based Approach, the results of the preliminary test, Cycle I, and Cycle II were compared.

Table 03. Comparison of Students' Writing Scores

Category	Pre-test	Cycle I	Cycle II
Very Poor	7	0	0
Poor	12	2	0
Fair	5	4	6
Good	3	14	10
Very Good	2	9	13

The comparison shows a clear improvement in students' writing performance from the preliminary test to Cycle II. The number of students in the *good* and *very good* categories increased significantly, while no students remained in the *poor* or *very poor* categories in Cycle II. Overall, the implementation of the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) successfully improved students' writing skill at STIT Palapa Nusantara Lombok, as indicated by the continuous increase in mean scores and students' active involvement in the writing process.

DISCUSSION

This classroom action research was conducted in two cycles, and each cycle consisted of four stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. These stages were implemented systematically to solve the problems encountered in teaching writing at STIT Palapa Nusantara Lombok. This research design is in line with the principles of Classroom Action Research which emphasize continuous improvement through reflective cycles (Rusmawan, 2017).stage in each cycle was carried out during the teaching and learning process, while observation focused on students' participation, writing performance, and responses toward the instructional activities. Reflection was conducted at the end of each cycle to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching strategy and determine necessary improvements.

The main focus of this study was to improve students' writing skill, particularly in writing descriptive texts, through the implementation of the Genre-Based Approach (GBA). Genre-Based Approach emphasizes explicit teaching of text structure and language features to support students in producing meaningful texts (Nasution et al., 2022). Based on the preliminary study, it was found that students' participation in writing activities was relatively low. Most students showed limited interest and motivation during the learning process. When the lecturer asked questions or invited students to express ideas, many students remained silent, and only a few were willing to respond. This condition indicated that students lacked confidence and were not accustomed to structured writing activities, a problem commonly found in EFL writing classrooms (Yassin & Sood, 2024).

The observation results in Cycle I showed that the teaching and learning process had not yet been implemented optimally. Although the Genre-Based Approach had been introduced, some students still experienced difficulties in organizing ideas, applying appropriate vocabulary, and using correct grammatical structures in writing descriptive texts. Similar findings were reported by Rusmawan, who stated that initial implementation of GBA often requires sufficient modeling and guided practice to be effective. The results of the writing test in Cycle I revealed that several students still achieved scores below the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM). These findings suggest that students needed more intensive guidance, clearer modeling, and additional practice to improve their writing performance.

In response to the weaknesses identified in Cycle I, improvements were made in Cycle II. The lecturer strengthened the implementation of GBA by providing clearer explanations of text structure and language features during the Modeling of the Text (MOT) stage. This stage plays a crucial role in helping students understand how a genre is constructed (Nasution et al., 2022)More guided practice was also provided during the Joint Construction of the Text (JCOT) stage, allowing

students to collaborate, exchange ideas, and receive immediate feedback. Collaborative writing activities in JCOT have been proven to increase students' engagement and confidence in writing (Tenri Waji et al., 2023).

The results of Cycle II demonstrated a significant improvement in students' writing skill. Based on the writing test results, the average score increased and all students achieved the Minimum Mastery Criterion. Students were able to produce more organized descriptive texts with clearer identification and description, richer vocabulary use, and fewer grammatical errors. Classroom observation also showed that students became more active and engaged during the learning process. They were more willing to participate in discussions, share ideas, and write independently. These results support previous studies which found that GBA effectively improves students' writing quality and classroom participation (Yassin & Sood, 2024).

The findings of this study indicate that the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) is effective in improving students' writing skill. The gradual scaffolding provided through the stages of Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF), Modeling of the Text (MOT), Joint Construction of the Text (JCOT), and Independent Construction of the Text (ICOT) helped students move from understanding the genre to producing texts independently. This scaffolding process aligns with the theory that writing instruction should focus not only on the final product, but also on the process of writing itself (Rusmawan, 2017; Tenri Waji et al., 2023). By guiding students step by step, GBA helps reduce students' anxiety and encourages them to develop writing competence more confidently.

In conclusion, the improvement in students' writing performance from Cycle I to Cycle II confirms that the implementation of GBA successfully addressed the problems identified in the preliminary study. The approach enhanced students' motivation, participation, and writing quality. Therefore, the Genre-Based Approach can be considered an effective instructional model for improving writing skill, particularly descriptive writing, in higher education contexts such as STIT Palapa Nusantara Lombok. This conclusion is consistent with previous empirical studies that highlight the effectiveness of GBA in EFL writing instruction (Nasution et al., 2022; Yassin & Sood, 2024).

CONCLUSION

Based on the Classroom Action Research (CAR) conducted in two cycles, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) significantly improved students' writing skill at STIT Palapa Nusantara Lombok. Learning activities in both cycles showed continuous

improvement, particularly in students' ability to develop ideas, organize descriptive texts, and apply appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures. Students also demonstrated greater independence and confidence in writing during the learning process.

The students' writing achievement increased in each cycle. The results indicated that the mean score improved from 58.28 in the preliminary test to 81.03 in Cycle I and further increased to 83.79 in Cycle II. This improvement was also reflected in the percentage of students who achieved the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM) of 70. In the preliminary test, only 34.48% of students reached the KKM, while 65.52% were below the criterion. In Cycle I, 93.10% of students achieved the KKM, with only 6.90% still below the standard. In Cycle II, 100% of students successfully met the KKM.

These findings indicate that the Classroom Action Research was successful and that the Genre-Based Approach is an effective instructional approach for improving students' writing skill, particularly in writing descriptive texts, at STIT Palapa Nusantara Lombok.

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