

# Exploring Secondary School English Teachers' Knowledge of the Genre-based Approach: Insight into Concept and Implementation

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## ABSTRACT

*The Genre-Based Approach (GBA) has been widely implemented in national curricula to support students' writing development through the scaffolded stages of the Teaching and Learning Cycle. Despite its prominence, limited research has explored teachers' understanding of GBA from both conceptual and practical perspectives. This descriptive qualitative study aims to investigate how four Indonesian secondary school English teachers understand the principles and implementation of GBA in teaching writing. The participants were purposefully selected from junior and senior high schools and represented varied levels of teaching experience as well as different degrees of exposure to formal GBA training. This variation allowed for a comparative understanding of how training and experience shape teachers' interpretations and classroom use of GBA. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews that explored teachers' conceptual knowledge of GBA, their understanding of the Teaching and Learning Cycle, instructional strategies across its stages, and assessment practices in genre-based writing instruction. The findings reveal that teachers who had received formal GBA training demonstrated stronger theoretical understanding of how to implement the Teaching and Learning Cycle systematically. In contrast, teachers without formal training tended to rely more on experience-based practices, often focusing on surface features of texts. Although all participants recognized the benefits of GBA for students' writing development, they also reported common challenges, including limited instructional time, diverse student proficiency levels, and restricted teaching resources. These findings highlight the importance of ongoing professional development and sustained institutional support to enable teachers to implement GBA more effectively in secondary school classrooms.*

**Keywords:** Genre-based approach; secondary English teachers; writing instruction

## INTRODUCTION

The development of students' English language skills has long been a national priority for the Indonesian government as part of broader efforts to prepare young citizens for participation in an increasingly globalized world. This commitment has been reflected in several curriculum reforms, including the 2004 Competency-Based Curriculum, the 2006 School-Based Curriculum, the 2013 Curriculum, and the current Merdeka Curriculum. Across these reforms, English is positioned as a crucial subject for developing communicative competence, with writing identified as one of the key productive skills essential for academic achievement and professional communication. Writing enables learners to express ideas, organize arguments,

and engage in meaningful communication across contexts and audiences (Bora, 2023). Writing, in particular, enables individuals to articulate and organize their thoughts more effectively than spoken communication (Asyifa & Daulay, 2024).

To support these goals, the Genre-Based Approach (hereafter GBA) has been adopted as a recommended framework for English writing instruction in Indonesia (Emilia & Hamied, 2015). Rooted in Systemic Functional Linguistics (hereafter SFL), a framework developed by Halliday (Rohmatunnazilah, 2025), GBA views language not merely as a set of grammatical rules but as a social semiotic system, that is a resource for making meaning within specific social and cultural contexts (Halliday, 1994; Sinurat, 2019). This theoretical foundation links linguistic features to communicative purposes, emphasizing that texts are shaped by context, audience, and purpose (Hyland, 2007). In line with this view, writing instruction in GBA explicitly teaches how texts are organized and how language choices achieve meaning in particular genres (Derewianka & Jones, 2016; Cheng, 2019). The pedagogical model most widely used in GBA is the Teaching and Learning Cycle (hereafter TLC) (Derewianka, 1990), consisting of four scaffolded stages: Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF), Modeling of the Text (MoT), Joint Construction of Text (JCoT), and Independent Construction of Text (ICoT). Within this cycle, scaffolding plays a pivotal role, as teachers act as expert guides who provide support to help students gradually master increasingly complex language skills (Gibbons, 2015; Emilia, 2011).

Through this cycle, students gradually develop control over a target genre, from exploring content and analyzing model texts to jointly and independently constructing their own writing (Chen, 2021; Emilia, 2011; Ueasiriphan & Tangkiengsirisin, 2019). Across all stages of the cycle, students' topical knowledge is continuously developed through a range of instructional activities, which supports their understanding of both the content and the language features of the genre (Kindenberg, 2021). This approach guides students to produce writing that is not only structurally sound but also socially and contextually appropriate (Pham & Bui, 2021). Research has demonstrated that the TLC effectively enhances students' understanding of text structure, coherence, and genre awareness (Xiaoxiao & Ibrahim, 2023).

Numerous studies in Indonesia have supported the effectiveness of GBA in improving students' writing skills. Studies by Ahmad (2018), Kamaliah and Apsari (2022), Hardiningsih et al. (2024), and Saputri (2021) found that GBA improved students' understanding of text organization, confidence in English use, and ability to compose various genres, including recounts, procedures, narratives, and descriptive texts. These findings affirm that when properly implemented, GBA provides a powerful framework for fostering learners' literacy development.

However, the effectiveness of GBA depends strongly on teachers' understanding and pedagogical decisions. According to Neumann et al. (2019), successful implementation requires harmony between "knowing" (conceptual understanding) and "doing" (classroom practice). Teachers' understanding of genre theory, text types, and the TLC stages is essential for making appropriate instructional decisions (Worden, 2018, 2019). Similarly, Faradina and Gandana (2024) emphasize that teachers' mastery of GBA principles shapes their ability to scaffold students' learning and to integrate genre, language, and context meaningfully.

In international contexts, researchers such as Johns (2015), Hedgcock and Lee (2017), Tardy et al. (2018), and Liu and Chen (2022) have examined teachers' conceptual and practical understanding of genre pedagogy. These studies consistently reveal that teachers often struggle to connect linguistic features with communicative purposes, resulting in limited or formulaic genre instruction. For instance, Liu and Chen (2022) reported that pre-service teachers found it difficult to link form, meaning, and context, and rarely provided explicit linguistic guidance.

Such findings highlight a widespread gap between theoretical knowledge and classroom practice, even in well-resourced contexts. In EFL settings like Indonesia, these challenges are intensified by limited professional development and the theoretical complexity of GBA, particularly its foundation in SFL (Cheng, 2019; Johns, 2011). Moreover, teachers face difficulties balancing genre knowledge, language instruction, and time constraints in test-oriented classrooms. Studies by Li et al. (2020), Tardy et al. (2018), and Liu and Chen (2022) suggest that without sustained institutional support, teachers may apply GBA focusing only on text structure without addressing meaning-making and language use. These limitations underscore the need for research that explores how teachers understand GBA within their specific educational contexts.

In addition, assessment practices within GBA are an integral yet sometimes neglected component. Effective genre pedagogy involves formative assessment throughout the TLC, using observation, questioning, and peer or self-evaluation to monitor student progress and inform instruction (Emilia, 2011). Hitimala et al. (2024) found that ongoing, integrated assessment significantly improved students' genre awareness and text organization, while rubrics aligned with genre objectives supported greater learner autonomy (Coffin et al., 2005). However, many teachers continue to rely on summative assessments, overlooking the formative and diagnostic potential of GBA assessment principles.

Overall, while GBA has proven conceptually strong and pedagogically effective, its success in practice depends on teachers' depth of understanding. Yet, there remains limited research focusing on how Indonesian secondary school English teachers conceptualize and apply the GBA in writing instruction. Most existing studies center on students' writing outcomes rather than teachers' pedagogical knowledge and interpretations. This gap limits understanding of how GBA is enacted in real classrooms and what professional development is needed to strengthen implementation.

Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by examining Indonesian secondary school English teachers' understanding and implementation of GBA in teaching writing. Specifically, it investigates how teachers interpret the theoretical foundations of GBA and how they comprehend the pedagogical enactment of its stages. To guide this inquiry, the study is framed by two central research questions: in what ways do secondary school English teachers conceptualize GBA, and how do they perceive its application in writing instruction.

## METHODOLOGY

### RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employed a qualitative research approach, specifically a descriptive qualitative design, to explore secondary school English teachers' knowledge and perceptions of GBA in writing instruction. A qualitative approach was chosen to gain a deep understanding of how teachers conceptualize and describe their knowledge of GBA, based on their own words and teaching experiences.

Descriptive qualitative research aims to present a rich, detailed, and straightforward account of participants' perspectives, staying close to their actual expressions. This design is particularly suitable for educational research where the goal is to describe and understand how a concept is experienced and explained by practitioners in real-world contexts (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

In this study, the descriptive qualitative design allows for the investigation of how teachers understand the principles of GBA, the types of texts they typically teach, and how they

perceive instructional components such as the teaching cycle, classroom activities, and assessment strategies. Since the focus of the research is on teachers' knowledge and perceptions rather than evaluating classroom practices, qualitative description provides an appropriate framework for capturing the depth and diversity of teacher voices.

#### PARTICIPANTS

Purposeful sampling was employed to select participants with relevant experience in English language teaching at the secondary level, aligning with the aims of qualitative research focused on specific pedagogical frameworks such as GBA (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Four English teachers from public junior and senior high schools in Riau and West Java participated in the study. With teaching experience ranging from 2 to 15 years, they represented both early-career and seasoned educators. All had taught under the 2013 Curriculum and the Merdeka Curriculum, both of which promote the use of GBA in writing instruction. Given this curricular exposure and their professional backgrounds, the participants were well-positioned to offer insights into their conceptual understanding and practical implementation of GBA in secondary school classrooms.

A summary of the participants' educational backgrounds, school levels, teaching experience, and involvement in GBA-related training programs is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Profile of the participants

NO	Participant	Formal Education Level	School Level	Teaching Experience	GBA Related Training Program
1	Teacher 1	Bachelor	Junior High School	15 years	Yes
2.	Teacher 2	Bachelor	Senior High School	2 years	No
3.	Teacher 3	Bachelor	Senior High School	6 years	Yes
4.	Teacher 4	Bachelor	Junior high school	6 years	No

#### RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

A semi-structured interview was used to gather data. There were 18 questions developed based on key literature on the key concept and implementation of GBA (Emilia, 2011). The first set of questions focused on exploring teachers' understanding of GBA, specifically their knowledge on the concept, the provision of the texts including genre awareness, and the teaching principles. The second set of questions explored how teachers understand the implementation of GBA in writing instruction, including how they comprehend the Teaching and Learning Cycle (TLC), their classroom practices, assessment strategies, and the challenges they faced. Questions related to participants' teaching experience and educational background were also included to provide context for their responses. The interviews were recorded using audio recordings to

#### DATA ANALYSIS

The interview data were analyzed in several steps based on Creswell (2018). First, the audio recordings were transcribed into written text. The transcripts were then read carefully to understand the teachers' views on GBA and how they implement it to teach writing. Important statements were highlighted and coded. These codes were grouped into themes. Thematic patterns were developed to reflect both the conceptual understanding and practical experiences

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of the four teachers. The analysis was informed by theoretical concepts from the GBA framework to ensure the interpretations were based on the literature. Teachers' direct quotations were included to support and illustrate the emerging themes.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The data were presented aligned with the research questions stated in the introduction and analyzed thematically as described in the method section. Based on thematic analysis, two major themes occurred from the interview data: (1) Teachers' Understanding of the Concept of GBA, and (2) Teachers' Understanding of the Implementation of GBA. Each theme was further divided into sub themes to highlight key patterns in participants' responses. This section begins by presenting the first theme.

### TEACHERS' UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONCEPT OF GBA

The data indicate that the four teachers' understanding of GBA varies considerably, largely depending on whether they have received formal training. Teachers who had undergone formal training demonstrated a more comprehensive and integrated understanding of GBA. They clearly recognized its theoretical foundation in SFL and its dual emphasis on text structure and social purpose. For example, Teacher 1 explained, "SFL is the foundation of GBA because, in GBA, a text must be taught as a whole in order to convey meaning. Each text serves a different function, which aligns with the principles of functional grammar in SFL." Her response reflects a strong understanding of how SFL underpins GBA, emphasizing that GBA is not merely about teaching structure, but also about addressing the social context and communicative purposes of specific texts.

Similarly, Teacher 3 also showed a clear view of GBA's focus on text types and their communicative purposes. She explained:

*"GBA is a teaching approach that focuses on understanding specific text types (genres). In the context of writing, students are taught the structure, purpose, and linguistic features of particular texts so they can write more effectively and appropriately."*

She further elaborated on the theoretical link between GBA and SFL, noting that both view language as functional and shaped by context. Her responses indicate not only an understanding of genre pedagogy but also an appreciation of the importance of equipping students with knowledge of how texts operate in real-world communication.

In contrast, Teacher 2, who had not received formal training, conveyed a more intuitive and less theoretically grounded understanding of GBA. Her explanation suggested that GBA involves using texts as the primary material, though she was less certain about its linguistic foundation. She remarked, "In my opinion, GBA is more about how we teach language by starting from a text... so, the context comes directly from the text." While this perspective touches on the surface principles of GBA, it lacks the deeper conceptual clarity evident among trained teachers. This gap became more apparent when she reflected on her limited knowledge of Systemic Functional Linguistics, noting, "I only heard about SFL during university... maybe that's how it connects to GBA." These comments reveal a limited and fragmented grasp of the theoretical underpinnings of GBA.

Teacher 4 displayed the most limited understanding of the approach. She offered a very general explanation that emphasized its practical aim without referencing any theoretical framework. She stated, "A method that focuses on teaching various text types to help students

develop writing skills.” Her response reflects a superficial grasp of GBA. Moreover, she acknowledged unfamiliarity with SFL, suggesting that her knowledge was derived more from classroom experience than from formal academic training.

Regarding text provision and genre knowledge, the study found that all four teachers acknowledged the importance of introducing various text types in writing instruction. However, the depth of their genre knowledge varied considerably.

Teacher 1, for instance, emphasized the functional dimension of genre, stating that:

*“Text types that are requested in Junior High School are descriptive, narrative, recount, procedure. The communicative purpose means that a text always has a purpose, and each genre has its own characteristics, marked by its structure and the linguistic features that often appear in particular texts.”*

This statement reflects an understanding consistent with SFL perspectives, which view language as a tool for achieving social purposes and position genre as a means of organizing meaning in context. Similarly, Teacher 3 provided a detailed description of two genres and linked each to its defining features. She explained: “Narrative texts aim to entertain, with a structure of orientation, complication, and resolution. Their language features include the use of past tense, action verbs, and adverbs of time.” This response demonstrates more than surface-level familiarity, showing a clear conceptual grasp of how GBA supports students in producing contextually appropriate and communicatively effective texts.

In contrast, the responses of Teachers 2 and 4 indicate a more procedural and less confident understanding of genre. Teacher 2, for example, listed a few genres and offered a hesitant explanation of descriptive texts: “The text types include report, descriptive, and procedure texts. These help students describe and recognize objects that they see every day. As for the structure of descriptive text, it has identification... and for language features, it uses proper nouns, if I’m not mistaken.”

The phrase “if I’m not mistaken” signals uncertainty, suggesting that her knowledge is still developing and largely shaped by practical experience and textbook exposure. Similarly, Teacher 4 provided a formulaic definition of descriptive text, stating: “Descriptive text is used to describe an object in detail, whether it’s a thing, person, place, or event. Its structure includes: Identification, about identifying the object; Description, about describing the characteristics in detail. Language features include adjectives to describe objects, nouns and noun phrases.”

Although technically accurate, her explanation seemed memorized and did not extend to the broader communicative purpose or contextual function of the genre. In other words, she described the structural and linguistic features correctly but overlooked how genres operate as tools for meaning-making in social contexts and how they guide students toward effective communication.

Regarding the basic principles of GBA, particularly scaffolding, explicit instruction, and contextual grammar, Teachers 1 and 3 demonstrated a strong, theory-informed grasp. Teacher 1 stated: “The main principles of GBA are scaffolding and explicit teaching so that students can reach their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). GBA also follows the principle of equity...” This response reflects her understanding of GBA as both inclusive and developmentally supportive. She further emphasized grammar as a meaning-making tool, taught contextually through model texts.

Teacher 3 similarly highlighted that “the main principles include social context-based learning, scaffolding, and explicit exploration of text structure and language.” This illustrates her focus on function and clarity in writing, with grammar instruction aligned to GBA’s emphasis on meaning-making.

Teacher 4, by contrast, did not refer to specific GBA stages but described a sequential approach to teaching genre. She explained: “Descriptive text is used to describe an object in detail... Its structure includes: Identification... Description, ... model texts help students understand grammar in context.” While accurate, her explanation appeared more practice-oriented than theoretically grounded. Unlike Teachers 1 and 3, who had received training and explicitly mentioned GBA principles, she did not articulate these underlying concepts.

Teacher 2 offered a more intuitive explanation: “The principle is that students should first explore the text... Before I give them a list of unfamiliar vocabulary, I usually provide space for them to write down which words are new... Grammar is taught from the text.” These responses suggest that Teacher 2 adopted a contextual and experience-based approach to GBA. However, her explanations lacked clear and explicit connections to its established principles, indicating reliance more on practical teaching experience than on a formal theoretical understanding of genre pedagogy.

#### TEACHERS’ UNDERSTANDING OF GBA IMPLEMENTATION

In terms of understanding the cycles of GBA, all four teachers demonstrated familiarity with the Teaching and Learning Cycle (TLC), although their levels of understanding varied. Teachers 1 and 3, who had formal training, showed a clear grasp of the four stages: BKOF, MoT, JCoT, and ICoT, as well as their instructional purposes. Teacher 1 explained:

*“I start with building knowledge to explore students’ prior understanding of the topic and introduce key expressions. Then I provide model texts... we write a text together... and finally, they write their own texts individually.”*

Her explanation demonstrates not only a practical understanding of classroom procedures but also an awareness of the theoretical foundations of GBA. By explicitly outlining each stage, she shows how instruction is scaffolded to support students’ gradual development of genre knowledge, which indicates that her teaching practice is grounded in both pedagogical theory and informed training.

Similarly, Teacher 3 stated: “I usually follow the four stages: BKOF, MoT, JCoT, and ICoT. Each stage helps prepare students gradually to write on their own.” This response reflects a confident and systematic understanding of GBA as a scaffolded model of instruction. Her explanation shows awareness of how each phase builds upon the previous one to support students’ development, suggesting that the implementation is intentional and rooted in a clear understanding of genre pedagogy.

Teacher 4, although lacking formal training, described a similar process: “I start with introducing the topic, then we read examples, write together, and at the end, students write by themselves.” This explanation generally aligns with the stages of the TLC within GBA. However, the use of non-technical terms such as “introducing the topic” and “read examples” suggests a more practice-based understanding rather than one informed by theoretical knowledge. The absence of explicit reference to key stages such as Building Knowledge of the Field implies that her implementation is guided more by classroom experience than by formal pedagogical training.

In contrast, Teacher 2 showed a fragmented view, stating: “I usually begin by giving them the text or reading aloud together... after that, I show them a list of keywords... then they make outlines and write based on different topics.” This response suggests that her implementation relies more on classroom practices than on a clear understanding of the theoretical framework underpinning genre pedagogy. While some components of GBA are

present, the absence of clearly defined stages points to the need for further professional development in aligning practice with theory.

Regarding instructional strategies in implementing GBA, all four teachers used approaches consistent with GBA, particularly scaffolded instruction, model texts, and gradual release. However, their depth of understanding and theoretical framing varied. Teacher 1 demonstrated a clear, structured application of the TLC, explaining:

*"I start with building knowledge to explore students' prior understanding of the topic and introduce key expressions. Then I provide model texts so students can recognize the structure and language features. After that, we write a text together, and finally, they write their own texts."*

This explanation demonstrates a clear understanding of the TLC, with each stage deliberately applied. The structured sequence reflects strong theoretical grounding and purposeful integration of genre pedagogy into classroom practice.

Similarly, Teacher 3 showed confidence and precision, stating: "In the BKOF stage, I hold discussions or show videos. Then in modelling, we read and analyze a sample text. During joint construction, we write together on the board. Finally, students write individually." This response highlights not only her understanding of GBA principles but also her ability to apply them through interactive and student-centered strategies. The integration of multimodal resources and collaborative writing reflects an informed and practical approach to scaffolded instruction.

Teacher 4 followed a similar instructional flow but used more general terms: "I help students learn vocabulary and structure using pictures or videos, then give them a text example. After that, we write together, and then they write on their own." While her teaching aligns with GBA practices, the absence of theoretical references suggests familiarity grounded more in practical experience than in conceptual understanding.

Teacher 2 described a less structured process: "We usually start with reading aloud and writing down unfamiliar words. Then I give them a list of useful vocabulary. After that, we talk about the structure and make outlines before writing." While this approach includes aspects of modeling and support, it lacks clear alignment with the TLC stages and reflects a developing understanding of GBA.

Regarding assessment, all four teachers applied practices that reflected their GBA knowledge and experience. Teacher 1, with formal training, stated: "I have to prepare a rubric first. It usually contains aspects like text structure, grammar, and content. The most important parts are structure and grammar." This response reflects a theory-based approach to assessment aligned with GBA principles. The use of rubrics highlights her focus on clarity and consistency, emphasizing key genre elements and reinforcing assessment as an essential part of the teaching process.

Teacher 3 also used a rubric but with broader focus: "I use a rubric that includes five aspects: text structure, grammar, vocabulary, coherence, and mechanics. Each is scored from one to five." This response indicates that she demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of how to assess both structural elements and functional effectiveness of student writing, aligning with genre-based assessment practices.

Teacher 4, without formal training, described: "I use a rubric with components like structure, topic relevance, vocabulary, grammar and spelling, coherence between sentences and paragraphs, and language style." Although her explanation lacks reference to theoretical frameworks, it demonstrates an intuitive understanding of key genre elements. Her rubric covers both micro-level features such as grammar and vocabulary and macro-level aspects such as coherence and text structure. This suggests that her assessment practice, while experience-



based rather than theory-driven, still reflects awareness of what constitutes effective writing within a genre, shaped by practical classroom engagement and observation.

Teacher 2, the least experienced, focused mainly on coherence: “I use a rubric, like scoring different aspects, but the most important part is coherence, which is how the ideas connect.” Her response suggests a narrow focus on one aspect of writing, with limited attention to other genre-specific features such as structure, language use, or purpose. While coherence is indeed a crucial component of effective writing, the lack of reference to a broader set of criteria indicates a more practice-driven than theory-informed approach. This limited perspective may stem from her minimal experience and lack of formal exposure to GBA principles, highlighting the importance of targeted professional development in assessment literacy within genre pedagogy.

Regarding the perceived benefits and challenges of implementing GBA, all four teachers acknowledged both its strengths and limitations, although their responses varied in depth and emphasis. Teacher 1 reported that GBA made her teaching more structured and goal-oriented. Her understanding of the Teaching and Learning Cycle (TLC) supported more systematic lesson planning, as reflected in her statement: “I feel that my teaching becomes more organized because I become more aware of what I need to do at each stage in GBA.” However, she also noted that GBA is time-consuming and requires creative strategies to maintain student engagement across all stages of the cycle.

Teacher 2 highlighted that GBA helps students internalize grammar rules more naturally through contextualized texts. She explained, “It helps them differentiate sentences and understand grammar rules implicitly.” Despite this benefit, she identified vocabulary development as an ongoing challenge in genre-based writing activities.

Teacher 3 offered a more comprehensive perspective, observing that GBA supported students in writing more clearly and critically. She noted improvements in students’ ability to organize ideas and understand the purposes of different genres. At the same time, she pointed out practical constraints, particularly limited instructional time and varying levels of student ability, which made full implementation of the Teaching and Learning Cycle difficult.

Similarly, Teacher 4 emphasized that GBA increased students’ awareness of different text types and contributed to overall improvement in writing quality. Although she did not explicitly refer to theoretical concepts, her explanation reflected a practical understanding of genre instruction. Nevertheless, she encountered common challenges, including limited class time, diverse student proficiency levels, and difficulties in motivating students to engage in writing tasks.

Overall, these findings suggest that while GBA is viewed as a valuable framework for teaching writing, its effective implementation in the classroom is influenced by teachers’ conceptual understanding, instructional strategies, and their ability to address contextual constraints.

## DISCUSSION

This study shows that the four teachers brought different levels of knowledge and confidence in applying GBA. A key factor behind these differences was whether they had received formal GBA training. Teachers who were trained tended to make stronger connections with Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), viewing writing not only as organizing grammar and structure but also as creating meaning for real purposes, audiences, and contexts (De Oliveira, 2023; Martin & Rose, 2008). Because of this perspective, their teaching was more intentional and closely aligned with genre pedagogy. This understanding reflects Hyland’s (2019) view that teachers who adopt a genre-oriented approach look beyond content and grammar to see

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writing as an act of communication aimed at achieving particular purposes and conveying meaning to readers.

In contrast, teachers without formal GBA training tended to focus more on surface features of texts, such as grammar and structure, and relied largely on personal teaching experience and textbook instructions (Emilia, 2011; Ur, 2019). This orientation suggests a more limited view of writing, in which communicative purpose and audience receive less emphasis, as described by Hyland (2019).

These contrasts became especially clear when teachers described how they conducted lessons. The trained teachers confidently followed the Teaching and Learning Cycle (TLC), carefully moving from building knowledge to independent writing, and using scaffolding so students gradually took more responsibility (Suharyadi & Basthomi, 2020). They were also creative in selecting materials such as videos, group tasks, and guided text analysis to support learning (Nugraha et al., 2024). On the other hand, teachers without training sometimes used similar activities but were not always aware that they belonged to specific TLC stages, a gap between what teachers do and the theory behind it, as Gebhard (2009) also observed.

Assessment practices also revealed clear differences. Teachers with training designed rubrics that closely followed the features of each genre, which helped students understand what was expected in their writing (Hitimala et al., 2024). Those without training tended to use more general scoring that did not always highlight which aspects students needed to improve (Suharyadi & Basthomi, 2020). This limited feedback may slow students' progress, especially when learning more complex genres at the secondary level.

Despite their different levels of knowledge, all teachers agreed that GBA has helped students write more clearly and more confidently. They also shared many of the same obstacles: limited class time, students with very different English abilities, and maintaining motivation during longer writing tasks, the issues commonly reported in EFL classrooms (Liu & Chen, 2022). Interestingly, teachers with training seemed more prepared to adapt and make adjustments, showing that knowledge empowers practice.

This study highlights how deeply teacher understanding influences the success of GBA in the classroom. Even teachers who are motivated and positive about GBA still need proper training, ongoing support, and opportunities to learn together. As Tardy et al. (2018, 2022) remind us, effective genre pedagogy develops not only from knowing the features of texts but also from continuously learning how to teach writing in meaningful ways. Strengthening both theoretical understanding and classroom practice is essential for ensuring that GBA truly benefits students' writing development.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study concludes that secondary school English teachers demonstrate varying levels of conceptual and practical knowledge of GBA. Teachers who have received formal training showed a stronger understanding of the theoretical foundation of GBA, particularly its basis in Systemic Functional Linguistics, the role of genre in meaning-making, and the importance of scaffolding and explicit instruction through the Teaching and Learning Cycle (TLC). They also implemented GBA more systematically in the classroom, including the use of appropriate learning stages and genre-based assessment rubrics. In contrast, teachers without formal training tended to rely on intuition and textbook guidance, resulting in a more limited focus on text structure and language forms rather than genre purpose and context.

Despite these differences, all teachers recognized the benefits of GBA in supporting students' writing development, particularly in helping them organize ideas and understand text features. However, challenges such as limited time, diverse student proficiency levels, and maintaining engagement were commonly experienced. These findings indicate that while GBA is valued in practice, teachers still require stronger theoretical grounding and support to fully implement genre pedagogy effectively.

Therefore, this study recommends strengthening professional development programs to ensure continuous and comprehensive training on GBA principles and classroom implementation. Providing guidance on genre-based assessment, collaborative teacher learning communities, and adequate resources such as model texts and classroom time allocation can also improve the quality of teaching. By enhancing both knowledge and support systems, teachers will be better equipped to apply GBA consistently and meaningfully, resulting in more effective writing instruction in Indonesian secondary schools. Future research should expand the scope by involving a greater number of schools and incorporating classroom observations to better capture how teachers' knowledge is reflected in actual instructional practices.

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