

A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW OF GENRE-BASED APPROACH IMPLEMENTATION IN TEACHING ESL/EFL WRITING, PERIOD 2021-2024

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: 05/4/2025	This systematic review investigates genre-based approach implementation in English as a Second Language/English as a Foreign Language writing instruction from 2021-2024, employing a triple-analysis methodology comprising bibliometric, content, and scientometric analyses. To achieve this, the study employed a combination of three analytical methods: bibliometric analysis, content analysis, and bibliographic coupling. The study identifies significant shifts in research focus and geographical distributions compared to previous periods. Bibliometric analysis reveals Indonesia's emergence as the leading contributor, displacing traditional Western research dominance. Content analysis indicates balanced attention to informative and evaluative genres, predominance of qualitative and mixed-method approaches, and concentration on undergraduate students. Scientometric analysis identifies three research clusters: pedagogical approaches, educational contexts, and specific research foci, with growing interest in teacher perspectives and hybrid methodologies. The findings suggest genre-based approach research is evolving from theoretical foundations toward classroom application concerns with increasing contextual adaptations to diverse educational environments. From the review results, implications for practitioners include implementing balanced genre integration, contextualizing genre-based approach for specific educational settings, adopting hybrid approaches, and aligning assessment practices. As genre-based approach continues gaining prominence in English as a Second Language/English as a Foreign Language writing instruction, future research should prioritize cross-cultural collaborations, methodological diversification, and exploration of emerging digital communication genres.
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KEYWORDS

Genre-based approach

ESL/EFL writing

Bibliometric analysis

Scientometric analysis

Writing pedagogy

NGHIÊN CỨU TỔNG QUAN CÓ HỆ THỐNG VỀ VIỆC ÁP DỤNG PHƯƠNG PHÁP DỰA TRÊN THỂ LOẠI TRONG GIẢNG DẠY VIẾT TIẾNG ANH NHƯ NGÔN NGỮ THỨ HAI/NGOẠI NGỮ, GIAI ĐOẠN 2021-2024

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THÔNG TIN BÀI BÁO	TÓM TẮT
Ngày nhận bài: 05/4/2025	Nghiên cứu này kết hợp ba phương pháp phân tích nhằm khảo sát việc áp dụng phương pháp tiếp cận dựa trên thể loại trong giảng dạy viết tiếng Anh như ngôn ngữ thứ hai/ngoại ngữ giai đoạn 2021-2024. Ba phương pháp phân tích được sử dụng gồm: phân tích thư mục, phân tích nội dung, và phân tích khoa học thư mục. Kết quả trắc lượng thư mục chỉ ra Indonesia nổi lên là quốc gia đóng góp hàng đầu, thay thế vị thế thống trị của phương Tây. Phương pháp phân tích nội dung phát hiện các nghiên cứu giai đoạn này tập trung vào thể loại văn bản thông tin và đánh giá, chủ yếu sử dụng phương pháp nghiên cứu định tính và hỗn hợp, và tập trung vào sinh viên đại học. Phân tích khoa học lượng xác định ba cụm nghiên cứu về phương pháp sư phạm, bối cảnh giáo dục, và trọng tâm nghiên cứu cụ thể, với sự quan tâm ngày càng cao đến quan điểm của giáo viên và phương pháp dạy kết hợp. Nghiên cứu về phương pháp tiếp cận dựa trên thể loại có xu hướng chuyển từ lý thuyết sang ứng dụng thực tế thích ứng theo bối cảnh. Những khoảng trống nghiên cứu được xác định bao gồm: thể loại văn bản kỹ thuật số, nghiên cứu dài hạn, và phát triển chuyên môn giáo viên. Các nghiên cứu tiếp theo nên thúc đẩy hợp tác giữa các quốc gia, tập trung vào áp dụng các phương pháp đa dạng, và khám phá thể loại giao tiếp kỹ thuật số mới.
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1. Introduction

Writing is the most striking skill to English as a Second Language/ English as a Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) learners all over the world [1]-[5]. Teachers have tried different teaching techniques to help their non-native English learners among which is genre-based approach (GBA), which is defined as a framework for language instruction using samples from specific genres [6]. Hyland [7] states that GBA has largely drawn on systematic functional grammar theory which explores the relationship between language and its social functions, aiming to demonstrate how language operates as a system that allows users to choose expressions to convey meanings. This approach stands out from others by focusing not just on subject content, composing processes, and linguistic forms, but on how a text aims to communicate with its readers. The core belief of this approach is that writing is done to achieve specific communicative purposes [2], [6], [8]. As a result, the GBA has gained increasing attention from teachers and researchers in the field of teaching writing.

The concept of genre has been defined differently by scholars from different schools of thought. The English for Specific Purpose (ESP), represented by Swales [9], conceptualizes genre as “a class of communicative events with some shared set of communicative purposes”. This concept is underpinned by the assumptions that similar groups of text share features aligning with the social settings in which they are created and used. While ESP focuses on communicative purposes, the SFL school, also known as Sydney school, defines genre as “a staged, goal-oriented, purposeful activity in which speakers (writers) engage as members of culture” [10, p.2] as the scholars in this field focus on the relation between genre and context of registers [11]. Building upon these perspectives and of seeing textual regularities as socially constructed, the New Rhetorical approach to genre integrates “text and context, product and process, cognition and culture in a single, dynamic concept” [12, p.57]. Genres are now perceived as shaping human activity by enabling it through ideological and rhetorical conventions [13]. Despite the differences in terms of theoretical backgrounds and approaches among scholars, it is commonly agreed among them that genre reflects community-specific language practices and includes the methods by which writers structure their texts and readers interpret the texts. However, among the three schools, the ESP and SFL are believed to offer direct pedagogical implications which are transferred into the teaching [2], [10], [14], [15].

In GBA writing classroom, teaching-learning cycle is deployed to teach learners the structure and linguistic patterns that occur in the target genres. The genre-based teaching-learning approach was originally cyclical with three phases in the order: deconstruction, join construction and independent construction [5], [16], [17]. Based on that, different teaching theories and models were proposed, contributing to upgrade the teaching – learning cycle (TLC). For instance, Hammond and Macken-Horarik’s model [18] consists of four stages with one additional (building-knowledge-of-context stage at the beginning) compared to the aforementioned. Derewianka and Jones [19] develop a five-stage model with: building knowledge of context, supported reading, deconstruction, join construction and independent construction.

In EFL/ESL writing classes, such teaching-learning cycles are widely used to provide students with instructions explaining rhetorical patterns, structures and language features of specific genres as well as those genres’ social-communicative purposes [7]. This instructional approach is expected to enable teachers to help EFL/ESL students improve their understanding of the target genres’ textual structures and linguistic features as well as raise their awareness of the conventions of academic writing in English [20]. However, the application of GBA in teaching writing also faces some critical arguments about its drawbacks. Some researchers claim that GBA pay too much attention to conventions and genres, therefore, it limits learners’ creativity (in creating ideas) and ignore their self-sufficiency [21], [22]. In addition, GBA neglects the importance of teaching EFL/ESL students basic linguistic, grammatical and vocabulary knowledge which help them express ideas in English [23].

That is why genre-based pedagogy remains somewhat controversial and, therefore, remains a hot topic for researchers around the world.

There have been a number of research on GBA since it was first introduced by Swales in the 1980s. Some research is purely theoretical, discussing the use of genre-based instruction, its teaching-learning cycle, its strength and limitations (e.g. [2], [15], [17], [24]). Some report results from empirical studies on the application of GBA in teaching writing (e.g. [16], [25]). Others explore students' perceptions and attitudes toward genre-based pedagogy in teaching writing (e.g. [14], [26]). Recently, GBA has also gained recognition in teacher education, teacher cognition [10]. However, there have been only a limited number of review articles on this topic, with two significant ones. The first review done by Paltridge [27] mostly explored the implementation of GBA in L1 writing. The second by Razali and Zhai [23] focused on its development in ESL/EFL writing. Their work drew a relatively comprehensive picture of the GBA's development in writing pedagogy for the period 2003-early 2021. The latter review figured out that during the studied timeframe, China, the US, Japan, Thailand, Sweden, and Hong Kong were the top countries publishing GBA pedagogy research. This approach could be employed to teach various genres such as recounts, research articles, narratives, critical literacy, professional reflective writing as well as for test preparation. Moreover, GBA is now widely used in different disciplines rather than language teaching. The review also showed that during the given periods, researchers preferred to use quasi-experimental research design, and the dominant participants were tertiary students. It particularly indicated that GBA's annual publication trends positively and sustainably developed for the last 5 years (2017-early 2021). Such development in the recent last quarter of a 20 year-long period may signal the starting point of changes in the field of GBA and writing pedagogy. To further complete GBA research map and identify its recent trends in writing pedagogy in the ESL/EFL context, this study will perform a triple analysis systematic literature review (SLR) to review articles in the period 2021-2024 in terms of country distributions, research disciplines, writing tasks, research design, research participants, annual publication trends and keyword bursts. This study's findings will be compared with those of Razali and Zhai [23] to confirm or reject the hypothesis of changes in the field. Whatever result of the comparison, the study is hoped to contribute to showcase a more comprehensive picture of the GBA in writing pedagogy.

To fulfill the objectives, this study aimed to answer two following research questions:

1. What is the status quo of GBA in writing instruction studies in the period 2021-2024?
2. What are the trends of GBA in writing instruction studies in the period 2021-2024?

2. Methods/Materials

2.1. Data sources

This study used Google Scholar as the primary database. After applying inclusion and exclusion criteria (Table 1) adapted from [28], 47 relevant studies were retained.

Table 1. Criteria for article inclusion and exclusion

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Key words	GBA, ESL/EFL, writing	Lack either key word
Publication timeline	January 2021 – December 2024	2020 and before
Language	English	Languages other than English
Document type	Research articles Conference proceedings Book chapters Unpublished theses	Books Notes

Of the 47 selected articles, 24 were indexed in Scopus and 23 were from non-Scopus sources including national journals, university journals and conference proceedings. Non-Scopus publications were assessed by two independent reviewers with disagreement resolved through

discussion. They were included in the review to provide a comprehensive picture of GBA trend around the world.

2.2. Analysis tools

The research followed a four-stage process shown in Figure 1. First, we conducted an SLR to gather data, selecting articles based on criteria such as keywords, language, and document types. Second, we applied a quantitative bibliometric analysis to refine the selection of articles and investigate trends in GBA within writing pedagogy research. Third, we performed content analysis to categorize the selected papers, conducting a thorough review to map the landscape of GBA research in ESL/EFL writing pedagogy studies. Finally, we conducted a scientometric analysis using the text-mining tool VOSviewer.

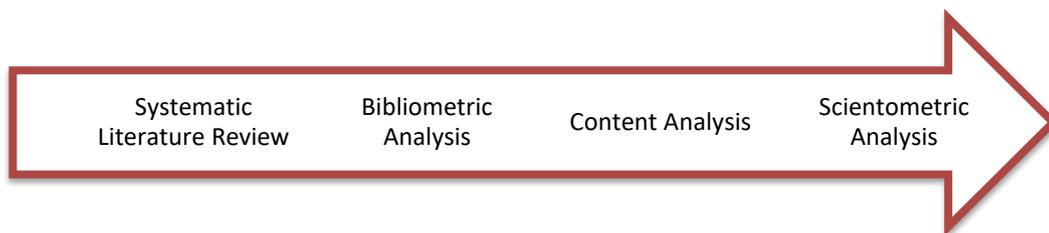


Figure 1. A flowchart showing the four-stage research procedure [23]

2.2.1. Systematic Literature Reviews (SLRs)

Systematic literature reviews emerged in the late 1970s. They were originally introduced in academia as a systematic, transparent, and reproducible approach to synthesizing research findings [23]. As defined by Lame [30], SLRs synthesize scientific evidence to address specific research questions in a manner that is transparent and reproducible. In other words, this method offers a comprehensive overview of the existing literature related to specific research questions, allowing for the presentation and synthesis of findings. This approach aims to include all relevant published evidence on the topic while critically assessing the quality of this evidence. These methods help reduce bias in selecting and including studies, evaluating the quality of the included studies, and summarizing them objectively.

The standard process of SLRs comprise eight steps [30]. First, research question(s) must be formulated. Second, inclusion and exclusion criteria must be clearly set to define the databases. Such criteria are guided by well-structured research questions, definitions or conceptualizations, key variables, research designs, participants, timeframes, and data [31]. They may include topic, methods, study designs, methodological quality of studies, etc. The third step is to locate the studies. A search strategy must be developed to cover the broadest possible range of sources relevant to the pre-determined research question. Studies can be found from databases like Scopus, Web of Science, study registers, academic repositories for theses, reference lists, etc. Next, the located studies must be assessed to decide if they meet the inclusion criteria. Relevant studies are often selected through two rounds: (1) screening titles and abstracts, (2) screening full texts of those passing the first round. To avoid subjectivity, it is required to have at least two reviewers to carry this task [23], [30]. After that, a pre-defined method for assessing the quality of included studies is used to assess the quality of the included studies. In step six, a pre-defined form is utilized to extract the data from each individual study. Step five and six also require the participation of at least two reviewers. A pre-defined method then is employed to analyze the data and synthesize the information from included studies. Finally, results are interpreted considering the limitations of the review, the strength of the evidence it surfaced, how research question is answered and what gaps for future research have emerged.

This study conducted a SLR focusing on trends in the most recent 4 years (2021-2024) in GBA research in the ESL/EFL context, and identifying gaps in recent writing pedagogy studies;

therefore, the key words to locate studies are genre-based approach, ESL/EFL and writing. Establishing a timeframe is crucial when conducting an SLR [23]. The period of 2021-2024 was chosen as the timeframe for investigation because this study was conducted as a subsequent review after that of Razali and Zhai [23] which investigated the earlier period. This SLR covering research conducted during the period can reveal the key works that have influenced and shaped the genre-based teaching of second language (L2) writing in English classroom settings.

In step four, each study's research type, subject, objectives, and methods were first carefully reviewed according to pre-established inclusion and exclusion criteria mentioned in Table 1. This involved a thorough screening of the selected articles' titles, abstracts, and keywords. In the second round, the full articles of those satisfying previous round's criteria were read. To report the result, a common SLR method in various research fields, PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses), involving four key steps (identification, screening, eligibility, and data abstraction and analysis) [32] was employed. The detailed PRISMA flowchart can be found in the Appendix.

2.2.2. Triple approaches to SLR data analysis

Bibliometric analysis

Bibliometric analysis is a widely-used and robust approach for investigating and interpreting large volume of scientific data [33]. It allows us to unravel the developmental intricacies of a particular field while highlighting emerging trends within that area. Bibliometrics, including citation and co-citation analyses, employs quantitative methods based on written documents to identify the essence of a field. The data central to bibliometric analysis is typically vast in scale (often encompassing hundreds or even thousands of records) and objective by nature (such as citation counts, publication numbers, and keyword occurrences). However, its interpretation often involves a blend of objective assessments (like performance analysis) and subjective evaluations (such as thematic analysis), guided by well-established techniques and methodologies [34].

In this study, we used SLR data to conduct a bibliometric analysis of GBA-related papers.

One limitation of bibliometric analyses is that the significance of references can vary and citations within a publication or article may sometimes be unrelated [34]. As mentioned above, bibliometric analyses often employ a sufficiently large sample size to reduce citation pattern discrepancies [35], references still reveal the underlying thoughts and concepts of a publication. To address this, the present study utilized content analysis of key articles [36].

Content Analysis

Content analysis is a research method employed to identify the occurrence of specific words, themes, or concepts within qualitative data, such as text. This approach allows researchers to measure and examine the frequency, significance, and connections of these elements [37]. For instance, by analyzing the language in a news article, researchers can detect potential bias or partiality. From this analysis, they can draw conclusions about the underlying messages, the authors, the intended audience, and the broader cultural and historical context of the text.

In this review, content analysis was conducted on the abstracts of 47 GBA studies carried out between 2021 and 2024, focusing on three fields: Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, language learning, and education. This analysis identified three main themes: types of writing tasks, research design/methods, and participant demographics.

Scientometric Analysis

While manual reviews provide valuable overviews of a field, they are susceptible to bias and subjective interpretation [38]. To overcome these challenges, VOSviewer, a tool designed for analyzing co-citation networks, was utilized for scientometric analysis. Scientometric analysis creates thematic maps of specialized disciplines, science domains, and research frameworks by visualizing bibliometric networks based on extensive literature. VOSviewer offers distinct advantages in visualizing and analyzing scientific literature, making it easier to understand by

generating accessible graphs that reveal insights hidden in large datasets. This innovative visualization method was applied to analyze and map a broader network from collected sources.

During the scientometric analysis of this review, articles were reviewed to visualize bibliometric networks, mapping the trends in GBA-related writing pedagogy studies from 2021 to 2024.

Overall, the three approaches - bibliometric, content, and scientometric analyses - complement each other in identifying key concepts and themes, revealing research gaps, guiding future research, and establishing the theoretical foundations and structure of GBA studies [33].

3. Results and Discussions

3.1. Bibliometric analysis

A total of 45 published primary research papers and 2 secondary ones were initially gathered for the bibliographic analysis of the research trend in publication year, geographic location, research discipline, and author [33]. Nevertheless, the map of author distribution was demolished because of the uniform distribution of authors, where each contributed only one research paper among the total listed publications.

3.1.1. Publication year

The publication trend of research articles in genre-based writing pedagogy between 2021 and 2024 shows a noticeable shift in scholarly activity (see Figure 2).

In 2021, there was a modest contribution to the field with a total of 9 publications. This marked the starting point which shows a considerable level of interest in GBA. However, in 2022, there was a significant change that the number of publications rose to 18, suggestively depicting an increase in research focus on the topic. This surge indicates that this approach to writing instruction has become increasingly attractive to researchers.

After the peak in 2022, the number of studies declined to 9 in 2023. Nonetheless, the trend recovered again in 2024, with 11 publications. This recovery illustrates the sustained importance of GBA pedagogy in academic teaching. With these fluctuations, more research papers should be conducted to investigate the effectiveness of GBA to teaching writing skills in modern educational settings.

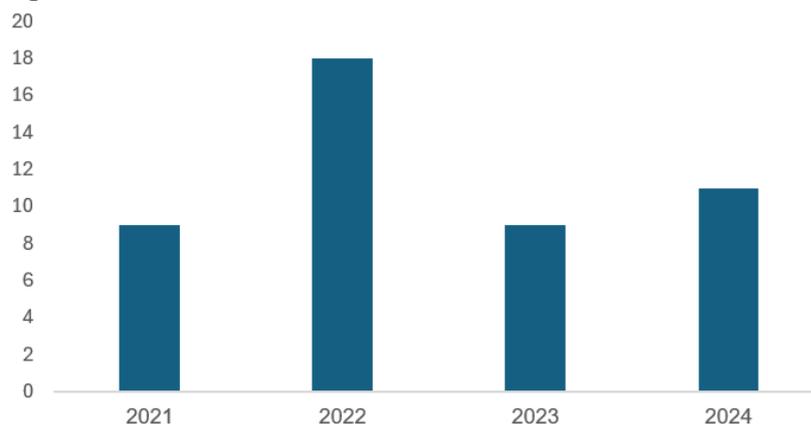


Figure 2. Yearly publication

3.1.2. Distribution by country/region

The origin of genre-based writing research is Australia, where it is considered to have begun with the systemic functional linguistics. Specifically, writing is taught within specific social and cultural contexts, aiming to enhance students' literacy skills by modeling various genres [39]. However, no Australian articles on the topic were produced during the research period, with other

countries witnessing the great quantity of publications. Razali and Zhai [23] reported similar findings that Australian scholars published only 2 articles on GBA over a 19-year period. This result aligns with our review, which covered a total of 4 years and found no published articles on the subject.

Overall, contributions come from diverse regions across the globe, including Asia, America, Europe, and Africa in descending order from the highest to the lowest (Figure 3). The diverse geographical spread highlights the global interest in this pedagogical approach.

Indonesia is the most prominent contributor in the past 4 years, with 13 publications. In other words, Indonesian schools are likely investing a lot of efforts into the application of GBA in its education system. The United States, China, and Vietnam each published 5 papers; Thailand ranks next with 4. The results are aligned with the findings conducted by Razali and Zhai [23] that China, the US, and Thailand were the prominent countries publishing GBA research papers. Also, Vietnam is seen as a promising nation which is employing this kind of approach in its teaching activities.

Iran shows a modest attention to the topic with 2 publications, showing interest in GBA and trying to analyze its usefulness in the educational context of the region. Other countries, like Sweden, Argentina, Colombia, India, Malaysia, Japan, Iraq, Algeria, Russia, Ethiopia, Netherlands, Korea, and Canada, each published one paper. While these contributions seem marginal, it shows the prominence of genre-based pedagogy as a topic worth studying from different parts of the world.

From research perspectives, the geographical shift toward Asian countries, particularly Indonesia, indicates growing contextualization of GBA. However, the lack of international collaboration calls for cross-cultural knowledge exchange. Future studies should be trans-border partnerships, particularly between established GBA traditions (e.g. Australia, US) and emerging research centers in Asia.

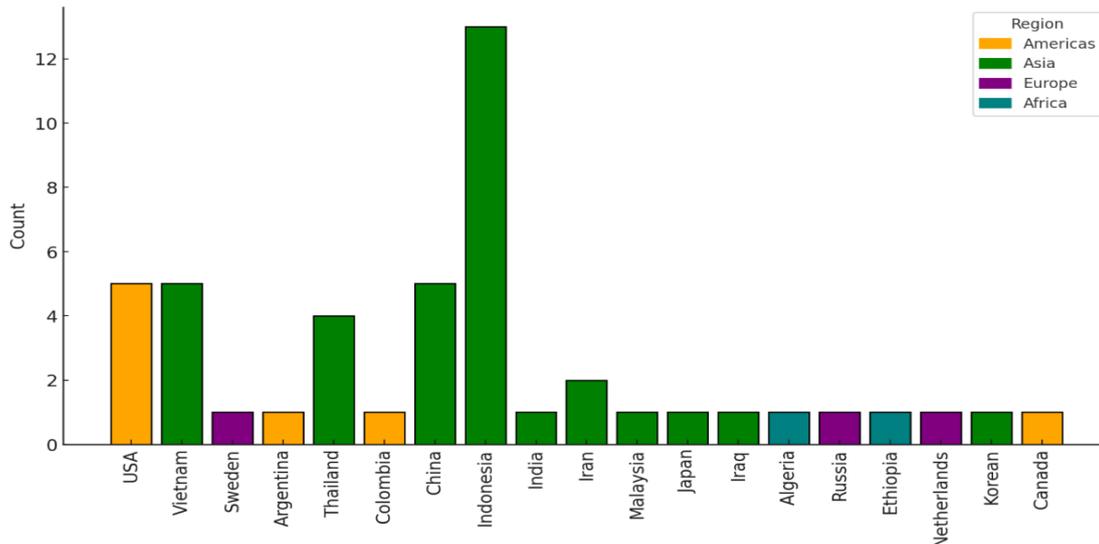


Figure 3. Country/region publication distribution

3.1.3. Research discipline

Subject categories were identified from the Scopus and World of Science database, with 24 articles reviewed (Table 2). The analysis offers a comprehensive understanding of the current distribution of research efforts and identifies emerging trends across disciplines. All journals were checked on Scimago Journal and Country Rank.

The majority of reviewed articles, 21 out of 24, fell under the category of Social Sciences. This dominance underscores the field's extensive engagement with topics that have societal

relevance, education to be precise. The high representation indicates a strong academic interest in addressing pedagogical applications in teaching writing skills. In contrast, only two articles were categorized under Arts and Humanities. Despite their limited quantity, the contributions from this field are significant in exploring the student [25] and teacher's performance [40] in genre-based writing classrooms in certain school contexts. Similarly, Psychology accounted for two articles. The studies within this category primarily focused on the attitude of students and teachers toward the teaching approach [22] and the confidence level of students in writing after applying the approach [41]. Psychology's presence highlights its relevance in understanding individual responses to the genre-based writing approach. Only one article was classified as multidisciplinary, illustrating the sustainable effectiveness of the genre-based writing method in teaching argumentative essays [42].

The dominance of Social Sciences in the database suggests a continued emphasis on addressing educational challenges. This dominance was also found in the former review [23], in which 46 articles were produced in the social sciences.

Table 2. *Research discipline distribution*

Research discipline	Count
Social sciences	21
Arts and Humanities	2
Psychology	2
Multidiscipline	1

Notably, there are 24 articles in total, but the sum of the counts is 25 because [25] is counted in both the Social Sciences and the Arts and Humanities.

3.2. Content analysis

To display existing GBA research and identify its trends in the ESL/EFL context, we performed content analysis on the 47 selected articles, regarding text genres, research method and participant demographics.

3.2.1. Text genres

The analysis of text-level writing in the reviewed studies reveals significant trends regarding the genres examined and their categorization based on social purposes which are proposed by Rose and Martin [43]. 47 studies were collected to analyze text levels, three of which emphasized paragraph writing while 40 studied whole texts. Furthermore, four studies did not define specific genres.

A wide range of different text types were covered. However, those which focused on multiple genres and those which generalized academic writing without a specific genre were not included in the main analysis. This narrowed approach enabled a sharper focus on the classification of social purposes of the text, which are engaging, informing, and evaluating according to [43]. Unlike Razali and Zhai [23], who classified text genres according to classroom genres proposed by Derewianka [44], we utilized the taxonomy of Rose and Martin [43] for a broader and more precise categorization (see Table 3). Within the "engage" category, two studies were identified, including narrative and creative writing. These genres aim to captivate readers and often emphasize storytelling or imaginative expression. In contrast, the "inform" category accounted for 11 studies. This group comprised descriptive texts, proposals, procedural writing, business-based writing, and scientific research articles. These genres primarily aim to convey information clearly and systematically to the reader. The "evaluate" category was widely represented, with ten publications concentrating on genres such as exposition, argumentative texts, reviews, persuasive texts, and explanations. These genres are characterized by their emphasis on critical analysis, and the presentation of opinions or evaluations.

The findings highlight a balanced emphasis on the purposes of informing and evaluating, with less attention given to engaging genres. This distribution reflects a broader focus on genres which characterize critical thinking, fundamental to twenty-first century learning, showing the ability to examine, analyze, interpret and evaluate [45].

Table 3. *Text genre classification based on Rose and Martin [43]*

	Text genres	Count
Engage	Narrative (1), and creative (1)	2
Inform	Descriptive (4), proposals (2), procedure (2), business-based writing (2), and scientific research (1)	11
Evaluate	Exposition (4), argumentative (2), reviews (2), persuasive (1), and explanations (1)	10

3.2.2. Research method

47 academic articles center on genre-based writing were analyzed regarding its research methodologies (see Table 4). The greatest number of publications (10) was conducted using qualitative research approaches given that qualitative research can be most appropriate for research designs laden with details and context, which emphasizes exploring participants' experiences, perceptions, and behaviors [46]. Each account of the eight studies falls under the categories of mixed method designs and quasi-experimental approaches. Their integration of qualitative research with quantitative research illustrates a significant shift to integrated research designs. Mixed methods enable the analysis of narratives quantitatively and qualitatively, while the use of pre-test and post-test characterizes quasi-experimentation.

Action research is also found in eight studies and is concerned with the practical, cyclical processes of intervention within a GBA class. Action research enables teachers as practitioners to emerge and collaborate with researchers, making it applicable in real classroom contexts.

Qualitative case study research makes up five of the articles demonstrating the relevance of a single (or multiple) case(s). In-depth context study is essential for examining specific teaching practices, student populations in certain classes, and teaching strategies. On the contrary, experimental research is only found in two studies while another two used quantitative survey/questionnaire research, which indicate limited interests in experimental and quantitative methods. Each ethnography, and design-based research only appears in one study, marking their scarce, but significant presence. Ethnographic research informs the writing discipline and community culture, while design-based research illustrates the partnership of a researcher and educator for some unsolved problems in education.

Overall, qualitative and mixed-method approaches seem to predominate, which captures the multifaceted nature of writing as a contextualized and interpretive activity. Conversely, the lack of use of experimental designs as well as ethnographic approaches is indicative of certain stagnant aspects of the discipline. The data depicts a shift towards practical research as illustrated by the rise of design-based and action research within the field.

Table 4. *Research method*

Research methods	Count
Qualitative	10
Mixed method	8
Quasi-experimental	8
Action research	8
Case study	5
Experimental	2
Quantitative	2
Ethnography	1
Design-based	1
Conceptual and theoretical analysis	2

Methodologically, while qualitative and mixed-method approaches appropriately reflect writing's contextual nature, the field would benefit from more experimental designs to establish causality, longitudinal studies tracking long-term effects, and ethnographic approaches exploring sociocultural dimensions of genre acquisition.

3.2.3. Participant demographics

The evaluation of participants' patterns in GBA research pays careful attention to the level of education and the demographic characteristics of these people. The patterns within research participants suggest a clear concentration on university students and learners in general, which align with the future research implications suggested by Razali and Zhai [23]. The secondary and elementary school students are represented to a relatively lower extent which indicates a gap that can be covered by future research to tap how GBA is done at lower levels of schooling. Likewise, while there is very good coverage of studies which involve teachers, there remains room for more study on their active partnership with students.

The most common participants in GBA research are learners. 32 studies were geared towards the learners, while 17 studies were focused on the teachers, with two studies simultaneously examining both student and teacher perspectives. This disparity illustrates the focus of student engagement, learning achievements, and writing among various contextualized levels of education [44]. Nevertheless, the notable number of studies done on teachers equally illustrates the need to focus on teachers' perceptions, training, and practices, as well as the difficulty of application.

A deeper look at educational level shows that undergraduate students participated most in genre-writing research, with their GBA practices receiving 20 articles. This indicates a considerable concern on academic writing and the problems university students encounter in mastering discipline-specific genres since academic writing is viewed as fundamental in higher education. Participants in secondary school are sampled in 9 studies, which illustrate the rising application of GBA in teaching and learning at the secondary school level. The highest and lowest levels include undergraduates and postgraduates, and on the other hand, elementary students are not preferable probably due to the complexity in sampling and data collection [47].

The concentration on undergraduate students indicates a need for increased focus on elementary and secondary education to understand how genre awareness develops across educational levels.

3.3. Scientometric Analysis

In the scientometric analysis, VOSviewer version 1.6.20 was used to create network visualizations based on the selected 47 publications. VOSviewer is one of the available information visualization softwares. The tool was configured to analyze both bibliographic coupling and keyword co-occurrence networks with a minimum threshold of 1 occurrence. For clustering, the default resolution parameter of 1.0 with a minimum cluster size of 1 was applied. The results helped map the trend in studying GBA in the period 2021-2024.

3.3.1. Network map by country

The country collaboration network reveals significant geographical patterns in GBA research production. As can be seen in Figure 3, the network comprises 18 nodes (countries) of different sizes and only one link. The size of each node is proportional to publication output of the country in the period 2021-2024, while the link refers to the cooperation of scholars between countries. This visualization highlights several important trends:

First, the most striking feature is Indonesia's emergence as the dominant contributor, displacing traditional leaders in the field. Specifically, the result produced by VOSviewer indicates that articles about GBA application in writing pedagogy were published in 18 countries around the world from 2021 to 2024, among which the nations making greatest contributions

were Indonesia, China, Thailand, USA and Vietnam. In this period, Indonesia replaced The United State to become number-one country, publishing the highest number of articles (13 publications). This shift reflects Indonesia's national educational policy reforms emphasizing genre-based pedagogies in English language teaching [48]. The United States, China, Vietnam, and Thailand form a second tier of significant contributors, each producing 4-5 publications during this period. Comparing to the list of top publishing countries from 2003 to 2021, including United States, Australia, China, Sweden, and England [23], it is crystal clear that the focus of GBA studies is leaning toward Asian EFL countries.

Second, Figure 4 also reveals that there was rare international collaboration in studying genre-based approach in teaching EFL/ESL writing in this period. In fact, during the four-year period, there was only one shared study between Chinese and Thai scholars. The near absence of international collaboration (only one link between China and Thailand) represents a concerning trend in GBA research. This contrasts with the previous period (2003-2021) analyzed by Razali and Zhai [23], which, while still showing limited collaboration, demonstrated more connections between English-speaking and non-English-speaking countries. The current pattern suggests increasing self-sufficiency in research capacity among non-English-speaking countries, but may indicate missed opportunities for cross-cultural knowledge exchange that could enrich GBA implementation across diverse educational contexts.

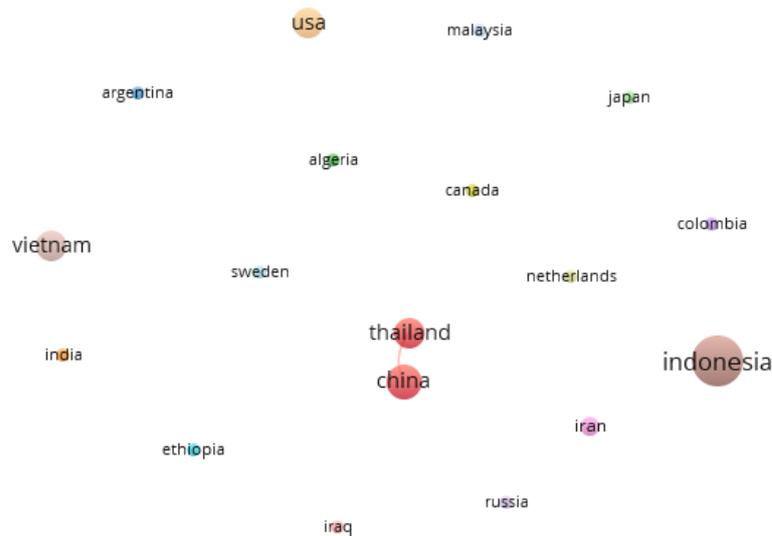


Figure 4. Country collaboration network in GBA studies (2021-2024)

In short, the geographical distribution reveals a clear shift toward Asian dominance in GBA research, with Indonesia, China, Vietnam, and Thailand collectively accounting for 57% of all publications. This marks a significant reorientation from the Western-centered research landscape documented by Razali and Zhai [23] for the 2003-2021 period, where the United States, Australia, and European countries led the field. This shift likely reflects both the growing investment in English language education research in Asia and the particular relevance of genre-based approaches for EFL contexts where structural approaches to language learning have traditionally been emphasized.

3.3.2. Network map of keyword co-occurrence

Keyword co-occurrence analysis produced a complex network visualization that provides valuable insights into the conceptual structure of current GBA research. Figure 5 demonstrates a system of nodes and links, illustrating a complicated network of keyword co-occurrence. Once again, the node size represents keyword occurrence frequency, while the link denotes the

“teacher cognition”, “process-genre approach”, and “digital genres” as terms showing the strongest growth in frequency during the 2021-2024 period, indicating evolving research priorities.

3.3.3. Citation and co-citation patterns

Citation analysis reveals several influential publications that have shaped GBA research during this period. The most highly cited works include theoretical contributions by Hyland [8] on genre pedagogies in digital environments and Nagao [15] on the evolution of teaching-learning cycles, along with empirical studies by Chen [14] examining student perceptions of GBA and Pham and Truong [49] investigating GBA implementation in Vietnamese universities (see Table 5).

Table 5. *The most highly cited words*

Research contribution	Scholars	Primary focus
Theoretical	Hyland [8]	Genre pedagogies in digital environments
	Nagao [15]	Evolution of teaching-learning cycles
Empirical	Chen [14]	Student perceptions of GBA
	Pham and Truong [49]	GBA implementation in Vietnamese universities

The citation network demonstrates a growing integration between theoretical foundations and classroom implementation studies, with empirical works increasingly cited alongside conceptual frameworks. This suggests the field is developing a more balanced research ecosystem that values both theoretical rigor and practical application.

Co-citation analysis, which examines which publications are frequently cited together, identifies three distinct scholarly communities within GBA research:

- (1) A theoretical community centered on systemic functional linguistics foundations
- (2) A pedagogical implementation community focused on classroom practices
- (3) An emerging digital/multimodal GBA community exploring technology integration

These citation patterns illustrate how GBA research has evolved from its origins in linguistic theory toward increasingly diverse applications across educational contexts.

3.3.4. Temporal evolution of research focus

Temporal analysis of publication patterns reveals substantial shifts in research focus over the relatively short 2021-2024 period. Traditional GBA studies maintained consistent representation throughout, while interest in process-genre approaches and digital/multimodal applications showed steady growth. Most notably, studies examining teacher perspectives and implementation challenges increased significantly in 2023-2024, suggesting a maturation of the field toward addressing practical classroom concerns. The temporal patterns also reveal an interesting correlation between geographical shifts and research focus. The rise of Asian countries in GBA publication coincides with increased attention to implementation challenges and contextual adaptations, reflecting the particular concerns of EFL educational environments.

4. Conclusion

This literature review examined GBA implementation in ESL/EFL writing from 2021 to 2024 using bibliometric, content, and scientometric analyses. The findings reveal significant developments that both extend and diverge from with previous research [23].

Bibliometric analysis demonstrates a notable geographical shift, with Indonesia emerging as the dominant contributor, followed by China, the US, Vietnam, and Thailand. This represents a significant reorientation from the Western-centered research landscape of previous periods, indicating growing investment in English language education research in Asian contexts. However, international collaboration remains minimal.

Content analysis reveals balanced attention to informative and evaluative genres, with less focus on engaging genres, reflecting an emphasis on academic writing requiring critical thinking.

Methodologically, qualitative and mixed-method approaches predominate, with action research gaining prominence. Regarding participants, undergraduate students remain the primary focus compared to K-12 education.

Scientometric analysis identifies three research clusters: core pedagogical approaches, educational contexts, and specific research foci. Temporal trends indicate growing interest in teacher perspectives, implementation challenges, and hybrid approaches like process-genre methodology. These findings suggest GBA research is evolving from theoretical foundations toward classroom application concerns with increasing contextual adaptations.

With limited attention to digital genres and teacher development which creates gaps in addressing evolving educational demands in writing pedagogy, the review identifies several areas requiring further research attention: digital genres, longitudinal effects, and teacher development models. For practitioners, the findings suggest the importance of balanced genre integration, contextualized implementation, methodological hybridity, and aligned assessment practices.

In conclusion, while GBA continues to gain prominence in ESL/EFL writing instruction, effective implementation requires ongoing adaptation to specific educational contexts, integration with complementary approaches, and attention to emerging communication genres. The field's evolution toward practice-oriented research suggests promising directions for both research and pedagogy.

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APPENDIX

PRISMA flow chart in accordance with the PRISMA 2020

