

DEVELOPING WRITING SKILL OF THE EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENTS THROUGH THE USE OF GENRE BASED APPROACH

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Abstract

Background: The objective of writing instruction is to equip students with the ability to proficiently comprehend and produce various types of texts, such as monologues, paragraphs, or essays. So, finding and applying appropriate teaching methods to teach writing skills is necessary. Methods: The subjects of this research were the students at grade VIII of SMP Negeri 3 Bambalamotu that consisted of 22 students. This research was Classroom Action Research (CAR) covering plan, action, observation, and reflection. This research was carried out in two cycles. The first meeting focused on explanation of the materials through the syntax of Genre-Based Approach; 1. BKOF (Building Knowledge of the Field), 2. MCOT (Modeling Construction of the Text), 3. JCOT (Join construction of the Text) and 4. ICOT (Independent Construction of the Text). And the second meeting focused on evaluation. Results: The data of this research were obtained from observation, field notes, and writing test. In the initial test of cycle 1, it was evident that the students did not meet the success standards as they struggled to write descriptive paragraphs. However, the test results in cycle 2 revealed that the introduction of the GBA (Guided-By-Approach) effectively enhanced the students' writing abilities. By following the stages outlined in the GBA, the challenges faced by students in writing can be reduced. Conclusion: three key elements of the GBA, namely collaboration, joint construction, and independent construction, contribute to the potential for improvement in students' writing skills

Keywords: *Writing skill; Classroom action research and Genre-Based Approach*

INTRODUCTION

Writing skills in English education are difficult and important skills to master because writing skills are complex activities (Parra G & Calero S, 2019). The average learner needs help in terms of grammar, cohesion, and coherence. In addition, they also needed help in terms of paragraph order and vocabulary (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2022). Writing is a crucial skill that needs to be imparted to students at the junior high school level. The objective is to equip

them with the ability to effectively comprehend and produce functional texts, as well as monologue texts such as paragraphs or essays in various genres including procedure, descriptive, recount, report, and narrative. Writing is an activity that demands proficiency gained through learning and practice (Amilia & Merrita, 2023).

The learning models that have been researched to be effective for improving writing skills are Problem-Based Learning (Ali, 2019), Project Based Learning (Poonpon, 2017), and Genre Based Approach (Dirgeyasa, 2016). According to Brown, writing is seen as a thought process with two general approaches: product or process (Brown, 2001).

The Genre-Based Approach (GBA) is a methodology that employs text as a means of language learning. This approach recognizes that achieving communicative competence entails proficiency across different text genres (Richards, 2006). In the learning process, by using the Genre-Based Approach, students and teachers will work together, where the teacher provides opportunities for students to discuss so that there is interaction between one student and another.

There are many relevant studies related to writing skill through Genre-Based Approach. For example, a study conducted by Nasir, Lihawa, Balango (2018) investigated the developing students' ability in writing narrative text through Genre Based Approach. which showed that the students' mean score in first test was 71.75 and means score in second cycle test was 75.45. The result indicated that using genre-based approach improved the students' skill in writing narrative text (Nasir, Lihawa, & Balango, 2021). The second study was conducted by Mastura (2020) about the effect of Genre-Based Approach on students' writing ability of recount text. The findings indicated a notable impact of the genre-based approach on students' writing proficiency in the recount text genre. The effects were observed in multiple aspects, including content, organization, vocabulary, language usage, and mechanics (Mastura, Arsyad, & Koto, 2020).

Although all studies reviewed a study similarly investigate the use of GBA in teaching writing, there some differences among them. The current research was focused on writing skills descriptive text in students and genre based approach as the medium while previous research focuses on types of writing skill. In addition, previous research reviewed adopted experimental and mix method as research design, while this study will adopt a CAR (class action research approach). Additionally, The upcoming study will be conducted in a Junior

High School setting, whereas previous research implemented a genre-based approach specifically in a Senior High School context.

SMP Negeri 3 Bambalamotu, a junior high school in Pasangkayu, follows the K13 curriculum, which includes English language learning through various text types or genres. The students are acquainted with monologue texts such as descriptive, narrative, report, recount, and procedural texts. The objective is for them to not only study and fulfill related tasks associated with these texts but also generate their own uncomplicated texts based on their acquired knowledge. However, it is unfortunate that the students are still facing challenges when it comes to writing basic paragraphs.

The researcher has been an educator at SMP Negeri 3 Bambalamotu for a duration of eight years. Throughout this time, the researcher has encountered numerous challenges that students face while learning English, particularly in the area of writing. The students continue to struggle with effectively expressing their ideas on paper and often exhibit fear of making errors in their writing. Additionally, they encounter difficulties with grammar and vocabulary. The students consistently encounter language-related obstacles when attempting to construct simple sentences. Another problem that the student's faced in writing is that they do not master other aspects of writing such as how to build ideas, organize them, how to identify the objects, how to develop related ideas, in addition, the students' lack of understanding of the structure of tenses, and limited vocabulary. When they write, students take a lot of time to express their ideas and put them on a piece of paper. That's because two possibilities are directly related to the problem; the level of language proficiency of students and the nature of the written language itself.

Moreover, the students struggle to construct coherent and cohesive sentences, lacking the ability to initiate their writing. Consequently, the writing classes predominantly revolve around filling in incomplete sentence structures. While the students actively engage in completing these writing assignments, they fail to generate original written content. Such writing activities in the classroom fail to foster active learning and fail to produce meaningful writing outcomes. Consequently, the majority of students attain low scores in their writing skills. Drawing from the researcher's experience, it can be inferred that students at SMP Negeri 3 Bambalamotu face challenges when it comes to effectively express their ideas in written form.

In order to effectively address the writing difficulties faced by students and successfully attain instructional objectives, the researchers were motivated to identify and implement appropriate teaching methods for teaching writing skills. Furthermore, it was desired that the chosen writing teaching method would effectively motivate students to engage in learning writing skills. To introduce new methods for teaching writing skills, researchers need to possess knowledge about teaching approaches, teaching methods, and teaching strategies. This knowledge is crucial because the new strategy should align with the chosen teaching approach and teaching methods. Essentially, regardless of the teaching approaches and methods employed by researchers for teaching writing skills, the teaching strategies must be consistent with those approaches and methods. Given these circumstances, it is crucial to find a resolution for the inadequate writing skills exhibited by students, particularly in class VIII at SMP Negeri 3 Bambalamotu. The Genre-Based Approach considers language learning as a collaborative effort between teachers and students. It emphasizes the equal significance of both parties in the learning process, ensuring that neither teachers nor students hold a dominant position in the classroom (Joyce and Feez, 1998). By introducing the Genre-Based Approach to the eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 3 Bambalamotu, the researcher anticipates that they will have a genuine English learning experience, become more actively involved in classroom instruction, and ultimately witness improvement in their writing skills. Considering the aforementioned context, the objective of this research is to enhance the writing abilities of the eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 3 Bambalamotu by implementing the GBA methodology.

METHODS

This research adopted CAR (Classroom Action Research) approach. The aim is to make changes on writing performance of the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 3 Bambalamotu. Particularly, it is done to develop students' ability in writing skills by implementing the Genre-Based Approach. Classroom action research designed suits with the teacher's status as the practitioner, a classroom teacher who intends to develop particular issue experienced by his students that is poor writing skill. The CAR activities encompassed repetitive cycles, each comprising planning, taking action, observing, and reflecting. The outcome of each cycle served as a basis for identifying the requirements of subsequent cycles,

ultimately resolving the issues through specific teaching techniques employed by the teachers.

This research was carried out into two cycles. The first meeting focused on explanation of the materials through the syntax of Genre-Based Approach; 1. BKOF (Building Knowledge of the Field), 2. MCOT (Modeling Construction of the Text), 3. JCOT (Join construction of the Text) and 4. ICOT (Independent Construction of the Text). And the second meeting focused on evaluation.

The research was conducted at SMP Negeri 3 Bambalamotu Pasangkayu. The subjects of this study were the eighth-grade students of the second semester in 2022/2023 academic year. The students involved were class VIII A. The numbers of the students are 22 (twenty-two) students. Using observation sheet, field notes and test as the instrument to collect the data. The data were collected and analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The data which is obtained from the questionnaire was firstly tabulated and interpreted descriptively. Meanwhile, the data collected from the test was analyzed using quantitative technique.

RESULTS

Before implementing the action, the researcher and their collaborator undertook necessary preparations, which included developing a syllabus, creating lesson plans, and preparing teaching materials. The researcher provided the teaching materials media, writing assessment criteria of success, and teacher and students' observation sheets, field notes for the collaborator. Considering the given factors, the initial cycle consisted of two meetings. The primary meeting concentrated on instructing the students in writing descriptive paragraphs, while the second meeting revolved around the evaluation process.

Cycle 1 Result

Table 1 The students' performance in cycle 1

Observed aspects	Meeting 1		Meeting 2	
	F	f%	F	f%
1. Asking question when they were writing	4	18.18	6	72.72
2. Responding to other students	6	27.27	7	31.81
3. Answering researcher questions	6	27.27	4	18.18

4. Paying attention to the teacher	18	81.81	20	90.90
5. Joining group discussion	19	86.36	20	90.90

From the table above it can be seen that the number of the students who asked questions when they were writing descriptive paragraph was only 4 (18.18 %) in the first meeting and 6 (72.72%) in the second meeting. Then, the number of the students responding to the other students when they were presenting their task in group was only 6 (27.27%) in the first meeting and 7 (31.81%) in the second meeting. There were also 6 (27.27%) students who answered the researcher questions when the researcher asked them to write simple sentences on the whiteboard and 4 (18.18%) students in the second meeting. There were 18 students (81.81%) paid attention to the researcher when he was giving explanation in the first meeting and 20 students (90.90%) students paid attention in the second meeting. The number of students who joined group discussion was 19 (86.36%) in first meeting and 20 students (90.90%) was joined group discussion in the second meeting.

Based on the table from the results of the learning process activities it can be concluded that there was a significant increase in what students did in class from meetings 1 and 2. This was based on the results of observations of collaborator in class when learning took place.

Table 2 The Students Writing Scores Test in Cycle 1

Student	Aspect of writing					Total		Category	Qualification
	C	O	G	V	Ms	score	score		
S1	10	10	6	6	4	36	50.0	Very poor	failed
S 2	10	15	6	6	4	41	56.9	Very poor	failed
S 3	15	15	9	9	6	54	75.0	good	successful
S 4	10	10	6	6	4	36	50.0	Very poor	failed
S 5	15	10	9	9	4	47	65.3	Very poor	failed
S 6	15	15	9	9	6	54	75.0	good	successful
S 7	10	10	6	9	4	39	54.2	Very poor	failed
S 8	20	15	9	9	6	59	81.9	good	successful
S 9	10	10	6	9	4	39	54.2	Very poor	failed
S 10	15	10	9	9	4	47	65.3	Very poor	failed

Student	Aspect of writing					Total		Category	Qualification
	C	O	G	V	Ms	score	score		
S 11	15	15	9	9	6	54	75.0	good	successful
S 12	20	15	9	9	4	57	79.2	good	successful
S 13	10	10	6	9	4	39	54.2	Very poor	failed
S 14	10	10	6	9	4	39	54.2	Very poor	failed
S 15	10	10	6	6	4	36	50.0	Very poor	failed
S 16	15	15	9	9	6	54	75.0	good	successful
S 17	10	10	6	6	4	36	50.0	Very poor	failed
S 18	20	15	9	9	4	57	79.2	good	successful
S 19	10	10	6	9	4	39	54.2	Very poor	failed
S 20	15	15	9	9	4	52	72.2	poor	failed
S 21	15	15	9	9	6	54	75.0	good	successful
S 22	15	10	9	9	4	47	65.3	Very poor	failed
total						1016	1411.1		
Average						46.18	64.1		
Successful %								8	36.36%
Filed %								14	63.64%

Source: Primary Data

Based on the data above, it could be described that most of the students must develop their writing skill. There were only 8 students who successful in individual test. It means that there were 36.46 % of the students achieved the criteria of success. In relation to the teaching, there were many problems faced by the students during the teaching and learning process. It could be seen through the observation data of researcher and students' performance in classroom. The researcher did not apply some activities.

The student's average score in the test was only 65.53, while they have to achieved the maximum score of 75. The classical mastery in the first cycle was just 36.46 %. Both result indicated that the students had not achieved the score wanted in this classroom action research, which was 75 % classical mastery and individual score of 75. Based on that, the cycle must be continued to the next one to develop the result.

Cycle 2 Result

The step of teaching and learning process in cycle 2 was the same as in cycle 1. They were plan, action observation and reflection. The difference between cycle 1 and 2 just involved of the way of the researcher in applying the material to the students. The individual test results from cycle 1 indicated that the students had limited proficiency in constructing basic descriptive paragraphs. In response, the researcher and collaborator devised a plan to modify the instructions in order to enhance the student's comprehension of the materials. Consequently, the researcher had to make adjustments in the application of the materials to better facilitate student learning.

Table 3 The Students' Performance in Cycle 2

Observed aspects	Meeting 1	
	F	F %
1. Asking question when they were writing	9	40.90
2. Responding to other students	12	54.54
3. Answering teacher's questions	16	72.72
4. Paying attention to the teacher	20	90.90
5. Joining group discussion	20	90.90

From the table above it can be seen that the activeness of the students in the second cycle is very good because they were active in teaching and learning process. The percentage score for activity for asking questions to the teacher when they were writing descriptive paragraph was 40.90% , and the students' responses to other students when they were presenting their task in group was 54.54 %. The third activity was answering researcher questions with average 72.72%, and the activities of paying attention to the researcher explanation of materials had been put into percentage score 90.90%. And the last activities was joining group discussion also have same percentage with students in paying attention to the teacher with percentage score 90.90%. From the percentage of students' performance in the second cycle it can be concluded that there was a significant increase from the first cycle.

Table 4 The Students Writing Scores Test in Cycle 2

Student	Aspect of writing				Total		Category	Qualification	
	C	O	M	Score	Score				
S1	15	10	9	9	4	47	65.3	poor	failed
S 2	15	15	9	9	6	54	75.0	good	successful
S 3	20	20	9	9	6	64	88.9	Very good	successful
S 4	15	15	9	9	6	54	75.0	good	successful
S 5	15	15	9	9	4	52	72.2	poor	failed
S 6	20	20	9	9	6	64	88.9	Very good	successful
S 7	15	15	9	9	6	54	75.0	good	successful
S 8	20	20	9	9	6	64	88.9	Very good	successful
S 9	15	10	6	9	4	44	61.1	Very poor	failed
S 10	15	15	9	9	4	52	72.2	poor	failed
S 11	20	15	9	9	6	59	81.9	good	successful
S 12	20	15	9	9	6	59	81.9	good	successful
S 13	20	15	9	9	6	59	81.9	good	successful
S 14	15	15	9	9	9	57	79.2	good	successful
S 15	15	10	9	6	4	44	61.1	Very poor	failed
S 16	20	15	9	9	6	59	81.9	good	successful
S 17	15	10	6	6	6	43	59.7	Very poor	failed
S 18	20	15	9	9	6	59	81.9	good	successful
S 19	15	15	9	9	6	54	75.0	Good	successful
S 20	20	20	9	9	6	64	88.9	Very good	successful
S 21	20	15	9	9	6	59	81.9	good	successful
S 22	15	15	9	9	6	54	75.0	good	successful
Total						1219	1693.1		
Average						55,41	77.0		
Successful %								16	72.73%
Filed %								6	27.27%

Based on the aforementioned data, it can be deduced that a total of six students did not pass the test. This implies that only 30% of the students failed to meet the success criteria, which was set at 75. Conversely, 16 students obtained high scores, indicating that 80% of the students successfully achieved the criteria for success.

DISCUSSION

In Cycle 1, the GBA was implemented to assess the students' ability to construct descriptive paragraphs. The purpose was to identify their mistakes and weaknesses, allowing for adjustments in subsequent planning. The data collected from Meeting 1 and Meeting 2 revealed several challenges faced by both the collaborator and the students during the teaching and learning process. These difficulties are reflected in the researchers' performance table during the implementation of GBA. Weaknesses observed in the application of the writing descriptive paragraph material in Cycle 1 included the researcher's lack of familiarity with the students prior to the lesson, insufficient opportunities for the students to analyze the material as the researcher primarily relied on slide-based explanations, and inadequate facilitation of the students' problem-solving efforts when constructing descriptive paragraphs.

Besides the researchers' performance, the students' performance also influenced the success of teaching and learning process in cycle 1. The result of the test in cycle 1 showed that there were 8 students (36.36%) failed, which shows that the unsuccessful students percentage was far more than the successful from perfect. The students still made mistakes in vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. Certain activities observed among the students yielded low scores, such as responding to the researcher's questions while they were writing descriptive paragraphs or inquiring about the content related to descriptive paragraphs. The revised plan was formulated taking into account the deficiencies observed in the researcher's classroom performance and the level of student engagement during the teaching and learning process in the cycle 1.

Some points can be noted in revised plan based on the result of the test and observations of researchers' performance in cycle 1 are the researcher should distribute the material individually to make the students easy to analyze the material, he should explain the material in detail, for example the use of article and noun (plural and singular) in sentences, the teacher also gave chance for the students to ask questions when they are writing

descriptive paragraph. Furthermore, based on the students' participation in process of teaching and learning, the students should express or ask questions if they did not understand the material, they should not depend on their friends when they were writing the task of descriptive paragraph, they should also active in joining group discussion.

Based on observational data and student written tests, the results of data analysis will be adjusted to the success criteria. The results of the observations and students' writing test on the researchers' activities showed that no activities were missed and the results of the students' writing test also reached the target of success. It means that all activities have been carried out properly by researchers. GBA has been implemented in teaching writing in this research. This involved of two cycles. In the activities in cycle 1, the researcher did the teaching and learning process as usual. The researcher executed the stages of the GBA, commencing with knowledge building in the subject area, demonstrating the construction of the text, facilitating collaborative construction of the text, and promoting independent construction of the text. Based on the observation and the result of the test in cycle 1, most of the students have difficulties in writing descriptive text. After the researcher reflected the teaching and learning process there were some weakness faced by the students specially in constructing descriptive text. This is due to the lack of students' skills in compiling good paragraphs, lack of vocabulary, and lack of knowledge in the use of English feature.

In cycle 2, the researcher began to change some ways in the process of teaching and learning process while still using the steps from the GBA. In applying the GBA as the method in teaching writing descriptive text, the researcher distributed the material individually before explaining the material. The researcher showed the students an example of descriptive text and asked them to identify the use of pronouns, articles, noun (plural or singular), subjects, verbs and objects. The researcher explained characteristics of place and person. Then the researcher gave chance for the students to practice by writing the sentences of descriptive on the whiteboard. Here the students felt happy because during the teaching and learning process the researcher facilitated them in constructing simple descriptive text. A significant portion of the students actively and eagerly participated in the class. All the activities carried out during cycle 2 proceeded smoothly, evident from the students' positive response and engagement during the researcher's lesson presentations. And ultimately the students can improve their vocabulary in writing sentences. And they could identify the language used of writing descriptive text.

In the first cycle of testing, it was found that the students did not meet the success criteria because they struggled with writing descriptive paragraphs. However, in the second cycle, the implementation of the GBA led to an improvement in the students' writing abilities. By following the stages outlined in the GBA, students' writing difficulties can be reduced. The phases of acquiring knowledge in the subject matter and constructing the text played a vital role in improving the students' vocabulary and comprehension of the text's topic and context. Furthermore, it deepened their comprehension of diverse types of texts, including their structure and linguistic features. The phases of collaborative construction and independent construction of the text further fortified the students' ability to explore ideas and effectively transform them into skillfully composed written works. Significantly, the scores reflecting the students' performance underscored an enhancement in their writing skills as a direct result of implementing the GBA.

The implementation of GBA, along with its supplementary actions, proved to be effective in enhancing the students' writing abilities over the course of two cycles. This conclusion is supported by observations of the teaching and learning process, as well as the results of the students' writing tests. Moreover, the improvement in the students' writing skills is evident from their performance scores. The students' writing skills were evaluated twice, once in Cycle 1 and again in Cycle 2, using the same assessment rubric. The final score was determined by calculating the average of the combined scores provided by both the collaborator and the researcher.

In Cycle 1, the students' success rate was 36.36%, which increased to 72.73% in Cycle 2. The scores clearly indicate an improvement in the students' writing skills, with many of them achieving higher scores in Cycle 2. Notably, they demonstrated enhancements in multiple areas, including content, organization, vocabulary, language usage, and mechanics. For a detailed breakdown of the students' scores, please refer to the appendix.

In this research, the researcher wanted to determine the implementation of GBA as a method to develop students' writing skill. The purposes were to find out whether there was development of students' writing skill or not after being taught using the GBA. The use of GBA as a teaching method gives good results in building students' writing achievement. In other words, teaching English writing used GBA was effective way to develop students' writing skills in terms of content and organization. The result of this research related to the researcher of Maulani (2021) found that the use of GBA in writing descriptive paragraph

developed the students writing descriptive. They were able to decrease their error in writing. It resulted in a better quality and quantity of the compositions and the students felt more confidence in writing (Lail, 2022; Maulani, 2021). In another research, it was discovered that the majority of students demonstrated a level of metacognitive awareness, specifically in the declarative aspect. This awareness appeared to positively impact their writing skills, resulting in an overall improvement in their writing performance (Pham & Bui, 2022). The utilized approach proved to be successful in enhancing students' ability to write descriptive texts, surpassing the impact of the conventional process-based approach. Students responded favorably to this approach, acknowledging its effectiveness in improving their writing skills, which was reflected in their improved test scores (Ganapathy, Kaur, Jamal, & Phan, 2022).

According to Hayland (2004), having prior knowledge can facilitate students in producing well-structured writing tasks. Therefore, assigning a specific genre appears to be a powerful tool for both students and teachers in the learning and teaching of writing (Hayland, 2004). Additionally, the genre approach encourages students to actively engage with the world around them, view writing as a practical tool, and understand how writers effectively organize their content. It also promotes flexible thinking among students and helps them recognize the organizational patterns employed by authors. The implementation of the genre-based approach, along with its stages, has been successfully adopted in various countries. The effectiveness of genre-based approaches in teaching writing has been widely acknowledged through empirical and theoretical studies. Burns (2005) conducted research on the effectiveness of the genre-based approach and discovered that applying GBA was effective in enhancing students' writing skills (Burns, 2005).

CONCLUSION

Following thorough discussion and analysis of the data, the researcher's conclusion is that the utilization of the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) in Grade VIII of SMP Negeri 3 Bambalamotu resulted in improvement. Within the framework of the GBA, three key elements, namely collaboration, joint construction, and independent construction, contribute to the feasibility of this improvement. This is further supported by the notable increase in the students' scores observed between Cycle 1 and Cycle 2. Based on these findings, the researcher has several recommendations to offer to English teachers and other researchers.

Teachers are advised to be involved in classroom action so that teachers know how to analyze the best ways to improve learning in writing English.

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