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AI-Integrated Genre-Based Writing Instruction: A Systematic Review and Pedagogical Framework

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Abstract
This review investigates how recent studies conceptualise the theoretical foundations, pedagogical practices, learning outcomes, and the integration of technology and artificial intelligence within genre-based writing instruction. It aims to systematically synthesise these dimensions and develop an in-depth understanding of genre-based writing instruction in contexts where English is learned as a second or foreign language. The review's significance lies in bringing these dimensions together within a single explanatory framework, as previous studies have often examined them in isolation. This review analysed 41 empirical studies published between 2020 and 2025, identified through ERIC, ProQuest, Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses framework. The findings show that the genre-based approach is established mainly in Systemic Functional Linguistics and English for Specific Purposes, whereas cognitive and sociocultural perspectives are increasingly incorporated. The Teaching and Learning Cycle remains the dominant instructional model, although hybrid pedagogies increasingly combine genre instruction with collaborative activities and digital tools. The studies report improvements in writing performance and genre awareness, together with emerging evidence of higher-order thinking skills and self-regulatory outcomes, including critical thinking, creativity, and self-regulated learning. However, the mechanisms linking instructional practices to these outcomes remain insufficiently explained, and none of the included studies explicitly integrated artificial intelligence. Based on these findings, the review proposes an integrated framework that links the genre-based approach with emerging AI-supported writing practices. Future research ought to test this framework in diverse contexts and adopt more robust, multidimensional assessment methods.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, genre-based approach, learning outcome, pedagogical practice, theoretical framework

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Introduction

English-language writing has long been regarded as a complex skill. Learners must coordinate linguistic knowledge, content development, genre awareness and rhetorical skills during the composing process (Alhammad, 2025; Jarunthawatchai et al., 2025). In other words, writing difficulties are not only about grammatical accuracy, vocabulary use and organisational structure; they also involve regulation and revision in context (Fan & Wang, 2024; Thaksanan & Chaturongakul, 2023). However, the emphasis in writing has often been on linguistic accuracy rather than on students' rhetorical development and self-regulated writing (Gu et al., 2025; Shen & Bai, 2024). This results in limited support for organising and developing texts to meet communicative expectations.

The Genre-Based Approach (GBA) has been widely regarded as one of the most effective interventions for improving writing performance, genre awareness, and communicative purpose (Abdel Latif et al., 2024; Guo et al., 2025). However, genre conventions are sometimes treated as fixed templates which may limit students' adaptive use of genre knowledge for communicative purposes (Sitompul et al., 2025). During writing instruction, more flexible, sustained and responsive scaffolding support is needed to meet students' actual needs (Alzahrani & Chaudhary, 2025).

In recent years, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has served as peer scaffolding to meet learners' writing needs through interactive prompts and adaptive feedback in genre-based activities (Altamimi, 2025; Mohammed & Khalid, 2025; You & You, 2026). Although AI has been implemented as generic, standalone tools, its use should be critically guided rather than treated as an automatic source of support. Moreover, limited attention has been paid to the systematic integration of AI into specific pedagogical frameworks (Zhang & Samsudin, 2026). This highlights the need to demonstrate whether AI can complement teacher-guided and collaborative scaffolding in GBA.

Previous review studies have provided useful insights into genre theory and GBA research. Derewianka (2003) and Paltridge (2014) examined trends, challenges and the development of genre theory. Liu et al. (2024) and Zhai and Razali (2023) focused more on research targets, geographical distributions, and methodological characteristics. Wang and Ganapathy (2025) examined related instructional approaches within the Process Genre Approach. However, these reviews provide limited explanation of how theoretical foundations influence pedagogical design, how particular instructional practices are associated with different learning outcomes, and how emerging technologies can be integrated into GBA study.

To address this gap, this review thoroughly examines recent research on GBA in English writing instruction in ESL/EFL contexts. It seeks to identify the key theoretical foundations of GBA, analyse how these foundations inform instructional practices and learning outcomes, and assess the extent of technology and AI integration in genre pedagogy. The following research questions guide the study:

1. What are the theoretical foundations of GBA in ESL/EFL writing?
2. How is GBA implemented, and what learning outcomes does it generate?
3. How have technology and AI been integrated into recent GBA research?

Literature Review

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) outlines the key linguistic and discourse foundations of GBA, while Cognitive and Sociocultural Theories (SCT) provide a comprehensive account of

learners' self-regulation and interactive scaffolding mechanisms in writing. These perspectives operate at different but interconnected levels. SFL explains how communicative purposes, contextual variables, rhetorical stages, and linguistic choices are realised in socially recognisable texts (Martin & Rose, 2008; Nagao, 2022). Cognitive writing models explain the recursive mental processes through which writers plan, generate, organise, monitor, and revise meaning during composing (Kellogg, 2008). Within the cognitive account, Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) offers a more specific account of how learners intentionally manage these composing processes by setting goals, selecting strategies, monitoring progress, interpreting feedback, regulating motivation, and evaluating their writing (Pintrich, 2004; Wiboonwachara & Charubusp, 2022; Zimmerman, 2000). SCT, in turn, indicates how these processes are initially supported by the teacher or peers through modelling, dialogue, collaboration, and scaffolding before being gradually internalised (Vygotsky, 1987). Their integration, therefore, does not require treating the theories as interchangeable. Rather, SFL specifies the socially situated genre knowledge to be learned; cognitive writing theory clarifies how that knowledge is processed and self-regulated through recursive activities; and SCT explains how this processing is mediated by interaction.

These perspectives converge in framing writing as a socially purposeful, cognitively recursive, and interactionally mediated process. However, the theories also contain important tensions. SFL foregrounds socially shared genre conventions, whereas cognitive models emphasise individual mental processing. Although explicit instruction supports learners in using rhetorical and linguistic resources to construct meaning, the excessive scaffolding may lead to mechanical imitation and limited creative expression (Hyland, 2003). Similarly, sociocultural scaffolding supports participation and internalisation, but overly or prolonged guidance may restrict the development of learners' self-regulation. To reduce this tension, GBA instruction should present genre conventions as adaptable rhetorical resources rather than fixed textual templates, while gradually transferring responsibility from teachers and peers to learners (Nagao, 2022; Osawa, 2025).

The Teaching and Learning Cycle (TLC) provides the pedagogical framework through which these conceptual perspectives can be connected. Grounded in SFL and SCT, the cycle commonly comprises Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF), Modelling of Text (MOT), Joint Construction of Text (JCT), and Independent Construction of Text (ICT) (Hammond, 1987). BKOF activates contextual, conceptual, and subject knowledge (Haerazi et al., 2020; Jarunthawatchai et al., 2025). MOT analyses model texts in terms of communicative purposes, rhetorical structures, and linguistic resources to strengthen genre awareness and analytical engagement (Abdel Latif et al., 2024; Samad et al., 2024; Staples et al., 2024). JCT provides opportunities for collaborative meaning-making, feedback, and negotiation of textual choices (Mauludin, 2020; Nagao, 2023; Sujinpram & Wannaruk, 2024). ICT then supports learners in independent writing through planning, composing, monitoring, and revision (He, 2022; Philippakos et al., 2023; Robillos, 2023). Across these stages, genre awareness, critical thinking, creativity and SRL may develop interactively, guiding learners from scaffolded participation towards independent rhetorical control (Hakim, 2023; Negretti, 2021; Orfanò & Wingate, 2024; Thaksanan & Chaturongakul, 2023; Truong, 2022). This cycle should therefore be understood not as a rigid, linear sequence but as a recursive, adaptive process in which learners may revisit earlier stages when further support is required (Derewianka, 2003; Gu et al., 2025; Triastuti et al., 2022).

Although these theoretical perspectives are conceptually complementary, existing research on genre-based writing has not yet fully explained how they jointly account for writing

development. Previous studies have commonly drawn on SFL to explain genre knowledge and text construction, SCT to account for scaffolding and collaborative learning, and cognitive and self-regulated learning perspectives to examine writing processes and strategic engagement (Samad et al., 2024; Shen & Bai, 2024; Staples et al., 2024). Moreover, limited research has examined how the TLC stages operate within the teaching process to connect genre knowledge, scaffolded interaction, and writing strategies to support the development of genre awareness, critical thinking, creativity, and self-regulation (Sitompul et al., 2025; Truong, 2022). As a result, the mechanisms through which GBA supports multidimensional writing development remain insufficiently understood.

As supporting resources, AI tools can enhance writing quality and SRL development by providing language support and continuous feedback, thereby promoting students' self-monitoring and revision (Alghamdi & Madini, 2026; Altamimi, 2025; Barzanji & Alsofyani, 2026; Mohammed & Khalid, 2025; Valerio, 2025). Meanwhile, by encouraging students to evaluate machine-generated texts, generate new ideas, and reconstruct expression, AI may also promote the development of critical thinking and creativity (Jai Lamimi et al., 2025; Wu et al., 2026; Singh et al., 2026; Stanko et al., 2026). However, overuse of AI may lead to template-based expression, linguistic homogenisation, and a weakened authorial voice (Mahfouz & AbdelMohsen, 2025; Moussa et al., 2026; Pryma et al., 2025). Therefore, AI-assisted writing instruction should be grounded in teacher guidance and standardised principles, so that its educational value can be effectively translated into learning outcomes (Hao & Razali, 2026; Zhang & Samsudin, 2026).

However, research on AI and GBA remains in its early stages. Most studies have treated AI as a general tool for writing, feedback, or assessment, while only a small body of research has begun to integrate its use into GBA (Ahmad et al., 2026; Zhang & Samsudin, 2026). Therefore, a theoretically grounded synthesis is needed to explain how AI can strengthen GBA while preserving learner agency, authorial voice, and teacher-guided evaluation.

Research Methodology

Systematic Review and PRISMA-Guided Study Selection

In recent years, SLRs have become increasingly common in applied linguistics and education to provide comprehensive syntheses of existing empirical evidence (Chong & Plonsky, 2021; Xiao & Watson, 2017). To ensure methodological transparency and reporting quality, this study followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework (Page et al., 2021). The review process comprised four stages: identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and data extraction and analysis (Moher et al., 2009).

Inclusion and exclusion criteria were established to ensure the relevance and methodological quality of the selected studies on GBA in ESL/EFL writing instruction (Table 1). The literature review begins in 2020, indicating the significant changes GBA has undergone in ESL/EFL writing instruction. First, scholars have begun to explore a wider range of genres customised for local teaching contexts (e.g., Osawa, 2025; Siangsanoh, 2024). Second, research during this period has increasingly adopted diverse research approaches to examine the effectiveness and implementation of GBA in ESL/EFL classrooms (e.g., Li et al., 2020; Mauludin, 2020). Third, the rapid expansion of digital technologies has encouraged the integration of new instructional tools into genre-based writing instruction (e.g., He, 2022; Sujinpram & Wannaruk, 2024). Therefore, contextualised genre

instruction, methodological diversification, and technology integration related to GBA research indicate a significant timeframe for this research.

Table 1. *Criteria for article inclusion and exclusion*

Criterion Category	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Scope & Language	GBA in ESL/EFL writing; English language; 2020-2025	L1 writing; non-English publications
Document Type	Peer-reviewed journal articles	Dissertations; conference proceedings; book chapters, opinion pieces
Methodology	Empirical studies with clear descriptions of participants, intervention, and data analysis	Theoretical/conceptual papers; studies lacking essential methodological details
Theoretical Focus	Studies that provide a discernible theoretical or conceptual basis for adopting GBA	Studies with no theoretical justification or rationale for GBA use
Pedagogical Detail	Clear description of GBA instructional procedures	Studies that mention GBA only in passing without pedagogical elaboration

This study conducted a Boolean search across five major research sources: ERIC, ProQuest, Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. The timeframe for relevant studies in these databases was 2020 to 2025. The search terms included “genre-based approach” OR “genre pedagogy” OR “genre theory” AND “writing”, among others. The database search yielded 660 studies (Figure 1). After removing duplicates and conducting title and abstract screening, a small number of studies remained. Consequently, 41 studies met the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

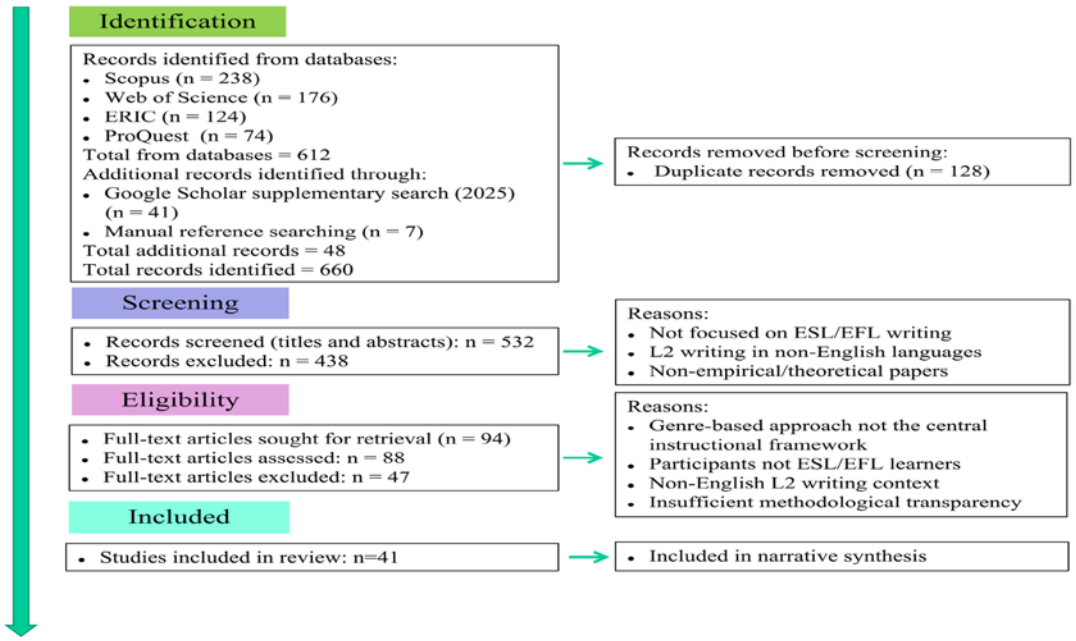


Figure 1. SLR process

Narrative Synthesis

Narrative Synthesis is a method used in systematic reviews to summarise and clarify findings mainly through textual analysis, thereby providing a coherent account of the synthesis (Popay et al., 2006). The general framework of Narrative Synthesis comprises four components: (1) developing a theory, (2) constructing a preliminary synthesis, (3) exploring relationships in the data, and (4) assessing the robustness of the synthesis.

Stage 1: Developing a theory - This stage aimed to clarify the evolution and theoretical foundations of GBA and to examine how these frameworks influence instructional design, learning processes, and learning outcomes.

Stage 2: Preliminary Synthesis– The included studies were systematically organised by tabulating research characteristics, identifying instructional approaches, and summarising key pedagogical patterns.

Stage 3: Exploring Relationships - This stage examined how different theoretical frameworks were linked to specific pedagogical practices and how these practices affected writing performance and higher-order learning outcomes.

Stage 4: Assessing Robustness - The final stage evaluated the reliability and relevance of the synthesised findings by assessing the methodological quality of the included studies and the consistency of the evidence across contexts.

Findings

Theoretical Foundations

As shown in Table 2, SFL-based GBA research accounts for a large proportion of studies (n=17, 42.0%). This was followed by ESP genre theory, which accounts for 29.0% (n=12). In recent years, an increasing number of studies have combined SFL with cognitive perspectives, accounting for 17.0% (n=7), while a similar proportion have combined SFL with sociocultural theory (SCT), accounting for 12.0% (n=5).

Table 2. *Distribution of theoretical foundations in the reviewed studies*

Theoretical Foundation	Number of Studies (n)	Percentage (%)
SFL Genre Theory	17	42.0
ESP Genre Theory	12	29.0
SFL & Cognitive Perspectives	7	17.0
SFL & Sociocultural Theory	5	12.0
Total	41	100

SFL Genre Theory

The 41 studies show that SFL-based GBA has been applied across multiple educational levels, including primary schools, high schools, vocational colleges, and universities. Of these, studies at colleges and universities account for the vast majority (Alhammad, 2025; Feng, 2021; He, 2022; Nagao, 2022; Thaksanan & Chaturongakul, 2023; Samad et al., 2024). The genres examined include practical, academic, narrative, argumentative, and expository writing (Haerazi et al., 2020; Huang & Zhang, 2020). In addition, some studies have used SFL to direct curriculum design and instructional materials, developing writing courses or academic writing modules grounded in GBA (Triastuti et al., 2022; Sitompul et al., 2025).

ESP Genre Theory

ESP research commonly employs genre and move analysis to investigate the rhetorical organisation of academic texts. The genres examined in these studies typically involve scholarly and professional texts, such as research articles (Dong & Lu, 2020; Alinasab et al., 2021), research project proposals (Kuzmenkova & Erykina, 2022), disciplinary academic writing (Li et al., 2020), specialised texts in professional fields such as nursing (Orfanò & Wingate, 2024), and short scientific genres such as scientific argumentative correspondence (Khammee et al., 2024).

SFL and Cognitive Perspectives

Recent genre-based writing research has integrated SFL with cognitive perspectives, forming a hybrid theoretical orientation (Gu et al., 2025; Negretti, 2021; Philippakos et al., 2023; Truong, 2022; Wiboonwachara & Charubusp, 2022). Compared with studies that focus primarily on textual structure or genre awareness, these studies shifted attention toward learners' cognitive and self-regulatory engagement during writing, including managing task complexity, revising ideas, and evaluating writing effectiveness (Gu et al., 2025; Philippakos et al., 2023; Wiboonwachara & Charubusp, 2022). This pattern suggests an emerging shift in GBA research from analysing genre knowledge as textual knowledge alone towards examining how it is used strategically during writing.

SFL and Sociocultural Theory

Studies integrating SFL with SCT often show how teacher and peer scaffolding helps learners use linguistic and semiotic resources to write for specific social purposes (Jarunthawatchai et al., 2025; Mauludin, 2020; Nagao, 2023; Thongchalerm & Jarunthawatchai, 2020). During GBA instruction, genre knowledge has been examined from both pedagogical and social perspectives. Mauludin (2020) emphasised how classroom interaction and scaffolding help learners develop genre knowledge, while Jarunthawatchai et al. (2025) and Nagao (2023) focused on how this knowledge enables learners to write for professional communities. These studies suggest that learners develop genre knowledge not simply by learning textual forms but by using language, with the support of teachers and peers, to respond to specific purposes, audiences, and contexts.

Overall, these results show that GBA is grounded in multiple theoretical traditions, with an increasing tendency to integrate social-semiotic, cognitive, and sociocultural perspectives. However, these frameworks are often applied in isolation, highlighting the necessity for a more integrated conceptual understanding of genre-based writing instruction.

Implementation of GBA

Across the 41 studies included in this review, three major types of teaching interventions were identified (Table 3): SFL-based TLC interventions, ESP move-analysis interventions, and hybrid or integrated genre pedagogies. Among these categories, SFL-based TLC interventions were the most frequently adopted instructional approach, accounting for 25 studies (61%), followed by ESP move-analysis interventions (9 studies, 22%), and hybrid or integrated genre pedagogies (7 studies, 17%).

Table 3. *Distribution of teaching interventions in genre-based writing studies*

Teaching Intervention Type	Number of Studies	Percentage (%)
SFL-based TLC interventions	25	61.0
ESP move-analysis interventions	9	22.0
Hybrid / integrated genre pedagogies	7	17.0
Total	41	100

SFL-based TLC interventions

Most studies followed the conventional stages of the TLC, which were often adapted to learners' proficiency levels, instructional time, genres, and classroom contexts. These studies followed the basic pedagogical logic of GBA, moving from genre analysis and guided practice to independent writing and revision. They just conducted different implementations in terms of classroom interaction, collaborative construction, feedback mechanisms, and the use of digital platforms when dealing with discipline-specific writing tasks (Haerazi et al., 2020; Jarunthawatchai et al., 2025; Mauludin, 2020; Osawa, 2025; Sitompul et al., 2025; Sujinpram & Wannaruk, 2024). This pattern suggests that the TLC functioned in the reviewed studies as a flexible pedagogical structure rather than a uniform instructional procedure. Therefore, the TLC served as a flexible pedagogical framework for sequencing scaffolded genre learning, independent writing, and revision.

ESP move-analysis instruction

ESP research usually examines rhetorical strategies, communicative purposes, and structural conventions in target genres through guided analysis of model texts, with a particular focus on discourse practices in specific disciplinary or professional contexts (Khammee et al., 2024; Li et al., 2020; Ye, 2020). Unlike TLC instruction, rhetorical strategy analysis focuses more directly on textual structure, move-step patterns, and disciplinary communication norms, and is therefore often associated with qualitative case studies, discourse analysis, or mixed-methods research designs (Alinasab et al., 2021; Hakim, 2023; Kuzmenkova & Erygina, 2022).

Hybrid and Integrated Genre Pedagogies

Recent studies show that technologies such as corpus-based learning, data-driven learning (DDL), multimodal writing, and digital collaborative platforms are gradually expanding the scope of GBA. Technology-assisted GBA is commonly used to support genre analysis, collaborative construction, and genre-appropriate writing. Applications in higher education are often oriented toward disciplinary writing practices, whereas those in primary and secondary education place greater emphasis on structured scaffolding and process-oriented guidance (Alhammad, 2025; Kuzmenkova & Erykina, 2022; Li et al., 2020; Liu & Chen, 2022; Philippakos et al., 2023).

Overall, these outcomes indicate that although TLC-based genre instruction remains the dominant pedagogical model, GBA has diversified through ESP-oriented analytical approaches and hybrid pedagogies that employ digital tools, corpus resources, and complementary instructional strategies. These instructional approaches are closely linked to distinct patterns of learning outcomes in GBA research.

Impacts on Learning Outcomes

Among the 41 empirical studies included in this review (Table 4), writing performance was the most frequently investigated outcome, with 14 studies (34.0%) focusing exclusively on improvements in students' writing quality and textual development. Sixteen studies (39.0%) examined writing performance and genre awareness. Notably, 11 studies (27.0%) investigated HOTS, including SRL, critical thinking, and creativity. Although writing performance remains the focus of GBA research, there is a clear trend toward emphasising the development of learners' cognitive aspects.

Table 4. *Distribution of learning outcomes examined in the reviewed GBA studies*

Outcome Category	Number	Percentage (%)
Writing performance only	14	34.0
Writing & Genre Awareness	16	39.0
Writing & HOTS	11	27.0

Improvements in Writing Performance

Most studies have reported improvements in writing performance; these gains were not confined to overall writing scores, such as content and organisation (Huang & Zhang, 2020; Osawa, 2025). Other studies have also examined more specific dimensions such as linguistic features and lexical or syntactic complexity (Gu et al., 2025; Thongchalerm & Jarunthawatchai, 2020). The Jacobs (1981) ESL Composition Profile (Huang & Zhang, 2020), SFL-based rubrics (Nagao, 2022), and holistic scoring scales (Philippakos et al., 2023) have been used to evaluate learners' writing quality across multiple genres.

For data analysis, the reviewed studies commonly used statistical procedures appropriate to their designs and focused on outcomes. Paired-samples t-tests were commonly used for pre- and post-intervention comparisons, while independent-samples t-tests, ANCOVA, repeated-measures MANOVA, and mixed-design ANOVA were used to compare instructional conditions or writing development across groups (Gu et al., 2025; Sujinpram & Wannaruk, 2024). Nonparametric and delayed-effect analyses were less common but appeared in studies with follow-up measures or alternative distributional hypotheses (Huang & Zhang, 2020). The results show that GBA is most commonly evaluated using rubric-based writing assessments and statistical comparisons of pre- and post-intervention writing tasks, with improvements frequently observed in both global text organisation and more fine-grained linguistic features.

Development of Genre Awareness

Studies of genre awareness suggest that GBA help learners recognise genre conventions with communicative purposes, allowing them to make more deliberate choices in constructing their writing to specific contexts (Hakim, 2023; Negretti, 2021; Thaksanan & Chaturongakul, 2023; Zhang & Zhang, 2021). This outcome is commonly analysed through questionnaires, interviews, reflective journals, and analyses of student writing, which capture learners' developing awareness of genre features and writing processes (Feng, 2021; Negretti, 2021). Overall, these studies suggest that genre awareness is an important mediating outcome of GBA, linking explicit genre instruction to learners' ability to make more purposeful rhetorical choices in writing.

Higher-order Thinking Skills

Critical thinking, creativity, and self-regulated learning have attracted growing attention in recent GBA studies. A growing body of research indicates that GBA can promote learners' strategic awareness of planning, monitoring, and revising during the writing process (Negretti, 2021; Wiboonwachara & Charubusp, 2022). Research has also examined how GBA contributes to the development of critical thinking skills in students' ability to construct arguments, evaluate evidence, and demonstrate greater awareness of audience and rhetorical positioning in academic writing (Abdel Latif et al., 2024; Insuwan & Thongrin, 2025; Orfanò & Wingate, 2024). The available evidence suggests that GBA may facilitate creativity not by removing structure, but by providing genre resources and scaffolding that enable learners to generate ideas, reshape meanings,

and make more flexible rhetorical choices within recognisable genre expectations (Haerazi et al., 2020; Triastuti et al., 2022).

Pre–post comparisons, quasi-experimental designs, and analyses of students' written texts and reflective responses were used to provide complementary evidence to understand how GBA supports the development of HOTS in writing contexts (Abdel Latif et al., 2024; Insuwan & Thongrin, 2025; Negretti, 2021; Wiboonwachara & Charubusp, 2022).

Taken together, these outcomes indicate that GBA is implemented through diverse pedagogical approaches and yields a range of learning outcomes. However, the relationship between instructional practices and learning outcomes is often implied rather than explicitly examined, denoting a lack of integrated analytical systems in the existing research.

Technology Integration and the Absence of AI in GBA Research

As shown in Table 5, despite the increasing interest in technology-enhanced writing instruction, only a limited number of studies have incorporated technological elements into GBA. (n = 6, 14%). These studies can be broadly categorised into corpus- and data-based approaches (n = 3, 7%) and digital platform-supported instruction (n = 3, 7%). Notably, none of the reviewed studies explicitly integrated AI tools into GBA. This gap illustrates the need to enable future research to explore how AI could be systematically integrated into GBA, rather than being used as a standalone tool.

Table 5. *Technology integration in GBA studies*

Category	Number of Studies (n)	Percentage (%)
GBA + Corpus / DDL	3	7
GBA + Digital Platforms	3	7
GBA + AI Tools	0	0
Total Technology-Integrated Studies	6	14

Discussion

This review examined 41 studies published between 2020 and 2025 to identify the theoretical foundations, pedagogical implementations, learning outcomes, and technology integration patterns in GBA. The discussion is organised around the three research questions. It first explains the dominance of SFL and the growing integration of cognitive and sociocultural perspectives. It then discusses how different theoretical orientations shaped pedagogical implementation and the emphasis on outcomes. Finally, this paper considers the limited use of technology and the absence of explicit AI integration in the reviewed GBA studies and then outlines the conditions required for responsible AI-supported genre pedagogy.

Theoretical Orientations in GBA Research

The findings for the first research question indicate that SFL remained the dominant conceptual framework in the reviewed GBA studies, followed by ESP genre theory, with an increasing number of studies using cognitive and sociocultural perspectives. The dominance of SFL can be explained not only by its historical background and high pedagogical operationalisability, but also by its suitability for ESL/EFL writing contexts (Hammond et al., 1987). SFL-based genre pedagogy makes implicit genre expectations more visible to ESL/EFL learners who may have limited access to the rhetorical and language practices of target genres (Hyland, 2007; Martin & Rose, 2008; Sitompul et al., 2025). It also makes SFL attractive for classroom-based research because changes in genre staging, organisation, cohesion, and linguistic

realisation can be observed in student texts and assessed with writing rubrics (Gu et al., 2025; Osawa, 2025).

At the same time, the growing integration of cognitive perspectives can be understood as a response to the explanatory limits of earlier genre-based research. Although SFL-oriented studies have demonstrated textual improvement, they have offered less direct explanation of how learners internalise genre knowledge and transform it into independent rhetorical control (Negretti, 2021; Wiboonwachara & Charubusp, 2022). Recent studies have therefore increasingly adopted cognitive perspectives to examine writing as a strategic, process-oriented activity rather than merely a final textual product (Kellogg, 2008; Negretti, 2021). This shift is also related to concerns that excessively rigid genre instruction may encourage formulaic reproduction, whereas cognitive perspectives help explain how learners use genre knowledge flexibly when making rhetorical decisions during composing (Nagao, 2022).

Moreover, as GBA research has expanded beyond writing performance and genre awareness towards higher-order and self-regulatory outcomes, cognitive integration has become increasingly important for explaining the internal processes underlying writing development. (Orfanò & Wingate, 2024; Shen & Bai, 2024; Truong, 2022; Wiboonwachara & Charubusp, 2022). In this sense, the growing cognitive orientation reflects a broader movement in GBA research from demonstrating textual improvement to explaining the developmental processes through which learners gain more independent and flexible control over genre-based writing.

Pedagogical Implementation and Learning Outcomes

The findings for the second research question show that GBA was most commonly implemented through SFL-based TLC interventions, followed by ESP move-analysis instruction and hybrid genre pedagogies. Rather than showing a single fixed model of GBA, this pattern suggests that genre-based writing instruction has been implemented along a continuum, ranging from staged classroom scaffolding to discipline-specific rhetorical analysis and more integrated pedagogical designs (Haerazi et al., 2020; Khammee et al., 2024; Staples et al., 2024). The prominence of TLC-based studies indicates that classroom research has largely examined GBA by structured instructional cycles, whereas ESP-oriented and hybrid approaches have paid greater attention to disciplinary communication, corpus use, digital tools, collaboration, and metacognitive engagement (Khammee et al., 2024; Dong & Lu, 2020; Sujinpram & Wannaruk, 2024).

These implementation patterns were associated with different emphases on outcomes. SFL-based TLC studies most often reported improvements in writing performance and genre awareness (Gu et al., 2025; Osawa, 2025). ESP-oriented studies foregrounded learners' control over rhetorical and disciplinary genre expectations (Khammee et al., 2024; Sujinpram & Wannaruk, 2024). Studies informed by cognitive or sociocultural perspectives were more likely to examine process-oriented, interactional, and higher-order dimensions of writing development (Negretti, 2021; Orfanò & Wingate, 2024; Robillos, 2023; Shen & Bai, 2024). These patterns imply that theoretical and pedagogical orientation shaped what was taught, how instruction was designed, what outcomes were measured, and how writing development was interpreted.

At the same time, the reviewed studies suggest that writing performance, genre awareness, HOTS and SRL development should not be treated as entirely separate outcomes. However, evidence of their interaction remains uneven. Most studies continued to rely on final written products, writing scores, questionnaires, interviews, or reflective data, with limited process-based evidence showing how learners coordinated genre awareness, strategic regulation, and HOTS

during composing (Abdel Latif et al., 2024; Nagao, 2022; Wiboonwachara & Charubusp, 2022). This indicates the need for more rigorous, multidimensional assessment systems that can trace how textual development, genre awareness, and higher-order cognition interact throughout the writing process.

Technology Integration and the Absence of AI in Reviewed GBA Studies

The findings for the third research question indicate that technology integration in GBA research remained limited. Only a small number of reviewed studies incorporated corpus resources, data-driven learning, or digital platforms (Sujinpram & Wannaruk, 2024; Staples et al., 2024), and none explicitly integrated AI into genre-based writing instruction. This absence is particularly striking given the rapid development of AI in language education, suggesting that AI's potential to support GBA remains largely unexplored (Ahmad et al., 2026; Barzanji & Alsofyani, 2026; Zhang & Samsudin, 2026). The findings therefore do not demonstrate the effectiveness of AI-supported GBA; rather, they reveal a gap between the rapid expansion of AI-mediated writing support and the slower development of theoretically grounded AI integration in GBA.

This gap suggests that future AI-GBA research should not treat AI as a generic writing assistant or a replacement for teacher guidance. Instead, AI should be positioned within the pedagogical logic of GBA, where AI-generated support is critically evaluated, adapted, and revised through genre-informed teacher guidance (Hao & Razali, 2026; Zhang & Samsudin, 2026). Such integration would need to examine whether AI can support sustained genre-based writing development rather than merely produce short-term improvements in text.

Conditions for Responsible AI-GBA Integration

The integration of AI into GBA also needs attention to several practical and ethical conditions. Teachers' readiness is central because AI-supported GBA requires teachers to align technological affordances with genre-pedagogical purposes, learner needs, and classroom assessment practices (Zhang & Samsudin, 2026). If teachers lack sufficient AI literacy, AI may be used only for surface-level correction or generic feedback rather than for genre-sensitive scaffolding (Alghamdi & Madini, 2026; Pryma et al., 2025). AI literacy in this context should include not only technical familiarity with AI tools but also the ability to judge the relevance, accuracy, bias and pedagogical value of AI-generated outputs. In addition, ethical concerns must be addressed, including overreliance, authorship, plagiarism, data privacy and the possible weakening of learner agency and authorial voice (Mahfouz & AbdelMohsen, 2025; Moussa et al., 2026). Third, assessment validity becomes more complex when AI is involved because teachers need to distinguish between learners' independent genre competence and AI-assisted textual improvement (Pryma et al., 2025; Singh et al., 2026). Accordingly, assessment should include process-based evidence rather than depending solely on final written products. Finally, institutional constraints such as large class sizes, limited instructional time, unequal access to technology and unclear policies may affect the ability to implement AI-GBA integration responsibly and consistently (Hao & Razali, 2026; Stanko et al., 2026). These concerns suggest that AI-supported GBA should be developed as a guided pedagogical system rather than as an unregulated technological add-on.

Limitations

This research has some limitations, primarily in the inclusion/exclusion criteria for the SLR process. Further investigations could include books and/or non-peer-reviewed articles to provide a more comprehensive picture of the GBA in writing pedagogy. Compared with this in-depth SLR, which includes research throughout multiple genres, future scholars could narrow the scope by focusing on the GBA in English-language academic research articles to support the development of English academic writing competence. Furthermore, the period for selecting articles could be extended to include 1979 to the present to provide a view of GBAs' development and better identify their trends. Overall, the current study functions as a basis for further investigation.

Conclusion

This review synthesised 41 studies published between 2020 and 2025 to examine the theoretical foundations, pedagogical approaches, learning outcomes, and technology integration of GBA in ESL/EFL writing instruction. The findings indicate that GBA has improved learners' writing performance, genre awareness, and, increasingly, HOTS, while also highlighting the need for more integrated theoretical and methodological development. Theoretically, this review highlights the value of integrating social-semiotic, cognitive, and sociocultural perspectives to explain the development of genre-based writing more comprehensively. Methodologically, it calls for more multidimensional assessment designs that move beyond final written products to capture writing processes and higher-order cognitive development. Practically, the review suggests that teachers should use GBA flexibly to support learners' rhetorical development, rather than reducing genre instruction to model-text imitation. Future research should explore how AI-integrated GBA can be responsibly designed, implemented, and evaluated across diverse educational contexts.

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