

# The Effects of Process Genre-Based Writing and Process Writing Approaches on Asian EFL Pre-University Students' Writing Performance

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**Abstract**—This study investigated the effects of process genre-based writing (PGBW) and process writing (PW) approaches on 40 Asian EFL pre-university students' academic writing performance in a pre-university writing course. The study employed a quasi-experimental research design by dividing the participants in two classes with equal number: 20 students in the process genre-based writing class consisting of 9 males and 11 females, and 20 students in the process writing class comprising 8 males and 12 females. Students' writing performances were examined using a comparison of their pre- and post-test writing scores. Data analysis revealed that students in both groups showed significant increases in their post-test writing performance after engaging in the PGBW and PW activities; however, learners in the PGBW class obtained higher average mean scores in the post-test writing compared to their peers in the PW class. A significant difference in the overall mean scores for the PGBW and the PW groups after the interventions was at  $p\text{-value} < .05$  ( $t(38) = 3.17$ ,  $p = .003$ ). These results suggest that the PGBW approach had a greater positive effect on students' writing performance. Implications of these findings for implementation of the PGBW approach are discussed.

**Index Terms**—process genre-based writing; process writing, writing performance, Asian EFL pre-university students, EFL students

## I. INTRODUCTION

Writing is defined as a thinking process in which a writer's ideas, thoughts, and learning experiences are translated into written form and it is considered one of the most important skills to acquire in an academic setting, particularly in schools from elementary to tertiary level (Mohamadi, 2018; Wingate & Harper, 2021). However, writing is challenging for L2 learners to master and is perceived as the most difficult language skill to acquire. Writing requires a multiplicity of knowledge, which includes content, context, process, register, rhetorical, and other linguistic features (Dobao, 2014; Qiu & Lee, 2020; Zhang, 2018). Writing is an intricate cognitive activity incorporating many processes and strategies (Ahmad, 2020; Chen, 2019). For students to write well, they must pay attention to details and consider their target audience. Because of the perplexing nature of writing, this productive language skill is often neglected in the ESL/EFL classroom and has a minor role in language learning instruction (Coulmas, 2013; Yanguas, 2020).

Second language (L2) writers will often translate texts directly from their mother tongue (L1) to compose texts in the target language (Li & Deng, 2019). L2 learners' cultural background and their native language (L1) greatly influence their L2 writing process when they construct texts in the target language (Yanguas, 2020). The syntactic structures and language styles in L2 are affected by the learners' first language (Darus & Subramaniam, 2009), which results in depreciation in the view of the literate community of the target language. It is essential for non-native language learners to learn appropriate writing strategies (Thongchalerms & Jarunthawatchai, 2020) and master the writing skills of the target language to obtain academic achievement in the tertiary education domain (Bacon et al., 2021; Kitjaroonchai & Suppasetseree, 2021a; Kitjaroonchai & Suppasetseree, 2021b). L2 learners need guidance and proper writing training to become effective writers and be able to express themselves in a more salient and noticeable voice in the target language (Matsuda, 2001).

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The teaching of writing in EFL classroom contexts has changed drastically over the past three decades. Two major approaches of teaching writing to L2 learners such as process writing and genre-based writing were found to improve writing skills to some extent; however, L2 learners are still in search of writing competency, which calls for more

investigation. The review of literature discussed two major writing approaches and proposed the integration of these two writing approaches, which was employed in the study.

#### A. *Process Writing (PW)*

Writing is an “exploratory and recursive, rather than linear, pre-determined process, and often peers intervene at one or several points in the writing process” (Polio & Williams, 2009, p. 491). Writing in the process approach is concerned with linguistic skills, such as planning, drafting, and revising, while linguistic knowledge such as grammar and sentence structure may be less emphasized as seen in the product approach (Badger & White, 2000). The process approach puts more emphasis on what writers do as they compose a text, rather than on textual features, and the role of learners is rather that of an independent producer of texts (Curry & Hewings, 2003). Therefore, the writing activities in the process approach promote the development of language use through brainstorming and discussion for content ideas (Hasan & Akhand, 2010; Martinez et al., 2020). According to Curry and Hewings (2003), there are seven primary stages for the process approach model in teaching writing: prewriting, planning, drafting, reflecting, peer/tutor review, revising, editing and proofreading. The seven stages proposed by Curry and Hewings (2003) can be summarized in the following.

Prewriting - Learners are encouraged to generate and brainstorm for ideas, collect information, and make notes of what comes into mind.

Planning - Learners are stimulated to organize and focus on formulated ideas. Useful strategies such as mind mapping, clustering, making an outline for a topic.

Drafting - Learners may work individually or in pairs or groups depending on the nature of the writing task. In a rough draft version, writers should focus mainly on the development of ideas, organization, or information collected from the prewriting stage.

Reflecting – Learners pause for a while in their writing, and reflect on it, before coming back to it with fresh eyes.

Peer/tutor review - Learners have their work read and commented on by peers or instructors to improve their written texts.

Revising - Learners are encouraged to further develop and clarify ideas in the written text as well as improving the structure of the text.

Editing and proofreading - Learners focus on linguistic accuracy, rules of language mechanics, formatting, and footnotes or references used in the content.

The process approach focuses on how texts are produced rather than the outcome. Writing is, therefore, viewed as complex and recursive, but not linear (Martinez et al., 2020). Feedback and revision are perceived as key elements in the process writing approach. However, educators have recognized that explicit teaching of writing is inevitable, whereby forms of different genres are taught to L2 learners to get them assimilated into the target culture and social context (Gibbons, 2014). To some researchers (e.g., Gibbons, 2014; Hyland, 2003b), the process approach is used solely to focus the language skills and processes of writing in the language classroom. As a result, this approach may fail to address social, cultural, and linguistic knowledge, or perceived understanding in a particular culture (Gibbons, 2014). For this reason, educators have adopted a new approach known as the “genre approach” to train writers to get familiar with different types of writing genres.

#### B. *Genre-based Writing (GBW)*

The genre approach views writing as a social and cultural practice in which learners acquire the knowledge of a particular genre for social and communicative success (Dirgeyasa, 2016; Gibbons, 2014; Hasan & Akland, 2010; Hyland, 2003a). In the view of those promoting the genre-based approach, linguistics becomes a practical tool that language teachers can use in their class and show learners how distinctive patterns of lexis, grammar, syntax, or structure sequentially support each genre (Hyland, 2007). A genre-based approach seeks to accomplish its purpose through being socially accepted by a community of readers who shares the same social norms. This indicates that learners of the language need to produce a written message for the audience which uses the target language (L1). As Munice (2002, cited in Hasan & Akland, 2010) posits, the genre approach draws its focus on the reader and on the conventions that a piece of writing must follow. A genre-based writer, therefore, needs to develop a writing style to meet social norms. Genre-based writing has its own linguistic features such as rhetorical structure, grammatical pattern, language register, or lexical units (Dirgeyasa, 2016; Hyland 2003a), and the writing has distinctive characteristics, produced for a particular target audience with a specific purpose (Coulmas, 2013; Nordin & Mohammad, 2017).

Teaching and learning of writing through a genre-based approach consists of three stages: modeling a text, joint construction, and independent construction of a text (Hyland, 2003a). The flow chart is shown in Figure 1, with cyclic procedures of teaching and learning of writing through a genre-based approach initially developed by linguists and educators in Australia (Gebhard, 2019).

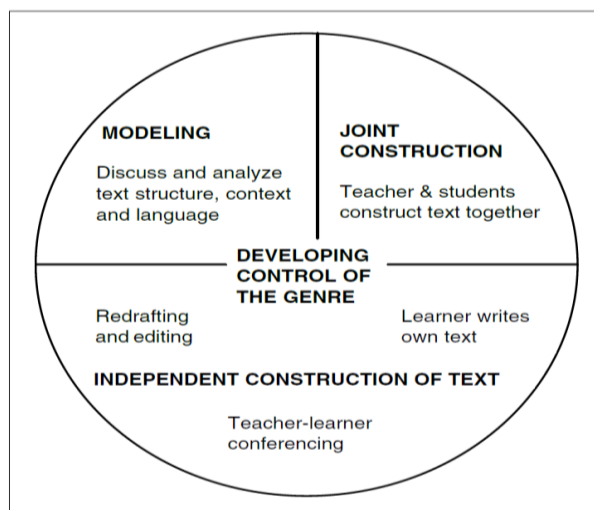


Figure 1. The Teaching and Learning Cycle (Hyland 2003b, p. 21).

The three stages embedded in the GBW are discussed as follows.

*Stage 1:* Model a text. At this level, the teacher chooses a certain type of genre, choose a sample text, and brings it to class to discuss and analyze text structure with learners. Learners study lexical items, grammatical or structural patterns, and practice the language and textual features used in that genre (Dirgeyasa, 2016; Worden, 2019) to work on their text.

*Stage 2:* Joint construction. Learners are guided to write by using words or phrases given, and they can modify or manipulate them to fit their context by following the style or the model given. The focal points are on demonstrating the process of producing a text type as well as discussing with learners the language featured associated with the particular genre (Gibbons, 2014).

*Stage 3:* Independent construction of a text. At this last stage of the genre writing approach, learners discover how to construct a certain type of genre they have learned from the previous stages. However, the teacher must ensure that learners truly understand the features of a particular genre (Dirgeyasa, 2016) to produce appropriate texts acceptable in the target readership.

GBW, therefore, enables learners to write and pursue a specific goal and be accepted by writing communities in different social contexts. It can be thought of as process writing because it has systematic orders to follow (Worden, 2019) and writers need to revise and get feedback from teachers or peers to improve the quality of text to convey the message more effectively and achieve its communicative goal.

### C. The Process Genre-based Writing (PGBW)

The integration of the two writing approaches (PW and PGBW) was initially proposed by Badger and White (2000) in which the researchers termed it “the integrated process-genre approach” (p.159) with a belief that a combination of two writing approaches will provide “a range of advantages including more focused use of text models” (Rusinovci, 2015 p. 702) without removing elements of other approaches. In the GBW approach, learners are trained to produce language used in a particular context, whereas the process writing fosters learners development in the use of language and linguistic features observed from peer feedback or instructor’s comments during the writing process. What lies beneath the GBW approach is that the development of writing varies among EFL learners since they are at different stages of writing development and language proficiency as given by their educational backgrounds and practices. The application of the integrated process-genre approach allows learners to observe how a text is constructed based on its purpose. A GBW approach provides learners with specific information concerning language forms and styles, or the syntactical features and the uniformity between texts produced for each writing genre (Uasiriphan & Tangkiengsirisin, 2019). Learners can examine the type of language structure employed, the kind of vocabulary and language register, and how they function to comply with the rhetorical situation practiced by a target community (Badger & White, 2000). As advocated by Humphrey and Macnaught (2011), at least two examples of a particular writing genre should be introduced to learners to demonstrate variations of linguistic features, styles, and writing mode that can guide them to construct their own texts. The PGBW approach combines the two writing approaches discussed previously in that writing encompasses knowledge about language, register, context, purposes, and linguistic competence in expressing thoughts (Huang & Jun, 2020). Thus, the two integrated approaches are viewed as complementing each other.

The integration of the PGBW approach is essential for EFL/ESL writing instructors as it has been shown to enhance academic writing skills (Huang & Jun, 2020). In the present study we modified the model of Huang and Jun (2020) by incorporating the writing process of planning, drafting, revising, peer review and editing. Our modification was planned to encourage learners to study different writing processes and help raise their awareness of the different processes so that they could later use them independently. The procedure of the modified PGBW approach is illustrated in Figure 2.

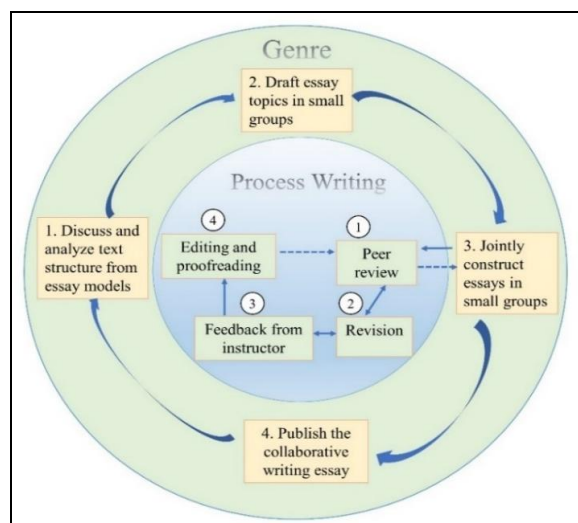


Figure 2. The Adapted Process Genre-Based Writing (modified from Huang & Jun, 2020)

As shown in Figure 2, the integration of PGBW can be interpreted from two planes: the GBW approach and the PW approach. At the initial stage of this integrated writing approach, the instructor introduces a specific genre to the students and elicits to them the text structure, language register, and rhetorical conventions of that specific genre. The instructor leads the students in analyzing written texts, discussing writing style, word choice, or language features used in that genre to build schema and stimulate learners' metacognitive reflection (Humphrey & Macnaught, 2011). After the students learn and adequately absorb the knowledge about the distinct type of essay and its stylistic conventions, the instructor assigns learners in small groups to draft their essay and the instructor assists them with model texts or language features. While drafting the script, learners are urged to revisit the model essays and pay attention to language features. In the joint construction of the essay, students work collaboratively in small groups to compose texts conforming to the style and rhetorical conventions of the target genre. At this stage, learners are guided to the process writing approach of text revision by improving the development of ideas, organization of the essay, and the rhetorical moves in response to the context of the writing genre (Hyland, 2011). During this revision process, the team needs to take note of rhetorical conventions, language features, specific structures commonly used by the target genre. For example, in constructing an argument essay, learners must ensure rhetorical moves, such as developing a strong thesis, making claims, and proposing refutation and rebuttals. After the revision is made, the team seeks further comments and feedback from the instructor. At the last stage of the writing process, the group edit and proofread the text, focusing on language accuracy, mechanics, structure within paragraphs, clarity of writing, and correct use of citations.

The PGBW approach shows the benefits of providing students with a systemic explanation of how to produce texts for communicative purposes. Learners' engagement in the PGBW can improve writing competency concerning content, language styles, and the linguistic knowledge acceptable to a target discourse community. Over the last two decades many scholars have gained merit for implementing the PGBW in the L2 writing classrooms for the benefits it brings to students' academic writing skills (Racelis & Matsuda, 2013). However, the existing body of literature provides scant information on how the PGBW can be implemented in an EFL writing course (Huang & Jun, 2020), particularly in an EFL classroom with culturally diverse learners engaging in group writing tasks. To bridge this gap, we offered a PGBW framework guided by the writing process model (Curry & Hewings, 2003) and the GBW of the teaching and learning cycle developed by Hyland and his students (Hyland, 2003) to investigate the effects of the integrated PGBW approach on Asian EFL learners undertaking an academic writing course at an international university. The following research questions guided our study.

1. Does the process genre-based writing approach improve students' academic writing performance?
2. Are there any differences in writing quality between learners' engaging in the process genre-based writing approach and those who are taught using the process writing approach?

### III. METHODOLOGY

The study employed a quasi-experimental research design by collecting data from a pre- and post-test writing to observe changes between two groups that were engaged in different writing approaches to L2 writing practices spanning 15 weeks. This study examined the effects the two writing approaches (independent treatments) had on EFL learners' academic writing performance to better understand the effectiveness of these writing approaches when used in an EFL classroom context.

#### A. Research Participants

We recruited 40 pre-university students undertaking the Applied Grammar and Academic Writing course in the first semester of the 2021 academic year offered by the English as a Second Language (ESL) program of a private international university in central Thailand. All these participants learned English as a foreign language. According to a pre-study survey, their years of English learning ranged from 9-14 years with a mean score 10.5 years. Based on the university English proficiency test (EPT) scores, the participants' English language proficiency ranged from pre-intermediate to upper-intermediate (comparable to A2 – B2 based on the CEFR scale). We used convenience sampling to divide students into two groups. The PGBW group had 20 students (9 males and 11 females) from China (3), Indonesia (4), Laos (3), Malaysia (3), Myanmar (2), and Thailand (5), while the PW group consisted of 20 students (8 males and 12 females) from China (4), Indonesia (3), Laos (2), Malaysia (2), Myanmar (2), Thailand (5), and Vietnam (2).

### B. The Setting and Pre- and Post-Treatment Writing Tasks

The study conducted in the Applied Grammar and Academic Writing class offered to pre-university students (students preparing to enter the international degree programs). This language skill course aimed to develop learners' academic writing skills with an emphasis on writing various types of essays, including description, comparison, cause and effect, and argumentative essays. The pre- and post-treatment writing tasks required students to compose an opinion essay in approximately 250-350 words within a permitted time of 70 minutes without consulting any resources. The topic of the pre- and post-test writing was identical: *All levels of education, from elementary school to university education, should be free of charge for all*, which was adopted from the 2020 International English Language Testing System (IELTS) practice essay questions. The students took the pre- and post-writing tasks in the university computer lab. We used Jacob et al.'s (1981) Composition Analytic Scoring Rubric (a 100-point scale) comprising of five language dimensions: content (13-30 points), organization (7-20 points), vocabulary (7-20 points), language use (5-25 points), and mechanics (2-5 points) to evaluate students' pre- and post-writing tasks. The participants' pre- and post-test scores were rated by three raters (two researchers and a composition instructor). The average scores obtained from the three raters were used for statistical analysis with a paired-sample *t*-test to compare the participants' mean scores and observe their post-test writing performance.

### C. Procedures and Instruments

Both groups of the participants were taught using four different types of essays defined by the course description. We used the course textbook "*Great writing 5: From great essays to research, 5<sup>th</sup> edition*" by Folse and Pugh (2019) to guide our teaching instruction. In both groups, the participants were divided into small groups of three to four members to work on two collaborative writing (CW) tasks: descriptive and argumentative essays. Two other essays (comparison and cause and effect) were constructed individually. The experimental procedure for both groups is illustrated in Table 1.

TABLE 1.  
EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURE

Group	N	week 1	week 2	weeks 3-5	weeks 6-8	weeks 9-11	weeks 12-14	week 15
PGBW	20	Orientation	Sign consent form / take pre-test writing	Descriptive essay (group writing)	Comparison essay (individual)	Cause an effect essay (individual)	Argumentative essay (group writing)	Take post-test writing
PW	20	Orientation	Sign consent form / take pre-test writing	Descriptive essay (group writing)	Comparison essay (individual)	Cause an effect essay (individual)	Argumentative essay (group writing)	Take post-test writing

Although the two groups were exposed to similar treatment in terms of producing four distinctive essay types, the teaching instruction for the PGBW group, however, followed the steps of the PGBW instructional framework while producing their CW tasks (see Figure 2). The teacher-researcher was involved in the intervention and introduced at least three additional essay models for each writing genre to the participants aside from the model essay provided in the textbook. The participants in the PGBW group were also extensively drilled in developing the context, modelling and deconstruction, and then jointly constructing texts with feedback from the teacher-researcher before revising their written text. Likewise, the other two independent essays followed similar steps (see Figure 2), except the independent construction of text as their final product instead of publishing collaborative essays.

For the PW group, the essay writing lessons were given using the conventional way of PW. The writing lesson plans were designed in a similar manner in which the writing instructions guided students to language knowledge. Learners worked in small groups to produce two CW essays like their peers in the PGBW group, while two essays were constructed individually. Their constructed essays went through revision processes with peer and teacher feedback or comments focusing mainly on grammar and sentence structure. The participants did not receive extensive training using additional essay models apart from the textbook, or get exposed to genre knowledge, but only learnt from the essay sample offered in the textbook. A comparison of differences and similarities between the two groups are displayed in Table 2.

TABLE 2  
WRITING INSTRUCTIONS FOR PGBW GROUP AND PW GROUP

Focus	Process genre-based writing	Process writing
No. of writing genre	4	4
Types of writing genre	Description; Comparison; Cause and Effect; Argumentation	Description; Comparison; Cause and Effect; Argumentation
No. of hours taught	6-7 hours	5 hours
Content	Theme followed textbook Essay sample from textbook with three additional essay models for each genre taken from other ESL writing textbooks and internet sources	Theme followed textbook Essay sample from textbook only
Input	Model text from textbook and other sources from ESL writing textbooks and online Peers Instructor-researcher	Model text from textbook Peers Course instructor
Practice	Write multiple drafts with extensive drills outside class hours; implement recursive writing	Write one or two drafts; no extensive practice; implement recursive writing
Model text use	Texts from essay models for each writing genre is studied as a resource for developing students' essay in terms of content, organization, language features, and rhetorical devices. Model texts are compared to guide in group/individual essay construction	Texts from essay sample from textbook are used as a resource to guide in group/individual essay construction
Writing strategy	Emphasis on explicit instruction in constructing an essay that follows process genre-based writing: discuss and analyzing text structure, draft out the essay, jointly construct the essay, review and revise the essay within group, get feedback and comment from instructor-researcher, edit and proofread the essay, publish the essay	Follow the process writing but no explicit instruction
Feedback	Self-evaluation/peer evaluation Peer feedback Instructor-researcher feedback (Explicit feedback including metalinguistic information, content, organization, language features, and rhetorical devices)	Peer feedback Instructor feedback (Focus on grammatical errors only)

#### IV. RESULTS

To respond to Research Question 1: Does the PGBW approach improve students' academic writing performance?, we used the average scores of learners' pre- and post-test writing scores rated by three raters (two researchers included) to determine if the participants improved their writing after engaging in the PGBW approach compared to those who were involved in the PW group. We employed the paired samples *t*-test to observe differences between the learners' pre-test and post-test scores in both groups. Table 3 displays the differences between the learners' pre-test and post-test scores.

TABLE 3  
RESULTS OF WRITING PERFORMANCE IN PRE AND POST-TEST (PGBW GROUP AND PW GROUP)

Group(s)	Writing Performance	N	M	SD	MD	<i>t</i>	df	<i>p</i>
PGBW (Experimental Group)	Pre-test	20	56.65	4.44	13.52	-8.06	19	.000
	Post-test	20	70.17	6.58				
PW (Comparison Group)	Pre-test	20	58.25	5.03	5.70	-7.47	19	.000
	Post-test	20	63.95	5.79				

Note. \*  $p < .001$  (2-tailed)

The analysis revealed that learners in both groups showed significant increases in their post-test writing performances: (t (19) = -8.06,  $p < .001$ ) after engaging in the PGBW activities, or 13.52 points increase in the mean scores, and (t (19) = -7.47,  $p < .001$ ) for those who participated in the PW activities, or 5.7 points increase in the mean scores. However, learners in the experimental group obtained higher mean scores in the post-test writing (M = 70.17, SD = 6.58)

compared to learners in the comparison group ( $M = 63.95$ ,  $SD = 5.79$ ). The mean difference (MD) of the post-test score between the two groups was 6.22 points indicating that learners in the PGBW group performed slightly better in their post-test writing. From the standard deviation (SD) it can be implied that learners in the PGBW group's post-test scores were more heterogeneous compared to their peers in the PW group. To further examine if the participants in both groups improved on each language domain after engaging in the PGBW and PW approaches, the dependent  $t$ -test was used to analyze data. The results of each language domain performed by both groups are presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4  
GROUP MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF PRE- AND POST-TEST SCORES BY LANGUAGE DOMAIN

Components	Group	N	Pre-test		Post-test		
			M	SD	M	SD	MD
Overall	PGBW	20	56.65	4.44	70.17	6.58	13.52
	PW	20	58.30	5.03	64.00	5.78	5.70
Content	PGBW	20	14.67	1.84	20.87	1.55	6.20
	PW	20	15.35	2.15	17.15	2.64	1.80
Organization	PGBW	20	12.60	1.36	15.05	1.64	2.45
	PW	20	12.87	1.33	14.32	1.71	1.45
Vocabulary	PGBW	20	12.55	0.91	14.37	1.52	1.82
	PW	20	12.75	1.27	14.10	1.40	1.35
Language	PGBW	20	14.15	1.79	16.72	2.39	2.57
	PW	20	14.57	1.70	15.37	1.45	0.80
Mechanics	PGBW	20	2.67	0.43	3.15	0.40	0.47
	PW	20	2.70	0.61	3.00	0.58	0.30

Note. PGBW = Process Genre-Based Writing Group; PW = Process Writing Group; SD = Standard Deviation; MD = Mean Difference

As indicated in Table 4, the paired samples  $t$ -test results showed that the participants in both groups' post-test writing performance scores increased significantly in all components ( $p < .001$ ) compared to their pre-test writing scores; however, learners in the PGBW group performed better than their peers in the PW group as evidenced by their higher average scores in all language domains (overall MD = 7.82; content MD = 4.40; organization MD = 1.00; vocabulary MD = 0.47; language MD = 1.77; and mechanics MD = 0.17). Noticeably, the increased scores observed from the mean difference (MD) between the pre-test and post-test of the PGBW group were higher in every language domain compared to the MD scores performed by learners in PW group. Figure 3 visualizes the line graph demonstrating differences between the two groups' mean scores from the pre-test and post-test.

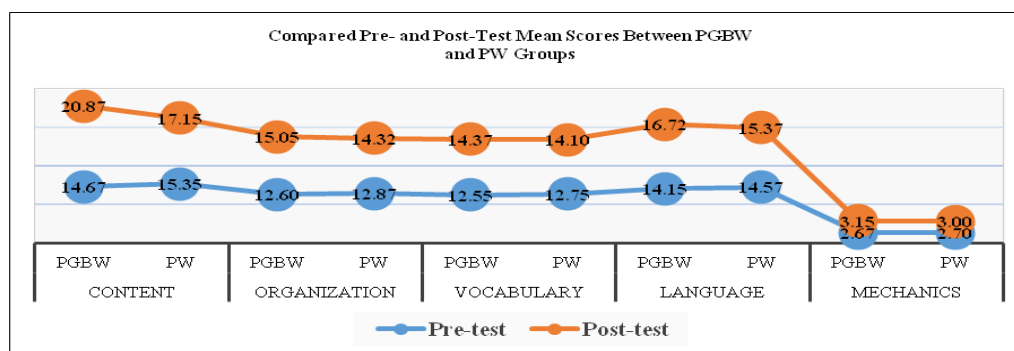


Figure 3. Process Genre-Based Writing Group and Process Writing Group Pre-and Post-Test Scores

As shown in Figure 3, the mean scores for the PGBW group's pre-test writing were slightly lower than their peers in the PW group's pre-test writing scores in all language domains (see line graph in blue), but their mean scores for post-test writing outperformed their peers in the PW group in all components (see line graph in orange). The overall mean scores performed by the two groups are illustrated in Figure 4.



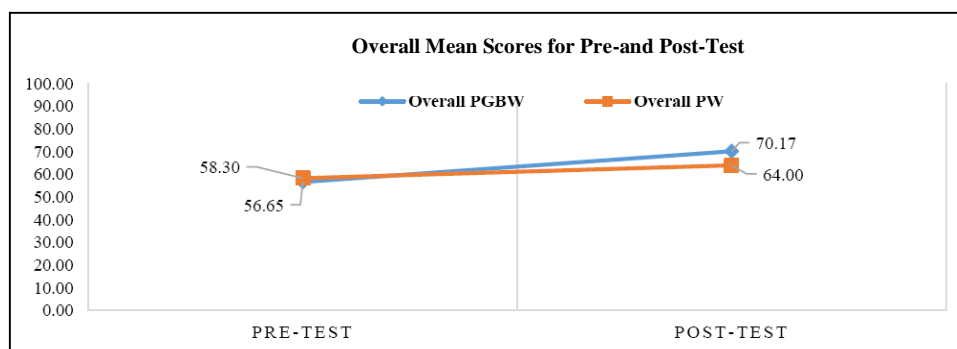


Figure 4. Overall Mean Scores for Pre-and Post-Test Performed by PGBW and PW Groups

As indicated in Figure 4, the mean score for pre-test performed by learners in the PGBW group is 1.65 points lower than the mean score for pre-test produced by learners in the PW group; however, the PGBW group's mean score for post-test was 6.17 points higher than the mean score for post-test exhibited by their peers in the PW group. This implies that learners who were taught using the PGBW approach improved their writing performance slightly better than the group that received merely PW instruction. We may state that both the PGBW and PW approaches could enhance learners' writing performance; however, the PGBW played a more prominent role in improving learners' writing skills as determined by the greater increase of their mean scores after engaging in the PGBW activities.

To further investigate if there are any significant differences in writing quality between learners' engaging in the PGBW approach and those who are taught using the PW approach, we addressed our second research question, by using an independent samples *t*-test to examine the differences between the two groups. The results of the independent samples *t*-test statistical analysis are presented in Table 5.

TABLE 5  
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES *T* TEST RESULTS (PGBW AND PW GROUPS)

Group	Writing Performance	N	M	SD	<i>t</i>	df	<i>p</i>
PGBW	Pre-test overall score	20	56.65	4.44	-1.065	38	.294
PW		20	58.25	5.03			
PGBW	Post-test overall score	20	70.17	6.58	3.175	38	.003*
PW		20	63.95	5.79			
PGBW	Pre-test content	20	14.67	1.84	-1.065	38	.294
PW		20	15.35	2.15			
PGBW	Post-test content	20	20.87	1.55	5.428	38	.000*
PW		20	17.15	2.64			
PGBW	Pre-test organization	20	12.60	1.36	-0.644	38	.523
PW		20	12.87	1.33			
PGBW	Post-test organization	20	15.05	1.64	1.363	38	.181
PW		20	14.32	1.71			
PGBW	Pre-test vocabulary	20	12.55	0.91	-0.571	38	.572
PW		20	12.75	1.27			
PGBW	Post-test vocabulary	20	14.37	1.52	0.593	38	.557
PW		20	14.10	1.40			
PGBW	Pre-test language	20	14.15	1.79	-0.767	38	.448
PW		20	14.57	1.70			
PGBW	Post-test language	20	16.72	2.39	2.151	38	.038*
PW		20	15.37	1.45			
PGBW	Pre-test mechanics	20	2.67	0.43	-0.148	38	.883
PW		20	2.70	0.61			
PGBW	Post-test mechanics	20	3.15	0.40	0.946	38	.351
PW		20	3.00	0.58			

Note. \**p* < .05

An independent samples *t*-test analysis revealed that overall, learners in the PGBW group' post-test writing score increased significantly compared to their peers in the PW group's post-test writing score. The significant difference in the overall scores for PGBW group ( $M = 70.17$ ,  $SD = 6.58$ ) and PW group ( $M = 63.95$ ,  $SD = 5.79$ ) intervention was  $t(38) = 3.17$ ,  $p < .05$ . These results suggest that the PGBW approach has a positive effect on writing performance. In terms of language domains performed by learners in the PGBW and PW groups, significant differences were found in their post-test writing content and language use: PGBW ( $M = 20.87$ ,  $SD = 1.55$ ) and PW ( $M = 17.15$ ,  $SD = 2.64$ ) for content;  $t(38) = 5.43$ ,  $p < .001$ ; PGBW ( $M = 16.72$ ,  $SD = 2.39$ ) and PW ( $M = 15.37$ ,  $SD = 1.45$ ) for language;  $t(38) = 2.15$ ,  $p < .05$ . As seen in Table 5, the results revealed that prior to the intervention, learners in the PGBW group and the PW group were similar as shown by their overall scores. The overall mean score of participants in the PW group ( $M = 58.25$ ,  $SD = 5.03$ ) was slightly higher than the overall mean score of the PGBW group ( $M = 56.65$ ,  $SD = 4.44$ ) prior to the intervention, although the variation in mean scores showed no statistically significant difference. These findings



imply that using the PGBW approach in the EFL classroom as an intervention could significantly improve learners' writing content, language use, and overall writing quality compared to using the PW approach alone. Answering the second research question whether there are any differences in writing quality between learners' engaging in the PGBW and PW approaches, the simple response is yes. In general, learners in the PGBW group produced better writing quality than their peers in the PW group. In terms of language domains, statistically significant differences ( $p < .05$ ) were observed from their writing content and language use although other components (e.g., organization, vocabulary, and mechanics) showed no significant difference.

## V. DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of the PGBW approach on the writing performance of EFL pre-university students who undertook an English writing course at an international university in central Thailand. The intervention group received the integrated PGBW instructions spanning one semester, whereas the comparison group was taught using the PW approach spanning the same time frame.

The first guiding research question was: Does the PGBW approach improve students' academic writing performance? The answer to this is yes. It was found that the post-test scores of the students in both groups increased significantly, with a  $p$  value  $< .001$ ; however, the intervention group (PGBW) had a post-test mean score slightly higher than their peers' in the comparison group ( $MD = 6.17$ ) despite their similarity in terms of language proficiency level (see the pre-test scores of both groups). As well, the group's post-test means scores for language domains, including content, organization, vocabulary, and language use, were slightly higher than their peers' in the comparison group. This implies that the PGBW approach is able to improve EFL learners' writing performance in a pre-university writing course. Such findings are congruent with the previous studies (e.g., Huang & Zhang, 2020; Thongchalerms & Jarunthawatchai, 2020; Ueasiriphan & Tangkiengsirisin, 2019). These researchers reported that the PGBW approach improved students' writing quality including language subcategories (e.g., content, organization, vocabulary, and language knowledge). Students' improved writing quality might be from their learning through observation and analysis of the model essays introduced in the classroom. In the PGBW approach, learners were trained to practice composing texts by relating the objective of writing to the subject matter (Rusinovci, 2015), so they learned how texts are written according to their purpose by following the forms and language structures applicable to that purpose. Additionally, the combined writing approach followed a rigorous process in which learners were exposed to the organization and structure of model essays, and they composed similar texts in small groups and went through a process of multiple drafts before their final version. Through this detailed process of writing, peer scaffolding and resource sharing provided by more knowledgeable partners during group work, individual learners could enhance their understanding by synthesizing and assimilating the accumulated information (Kitjaroonchai & Suppasetseree, 2021b), and subsequently improve their writing performance when the work was carried out on an individual basis. This occurrence was explained as "internalization" when the process of mental function manipulated or stored the acquired information and useful resources for future utilization (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007) after learners were exposed to CW practice. Further, the integration of the CW process in the PGBW approach promoted learners' awareness of regulating self and other's cognitive functions (Huang & Zhang, 2020). They were taught to compose texts more purposively, by undertaking the recursive writing process. Thus, students were able to learn writing techniques introduced in CW practice and improve their individual writing. Similar findings were discussed in Chen's (2019) study when EFL learners engaging in CW tasks could exchange ideas in meaningful and contextual ways, and subsequently improve their writing when they performed individual tasks.

The second research question examined the differences in writing quality between learners who were taught using the PGBW approach and those that were taught by the PW approach. The findings revealed that learners in the PGBW class performed significantly better than their peers in the PW class, comparing the overall writing quality, as evidenced by the difference in mean scores. In the area of language domains that were defined in Jacob's (1981) Composition Analytic Scoring Rubric, there were two differences in the post-test writing between the two groups: these are in content and language use. However, there was no difference in relation to organization, vocabulary, and mechanics produced by learners between the two classes in their post-test. Such findings suggest that the PGBW approach had slightly greater impact on improving content and language use in student writing performance over the PW approach, but there was no significant difference between them in terms of organization, vocabulary, and mechanics. This occurrence might be because learners had extended exposure to distinctive linguistic features and grammatical patterns, and they practiced composing texts with rich content in the PGBW class (Dirgeyasa, 2016). The findings were congruent with Thongchalerms and Jarunthawatchai (2020) who found that EFL university students who were exposed to genre-based instruction could improve their writing ability in the area of content of the passage, grammatical units, and sentence structure. In the present study, learners had to revise multiple drafts to follow the steps of the writing process. With such a recursive process learners experienced in both the PGBW and PW interventions could improve their individual writing ability as observed from the increased post-test scores. The plausible explanation for this increase in post-test scores in both groups could be due to learners' exposure to writing practice, receiving peer scaffolding and instructor's comments or feedback provided during the writing process (Rusinovci, 2015). As advocated by Lantolf and Thorne (2007), in learning environments, when students received positive language scaffolding, they would make use of linguistic inputs, and their learning continuum could enable them to gain

knowledge for future use. Peer feedback and instructor's comments implemented in the process genre-based writing approach in academic writing could enable learners to subsequently employ language features when writing texts on an individual level. Our findings confirmed Nordin and Mohammad (2017) who asserted that a process writing approach and genre-based approach in an ESL or EFL writing classroom can be viewed as complementing each other in supporting and developing L2 learners' writing skills. The two approaches when integrated into an EFL writing classroom could empower students to write more effectively by consulting potential resources from their teacher, knowledgeable peers, and models of writing from the target genre. This accumulated learning experience, therefore, supports learners to employ more appropriate language features and rhetorical devices when constructing their own text (Badger & White, 2000), as evidenced by our present study.

## VI. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

This empirical study sought to measure the effects of the PGBW and PW approaches on Asian EFL pre-university students' academic writing performance in a pre-university writing course by employing a quasi-experiment. The researchers divided the participants in two groups with equal number. The major findings revealed that overall learners who were taught using the PGBW approach significantly outperformed their peers in the PW class as marked by their increase in overall scores. However, in terms of language domains defined by the analytic scoring rubric, including content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics, the results showed that two components, namely, content and language use, the learners in the PGBW class significantly outshone their peers who were taught using the PW approach. Other language elements (e.g., organization, vocabulary, and mechanics) showed no significant differences in the participants' post-test scores although the increase in mean scores for learners in the PGBW class was slightly higher than their partners in the PW group.

This study sheds light on some pedagogical implications in supporting EFL writing instructors to design L2 writing tasks by integrating the PGBW approach to enhance academic writing skills. Such a writing approach provides abundant opportunities for learners to improve their language acquisition and linguistic resources by actively engaging in the writing process, interacting with peers during the CW process, and studying the models of writing from the target genre. The PGBW approach encourages learners to pay attention to rhetorical features by patterning model texts, receiving language scaffolding from more knowledgeable partners or taking comments or advice from the instructor, and evaluating the written texts to conform to the writing genre. The PGBW approach provides explicit linguistic features to learners when they are guided through the modeling and construction stages. Furthermore, during the collaborative construction of texts, learners could share ideas and gain confidence in knowledge acquisition. As seen, employing the PGBW approach in an EFL writing classroom requires a collaborative effort from both teachers and students, but the hours invested for honing learners' writing skills is worthwhile as learners are guided through meticulous writing processes to produce a finely crafted writing product. Instructor's comments and peer feedback provided during the process of writing give an opportunity to enhance learners' academic writing performance. The reason is that more sets of eyes can detect errors that a writer might overlook. Additionally, we should note that writing is perceived as a social act in which writers ought to be aware that their constructed messages are to be read by others. Therefore, we strongly recommend that peer review and editing workshops should be incorporated extensively into academic writing subjects as an integral element of writing course design in pre-university or university programs. This would help EFL learners to be more critical and analytical writers as well as establish self-confidence in fulfilling the purpose of writing and sharing their worldviews to the target audiences of their discourse community.

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