Enhancing EFL Students' Writing through Genre-based Digital Multimodal Composing

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ABSTRACT:

Writing for EFL students is often challenging in constructing sentence structure, selecting appropriate vocabulary, and organizing ideas. A preliminary study conducted in my Paragraph Writing class found that the major problems are using grammar, structuring sentences, selecting appropriate vocabulary, generating ideas, and organizing ideas coherently. Monotonous and individual writing practices are also side problems that reduce students' motivation. To address this issue, this study integrates a genre-based approach into digital multimodal composing to improve students' writing performance. Using a Classroom Action Research design, the study was conducted over four cycles involving 20 EFL students. Data were collected through writing assessments, classroom observations, and interviews. The findings revealed improvements in students' mean scores, rising from 58.3 in Cycle 1 to 86.1 in Cycle 4. Qualitatively, the integration of GBA provided necessary scaffolding that helped students overcome cognitive overload and reduce dependency on digital templates. This study suggested that although digital tools like Canva enhance engagement, their pedagogical success depended on a strong linguistic foundation. These results offered practical implications for EFL teachers in balancing technical skills with genre-based instruction in the digital era.

org/licenses/by/4.0/). Keywords: Digital Multimodal Composing, EFL Writing, Genre-based Approach.

Writing is a challenging practice that requires writers to adjust their ideas to the purpose, audience, and context (Dhobi, 2024). In the context of EFL at the university level, proficiency in English writing supports the achievement of academic success and personal growth (Pakaya & Nabu, 2022). However, many EFL students still face difficulties in their writing development, which are related to grammar inaccuracies, vocabulary use, weak organization of ideas, and difficulty in expressing thoughts (Taye & Mengeshe, 2024). It also happens in my preliminary observations in a Paragraph writing course that students continue to struggle with fundamental writing aspects. Preliminary test results and classroom observations revealed that students face some challenges in idea organization, grammatical accuracy, and vocabulary choice. In addition, information from the interview revealed that students liked to use digital tools in their writing classroom. Related to this, students felt that traditional monotonous writing tasks were disconnected from their digital-driven lifestyles, and this leads them to demotivation (Kim et al., 2023).

In response to these challenges, Digital Multimodal Composing (DMC) arose as an innovative approach that can integrate multiple modes like text, videos, audio, and layout into writing activities (Kessler, 2024; Zhang & Yu, 2024a). Previous studies showed that DMC can promote L2 writing autonomy by enhancing engagement, composition ability, and experimentation freedom (Xie & Jiang, 2025). DMC also enhances self-efficacy and self-regulation (Abdelhalim, 2024). However, other research results highlight that DMC implementation did not automatically improve writing skills (Zhang & Yu, 2024b); it required structured guidance and models to improve L2 writing skills (García-Pinar, 2024; Yu, 2021; Zhang & Yu, 2023). Despite its potential for improving content, organization, and language (Kim et al., 2023), multimodal instruction without rigorous teacher guidance may lead students to neglect these essential rhetorical functions (Lim & Unsworth, 2023; Michalovich;, 2024). For this reason, the integration of DMC into writing instruction requires a pedagogical framework.

One approach that offers such guidance is the Genre-Based Approach (GBA). GBA, which is grounded in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL views writing as a social activity that serves particular communication purposes (Herman et al., 2020). Through explicit instruction, students learn how texts are organized and how language is used in different genres (Liu et al., 2023). Therefore, GBA is integrated into DMC activities to provide systematic scaffolding. Through the phases of the GBA, they are Building Knowledge of the Field (BKoF), Modelling of the Text (MoT), Joint Construction of the Text (JCoT), and Individual Construction of the Text (ICoT) (Derewianka, 2003), which are believed to provide a roadmap that needs to balance the multimodal creativity and writing standards (Hyland, 2023; Kitajroonchai et al., 2022). While existing research often examines DMC and GBA separately and focuses on their creativity (Rahimi, 2024; Zuo, 2024) and structured development (Alhammad, 2025; Aljafen, 2025; Damayanti et al., 2023), this study is conducted to reveal their integration, while GBA provides clear guidance on language use and text organization, DMC creates opportunities for creativity and digital expression.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate the integration of GBA into DMC activities to be implemented in a writing classroom to support undergraduate students' writing development, as well as to make a novel contribution. By utilizing a classroom action research cycle for the implementation of GBA integration in DMC, which has not been explored in other studies, this study carries the following research question:

1. How did the integration of GBA into DMC activities evidence improvements in students'

writing performance throughout the reflective cycle of classroom action research?

Literature Review

Writing in EFL Contexts

Writing has been regarded as one of the most challenging skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. Unlike speaking, listening, or reading, writing demands learners to produce accurate linguistic forms, organize ideas coherently, develop arguments, and consider audience and purpose (Aljoundi & Tappe, 2025). In the Indonesian EFL context, students often face a variety of problems, such as vocabulary limitations, grammatical errors, a lack of rhetorical organization, and difficulties in expressing ideas clearly (Amalia et al., 2024; Bram & Angelina, 2022). Students often feel unmotivated, experience writing anxiety, and feeling unconfident due to those linguistic and rhetorical problems (Fajrina et al., 2023). Because of this, many students view writing as a tedious task rather than a useful skill.

This study highlights how these challenges need innovative instructional approaches that can overcome linguistic difficulties and enhance students' motivation and confidence in writing as well. Scholars and practitioners have explored some pedagogical approaches to address these issues, one of which is the use of technology or digitalization (Fathali et al., 2022). The product-oriented approach often emphasizes the product rather than meaning, whereas the process-oriented approach sometimes does not provide guidance on how the writing becomes meaningful (Hyland, 2023). Here, genre pedagogy has been raised as a promising alternative approach that offers structured support to facilitate explicit teaching of language features with practice opportunities in a meaningful context. This indicates that GBA may work as a foundation to meet the needs of linguistic and organizational problems among Indonesian EFL learners.

Genre-based Approach

The genre-based approach (GBA) which is based on systemic functional linguistics (SFL), views writing as a social practice not merely an individual activity (Kitajroonchai et al., 2022; Ortiz et al., 2022). Texts are created for communicative purposes and are adapted to the context of their users. Therefore, it can be concluded that according to GBA, learning to write means understanding how a text fits its social purpose, not just expressing ideas. This view is in line with the objective of the study which is providing students with both structural and functional awareness in their writing tasks. There are four stages in GBA's teaching-leaning phase, they are: *Building Knowledge of the Field (BKoF), Modelling of the Text (MoT), Joint Construction of the Text (JCoT), and Independent Construction of the Text (ICoT)* (Derewianka, 2003; Hyland, 2023). GBA supports help from teachers, then slowly facilitates students to write independently through its stages.

This approach helps students gain knowledge of the text structure, use appropriate language and organization based on the genre, and develop their writing skills, as stated in the Indonesian context's research (Damayanti et al., 2023; Oktora & Sumarsih, 2025). This study explores the use of GBA stages as the structural framework to guide students in producing their digital multimodal writing tasks. However, although some have revealed the strength of GBA, some studies have found limitations in GBA implementation. GBA stages are viewed as a fixed structure and give limited creativity for students (Alhammad, 2025). In addition, GBA does not always involve multimodal writing practice because it is commonly used in monomodal writing tasks. This has encouraged researchers to explore the integration of digital literacies with genre pedagogy. Motivated by this limitation, this study aims to integrate GBA into DMC activities to provide students with both structured guidance and opportunities for digital creativity.

Digital Multimodal Composing

The development of digital technology has changed the perspective on literacy and writing instruction. Students nowadays are digital natives who are exposed to multimodal texts that

combine written language with images, videos, sounds, and other multimodal elements (Kessler & Marino, 2022). Thus, DMC enables students to produce texts and combine various multimodal elements as semiotic resources, which help them to upgrade their communicative skills (Abdelhalim, 2024). This study uses DMC to help students to gain knowledge about multimodal practices to enrich their writing performance.

Research has shown that DMC offers some pedagogical advantages. First, DMC increases student motivation and engagement, as they often find multimodal tasks more authentic, enjoyable, and meaningful than traditional writing (Zhang & Yu, 2024b; Zuo, 2024). Second, DMC encourages creativity and critical thinking of learners, as they have to make purposeful choices about how to represent meaning through various modes (Zhang & Yu, 2024a). Third, DMC supports the digital literacy skills development, which are essential for academic and professional success (Michalovich, 2024).

For this study specifically, these advantages are particularly important in motivating students who often feel unmotivated by traditional text-based writing. In the context of EFL, DMC has been shown to support language development as students negotiate meaning in multimodal settings, collaboratively work with peers, and participate in structured writing processes, those are planning, drafting, revising, and publishing, all of which are done in digital platforms (Kim et al., 2023). However, to date, there has been little research on DMC in Indonesia, and most studies have focused on secondary school settings and teacher perspectives rather than on EFL writing courses at the university level. This study aims to fill this gap by introducing DMC into the teaching of the Paragraph Writing course in Indonesia, especially in university settings.

Integrating GBA into DMC: Research Gap

Although both GBA and DMC have been proven effective in improving the EFL writing skills, existing studies tend to analyze them separately. GBA provides systematic guidance and explicit instruction on text and language features (Derewianka, 2003), but may lack opportunities for creativity and multimodal expression. In contrast, DMC that facilitates space for innovation, creativity, and digital competence (Kessler, 2024), is not always accompanied by structured guidance in a writing context. The integration of GBA into DMC as a unified teaching framework is a response to meet the gap in this study.

Integrating GBA into DMC activities has the potential to address the needs of students' problems stated in the preliminary study. The two approaches are synergized to facilitate the scaffolding and provide engaging and holistic writing tasks that relate to students real life experiences. This study uses Classroom Action Research to explore how GBA integrated into DMC activities to enhance students' writing performance.

Methodology

The method used in this study is Classroom Action Research (CAR). This method was chosen for its cyclical and continuous nature, consisting of planning, action, observation, and reflection. This cyclical framework allowed researchers not only to identify challenges that arise in the classroom but also to adjust and refine their targeted pedagogical strategies to achieve students' improvement (Kemmis, 2009; Norton, 2009). By utilizing CAR, this study documented the interaction between instructional adjustments and students' writing development in real-time.

Design and Participants

The research participants were 20 undergraduate students (aged 18-19) enrolled in an EFL Paragraph writing course. Although they were digitally native and proficient in social media. Their ability to utilize digital tools for academic experience remained undeveloped. In this research design, one of the researchers acted as the instructor who implemented the integration of GBA in DMC activities. To make sure that the research is objective and reliable, two observers assisted in monitoring student engagement, and two independent raters helped to assess the final writing products. The research began with a preliminary study that was conducted in a Paragraph Writing course for second-semester

students at a private university in East Java, Indonesia. To capture the authentic classroom challenge, a monomodal writing test was administered for a preliminary study. Assessment using Jacob's scoring rubric showed that students' scores ranged from 64 to 72 (Fair to Good). As the quantitative data show, students were identified as having monomodal fatigue, with difficulties in grammatical accuracy, vocabulary choice, and paragraph organization due to a lack of communicative purpose. In the interview, students expressed that they felt demotivated due to monotonous writing tasks and felt disconnected from their digital realities.

Following Kemmis and McTaggart's reflective model, the study was conducted from March to July 2025, structured into four cycles of Classroom Action Research. Each cycle was designed to address the problems and refined to adjust the tensions identified in the previous cycle. Cycle 1 focused on familiarizing students with GBA phases and Canva as a tool for multimodal composing. Here, the complete GBA phases were provided. In cycle 2, the Joint Construction (JCoT) phase was extended to adjust the need for peer-discussion time so students could organize the DMC activities effectively. In cycle 3 the Building Knowledge (BKoF) phase was given briefly to prioritize the Modelling of the Text (MoT) phase. This is due to the change of the text genre, from Comparison and Contrast to Process and Procedure text. Lastly, cycle four focused on JCoT and ICoT (Independent Constructing of the Text) where students focus on having a balance of linguistic and original multimodal synergy.

The reflective pedagogical phases are shown in this table:

Table 1 *The Pedagogical Design of the Integration of GBA into DMC Activities*

Cycle	Focal GBA Phase	DMC Tasks	Action and Refinement
Cycle 1	Full GBA standard (BKoF, MoT, JCoT and ICoT)	Compare and Contrast Multimodal Text (Topic: Shopping)	Introducing GBA and DMC tools (Canva) and making the initial DMC products.
Cycle 2	Extended MoT and JCot	Compare and Contrast Multimodal Text (Topic: Travelling)	Reducing multimodal noise through some text models and intensive peer-discussion and collaboration
Cycle 3	Enhanced MoT and JCoT	Process and Procedure Text/ Digital Cookbook	Addressing student boredom
Cycle 4	Intensified JCot and ICoT (Omitting BKoF)	Descriptive Text/ Digital Brochure	Eliminating template dependency and local wisdom integration.

Instrument and Data Collection

There were three primary instruments employed in this research, the first of which is multimodal writing tasks that were scored by an analytic adapted rubric (Hafner & Ho, 2020). This rubric was chosen for its ability to measure three important aspects, they are content and organization, language and communication, and multimodal synergy. The second was observation; the researchers were assisted by two observers who documented the teaching and learning process during each cycle. They

monitored the classrooms and took notes on the observation sheets, focusing on students' engagement during the integration of GBA into DMC activities, their interaction with Canva, and the peer collaboration activities. At the end of each cycle, semi-structured interviews were conducted as a reflection stage to capture students' voices.

Success Criterion

The success of this action research is determined based on at least 70% of the students achieving scores between 77-83. This score was set as the benchmark that students have perform good writing skills and are able to create digital content.

Data Analysis

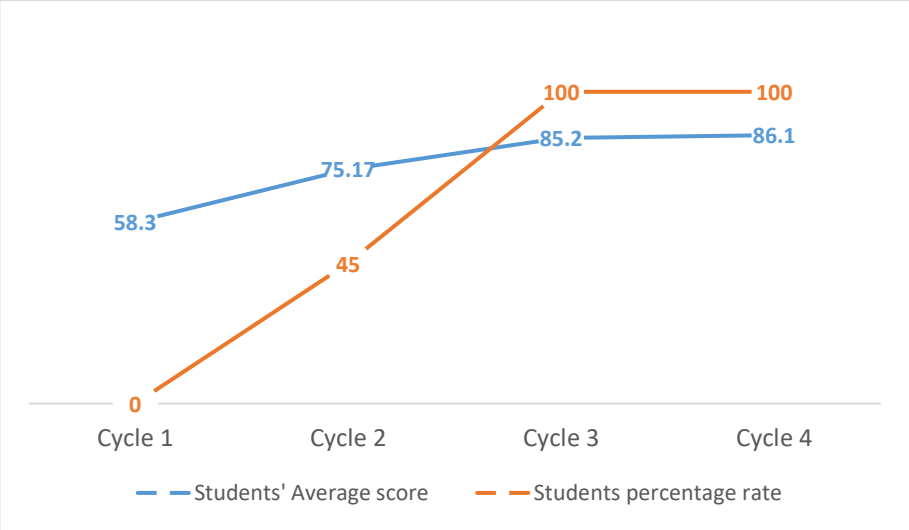
The data were analyzed using a mixed-method approach to provide a clear view of the action. Descriptive statistics were used to calculate the progress score of the DMC products in each cycle. The scores, based on Hafner & Ho (2020), were then visualized in charts to track the students' writing performance trends. This analysis helped to determine the 70% success criterion achievements. Data from classroom observation and interviews were analyzed through thematic analysis. The researchers coded the data to identify key patterns. These qualitative findings were important to describe the instructional refinement and to explain the score progress during the cycles. These quantitative and qualitative data were combined to provide an accurate answer to the research questions. Especially, the qualitative themes identified through observations and interviews were used to explain the progress shown across four cycles.

Results

The Students' Improvement of Writing Performance

The integration of GBA into DMC activities throughout the four cycles resulted in a good improvement in students' writing performance. This progression of the students' mean scores is visualized in the figure below:

Figure 1 *The Students' Improvement of Writing Performance*



The findings of this classroom action research indicated a significant improvement in students' writing performance. As shown in Figure 1, the average score rose significantly from 58.3 in Cycle 1 to 86.1 at the end of Cycle 4. This data served as primary evidence that integrating GBA into DMC activities can enhance students' ability to compose multimodal texts. In terms of success criteria, the improvement was even more significant. In Cycle 1, none of the students achieved the score criterion of 77. However, after four cycles of instructional refinement, the success rate reached 100% in both Cycle 3 and Cycle 4. Overall, these score improvements reflected the success of the instructional adaptations implemented by the researchers. By

adjusting and refining the teaching design in each cycle to provide targeted support, which enabled students to produce both good writing and good quality of multimodal works.

In addition to the overall scores, a detailed analysis of each assessment aspect revealed specific areas where students have made progress. In the Content and Organization aspect, scores continued to improve as students transitioned from simple compare-and-contrast paragraphs in Cycle 1 to more complex structures, such as digital cookbooks for procedure and process paragraphs and digital tourism brochures for descriptive text. In terms of Language Use, an improvement in students' ability to use genre-specific vocabulary in the target text and in the DMC products they created. Further, in the Multimodal Synergy aspect, the early cycle showed that visual elements were often decorative and poorly aligned with the text, however as students incorporated multimodal elements into their activities, the quality of their work accordingly improved. The breakdown of assessment aspects could be seen in the table below:

Table 2 *The Breakdown of Each Assessment Aspect*

Aspect of assessment	Cycle 1 (Mean score)	Cycle 2 (Mean score)	Cycle 3 (Mean score)	Cycle 4 (Mean score)
Content and Organization	19.6	24.2	26.9	29.1
Language Use	19.1	23.5	27.2	28.2
Multimodal Synergy	19.6	27.2	31,1	28.8
Overall Mean score	58.3	75.1	85.2	86.1

The detailed breakdown in Table 2 showed that Language Use and Content and Organization aspects gained progression. This revealed that the integration of GBA into DMC activities could address students' initial difficulties in organizing their ideas and language features. Therefore, it could be concluded that the implementation of this action in this Classroom Action Research was successful for this specific group of students. Although these results demonstrated the success of the action within this classroom context, they did not claim that this model is universally successful. Instead, these results can serve as an example and evidence that this learning model can improve students' writing performance, so in the future it can be used as a learning model for other learning activities.

The Integration Transformed Student Learning: Qualitative Insights

In the initial cycle, the researchers implemented the Building of Knowledge of the Field (BKoF) phase by introducing multimodal elements and Canva as the digital tool, then, followed by the MoT phase. The researchers gave some models of the text or multimodal text examples to gain students' knowledge and boost their creativity. The JCoT phase went well, featuring two-way discussions between the teacher-researcher and students regarding sentence structure and the selection of multimodal elements. However, observations revealed that most students experienced cognitive overload when moved to the ICoT phase. They felt exhausted and overwhelmed because they had to think about text structure and organization while incorporating multimodal elements. As a result, their focus was distracted, and they spent too much time selecting the modes. In addition, the reflection session revealed that in Cycle 1 they felt

burdened by having to write and decorate their digital work,

One commented,

"Selecting the elements carefully is exhausting." (S4)

"*I felt confused to write or to design first.*" (S7)

but on the other hand, they felt excited because the integration of GBA enlightened them with clear guidance to share knowledge, discuss, and work on tasks independently.

One of them said,

"We know the steps from the beginning, so we are not confused and the result is neater." (S7).

Figure 2.*The Example of Student's Work in Cycle 1*

The results from Cycle 1 were then used to refine the plan in Cycle 2 to address the issue of cognitive load that occurred earlier. The researchers provided more time to understand the text examples and extended the time for the discussion and collaboration session (extended MoT and JCoT phase). Once the students understood the texts' purpose and structure, they began the joint construction process with the teacher-researcher to develop a collaborative draft. In this phase, the classroom atmosphere changed into a collaborative editorial space, where the teacher-researcher acted as a facilitator and scaffolder, guiding students' ideas through some questions, recording their contributions, and providing immediate feedback supportively.

Students acted as active contributors, they began to experiment with sentence structures and ideas, then negotiated meaning-making modes to reflect their collaborative draft. In this phase, a dynamic dialogue occurred when students negotiated the word choices, selected multimodal elements to strengthen their text's meaning, and revised the draft together. This collaborative process served as a mediated learning process to build students' confidence before they go to independent writing.

As one student explained,

"When we discussed together, I understood things I didn't get before" (S3).

The other commented,

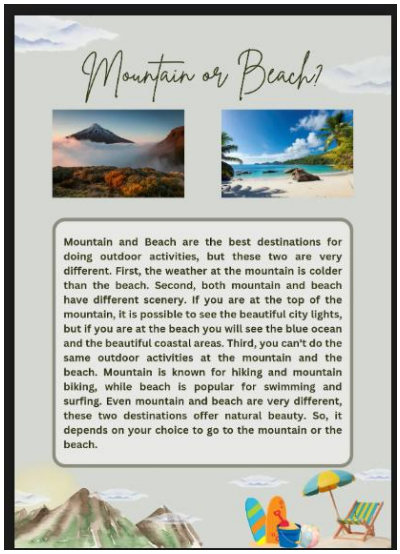
"The teacher led us to discuss together, I felt more comfortable." (S11)

Peer exchanges also stimulated new perspectives, with another noting,

"My friends shared ideas I never thought of" (S9).

These refinements in planning and action proved to build students' confidence when they were allowed to write individually during the ICoT phase in Cycle 2. Here is the example of a student's work in cycle 2,

Figure 3 *The Example of Student's Work in Cycle 2*



However, their assessment results have not yet reached the success criteria, from 20 students, only 9 scored within the range of 77–83 (45%). During the reflection session, they stated that there were no significant challenges in this assignment because they were working on the same DMC activities: writing digital multimodal compare-and-contrast texts. Because of this, the next cycle brought to "process and procedure" text focused on creating a digital cookbook.

The third cycle began with a brief BKoF phase, followed by intensive MoT and JCoT phases as done in the previous cycle. The students were tasked to create digital cookbooks. During the JCoT phase, there was lively discussion between the teacher-researcher and students on how to write a process and procedure text in the form of digital cookbooks. Although the JCoT phase could address the structural and language use aspects, the ICoT phase revealed an over reliance on digital templates. Students were still template-driven, given by Canva. However, in good DMC activities, the written content should guide the design. If they simply followed the templates, students did not learn how to visualize their ideas. The interview revealed that students felt pressure to produce well-written text and well-edited multimodal text, so they use the template directly.

One student admitted,

"I feel like something's not right when my writing is good, but the editing is poor." (S15).

Another added,

"There are many templates, so I love to explore." (S17)

Others found the process exhausting when multiple revisions were required; to shortcut the exhaustion, they use templates.

"It feels exhausting, so I use templates" (S4).

Although the score achievements showed significant improvement, but the template-dependency indicated that students still need to have further practice, therefore Cycle 4 was planned to focus on breaking the template to empower students in creating layouts and integrating modes to develop paragraph details.

In the final cycle, the researchers implemented a blank canvas strategy for the final project themed "Digital Tourism Brochure". It focused on refining the template-dependency revealed in the previous cycle. The researchers maximized the ICoT phase, so students could independently synergize their DMC process and develop their descriptive texts about local tourism objects with self-selected visual elements. This phase marked the pinnacle of the research success. Although the mean score (86.1) was statistically similar to the previous cycle, the qualitative quality of the students' work was significantly more authentic. Interview data revealed that students expressed a greater sense of pride and ownership because they constructed their work from scratch. This outcome confirms that the integration of GBA

and DMC effectively fostered student autonomy as proficient multimodal composers.

One participant shared,

"if we extended independent time, adding pictures that match the text is exciting, like making my own magazine" (S12).

Other participant commented,

"If I work alone (in independent phase), all my ideas can be included confidently" (S8).

Others appreciated the sense of ownership and expressiveness afforded by multimodality, describing their work as "more alive."

"In DMC, the work feels more alive, not just words on paper."(S18).

Figure 4. *The Example of Student's work*

Discussion

Within the specific context of this study, the findings suggested that integrating GBA into DMC activities served as an effective strategy for improving students' writing performance. GBA provided the necessary linguistic foundation while DMC offered a meaningful space for creative expression. This experience that DMC empowers L2 students to use multiple modes, including text and images, to convey meaning, enhancing their creative expression and engagement in writing (Kessler & Marino, 2022; Zhang & Yu, 2024b). In this classroom, the combination of the two ensured that students' final products were not only visually engaging but also anchored by coherent written content.

At the beginning of the study, many students struggled to balance their focus between language use and digital design, a situation often described as cognitive overload (Paas & van Merriënboer, 2020). To reduce cognitive load, the researchers provided extended support in the scaffolding phases. Koudsia and Kirchner (2024) stated that strategies can be implemented to manage cognitive load and enhance student learning. In this study, Joint Construction (JCoT) phase was provided to allow the teacher-researcher and students to have group discussions to gain their confidence in their digital writing. This practice reflected the Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), showing that for this specific class, well-timed guidance was key to help students move from confusion to competence (Wu & Bakar, 2025).

A notable finding in this study was the students' reliance on templates during Cycle 3. While Canva templates initially provided helpful guidance, they also tended to limit students' creative choices. The decision to use the blank canvas way in Cycle 4 proved to be a turning point in developing learner autonomy. As Xie and Jiang (2025) suggested, autonomy in digital writing grows when students take responsibility for their own design decisions. By building their work from a draft, the students in this class moved beyond tool users to become meaning-makers. This transition led to a greater sense of pride, as they viewed the final products as the direct result of their own original thinking.

This experience offered a valuable lesson that digital tools should not be introduced without a strong foundation in text structure. For the participants in this research, it was essential for the teacher to focus on language quality through the GBA stages before moving into digital production. This reflected Parra et al.'s (2024) view that digital literacy requires a balance between technical skills and a deep understanding of content. When students clearly understood both what to write and how to design, the writing process became more engaging.

In conclusion, this classroom action research demonstrated the integration of GBA into DMC activities and could improve the writing performance of students in this specific classroom context. Although these results were specific to this group of learners and were not intended for broad generalization, they provided practical evidence that balancing technical design skills with a foundation in the text structure could make writing more engaging and authentic.

Limitations and Conclusion

Although this present study offers valuable pedagogical implications, it has several limitations that need to be acknowledged. First, the findings are based on a specific classroom context with a relatively small sample size, which may constrain the generalizability of the results across more diverse learner populations. The study focused on a short-term intervention, thus, longitudinal research may offer deeper insights into how the relationship between linguistic mastery and digital composing skills evolves over a longer period.

Moreover, contextual influences such as students' prior digital proficiencies and access to technology were not strictly controlled, which may interfere with the observed effects of GBA-DMC integration. In many settings, technology accessibility and varying socio-economic backgrounds may influence how students interact with tools like Canva. Future research may replicate this model in other geographical or linguistic settings to enhance its cross-cultural validity. Further studies could also benefit from using mixed-method or experimental designs with control groups to further validate the causal relationship between GBA scaffolding and multimodal success. Finally, while this study utilized the GBA framework, future research may explore hybrid models incorporating other motivational theories, such as Self-Determination Theory or Flow Theory, to better understand the psychological drivers behind students' engagement in digital multimodal composing.

To conclude, this study examined how the integration of GBA into DMC activities improve students' writing performance. The findings revealed that while digital tools significantly enhance students' creative engagement, their success is heavily mediated by the linguistic scaffolding provided through GBA phases. The results highlight the importance of designing writing instructions that engage learners not only visually but also linguistically, ensuring that written content remains the core of multimodal products. By addressing challenges such as cognitive overload and template-dependency, the study demonstrated that moving from structured support to autonomous blank canvas creation is key to foster independent meaning makers. In short, by bridging GBA with DMC, this study offers a theoretically grounded model that advances insights into 21st-century writing instruction and provides practical evidence on how to promote learner autonomy in digital contexts.

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Statement of AI Use

The authors acknowledge the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools, specifically Cloud and Gemini, in the preparation of this manuscript. The generative AI used as technologies in the writing process before submission to ensure the readability and language improve.

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