

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN BUSINESS & SOCIAL SCIENCES



## Writing Skills and Writing Approaches in ESL Classroom: A Systematic Review

Lavanya Vejayan, Melor Md Yunus

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i6/13259>

DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i6/13259

**Received:** 12 April 2022, **Revised:** 16 May 2022, **Accepted:** 29 May 2022

**Published Online:** 11 June 2022

**In-Text Citation:** (Vejayan & Yunus, 2022)

**To Cite this Article:** Vejayan, L., & Yunus, M. M. (2022). Writing Skills and Writing Approaches in ESL Classroom: A Systematic Review. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*. 12(6), 1301 – 1319.

**Copyright:** © 2022 The Author(s)

Published by Human Resource Management Academic Research Society ([www.hrmars.com](http://www.hrmars.com))

This article is published under the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) license. Anyone may reproduce, distribute, translate and create derivative works of this article (for both commercial and non-commercial purposes), subject to full attribution to the original publication and authors. The full terms of this license may be seen at: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/legalcode>

Vol. 12, No. 6, 2022, Pg. 1301 – 1319

<http://hrmars.com/index.php/pages/detail/IJARBSS>

JOURNAL HOMEPAGE

Full Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at  
<http://hrmars.com/index.php/pages/detail/publication-ethics>



# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN BUSINESS & SOCIAL SCIENCES



[www.hrmars.com](http://www.hrmars.com)

ISSN: 2222-6990

## Writing Skills and Writing Approaches in ESL Classroom: A Systematic Review

Lavanya Vejayan

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia, SMK Kamarul Ariffin,  
Malaysia

Email: lvejayan@gmail.com

Melor Md Yunus

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia  
Email: Malaysiamelor@ukm.edu.my

### Abstract

The English language is used as the universal language to communicate with people worldwide in the era of globalisation as more global citizens take up English as a Second Language (ESL). In line with that, the Ministry of Education (MOE) has emphasised the importance of the English language especially in the aspect of writing. This paper presents systematic literature review of relevant published paper from 2015-2021, a span of seven years. It discusses the writing approaches implemented by English as a Second Language teachers to teach writing skills. A total of 15 papers related to the writing approaches were obtained using the PRISMA method from Google Scholar, Scopus and ERIC. The two questions addressed in this research are; (i) what are the approaches which is suitable for ESL writing classroom? and (ii) what are the impacts of using the selected approaches in improving writing difficulties? The findings revealed that five approaches were commonly used to teach writing process based approach, product based approach, genre based approach, process-product approach and processgenre approach. The results indicated more positive outcomes than negative outcomes.

**Keywords:** ESL Classroom, Systematic Review, Writing Approaches, Writing Skills, Writing Strategies.

### Introduction

The English language is a universal language also commonly known as lingua franca. It a common communication language for people whose native language or first language is not the same. It is widely spoken around the world and it is usually taught as English as Second Language (ESP) or English as Foreign Language (EFL). In Malaysia, English is taught as a second language and is predominantly taught beginning from primary education until tertiary education. The education ministry has also introduced the Common European Framework which includes 5 components ((i) language awareness-grammar, (ii) listening skills, (iii) reading skills, (iv) speaking skills and (v) writing skills) for a more constructive language learning,

teaching and assessment. To support the efforts of educators and learners, it is important to promote, encourage and support to constantly develop their teaching and learning based on the characteristics, motivations, needs as well as the resources around them (Council of Europe, 2001).

Writing skills is an important skill because writing is one way to communicate and to express oneself. It is used to perform mundane task like taking notes to more complex purposes like filing in forms and academic writing. Yulianti (2018) explained that pupils critical thinking is developed through writing as it allows pupils to express and deliver their idea in a structured manner. Among the all four aspects taught at school, students generally rate writing skills as the most difficult task for them to fulfil. Composition or writing can be a daunting and tough process for students as they are not confident users of the English language. Stalin & Kim Hua (2020) termed writing as the most laborious among all skills to be achieved by English as Second Language learners. Theresia (2015) mentioned that students find the writing process a very difficult and stressful process. Misbah et al (2017) suggested that inability for students to express what they are thinking successfully will demotivate learners and decrease the usage of the target language in their daily life.

Other than that, English is not favoured by students because they think that it is a monotonous process because they have many problems understanding what is being taught since writing skills is an intricate skill. Yunus & Chien (2016) stated that students look worried and hesitant as they tried to write causing their points to be unorganised. They further added that although students might have the ideas to write they are not able to transform and convey the ideas into a piece of well written text with proper cohesion, diction and language. Although students have been learning English from a young age, they are still not able to successfully produce a grammatically correct and organised essay. Pazilah et al (2019) stated that it is crucial for every student to master the writing skill because it is a requirement for Malaysian exams. Thus, this systematic review, will observe the approaches/ strategies used to teach writing/ composition in ESL classroom and the impact on it on ESL learners.

According to David et al (2015), some of the problems in writing skills is students are not confident users of the English language because they lack the language structures as well as vocabulary. He also mentioned weak of grammar and lack of authentic communication among learners as problems in writing. Ghabool et al (2012) stated that the problem in writing skill among Malaysian learners are the disparity between first and second language. They also added that students frequently had problems with conventions, punctuations and language use. Al Mubarak (2017) reported that apart from learner related problems like insufficient vocabulary and language interference, the writing difficulties are also caused by lack of proper teacher guidance. Faisal & Suwandita (2013) also stated that teachers rarely used a variety of techniques or methods resulting in a monotonous lessons and students not having the concept to write. Ahmad & Mani (2021) echoes that statement and proposed something different than learner related problem which is teachers' teaching approach. They explained that the approach that teacher follows to teach, facilitates learning opportunities, provides constructive feedback and motivates learners. Thus is because it is important to allows students to have regular practice to overcome their lack of confidence in writing and improve their command in the technical aspect of the language.

To address the writing difficulty problem among ESL learners, a systematic literature review was carried out to identify and learn about the best approaches to teach writing to ESL learners and the impact of using those approaches or strategies in teaching writing.

The main aim of this systematic review is:

- a) to present a set of empirical data of various approaches based on previous studies on teaching writing skills in ESL classroom.

This study attempts to answer two questions:

- a) What are the approaches which is suitable for ESL writing classroom?
- b) What are the impacts of using the selected approaches in improving writing difficulties?

## **Methodology**

Literature review is a way to summarize and present an overview of past or current ideas and knowledge from a body of literature. It is mainly used to justify an idea or to validate why a problem is worth researching. Systematic review provides a more unbiased, comprehensive and structured set of data based by collecting and summarising various papers body a field of study. The PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) statement offers an outline for researchers to present their findings. Khan et al. (2003) proposed a five steps phase to conduct systematic review and is adopted in this paper: a) framing a question for review, b) identify relevant work, c) assess the quality of the study, d) summarise the evidence and e) interpret the findings.

### **Phase 1: Framing Question for Review**

In order to review and select the articles, it is important to form a question to answer to. In this review, two questions were formed to avoid ambiguity. The studies selected for this review should explicitly point out the approach/approaches used to teach writing as well as how the selected approaches impacts and improves students' writing performances. Writing performance refers to an expertise acquired through practice. Nelson & Schunn (2009) mentioned that writing performance refers to the knowledge obtained by completing a repeated task like a continuous drafting the same writing practice.

### **Phase 2: Identify Relevant Work**

The second step is to identify relevant work. To search for relevant articles, there were two major stages which are (a) collecting all relevant articles during the initial search and (b) shortlisting pertinent articles using the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The researcher used ERIC, Scopus and Google Scholar database to exploit articles relevant to the study. To range of past studies included in this paper is from 2015 – 2021, a total of seven years. Using the advanced search methods, several combinations of keywords were used to run through the database as shown in the Table 1. Other than that, to ensure that the articles gathered are relevant to the review, the initial inclusion and exclusion criteria was used as shown in Table 2. The data collected are also screened for duplicates.

Table 1  
*Keywords used to find related articles.*

Databases	Keywords
<b>Scopus</b>	TITLE-ABS-KEY ('writing approaches' OR 'teaching writing' OR 'writing methods' OR 'writing process') AND ('ESL classroom' OR 'ESL learners' OR 'ESL students') AND ('writing achievement' OR 'writing performance' OR 'writing skills')
<b>ERIC</b>	writing approach AND ESL learners, writing approaches AND ESL classroom, effectiveness of writing approaches AND ESL learners, proses approach AND ESL learners, genre approach ANDESL learners, product approach AND ESL learners
<b>Google Scholar</b>	Writing approaches AND ESL, writing instruction AND ESL, approaches in writing AND ESL, effectiveness of writing approaches AND ESL learners, proses approach AND ESL learners, genre approach AND ESL learners, product approach AND ESL learners

Table 2  
*Inclusion and exclusion criteria*

Databases	Inclusion	Exclusion
<b>Type of articles</b>	Journal articles (ESL or ESL/EFL)	books, book chapters, citation only, incomplete papers, literature reviews only, EFL/ESP/EBP related papers, thesis
<b>Year</b>	2015-2021	<2015
<b>Language</b>	English	Other than English
<b>Perspective</b>	Teachers, teachers and students	Students only

### Phase 3: Assess the Quality of the Study

The third step is to assess the quality of the study. After the first stage of the inclusion and exclusion, the second stage of inclusion and exclusion was carried out. The researcher reads through the research to check if the materials gathered are relevant to the study using the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The criteria focused on was the writing approach adopted, intervention applied to teach writing and the results. While reading through the articles, the articles which were excluded were articles that discusses only students' perspectives and articles which does not provide a clear overview of how the selected approach were implemented.

### Phase 4: Summarise the Evidence

After assessing the articles collected, a summary chart was drawn. In the beginning stage there were 149 articles identified for the inclusion based on the inclusion and exclusion

criteria (Table 2). 6 articles were removed because there were duplicates. From the remaining number of articles, 95 articles were eliminated because they there related to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) or English for Specific Purposes (ESP) or English for Business Purposes (EBP). However, articles which discusses both ESL and EFL were included. Next, from the remaining 45 articles, more papers were excluded because it discusses only students' perspective, literature reviews and doesn't provide a clear overview of study. Finally, 15 articles were chosen to be used in this review as summarised in Figure 1 using the PRISMA flow chart.

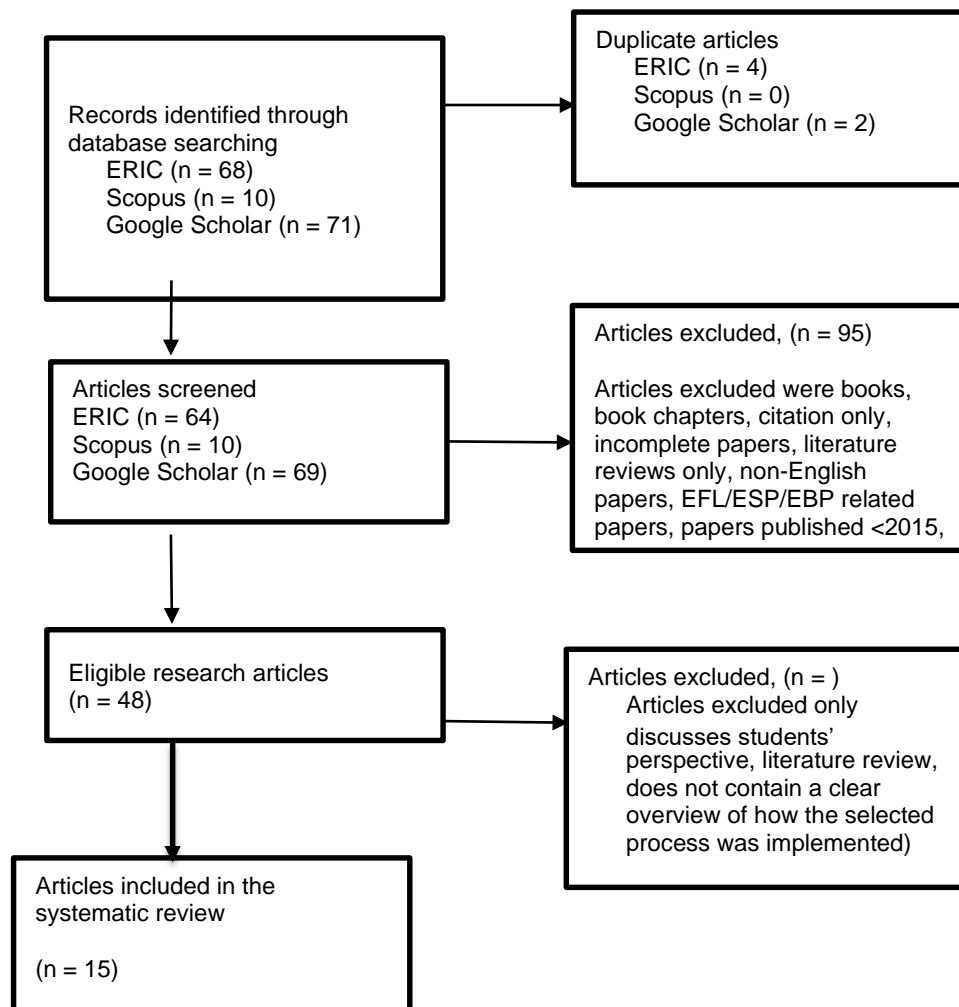


Figure 1: PRISMA flow chart

### Interpret the Findings

Finally, based on the research questions created, a total of 15 articles were review. There were five approaches identified in total: process-based approach, product-based approach, genrebased approach, process-genre approach and process-product approach. according to the 15 studies reviewed, 3 studies were on tertiary students, 8 studies focus on high school and 4 studies targeted primary students. Most studies discussed the approaches employed explicitly while some were just mere mentions. The studies also used different types of research designs and research instruments for analysis, however, the results turned out to be

more or less similar. A more detailed analysis will be tabulated below in Table 3 in the findings section.

### Findings / Results

A total of 15 past research related to this paper from 2015 to 2021 were chosen and reviewed. The results are as shown below:

Table 3  
*Analysis of Findings*

	Article/ Study	No of participants	Research design	Intervention	Approach adopted	Results
1.	Saputra & Marzulina (2015)	72 eighth grade students	Quasi experimental design	Dived students into control group and experimental group and were taught by using the process genre approach	Process-genre approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noticed a significant difference between the controlled group and experimental group</li> <li>Learners were enthusiastic and helped students prepare their thoughts</li> </ul>
2.	Annamalai i (2016)	6 Year 10 ESL students	Qualitative case study	Using Facebook as a tutor platform to complete narrative writing task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Process approach</li> <li>Product approach</li> <li>Genre approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students like the use of Facebook used for teaching writing</li> <li>Shows that students were more confident to engage in learning and students showed online fatigue syndrome</li> <li>(interactions less developed form task 1 to task 3)</li> </ul>
3.	Barr ot (2016)	171 first year university students	Self-report	Using Facebook e- portfolio for writing practices	Process- genre approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facebook-based e-portfolio had a positive impact on students' writing. Thus, it is a feasible tool for e-portfolio assessment</li> </ul>

4.	Qomariyah & Permana (2016)	174 4 <sup>th</sup> semester tertiary students	-	Separate into two groups (controlled & experimental), persuasion writing paragraph was used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Process based approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Process based approach was not effective in improving writing ability among tertiary students</li> </ul>
5.	Choi & Wong (2018)	37 Gred 9 students	-	Teacher models and provide creative imitation explicitly during writing instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Genre based approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When teacher models and provide creative imitation explicitly during writing instruction, it provides students a sort of authority and freedom towards their learning</li> </ul>
6.	Nair & Sanai (2018)	20 Year 6 students	Action research	STAD method through cooperative learning approach was applied in descriptive writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Process based approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The STAD method through collaborative learning improved students writing skills because they get the opportunity to edit their group essays</li> <li>Students were actively engaged in writing process during group work and hence improving their social skills</li> </ul>
7.	Chandran et al (2019).	55 Form 4 students from Pahang and Johor	Action research	Using hi-five fingers to brainstorm ideas and snack bar guides the essay writing stages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Product based approach</li> <li>Process based approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved writing performance and grade Increased students interest and fun</li> </ul>



8.	Vega & Pinzón (2019)	12 third grade bilingual students	Action research	Students are exposed to different texts in English and guided during the writing process stages. Students were taught to apply some writing strategies like planning, monitoring, and evaluating own output.	Process based approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PBA was useful to enhance young English learners writing skills</li> <li>• Students' writing performance in terms of content, organization, fluency, conventions and vocabulary improved.</li> <li>• Students feel confident about writing which contributes to the students' self-belief when completing writing tasks</li> </ul>
9.	Yeung (2019)	70 secondary school students	Mixed method (pre-experimental design)	Brainstorming, peer session, self-assessment	Process based approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive changes in young writers' learning autonomy despite variations in implementers' teaching belief</li> </ul>
10.	Naim (2020)	80 tertiary level ESL students	Mixed method design (experimental study)	Think-pair-share cooperative learning	Process based approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperative learning enhanced students' learning experience, motivation, improved writing skills and individual accountability.</li> <li>• Findings suggest that TWPS improved ESL tertiary students' writing performance and should be considered as a promising technique.</li> </ul>

11.	Purba, Van Thao & Purba (2020)	22 secondary school students in Indonesia	Descriptive quantitative method	Using stages / cycles to aid writing skills	Genre based approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It served as a tutorial and was beneficial to help students decide what ideas to be included in their writing during classroom practice in creating meaningful texts.</li> </ul>
12.	Rumanti & Dewi (2020)	60 8 <sup>th</sup> grade students	Descriptive quantitative method	Using the process approach and assessed using rubrics adopted from Brown (2007)	Process based approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant mean difference between post-test and pre test Aspects of writing improved although the process is time consuming</li> </ul>
13.	Stalin & Kim Hua (2020)	30 year 2 ESL students	Quantitative research design	Upload a picture and three corresponding sentences based on the pictures appropriately according to the five themes selected	Genre based approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Test results showed significant difference with positive increment in mean score</li> <li>Students were eager and motivated to share their responses</li> </ul>
14.	Safitri & Susiati (2021)	Ten 11 <sup>th</sup> grade students in Indonesia	Descriptive qualitative study	Instagram was used to teach and learn writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Genre approach</li> <li>Product approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discovered several challenges while conducting the research and offered solutions to overcome them</li> </ul>
15.	Yuk & Yunus (2021)	36 Primary 4 Chinese- vernacular school students	Quasiexperimental research	Peer-Modo feedback intervention during pre- writing stage	Process- Product approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant improvements in terms of the content quality of their writing after conducting Peer-Modo feedback.</li> </ul>
	<b>Article/ Study</b>	<b>No of participants</b>	<b>Research design</b>	<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Approach adopted</b>	<b>Results</b>
1.	Saputra & Marzulina (2015)	72 eighth grade students	Quasi experimental design	Dived students into control group and experimental group and were taught by using the process genre approach	Process-genre approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noticed significant difference between the controlled group and experimental group</li> <li>Learners were enthusiastic and helped students prepare their thoughts</li> </ul>

2.	Annamalai (2016)	6 Year 10 ESL students	Qualitative case study	Using Facebook as a tutoring platform to complete narrative writing task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Process approach</li> <li>Product approach</li> <li>Genre approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students like the use of Facebook used for teaching writing</li> <li>Shows that students were more confident to engage in learning and students showed online fatigue syndrome</li> <li>(interactions less developed form task 1 to task 3)</li> </ul>
3.	Barrat (2016)	171 first year university students	Self-report	Using Facebook e-portfolio for writing practices	Process- genre approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facebook-based e-portfolio had a positive impact on students' writing. Thus, it is a feasible tool for e-portfolio assessment</li> </ul>
4.	Qomariyah & Permana (2016)	174 semester 4 <sup>th</sup> tertiary students	-	Separate into two groups (controlled & experimental), persuasion writing paragraph was used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Process based approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Process based approach was not effective in improving writing ability among tertiary students</li> </ul>
5.	Choi & Wong (2018)	37 Grade 9 students	-	Teacher models and provide creative imitation explicitly during writing instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Genre based approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When teacher models and provide creative imitation explicitly during writing instruction, it provides students a sort of authority and freedom towards their learning</li> </ul>
6.	Nair & Sanai (2018)	20 Year 6 students	Action research	STAD method through cooperative learning approach was applied in descriptive writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Process based approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The STAD method through collaborative learning improved students writing skills because they get the opportunity to edit their group essays</li> <li>Students were actively engaged in writing process</li> </ul>

						during group work and hence improving their social skills
7.	Chandran et al (2019).	55 Form 4 students from Pahang and Johor	Action research	Using hi-five fingers to brainstorm ideas and snack bar guides the essay writing stages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Product based approach</li> <li>Process based approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved writing performance and grade</li> <li>Increased students interest and fun</li> </ul>
8.	Vega & Pinzón (2019)	12 third grade bilingual students	Action research	Students are exposed to different texts in English and guided during the writing process stages. Students were taught to apply some writing strategies like planning, monitoring, and evaluating own output.	Process based approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PBA was useful to enhance young English learners writing skills</li> <li>Students' writing performance in terms of content, organization, fluency, conventions and vocabulary improved.</li> <li>Students feel confident about writing which contributes to the students' self-belief when completing writing tasks</li> </ul>
9.	Yeung (2019)	70 secondary school students	Mixed method (pre-experimental design)	Brainstorming, peer session, self-assessment	Process based approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive changes in young writers' learning autonomy despite variations in implementers' teaching belief</li> </ul>

10.	Naim (2020)	80 tertiary level ESL students	Mixed method design (experimental study)	Think-pair-share cooperative learning	Process based approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cooperative learning enhanced students' learning experience, motivation, improved writing skills and individual accountability.</li> <li>Findings suggest that TWPS improved ESL tertiary students' writing performance and should be considered as a promising technique.</li> </ul>
11.	Purba, Van Thao & Purba (2020)	22 secondary school students in Indonesia	Descriptive quantitative method	Using stages / cycles to aid writing skills	Genre based approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It served as a tutorial and was beneficial to help students decide what ideas to be included in their writing during classroom practice in creating meaningful texts.</li> </ul>
12.	Rumanti & Dewi (2020)	60 8 <sup>th</sup> grade students	Descriptive quantitative method	Using the process approach and assessed using rubrics adopted from Brown (2007)	Process based approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant mean difference between post-test and pre test. Aspects of writing improved although the process is time consuming.</li> </ul>
13.	Stalin & Kim Hua (2020)	30 year 2 ESL students	Quantitative research design	Upload a picture and three corresponding sentences based on the pictures appropriately according to the five themes selected	Genre based approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Test results showed significant difference with positive increment in mean score.</li> <li>Students were eager and motivated to share their responses.</li> </ul>
14.	Safitri & Susiati (2021)	Ten 11 <sup>th</sup> grade students in Indonesia	Descriptive qualitative study	Instagram was used to teach and learn writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Genre approach</li> <li>Product approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discovered several challenges while conducting the research and offered solutions to overcome them.</li> </ul>
15.	Yuk & Yunus (2021)	36 Primary 4 Chinese-vernacular school students	Quasiexperimental research	Peer-Modo feedback intervention during pre-writing stage	Process-approach Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant improvements in terms of the content quality of their writing after conducting Peer-Modo feedback.</li> </ul>

## Discussion

Fifteen research has been identified (Saputra & Marzulina, 2015; Annamalai, 2016; Barrot, 2016; Qomariyah & Permana, 2016; Choi & Wong, 2018; Nair & Sanai, 2018; Chandran et al, 2019; Vega & Pinzón, 2019; Naim, 2020; Purba, Van Thao & Purba, 2020; Rumanti & Dewi, 2020; Stalin & Kim Hua, 2020; Yeung, 2020; Safitri & Susiati, 2021; Yuk & Yunus, 2021) on the approaches in teaching writing skills. The discussion was structured according to the research questions (selected writing approach and the impact of implementing the selected writing approach).

## Approaches used in ESL Classroom

From the total number of articles reviewed, the conclusive summary could be made. the approaches can be classified as individual approach, combination of two or more approach and hybrid approach.

Table 4

*Classification of Approaches*

Classification	Approach	Article(s)
<b>Individual</b>	Process approach	6
	Genre approach	3
<b>Combination</b>	Genre approach, product approach	1
	Product approach, process approach	1
	process approach, product approach, genre approach	1
<b>Hybrid</b>	Process-genre approach	2
	Process-product approach	1

The most popular approach used to teach writing is the process approach (Annamalai, 2016; Qomariyah & Permana, 2016; Nair & Sanai, 2018; Chandran et al., 2019; Vega & Pinzon, 2019; Naim, 2020; Rumanti & Dewi, 2020; Yeung, 2020) since 8 out of 15 articles employed the process approach. The process approach in writing skill focuses on how to get the end product. Over the year, many scholars have developed and refined models of the writing process. Kallestinova (2017) suggested that there are three stages in the writing process; pre-writing, editing and revising. Donovan and McClelland (1980) explained that the process approach is not something that can be understood if looked from the back and it is something that has to go through a process drafting. They also mentioned that the process based approach involves a certain period of drafting and revising. These are parallel to the findings based on the articles. The study from Qomariyah & Permana (2016); Chandran et al (2019) expects that using the process based approach can pump creativity among students in developing their paragraphs and develop better writing experience. However, Vega & Pinzón (2019) and Annamalai (2016) believes that its useful in the development of writing and focuses on

strategies like planning, monitoring and evaluating the students own written product. This shows that the process approach is a gradual process and is done systematically and it resonates with (Nair & Sanai, 2018; Naim, 2020; Rumanti & Dewi, 2020). Yeung (2019) on the other hand was inclined to use this approach because process approach reduces students' dependency on teacher and other people which provides an environment of self-growth.

Another popular approach is the genre approach (Annamalai, 2016; Choi & Wong, 2018; Purba et al., 2020; Stalin & Hua, 2020; Safitri & Susiati, 2021) which was found in five articles. Richards et al (1993) defined genre as a specific category of speech integrated as a written text like discussions, interview, music, poem, prayers, and stories. Martin (1999) states that genre based approach is encouraging to students and allows them to improve throughout learning and that it is cyclical in nature. Martin also asserted that students can access, appreciate and question meaningful document and allows teacher and students to understand the document. These are comparable to the findings from the articles. The study from Choi & Wong (2018); Stalin & Kim Hua (2020) suggest that genre pedagogy can be used to scaffold knowledge and to create creative narratives. Creative imitation of literature is used to empower writing experience and allow students to be more resourceful when writing and obtain benefits by researching a variety of written text (Purba, Van Thao & Purba, 2020; & Choi & Wong, 2018). To add on, Safitri & Susiati (2021) suggested using the genre approach is a great to teaching writing as it helps to develop students' confidence. This shows that it scaffolds knowledge to encourage long-term retention of knowledge. Other than that, examination is also considered a genre in the Malaysian classroom, thus, Annamalai (2016) justified that it helps with appropriate use of language and guides students to excel their examination.

Next, the other approach is the product approach. Tangpermpoon (2008) proposed that this approach is helpful to reinforce grammar and syntax in L2 writing besides raising awareness based on students' proficiency through the use of model paragraphs, combing sentences and rhetoric pattern exercises. Palanisamy & Aziz (2021) also suggested along the same line that the end product is the main concern when using this approach and that included the readability, grammar, main ideas and supporting details. These literature resembles what was suggested in the articles reviewed. The product approach was not used individually but it was combined together with other approaches in three of the articles (Safitri & Susiati, 2021; Chandran et al, 2019 & Annamalai, 2016) because it focuses more on how correct the writing text is as compared to how it was formed. Annamalai (2016) criticised the examoriented education that too much importance is given to the accuracy but students don't have enough guide to produce a written text. Despite that, it is important that students know the mechanics of the language, vocabulary and grammar knowledge (Chandran et al., 2019; Safitri & Susiati, 2021).

Finally, the hybrid approach which is the combination of two approaches. There were two hybrid approaches found: process-genre approach (Saputra & Marzulina, 2015) and process-product approach (Yuk & Yunus, 2021). The process-genre approach which is a combination of both process and genre approach. Saputra & Marzulina (2015) suggested that students may learn the connection between connection and form of a certain genre. On the other hand, the process- product approach used by Yuk & Yunus (2021) puts forward the argument that peer review (pointing out mistakes) during the pre-writing stage will help students get ideas before

they move to the drafting stage. The cross between two approaches makes transferring skills between students easier. In brief, these approaches and arguments proposed should be a guide for teachers when teaching writing.

### **The Outcomes of Using Selected Approaches in ESL Classroom**

The review articles resulted in discovering some recurring patterns. Thus, the discussion will be divided into 3 parts: showed statistical improvement, positive responses and negative responses. Four out of 15 articles reported significant improvement in mean score based on the pre-test and post-test which makes it a success (Saputra & Marzulina, 2015; Rumanti & Dewi, 2020; Stalin et al., 2021). Other than an increase in mean, Rumanti & Dewi (2020) showed that the value of Cohen d showed the use of process based approach has a medium effect on writing competence. Using the selected approaches also allowed researches to observe the continuous improvement in writing performance and grade. Chandran et al (2019) found that as compared to the pre-test, students' essays had a more organized structure and had more elaboration in the post test. This is parallel to Purba et al (2020); Vega & Pinzon (2019); Annamalai (2016) who concluded that there is evidence of reflective content, organization and ideas in an orderly pattern despite mistakes in writing. The approaches used also proved improvements in certain areas like grammatical structures, spelling, vocabulary, punctuation and tense after the intervention. Choi & Wong (2018) observed that the students presented relevant idea and expanded them well so it can be easily understood to capture readers' attention and the organisation of story line is perfectly aligned and followed a specific structure of orientation, complication and solution

Next, based on the findings, the common theme is positive responses. The students were motivated and enthusiastic when taught using the selected approaches. The process applied helped students prepare their thoughts and they were more enthusiastic and actively involved in the lesson. Students were more confident to take charge of learning (Yuk & Yunus, 2021; Stalin & Hua, 2020; Purba et al., 2020; Chandran et al., 2019; Annamalai, 2016, Barrot, 2016). Vega & Pinzon (2019); Yeung (2019) discussed that students showed positive self-efficacy and positive learning autonomy which essentially refers to observational learning, vicarious experience, social persuasion and physical as well emotional state. The study by Annamalai (2016); Naim (2020) deduced that students had more critical mean of communication with their peers. They become better communicators in line with the socio-affective learning strategies and they are motivated because of a supportive learning environment. It also promoted a healthy competition among students and fosters cooperation among groups. Students make less errors when learning together because they collaborate and edit the essay together while scaffolding what their existing knowledge as they develop analytical skills which allows students to receive criticism and respond to criticism (Nair and Sanai, 2018; Saputra & Marzulina, 2015; Yuk and Yunus, 2021). Barrot (2016); Yeung (2019) inferred a similar impact that is students can; (i) can reflect on their work, (ii) show their best work, (iii) navigate output, (iv) track their progress and (v) be aware of the gaps in their metacognitive knowledge and decrease teacher dependency.

Finally, there were three articles which reported a negative impact. Qomariyah & Permana (2016) observed a positive mean score increase in the experimental group. However, she believed that the approach was unsuccessful and suggested that teachers should find ways to promote and encourage creativity among students as it is considered as a significant aspect in



L2 learning. Safitri & Susiati (2021) echoed this sentiment and concluded that when an approach is introduced it should be introduced in an orderly manner to prevent bad writing quality. Rumanti & Dewi (2020) concluded that the process based approach is a lengthy process and time consuming despite its benefits.

### Conclusion

This systematic review paper analyses the writing approaches adopted by teachers to teach writing skills and impacts of those approaches on students writing performances. A total of 15 papers from a span of seven years were identified to be analysed. In spite of most researches were carried out in

EFL, ESP and some EBP context, this paper managed to identify researches done in ESL context only. Out of 15 studies, 3 studies were on tertiary students, 8 studies focus on high school and 4 studies targeted primary students. Most studies discussed the approaches employed explicitly while some were just mere mentions. The studies also used different types of research designs and research instruments for analysis, however, the results turned out to be more or less similar. There were five approaches identified in total: process-based approach, product-based approach, genre-based approach, process-genre approach and process-product approach. After using the selected approach, the researchers reported a significant different in post-test mean score. They also mentioned that students were more confident and engaged in lesson, improved their social skills as well as writing performances and they are able to produce meaningful text and arrange their thoughts well. Aside from that, some papers mentioned that there are limitations to the research and the common problems stated was the limited time to conduct the study and also limited sample size. Researchers who used online applications stated that there were problems with internet access, students discipline in submitting assignments and students tend to lose motivation because of too much screen time.

### Recommendations

In order to carry out successful writing lessons, teachers should know about students' proficiency, learning needs and learning style. Based on that knowledge, it would guide teachers choose the right approach to be utilised when teaching writing. In future researches, other approaches like free writing or Language Experience Approach (LEA) or even integrated approaches (i.e. process-product approach or process-genre approach) should be exploited to determine the effectiveness in teaching writing skills. Another area which could be investigated is how a writing approach chosen could be used to carry out a more successful online instruction. Since education has been seeing vast changes with the COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers play a significant role in helping students develop themselves to achieve their full potential, therefore, the approaches and techniques are vital to produce learners with good written communicative competence.

### References

- Al Mubarak, A. A. (2017). Sudanese students' perceptions of using facebook for vocabulary learning at university level. *Journal of Nusantara Studies (JONUS)*, 2(1), 170-176.
- Annamalai, N. (2016). Exploring the writing approaches in the Facebook environment. *Teaching English with Technology*, 16(1), 71-87.
- Barrot, J. S. (2016). Using Facebook-based e-portfolio in ESL writing classrooms: impact and challenges. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 29(3), 286-301.4

- Chandran, Y., Plaidaren, C. J., Pavadai, S., & Yunus, M. M. (2019). Collaborative Writing: An Integration of Snack Bars and Hi-Five Fingers via Social Media. *Creative Education*, 10(02), 475.
- Choi, T. H., & Wong, W. C. C. (2018). "Platform nine and three-quarters" and more: Scaffolding ESL writing through teacher modelling and creative imitation. *TESOL Journal*, 9(4), e00423. doi:10.1002/tesj.423
- Council of Europe. (2001). Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment. Cambridge, U.K: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge.
- David, A. R., Thang, S. M., & Azman, H. (2015). Accommodating low proficiency ESL students' language learning needs through an online writing support system. *eBangsi*, 12(4).
- Donovan, T. R., & McClelland, B. W. (1980). Eight approaches to teaching composition.
- Faisal, F., & Suwandita, K. (2013). The effectiveness of FRESH technique to teach descriptive paragraph. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 7(4), 239-248.
- Ghabool, N., Mariadass, M. E., & Kashef, S. H. (2012). Investigating Malaysian ESL students' writing problems on conventions, punctuation, and language use at secondary school level. *Journal of Studies in Education*, 2(3), 130-143.
- Kalleshinova, E. (2017). Crafting an Argument in Steps: A Writing Process Model for Graduate and Professional Students with LD. *Learning Disabilities: A Contemporary Journal*, 15(1), 15-37.
- Khan, K. S., Kunz, R., Kleijnen, J., & Antes, G. (2003). Five steps to conducting a systematic review. *Journal of the royal society of medicine*, 96(3), 118-121.
- Martin, J. R. (1999). Mentoring semogenesis: 'Genre-based' literacy pedagogy. *Pedagogy and the shaping of consciousness: Linguistic and social processes*, 123155.
- Misbah, N. H., Mohamad, M., Yunus, M. M., & Ya'acob, A. (2017). Identifying the Factors Contributing to Students' Difficulties in the English Language Learning. *Creative Education*, 8(13), 1999-2008.
- Naim, I. A. M. (2020). Enhancing Students' Writing Performance in Higher Learning through Think-Write-Pair-Share: An Experimental Study. *Asian Journal of University Education*, 16(3), 255-264.
- Nair, S. M., & Sanai, M. (2018). Effects of Utilizing the STAD Method (Cooperative Learning Approach) in Enhancing Students' Descriptive Writing Skills. *International Journal of Education and Practice*, 6(4), 239-252.
- Nelson, M. M., & Schunn, C. D. (2009). The nature of feedback: How different types of peer feedback affect writing performance. *Instructional science*, 37(4), 375-401.
- Palanisamy, S. & Aziz, A. A. (2021). Systematic Review: Challenges in Teaching Writing Skills for Upper Secondary in ESL Classrooms and Suggestions to overcome them. *Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH)*, 6(4), 262-275.
- Pazilah, F. N., Hashim, H., Yunus, M. M., & Rafiq, K. R. M (2019). Improving Narrative Writing in ESL Classroom Using Picture Series. *Religación*, 4, 118-123.
- Purba, R., Van Thao, N., & Purba, A. (2020). Using Genre-based Approach to Overcome Students' Difficulties in Writing. *Journal of Education and e-Learning Research*, 7(4), 464470.
- Qomariyah, S. S. A., & Permana, D. (2016). Process Based Approach towards Students' Creativity in Writing English Paragraph. *IJELTAL (Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics)*, 1(1), 37-47.
- Richards, J. C., Platt, J., & Platt, H. (1993). Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and

Applied Linguistics. 3rd impression.

- Rumanti, N. P. Y., & Dewi, N. P. A. S. (2020). The effect of process-approach on students' writing achievement. *International Journal of Social Science Research*, 2(2), 162167.
- Saputra, H., & Marzulina, L. (2015). Teaching writing by using process genre approach to the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 22 Palembang. *Edukasi: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pengajaran*, 2(1), 1-12
- Stalin, L. T., & Kim Hua, T. (2020). Use of Snapchat to Enhance Primary School English as Second Language Learners in the Writing of Personal Information. *International Journal of English Language and Literature Studies*, 9(4), 330-338.
- Steele, V. (2004). Product and process writing: a comparison. *Retrieved March, 23, 2014*.
- Tangpermpoon, T. (2008). Integrated approaches to improve students writing skills for English major students. *ABAC journal*, 28(2).
- Thresia, F. (2017). Improving students' writing ability through cue cards technique. *Premise: Journal of English Education and Applied Linguistics*, 6(1), 8-19.
- Vega, L. F. S., & Pinzón, M. M. L. (2019). The Effect of the Process-Based Approach on the Writing Skills of Bilingual Elementary Students. *Latin American Journal of Content and Language Integrated Learning*, 12(1), 72-98.
- Yeung, M. (2019). Exploring the Strength of the Process Writing Approach as a Pedagogy for Fostering Learner Autonomy in Writing among Young Learners. *English Language Teaching*, 12(9), 42-54.
- Yuk, A. C. K., & Yunus, M. M. (2021). Using Peer-Modo Feedback at the Pre-Writing Stage to Improve Year 4 Pupils' Writing Performance. *Journal of Education and e-Learning Research*, 8(1), 116-124.
- Yulianti, D. B. (2018). Learning strategies applied by the students in writing English text. *Journal on English as a Foreign Language*, 8(1), 19-38.
- Yunus, M. M., & Chien, C. H. (2016). The use of mind mapping strategy in Malaysian university English test (MUET) Writing. *Creative Education*, 7(04), 619.