The Effects of Process-Genre Approach on Writing Performance and Writing Anxiety of Thai EFL University Students

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Abstract

The primary aim of this study was to examine the effects of the process-genre approach (PGA) on Thai university students' essay writing performance in five key aspects: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. Additionally, the study sought to assess changes in students' writing anxiety levels before and after PGA implementation. Using a quasi-experimental research design, 70 second-year English major students from two intact classes were participants, with 37 in the experimental group and 33 in the control group. The experimental group received PGA instruction, while the control group was taught using the process approach. Two research instruments were used to collect data: pre- and post- tests of expository essay writing to measure writing performance and a writing anxiety questionnaire to measure anxiety levels. The results demonstrated that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group in the post-test in content, organization, and vocabulary. However, there were no significant differences observed in language use and mechanics. In addition, the results indicated that PGA could significantly reduce students' writing anxiety in all three types of anxiety (somatic, cognitive, and avoidance behavior). The study also discusses the implications of these results for effectively implementing PGA.

Keywords: essay writing, process-genre approach, writing anxiety, writing performance

1. Introduction

Writing is widely considered a fundamental skill for conveying ideas effectively. In language learning, mastering writing is crucial for students, as it facilitates the learning, discovery, development, and enhancement of language abilities (Astuti et al., 2020; Tribble, 1997). However, writing is often seen as complex for language learners to master. Previous studies have identified four major problems in L2 writing instruction for EFL learners in higher education (Huang, 2020). First, writing instruction is exam-oriented, with university English teaching heavily influenced by tests and focused on preparation exercises. Second, feedback is insufficient due to large class sizes, with teachers providing only general comments and corrections on linguistic forms. Automated writing assessment tools also focus on surface-level features, neglecting organizational and rhetorical aspects. Furthermore, there is a lack of content instruction, as EFL writing is taught in a decontextualized manner, without considering the communicative purposes of different genres. Students often imitate sample essays without understanding the specific genres and structures (Huang, 2020; Shen et al., 2023).

Another significant challenge for EFL students is writing anxiety (WA). When tasked with writing assignments, they often fear negative judgment from others. WA mirrors general anxiety, characterized by worry, self-criticism, fear of judgment, and either avoidance or excessive time spent on writing (Cheng, 2004; Santri et al., 2022). This anxiety makes every stage of the writing process difficult and demanding for students. Consequently, WA can hinder their learning and negatively impact their writing performance (Chen & Chang, 2004; Cui et al., 2024; Yan, 2024). Research on the relationship between WA and writing performance (WP) has yielded significant findings, with many studies indicating a strong negative correlation. For instance, Kurniawati and Atmojo (2022) found that higher anxiety levels are associated with poorer WP.

At the university where the researcher taught, second-year English major students were required to enroll in an Essay Writing course designed to develop their expository writing skills across three sub-genres: descriptive, compare-and-contrast, and cause-and-effect essays. In the EFL context, proficiency in expository writing is essential for college and tertiary-level students, as it forms a fundamental component of academic writing tasks in international language proficiency exams such as IELTS and TOEFL—both of which are often prerequisites for higher education or career advancement (Kim, 2016). However, classroom observations revealed significant challenges. Many students struggled with fundamental aspects of writing, particularly in terms of content development and organizational structure. A notable difficulty was their inability to use appropriate language suited to different social contexts and genres. For example, when assigned a cause-and-effect essay, students frequently relied on descriptive sentences, failing to incorporate essential signal words and connectors to illustrate causal relationships. The assessment of their final written work further indicated persistent difficulties in generating coherent ideas

and structuring them into well-organized essays (Hyland, 2016; Schleppegrell, 2006; Yang, 2016).

Over the decades, scholars have proposed various approaches to writing instruction. These include the product approach (Pincas, 1982; Yan, 2005), the process approach (Caudery, 1998; Flower & Hayes, 1981; White & Arndt, 1991), and the genre approach (Badger & White, 2000; Hyland, 2003). First, the product approach emphasizes the final written product, focusing on specific skills such as sentence-level exercises, the use of transition words, and the analysis of model texts (Pincas, 1982). In this model, teachers assign writing tasks, correct errors, and return assignments for revision. However, Yan (2005) argues that this emphasis on producing flawless work and continual error correction can negatively impact students' self-esteem and motivation. In contrast, the process approach views writing as a knowledge-seeking journey involving stages such as planning, writing, reviewing, editing, and revising, often in a recursive manner (Hairston, 1982). Caudery (1997) asserts that engaging students in stimulating activities, such as peer feedback, can enhance their motivation. Nevertheless, critics, including Badger and White (2000), contend that this approach may overlook essential aspects such as audience and content. The genre approach, on the other hand, seeks to address the varied needs of learners by framing writing as a social endeavor, considering audience, context, and objectives (Hyland, 2007). However, this shift towards genre may neglect the cognitive processes and strategies emphasized in the process approach (Huang, 2020). In light of these critiques, Badger and White (2000) argue that an effective writing methodology should integrate elements from all three approaches. Consequently, they proposed the process-genre approach (PGA), which aims to combine the strengths of the product, process, and genre approaches.

PGA in L2 writing instruction has gained significant attention in recent scholarship, as it helps students improve writing performance (WP) within a socially situated learning context and enhances self-efficacy (Huang, 2020; Yasuda, 2011; Han & Hiver, 2018). In this approach, students explore specific genres to identify their purpose, language, and structure, enabling them to produce the target genre. PGA also helps students understand the connection between a genre's purpose, its language, and its form, with the teacher scaffolding their progress. This preparation allows students to write for real audiences, not just for classroom assignments (Yan, 2005). Given these potential benefits, PGA has flourished in the field of English language teaching and has been implemented across diverse educational contexts (Huang, 2020; Kitajroonchai et al., 2022; Saputra & Marzulina, 2015). However, within the Thai EFL context, PGA remains underexplored. This study, in alignment with the continuum of research on PGA, aimed to provide additional evidence on the feasibility of this approach in the Thai EFL context. Therefore, this study adapted the PGA model proposed by Badger and White (2000) and the PGA writing instructional framework developed by Huang (2020) as guiding model. The model included four main stages: developing the context, considering the genre, joint construction, and independent construction, as shown in Figure 1.
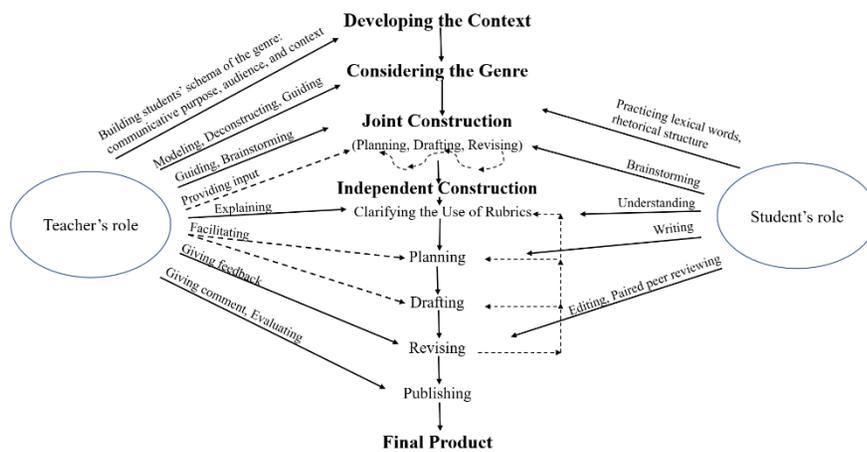

Figure 1. Modified PGA Model of Current Study (Adapted from Badger and White (2000) and Huang (2020)

1.1 Research Questions

In light of recent calls for rigorous studies to investigate the effects of PGA, this current study was conducted. The main focus of this study was to address the following research questions:

1. What are the effects of PGA on students' writing performance in the aspects of content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics?

2. What are the effects of PGA on students' writing anxiety?

1.2 Theoretical Framwork

Sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) and self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1986) served as the theoretical frameworks for this study. From a sociocultural perspective, PGA emphasizes the importance of scaffolding and teacher-learner interactions in guiding students through the stages of drafting, revising, and refining their work. Additionally, PGA aligns with self-efficacy theory, which highlights the role of

individuals' beliefs in their capabilities to influence motivation, behavior, and performance.

2. Method

In this study, a quasi-experimental research design was adopted, employing a two-group pretest-posttest design to compare and measure writing performance (WP) in essay writing classes over a 14-week period. The study examined the effects of the process-genre approach (PGA) on students' essay WP and writing anxiety (WA) in an EFL classroom context.

2.1 Research Participants and Context

The participants of this study were 70 second-year Thai EFL English major students, aged between 19 and 20, from two intact classes. They were divided into a control group (N=33) and an experimental group (N=37). The control group (CG) was taught using the process approach, whereas the experimental group (EG) received PGA instruction. All of them were from nearby provinces with a similar L1 background (i.e., Thai) and had studied English as a foreign language for thirteen years. None of them had ever been to native English-speaking countries. Prior to the treatment, the two groups were the same in their overall English proficiency (CEFR A1-B1 levels), as indicated by their Cambridge English Placement Test (CEPT) scores from the previous semester. To maintain consistency in instruction, the researcher served as the teacher for both groups. Prior to their participation in the study, explicit informed consent was obtained from all participants to ensure that they individuals willingly and knowingly agreed to take part in the research, understanding the purpose, procedures, and benefits involved. This study was conducted at a government university located in the northeastern part of Thailand.

2.2 Research Instruments

2.2.1 Pre-test and Post-test of Expository Essay Writing

The researcher developed English expository essay writing tests as the pre-test and post-test to evaluate the students' essay writing performance (WP) before and after receiving the interventions. Both tests were administered on paper. To establish the validity of the expository essay tests, ten prompts on personal experiences, science and technology, and social issues were sourced. Five ELT experts with over ten years of experience in teaching college writing reviewed the prompts for accuracy, appropriateness, and relevance, providing feedback that led to necessary revisions. Five prompts were then selected based on their alignment with learning objectives and relevance to students (See Appendix A). Finally, ten non-participant students from a similar demographic completed the test, confirming its moderate level of difficulty, clarity of instructions, and coherence of responses.

For the pre-test, the participants were assigned to write an expository essay by selecting one from five prompts provided. However, they were required to select a different prompt during the post-test to avoid repeating ideas that they used during the pre-test period. The participants completed both tests under the same writing conditions to ensure comparability between the pre-test and post-test. The participants were given 90 minutes to complete the tests. The tests were scored using a scoring rubric known as the ESL composition profile (Jacobs et al., 1981) which included five distinct rating categories of writing quality with a 100-point scale. The five rating categories included content (30 points), organization (20 points), vocabulary (20 points), language use (25 points), and mechanics (5 points). To establish inter-rater reliability, the tests were rated by three raters with over ten years of experience in teaching English writing in Thai EFL contexts and specialized expertise in ELT. After rating the tests, the interrater reliability was calculated using Fleiss' Kappa statistic, which was used to measure inter-rater reliability with more than two raters (Landis & Koch, 1977), for the five writing aspects (content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics) were 0.76, 0.82, 0.76, 0.81, and 0.83, respectively; thus, indicating a satisfactory level of interrater reliability.

2.2.2 Writing Anxiety Questionnaire

In this study, Cheng's (2004) Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) was used to assess participants' writing anxiety before and after implementing PGA. The SLWAI was a 22-item questionnaire designed to gauge the anxiety that students experienced when writing in English. It comprised three components: somatic anxiety (7 items), avoidance behavior (7 items), and cognitive anxiety (8 items). The questionnaire employed a Likert-type 5-point response scale: 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neither agree nor disagree), 4 (agree), and 5 (strongly agree). This questionnaire was chosen due to its proven reliability and validity, with a correlation coefficient of 0.91 (Cheng, 2004). The EG completed the questionnaire both before and after the experiment. To ensure participants could read, understand, and respond accurately, this study adopted the Thai version of the questionnaire developed by Parichut and Chinokul (2014), which had an Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) index ranging from 0.60 to 1.00 and a Cronbach's alpha of 0.85.

2.3 Data Collection Procedure

The data collection procedure began with an orientation session during the first class. Before the initial class started, participants from both groups took a 90-minute pre-test by writing an expository essay. Additionally, the EG completed a writing anxiety questionnaire, while the CG did not. From weeks 2 to 13, the researcher, acting as the teacher, conducted English essay writing classes for three hours per week for both groups. They learned to write three subcategories of expository essays: descriptive, compare-and-contrast, and cause-and-effect. Each essay type was taught over three weeks, followed by general expository essays. In week 14, a post-test was administered to assess improvements in essay writing performance, and the writing anxiety questionnaire was re-administered to the EG. The PGA lesson plan is provided in Appendix B.
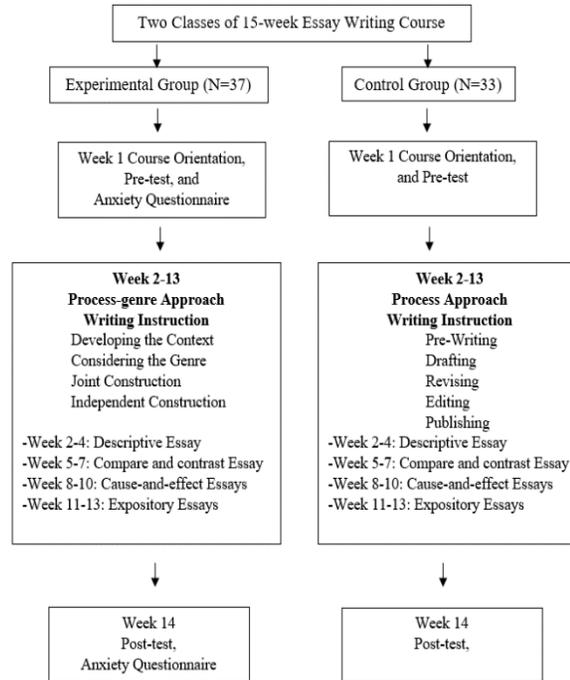
Figure 2. Data collection procedure

To ensure fairness between both groups, they were provided with equivalent resources and covered similar content. After the completion of the experiment, the researcher offered supplementary instruction to the CG on elements exclusively covered in the EG for four weeks. This additional instruction aimed to balance the learning opportunities between the two groups. While the CG was initially taught using the process approach, they later received explicit instruction on genre awareness, textual organization, and linguistic features emphasized in PGA. This measure ensured that both groups ultimately had access to the same instructional content, though at different stages of the study.

2.4 Data Analysis

In this study, the pre-test and post-test results were evaluated using the ESL Composition Profile rubric (Jacobs et al., 1981). A between-group analysis was conducted to assess differences in mean scores across students' WP gained from the tests. The assessment included overall scores and evaluated five aspects: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics, utilizing an independent t-test.

The WA questionnaire was analyzed to address Research Question 2. Mean and standard deviation were employed to analyze data from the WA questionnaire. The mean values derived from each item were interpreted to determine WA levels.Items falling within the first third of the score range (1.00 to 1.66 points) indicated a low level of WA.Items scores falling between one-third and two-thirds of the score range (1.67 to 3.33 points) indicated a moderate level of WA, and items scores falling within the last third of the score range (3.34 to 5.00 points)indicated a high level of WA (Allen & Seaman, 2007).Finally, a paired sample t-test was used to analyze the differences in participants' WA levels before and after the experiment.

3. Results

3.1 The Effect of PGA on Students' Writing Performance

Table 1. A summary of descriptive statistics of writing tests

Writing Aspects	Groups	N	Tests	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Overall score	CG	33	Pre-test	53.65	11.66	-0.074	-0.954
			Post-test	70.30	11.88	0.532	-0.710
	EG	37	Pre-test	56.76	8.26	0.438	-0.340
			Post-test	78.20	10.02	-0.824	0.697
Content	CG	33	Pre-test	16.00	2.59	0.720	-0.190
			Post-test	20.36	4.49	0.293	-0.948
	EG	37	Pre-test	16.43	2.49	0.917	0.498
			Post-test	23.78	4.19	-0.646	-0.381
Organization	CG	33	Pre-test	11.39	2.82	-0.006	-1.155
			Post-test	14.64	2.61	0.427	-0.383
	EG	37	Pre-test	12.14	2.12	-0.050	-0.946
			Post-test	16.72	2.50	-1.075	1.934

Writing Aspects	Groups	N	Tests	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Vocabulary	CG	33	Pre-test	11.74	2.93	0.005	-1.052
			Post-test	14.73	2.21	0.204	-0.540
	EG	37	Pre-test	12.27	1.96	0.141	0.617
			Post-test	15.85	1.89	-1.618	3.241
Language use	CG	33	Pre-test	12.03	3.83	-0.364	-0.667
			Post-test	17.45	3.35	-0.262	-0.319
	EG	37	Pre-test	13.39	2.67	0.464	-1.527
			Post-test	18.45	2.01	-0.342	1.139
Mechanics	CG	33	Pre-test	2.48	0.59	0.781	-0.526
			Post-test	3.12	0.67	0.508	0.307
	EG	37	Pre-test	2.53	0.49	0.080	-1.606
			Post-test	3.41	0.60	-0.229	-0.086

Note: Control Group: CG, Experimental Group: EG

Table 1 presents an overview of the descriptive statistics for both groups' writing performance (WP) during the pre-test and post-test phases. The results indicated that, in the pre-test phase, the CG had an overall mean score of 53.65 (SD = 11.66). For specific writing aspects, the mean scores were as follows: content—16.00 (SD = 2.59), organization—11.39 (SD = 2.82), vocabulary—11.74 (SD = 2.93), language use—12.03 (SD = 3.83), and mechanics—2.48 (SD = 0.59). In comparison, the EG showed greater improvements across all measured aspects. The EG's pre-test mean score was 56.76 (SD = 8.26), with the following scores for specific aspects: content—16.43 (SD = 2.49), organization—12.14 (SD = 2.12), vocabulary—12.27 (SD = 1.96), language use—13.39 (SD = 2.67), and mechanics—2.53 (SD = 0.49).

In the post-test phase, the EG achieved an overall mean score of 78.20 (SD = 10.02), which was higher than the CG's score of 70.30 (SD = 11.88). For content, the mean score was 23.78 (SD = 4.19), surpassing the CG's score of 20.36 (SD = 4.49). In terms of organization, the EG scored 16.72 (SD = 2.50), higher than the CG's score of 14.64 (SD = 2.61). The EG's mean score for vocabulary was 15.85 (SD = 1.89), exceeding the CG's score of 14.73 (SD = 2.21). For language use, the EG's score was 18.45 (SD = 2.01), compared to 17.45 (SD = 3.35) for the CG. Finally, the mean score for mechanics was 3.41 (SD = 0.60), higher than the CG's mean score of 3.12 (SD = 0.67).

Additionally, the overall scores and the five aspect scores (content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics) for both groups were assessed for normality using skewness and kurtosis values. The results indicated that the distribution of scores was approximately normal across all aspects, as the skewness values fell within the generally accepted range of -3 to 3, and the kurtosis values were within the range of -10 to 10. These findings support the validity of the statistical analyses conducted on the data (Kline, 2011).

Table 2. Results of independent samples test

Writing Aspects		Groups	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value	Effect size (d)
Overall	Pre-test	CG	33	53.65	11.66	1.30	0.20	0.31
		EG	37	56.76	8.26			
	Post-test	CG	33	70.30	11.88	3.02	0.00*	0.72
		EG	37	78.20	10.02			
Content	Pre-test	CG	33	16.00	2.59	0.71	0.48	0.17
		EG	37	16.43	2.49			
	Post-test	CG	33	20.36	4.49	3.30	0.00*	0.80
		EG	37	23.78	4.19			
Organization	Pre-test	CG	33	11.39	2.82	1.25	0.21	0.30
		EG	37	12.14	2.12			
	Post-test	CG	33	14.46	2.61	3.41	0.00*	0.81
		EG	37	16.72	2.50			
Vocabulary	Pre-test	CG	33	11.74	2.93	0.89	0.37	0.21
		EG	37	12.27	1.96			
	Post-test	CG	33	14.73	2.21	2.29	0.03*	0.55
		EG	37	15.85	1.89			
Language use	Pre-test	CG	33	12.03	3.83	1.74	0.09	0.41
		EG	37	13.39	2.67			
	Post-test	CG	33	17.45	3.35	1.52	0.13	0.36
		EG	37	18.45	2.01			
Mechanics	Pre-test	CG	33	2.48	0.59	0.33	0.74	0.08
		EG	37	2.53	0.49			
	Post-test	CG	33	3.12	0.67	1.87	0.07	0.45
		EG	37	3.41	0.60			

Notes: *p<.05, Control Group: CG, Experimental Group:EG

As reported in Table2, the findings from an independent t-test analysis revealed a significant increase in the post-test scores of participants in the EG when compared to those in the CG. The significant difference in the overall scores for the EG was t-value = 3.02, p-value = 0.00 with a medium effect size (d = 0.72). Significant differences were observed in the post-test scores between the EG and the CG in content,

organization, and vocabulary. For content, the EG scored higher compared to the CG with a t-value of 3.30, p-value = 0.00, and a large effect size (d = .80). In terms of organization, the EG also outperformed the CG with a t-value of 3.41, p-value = 0.00, and a large effect size (d = 0.81). Similarly, for vocabulary, the EG had higher scores compared to the CG with a t-value of 2.29, p-value = 0.03, and a medium effect size (d = 0.55). However, there were no significant differences observed in the other two components, namely language use and mechanics. These results indicated that implementing PGA in EFL writing classroom could significantly improve students' content, organization, and vocabulary, and overall writing quality compared to conventional instruction. These results suggested that EG participants outperformed their peers in the CG. These results proved the positive effects of the implementation of PGA to essay writing instruction in EFL classes.

3.2 The Effect of PGA on Students' Writing Anxiety Levels

In order to measure the writing anxiety levels of participants in the EG, the Thai version of the Writing Anxiety (WA) questionnaire, developed by Parichut and Chinokul (2014) based on the original English version by Cheng (2004), was used to address the second research question.

Table 3. Somatic anxiety levels before and after the implementation of PGA

No.	Statements	Before Implementation			After Implementation		
		Mean	SD	Meaning	Mean	SD	Meaning
2.	I feel my heart pounding when I write English compositions under time constraint.	2.43	0.90	Moderate	2.51	0.80	Moderate
6.	My mind often goes blank when I start to work on an English composition.	4.11	0.88	High	3.41	0.83	High
8.	I tremble or perspire when I write English compositions under time pressure.	3.08	1.04	Moderate	2.86	0.95	Moderate
11.	My thoughts become jumbled when I write English compositions under time constraint.	4.11	0.77	High	3.35	1.03	High
13.	I often feel panic when I write English compositions under time constraint.	3.92	0.89	High	3.76	1.14	High
15.	I freeze up when unexpectedly asked to write English compositions.	3.08	0.95	Moderate	3.14	1.06	Moderate
19	I usually feel my whole-body rigid and tense when I write English compositions.	2.70	0.85	Moderate	2.62	0.98	Moderate
	Overall	3.35	0.90	High	3.09	0.97	Moderate

According to Table 3, the students' somatic anxiety was generally high before the implementation of PGA, with a mean score of 3.35 (SD = 0.90). The highest mean scores, both 4.11 (items 6 and 11), indicated that students struggled significantly with starting the writing process and experienced notable physical stress responses when writing under a time limit. After the implementation of PGA, the anxiety mean score decreased to 3.09 (SD = 0.97), indicating a moderate level of anxiety. The highest mean score for the post-implementation was 3.76 (item 13), reflecting that student still had strong anxiety about time constraints. Overall, the mean score for somatic anxiety decreased after receiving PGA instruction (from 3.35 to 3.09), indicating a reduction in writing anxiety from a high to a moderate level during the study. However, the mean scores for items 2 and 15 increased after the implementation of PGA. Item 2, which reflected the sensation of heart pounding when writing under time constraints, increased slightly from 2.43 to 2.51. Item 15, which measured the feeling of freezing up when unexpectedly asked to write, also showed a slight increase from 3.08 to 3.14. These increases suggested that while the overall anxiety was reduced, some aspects of anxiety, related to unexpected writing tasks and time pressure, remained challenging for students and may require additional targeted support.

Table 4. Cognitive anxiety levels before and after the implementation of PGA

No.	Statements	Before Implementation			After Implementation		
		Mean	SD	Meaning	Mean	SD	Meaning
1.	While writing in English, I'm not nervous at all. *	3.76	0.60	High	2.41	0.55	Moderate
3.	While writing English compositions, I feel worried and uneasy if I know they will be evaluated.	3.89	0.77	High	2.78	0.79	Moderate
7.	I don't worry that my English compositions are a lot worse than others'. *	3.84	0.65	High	2.49	0.80	Moderate
9.	If my English composition is to be evaluated, I would worry about getting a very poor grade.	3.81	0.74	High	2.70	0.88	Moderate
14.	I'm afraid that other students would deride my English composition if they read it.	3.95	0.81	High	2.41	0.86	Moderate
17.	I don't worry at all about what other people would think of my English compositions. *	3.59	1.01	High	2.41	0.69	Moderate
20.	I'm afraid of my English composition being chosen as a sample to be discussed in class.	3.46	0.87	High	2.22	0.75	Moderate
21.	I'm not afraid at all that my English compositions would be rated as very poor. *	3.27	1.07	Moderate	2.14	0.75	Moderate
	Overall Mean	3.70	0.82	High	2.44	0.76	Moderate

*Note: *Scores were reversed before being analyzed.*

As shown in Table 4, the students' cognitive anxiety was high before the implementation of PGA, with a mean score of 3.70 (SD = 0.82). The highest mean score was 3.95 (item 14), indicating that students were afraid of being ridiculed by others if their English composition was read by their peers. This suggested a strong concern about social judgment and peer evaluation, contributing to heightened cognitive anxiety. After the implementation, the cognitive anxiety mean score decreased to 2.44 (SD = 0.76), indicating a moderate level of cognitive anxiety. The highest mean score was 2.78 (item 3), reflecting that students still experienced some worry and uneasiness if they knew their English compositions would be evaluated. However, the lowest mean score was 2.14 (item 21), suggesting that students were not worried about receiving poor ratings.

Table 5. Avoidance behavior levels before and after the implementation of PGA

No.	Statements	Before Implementation			After Implementation		
		Mean	SD	Meaning	Mean	SD	Meaning
4.	I often choose to write down my thoughts in English. *	3.38	0.95	High	3.14	0.89	Moderate
5.	I usually do my best to avoid writing English compositions.	2.24	0.83	Moderate	2.32	0.88	Moderate
10.	I do my best to avoid situations in which I have to write in English.	2.54	0.77	Moderate	2.43	0.73	Moderate
12.	Unless I have no choice, I would not use English to write composition.	2.68	0.97	Moderate	2.54	0.96	Moderate
16.	I would do my best to excuse myself if asked to write English compositions.	2.35	0.75	Moderate	2.24	0.76	Moderate
18.	I usually seek every possible chance to write English compositions outside of class.	3.59	0.64	High	2.81	0.74	Moderate
22.	Whenever possible, I would use English to write compositions. *	3.86	0.63	High	2.95	0.78	Moderate
	Overall Mean	2.95	0.79	Moderate	2.63	0.82	Moderate

*Note: *Scores were reversed before being analyzed.*

According to Table 5, the students' WA, in terms of avoidance behavior, was at a moderate level before the PGA implementation, with a mean score of 2.95 (SD = 0.79). The highest mean score was 3.86 (item 22), indicating that students were generally unwilling to write English essays whenever possible. On the other hand, after receiving PGA instruction, the mean score of avoidance behavior decreased to 2.63 (SD = 0.82), indicating a moderate level of anxiety, though with a noticeable reduction in avoidance tendencies. The highest mean score was 3.14 (item 4), reflecting that students still felt somewhat hesitant to express their thoughts in English, but were more open to doing so compared to before the instruction. However, the lowest mean score was 2.24 (item 16), suggesting that students were less likely to make excuses or avoid writing English compositions when asked to do so, indicating a reduction in their tendency to evade writing tasks and a slight increase in their willingness to engage with writing assignments after receiving PGA instruction.

Table 6. The mean score of each type of writing anxiety

Types of WA	Before Implementation			After Implementation		
	Mean	SD	Meaning	Mean	SD	Meaning
Overall	3.35	0.84	High	2.71	0.85	Moderate
Somatic anxiety	3.35	0.90	High	3.09	0.97	Moderate
Cognitive anxiety	3.70	0.82	High	2.44	0.76	Moderate
Avoidance behavior	2.95	0.79	Moderate	2.63	0.82	Moderate

As shown in Table 6, before the implementation of PGA, the analysis of the types of WA indicated that cognitive anxiety, with a mean score of 3.70 (SD = 0.82), was the predominant type experienced by the participants. This was followed by somatic anxiety, with a mean score of 3.35 (SD = 0.90), and avoidance behavior, with a mean score of 2.95 (SD = 0.79). In contrast, after the implementation, the students' writing anxiety decreased. However, cognitive anxiety became the lowest, with a mean score of 2.44 (SD = 0.76), followed by avoidance behavior, with a mean score of 2.63 (SD = 0.82). Somatic anxiety became the highest after the treatment, with a mean score of 3.09 (SD = 0.97).

Paired differences of writing anxiety level of the experimental group

Table 7 shows differences of the EG's WA scores before and after the implementation. These differences are in terms of mean, standard deviation, t-value and probability significance (p-value).

Table 7. Paired samples test of the experimental group (N=37)

Types of Writing Anxiety		Mean	SD	t	p
Overall	Before PGA implementation	3.35	0.84	9.83	0.00*
	After PGA implementation	2.71	0.85		
Somatic anxiety	Before PGA implementation	3.35	0.90	3.63	0.00*
	After PGA implementation	3.09	0.97		
Cognitive anxiety	Before PGA implementation	3.70	0.82	14.88	0.00*
	After PGA implementation	2.44	0.76		
Avoidance behavior	Before PGA implementation	2.95	0.79	3.87	0.00*
	After PGA implementation	2.63	0.82		

Note: *p<.05

Table 7 presents the EG's WA scores before and after the implementation, revealing significant improvements across overall score and the three types of WA. The t-value of the overall score was 9.83 (p = 0.00), indicating a statisticall significance in overall WA, decreasing from a high level to a moderate level. For somatic anxiety, the t-value was 3.63 (p = 0.00), also showing a significant decrease from a high level to a moderate level. The most statistically significant difference was observed in cognitive anxiety, with a t-value of 14.88 (p = 0.00). Avoidance behavior showed a significant difference as well, with a t-value of 3.87 (p = 0.00), demonstrating a reduction in mean scores while still remaining at a moderate level.

4. Discussion

The first research question aimed to determine whether PGA would improve EFL students' WP as evaluated through overall scores and five writing aspects: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. The findings revealed that after receiving PGA writing instruction, EG participants achieved significantly higher overall post-test scores compared to their CG peers. The post-test mean scores for the writing aspects of content, organization, and vocabulary were significantly higher for the EG than for the CG. This suggested that PGA effectively enhanced EFL students' WP in an essay writing class. These results align with previous studies (e.g., Huang, 2020; Jarunthawatchai, 2010; Kitajroonchai et al., 2022), which reported that PGA instruction proved to be effective in improving students' WP.

Firstly, the improvement in the content scores of the EG may be attributed to various stages of interaction. In the initial context-developing stage, the teacher elicited students' perspectives and knowledge regarding the communicative purpose, audience, and context of the specific genre, which likely enhanced their understanding of the topic. During the modeling and deconstruction stage, the teacher helped students recognize how to use appropriate evidence to support their thesis statements. This aligns with the findings of previous studies emphasizing the importance of clear demonstrations by teachers in PGA instruction to illustrate the content needed to fulfill the communicative purpose (Huang, 2020; Miller et al., 2016; Rajim & Aziz, 2024). Additionally, students were also encouraged to engage in brainstorming sessions and small group discussions to examine the genre's features and understand the organization and structure of language in the sample text. Such activities allowed students to exchange knowledge and gain new insights from their peers, as suggested by Nordin and Mohammad (2006). Overall, this collaborative and interactive approach likely played a pivotal role in enhancing the EG's content scores.

Secondly, the significant improvement in organization within the EG may have resulted from the explicit instruction provided by the teacher on essay structures and text analysis activities. The teacher guided students in generating and organizing ideas, and collaboratively constructed sentences with them. Additionally, students benefited from shared ideas presented by peers who volunteered in class. This collaborative and interactive approach likely contributed to their ability to produce well-organized essays in the post-test. The guidance provided by the teacher aligns with the recommendations of Negretti and McGrath (2018) and Zhang et al. (2016), who emphasize the importance of explicit instruction in enhancing organizational skills. By actively involving students in idea construction and organization and exposing them to diverse perspectives through peer contributions, they gained a deeper understanding of the interconnected components of each essay type. This approach facilitated the development of effective organizational strategies and contributed to the observed improvement in the EG's post-test essays. Moreover, planning may have helped students organize their writing, as the teacher guided them in arranging their ideas logically. This is consistent with Harpiansi (2023) and Huang (2020), who reported that planning helps students develop a better understanding of textual knowledge and interconnected components in academic genres. As a result, their essays demonstrated a clearly organized structure and coherence from beginning to end.

Finally, the improvement in vocabulary observed in the EG may be attributed to genre awareness, aligning with the findings of Lara (2017), who suggested that vocabulary improvement stems from genre awareness, as it helps students recognize textual meanings within specific communicative contexts and select appropriate word choices for a given genre. Moreover, while drafting their essays, students received related vocabulary from the teacher and had opportunities to seek assistance from their peers. Following the completion of the initial draft, a collaborative revision and editing process took place, involving both the teacher and students. Some students, along with the teacher, iteratively refined their work multiple times until it aligned with genre expectations. In the independent construction stage, students were responsible for independently crafting their essays. They were encouraged to thoroughly revise their work before sharing the second draft with peers, fostering a collaborative environment for further refinement through shared insights and feedback. Such collaborative writing processes, supported by both teacher and peer feedback, have been shown to enhance writing quality and reinforce genre-specific expectations (Badger & White, 2000; Huang, 2020).

However, there were areas that did not show significant differences between the two groups, such as language use and mechanics. Remarkably, despite the CG receiving more time for grammar instruction, there were no significant differences in language improvement between the two groups. Moreover, the EG did slightly outperform the CG. Additionally, although no statistically significant difference was observed in mechanics, the EG still slightly outperformed the CG. In the CG, mechanics received explicit instruction from the teacher, whereas in the EG, mechanics were not explicitly taught; instead, feedback was given by both peers and the teacher. Consequently, the participatory activities in the EG, although not involving explicit instruction, still yielded benefits in the form of slightly higher scores in mechanics (Harpiansi, 2023; Huang, 2020; Yan, 2005).

Concerning the second research question, this study primarily aimed to explore students' WA before and after the implementation of PGA. The results showed that the mean WA score decreased after receiving PGA instruction, indicating a reduction from a high to a moderate

level. This reduction was evident across overall WA scores as well as specific types of anxiety, including somatic anxiety, cognitive anxiety, and avoidance behavior, all of which showed statistically significant improvements post-treatment.

One reason for the effectiveness of PGA in reducing WA may be its features, such as the incorporation of social context for specific writing genres and the use of various inputs. These elements helped frame the purpose of writing and provided a clear understanding of the writing task. This was supported by Ajmal and Irfan (2020), who explained that understanding the different purposes of each writing genre and having a clear grasp of these purposes was valuable in helping student writers focus on their tasks, thereby reducing WA in students who received PGA instruction. This aligned with the findings of Abdullah (2019) who indicated that PGA effectively reduced students' WA due to increasing familiarity with various writing genres. Their typical features boosted students' overall writing confidence. The use of rubric as self-assessment checklist also provided a sense of reassurance about evaluations, as students better understood the assessment criteria.

Furthermore, knowing how their written works would be evaluated also helped reduce WA. It might be because when students met the expectation of the writing tasks, they felt less anxious about how their score would be. This point was explained by Panadero and Jonsson (2013) who found that rubrics provided clear expectations and reduced uncertainty about how students' work would be evaluated. This clarity helped students understand what they needed to do to succeed, thereby reducing anxiety associated with ambiguity and subjective grading.

Another reason could be the highly supportive feedback from peers and the teacher. This feedback could significantly reduce WA for several reasons. One key factor was the supportive nature of the feedback. Teachers played an essential role in creating an environment conducive to collaborative writing. Seeking help from peers and the teacher, as well as preparing before writing, were considered effective strategies for reducing stress (Huwari & Al-Shboul, 2016; Qashoa, 2014). This supportive environment was further emphasized by the findings of Yastıbaş and Yastıbaş (2015) and Kurt and Atay (2007), who noted that peer feedback helped create a learning environment that was less anxiety-inducing and stressful. It reduced WA and boosted students' confidence in their writing. During peer feedback sessions, students had the opportunity to discuss errors and potential corrections with their peers (Uymaz, 2019). This shared experience fostered a supportive environment where constructive feedback contributed to the growth of a writer.

5. Implications

The findings of this study have key implications for implementing PGA in Thai and other EFL contexts. Many Thai students struggle with essay writing due to exam-oriented teaching methods that emphasize grammatical accuracy over communicative competence. PGA could address this gap by providing structured, flexible guidance on writing development. Additionally, large class sizes in Thailand limit teachers' ability to offer detailed, individualized feedback. PGA instruction, including joint text construction and peer feedback, provides a supportive way to enhance students' writing skills, even in crowded classrooms. Regarding EFL writing classes, PGA can improve students' WP in content, organization, and vocabulary—areas where the EG showed significant gains compared to the CG. Therefore, it would be beneficial for instructors to follow these steps.

First, in terms of context development and genre familiarization, teachers should start by establishing the genre's context, helping students understand its purpose, audience, and structure. This initial stage is critical, as it allows students to develop an awareness of genre expectations, guiding their writing choices. Second, for model analysis and collaborative writing, teachers can enhance learning by providing model texts and guiding students through collaborative text construction. By analyzing and practicing genre-specific language and structure, students will be better prepared for independent writing. Third, the study demonstrated that allowing students to write independently and then engage in peer review sessions was valuable. Peer feedback encourages collaborative learning, provides diverse perspectives, and helps reduce WA while improving self-efficacy.

However, the study found no significant improvement in language use and mechanics, suggesting a need for targeted interventions, such as focused grammar and mechanics workshops or individualized feedback sessions. Teachers could introduce additional grammar instruction or peer editing activities to support these areas. In terms of WA, the study highlighted that PGA was effective in reducing WA among Thai EFL students. By introducing writing tasks (e.g., context development, model analysis, and joint construction), PGA helps reduce cognitive anxiety. Students feel less overwhelmed when they understand the purpose and structure of their tasks, allowing them to gradually build confidence in their writing. Furthermore, the peer review section helps reduce WA. Teachers should incorporate regular peer feedback sessions, where students can receive constructive comments from their classmates.

6. Conclusion

This study aimed to highlight the effectiveness of PGA in improving students' essay writing in an EFL context. Statistical analysis revealed a significant difference in WP between the EG, which received PGA instruction, and the CG, which received process approach instruction. The results indicated that by implementing PGA, the EG significantly outperformed the CG in many writing aspects, including content, organization, and vocabulary. Additionally, PGA was shown to be effective in reducing students' levels of WA, further contributing to a supportive learning environment that facilitated improved WP.

Although this study provided insights into PGA, it had some limitations. Firstly, there may be external and uncontrollable factors, such as students' background knowledge, that could influence their writing improvement. Therefore, future research should investigate these factors to better understand their impact on students' WP. Secondly, although peer feedback was essential in reducing WA, some students

initially felt uncomfortable receiving critiques from peers, which increased their WA. Future studies should incorporate additional encouragement and more training on giving and receiving constructive feedback. Lastly, since PGA was new for most students, additional time was required at the beginning of the course to help them understand the methodology. This adaptation period slightly delayed the transition to full engagement with PGA stages, particularly in the initial sessions. Future studies should implement an orientation phase for PGA by introducing PGA concepts, stages, and expectations before moving into full instructional sessions.

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Authors' contributions

Both Massaya Rachawong and Dr. Pilanut Phusawisot were responsible for study design and data analysis. Massaya Rachawong mainly managed the literature review and data collection. Dr. Pilanut Phusawisot provided ongoing guidance and consultation throughout the entire research process. Both Massaya Rachawong and Dr. Pilanut Phusawisot jointly analyzed the data, interpreted and discussed the findings. Massaya Rachawong drafted the manuscript and Dr. Pilanut Phusawisot revised it. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript. The two authors have contributed equally to the study.

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Appendix A. Pre-test and Post-test

Instructions:

1) Write an expository essay of between 250 and 300 words in response to one of the given prompts,

2) You have 90 minutes to finish writing the essay and make sure you submit it in time.

3) Write down your essay on the paper provided separately, corresponding to the selected prompt.

4) Please be noted that any dictionaries are not allowed.

Prompts:

Prompt 1: Everyone enjoys time with their family. What is the best day you have ever spent with your family? Think about the best day that you ever spent with your family. Write an essay about the best day you ever spent with your family. Include at least three reasons in your paper that explain what made it the best day. Be sure to use specific details to support each of your reasons. Use vivid verbs and adjectives to make your paper interesting to read.

Prompt 2: A mobile phones is a two-edged sword for high school students. On the one hand, it puts you in touch with the world, on the other, it discourages real face-to-face interaction. Write an essay that explores both the pros and cons of mobile phone usage among teenagers.

Prompt 3: Everyone has a favorite color. Think about what yours is and why it is your favorite. Think about things that are your favorite color and how they make you feel. Write a paper explaining several reasons why the color is your favorite! Remember to use specific details to support and explain your reasons. Use interesting adjectives and descriptions to make your paper interesting to read.

Prompt 4: Everyone has a favorite type of music. It may be rock, country, rap, classical, or some other kind. Before you begin to write, think about your favorite kind of music and why you like it. Now explain in an essay why this one type of music has become your favorite. Support your music choice with examples and details.

Prompt 5: Social media plays a significant role in the lives of many teenagers. Write an essay explaining how social media affects your daily life as a student. Discuss both the positive and negative impacts, such as connecting with friends, staying informed, managing time, or dealing with distractions. Use specific examples to illustrate your points and provide a balanced view of the influence of social media.

Appendix B. PGA Lesson Plan

Writing a Cause-and-effect Essay: The Effect of School Bullying

Lesson Duration: 3 hours

PGA Stages	Activities

1. Developing the Context
(30 minutes)
Objective: Introduce the topic and genre and elicit students' prior knowledge.
	1) Introduction to the topic:
	  - Brief discussion on bullying: What is it? Types of bullying?
	  - Show a short video clip or news article on school bullying.
	2) Eliciting Prior Knowledge:
	  - Ask students about their experiences or stories they have heard related to school bullying.
	  - Discuss the effects of bullying on victims, bullies, and the school environment.
	3) Purpose, Audience, and Context:
	  - Explain the purpose of a cause-and-effect essay: to analyze the reasons for an event or situation and its impacts.
	  - Discuss the potential audience: teachers, parents, policymakers.
	  - Context: School magazine, awareness campaigns, educational blogs.

2. Considering the Genre
(45 minutes)
Objective: Familiarize students with the structure and features of a cause-and-effect essay.
	1) Model Text Analysis:
	  - Provide a sample cause-and-effect essay on a different topic.
	  - Identify and discuss the structure: introduction, body (causes and effects), conclusion.
	2) Language Features and Rhetorical Structures:
	  - Highlight transition words and phrases used to show cause and effect (e.g., because, as a result, consequently).
	  - Discuss the use of specific vocabulary related to bullying and its effects.
	3) Deconstructing the Text:
	  - Break down the sample essay into parts and analyze each section.

3. Joint Construction
(45 minutes)
Objective: Collaborate to create a draft cause-and-effect essay on school bullying.
	1) Brainstorming:
	  - In groups, brainstorm causes and effects of school bullying.
	  - Share ideas and compile a class list of potential causes and effects.
	2) Planning the Essay:
	  - Create an outline together, deciding on the main points for each paragraph.
	3) Drafting:
	  - Begin drafting the introduction and the first body paragraph together.

PGA Stages	Activities
	- Encourage students to suggest sentences and ideas. - Continue drafting the remaining body paragraphs and conclusion with teacher guidance. 4) Revising and Editing: - Revise the draft as a class, focusing on clarity, coherence, and language use.
4. Independent Construction (60 minutes) Objective: Students write their own cause-and-effect essays.	1) Introduction of Scoring Rubric: - Present and explain the scoring rubric. - Discuss how it will be used for assessment and self-evaluation. 2) Independent Writing: - Students write their own cause-and-effect essays on the effects of school bullying. - Encourage the use of the rubric for self-checking during the writing process. 3) Paired Peer Review: - Students exchange essays with a partner and provide feedback using the rubric. - Discuss feedback with partners and make revisions. 4) Final Revision and Submission: - Students revise their essays based on peer feedback and submit them to the teacher. 5) Teacher Feedback: - Review submitted essays and provide detailed feedback, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement. 6) Class Discussion: - Discuss common issues and exemplary parts of some essays (anonymously, if preferred). 7) Future Writing Guidance: - Provide tips and strategies for future cause-and-effect essays.

Materials Needed:
- Short video clip or news article on school bullying.
- Sample cause-and-effect essay.
- Whiteboard/Smartboard for brainstorming and planning.
- Copies of the scoring rubric.

Assessment:
- Use the scoring rubric to assess students' essays.

Follow-Up:
- Encourage students to reflect on the feedback and revise their essays.