



ENGLISH TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF GENRE-BASED APPROACH: CONCEPT AND IMPLEMENTATION

by

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Abstract:

The Indonesian government places a high priority on revising and improving the curriculum to achieve the desired outcomes. Since 2004, the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) has been implemented as one of the approaches to teaching English. Although GBA has several benefits in English language teaching, there has been much concern that the outcomes still need to be achieved. This study investigated English teachers' understanding of the GBA concept and its implementation. Using a semi-structured interview, this study involved two high school English teachers in Aceh Tengah. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. It was found that English teachers' knowledge of the genre-based approach could be much higher and require further development and guidance. They need to show it to understand the general concept of GBA, text types, and basic GBA principles. Regarding GBA implementation, their lack of knowledge is shown by incomplete activities at certain cycle stages, difficulties in applying the stages, and inaccuracy in assessing students' achievement. Thus, it is suggested that teachers improve their knowledge of the approach practically and conceptually because the quality of the teaching processes is vital in achieving student learning success.

Keywords: genre pedagogy, genre-based approach, teachers' knowledge, systemic functional linguistics

Abstrak:

Pemerintah Indonesia menempatkan prioritas tinggi pada revisi dan perbaikan kurikulum untuk mencapai hasil yang diinginkan. Sejak tahun 2004, Genre-Based Approach (GBA) telah diterapkan sebagai salah satu pendekatan untuk mengajar bahasa Inggris. Terlepas dari kenyataan bahwa GBA memiliki beberapa manfaat dalam pengajaran bahasa Inggris, ada banyak kekhawatiran bahwa hasilnya belum tercapai. Penelitian ini menyelidiki pemahaman guru bahasa Inggris tentang konsep GBA dan implementasinya. Menggunakan wawancara semi-terstruktur, penelitian ini melibatkan dua guru bahasa Inggris SMA di Aceh Tengah. Analisis tematik digunakan untuk menganalisis data. Ditemukan bahwa pengetahuan guru bahasa Inggris tentang pendekatan berbasis genre secara signifikan rendah dan membutuhkan pengembangan dan bimbingan lebih lanjut. Hal ini ditunjukkan oleh kurangnya pemahaman mereka tentang konsep umum GBA, jenis teks, dan prinsip-prinsip dasar GBA. Dalam hal implementasi GBA, kurangnya pengetahuan mereka ditunjukkan oleh kegiatan yang tidak lengkap pada

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Nabilah & Emilia (2023)

tahap siklus tertentu, kesulitan dalam menerapkan tahapan, dan ketidaktepatan dalam menilai prestasi siswa. Dengan demikian, disarankan agar guru meningkatkan pengetahuan mereka tentang pendekatan baik secara praktis maupun konseptual karena kualitas proses pengajaran sangat penting dalam mencapai keberhasilan dalam pembelajaran siswa.

Kata kunci: *pedagogi genre, pendekatan berbasis genre, pengetahuan guru, linguistik fungsional sistemik*

INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English is regarded as a foreign language. Most students learn English from school and spend six years learning English from junior to senior high school. As a result, schools should play the most significant role in helping students improve their English ability (Mustafa, 2018). However, English proficiency in Indonesia still needs to be considered high. According to the EF English Proficiency Index (EF EFI) 2021 by English First, a prominent English language teaching provider with branches worldwide, Indonesia is ranked 80th out of 112 countries worldwide and 14th out of 24 countries in Asia (EF, 2021). It means that students leaving school still need help to satisfy the need for English competency expected by the government.

Thus, the Indonesian government has tried to improve students' English skills. It is clear from the programs established over the years that English is always given serious consideration (Rini et al., 2022). As the new curriculum in 2004 was implemented, the English curriculum had to undergo significant changes. English teaching in high school has shifted from a communicative approach to a genre-based approach (GBA), in which the teaching and learning process must use genre. The impact of GBA is growing, as seen in the revised and included in the KTSP 2006 (Kasihani, 2000, in Emilia, 2011). GBA is also one of the suggested approaches to use in Kurikulum 2013.

GBA is a type of literacy teaching that focuses on text types and emphasizes the relationship between text types and their context (Hyon, 1996), cited in (Effendy, 2006). GBA draws on the work of Michael Halliday in 1985, who developed the internationally influential systemic functional linguistics (SFL) that sees language as a meaning-making system through which we interactively shape and interpret our world and ourselves (Emilia, 2011). It is an approach to language and literacy education that incorporates understanding the notion of genre and teaching about genre in educational programs (Hammond & Derewianka, 2001 in Suswati, 2009). Dirgeyasa (2016) defined genre as an oral or written work with a relationship between language and its social function. Because of the diverse social roles, language usage tends to

Nabilah & Emilia (2023)

apply to different genres depending on the existing social function to attain a particular goal. As a result, genre is sometimes conceived of as a text type. There are several types of texts taught in the Indonesian English curriculum context, per what Macken-Horarik (2002, p. 21-23) conveyed, as cited in Emilia (2011): descriptive, procedure, recount, narrative, report, exposition, explanation, discussion, and news items.

In order to teach a genre successfully, there are some basic principles that English teachers need to understand. The basic principles of GBA are: (1) GBA emphasizes the importance of teachers in developing students' awareness that each text is a unique creation relative to a particular group of people and contexts (Hyland, 2002, cited in Emilia, 2011); (2) social activity which allows the collaboration between the teacher and the students and between students and other students in the group; (3) explicit teaching where the learning occurs with a teacher gives clear explanation about the learnings to the students explicitly; (4) apprenticeship teaching, where the students act as an apprentice, and the teacher plays a role as authoritative; (5) grammar teaching is an essential part of GBA to lead students to knowledge of how language functions (Emilia, 2011, p. 33).

GBA is implemented by applying a teaching cycle that contains some stages. There are several models of GBA coming from different theorists, such as those proposed by Callaghan and Rothery in 1988, Derewianka in 1990, Hammond et al. in 1992, Cope and Kalantzis in 1993, Rothery in 1996, Gibbons in 2002, Martin in 2010, and Derewianka and Jones in 2016. However, the model that is known by teachers in Indonesia, as suggested by the English curriculum, actually corresponds to the model developed by Rothery in 1996. The model consists of four stages: building knowledge of the field (negotiating field), modeling (deconstruction), joint construction, and independent construction.

In the first stage, building knowledge of the field, some activities can be done, such as discussing cultural context, sharing experiences, searching for relevant vocabulary, and practicing grammatical patterns (Hammond, 1992, in Pirliani, 2017); the students have observation, interview, or reading the references to get more information needed (Pirliani, 2017); the teacher can read a text or make the students listen to a text using an audio recorder (Emilia, 2011); students are asked to retell what they have learned or read, and answer questions regarding the text orally or ask each other with classmates (Emilia, 2011). In the modeling stage, some activities can be done, including introducing some models of text to the class,

Nabilah & Emilia (2023)

discussing the purposes, identifying the structure of the text, discussing the purposes of text, identifying the structure of the text, and discussing the function of each structure, and discussing the language features (Derewianka & Jones, 2016); students are given examples of texts of the same genre but in a different form to analyze; students are invited to discuss the application of grammar in order to help them learn grammar in context (Emilia, 2011).

The joint construction stage can be completed in two ways. First, the teacher collaborates with the students to compose a text. The teacher can serve as a scribe or writer on a whiteboard. Students contribute to the text's writing by making recommendations or expressing sentences that could be included. The second way involves having the students write in groups. This method is used only if students thoroughly understand the written text's organizational structure and linguistic features and have a solid understanding of the topic under discussion (Emilia, 2011). The activities in the final stage, independent construction, are similar to those in the joint construction stage but completed independently. The written text can have the same or a different topic than the joint construction stage. This final stage can alternatively be completed orally, in which students are interviewed and answer questions regarding the topics discussed or written down (Emilia, 2011). It is also possible that students will be asked to retell what they have written.

In terms of the assessment of GBA, it must be seen from both the learning process and the products produced by students. Therefore, an assessment should be carried out at each stage of the GBA approach. In addition to assessing student progress with numbers, an effective teacher will continuously monitor student progress at each stage through systematic observation and record it as a means of assessment (Emilia, 2011). One example of the aspect of assessment during the learning process at each stage can be seen in Knapp and Watkins (2005). In assessing student-produced texts, the things that must be considered are students' understanding of the text's organizational structure and linguistic characteristics so that the written text can successfully achieve its goals (Emilia, 2011). Teachers can use text assessment rubrics to assess student-produced text. There are many examples of text grading rubrics that can be used, such as the text grading rubric by Rose (2007), Coffin et al. (2003), and Hyland (2004) cited in Emilia (2011).

There have been numerous studies in the literature showing the effectiveness and implications of GBA in English language teaching (Amogne, 2013; Bae, 2016; Carstens &

Nabilah & Emilia (2023)

Weideman, 2009; Dirgeyasa, 2016; Emilia, 2005; Kongpetch, 2016; Shi, Baker, et al., 2019; Yang, 2012). These studies have demonstrated that GBA effectively improves students' writing performance, increasing students' confidence in producing English text, facilitating critical thinking and reflection, and increasing students' literacy skills. However, these successes in teaching English using GBA cannot be separated by the significant role played by the teachers in the learning process.

It is assumed that the teacher's competence relates to the quality of their students. They must be familiar with what they will teach and know how to teach. "Knowing what to teach deals with the materials and knowledge, meanwhile knowing how to teach deals with the methods" (Effendy, 2006, p. 2). In this respect, the more knowledgeable the teachers are, the more effectively they may guide the students to understand the critical aspects of the genre under discussion (Butt et al., 2000; Connelly, 2006). Thus, because teachers are critical to the successful implementation of curriculum, the role of teachers in education is crucial (Richards, 2001). No matter how much effort the government puts into curriculum revision and improvement, it will only be meaningful if teachers understand the concept and its implementation.

Therefore, this study examines the abovementioned problem by examining the teacher's knowledge of the concept and the implementation of GBA. The theory of GBA is quite broad; thus, the researcher limits the research to the theories most important for teachers when using GBA. In terms of the concept, this study looks explicitly into teachers' knowledge of the general concept of GBA, text types, and its basic principles. Further, this study will learn about teachers' understanding of the implementation of GBA, which is the model of GBA, the teaching activities, and the assessment of students' achievement.

This study addresses the following question in line with the background above:

1. How do high school English teachers understand the concept of GBA?
2. How do the high school English teachers understand the implementation of GBA?

METHOD

Design

Nabilah & Emilia (2023)

This study used a qualitative design. Specifically, descriptive qualitative design was used in this study to investigate teachers' knowledge of the concept and implementation of GBA. Qualitative research from different perspectives in the same context and social situation focuses on understanding the situation and context in depth from the participant's point of view in the form of a complete picture rather than breaking it into small pieces (Jacobs, 2010). Therefore, this research design is best suited to find out teachers' understanding of the concept and implementation of GBA.

Participant

The participants were English teachers from two different high schools in Takengon, Aceh. The teachers were chosen based on their teaching experience; the two teachers have been teaching for more than 20 years, which means they experienced the curriculum shift in 2004 when the genre-based approach was first applied in KBK. Given that fact, the researcher assumes that the teachers have prior experience teaching English using GBA. The teachers' level of formal educational background and teacher training program related to GBA are also considered to see if they play a significant part in their knowledge of GBA.

Table 1 Teachers' educational level and training program

No	Participant	Formal Educational Level	Teaching Experience	GBA Related Training Program
1	Teacher 1	Master	23 years	Yes
2	Teacher 2	Bachelor	22 years	No

From Table 1, it can be seen that the two teachers have different educational backgrounds. Teacher 1 had taken a master's degree program. Meanwhile, Teacher 2 only had a bachelor's degree. However, the teaching experience of both teachers is very similar, with only one year difference. Based on those years of teaching, the teachers are considered experienced in the field. Regarding training experience related to GBA, Teacher 1 said she participated once in a GBA-related training. Meanwhile, Teacher 2 never had such an experience.

Instrument

This research used semi-structured interviews to collect the data. Therefore, interview guidelines were used as the instrument of this study. There were ten guiding questions to assist

Nabilah & Emilia (2023)

the interview process. The guideline was developed from the literature on the concept and implementation of GBAs (Emilia, 2011; Derewianka & Jones, 2016; Hammond, 1992). However, other questions related to the topic outside of the guidelines can be asked during the interview process if needed. The questions were developed with the literature on the concept of GBA and its implementation in mind. The first few questions asked about the teachers' background to determine whether or not their background significantly affects their understanding of the concept and implementation of GBA. The following questions focused on teachers' understanding of the concept of GBA. The last few questions asked the teachers about their understanding of implementing GBA.

Data collecting technique

A semi-structured interview was used to collect the data. Each teacher participated in the interviews. Using this type of interview, the researcher can follow up on ideas, investigate responses, and flexibly identify the participants' motives and feelings (Babey, 2020). Before starting the interview, the two teachers were asked for consent to participate in the study. The teachers were interviewed one by one in a face-to-face interview. Teacher 1 spent approximately 60 minutes. Furthermore, the interview with teacher 2 took around 50 minutes. The interviews were recorded through a phone recorder in Bahasa, Indonesia, to allow the teachers to explore ideas freely.

Data analysis technique

The acquired data from the interview was thematically analyzed. More specifically, thematic analysis is a method for systematically identifying, organizing, and offering insight into patterns of meaning (themes) across a dataset by focusing on meaning across a dataset; thematic analysis allows the researcher to see and make sense of collective or shared meanings and experiences (Clarke & Braun, 2013). There were seven phases in analyzing data using thematic analysis. However, because the interviews were done in Bahasa Indonesia, one more step, which is translating the data, is added to the phases (Lester et al., 2020), including preparing and organizing the data for analysis; transcribing the data, translating the data; becoming familiar with the data; memoing the data; coding the data; moving from codes to categories to themes and; making the analytic process transparent.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results or Findings

The data were presented in line with the research questions mentioned in the introduction, and the analysis procedure stated in the method section. The result of the interview is presented by two themes based on the scope of this study: the concept of GBA and the implementation of GBA. Regarding the concept of GBA, several aspects of teachers' understanding shown through interviews are classified into three categories: general knowledge of GBA, text provision, and basic principles of GBA. Moreover, several aspects of teachers' knowledge regarding implementing GBA are discussed. The aspects are classified into the GBA model, teaching activities, and assessment.

The Understanding of the Concept of GBA

Several aspects of teachers' understanding shown through interviews are classified into three categories: general knowledge of GBA, text provision, and basic principles of GBA. Regarding the teachers' general knowledge of the concept of GBA, interview data revealed that the two teachers have different levels of knowledge.

Teacher 1 needs to gain more understanding of the general concept of GBA. According to what she knows, GBA is a writing-related teaching approach in which many different types of text are taught in the classroom. However, when asked about the origins of GBA, which are derived from the concept of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), she stated that she is unfamiliar with SFL and only assumed that it is the concept that deals with understanding the language elements of a text, the organization of a text, and various other things such as chronological order. On the other hand, Teacher 2, who has never had any training, stated that she has no clue what GBA is, let alone how the concept is related to SFL. However, once the researcher briefly described the concept of GBA, she began to realize it by stating that it is the teaching of the text.

Regarding understanding text types, the two teachers also have different knowledge. Teacher 1 sounds confident in mentioning all the text types taught in senior high and knows each has a social function, generic structure, and linguistics features. Teacher 2, on the other hand, only mentioned several text types and is unfamiliar with them.

Regarding the basic principles of GBA, teacher 1 needs some clarification. First, she stated that GBA only focuses on teaching writing, whereas language skills are taught in an integrated manner, and all skills can be taught at any stage based on the activity chosen by the

Nabilah & Emilia (2023)

teacher (Emilia, 2011). Meanwhile, teacher 2, who had a minimal understanding of GBA, did not comment on the questions. The summary of the teachers' understanding of the concept of GBA is listed in Table 2 below.

Table 2 Summary of teachers' understanding of the concept of GBA

No	Aspects	Teacher 1		Teacher 2	
		Understand	Not understand	Understand	Not understand
1	The general concept of GBA	√			√
2	Text types	√		√	
3	Basic principles of GBA		√		√

Looking at the table, the teachers do have some knowledge about GBA, even though they are very superficial. Regarding the teachers' general knowledge of the concept of GBA, interview data revealed that two teachers have different knowledge of what GBA is. One of the teachers has a better understanding even though it is constrained. Regarding the understanding of text types, the two teachers have some knowledge about it even though their level of understanding is different. Regarding the basic principles of GBA, one of the teachers needs some clarification, while another needs help comprehending it.

The Understanding of the Implementation of GBA

Several aspects of teachers' knowledge of implementing GBA arise from the interviews. The aspects are classified into the GBA model, teaching activities, and assessment.

Concerning the GBA model used in the classroom, teacher 1 is familiar with the GBA cycle. When questioned about the cycle stages, she is relatively knowledgeable about each one. Even though she does not provide a detailed explanation, she mentioned establishing knowledge of the field, modeling, joint construction, and independent construction, as Rothery (1996) described. Meanwhile, teacher 2 said she had no knowledge about the model and claimed to have never heard of it before.

In terms of teaching activities, the interview indicated that teacher 1 understands the teaching activities suggested in the GBA model. However, they are difficult to follow. In

Nabilah & Emilia (2023)

practice, teacher 1 admitted that she only applied the stages partly because she said it was hard to implement because of the students' lack of vocabulary and grammar in English. Furthermore, teacher 2 stated that this was the first time she had used GBA, although she taught the students several texts and gave some questions for them to answer regarding the text.

Both teachers need to learn more about assessing students' understanding of the text taught or the text produced by the students. Teacher 1 reported that she only focused on their finished writing when assessing the students. She said that she specifically looked at the text's grammar, linguistic features, and generic structure to see whether or not they corresponded with what had been taught. Regarding teacher 2, she asked her students to write a text since she thinks she understands her students' capacity and motivation to write. The summary of the teacher's understanding of the implementation of GBA is shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3 Summary of teachers' understanding of the implementation of GBA

No	Aspects	Teacher 1		Teacher 2	
		Understand	Not understand	Understand	Not understand
1	Model of GBA	√			√
2	Teaching activities	√			√
3	Assessment of students' achievement	√			√

From the table, the two teachers have different knowledge regarding implementing GBA. Concerning the GBA model used in the classroom, one of the teachers is familiar with the GBA cycle. Meanwhile, the other teacher does not know about it. In terms of teaching activities, the interview indicated that the teacher understands the teaching activities suggested in the GBA model. However, they are difficult to follow. Regarding assessment, teachers need more knowledge of assessing students' understanding of the text and the text produced by the students, even though teacher 1 needs more knowledge regarding the assessment.

Discussion

The Understanding of the Concept of GBA

This study indicated the need for more understanding of the concept of GBA by the two experienced high school teachers. Their understanding of the general concept of GBA is very concerning. One of the teachers' understanding was very little, considering she had a master's

Nabilah & Emilia (2023)

degree and training related to GBA. Meanwhile, the other teacher, who had never had training in GBA before, had yet to learn about its general concept. Nurviani (2012), in her research about teachers' understanding of GBA, discovered that teachers only have a minimal understanding of the GBA and lack the courage to admit that they do. Along the same line, Dirgeyasa (2016) discovered that many university lecturers, teachers, and student teachers are not well-informed and lack a thorough understanding of the genre. It is not delightful to know because the curriculum mentions that GBA is one of the approaches used in teaching English. The teacher must refrain from reading or comprehending the curriculum document. This problem has occurred because curriculum revisions or developments have yet to be accompanied by the development of teachers' comprehension of the principles underpinning the curriculum (Kasihani, 2000; Sudjana, 2000, cited in Emilia, 2005). If so, Effendy (2006) asserts that introducing a new paradigm and concept should be accompanied by appropriate socialization. Nonetheless, the two teachers know the text types used in implementing the GBA approach despite having different levels of knowledge regarding it.

Concerning the basic principles used in implementing GBA, they have significant misconceptions. First, one of the teachers stated that GBA only focuses on teaching writing. In contrast, language skills are taught in an integrated manner, and all skills can be taught at any stage based on the activity chosen by the teacher (Emilia, 2011). Hermansson et al. (2019) assert that teachers can integrate four skills by giving the students short functional and procedural texts to read and asking them to write text similar to what they have read. Another common misunderstanding is the use of the grammar-translation method in practice. Abbaszadeh (2013) revealed that many teachers must implement GBA as the national curriculum recommends. Instead, they use the grammar-translation method. Whereas Emilia (2005) stated that GBA does suggest "explicit teaching," but this does not imply that we return to traditional grammar instruction (Gibbons, 2003). Teachers must learn functional grammar to address this issue because it helps students understand meaning-making in language learning (Emilia, 2014; Gunawan, 2020). The final misconception is that the activities could be more flexible. However, Arimbawa (2012) clearly stated that the teaching cycle of GBA is customizable in that teachers can begin at any stage, depending on the students' objective and condition, and may return to any stage at any time during the learning process. After all, the teachers' lack of understanding of the GBA concept in every aspect fails to improve students' English communicative skills (Slamet, 2015).

The Understanding of the Implementation of GBA

The result implies that teachers need to gain more knowledge about implementing the GBA approach even though it is still considered inadequate compared to their teaching experience. Even though teacher 1 knows the stages of GBA, she claimed that stages are challenging to implement. In practice, she admitted that she only applied the stages partly because of the students' need for more vocabulary and grammar in English. This finding is consistent with the finding of Nurviani (2012), who discovered that teachers need to implement teaching-learning activities fully because they only partially understand the method. Similarly, implementing GBA in the classroom is reportedly perplexing for teachers since they need to fully comprehend how to carry out the stages, which is why the execution of GBA has yet to satisfy the implementation standard (Kadarisman, 2014). To tackle this problem, professional development on implementing genre pedagogy in the current educational system is undoubtedly required to support teachers' desire to apply genre pedagogy in their classrooms (Shi, Baker, et al., 2019).

Furthermore, teacher 2 stated that this was the first time she had used GBA, although she taught the students several texts and gave some questions for them to answer regarding the text. However, the activity needed to follow the GBA teaching approach properly. This is why, before beginning a teaching activity, teachers must first understand the concept of an approach (Effendy, 2006). Nadjib and Triastuti (2023) suggested that teachers need support from the government in the form of teacher training about GBA implementation due to its ineffective implementation all this time.

Regarding the assessment of GBA, both teachers need to gain more knowledge of how to assess students' understanding of the text taught or the text produced by the students. One of the teachers said that she looked at the text's grammar, linguistic features, and generic structure to see whether or not they corresponded with what had been taught. Meanwhile, in assessing a student's achievement, the teacher should see it from the student's product and during the learning process (Emilia, 2011). Furthermore, the teacher stated that analyzing students' writing is laborious work, as she mentions the workload of assessing students' work from six classes. Hence, it is essential for a teacher to be open-minded and have prior knowledge of students and the assessment system (Desimone, 2009; Shi, Delahunty, et al., 2019). Their understanding of implementing GBA could be more profound as they have a few misunderstandings and limited

knowledge about the GBA model and its teaching activities, along with assessing students' achievement using the approach.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

Conclusion

From the findings, even though the two teachers had experienced the curriculum changes in 2004, where the genre is required, and have years of teaching experience, their knowledge of the concept and implementation of GBA still needs to be improved. The interview data demonstrated that their comprehension of the concept of GBA could have been more superficial, as seen by their need for more awareness of the general concept of GBA, text types, and the basic principles of GBA, which further exacerbated several misconceptions. Regarding GBA implementation, their lack of knowledge may be evident in the unfinished activities at various stages of the cycle and difficulties in applying the stages and evaluating the students' achievement. Additionally, it is shown that teachers' educational and professional backgrounds influence their knowledge of GBA. The teacher with GBA training and a higher educational background is more knowledgeable about the concept and its implementation, even though it is still considered low.

On the other hand, the teacher who has never received GBA training stated she has little to no knowledge of the approach. Based on that, teacher development is significant. Moreover, the government or curriculum leaders ensure teachers understand the new concept or approach before implementing it. Ultimately, no matter how good and improved the curriculum is, it will never achieve the desired outcomes if poorly implemented.

Limitation

Nevertheless, this study has some limitations. This study needs more participants and instruments for collecting the data. Thus, the result of this study cannot be generalized. Considering these limitations, future studies could expand on this research by including more teacher participants and using more instruments to make the research more comprehensive.

Implication

The implication of this study is the urgency for teachers to continue to improve their self-competence as educators. It is highly suggested that teachers keep an open mind to new approaches and be willing to continue learning and improving. English teachers require further

Nabilah & Emilia (2023)

development and guidance to address the issues. Furthermore, the government could provide proper socialization of the new concept introduced. GBA can be very effective in language learning because it incorporates many aspects of learning. This is why teachers need to understand the concept of the approach and the curriculum before teaching. By doing so, their capability to teach and the student's ability to learn English can improve.

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Nabilah & Emilia (2023)

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