

The Effectiveness of Task-Based Language Teaching on Improving Writing Skills of EFL students

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Abstract. This study examines the effectiveness of task-based language instruction (TBLT) in improving the writing skills of 7th-grade English as a Foreign Language students. Using a one-sample t-test, researchers analyzed the students' writing performance. Students' writing performance was analyzed before and after the implementation of TBLT, ensuring that the data met the assumptions of normality and homogeneity. A pre-test assessed students' ability to write a "school holiday" recitation text in 30 minutes. After learning the TBLT, a post-test under identical conditions allowed for a direct comparison. The results showed significant improvement, with mean scores increasing by 44.25 (pre-test) to 74.75 (post-test), demonstrating the effectiveness of TBLT. The approach provides an authentic learning context, encouraging meaningful language use. However, successful implementation requires enhanced pedagogical skills, particularly in pedagogical and technological knowledge (TPACK). Despite its contributions, this study acknowledges limitations such as non-representative samples and lack of longitudinal analysis, which affects generalizability. However, it reinforces the role of TBLT in teaching English as a foreign language and highlights the need for more innovative contextual teaching strategies.

Keyword: Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT); Writing Skills; EFL Students

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INTRODUCTION

English writing skills are essential for EFL learners to communicate and convey ideas in academic and professional contexts (Ilham et al., 2020). However, EFL learners often face challenges in developing their writing skills, such as differences in language structures, vocabulary limitations, and difficulties in understanding the genres and conventions of English writing (Ilham, 2022,2023,2024,2025). This challenge requires practical learning approaches to help learners overcome these barriers and significantly improve their writing skills.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is a learning approach that emphasizes using actual tasks to improve students' language skills (Ha et al., 2021). In this approach, students the

committee provides the resources. Relevant and authentic tasks require them to use language in a practical context (Magdalena et al., 2023). A key tenet of TBLT is that language is learned effectively through direct experience, not just theoretical teaching (Tematik et al., 2023). The tasks designed in TBLT help students interact with and produce texts, such as writing, that reflect real-world situations, thereby improving language skills, especially in writing.

Many people have widely recognized task-based language teaching (TBLT) as a practical approach to improving EFL students' writing skills. This approach facilitates students' active engagement through authentic tasks relevant to real-world contexts, thus increasing their motivation in writing activities (Approach et al., 2024). The study showed that TBLT significantly improved students' writing ability, as evidenced by increased pretest and posttest scores (Aqad et al., 2024). In addition, TBLT encourages the application of metacognitive strategies and provides immediate feedback, which helps students reflect on their writing process and improve the outcome (Lin et al., 2024.).

Various studies support the effectiveness of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in improving the writing skills of EFL students (Anshary et al., 2020). The combination of TBLT with Divergent Assessment is proven to significantly improve students' argumentative writing skills compared to traditional methods (Bagheridoust & Al-Sultani, 2023). The collaborative strategy in TBLT also helped more than 75% of students improve their essay-writing skills through peer interaction (Nggawu et al., 2022). In addition, the scientific station strategy effectively improved the writing skills of secondary school students. However, the limitations of TBLT, such as the less-than-optimal development of advanced writing skills and teachers' need for Technological Pedagogical and Content Knowledge (TPACK), still pose challenges to its implementation (Iskandar & Riantoni, 2023).

Through natural learning and intrinsic motivation, task-based language teaching (TBLT) effectively improves Indonesian EFL students' communication skills, particularly in speaking and writing (Maulana, 2021). This approach also improves students' fluency, accuracy, and confidence (Sabaruddin & Melati, 2022). However, implementing TBLT faces challenges, such as teachers' limitations in method adaptation and differences in educational contexts (Sholeh, 2021). Methodological limitations, such as social bias in questionnaires and lack of control groups, limit the study's validity. In addition, the unrepresentative sample and lack of longitudinal studies hinder the generalisability of the findings (Firmansyah & Dede, 2022). Further research is needed to strengthen the evidence of TBLT's effectiveness and address the existing gaps.

Although Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) has The team recognized the achievement. as a practical approach to improving EFL students' writing skills, some gaps require further exploration. One limitation is the less-than-optimal development of advanced writing skills, such as complex argumentation, although this approach has successfully improved basic and intermediate writing skills (Tarigan & Efrizah, 2022). In addition, the successful implementation of TBLT often depends on teachers' competence in integrating Pedagogical and Technological Content Knowledge (TPACK), which remains challenging in some educational contexts (Rochaendi et al., 2021). Methodological limitations, such as social bias in questionnaires and the lack of a control group, also limit the validity of previous findings.

This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of TBLT in developing EFL students' advanced writing skills by integrating innovative strategies such as Divergent Assessment. In addition, this study seeks to identify implementation approaches that can overcome methodological limitations and improve teachers' competence in implementing TBLT optimally. This research the subject expects. Contribute to strengthening the empirical evidence of the effectiveness of TBLT and developing more relevant learning models to improve EFL students' writing skills.

METHOD

This study used a quantitative design with a one-group pretest-posttest research design. In this design, only one experimental group without a control group was treated with the Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) approach. Before the learning activity or experiment, the researchers conducted a pre-test using a writing test designed to measure students' complex argumentation skills. After the experimental activities, The team completed the tasks. A post-test was conducted on the same group to see the development of students' writing skills after being given the treatment.

The writing test was used as the main instrument in this study because it validates students' ability to compose recount texts with good structure and cohesion. Students The team asked them to write a recount text describing a personal experience or event they had experienced. The population of this study consisted of 7th-grade EFL students at SMP Plus Miftahul Falah. The sample used in this study totaled 20 students, who were selected using the Purposive Sampling technique.

Data analysis in this study used a paired sample t-test to compare the scores between the pre-test and post-test in the same group. The t-test was chosen because it can test whether there is a significant difference in students' writing ability before and after treatment. Before conducting the t-test, the data was tested first to ensure that the data was normally distributed and fulfilled the assumption of homogeneity of variance. The t-test results will illustrate whether using the Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) approach significantly improved writing ability compared to before the treatment Someone gave it.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first stage of this study was the pre-test stage, which was carried out on 20 7th-grade high school students. Students were told to write a recount text with the theme "school vacation" for 30 minutes. This pre-test was conducted to determine students' writing ability before being given treatment through a Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) learning strategy. After implementing the learning treatment, the next stage is giving the final test or post-test. The post-test question is a recount text with the same theme as the pre-test and lasts 30 minutes. The results of the two types of tests were then analyzed using statistical analysis.

Table 1 Descriptives

Descriptives					
	Kelas		Statistic	Std. Error	
Hasil	Pre-test	Mean	44.25	2.185	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	39.68	
			Upper Bound	48.82	
		5% Trimmed Mean	44.17		
		Median	42.50		
		Variance	95.461		
		Std. Deviation	9.770		
		Minimum	30		
		Maximum	60		
		Range	30		
		Interquartile Range	14		
		Skewness	.280	.512	
		Kurtosis	-.801	.992	
	Pos-test	Mean	74.75	2.250	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	70.04	

		Upper Bound	79.46	
		5% Trimmed Mean	74.72	
		Median	75.00	
		Variance	101.250	
		Std. Deviation	10.062	
		Minimum	60	
		Maximum	90	
		Range	30	
		Interquartile Range	18	
		Skewness	-.355	.512
		Kurtosis	-.923	.992

Based on table 1. Descriptive statistical analysis and pretest results showed that participants obtained an average score of 44.25 with a standard deviation 9.77. The lowest score achieved was 30, while the highest score reached 60. The pretest data distribution had a skewness of 0.280 and a kurtosis of -0.801, which indicated that the data distribution was quite symmetrical and close to a normal distribution. After the intervention, the post-test scores increased significantly, averaging 74.75 and a standard deviation 10.062. The post-test data distribution had a skewness of -0.355 and kurtosis of -0.923, indicating that although the distribution was slightly different from the pretest, it still tended to be close to normal.

Tabel 2 Tests of Normality

Tests of Normality							
	Kelas	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Hasil	Pre-test	.169	20	.135	.913	20	.074
	Pos-test	.210	20	.021	.884	20	.021

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Based on table 2. The results of the normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk methods show that the pre-test data has a significance value of more than 0.05 ($p = 0.074$), which indicates that the data is normally distributed. In contrast, the post-test data had a significance value of 0.021, indicating that the data distribution was not completely normal. This difference indicates a change in the distribution pattern after the intervention

Tabel 3 Test of Homogeneity of Variance

Test of Homogeneity of Variance					
		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Hasil	Based on Mean	.003	1	38	.957
	Based on Median	.000	1	38	1.000
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.000	1	37.951	1.000
	Based on trimmed mean	.004	1	38	.952

Based on table 3. The results of the homogeneity of variance test using the Levene test show that the significance based on the mean, median, and trimmed mean is above 0.05, with values ranging from 0.952 to 1.000. These results indicate that the variance between the pre-test and post-test groups is homogeneous, so there is no significant difference in data variability

between the two groups. Thus, the increase in post-test scores can be attributed to the intervention rather than to differences in variability between the groups.

Table 4 Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pretest Pos-test	-30.500	9.445	2.112	-34.920	-26.080	-14.441	19	<.001

Based on table 3. The t-test results show that the value of $t = -14.441$ with $p\text{-value} < 0.001$. Since the $p\text{-value} < 0.05$, the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores is statistically significant. This means that the improvement of students' writing skills after the implementation of the TBLT strategy is not the result of chance factors but is caused by the treatment given.

The results of this study show that implementing the Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) approach significantly improved EFL students' writing ability. The mean difference between pre-test and post-test scores was 30.5 points, with the results of the t-test analysis showing an extreme statistical significance ($p < 0.001$). This finding confirms the effectiveness of TBLT in improving students' writing skills, consistent with previous studies (Aqad et al., 2024); (Bagheridoust & Al-Sultani, 2023).

The relatively low average pre-test score (44.25) indicated that students had difficulties writing recount texts before the treatment. This difficulty is likely related to common obstacles in EFL learning, such as limited vocabulary and understanding of text structure (Djafar, 2022). However, after being treated using the TBT approach, the post-test score increased to 74.75, indicating that this strategy could overcome these obstacles by providing an authentic and relevant learning context (Ha et al., 2021).

The success of TBLT in this study was supported by the provision of authentic tasks that allowed students to use language in a practical and meaningful way. In addition, the feedback provided during the learning process helped students reflect on and improve the quality of their writing (Lin et al., n.d.). This process encourages students' active learning engagement, improving their motivation and writing ability.

The results of statistical analysis also reinforce the findings of this study. The pre-test data distribution, which has a skewness of 0.280 and a kurtosis of -0.801, shows the data is symmetrical and close to a normal distribution. Meanwhile, although the distribution of the post-test data was slightly different, with a skewness of -0.355 and a kurtosis of -0.923, the distribution pattern was still close to normal. Therefore, this statistical analysis provides additional validity to the research results.

This study makes an important practical contribution, especially for EFL educators. By demonstrating that TBLT can effectively improve students' writing skills, this approach can be implemented as a key strategy in teaching writing in various educational contexts. Moreover, real-life, relevant tasks improve writing skills and help students develop critical and creative thinking abilities in composing cohesive and structured texts.

Overall, this study's results confirm that the Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) approach is an effective strategy for improving EFL students' writing skills. The findings significantly contribute to developing relevant and innovative learning methods capable of supporting the overall success of English language learning.

CONCLUSION

This study proved that the Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) approach can significantly improve EFL students' writing skills, especially in recount text production. This can be seen from the increase in the average pretest score of 44.25 to 74.75 in the posttest, with an average difference of 30.5 points. Statistical analysis showed highly significant results ($p < 0.001$), which reinforced the effectiveness of the TBLT approach in supporting the acquisition of writing skills.

The effectiveness of TBLT in this study was achieved by providing authentic tasks relevant to real-life contexts. These tasks encourage students to practice language in meaningful and applicable situations. In addition, the learning process that includes feedback provides opportunities for students to revise and improve the quality of their writing, thus creating a more productive learning experience. Thus, this approach improves writing skills and builds students' motivation and engagement during the learning process.

Based on these results, the TBLT approach can be used to improve EFL students' writing skills in various learning environments. The results of this study also make an important contribution to innovations in English language teaching methods.

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