

The impact of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) on writing among EFL learners'

El impacto de la Enseñanza de Lenguas Basada en Tareas (ELBT) en la escritura entre los estudiantes de EFL

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Palabras claves:

Escritura de
inglés,
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escribiendo
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Resumen

Introducción. Para adolescentes y estudiantes de EFL, desarrollar habilidades de escritura puede ser especialmente exigente, lo que convierte las decisiones metodológicas del profesor en un aspecto importante de la enseñanza en el aula. **Objetivo.** Analizar el impacto de la enseñanza de idiomas basada en tareas en el desarrollo de habilidades de escritura entre los estudiantes de EFL. **Metodología.** Esta investigación se llevó a cabo dentro de un paradigma pospositivista utilizando un diseño cuasi-experimental para analizar el impacto de una intervención educativa en una institución educativa privada de Quito, Ecuador. El estudio se llevó a cabo con dos clases de octavo curso intactas; una clase se asignó como Grupo Experimental (EG) y la otra como Grupo de Control (CG). **Resultados.** El test estadístico inferencial t se utilizó para examinar los datos y comparar las medias de los grupos experimental y control. Como resultado, el análisis reveló que la aplicación de TBLT tuvo un impacto en la mejora de la escritura de los estudiantes a nivel inicial de EFL en términos de vocabulario, organización y coherencia. **Conclusión.** El grupo experimental mostró una mayor mejora en la escritura tras el uso de TBLT. Los resultados indican que TBLT tuvo un impacto positivo en las habilidades de escritura de los estudiantes. TBLT puede ser un enfoque eficaz para enseñar escritura en contextos de EFL. Las actividades basadas en tareas pueden promover una comunicación significativa, creatividad y colaboración. **Área general de estudio:** Educación. **Área específica de estudio:** Enseñanza de idiomas basada en tareas. **Tipo de estudio:** Artículos originales.

Keywords:

EFL writing,
TBLT,
writing genres.

Abstract

Introduction. For teenagers and EFL learners, developing writing skills can be particularly demanding, making the teacher's methodological decisions an important aspect of classroom instruction. **Objective.** To analyze the impact of task-based language teaching on the development of writing skills among EFL learners. **Methodology.** This research was conducted within a postpositivist paradigm by using a quasi-experimental design to analyze the impact of an educational intervention in a private educational institution in Quito, Ecuador. The study was conducted with two intact eighth-grade classes; one class was assigned as the

Experimental Group (EG) while the other served as the Control Group (CG). **Results.** The inferential statistical t-test was used to examine the data and compare the means of the experimental and control groups. As a result, the analysis revealed that the application of TBLT had an impact on improving students' writing at a beginning EFL level in terms of vocabulary, organization, and coherence. **Conclusion.** The experimental group showed greater improvement in writing after using TBLT. The results indicate that TBLT had a positive impact on students' writing skills. TBLT can be an effective approach for teaching writing in EFL contexts. Task-based activities can promote meaningful communication, creativity, and collaboration. **General Area of Study:** Education. **Specific area of study:** Task-Based Language Teaching. **Type of study:** Original articles.

1. Introduction

Writing is universally recognized as one of the most challenging skills in English language learning because it requires learners to integrate vocabulary, grammar, organization, coherence, and the ability to communicate ideas effectively (Kormos, 2023). For teenagers and EFL learners, developing writing skills can be particularly demanding, making the teacher's methodological decisions an important aspect of classroom instruction (Chen & Zheng, 2022; Ellis, 2003). There are different approaches and methods to teach writing: product, process, genre-based, Presentation, Practice, and Production (PPP). Traditional teaching methods often focus on memorization and mechanical exercises, which may limit students' communicative competence and creativity in writing. In contrast, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) emphasizes meaningful communication and the use of authentic tasks that encourage learners to actively participate in the learning process (Kafipour et al., 2018). Azmy & Nanda (2024) state that TBLT offers an alternative perspective by organizing language learning around meaningful tasks rather than focusing primarily on the presentation and controlled practice of specific language forms. Through tasks, learners are encouraged to use language to communicate ideas, solve problems, collaborate, and produce meaningful outcomes. Aqila (2025) states that the teacher provides the students with the required background information and outline of the task, and TBLT highlights students' ability to utilize language in real-life situations rather than on grammatical accuracy. Previous research provides evidence of the potential of TBLT for developing writing skills. For instance, Wardana et al. (2022) working with eighth-grade learners, reporting

improvements in descriptive writing and student motivation through task-based activities, with a positive relationship between task-based learning and motivation. Likewise, Madera & López (2019) highlight the contribution of collaborative tasks to improving written production among secondary school learners. More recently, Mohammad et al. (2025) state that they found that TBLT enhances creative writing and overall language proficiency among elementary learners. On the other hand, by Zhaochun (2015) the traditional PPP approach may improve writing competence but has limited effects on learner participation and the learning environment.

Evidence from the Ecuadorian context also supports the relevance of TBLT for writing instruction. Paredes & Lema (2026) in a study conducted at Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo (UNACH), report that students perceive improvements in fluency, vocabulary, and organization of ideas when learning is based on meaningful tasks with clear communicative goals. Similarly, Sailema et al. (2026) in a study conducted at Universidad Estatal de Bolívar with A1-level learners aged 19 to 22, found significant improvements in writing skills following the implementation of TBLT. Although these studies provide valuable evidence of the effectiveness of task-based instruction, their contexts and participant characteristics differ from those of adolescent learners in private educational institutions. Consequently, little is known about its impact on writing among teenagers in private educational institutions in Quito, Ecuador.

Therefore, the present study aims to analyze the impact of task-based language teaching on the development of writing skills among EFL learners in a private educational institution, with a focus on 8th-grade learners. The hypothesis to be evaluated is (H₁): TBLT has a statistically significant positive impact on the development of writing skills in 8th-grade EFL learners in a private educational institution.

1.1. Writing skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

Writing is one of the four macro skills in the English language. According to Mindiola & Vaca (2024) writing is seen as the most difficult and the least attractive for students. It is also considered a challenge for teachers and for students. Therefore, Pico & Vélez (2022) found that students are prone to showing fear of engaging in writing activities since the idea they wish to express in a specific context could be misinterpreted. Manyike & Lemmer (2010) state that writing is not only a means of communication but also a tool to clarify and stimulate thinking. Likewise, Madera & López (2019) emphasized that writing instruction requires students to develop several sub-skills, such as grammar, vocabulary, coherence, cohesion, and mechanics, which are essential for producing meaningful written texts.

1.2. Dimensions of writing skills

Based on contemporary EFL writing assessment frameworks (Hyland, 2019; East, 2021), writing proficiency can be evaluated through five interconnected dimensions: content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and task achievement. Content refers to the relevance, clarity, and development of ideas presented in a text. Effective writers generate

meaningful information that addresses the task's communicative purpose. The organization involves the logical sequencing of ideas and the use of cohesive devices that facilitate textual coherence. The vocabulary encompasses lexical range, precision, and appropriateness for the communicative context. The grammar includes accuracy and complexity in the use of language structures necessary for effective communication. Task achievement refers to the extent to which learners fulfill the communicative objectives and requirements of the writing task.

1.3. Overview of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

Richards & Rodgers (2001) and Ahmed & Bidin (2016) described TBLT as an approach in which tasks become the central unit of planning and instruction in language teaching, designed to facilitate the learners in real-life communicative situations (Nunan, 2004; Murad, 2024). A task is classwork that requires learners to comprehend, manipulate, produce, or interact in the target language. A task is understood like activities that the TBLT approach can show to get learning goals needed. It has gained considerable attention as an innovative and effective methodology in language education. It focuses on meaningful tasks that require students to use the target language to achieve a communicative objective (East, 2021). Among the communicative approaches, Ellis (2003) defined TBLT as an approach that provides learners with opportunities to engage in authentic language use through tasks that reflect real-world communication. Nguyen & Luu (2018) emphasizes TBLT positively influenced EFL learners' writing performance with significant improvement of all five components, namely vocabulary, content, grammar, organization, and mechanics.

1.4. Benefits of TBLT in writing development

According to Madera & López (2019) the implementation of TBLT improved students' vocabulary, grammar, syntax, coherence, and confidence in the writing process. In addition, task-based activities increased students' motivation and participation because learners worked with meaningful topics connected to their interests and communicative needs. Collaborative tasks also allowed students to exchange ideas, provide peer feedback, and develop autonomy during the writing process. Kadel (2018) and Gutierrez (2024) define a task as 'an activity in which a person engages to attain an objective, and which necessitates the use of language. Therefore, TBLT represents an effective pedagogical approach that supports writing development by creating engagement, communicative, and learner-centered environments in EFL classrooms. Farhatunnisa & Uman (2020) state that it can be implemented into the curriculum easily. However, Ahmed (2018) explains that the TBL syllabus can cause some initial difficulties among the teachers and students, but learners' L2 written performance improves significantly. Al-Mahrooqi et al. (2015) the main advantage of the task-based approach is that it gives students much freedom and natural context in which they can use the target language in class. Al-Mahrooqi et al. (2015) the methodology commonly includes stages such as pre-task, task cycle, planning report, and language focus, which helps learners develop

language skills in an organized and interactive way. The relationship between TBLT and writing development has been widely recognized in previous research due to the positive effects of task-based activities on learners' writing performance. TBLT encourages students to engage in authentic writing experiences where they plan, draft, revise, and edit their written work collaboratively and meaningfully. Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu (2011) describe benefits like natural learning with emphasis on meaning, fertile input, intrinsically motivating, learner-focused, and improvement of fluency without ignoring accuracy.

1.5. TBLT and PPP

Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu (2011) claim that TBLT can be applied in combination with traditional approaches. In the same way, Anderson (2016) argues that the traditional PPP has limitations and suggests that it should be combined with other approaches according to learners' needs and instructional contexts. East (2021) states PPP is particularly useful for the transition toward task-based teaching. Thus, language teaching progressively moved beyond an exclusive focus on controlled practice with PPP toward greater opportunities for meaningful communication and language use with TBLT.

Shintani (2011) was able to show that while the PPP lessons helped learners acquire certain nouns and adjectives, TBLT emphasized learner-centered instruction, communication, and the practical use of language for real purposes. In this line, Campos (2022) explains that PPP is an effective way to teach by novice teachers, but TBLT is more effective for learning. In the same way Pratista (2023) explains that PPP focuses mainly on accuracy while TBLT encourages students to be communicative; the first method is effective in preparing students to take exams or tests while the second is more appropriate for real-life communicative purposes. Long (1985) criticizes the traditional approach because language teaching programs tend to be organized around linguistic structures and the intuition of materials developers, rather than being based on research into how students acquire a second language. However, EFL teachers tend to prefer PPP practices and explicit instruction, despite the communicative potential of task-based approaches (Kafipour et al., 2018), and Anderson (2016) notes that PPP has been one of the most popular and durable lesson-planning paradigms in ELT. Nevertheless, the emergence of communicative approaches represented a significant transformation in language teaching and learning, shifting attention from the exclusive teaching of linguistic structures toward communicative competence and meaningful language use (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). To place greater emphasis on predetermined grammatical structures and vocabulary may limit opportunities for learners to use language spontaneously and meaningfully. These concerns highlight the need for approaches that provide learners with opportunities to use language to achieve meaningful communicative purposes (Chen & Zheng, 2022; Ellis 2003).

2. Methodology

This research was conducted within a postpositivist paradigm by using a quasi-experimental design to analyze the impact of an educational intervention in a private educational institution in Quito, Ecuador. The study was conducted with two intact eighth-grade classes; one class was assigned as the Experimental Group (EG) while the other served as the Control Group (CG). Both groups received five hours of English instruction weekly for 1 week, following the institutional curriculum and covering the same writing topics but with different methods: TBL (Willis & Willis, 2007), for the EG and PPP (Batubara et al., 2023) for the CG.

Data was collected through writing pre-tests and post-tests. They were administered to experimental and control groups before and after the intervention. Students' writing performance was assessed using an analytic writing rubric adapted from Madera & López (2019) which evaluates content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and task achievement. The rubric was validated by three university teachers who work in English majors. During the intervention, students wrote a paragraph, an e-mail, and a story about daily routines, my favorite place, and a fairy tale. These topics were taken from the Cambridge book "SHAPE IT" for eighth grade, which corresponds to the A1+ level. At the end of each lesson, students' written performance was assessed using the same analytic writing rubric. The rubric evaluated four components: organization, grammar, vocabulary, and coherence, allowing the researcher to monitor students' progress.

The participants consisted of 31 eighth-grade students, approximately 12 years old, selected through non-probabilistic convenience sampling based on accessibility, parents, and the institution's authorization, for both control and experimental groups who agreed to participate voluntarily. The sample was divided into two intact groups: an experimental group (14 students) and a control group (17 students). Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics were used to compare the performance in the pre-test and post-test of both groups by using the mean and the standard deviation. Inferential statistics, on the other hand, were used to evaluate the research hypotheses through the independent-samples students' t-test, comparing the means of the experimental and control groups in both the pretest and posttest. A significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ (95% confidence level) was established, with differences considered statistically significant when $p < 0.05$ (Pallant, 2026).

3. Results

This section shows the findings from pretests and posttests that were administered as part of TBLT as a strategy to improve writing skills. The inferential statistical t-test was used to examine the data and compare the means of the experimental and control groups. As a result, the analysis revealed that the application of TBLT had an impact on improving

students' writing at a beginning EFL level in terms of vocabulary, organization, and coherence. These results are explained in the next sections.

Table 1

Pre test

	Group	N	Mean	Dev. Deviation	Dev. Error Average
PRE - TEST	CG	17	5,64	1,03	0,25
	EG	14	6,30	1,47	0,39

Table 1 shows the difference of means between the control and experimental groups in the pre-test. Before the experiment, there was a minimum difference between means. The control group had a mean of 5,64 (out of 10) with an average error of 0,25 while the experimental group had a mean of 6,30 (out 10) with an average error of 0,39. The standard deviation of the first group (CG) is 1,03 while the second group (EG) had 1,47. These results show that the data are scattered from the mean, but the mean of the experimental group is a little higher.

Table 2

T-test

	Group 1 CG	Group 2 EG
N	17	14
Media	5,64	6,30
Media (CG) - Media (EG)	-0,67	
LI (95)	-1,58	
LS (95)	0,26	
T	-1,48	
p-value	0,15	

Table 2 shows the p-value which shows if the differences between means of the groups of study were significant or not. If p-value is $< 0,05$, there is a significant difference between the control and experimental group. If it is $>$ or equal $0,05$ there is no significant difference. **Table 2** the p-value is 0,15 which means that there is no significant difference. That is, both groups had almost the same scores in writing before starting the treatment.

Table 3

Post-test

	Group	N	Mean	Dev. Deviation	Dev. Error Average
POST - TEST	CG	17	6,38	0,85	0,21
	EG	14	8,64	0,74	0,20

Table 3 shows the difference of means between the study groups in the post-test. After applying task-based learning in the experimental group and PPP Framework in the control group, there was a significant difference in the means. The experimental group presented a mean of 8,64 with an average error of 0,21 and the control group had a mean of 6,38 with an average error of 0,197. The standard deviations in both groups are < 1 , which means that the scores in both groups are close to the mean.

Table 4

T-test

	Group 1	Group 2
	CG	EG
N	17	14
Media	6,38	8,64
Media (CG) - Media (EG)		-2,26
LI (95)		-2,85
LS (95)		-1,67
T		-7,81
p - valor		$< 0,0001$

Table 4 shows the p-value of the post-test, which shows if the differences between means of the groups of study were significant or not. If p-value is $< 0,05$, there is a significant difference between the control and experimental group. If it is $>$ or equal to 0.05 there is no significant difference. In **Table 4**, the p-value is 0,0001 which means that there is a significant difference. That is, there is an impact on the application of TBLT in writing.

4. Discussion

The pretest results showed no statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups ($p = 0.15$), indicating that both groups had comparable initial levels. In contrast, the posttest results showed statistically significant differences between the two groups ($p < 0.05$), suggesting that the implemented intervention improved the performance of the experimental group. This study shows that TBLT is useful to improve students' writing at a beginning EFL level in a private educational institution in Quito, Ecuador. These results are like Kaharuddin et al. (2022) who collected quantitative (writing test) and qualitative data (questionnaires and interviews) to show improvement in the students' descriptive writing texts by using Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in a senior high school. They describe 5 contributing factors of TBL: students' interest, teacher's strategy, teacher's media, classroom environment, and students' learning strategy. Another mixed research with 30 students of ten grades showed that the task-based learning method contributed to enhancing students' writing skills in English as a Foreign Language learning (Mindiola & Vaca, 2024). In addition, Simamora et al. (2018) showed that TBLT can improve senior high school students'

writing. They claim that TBLT can be applied in elementary school, junior high school, and in the university.

5. Conclusion

The experimental group showed greater improvement in writing after using TBLT. The results indicate that TBLT had a positive impact on students' writing skills. TBLT can be an effective approach for teaching writing in EFL contexts. Task-based activities can promote meaningful communication, creativity, and collaboration.

6. Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in relation to the article presented.

7. Copyright

The authors are the owners of the copyright (patrimonial and/or exploitation) of the contents of the journal.

8. Authors' Contribution Statement

The authors declare that they have participated equally and substantially in the conduct of this research, under the responsibilities under the CRediT Taxonomy to describe the individual contributions of each author to the work.

Irlanda Jeaneth Castellano Uribe, carried out the conceptualization of the research, organization and execution of the essay, collection and curation of the data, review of the statistical analysis, interpretation of the results, preparation of the original draft, preparation of tables and figures, critical review of the content and approval of the final version of the manuscript.

Amparo de Jesús Romero Palacios, carried out the academic, conceptualization and methodological supervision of the research, provided guidance during the development of the essay, reviewed the analysis and interpretation of the results, carried out the critical review of the manuscript, made the scientific and academic correction and approved the final version for publication.

Disclosure of Delegation to Generative AI

The authors declare the use of generative AI in the research and writing process. According to the GAIDeT taxonomy (2025), the following tasks were delegated to GAI tools under full human supervision:

- Literature search and systematization

The GAI tool used was: ChatGpt.

Responsibility for the final manuscript lies entirely with the authors.

GAI tools are not listed as authors and do not bear responsibility for the final outcomes.

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