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THE EFFECT OF TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING ON UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' WRITING ABILITY AND METACOGNITIVES AWARENESS

[1*]Helaluddin, [2]Mohammed H. Al Aqad, [3]Ririn Martuti, [4]Hasmawaty, [5]Harmelia Tulak
[1]Indonesian Teacher, Faculty of Islamic Economic & Business, Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, Indonesia
[2]Malaysian Teacher, Management and Science University, Malaysia
[3]Indonesian Teacher, STIK Bina Husada Palembang, Indonesia
[4]Indonesian Teacher, Universitas Negeri Makassar, Indonesia
[5]Indonesian Teacher, Universitas Kristen Indonesia (UKI) Toraja, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author Email: helaluddin@uinbanten.ac.id

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Abstract

In producing competent college graduates in the 21st century, two skills must be taught to students: writing and metacognitive skills. This research explores the impact of the task-based teaching-learning method on Sharia banking students' writing and metacognitive abilities at a state university in Banten Province, Indonesia. This research used a pretest-posttest experimental design involving 60 students. Data collection in the research used essay writing tests, essay writing assessment rubrics, and metacognitive skills questionnaires. Next, the data was analyzed using a quantitative approach by running the SPSS 20.00 program with paired sample t-test and one-way ANCOVA. The research results show that the TBLT model can improve students' writing performance and metacognition skills. This means that there has been a significant change in the average score in writing ability [t = -16.871, p < .000] and writing metacognitive awareness score [t = -17.197, p < .000] in the experimental group that received treatment with the task model. -based language teaching (TBLT). This study recommends that the TBLT method can be used as an alternative for teachers to simultaneously improve writing abilities and metacognition skills. In addition, this study emphasizes the importance of using comprehensive learning methods to develop both skills.

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INTRODUCTION

In the development of language teaching, both first and second languages, task-based teaching learning (TBLT) is one of the three most significant teaching methods widely used by teachers of communicative language teaching systems. Several experts have recommended this method in language teaching activities (Albino, 2017; Ellis, 2019; Gucle et al., 2015). This approach is described as a communicative method for teaching and learning languages by positioning language as a means of communication and not only viewed as an object of study (Rodríguez-Peñarroja, 2022). TBLT consists of meaningful tasks that are systematically designed so that students can use and acquire language communicatively (Ahmadian, 2016; Xu & Fan, 2022).

The TBLT method is not much different from problem-based learning (PBL). In other words, the two methods have relatively the same characteristics.The two methods have similarities in the step sequence pattern, scope of problem-solving, and communicative nature

(East, 2021; Hasnain & Halder, 2021). Experts say that TBLT is a communicative approach to language teaching which considers learning with task design to play a significant role in achieving learning goals (Lambert et al., 2023; Spada, 2022). This aligns with the perspective put forward by Ellis (2004) who stated that the TBLT concept lies in its potential to provide opportunities for language learning. Apart from that, the TBLT method also has great potential in developing language skills collaboratively.

Even though its presence is controversial, the TBLT method is considered superior to conventional methods because it consists of a series of communicative tasks focusing on meaning and contextualization (Bygate, 2016; Ziegler, 2016). The main difference between TBLT and traditional education lies in the basic idea of TBLT, which illustrates that language learning will develop well if teaching aims only to create context (Guo & Mollering, 2016; Ortega, 2015). In other words, conventional methods still focus explicitly on language form or structure, while TBLT emphasizes the expression of meaning with forms obtained by chance.

In addition, the TBLT method prioritizes task completion by mobilizing students' linguistic resources to achieve the expected goals. These goals can be student activities in finding a solution to a problem, conveying a message to others, or simply informing people about something (Anwar & Arifani, 2016; Mulyadi et al., 2021). Liu & Ren (2021) emphasize that tasks in the TBLT method must have relevance to the real world so that they can quickly help students develop language skills. These features have positioned the TBLT method as the best language teaching method for the last 30 years.

The TBLT method is closely related to metacognitive skills (Chou, 2017). These skills are one of the skills that must be mastered by students in the 21st century. This type of skill is vital for students to master because it has strong relevance in educational and psychological contexts (Muawiyah et al., 2009). In recent years, metacognitive skills have been linked to various fields of knowledge, such as writing, mathematics, information technology, and others (Al-Shabibi & Alkharusi, 2018; Garzón et al., 2020). Students with good metacognition can stimulate and foster reflective, responsible thinking, build self-confidence, make effective decisions, and develop critical and creative thinking (Kuiper, 2002).

Metacognitive skills represent higher-order strategies because they organize cognitive or motivational strategies with all learning tasks (Schraw & Moshman, 1995). Indirectly, these skills address information processing or motivational issues and can ensure the implementation of cognitive regulation strategies for quality learning (Leopold & Leutner, 2015). Therefore, metacognitive skills are positively related to performance, learning achievement, motivation, and problem-solving skills (Güner & Erbay, 2021; Surati et al., 2021; Belenkova, 2021; Zepeda et al., 2015). Additionally, several studies have shown that metacognitive skills have the potential to improve performance in several other domains (Ohtani & Hisasaki, 2018; Zepeda et al., 2019).

Apart from metacognitive skills, another essential language skill that students must master is writing ability. Writing skills consist of four main components: cognitive, affective, physiological and social. Genc-Ersoy & Gol-Dede (2022) emphasize that someone who has writing skills can build interpersonal communication by integrating vocabulary with content knowledge. Writing skills can also be used to transfer feelings and thoughts in written form, organize thoughts, and become a learning mediator (Yeh et al., 2020).

Several previous studies have explored the role of TBLT methods in various types of language learning. The TBLT method has been proven to improve three language skills: listening comprehension, writing, and speaking skills in English. Apart from that, the TBLT method also has a positive impact on increasing other aspects that encourage students to learn, such as increasing motivation, student involvement in learning, and student metacognitive awareness (Liu & Ren, 2021; Musazay & Khalid, 2017; Rodríguez-Peñarroja, 2022).

Specifically in learning to write, several previous studies have also investigated the role of the TBLT method in improving students' academic writing skills. Ahmed and Bidin (2016) have found that the TBLT method can improve students' writing performance in English language learning in Malaysia. Apart from that, similar findings were also put forward by other researchers who claimed that this method could develop students' writing skills in the aspects of content, organization, format and grammar (Pham et al., 2021; Pingmuang & Koraneekij, 2022; Shaby & Joy, 2020; Sundari et al., 2018).

From several previous research presentations, there are still few researchers who focus on first language learning. To the best of the author's knowledge, no previous studies have explored the impact of the TBLT method on students' writing abilities and metacognitive awareness simultaneously. Based on these conditions, the novelty in this study is that no research has focused on analyzing the impact of TBLT on writing skills and students' metacognitive awareness in the first language learning process. For this reason, researchers were interested in conducting this study by asking the research question: What is the impact of the TBLT method on students' writing abilities and metacognitive awareness in learning to write Indonesian?

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

In general, this research aims to investigate the influence of the TBLT model on students' writing abilities and metacognitive awareness. Researchers used a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest design to achieve this goal. This design aims to evaluate the intervention and show causality between the intervention and the outcome without using randomization techniques (Creswell, 2014). Furthermore, data was collected using a writing test and metacognitive awareness of writing questionnaire. Data was collected at the first meeting session (pretest) and the last session (posttest).

Participants

The participants of this study were 60 first-semester students. They were divided into two study groups, namely, 1 class as the experimental group (30 students) and one other class as the control group (30 students). Of all the participants, there were 42 female students and 18 male students. In terms of age, there were ten students under 18 and 50 students aged 18 years or older. Participants are students of the Sharia Banking Study Program at the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business, UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, Indonesia, taking Indonesian language courses as a compulsory subject. Researchers randomly selected two classes to be research participants from five classes in the odd semester of the 2023/2024 academic year. The random selection of participants was related to the varying levels of writing ability and metacognitive awareness.

Instruments

Essay Writing Assesment Rubric

According to Oshima and Hogue (2006), a good essay consists of three main parts, namely: (a) opening paragraph, (b) essay body, and (c) closing paragraph. Researchers asked students to write essays containing these three components by choosing one of the themes, including: (a) 21st-century education, (b) economic challenges in the post-pandemic era, (c) health and its problems, (d) conditions social politics ahead of the election, and (e) the development of sharia banking in the world. Students are asked to write an essay length of 400-500 words. The writing test was applied twice, namely the test before giving treatment (pre-test) and the final test after receiving treatment (post-test).

Researchers used an essay writing assessment rubric developed by Jacobs et al. (1981). There are six assessment aspects in the rubric, namely: (a) content with a maximum score of 25, (b) writing organization with a maximum score of 25, (c) grammar of 25, (d) vocabulary with a maximum score of 15, and (e) aspects mechanics with a maximum score of 10. Thus, the highest total score is 100, and the lowest is 0. Researchers ran tests to determine the level of consistency of the scoring rubric scores before use. The test was carried out to avoid subjectivity related to the validity and reliability of the instrument. Based on the inter-rater reliability test results, two lecturers were involved in the inter-rater reliability test by assessing ten students' writing randomly and showing a score of 0.84. Thus, based on measurements using *Pearson product-moment*, the research instrument in the form of an essay assessment rubric was stated to have a high level of consistency and was acceptable to both assessors.

Metacognitive Awareness of Writing Questionnaire

Researchers also used another instrument in the form of a questionnaire known as the Metacognitive Awareness of Writing Questionnaire (MAWQ). The questionnaire was developed based on the fact that metacognitive awareness has two broad categories: cognitive knowledge and cognitive regulation (Farahian, 2017; Farahian & Avarzamani, 2018). The MAWQ consists of 36 items, namely 20 items for the knowledge aspect of cognition and 16 for the regulation aspect of cognition. In the knowledge aspect of cognition, 13 items assess awareness of declarative knowledge, three items related to procedural knowledge, and four items related to conditional knowledge. In the aspect of cognitive regulation, there are five items for assessing planning and arrangement: four items for general strategy, two items for allocating time and place, two items for prevention (avoidance), and three items for revision. Each statement is provided with five alternative answers, namely: (a) strongly disagree, (b) disagree, (c) no idea, (d) agree, and (e) strongly agree. Thus, the points for each answer choice start from a score of 1 for strongly disagree to 5 points for strongly agree. Thus, the highest possible score that students can achieve is 180, and the lowest is 36. In addition, this instrument has been tested for reliability, which shows a score of 0.91 and is declared suitable for use.

Data Analysis

The next stage is quantitative data analysis using SPSS program version 25.00. First, a paired samples t-test was applied to explore the impact of the task-based learning teaching (TBLT) method on students' writing and metacognitive writing skills from both groups (experimental and control). The data analysis process began by calculating the mean and standard deviation values of students' writing and questionnaire results. Furthermore, the one-way ANCOVA test was also applied to determine the comparison between the two groups regarding students' writing and metacognitive writing abilities. This means that the primary purpose of the ANCOVA analysis is to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores.

Instruction Procedure

Writing learning activities in Indonesian language courses begin at the beginning of the odd semester of the 2022/2023 academic year. Instructors/researchers teach Indonesian writing skills to students (experimental group) using the TBLT method framework proposed by Willis (1996), which consists of three stages, namely: (a) pre-task phase, which consists of topic introduction activities and task preparation, (b) a task cycle that includes task performance, planning, and reporting, and (c) a post-task review of various aspects of writing. The learning treatment was carried out over eight meetings (1 time per week) for 100 minutes per meeting.

Table 1
Procedure of experimental class

Meeting	Phase	Description
		Paragraph Writing Material
1.	Pre-test	- Students write essays - Students fill out the questionnaire via Google form
2.	Pre-task	- The instructor presented the topic of writing paragraphs to encourage students - Brainstorming with free discussions - The instructor presents charts, maps, scripts, or images to find ideas
3.	Task Performance	- The instructor asks students to organize ideas and determine the topic of writing - Students form groups of 2 to 3 people to discuss with peers - The instructor monitors and helps students write without aiming to intervene - Students collaborate in one team with the help of an online dictionary, peers, and instructor to write paragraphs - The instructor asks 2 to 3 groups to read their writing
4.	Post-task	- Instructor and students discuss paragraph structure and organization with the main focus on language levels, cohesive devices, content, grammar, ideas, and word choice
Material: Writing Essays		
5.	Pre-task	- The instructor presents a topic about essay writing to encourage students - Brainstorming with free discussions - The instructor presents charts, maps, scripts, or images to find ideas
6.	Task Performance	- The instructor asks students to organize ideas and determine an essay topic - Students form groups of 2 to 3 people to discuss with peers - The instructor monitors and helps students write without aiming to intervene - Students collaborate in one team with the help of an online dictionary, peers, and instructor to write essays - The instructor asks 2 to 3 groups to present their essays
7.	Post-task	- Instructor and students discuss paragraph structure and organization with the main focus on language levels, cohesive devices, content, grammar, ideas, and word choice
8.	Pos-test	- Students write essays - Students fill out the questionnaire via Google Form

In the control class, the instructor employs traditional teaching methods that rely on existing textbooks as the primary instructional resource. This conventional approach is structured around several distinct stages that guide the learning process. The first stage involves an introductory session, where the instructor sets the context for the lesson and prepares the students for the topic to be covered. Following this, the instructor presents the main topic, explaining key concepts and providing foundational knowledge to the students. To reinforce the content, the instructor uses examples directly from the textbook, illustrating important points and offering a model for students to emulate. After the topic presentation, students are tasked with writing assignments, which may include paragraphs or essays related to the lesson content. This activity aims to develop students' writing skills and deepen their understanding of the material. The final stage involves the instructor selecting three student assignments, which are then displayed and reviewed in class. These assignments are presented in a sequence that may be predetermined or randomized, allowing for a range of responses and interpretations to be discussed. This presentation serves as a platform for peer learning, where students can analyze different approaches to the same task and receive feedback from both the instructor and their classmates, thus completing the learning cycle in the conventional instructional setting.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

This research explores the impact of using the TBLT method on students' writing abilities and metacognitive awareness. Data from the pretest and posttest sessions from the experimental and control groups were analyzed quantitatively by carrying out descriptive statistical tests. The following are the results of descriptive statistical tests from the two groups.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics

	Group	Mean	N	Std. deviation	Std. error mean
Pre-Writing Ability	TBLT	55.03	30	4.972	.908
	Conventional	56.73	30	4.234	.773
Post-Writing Ability	TBLT	89.03	30	3.672	.670
	Conventional	70.80	30	4.708	.860
Pre-Writing Metacognitive	TBLT	102.93	30	10.654	1.945
Awareness	Conventional	105.47	30	9.261	1.691
Post-Writing Metacognitive	TBLT	163.83	30	8.690	1.587
Awareness	Conventional	132.83	30	15.077	2.753

Table 2 shows the results of descriptive statistical tests for the experimental and control groups, both pretest and post-test. In the pretest session, there were differences in the average scores of students' writing ability and writing metacognitive awareness. However, the difference in scores is so slight that the initial abilities of the two groups (experimental and control) are equivalent. Furthermore, in the post-test session, the paired sample t-test results showed a difference in the average scores of the two groups.

Based on the results of Table 2, the researcher tested the significance level of the difference in scores. In other words, researchers want to know whether the score difference is categorized as significant. Researchers ran a paired sample t-test to determine whether the impact of using TBLT on students' writing abilities and writing metacognitive awareness was significant. Next, Table 3 shows the paired sample t-test results from the two groups (experimental and control).

Table 3

Results of Paired Samples T-test

		Mean	Std. deviation	Std. Error Mean	*T*	*df*	Sig. (2-tailed)
TBLT	Pre- and Post WA	-24.033	11.035	1.425	-16.871	59	.000
	Pre- and Post WMA	-44.133	19.879	2.566	-17.197	59	.000
Conventional	Pre- and Post WA	-14.067	5.477	1.000	-14.068	29	.000
	Pre- and Post WMA	-27.367	11.016	2.011	-13.607	29	.000

Table 3 is the result of the paired sample t-test, which aims to ascertain whether the impact of the TBLT model is significant in influencing the increase in writing ability and metacognitive awareness. Based on this table, the two aspects of skills targeted in this study have increased significantly. This means that students' writing skills and metacognitive awareness have increased significantly compared to the pretest and posttest sessions. This score increase indicates that the TBLT model has great potential to influence improving these

two skills. In other words, there has been a significant change in the average score on two student skills, namely writing ability [t = -16.871, p < .000] and writing metacognitive awareness score [t = -17.197, p < .000] in the group experiments that received treatment with the task-based language teaching (TBLT) model.

Table 4

Results of ANCOVA Test for Writing ability Aspect

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial eta squared
Group	5477.799[a]	18	304.322	22.987	.000	.910

After running the paired sample t-test, the researcher ran a one-way ANCOVA test. This test aims to determine and confirm the level of difference in scores between the experimental group and the control group. Table 4 above shows the results of a particular ANCOVA test to see differences in scores on students' writing abilities. Table 4 shows a significant difference between the group using the TBLT model and the group using the conventional method in writing ability. This can be seen from the scores on the writing ability aspect, which shows a score of F = 22.987, p = .000, and partial eta squared = .910. In conclusion, the experimental group using the TBLT model outperformed the control group using conventional methods. On the other hand, the ANCOVA test results in Table 4 show a partial eta-squared score of 0.910. In other words, there is a contribution of 91% from the use of the TBLT method to increasing students' writing abilities.

Table 5

Results of ANCOVA Test for Writing Metacognitive Awareness Aspect

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	*Sig.*	Partial eta squared
Group	20449.433[a]	22	929.520	12.516	.000	0.882

A one-way ANCOVA test was also carried out to determine the difference in scores between the two groups (experimental and control) for the writing metacognitive awareness aspect. The test results show that using the TBLT method is much better and has great potential in increasing students' writing metacognitive awareness compared to the control group. The results of the one-way ANCOVA test on the writing metacognitive awareness aspect showed a score of F = 12.516, p = .000, and partial eta squared = 0.882. This means that the TBLT method contributed 88.2% to increasing students' writing metacognitive awareness.

Discussion

The results of this research show a significant increase in students' writing ability in the experimental class after receiving treatment using the TBLT method. This means there is an aspect of the effectiveness of the TBLT method in learning to write when compared with the conventional method used in the control group. These findings support the results of previous research, which showed that the TBLT method significantly improved students' writing competence and language proficiency (Mehta & Al-Mahrooqi (2015). They emphasized that task-based writing has tremendous potential compared to other practical pedagogical practices because its benefits students in lexical aspects, collocations and language forms.

Furthermore, the current findings are consistent with previous research exploring using the TBLT method to improve writing skills (Kafipour et al., 2018). These various studies have confirmed that the TBLT method has better effectiveness in increasing students'

opinions about writing teaching, increasing student interaction, and improving comprehension, listening, and reading abilities. Apart from that, the TBLT method also has a promising and significant effect on students' writing abilities in the long term (Bryfonski & Mckay, 2019). In another study, the TBLT method was reported as a very suitable method for learning writing. This means that the study has confirmed the usefulness of TBLT in improving students' writing skills in Iran (Valli & Priya, 2016).

One of the determinant factors that influence the improvement of students' writing skills using the TBLT method is the role of brainstorming and collaboration activities. In the pre-task phase, students are asked to conduct discussions/brainstorming to determine the theme and framework of the writing. This activity can encourage students' confidence and motivation to provide ideas and opinions about writing themes.

Besides brainstorming, collaborative activities in small groups also have great potential in developing students' writing skills. Several previous studies have claimed that collaborative activities significantly impact writing skills (Helaluddin et al., 2023; Hosseini et al., 2020; Putarek & Pavlin-Bernardic, 2020). Collaborative activities play a significant role in learning because there are negotiation activities, coordination, and making the right decisions (Talib & Cheung, 2017). Collaboration is considered to positively impact students' social development because there is equal interaction with colleagues and instructors (Veramuthu & Md Shah, 2020).

Other findings in this research state that the TBLT method impacts students' metacognitive awareness. This means that using the TBLT method has improved students' metacognitive skills in learning to write. This is proven by the average score in the posttest session, which is higher than in the pretest. This research's findings align with a study conducted by Ramadhanti and Yanda (2021), which claims that students with a high metacognitive level tend to be more adept at writing explanatory texts when compared with students with a low metacognitive level. Furthermore, students' metacognitive knowledge can be improved with various activities in writing, such as planning ideas, developing ideas, compiling a writing framework, and evaluating writing (Schuster et al., 2020).

Teaching focusing on metacognitive aspects can be developed by encouraging metacognitive knowledge and awareness. In teaching writing, teachers usually use various strategies to raise metacognitive awareness, such as a) asking questions about students' cognitive level and the level of writing they produce, b) comparing their writing with other people's writing, and c) using various teaching aspects to influence writing activities in helping students understand the text (Escorcia & Gimenes, 2020). This is in line with the argument put forward by Pitenoee et al. (2017), who stated that metacognitive teaching can influence improving the quality of writing because writing activities require high-level thinking abilities. This thinking ability must be developed continuously through writing activities such as: (a) planning writing, (b) developing ideas, and (c) evaluating writing (Goctu, 2017). In order to achieve maximum results, experts recommend integrating metacognitive strategies, cognitive learning models, mind-mapping strategies and genre-based learning in writing activities (Ramadhanti & Mana, 2018; Thongchalerm & Jarunthawatchai, 2020).

Metacognition skills indeed play a vital role in supporting student learning success. Tosuncuoglu & Kirmizi (2019) agree with this by stating that students can find their writing weaknesses and try to improve them by implementing new strategies. Teachers who apply metacognitive strategies in their learning can say that the teacher has introduced these metacognitive skills to students (Gebele et al., 2022). Students who have metacognitive skills or metacognitive awareness have great potential to be able to regulate their learning, encourage independent learning, and improve task performance (Chaterdon & College, 2019; Lestari et al., 2019; Maawa & Cruz, 2019; Maduabuchi et al., 2016; Setyowati & Sukmawan,

2019; Suastra & Menggo, 2020). Thus, metacognitive skills are essential in encouraging student learning activities, especially in learning to write.

CONCLUSION

One language teaching method currently being highlighted by researchers and teachers is Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). This method is one of many language teaching methods that can develop various skills. Since there are still very few studies exploring this theme, researchers are interested in doing it in writing learning. This research investigates the impact of using the TBLT method on students' writing abilities and metacognitive awareness. The research results show that using the TBLT method can improve students' writing skills and metacognitive awareness. This research investigates the impact of using the TBLT method on students' writing abilities and metacognitive awareness. The research results show that using the TBLT method can improve students' writing skills and metacognitive awareness. The findings state that students who are taught with the TBLT model are proven to be able to write well, impacting their metacognitive awareness.

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