




## Effects of task-based instructions on second-language learners' comprehension of collocations to improve writing skills: A pedagogical perspective

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### ABSTRACT

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The current study was envisioned to examine the influence of task-based writing instruction (TBWI) on learners' knowledge of collocations and its impact on the writing performance of a sample of 20 students registered in undergraduate programs at a college in Pakistan. English language teaching (ELT) practitioners and researchers have been promoting Task based language teaching (TBLT) as an important component of language pedagogy curricula in many nations across the world. In the current study, tasks were used as the principal part of teaching, and a mixture of consciousness-raising and communicative task-based materials were used to develop learners' understanding of collocations in writing narrative essays. To enable the research process, the writing samples were collected at the start and end of the study to evaluate any language development in second language performance. Quantitative content analysis was used in terms of language complexity, fluency, and accuracy to analyze the written work to comprehend the development in the learners' understanding of collocations and their use to improve writing skills after they have been instructed using Task Based Language teaching methodology. The results of the data implied vital signs of improvement in the level of learners' knowledge of collocations and writing performance in terms of language performance with regards to language complexity, accuracy and fluency.

**Contribution/Originality:** This study's contribution is showing task-based writing instruction's (TBWI's) efficiency in raising the collocational proficiency of Pakistani second-language learners, an under-researched area. Task-based Writing Instruction (TBWI) is a pedagogical approach that centers on developing writing skills by utilizing writing tasks to enhance students' overall writing proficiency. The study makes a revolutionary effort to draw the attention of academia towards TBLT as a much-needed component in L2 teaching.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Writing in English presents particular challenges for second-language learners in the areas of grammar, lexical resources, spelling, punctuation, and unity. Many second-language learners find acquiring writing skills to be challenging (Ilyas, Ayub, & Khan, 2017; Naudhani & Naudhani, 2017; Sundari, Febriyanti, & Saragih, 2018). Learning how to write will help pupils acquire language more effectively (Inayanti & Halimi, 2019). Writing is also a skill that foreign language learners find challenging and upsetting to learn (Sundari et al., 2018). Teachers make every effort to assist their pupils in producing quality writing (Naudhani & Naudhani, 2017). To help pupils master

English writing approaches, advanced and varied teaching strategies and methods are employed (Inayanti & Halimi, 2019).

The language proficiency of English as a second language (ESL) learners can be enhanced by increased collocational knowledge (Wray, 2002). According to language scholars, a stronger command of collocations in both written and spoken English is a key component of fluency in any language (Nation, 2001). Understanding collocations, according to Ünver (2018), improves linguistic correctness and fluency. Being aware of collocations usually comes effortlessly to native English speakers because they are familiar with the word combinations, but it could be challenging for second language learners. As a result, by learning word combinations, students may be better able to produce accurate language and employ more idioms and a formulaic language (Al Ghazali, 2015).

Based on the problems that ESL learners encounter in acquiring knowledge of collocations in assisting writing skills, it is essential to search for appropriate instructional methods to improve learners' collocational competence and its application to enhance their writing skills. Task-based language teaching (TBLT) can be useful in such cases, as it focuses on eloquent tasks and real communication (Ahmad, Islam, & Hassan Naqvi, 2021) in the learning process. TBLT is expected to suggestively increase the writing skills of learners (Kafipour, Mahmoudi, & Khojasteh, 2018). Activities that include language learners in meaningful, goal-oriented dialogue to resolve issues, finish tasks, and come to decisions are known as task-based instruction (TBI). Tasks have been employed for a wide variety of educational reasons, including as components of course syllabi, exercises for practicing structure or function, and language-focused additions to content-based curricula (Pica, 2008). In essence, TBLT is based on the ideas and efficacy of experiential learning, and real-world scenarios are acted out in language instruction classrooms (Ellis, 2009).

In Pakistan, English is generally taught as a required course that is mostly literature-based and does not focus on functional use (Ahmed & Bidin, 2016). Suleman et al. (2020) claims that while native speakers are often unapproachable as English language instructors in non-English-speaking nations, L2 teachers often struggle to teach collocations because they lack the necessary collocational skills. On the basis of the issue raised in relation to the challenges Pakistani L2 learners face in developing strong writing skills and the contribution that knowledge of collocations makes to writing skills facilitation, it is necessary to investigate appropriate writing instruction and tasks that can aid in improving their writing skills. Learners are expected to understand how the social context affects writing. Additionally, for the aim of authentic communication, lessons learned in the classroom setting should be utilized in real-world situations. Therefore, based on the efficacy of task based learning in language classrooms it can be assumed that in fact, students who write in a foreign language should be taught to be familiarized with the social setting in which the writings are set as well as the target audience. Additionally, what students learn in the classroom may be implemented and used outside of it for genuine conversation. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to concentrate on the Pakistani L2 setting to demonstrate the value of task-based instruction (TBI) in improving the writing abilities of undergraduate English language learners at the government-run KTS College for girls in Pakistan. The preceding explanation clarifies the study's purpose, which is to determine if task-based learning aids students in acquiring collocations and what effect it has on how writing skills are taught. Hence, the current study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Has TBWI impacted ESL learners' knowledge of collocations in written language performance in their L2 fluency, complexity and accuracy?

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Native speakers of a language acquire new lexical items via communication with the language in daily life situations, whereas ESL learners' communication and use of the language is generally restricted (Deveci, 2007). Therefore, if learners have no exposure to a bigger pool of vocabulary, they will not be able to use language accurately in an educational setting. The study by Fan (2009) determined that L2 users are prone to use relatively

fewer collocations than native speakers when using target language. This would suggest that learners' consciousness of word combinations lets the users use language with native like accuracy and it may increase their ability to use many types of formulaic language (Al Ghazali, 2015). This also shows that collocational competence supports the learners to produce fluent and accurate language (Ünver, 2018).

Yusoff, Gurmani, Sanif, and Noor (2022) discussed that a good command of lexical items is effective to succeed educationally, proving it to be an important tool in positive language learning. Heikkilä (2005) cited by Al Ghazali (2015) has described that collocational competence is a skill to properly formed word combinations that allows a user to produce fluent, and accurate language. Traditional methods to learn vocabulary focus on learning individual words or vocabulary lists, which is not adequate. Shokouhi and Mirsalari (2010) urged that students should have knowledge of word combinations, word correlation, and how they can be used for communication purposes. There are comparatively inadequate investigations to inform on approaches to teach vocabulary in the academic paradigm (Read, 2004). Therefore, it is recommended to teach learners to identify, memorise, and retrieve collocations rather than letting them make lopsided combination of words (El-Dakhs, 2015). Second language learners are aware of the importance of vocabulary in a target language; they recognize the importance of developing their vocabulary in order to develop their communicate competence, yet many methods that educators used for the teaching of vocabulary are traditional approaches (Abrudan, 2017).

### 2.1. Collocations

Collocations are the combination of words which occur logically and regularly. According to Lewis (1997), collocations are the words which are constantly combined. However, if the words' combinations do not show recurrent co-occurrence, it will not be considered as collocations according to El-Dakhs (2015). Furthermore, collocations are classified in various ways, for instance, combination words that are prefabricated, or multi word units etc., which are discussed in varying manners in language teaching (Fan, 2009). Collocations can also be referred to as a class of idiomatic expressions (Zaabalawi & Gould, 2017) as the arrangement of comprising words that co-occur in an orderly manner (Fan, 2009; Nesselhauf, 2003; Zaabalawi & Gould, 2017). It can also be called a language aspect, which is usually considered to be complicated to the language students who require the proper collocational competencies for useful communication (Fan, 2009).

In addition to the adoption of various standards for determining whether or not a group of words qualifies as a collocation, there are other criteria like that the terms should co-occur frequently and naturally and that there should be some semantic opacity (Altuwairesh, 2017). For instance, Wray (2002) proposed an explanation for collocation, which he defined as a continuous or discontinuous sequence of words or other meaningful elements that a prefabricated, that is, gathered and retrieved from the memory at the time of use rather than being subjected to inspection or formation by the language grammar (p. 465). Collocations are the grouping of words that typically occur in correlation and display mutual expectation, according to Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992).

### 2.2. Classification of Collocations

Benson (1985) suggested that collocations are of two kinds: lexical and grammatical. Grammatical collocations refer to a periodic and recurring combination of words that fundamentally contains a dominant word (that word may be verb, noun or the adjective), followed by a word that is grammatical, which could generally be a preposition (Benson, 1985; Poulsen, 1991). However, lexical collocations possess no subordinate components as they usually consist of two equal lexical components (Benson, 1985); in addition, they do not possess any prepositions, clauses, infinitives but consist of nouns, adjectives, adverbs or verbs (Poulsen, 1991). Lewis (1997) has debated that collocations can be classified into four groups: Strong, weak, frequent and infrequent. This division between the weak and strong collocations depend upon their permanency and frequency; however the difference between frequent and infrequent collocations depends upon how frequent those words co-occur.

### 2.3. Importance of Collocations and Writing

The complexities often encountered by foreign language (EFL/ESL) students is the L2 composition, expectantly in the future, proposing and implementation useful efficient approaches to improve the L2 learners' composition and writing abilities, which is a matter of discussion for foreign language writing experts (Ismail, 2011). This has inspired and prompted various scholars & researchers to engage in new research for the accomplishment of renovating findings, which has advocated the instructions of collocations as some of the many practical methodologies (e.g. (Ashouri & Mashhadi Heidar, 2015; Mounya, 2010; Sadoughvanini, 2012)). When discussing the language performance, it is believed that collocations aid in as readily available resources that allow fluency in the language (Pawley & Syder, 1983). In essence, a student requires the achievement of enough collocational knowledge along with the correct sense of utilisation to communicate, and express fluency like the natives. According to Namvar, Nor, Ibrahim, and Mustafa (2012), the shortage of collocational competencies results in errors and shortcomings that halt the language performance of the ESL/EFL learner. If taught properly, the correct form and usage of collocations can develop substantial fluency, accuracy in writing & composition, along with betterment in the overall performance of language. Mahvelati (2016). Thus, collocations help improve learners' style of writing because they can produce more powerful writing.

Avci (2006) rejected the parallel positive results regarding the effectiveness of teaching the collocations, and anticipates that the study's results may be due to the interruption of other features, for example, due to the learners' expertise in the target language and the study period. Furthermore, it is important to reflect that various researches in this area are only devoted to measuring learners' overall writing proficiency. One of many studies (e.g., Eidian, Gorjian, and Aghvami (2013)) exactly examined writing components, and language performance developed by teaching collocations. It was also observed that earlier studies presented a minor consistency in their results. For example, Ghonsooli, Pishghadam, and Mahjoobi (2008) recognised that teaching of collocations could intensify the fluency and vocabulary of Iranian students. Ashouri and Mashhadi Heidar (2015) defined the positive outcomes of teaching collocations on the mechanics and lexical items. Further research on language complexity, accuracy, and fluency is required to increase the prospects of the body of knowledge. In the current study, communicative and awareness-raising tasks were both used to examine the consequences of learners' approaches about collocational competence, and their application on language complexity, accuracy, and fluency in writing skill.

### 2.4. Background of Task-based Language Teaching

The constructive theory of learning is the foundation for more recent theories of learning, like TBLT. The origins of TBLT can be traced back to the 1980s, when Prabhu (1987) Communicational Language Teaching project in India was launched. The lack of performance in the production of the target language and other shortcomings of the conventional language education approaches based on the structural approach following the PPP (Presentation-Practice-Production) paradigm served as the basis for its development. The PPP method is based on the behaviorist school of learning, and learners are given chunks of language with an emphasis on acquiring the target language's structures by rote (Ellis, 2003a). Before, it was believed that learning a language required memorizing and repeatedly using the target language's grammar. Long-term results showed that it was incorrect because students who only knew theoretical grammar principles were unable to communicate effectively in the target language in everyday contexts (Ellis, 2003b; Prabhu, 1987).

Constructivism places a strong emphasis on the learner's motivation, cognitive skills, and autonomy, which are all core tenets of TBLT (Ellis, 2009; Willis, 1996). According to Wang (2011), TBLT principles and constructivism both place a strong emphasis on the learners' autonomy, reflectivity, personal involvement, and active engagement in the learning process. When a learner engages in a communicative task, he is likely to employ his pre-existing linguistic resources to accomplish a goal (Willis & Willis, 2007). There is coherence between constructivist learning ideas and TBLT (Ellis, 2003b).

### 2.5. Task-based Writing Instruction (TBWI)

Task-based Writing Instruction (TBWI) uses the writing task as a forum for genuine language use between the language student and the teacher while upholding the priority of meaning. Together, they transform the student's interlanguage (emergent second-language skills) contained in a crude draught into standard English, which would make it possible to differentiate language training greatly (Bantis, 2008). Task-based writing instruction (TBWI) in the wider outline of TBLT draws students' attention on collaborative tasks which are lifelike (Kawachi, 2003). Concerning writing task, some noticeable aspects of tasks are deliberated by linguists and language researchers; the task structure, mutual or un-reciprocating (Ellis, 1991), style of task accomplishment, whether individual or cooperative input by the learners (Oxford, 1997), these elements assist the practice of TBLT. Task-based writing activities are done to create something, to complete, or produce a pictorial image of a setting to show its meaning in a certain context (Tilfarlioglu & Basaran, 2007). TBLT escalates learners' writing performance, communicative abilities, and their educational performance (Hai-yan, 2014). Abraham (2015) urged that by practising writing and completing tasks, learners can improve their vocabulary and improve the grammar and mechanics.

TBLT is perceived to be helpful for the writing instruction in many previous studies. Inayanti and Halimi (2019) were of the view that tasks can suggestively help learners to practise in sharing their thoughts in descriptive writing tasks. Well-built tasks aided and allowed learners in text organisation; as well as tasks could inspire brainstorming concepts and topics for further elaboration to create accurate writing (Sundari et al., 2018). It is expected that TBWI may be useful in refining writing performance and may develop language ability (Mukhrif, 2020). Writing skill is rigorously related to all other language skills (i.e., reading, listening, and speaking), thus, the writing development is not limited to a definite pattern of task, and rather it supports codependent types of tasks (Liu & Yao, 2019). For instance, Manzoor, Azhar, and Malik (2020) and Rashid (2017) have examined the influence of reading-to-writing tasks on Pakistani English learners to improve their narrative writing. Likewise, Liu and Yao (2019) used task-based cooperative writing to nurture critical thinking skills amongst ESL students. Suleman et al. (2020) used technology-based tasks to advance ESL learners' writing, such as online chats, editing tools, and blogs etc. Rashid, Cunningham, and Watson (2017) used TBLT with in mobile assisted settings to do a case study to inquire about Pakistani student's insights of the method. Ilyas et al. (2017) investigated the effect of TBI on the writing skill of intermediate level ESL students, they used a quantitative study method on 120 Pakistani learners, and the results explored that the participants demonstrated optimistic attitude toward TBLT.

### 2.6. Consciousness-Raising in Teaching Collocations

Instruction of collocations using consciousness-raising technique has been greatly supported by Lewis (1997); Lewis (2000); Hill (2000); Stoitchkov (2008) and Schmidt (1990). Lewis (2000) recognized that language instructors should improve their learners' collocational awareness and help them to increase their ability to study the combination of words. Schmidt (1990) considered this awareness as a vital element in L2 learning, and distributed this idea into three kinds: knowledge, awareness, and intention. Schmidt deliberated that awareness has three stages: perception, noticing, and understanding. Awareness is important for the knowledge development; it is a significant part of language learning (Fazlali & Shahini, 2019).

According to Amirian and Abbasi (2014), consciousness-raising (CR) is centred on learners. The teacher is a helper, who delivers suitable chances for the students to examine the language through analysis, and exploration. A key aspect of CR seems to be that it does not need instant mastery of language or precise productivity upon teaching, which is because CR is a developmental process to acquire the language. In CR language is learned and comprehend gradually by the learners (Amirian & Abbasi, 2014). Ying and Hendricks (2003) suggested a model of collocational consciousness raising, which requires the learners to be able to be aware of collocations and taught to practice the appropriate word combinations in the process of learning. Ying and Hendricks (2003) advised that consciousness awareness raising is a manifold process that assists students to notice and note and to incorporate

expected language forms. Consciousness-Raising tasks aids in instruction of grammar that assists in refining learners' awareness of grammar to motivate their independence (Amirian & Abbasi, 2014).

Mahvelati (2016) also showed through an empirical study the positive consequences of this instructive technique for the improvement of L2 learners' collocational knowledge. Mukhrib (2020) did the study on Saudi students of English language, who were given a combination of awareness-raising tasks and meaning-based activities. The results revealed development in both accuracy and fluency of the students' language performance and the endorsement was made to give more significance to Task-based learning by merging both consciousness-raising and communicative tasks to make best use of the techniques.

### 2.7. English Language Teaching in Pakistan

The study aims to emphasize Pakistani L2 setting. English, generally, is a compulsory subject in Pakistan that is typically based on literature, but its pragmatic use is not highlighted (Ahmed & Bidin, 2016). The grammar translation method (GTM) is commonly employed for teaching English (Ahmad et al., 2021; Naudhani & Naudhani, 2017; Suleman et al., 2020) and learners are evaluated through a written examination, thus, learners learn the language, only to be successful in their exams by securing good grades. Pakistani teachers use teaching approaches that do not fulfil the requirement of developing creativity among learners, GTM is still being used mainly in the countryside which obstructs the contextualization of language (Anwar & Khan, 2012; Awan & Shafi, 2016; Rashid et al., 2017). The learners' role in Pakistani English language (EL) classes is of a passive receiver of knowledge (Soomro, Memon, & Memon, 2016). As recognized by Nawab (2012), traditional approaches of instruction of writing to students of diverse backgrounds are not effective. Suleman et al. (2020) opine that native speakers are not available as EL teachers in numerous non-English-speaking countries, therefore, ESL educators do not have sufficient skills in teaching collocation. Similarly, acquiring the knowledge of vocabulary is difficult for learners because they are not aware of collocations and connotations, and therefore commit errors while writing (Fareed, Ashraf, & Bilal, 2016) Specially, new ESL learners and teachers ignore teaching and learning of collocations from their syllabus. As a result students are not able to recognize the importance of collocations in improving English, which interferes with meaningful communication among students (Suleman et al., 2020).

## 3. METHOD

This study analysed the impact of TBI for L2 classes at a government college in Pakistan. The tasks were prepared following the steps of Willis (1996) Task-Based plan. The task-based lesson materials were cautiously selected, prepared, and employed in three stages (Ellis, 2003a). Twenty students who were enrolled in the first year of a four-year BSc (Hons.) in the department of zoology participated in the study. The study period spanned over a 12-week period. The students were asked to write a narrative essay of about 250 words on topics: (1) Write about your high school memories; (2) Write about your childhood memories. These essays were assessed to examine the students' ability in using collocations in essay writing. They were then instructed through carefully designed language tasks using pre-task, task cycle and post-task phase. Later, writing samples were collected after the study period, which consisted of narrative essays. The content analysis of the students' written essay was done to inquire development in L2 complexity, fluency and accuracy objectively and systematically. The goal was to provide a deeper understanding of characteristics and procedures of TBWI in a higher education L2 writing course.

### 3.1. Task-Based Instruction Interaction

The writing tasks given to students were grounded on the model suggested by Willis (1996), and adopted over the twelve weeks' period. The topics for essays were selected from the book, and the writing samples were written and collected in class. Students operated in groups and pairs to complete tasks. The target collocations were chosen from the book. Lexical and grammatical collocational items were taught to the students via awareness-raising tasks

based on task-based instructions, and the multiple tasks based on problem-solving, and gap-filling were used. As said earlier, the tasks were distributed in the pre-task, during task, and post-task-phases. Students were provided with consciousness-raising tasks during pre-task, where they tried doing collocation tasks. In the next phase, instructions on essay writing skills were provided with samples and asked to write narrative essays. In the post-task phase, feedback on their written production was provided.

Learners' understanding of collocation was established clearly through 'Collocation consciousness raising' a method proposed by [Ying and Hendricks \(2003\)](#). Principally, the students were taught the collocations explicitly, given both correct and incorrect samples of word combinations, through available means, such as online concordances materials as well as specifically designed tasks containing mix and match activities, highlighting the appropriate collocational patterns, etc.

### 3.1.1 Framework for Task-Based Learning

The pre-task phase provided an overview of the task and topic to the learners. In this phase the teacher introduced the topic by providing lead-in questions, for example, by showing a video prompt (containing information about the writing topic), and highlighting collocations. The teacher thus arranges the students to do a task by familiarizing them with the topic. The teacher may also provide related lexical and grammatical collocations to help students practise some awareness raising tasks such as reading model texts in the task cycle.

In the next phase of during task, the students focused on two things: planning and reporting. First, students planned to write on the assigned topic after brainstorming ideas for how to complete the task in groups (e.g., discussion, information exchange, problem-solving exercise) and put together the report of their assignment. Next, the class hears the reports from students about how they completed the task. The class is given the opportunity to hear from the students about their experience. The teacher serves as a facilitator and monitors the work, assisting pupils' attempts without altering or criticising them. In the final phase, post task, the focus is on two things: analysis and practice. The analysis included discussion and peer assessment of the written drafts while the practice focused on highlighting and talking about certain words, phrases, and writing structures from the written drafts by teachers and learners. During this final phase, students must complete the task, simultaneously looking for new lexical items or structural elements as they analysed the text. This method is clearly illustrated in [Table 1](#).

**Table 1.** A framework for TBLT.

Phase	Tasks
Pre-task	Introduction to the topic and task
Task cycle	Students carry out the task - Planning: Students plan on how to report the task outcome - Report: Students report back to class
Language focus	- Analysis - Practice

Note: [Willis \(1996\)](#).

### 3.2. Target Collocations

A list of selected target collocations to be taught was prepared after a detailed discussion with the EL teachers at the research site. This list which was based on their feedback contained most commonly used collocations by Pakistani learners in their writing. Due to the time constraints, it was decided to introduce a minimum of 5 collocations in daily lessons. Overall, 50 of the collocations were taught in the present study. It is vital to acknowledge here that the collocations in this study included the grammatical and lexical collocations. The following patterns were used:

Noun+ Noun, Noun+ Verb, Verb+ Noun, Adjective+ Noun, Adverb+ Adjective, Verb+ Adverb, Noun+ Preposition, Preposition+ Noun, Adjective+ Preposition.

### 3.3. Data Analysis

According to Skehan (1998), accuracy, complexity, and fluency are three dimensions of language performance. Students' first and final writing samples were assessed to find the impact of TBWI and judge the language performance triad, language complexity, accuracy, and fluency. The learners' L2 complexity was also analyzed concerning L2 lexical diversity usage, as was used by Sundari et al. (2018); Ahmed and Bidin (2016) and Rahimpour (2008), where L2 complexity was measured by using the following formula, which included the number of lexical, 'open class', or content words in a text-for instance verb, nouns. In this formula, adjectives and adverbs were divided by total words and then multiplied by 100.

$$\text{Learners' L2 complexity} = \frac{\text{total number of open class words}}{\text{total words}} \times 100$$

The T-unit formula was used to assess fluency. Fluency has been defined by Skehan (1998) as the learners' skill of the usage of L2, accentuating implications and the use of varied lexical items for effective communication in L2. Abdel Latif (2013) asserted that the structure of text, cohesion, coherence, language features containing rhetorical features, T-units and sentence length define fluency in a written sample. T-unit is defined as the shortest amount of writing that sentences can be divided into. T-unit contains a main clause with subordinate clauses if any. T-unit analysis, established by Hunt (1965), has been used widely to analyze the inclusive syntactic complexity of both spoken and written samples. Linguistics and language researchers use it to study the use of a target language. The fluency of L2 learners writing samples was evaluated and calculated using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Total number of L2 written words}}{\text{T - Units}} = \text{Learner's L2 Fluency}$$

A T-Unit is a measurement in linguistics and refers to the main clause plus any subordinate clauses that may be attached to it (Hunt, 1965). The analysis was done based on language accuracy and complexity. Accuracy in writing means the use of language in its correct form. Grammatical competence is more often related to the accuracy and complexity of ESL (Porcino & Finardi, 2012).

Accuracy in writing skills counts for the extent of correctness in the use of English by students (Ahmed & Bidin, 2016). Ellis (2003b) referred to accuracy as the learner's capacity to produce target language without errors. That means to what extent written language during L2 use is accurate.

Learners' accuracy is calculated by adopting the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Total number of error free clauses of L2}}{\text{Total number of clauses of L2 sample}} = \text{L2 accuracy}$$

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Content analysis was applied on students' essays to find out the effects of task-based instruction on students' knowledge of collocations and their usage to enhance their writing performance. The content analysis was administered on the essays produced by the learners and were analyzed on sentence complexity, lexical complexity, accuracy, and fluency. Table 2 depicts the quantitative scores for lexical complexity from pre-study and post-study.

Table 2 presents the results on overall score of language complexity, and it is revealed through the results of this study that the overall score of complexity level pre-study writing samples from students is comparatively higher than before the commencement of the study, +1000.42 > +907.

The statistics show the proof of progress in L2 lexical complexity in writing skills with the TBLT approach, as the L2 complexity of the post-study is more than that in the pre-study.

It hence has demonstrated that the essays developed by the learners employing developed task-based instructional materials contain advanced diversity and abundance of lexicons such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs and thus causing this lexical complexity.



Table 2. L2 lexical complexity from pre and post study.

S. no	Pre-study			Post-study			Difference
	Total words	Content words	L2 complexity	Total words	Content words	L2 complexity	
1	202	140	69.30	230	180	78.26	+8.96
2	98	36	36.73	171	75	43.85	+7.12
3	98	43	43.87	143	71	49.65	+5.78
4	120	45	37.5	135	56	41.48	+3.98
5	143	66	46.15	176	82	46.59	+0.44
6	173	78	45.08	185	84	45.40	+0.32
7	121	58	47.93	224	108	48.21	+0.28
8	90	43	47.77	140	75	53.57	+5.8
9	96	41	42.7	127	60	47.24	+4.54
10	122	54	44.26	169	82	48.52	+4.26
11	120	60	50	124	63	50.80	+0.8
12	138	66	47.82	141	70	49.64	+1.82
13	98	47	47.95	112	65	58.03	+10.08
14	138	60	43.47	144	65	45.13	+1.66
15	154	65	42.20	265	112	42.26	+0.06
16	253	90	35.57	151	93	61.58	+26.01
17	138	60	43.47	219	101	46.11	+2.64
18	165	69	41.81	160	75	46.87	+5.06
19	136	61	44.85	156	74	47.43	+2.58
20	140	68	48.57	134	78	58.20	+9.63
Total			+907			+1000.82	101.82
Difference in improvement	101.82						

Table 3. L2 written fluency.

ESL.S.no	Pre-study			Post-study			Difference
	Word count	T-units	L2 fluency	Word count	T-units	L2 Fluency	
1	202	20	10.1	230	17	13.52	3.42
2	96	14	6.8	171	11	15.54	8.74
3	98	12	8.16	143	16	8.93	0.77
4	120	11	10.9	135	7	19.28	8.38
5	143	13	11	176	11	16	5
6	173	17	10.17	185	16	11.56	1.39
7	121	15	8.06	224	20	11.2	3.14
8	90	10	9	140	12	11.66	2.66
9	96	13	7.38	127	15	8.46	1.08
10	122	13	9.38	169	16	10.56	1.18
11	120	12	10	124	11	11.3	1.3
12	138	14	9.86	141	15	9.4	-0.46
13	98	12	8.2	112	12	9.3	1.1
14	138	15	9.2	144	14	10.2	1
15	154	16	9.6	265	22	11.6	2
16	253	21	12.0	151	16	9.43	-2.57
17	138	14	9.8	219	22	9.9	0.1
18	165	18	9.1	160	16	10	0.9
19	136	15	9.0	156	17	9.1	0.1
20	140	14	10	134	13	10.3	0.3
Total			187.71			227.24	39.53
Difference in improvement	39.53						

Table 3 presents the L2 written fluency difference between before and after the study period. It is evident that the L2 fluency of the study participants (n=20) was 187.71 in the pre-study samples, and it was enhanced to 227.24

after the TBWI implementation in classes during the twelve-week study period. Henceforth, a development was recorded in L2 fluency as the cumulative sum of L2 fluency in the post-study is greater ( $227.24 > 187.71$ ), showing an enhancement of  $+39.53$ . Likewise, Table 3 illustrates that the L2 fluency mark in the post-study of almost all ESL learners is constantly on the surge excluding a few learners (i.e., S-12,16) whose L2 fluency measure in the post-study has slightly decreased (i.e.,  $-0.46, -2.57$ ).

Table 4. L2 accuracy.

ESL.S.no	Pre-study			Post-study			
	Total clauses	Total Error free clauses	L2 accuracy	Total clauses	Total error free clauses	L2 Accuracy	Difference
1	18	14	0.77	22	20	0.90	0.13
2	15	9	0.6	16	13	0.81	0.21
3	17	8	0.47	19	16	0.84	0.37
4	15	9	0.6	16	14	0.87	0.27
5	11	6	0.5	18	12	0.66	0.16
6	22	13	0.6	26	19	0.73	0.13
7	19	7	0.36	29	22	0.75	0.39
8	12	6	0.50	15	13	0.86	0.36
9	14	9	0.64	17	14	0.82	0.18
10	15	10	0.66	17	14	0.82	0.16
11	17	6	0.35	16	13	0.81	0.46
12	15	10	0.66	16	12	0.75	0.09
13	14	8	0.57	16	14	0.87	0.3
14	24	15	0.62	19	19	1	0.38
15	20	15	0.75	32	25	0.78	0.03
16	24	17	0.70	19	18	0.94	0.24
17	20	8	0.4	22	17	0.77	0.37
18	24	16	0.66	24	21	0.87	0.21
19	20	9	0.45	18	11	0.61	0.16
20	18	12	0.66	17	12	0.70	0.04
Total			11.52			16.16	4.64
Difference in improvement	4.64						

Table 4 presents the level findings on written language accuracy in the pre-study and post-study samples. It has been revealed that the total score of level of accuracy from pre-study is different from the score of post-study;  $16.16 > 11.52$ , with a difference of 4.64. This demonstrates a higher level of accuracy; hence, it establishes the fact that the students if being instructed using task-based resources can produce essays with an advanced level of accuracy.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics of language performance (N=20).

Language performance	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Pre-study fluency	6.8	12	9.38	1.22
Post-study fluency	8.46	11.36	11.36	2.6
Pre-study L2 complexity	35.57	69.3	45.35	6.7
Post-study L2 complexity	41.48	78.26	50.44	8.2
Pre-study accuracy	0.35	0.77	0.57	0.12
Post-study accuracy	0.61	1	0.80	0.09

Note: SD= Standard deviation.  
M= Mean.  
Min.= Minimum.  
Max.= Maximum.

Subsequently, Table 5 demonstrates the values of descriptive statistics for the Mean and Standard Deviation about fluency, accuracy, and language complexity in pre and post study phases. It shows that the mean value in fluency ( $n=20$ ) of  $11.36 > 9.38$  is greater in post-study writing samples with a  $2.6 > 1.22$  SD value. If we take the Mean and SD for accuracy into consideration, it's also showing signs of improvement. With  $0.80 > 0.57$  (M) and

0.12 > 0.09 (SD), and the minimum and maximum values in L2 accuracy (Min= 0.61 > 0.35, Max= 1 > 0.77) in pre and post-study is also supporting the claims to develop language accuracy. With an M value of 50.44 > 45.35 and 8.2 > 6.7 in SD value L2 complexity is also enriched, indicating (Min=41.48 > 35.57, Max= 78.26 > 69.3).

Based on scores on complexity, fluency, and accuracy, task-based writing instructions have shown evident traces of refining students' writing skills. Tasks given in the class stimulate students to use various forms of collocations, resulting in a greater understanding of word structure, spelling, and the use of vocabulary. Likewise, the process helped develop students' understanding of grammatical structures. These results also sustain and support the findings of Sundari et al. (2018) and Ahmed and Bidin (2016) in which the use of TBI has improved the learners' writing skills, as well as enhanced the L2 proficiency indicators like L2 complexity, fluency, and accuracy. Grounded on the scores of fluency, L2 complexity, and accuracy, TBIs have demonstrated improvement in students' writing skills. The formulaic language helps student writers improve language fluency and accuracy in writing and broaden lexical knowledge.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The study findings illustrate that communicative and consciousness raising task-based instruction, or task-based language teaching at large, has a noteworthy effect on overall writing performance in the terms of language complexity, accuracy and fluency. Employing collocations in lesson plans can assist the students to write more accurately and fluently, thus, enhancing their understanding of writing. Precisely, task-based instructions have successfully fostered students to use proper collocations in meaningful context and construct essays using multiple sources of tasks; simultaneously, tasks specified in the lessons developed learners' awareness of target language. Moreover, reliable tasks empowered the students to accomplish activities in the class as well as be more confident about their understanding of subject matter. Thus, the aftermath of tasks implementation and completion are pertinent to the language usage in actual life-like situations. A recommendation to retain the collocational pattern in their memory is to use these collocations in meaningful context and practice them frequently. Therefore, the tasks and language production are applicable to the language used in the real world.

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