Saudi EFL university learners' perspectives on using task-based language teaching in promoting opinion essay writing

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Abstract
The fundamental aim of this study is to investigate Saudi EFL university learners' perspectives on using the task-based language teaching (TBLT) approach to improve opinion essay writing in the College of Science and Arts in Tanumah, King Khalid University. The study was conducted during the second semester of the academic year 2021-2022. To collect data, the study uses a questionnaire and tests as primary tools. The population of the study covers all third-level EFL university students in the aforementioned college. Thirty students are randomly chosen and then they are divided into the control group (CG) and the experimental group (EG), each of which consists of 15 students. The participants in the CG learned how to write an opinion essay by employing traditional teaching methods based on the structure of the textbook. In contrast, the participants in the EG learned how to write an opinion essay by implementing the task-based language teaching approach, which is based on the TBLT framed by Wills (1996). The post-test analysis reveals that the implementation of TBLT has significantly improved the opinion essay writing of Saudi EFL university learners. In addition, the analysis of questionnaires of the experimental group shows that most Saudi EFL university learners hold positive perspectives towards implementing TBLT to improve their opinion essay writing.

Keywords: implementation; Task-based Language Teaching Approach (TBLT); Opinion Essay; Saudi EFL University Learners; Perspectives; Writing.

1. Introduction

The ability to write is crucial to learning in any foreign language, but it is incredibly significant in English since it is now the global language. Writing helps students in some ways in the EFL context. Rao (2007) as cited in Ahmed (2019), for instance, discusses the value of writing in an EFL environment and how this environment encourages learners to organize their thoughts, engage in analysis and criticism, and improve their summarizing skills. Furthermore, it improves students' ability to reflect, think, and learn the language. Writing assists students in creating a language by structuring and linking ideas through written work.

Writing, according to Pham, V. et al. (2021), is the hardest of the four skills for many learners of a foreign language because of the many variables that should be addressed, like grammar, vocabulary, content, styles, and genres. For EFL students, mastering these components makes writing a difficult endeavor. As a result, the learners' written performance is marked by a lack of coherence and cohesion, as well as grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors. It can be challenging for EFL students to write an effective and persuasive paragraph. That is, they might employ improper cohesive devices or compose discontented sentences.

Many studies have concluded that the most difficult element of language acquisition for second-language learners is writing. For instance, according to Grami (2010: 9), cited in Al Badi (2015), writing is a skill that may be challenging to master or teach since it is a complicated mental process that calls for "careful thought, discipline, and focus." Furthermore, Humphreys (2004) states that "*Learning to write in L1 or L2 is extremely difficult. Even educated native speakers have difficulty, hence the abundance of books on the subject*". For Richards (1990), "learning how to write effectively is a complicated, lengthy process, one that causes anxiety and frustration in many learners." Nunan (1999), declares that "*producing a clear, fluent, extended piece of writing is the most difficult activity to perform in language learning, which is much more problematic for second language learners.*" In this respect, a study by Ahmed (2016) reveals that students' writing performance is poor because of factors such mother tongue interference, inadequate activities, the inadequate practice of fundamental writing techniques, and insufficient follow-up on the student's writing performance.

According to Yunus (2020), to learn more effectively, Namaziandost, et.al (2019), think that task-based teaching is a good technique for teaching languages since it considers the way languages are learned. Task-based instruction is essential for enhancing the usage of English as a teaching language. TBLT emphasizes the student's participation in activities that aims to prepare the students to handle real-world performance and communication situations.

So many previous studies discussed the role and influence of TBLT on improving the writing performance of EFL learners. Pham et al. (2020, as cited in Vu et al. (2021), for example, claim that EFL learners are unmotivated to learn writing. So, they propose that a useful teaching approach like task-based instruction should be used to assist students to learn better in the writing classroom. Likewise, Jeon (2005) in Sundari (2018), believes that learning a language is a very complicated procedure that requires interactions between several elements, including materials, exercises, and evaluative feedback. These variables are positively impacted by TBLT. It suggests that TBLT offers students access to reliable sources of significant content, conducive environments for communication, and encouraging feedback that promotes language acquisition.

Cao (2012) in Sari et al (2018) mentions in her study that the Task-based Approach was utilized

in the EFL writing classes. The results revealed that the Task-based Approach was a viable option for college EFL students who are seeking the improvement of their writing skills. She emphasizes the importance of shifting activities from teacher-centered writing instruction to student-centered writing instruction.

The current research seeks to investigate the impacts of TBLT on opinion essay writing among Saudi EFL university students in consideration of the encouraging findings of other research papers on the effect of TBLT on the written language of EFL learners.

1-1 Statement of the Problem.

This study attempts to investigate Saudi EFL university learners' perspectives on using the TBLT approach to improve opinion essay writing in the College of Science and Arts in Tanumah, King Khalid University.

1-2 Questions of the Study.

This study poses the following questions:

1. What perspectives do Saudi EFL university learners hold about implementing TBLT approach?
2. Does the implementation of the TBLT approach improve the Saudi EFL university learners' opinion essay writing?

1-3 Hypotheses of the Study.

Based on the research questions, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

1. Saudi EFL university learners have a positive perspective on the TBLT approach.
2. TBLT approach improves opinion essay writing among Saudi EFL university learners.

1-4 The Study objectives.

This study aims to accomplish the following objectives:

1. To investigate the perspectives of Saudi EFL university learners using a TBLT approach.
2. To determine the extent to which TBLT implementation improves Saudi EFL university learners' writing skills.

1-5 Significance of the Study.

Since the current study sheds light on the influence of implementing the TBLT approach on opinion essay writing from EFL university learners' perspectives, it will be very significant to EFL university instructors by giving them good insights about how to implement this approach and modify and update their teaching methodologies.

1-6 Limits of the Study.

The research is primarily centered on the influence of implementing the TBLT approach on opinion essay writing of Saudi EFL university learners in the College of Science and Arts in Tanumah at King Khalid University in the academic year 2021/2022 during the second semester. A questionnaire and tests are used as primary tools for collecting data.

2-Literature Review

2-1 The notion behind task-based language teaching (TBLT)

Derakhshan (2018) believes that task-based approaches to language teaching have become increasingly popular over the past 20 years, as seen in the extensive literature on the subject. Considering this,

Johnson (2001), as cited in Derakhshan (2018:529), observes that "*the late 1990s may come to be known in applied linguistics as ''The Age of the Task*" (p. 195). For Willis (1996), as cited in Brigette and Inthapthim (2019), TBLT is a reaction to the shortcomings of the Presentation, Practice, and Production (PPP) approach. For Richards (2006), '' *the introduction of the TBLT approach signaled a moment of a significant shift in language teaching, and as a result, it was seen by experts and researchers as a more effective and better technique for language learning.* According to Malmir et al (2011:81), "*nowadays, the concept of task and task-based methodology has been the common orthodoxy in the field of language teaching, and it is becoming increasingly important in ELT*".

According to Richards and Rogers (2001: 223), TBLT is "*an approach based on the use of tasks as the core unit of planning and instruction in language teaching*". To Harmer (2007: 71).task-based language learning, also known as ''Task-Based Instruction", "*places the performance of meaningful tasks at the center of the learning process*"

Brigette & Inthapthim (2019), consider TBLT to be a learner-centered method that provides learners with a natural context in which to utilize the second language through communicative exercises that prioritize meaning over form. The tasks are designed to motivate students to complete meaningful, authentic tasks (often in small groups). TBLT is defined by Richards and Rodgers (2001:223) as "*an approach based on the use of tasks as the core unit of planning and instruction in language teaching*". It is also described by Willis & Willis (2007), as an approach to language instruction where solving problems from the actual world is prioritized over completing activities that are evaluated based on their results.

2.2 Definition of the task.

One of the most crucial concepts in TBLT, according to Ahmed et al (2021), is "task." In other words, the TBLT is founded on the idea of "task." There are numerous ways to define the word "task." A task, for instance, is described by Prabhu (1987:24) as "*an activity which demands learners to arrive at an outcome from supplied knowledge through some process of thought, and which permits teachers to supervise and regulate that process.*" According to Willis (1996a), as cited in Amer & Demirel are "*activities where the learner uses the target language for a communicative purpose (goal) to achieve an outcome*" (p. 23).

Nunan (2004) describes the term task as "*a piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing, or interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on mobilizing their grammatical knowledge to express meaning, and where the intention is to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form.*" (P.4). For Ellis (2003:197), "*a task is a device that guides learners to engage in certain types of information-processing that are believed to be important for effective language use and/or language acquisition from a variety of sources.*"

2.3 Framework of TBLT Approach:

There have been numerous TBLT models used for classroom instruction, according to Ahmed et al (2021). For instance, in a 1987 publication of his work, Prabhu, who is largely viewed as the first language instructor to use the task-based approach, suggested a three-stage paradigm. These three stages are explained below:

    (a) pre-task (preparatory),
    (b) task (meaning-focused, interactive process),
    (c) post-task (discussion - attending to form).

Willis (1996) adopted the original model of Prabhu (1987) on the task-based method, and produced a rigorous work that had a significant impact on this literary aspect. The framework for TBLT was carefully created and approved by Jane Willis (1996a, 1996b, 1998, 2001, 2007, 2009), who was later supported by other authors (Richards Frost, 2006). To employ TBLT in the classroom, Jane Willis (1996) proposes a methodology in her book "*A Framework for Task-Based Learning.*" Table 2 from Mónica & Jeisson (2010) demonstrates that this model is commonly developed in three phases:

1) The pre-task (introduction to topic and task)

The pre-task phase provides the students with an introduction to the topic and task using terms and phrases connected to it. Typically, this stage of the framework is the shortest. Pre-task activities ought to actively engage all students, expose them to material that is pertinent to the work at hand, and, above all, make the task at hand exciting (Willis, 1996:43). Learners recollect previous knowledge during the pre-task phase, which aids them in finishing the task cycle phase. The pre-task phase's goal is to get learners ready to complete the task in a way that will encourage language learning (Ellis, 2003:244). According to Willis (1996:43-44), the following language activities can be included in the pre-task stage:

- Memory Challenge
- Sorting words and phrases
- Formulating questions to ask
- Brainstorming and mind-mapping
- Teacher sharing a similar experience.

2) Task cycle (includes the planning, reporting, and the actual task)

Here, to successfully finish the task, learners participate in small groups or pairs, which is often a reading, listening, or problem-solving activity. They then create a report for the entire class detailing how they finished the task and the findings they came to.

According to Korkmaz (2014), the task cycle enables students to accomplish tasks using whatever language they already know while also enhancing their language proficiency as they prepare their task reports. During the task stage, pairs of students do the task while the teacher listens to the dialogue. The teacher then assists with oral or written correction of the completed work. In front of the class, one of these pairs acts out their dialogue. When the task is finished, the students will hear native speakers repeat the very same talk so they can make a comparison to it with their own.

3) Language Focus and Feedback (the last analysis and extra practice).

Lastly, either verbally or in writing, the students report their findings to the class. The language focus stage, which comes last, highlights particular language aspects of the task. It may also be acceptable to provide feedback on the student's achievement during the reporting phase at this time.

Willis & Willis (2001:178) refer to the post-task stage as the language focus stage. They study the post-task period using the terms "language focus" and "language practice," respectively. Students try to understand the rules of the second language as well as its usage during the language focus stage. At this phase, students are familiar with some specific usage and application of language features. At the phase of language practice, a wide range of tasks can be examined to increase learners' comprehension. In other words, the instructor conducts practice exercises as necessary based on the language analysis

work that is already written on the board or by using illustrations from the text or transcript. Choral repetition, memory-testing games, phrase completion exercises, past tense verb matching games, and dictionary checks are all examples of practice activities. (Willis & Willis, 1996:57–58). As mentioned in Mónica & Jeisson, Willis' (1996 b) framework is shown in Table 2 and is used in the current investigation (2010).

Table 2. Task-based lesson plan model (Willis, 1996, p. 38)

Pre-task		
Introduction to topic and tasks		
Teacher explores the topic with the class, highlights useful words and phrases. Learners may be exposed to examples.		

Task cycle		
Task	**Planning**	**Report**
Students do the task in pairs or small groups. Teacher monitors; mistakes do not matter.	Students prepare to report. Accuracy is important, so the teacher stands by and gives advice.	Students exchange or present report. Teacher listens and then comments.

Laguage focus	
Analysis	**Practice**
Students examine then discuss.	Teacher conducts practice of new words.

2.4 A Review of Some Previous Related Studies

The influence of the TBLT approach on the writing abilities of EFL learners has been the focus of numerous studies. Therefore, the purpose of this section is to give an in-depth assessment of some of these previous related studies and to explain their findings. For instance, at Tien Giang University, researchers Hanh and Tuan (2018) examine how TBLT affects students' writing abilities and motivation. A quasi-experimental design was used, with 40 first-year students equally divided into the control and experimental groups. The results of the analysis of the data from the participants' pretests, posttests, and pre-and post-questionnaires showed that TBLT had a positive impact on the writing performance of EFL learners, with improvements in all five areas: grammar, content, organization, vocabulary, and mechanics. TBLT was also found to have a positive impact on students' writing motivation and motivation and students' writing abilities are positively correlated.

Marashi & Dadari (2018) examine the effects of task-based writing on the writing abilities and creativity of EFL learners. 56 female intermediate Iranian EFL students were selected from a total of 89 for this study based on their performance on a piloted sample PET. The learners were then assigned randomly to one control group with 28 participants and one experimental group with the same number of students. Students participated in a writing test (part of PET) and the Abedi-Schumacher Creativity Test (ACT) as pretests before the treatment. During the 18 sessions of treatment, the same amount of instruction and writing assignments were given to both groups. The experimental group completed writing assignments while the control group received no writing assignments at all. Both groups received the ACT and a writing test (another PET) after the program. The statistical analysis's findings showed that task-based writing benefited students greatly in both their writing and their creativity.

In their investigation, Pham, V. et al. (2021) seek to determine whether task-based instruction enhanced the accuracy and fluency of EFL students' writing. 56 non-English majors from Van Lang University in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, participated in the study. The experimental group learned to

write using task-based training, whereas the control group learned to write paragraphs using a product-based approach that matched the current teaching strategies and the learning environment. Data from the pre-and post-tests were gathered to evaluate the writing skills of the students. According to this research, the fourteen-week treatment with task-based training resulted in a significant improvement in post-test scores for the experimental group. Additionally, new, and creative teaching strategies were developed because of the current research to help local instructors evaluate their current teaching strategies and boost their effectiveness.

The current study positions itself as a continuation of and in agreement with some of the previously analyzed research carried out in the field of TBLT methodology. The current study differs from the previously reviewed studies in that it seeks to explore the views of Saudi EFL university learners toward using a TBLT approach, as well as to determine to what extent the implementation of TBLT improves Saudi EFL university learners' opinion essay writing.

3 Research Methodology

3.1 Population and Sampling

This study's population includes all third-year EFL university learners in Tanumah's College of Science and Arts who are enrolled in *Writing 3* during the second semester of the academic year 2021/2022. There are thirty students in total. The participants are divided into two groups: control (CG) and experimental (EG). Each group is composed of 15 students. The participants are Saudi male students with Arabic as their mother tongue. Their ages range from 20 to 22 years old, and they share the same cultural, linguistic, and ethnic backgrounds.

3.2 Instructional Materials

Both CG and EG participants study the textbook "Trio Writing 3." by Alice Savage & Colin Ward (2015) as a prescribed coursebook for the course of Writing 3 in the academic year 2021–2022, second semester. According to the course specification, this course is designed to help students reach the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages' intermediate level (B1 CEFR). Furthermore, the course covers topics relevant to students' daily lives. It employs a three-tier analysis strategy that includes vocabulary, grammatical structure, and writing composition. Overall, it provides students with a wide range of practice opportunities, from the sentence level to the paragraph level, with a focus on its organizational parts: the topic sentence, the body of the paragraph, and the concluding sentence.

The course aims to improve and consolidate previously acquired writing skills. Students are guided in gathering, organizing, and analyzing information to produce higher-quality writing. The main objective of the course is to teach learners how to write a standard, simple, and logical essay.

This textbook is divided into three units, each with three chapters. 9 chapters cover 9 topics in total. Each unit is dedicated to a specific type of essay writing. Unit One, for example, focuses on developing opinion essay writing abilities. Since the primary objective of this research study is to examine the effect of TBLT implementation on opinion essay writing, the study procedures will be carried out with Unit One.

3.3 Procedures

The participants in the control group learn how to write an opinion essay by employing traditional

teaching methods based on the structure of the textbook. The Trio Writing 3 guides students to write essays using models and scaffolded tasks. The writing lesson builds on the previous lessons by bringing the language and theme together in a six-step, scaffolded writing task- {See ''Trio Writing 3 With Online Practice' by Alice Savage & Colin Ward (2015), Unit One – Chapter One, Pp.19-35}. These six steps can be explained as follows:

Step 1: Preparation

This step involves reading about a certain topic followed by a group of questions to check the student's comprehension. Multiple writing strategies within the writing process are also embedded in this step to present focused instruction that supports the assignment. Writing strategies feature additional language points and writing skills so that students become aware of academic writing.

Step 2: Prewriting

Here, the students are directed to write notes about the topic they have chosen. The topic must be divided into three major sections as follows:

    i.   Introduction:

The students give background information about a company.

    ii.   Support paragraph(s): This is the main part of the essay, here the students are requested to explain what they like about the company. Give examples of people or services that make the company special. In this section, the students can write one or two paragraphs.

    iii.   Conclusion: the students explain why the company has customer loyalty.

Step 3: Writing

Here, the students are requested to look at their notes from the prewrite step and complete certain sentences about the topic. They then write their essay by using the notes to help them guide their writing. Finally, they add the title to the essay.

Step 4: Revision

In this step, the students read about a related topic that discusses a certain writing strategy such as using transition words to signal a change of focus or to signal new ideas in paragraphs.

Step 5: Editing

This step involves correcting mistakes according to a certain editing checklist.

Step 6: Publishing

This is the final step in which students are expected to complete their final draft of the essay.

Contrarily, participants in the experimental group are taught how to compose an opinion essay by implementing the TBLT approach which is based on the TBLT framework by Wills (1996:38). In this framework, as has been mentioned before, there are three stages. That is, lectures are planned according to these three stages.

3.4 Tools of data collection.

The study uses the following tools to gather data:

3.4.1 Testing

In terms of testing as a primary source of collecting data, there are two tests: pretest & post-test. These two tests are conducted as follows:

The implementation of this study takes 6 weeks, with two lectures per week: from January 23rd to March 3rd, 2022. One week before the experiment, the participants of two groups are asked to complete a 60-minute pretest to assess their writing ability. In this pretest, the participants are instructed to write an essay between 150 and 200 words about *a business that they like*. The main objective behind conducting such a test is to help researchers select students for both groups based on the similarity in their English language writing skills.

From week 1 to week 6, as it has been mentioned before, the participants in CG learned how to write an opinion essay by implementing the conventional method whereas the participants in EG learned by employing TBLT. The participants of both groups are instructed to do a posttest by the end of the sixth week. In this posttest, the participants are instructed to write an essay between 150 and 200 words about *a company that they like explaining what makes customers loyal to that company*. The duration of the writing test is an hour. Both tests are from the same book to ensure the same level of difficulty, that is, "Trio Writing 3" by Alice Savage & Colin Ward (2015) as a prescribed coursebook for the course of Writing 3. The pre-test and post-test are marked according to the ESL Composition Profile adopted from (Jacobs, et al., 1981) which is composed of five aspects: content (30 points), organization (20 points), vocabulary (20 points), language use (25 points), and mechanics (5 points). In this study, three inter-raters are selected to assess students' essays using the analytic writing rubrics provided by Jacobs et.al. (1981. They are English associate professors at King Khalid University, College of Science and Arts in Tanumah, having more than ten years of experience in teaching writing. Students' paper scores are graded individually. Before being marked, the students' names are removed.

3.4.2 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is administered to the experimental group to get the students' feedback and perspectives about the impact of implementing the TBLT approach on the opinion essay writing of Saudi EFL university learners. The questionnaire data is analyzed by calculating the frequency and percentage scores of the student's responses. The questionnaire includes 30 close-ended yes/no questions. These questions are divided into four tables: 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, and 4.9.

4. Data Analysis &Discussion

In this part, the essay writing tests, and questionnaire will be analyzed and described as follows:

4.1. Analysis of the essay writing test

The results of pre-tests indicate that there is no significant difference between CG and EG. The students of both control and experimental groups are again instructed to do an essay writing test by the end of the sixth week. Again, the data collected through these post-tests are analyzed quantitatively. Then, to analyze quantitative data, descriptive statistical techniques such as frequencies and percentages are used. Finally, data is presented using tables and charts. The researchers used descriptive statistics to present the numerical data in charts and percentages.

As it has been mentioned before, the students' essays are assessed by three raters independently

using Jacobs ESL Composition Profile (Jacobs et al., 1981) which is assessed according to five aspects: content, structure, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. The scores used for computation are the closest score between raters with ten range points. The tables below provide a statistical description of frequencies and percentages of students' scores obtained from the raters in the writing test of the two groups. That is, the results of each of the five items are shown as follows:

Table 4.1: Content

Groups	Scores	Percentage
Control	355	79%
Experimental	366	81.33 %

The findings shown in Table 4.1 demonstrate that the participants of the experimental group scored better grades for the content in their essay writing test. This result can be presented in the following chart:
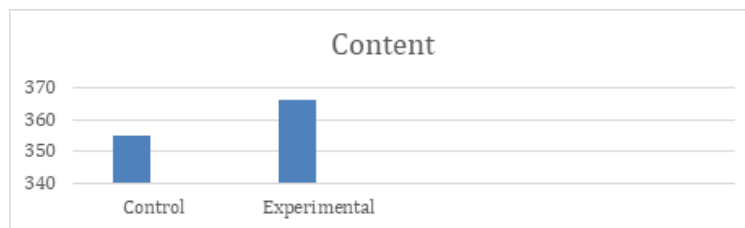

Chart 4.1 content

Table 4.2: Organization

Groups	Scores	Percentage
Control	238	79.33 %
Experimental	245	82%

The results of the study in Table 4.2 illustrate that the learners in the experimental group scored better grades for the organization in their essay writing test. This result can be presented in the following chart:
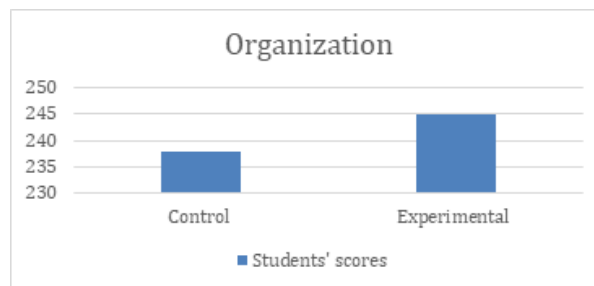

Chart 4.2: Organization

Table 4.3 Vocabulary

Groups	Scores	Percentage
Control	242	80.66 %
Experimental	250	83.33 %

The findings shown in Table 4.3 show indicate that the students in the experimental group scored better grades for the vocabulary in their essay writing test. This result can be presented in the following chart:
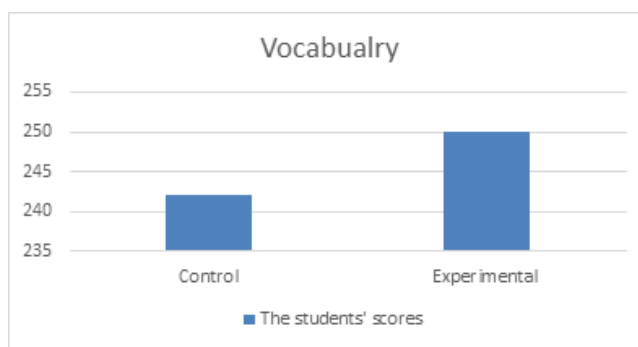
Chart 4.3: Vocabulary

Table 4.4 Language use

Groups	Scores	Percentage
Control	305	81.33%
Experimental	316	84.26%

The findings of the study as shown in Table 4.4 prove that the students in the experimental group scored better grades for language use in their essay writing test. This result can be presented in the following chart:

Chart 4.4: Language use

Table 4.5 Mechanics

Groups	Scores	Percentage
Control	61	81.33%
Experimental	67	89.33 %

The findings presented in Table 4.5 show that the students in the experimental group scored better grades for mechanics in their essay writing test. This result can be presented in the following chart:
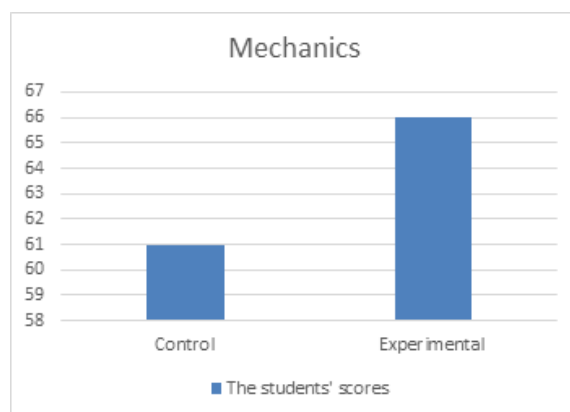

Chart 4.5: Mechanics

Regarding the charts and tables, it can be concluded that the analysis of the data reveals that all five criteria used by Jacobs et al. (1981) to evaluate written essays—content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics—have greatly improved because of the use of the TBLT approach.

4.2 Analysis of the students' questionnaires

The following tables show students' responses:

Table 4-6 Learners' understandings of tasks and TBLT (Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7)

No.	Statements	Yes		No	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1	A task is a goal-directed communication.	13	86.67%	2	13.33%
2	A task entails a primary emphasis on meaning.	14	93.33%	1	6.67%
3	A task has a specific outcome.	14	93.33%	1	6.67%
4	A task is any action that requires the learner to use the target language.	15	100%	0	0%
5	TBLT is based on the student-centered teaching approach.	12	80%	3	20%
6	There are three stages to TBLT: pre-task, task implementation, and post-task.	15	100%	0	0%
7	Tasks are always completed in groups or pairs.	15	100%	0	0%

From table 4.6, the following points can be inferred:

- 86.67% of the students agree that a task is goal-directed communication.
- 93.33% of students believe that a task entails a primary emphasis on meaning and that the task has a specific outcome. For all students, a task is any action that requires the learner to use the target language.
- 80% of students think that TBLT is built on the student-centered instructional approach.
- All students believe that there are three stages to TBLT: pre-task, task implementation, and post-task. They also believe that tasks are always completed in groups or pairs.

Table 4-7: Learners' perspectives about the tasks (Questions 8,9,10, and 11)

No.	Statement	Yes		No	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
8	The task was boring for me.	2	13.33%	13	86.67%
9	Learning English writing by using tasks was very interesting.	13	86.67%	2	13.33%
10	Tasks provided by TBLT help learn English writing.	13	86.67%	2	13.33%
11	Tasks provided by TBLT are helpful in real-life situations	14	93.33%	1	6.67%

Table (4.7) shows that

- 86.67% of students believe that the task was not boring for them, and they also believe that learning English writing by using tasks was very interesting and that tasks provided by TBLT help them learn English writing.
- 93.33% of students think that tasks provided by TBLT are helpful in real-life situations.

Table 4-8 Learners' perspectives about the implementation of the TBLT in the classroom (Questions 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20)

No.	statements	Yes		No	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
12	TBLT makes learning English interesting	13	86.67%	2	13.33%
13	TBLT makes learning English easy	13	86.67%	2	13.33%
14	TBLT enhances my learning motivation.	12	80%	3	20%
15	TBLT makes me feel more confident in using English.	13	86.67%	2	13.33%
16	TBLT creates a relaxing classroom environment that promotes language use.	13	86.67%	2	13.33%
17	TBLT encourages cooperative learning	13	86.67%	2	13.33%
18	TBLT gives me many opportunities for natural language use	14	93.33%	1	6.67%
19	TBLT enables me to interact and speak freely.	13	86.67%	2	13.33%
20	TBL creates a collaborative learning environment	13	86.67%	2	13.33%

According to the above-mentioned table (4.8), the following points can be inferred:

- 86.67% of students believe that TBLT makes learning English interesting and easy.
- 80% of students think that TBLT enhances their learning motivation.
- TBLT makes 86.67% of students feel more confident in using English
- TBLT encourages cooperative learning and creates a relaxing classroom environment that promotes language use for 86.67% of students.
- TBLT gives 93.33% of students many opportunities for natural language use.
- 86.67% of students believe that TBLT enables them to interact and speak freely and that TBL creates a collaborative learning environment.

Table 4-9 Learners' perspectives about the impact of implementing TBLT on writing skills. (Questions 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30)

No.	Statements	Yes		No	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
21	Learning through tasks can stimulate my imagination in English.	11	73.33%	4	26.67%
22	Learning writing by using tasks is very interesting.	12	80%	3	20%
23	TBLT assigns tasks that help me improve not only my writing but also my other language skills.	14	93.33%	1	6.67%
24	TBLT encourages me to have more motivation when writing the target language	13	86.67%	2	13.33%
25	TBLT helps me build confidence in writing	14	93.33%	1	6.67%
26	TBLT encourages me to be more interested in writing English.	12	93.33%	1	6.67%
27	TBLT improves my English writing skill.	14	93.33%	1	6.67%
28	TBLT encourages me to be more active in my English writing skill.	14	93.33%	1	6.67%
29	I am more motivated to learn and study English since using a TBL approach.	14	93.33%	1	6.67%
30	My English has improved since we started using TBLT	12	80%	3	20%

Table (4.9) indicates that.
- 73.33% of students see that learning through tasks can stimulate their imagination in English.
- For 80% of students, learning to write through tasks is very interesting.
- TBLT assigns tasks that help 93.33% of students improve not only writing but also other language skills.
- 86.67% of students believe that TBLT encourages them to have more motivation when writing the target language.
- TBLT helps 93.33% of students build confidence in writing.
- TBLT motivates 93.33% of students to become more interested and involved in English writing skills.
- TBLT improves the writing skill of 93.33% of students and encourages them to be more active in English writing skills.
- 93.33% of students see that they are more motivated to learn and study English since using a TBL approach.
- 80% of students think that their English has improved since they started using TBLT.

5. Results and discussions

5.1 The first question of the study

What perspectives do Saudi EFL university learners hold toward implementing TBLT approach?

To answer this question, the analysis of the questionnaire data in Tables 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, and 4.9 shows that majority of Saudi EFL university learners hold positive views and perspectives towards implementing the TBLT approach in improving their opinion essay writing. They believe that learning English writing by using tasks was very interesting and that tasks provided by TBLT help them learn English writing.

It is also evident from the analysis of the questionnaire data in Table 4.8 that the majority of Saudi EFL university learners have positive perspectives on the implementation of the TBLT in the classroom. For them, TBLT enhances learning motivation, encourages cooperative learning, creates a relaxing classroom environment that promotes language, and makes learning English interesting and easy .

5.2 The second question of the study

Does the implementation of the TBLT approach improve the opinion essay writing of Saudi EFL university learners?

The evaluation of the test results reveals that the implementation of TBLT has significantly improved the opinion essay writing of Saudi EFL university learners. It is also evident from the analysis of tables 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, and 4.9 that the findings of the questionnaire show that majority of students agree that TBLT has improved their opinion essay writing on the ground they become more motivated to learn and study English besides that their English has improved since they started using TBLT. Furthermore, learning writing by using tasks is very interesting as it stimulates their imagination in English. Moreover, TBLT encourages them to be more active, and more motivated and to build confidence when writing the target language. Generally, TBLT provides tasks that help students develop not only writing abilities but also other language skills.

6. Conclusions and Implications

The main objectives of this research paper are to examine the views of Saudi EFL university learners towards using the TBLT approach and to find out to what extent the implementation of TBLT improve Saudi EFL university learners' writing skill. Based on the analysis of data from both tests and questionnaires, the current study reveals that the majority of Saudi EFL university learners maintain positive views and perspectives towards implementing the TBLT approach in improving their opinion essay writing. The study reveals also that the implementation of TBLT has significantly improved the opinion essay writing of Saudi EFL university learners. In this respect, the results of this research are similar to those of other studies conducted in various contexts. For instance, the study of Hanh and Tuan (2018) shows that the use of TBLT at Tien Giang University has considerably improved students' writing abilities. Significant improvements were made in each of the five criteria used to assess the participants' written work. Furthermore, the participants in the TBLT condition significantly enhanced their motivation to write. The findings of a research study

by Sundari (2018) have proved that TBLT has also a considerable impact on writing performance in terms of format, content, organization, grammar, and sentence structure. Based on the findings of a study by Waguey & Hufana (2013), it is concluded that task-based instructional materials are useful tools for improving students' writing abilities. Similarly, Derakhshan (2018) discovered that TBLT at the intermediate level is educationally effective. Furthermore, TBLT reinforces students' attitudes toward English and their writing skills.

Finally, the overall findings of this study may have implications that should provide useful information on the advantages of using the TBLT approach to develop and enhance students' writing or other English language proficiency. It can also show how students perceived the use of TBLT in an EFL classroom context.

7. Suggestions for Further Studies

A similar study to investigate the perspectives of EFL university teachers on using a task-based language teaching approach in the classroom is recommended based on the current study's findings and conclusion. Another comprehensive study with a larger sample of teachers and students can be carried out to investigate the effect of TBLT implementation on the speaking abilities of Saudi EFL university students. Furthermore, additional research should be carried out to examine EFL university students' perspectives on using a task-based language teaching approach in the classroom.

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