

# Exploring the Implementation of Task-Based Language Learning Model: A Review of Studies on Students' Perceptions

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## ABSTRACT

This study attempt to investigate the students' perception on the implementation of Task-Based Language Learning (TBLL) Model. The study involved 18 EFL students as the participants. The data was collected from questionnaire that were administered to all participants and interviews to some students as the representatives. The result showed that the developed model which highlights teaching steps, classroom situation, time allocation, writing activities, and lecturers' performance in the class and the teaching materials are effective to facilitate students to learn and improve their writing skills. The result of this study also revealed that the developed model was perceived by the students to be very well structured because the learning stage started from introducing to presenting stage, the interaction between the lecturers and the students in the academic writing course was very responsive, the students thought that the lecturers treated the students well, most students had positive perceptions of the teaching materials of academic writing subjects and they felt the learning objectives were achieved. They were able to write topic sentences and composed a full text, their writing structure was better, and they recognized the small things. Then, students became more active, motivated and their understanding of the topic was increased.

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## I. I. Introduction

For much of its history, language teaching has observed with a search for the right method. It was felt that somewhere or other there was a method which would work for all learner in all contexts, and that once such a method had been founded the language teaching problem would solve once and for all. For many years the goal of language pedagogy was to find the right method namely a methodological magic formula that would work for all learners at all times.

The field of EFL teaching in Indonesia has undergone many fluctuations and shifts. One EFL teaching approach comes as new solution and substitutes other approach. While some have achieved wide recognition and acceptance at different historical times, others faded away after they came into existence. Common to each method or approach is the belief that the teaching practices a method or an approach supports are more effective and appealing than the previous one. Language approach or methods from traditional approach/method such as Grammar Translation Method, Audiolingual method, Silent way, etc to communicative language teaching more specifically to task-based language teaching has been implemented and modified by the local English teachers to create situation in which the students are focused on communication of meaning through interaction with the tasks.

In task-based language teaching, the use of tasks provides better context for activating learners' acquisition processes and promoting L2 learning (Shehadeh, 2005). In addition, the use of language learning tasks remains a challenge for many teachers because the real tasks of using tasks are not

always straightforward. Textbook-provided activities do not always meet the criteria of a task, and readily available tasks may not be appropriate to meet the learners' goals and needs (Megan, 2014). Besides, the use of real communication activities in language learning, target language to carry out meaningful tasks (Bula-Villalobos & Murillo-Miranda, 2019; Ellis, 2003; Kumaravadivelu, 2006) and the use of useful language to support the learning process (Willis, 1996). Next, Task-Based Language Teaching which focuses on meaning-based learning and students-centered teaching approach would make learners have a sense of accomplishment when they perform the task successfully (Prabhu, 1987).

Task-based language teaching provides students much freedom and natural context to use the target language in the class (Ellis, 2009). At the same time, this learning model guides students to learn language by communicating interactively while engaging in meaningful tasks, and it offers a focus both on form and on communication (Abraham, 2015; Ellis, 2009; Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Waluyo, 2019). In addition, task-based learning is emphasized in meaning form and learning form (Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Mcdonough & Chaikitmongkol, 2007). In practice, the learning activities are designed to help students to have a rich input of the target language. This learning creates a dynamic learning atmosphere with students' high motivation (Jeon & Hahn, 2006). In the end, some researchers inform that this learning can contribute to the improvement of communicative fluency while not neglecting accuracy, and it can be used together with a more traditional approach in the teaching of writing skills (Ellis, 2009); (Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu, 2011); (Mcdonough & Chaikitmongkol, 2007).

In this study, various tasks are beneficial because students can learn language by communicating interactively while engaging in meaningful tasks (Carless, 2002; Littlewood, 2004; Nunan, 2004). Besides, giving various tasks for students is flexible enough to fit into different teaching contexts (Ellis, 2003). In the current study, the use of task-based learning activities is considered an effective approach for teaching four language skills including grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary (Willis & Willis, 2007; Willis, 1996). According to (Douglas & Kim, 2014), task-based learning support students with meaningful classroom tasks and help them complete those tasks through modelling, experiencing, practicing, participating, cooperating, and communicating (Nunan, 2004), (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Task-based learning activities can involve students in group work (Jeon & Hahn, 2006). Because of this, students became more independent in learning and gained an academic skill that they could use in other courses (Mcdonough & Chaikitmongkol, 2007).

Above all, this present work was aimed at finding out the students' perception towards the implementation of task-based language teaching model and to help them bring their awareness of the knowledge and the skills they got during the Task-based language teaching implementation.

## **II. II. Method**

This study employed descriptive qualitative study to investigate students' views on the implementation of task-based language teaching model in teaching academic writing.

### *A. Participants*

The participants of the study were selected purposively, consisted of 20 students. They were the students of English Department at one of the private universities in Mataram.

### *B. Data Collection and Analysis*

The data was gathered through questionnaires and interview. Questionnaire were delivered to all participants as the instrument to gather the data. It consisted of three parts of questions: how students' feel and opinion about teaching step, classroom situation, time allocation, writing activities, lecturers' performance, and writing material, and whether students have the interest to follow the continuous learning processes like what it is. The data obtained from questionnaire were summarized and analyzed using table form. In addition, the interview were conducted to get deeper information from the students' perceptions of task-based language learning model implementation. The results was the analyzed and elaborated with the result of the questionnaire.

### III. Finding and Discussion

TBLL model is viewed from students' perception in the writing classroom. Students perceptions were collected by using questionnaires and interviews that contains students' feeling about the supporting element of the developed model.

#### A. Students' Perceptions on the Implementation of the TBLL Model

The followings are students' perceptions of the developed model, TBLL, that has been implemented in their classroom. The data was gathered from the questionnaires and the interviews

##### 1) Finding and Discussion data from Questionnaires

The perception of students is focused on how students feel when they attend the class to practice writing descriptive text and exposition text. The items questioned include the teaching steps, the situation in the classroom, the allocation of time, writing activities, the performance of the lecturer, and teaching materials. These aspects are divided into three big questions about how students feel when they attend the writing class, how students view the developed model viewed from those aspects, and whether or not students are interested in following the continuous class which applies the TBLL model.

Students are questioned on the three aspects to know their perception of the model developed. Based on the analysis of the results, the mean percentage of perception of students is shown in the table below 14 below.

Table 1. Students' Perception in Writing Class

No	Aspect Assessed	Students' Perception		Percentage (%)	
		Like	Dislike	Like	Dislike
1	<b>How do you feel about</b>				
a	Teaching steps	18	2	90	10
b	Classroom situation	18	2	90	10
c	Time Allocation	18	2	90	10
d	Writing activities	19	1	95	5
e	Lecturer's performance	19	1	95	5
f	Teaching Materials	17	3	85	15
	Aspect assessed	Novelty	No Novelty	Novelty	No Novelty
2	<b>How your opinion is about?</b>				
a	Teaching Steps	18	2	90	10
b	Classroom Situation	17	3	85	15
c	Time Allocation	17	3	85	15
d	Writing activities	18	2	90	10
e	Teacher performance	18	2	90	10
f	Teaching Materials	17	3	85	15
3	<b>Aspects Assessed</b>	Willing	Unwilling	Willing	Unwilling
	You have the interest to follow the continuous learning processes like what it is	20	-	100	-
	Mean			90	10

It can be mentioned from Table 1 that students considered the TBLL model as very good (mean 90%). It indicates that the developed model which highlights teaching steps, classroom situation, time allocation, writing activities, and lecturers' performance in the class and the teaching materials are effective to facilitate students to learn and improve their writing skills. The data are collected by using questionnaires. The items of the questionnaires consist of 13 items which can be seen in appendix 1i.

##### 2) Finding and Discussion Data from Interview

This section discusses the students' perception of the implementation of TBLL model. The data were obtained from the interview. Five central themes were set up as guiding questions for the interview: syntax, social system, the principle of reaction, support system, and direct and accompaniment impact.

The interview was conducted at the end of the teaching program involving all participants. The purpose of this interview was to get comprehensive information regarding the students' perception of the developed model and how students feel when they attend the writing class. There were six questions used for this session taking the focus on several aspects that pertained to teaching steps, the situation in the classroom, the allocation of time, writing activities, the performance of the lecturer, and teaching materials.

In general, the students perceived positively on the implementation of the developed model. The students' perceptions of the developed model are summarized in table 01 below.

Table 2. The summary of students' perception of TBLL model

<b>Central Theme</b>	<b>Students' perception</b>
syntax	The students perceived the teaching step as really good because the learning was starting from the introduction to presenting stage. Students first learned the topic, then did some practice, composed texts, and last presented the text. The students acknowledged that the learning steps are well-structured. Before writing, students have to know the topic of the sentence, introduced the points that should be provided for writings, the examples, and the text models.
Social system	The students thought that the interaction between lecturers and students was very good. The lecturer was the controller of the learning process, provided the materials, and checked the students' tasks. The students could ask the lecturer and the lecturer kept checking the student's writing is very good, then the interaction between students is also great. The students thought the interaction among students happened from studying in groups, they have interacted well, students ideas were not always the same but when learning as a group they elaborated together, then the interaction between lecturer and students are very good, it controls the learning process then provide feedback.
Principle of reaction	The students' taught the way lecturer treated students was very good because the lecturers and the students have actively participated. Lecturers actively went around the class, asked questions, and helped the students with the writing process. The students thought the way lecturers treat students is quite good because the lecturer can respond to the questions that students gave. The lecturer also provided corrections and responses to every student at their desks.
Support system	The students perceived the materials were good and easy to be understood. The teaching materials were repeated so that students could be more focused on the materials being learned. The students stated the material was excellent. The materials were completed with pictures, detailed explanations, and exercises so that they helped me to have a better understanding. The students thought materials were quite complete with many references
Direct and accompaniment impact	The students thought the learning objectives had been achieved. Moreover, the students' understanding had increased, much better than from the previous writing course. The students informed that learning objectives had been achieved. The students were able to write topic sentences and compose one text. The students' writing structure was better, and become more concerned with small things. The learning process had a big impact on students and it improved their writing, motivation and enjoyed academic writing. The students stated that their understanding of the material was very good, the materials provided were not complicated, easy to understand. Their Learning outcomes are quite improved because of many exercises given, then they thought academic writing motivate students to learn continuously.

### *B. Students' Perceptions of the Developed Model*

As indicated in Table 01 the discussion regarding the students' perceptions on the implementation of the developed model divided into five themes including syntax, social system, the

principle of reaction, support system, and Direct and accompaniment impact. The themes were presented with illustrative data examples taken from the interviews.

The data from the interview indicate that the developed model was perceived by the students to be very well structured because the learning stage started from introducing to presenting stage. Students first learned the topic, then did some practices, after that compose text, and last presented the text. S11 commented that the teaching steps had been arranged well, it started from the initial step to presenting stage during the learning process of academic writing. S11 said:

I think it's really good because the learning was starting from the introduction. We first adapt to the topic, then we were given some practice, after that, we made our text, and last we presented our works. The steps are really good. (Student 11)

Moreover, S9 shared a similar opinion. She explained:

The learning is quite good, Sir because the steps are in order. We know that the students can write, but they can't write in a good way at once. There must be good steps to be introduced at first. Now, we know. The steps are really good, Sir. Before we write, we have to know the topic of the sentence, then, we were introduced to the points that should be provided for our writings, the examples, and the text models. (Student 9)

In regard to learning interaction between lecturer-students and student-student in the classroom using the TBLL model, the students articulated positive remarks. Moreover, they also commented that the lecturer controlled the learning process, facilitated the materials, and checked their tasks. Students 5 and 18 said:

I think that the interaction between lecturers and students was very good. The lecturer was the controller of the learning process and he also provided the materials. In addition, the lecturer checked the students' tasks, which is, in my opinion, great. The students themselves feel free to ask since several students are tending to be shy. So you keep checking the student's writing, it's very good, then the interaction between students is also great. (Student 5)

I feel that the class situation in this academic writing course was very engaging, handled by you. In the interaction between students, we could share and discuss. The interaction between lecturers and students was very responsive. We responded to the lecturer, and the lecturer paid good attention to us. Because some students are introverted and they were afraid of being wrong. So, I think every lecturer should role like that, not the ones that ignore their students. (Student 18)

The data suggest that the interaction between the lecturers and the students in the academic writing course was very responsive. The students responded to the lecturer and the lecturer paid good attention to the students. The relevant literature highlighted that theories of communicative competence emphasize the importance of interaction as human beings, using language in various contexts to negotiate to mean, getting an idea out of one person head into the head of another person and vice versa (Brown & Lee, 2015). The lecturers acted as controllers, facilitators, and feedback givers to the learning process. The findings were in line with other studies on teachers' roles in which the teacher as the controller who tells the students, organizes the exercise, gives examples on how to do something with good quality to students (Naibaho, 2019; Rindu & Ariyanti, 2017; Renandya, 2012). The findings were also shown that the lecturer was acted as a facilitator by giving students clear instructions for the activity they were going to have (Ayustina, et al, 2018). Writing feedback was important to help students improving their writing and to help them improved their ideas (Razali & Jupri, 2014).

Concerning the way lecturers treated the students in the learning process using the developed model, the students thought that the lecturers treated the students well. He went around helping students and then responded to students during the learning process. They are reflected in the following comments.

It's been very good because the lecturers and the students have actively participated. Lecturers actively went around the class, asked questions, helped the students with the writing process. (Student 10)

I think it's quite good because the lecturer can respond to the questions that students gave. The lecturer also provided corrections and responses to every student at their desks. I think it's pretty good. (Student 17)

The comments may suggest that the way the lecturers treated and responded to the students in the learning process was very good. The students got feedback on their writings. In other words, the lecturer and the students have actively participated.

According to the support system (the syllabus and teaching materials) used in the learning process using the developed model, most students had positive perceptions of the teaching materials of academic writing subjects. The students informed that the materials were good and easy to be understood. They were completed with pictures and exercises that help the students to have a better understanding. As indicated by S20 and S15:

The materials are good and easy to be understood. The teaching materials were repeated, so that, we could be more focused on the materials being learned. So, the materials were not just given immediately, then proceed to the next ones. (Student 20)

It is Excellent. The materials were completed with pictures, detailed explanations so that they helped me to have a better understanding. (Student 15)

The data has informed that the teaching materials were understandable, repeated, focused, and practical. They were completed with pictures and detailed explanations so that the students were enhanced to have a better understanding. It shares a similar idea with Tomlinson (2011) who stated that many learners feel relaxed and self-confident if they think that the materials they learn are not too difficult but just one step further more difficult than their existing proficiency.

Moreover, concerning the direct and the accompaniment impact on students' English writing after the TBLL model implementation, almost all students agreed that the learning objectives had been achieved. To clarify, the students' understanding was very good due to a lot of practice, and the students become more motivated.

In my opinion, the learning objectives have been achieved. Moreover, the students' understanding has increased, much better than from the previous writing course. Now, from many exercises given in the learning model, I can understand the materials faster. (Student 8)

The learning objectives have been achieved. The students could write topic sentences and compose one text. I think I've been able to accomplish (the writing) because you've checked. For me, my writing structure is better, and I become more concerned with small things, such as I don't have to put this here or I don't have to put that there. The learning process has a big impact on me and it improves my writing, too. Lastly, I am very motivated and I really enjoy academic writing. (Student 11)

From the excerpts above, it can be asserted that most of the students felt the learning objectives were achieved. They were able to write topic sentences and composed a full text, their writing structure was better, and they recognized the small things. Then, students became more active, motivated and their understanding of the topic was increased. It is in line with Tomlinson (2011) who noted that materials should achieve impact. The impact is achieved when the learning materials have a noticeable effect on learners, that is when the learners' curiosity, interest, and attention are attracted. Further, the materials can achieve impact when they are new, varied, presented attractively, and interesting.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

The present study set out to determine the students' perception in the implementation of task-based language learning at one of private university is Mataram. Classroom situation, time allocation, writing tasks, lecturers' performance in class, and teaching materials, is beneficial in assisting students in learning and improving their writing skills. Furthermore, the students thought the developed model was very well structured because the learning stage started from introducing to

presenting, the interaction between lecturers and students in the academic writing course was very responsive, the students thought the lecturers treated the students well, the majority of students had positive perceptions of the teaching materials of academic writing subjects, and they thought the learning objectives were achieved. They were able to construct topic sentences and compose a complete text, and their writing structure was improved, as well as their ability to identify small details. Further research regarding the implementation of task-based language learning model in wider context involving more students from more universities would be a great help for the improvement of academic writing teaching and learning in EFL context such as Indonesia.

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