The Contribution of Task Based Approach in Enhancing Learners’ Writing

The Case of Third Year Students in Economics at KMOU

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my dear parents…
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Abstract

Task Based Approach (TBA) has gained popularity in the field of language teaching since the last decade of the 20th century and significant scholars have joined the discussion and increased the amount of analytical studies on the issue. The present study aims at investigating the enhancing of writing under the task based approach. To achieve this aim, we chosen the sample third-year Economics at the University of Kasdi Merbah, Ouargla. We hypothesize that if the task based approach improves the learners’ writing skill. We adopted a needs analysis sheet to our sample, and we administered a pre-test and post-test to the sample to test the reliability of the model adopted. As might been expected, the results of the investigation revealed that the task based approach improves the ESP learners’ writing skill.

Key words: task based approach, writing skill
List of Abbreviations

BE: Business English

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

EAP: English for Academic Purposes

EBP: English for Business Purposes

EFL: English Foreign Language

ELT: English Language Teaching

ESP: English for Specific Purposes

NSs: native speakers

NNSs: non-native speakers

TBA: Task Based Approach

TBL: Task Based Learning
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Chapter One: Research Background

Introduction

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1.6. Outline of the Dissertation
**Introduction**

Writing plays a crucial role in the business field as millions of employees in this domain write and receive billions of e-mails and letters every day to establish internal and/or external business communication.

The Task Based Approach represents a new direction in communicative language teaching; it is thought to be highly effective and fruitful in the domain of languages for specific purposes for different reasons.

1.1. **Statement of the purpose**

This study attempts to explore the effect of implementing the TBA on the students’ writing skills as mastery of the English language needed in the target situations.

1.2. **Statement of the problem**

Students in different ESP contexts especially at the Department of Economics, University of Kasdi Merbah, Ouargla. Find writing as a challenging activity due to some problems and lacks.

1.3. **Hypotheses**

Through the present study, we will attempt to establish how the task based approach can develop the learners’ writing, different hypothesis can interfere to build up this study, and the main ones are as following:
1- Implementing the task based approach improves the learning of writing in the target ESP classes at the Department of Economics, University of Kasdi Merbah, Ouargla.

2- The task based approach improves the participants’ writing skill.

1.4. Method

In order to test the hypothesis stated above, we have adopted a descriptive method, dealing with quantitative data. It is based on the collection and analysis of these data.

The approach approved along the present study is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) which views that syllabus design should prepare learners to act communicatively in the target language. Thus, Providing activities and tasks related to the real communication will enhance learners’ motivation in learning, as well as, integrating the four skills would make the ESP course practical.

1.5. Tools of investigation

During the present study we have set hypotheses to be proved, doing so requires a needs analysis sheet, pre test and post test to have this study reliable as well as to prove the set hypotheses.
1.6. **Outline of the Dissertation**

This dissertation is organized into five chapters. The first chapter presents the background to the study, the statement of purpose, the statement of problem, and the research hypotheses.

Chapter Two, is devoted to Business English. The chapter falls into two sub-sections. In the first sub-section, we define ESP; discuss its main types, namely EAP and EOP and its characteristics. In the second sub-section, we define BE, discuss its main characteristics, and types of Business English.

Chapter Three, we attend to the task based approach. It is divided into two main sub-sections. In sub-section one; we give a brief account of conceptual background of the task based approach and in the second sub-section we define TBA, discuss its types, components, TBA methodology and the teacher and students’ roles in the TBA.

Chapter four, this chapter gives an overview of the writing skill, we have tried to show that writing is a complex and challenging skill and that one needs to know its different components and its stages to develop it. This chapter also explores the resources of the writing skill and the different writing approaches.

The fifth chapter is the practical parts of the present study; it consists of the needs analysis sheet devised to the learners in the Department of Economics. This chapter is based on the analysis of the data and the obtained results serve to verify the research hypotheses. We have tried to provide the reader with some pedagogical recommendations to contribute to the improvement of writing when doing task.
Chapter Two: The Task Based Approach

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Conclusion
Introduction

Language teaching field witnessed the emergence of various approaches which rise, either as an extension or a reaction to one another. In this chapter we will examine one of that approaches which is the task based approach, and try to give an overview of the status of writing under major teaching approaches before a general description of how writing is viewed under the task based approach.

2.1. Conceptual Background of the Task Based Approach

2.1.1. Communicative Language Teaching Approach

The teaching process must involve a suitable theory which is convenient for both learners and teacher. In ESP the question that should be asked is: how are the students going to learn? I.e. the teacher should apply a theory for learning during his/her course. As many researchers claimed, the communicative approach seems to be an effective method to teaching and the most appropriate theory for ESP courses. Raluca,N(2002), hold that The communicative approach helps the learners to be communicatively competent, since ESP learners are aware of the purpose for learning a foreign language it is workable to use the specific language communicatively in order to communicate effectively in the given situation.

The communicative approach to language teaching is a well-structured and complex theory but the most effective method which serves teachers and learners during the teaching process. It contains many principles and it is the teacher role to be selective by adopting the most useful principles. Depending on this fact, it would be useful to satisfy the convenient principles in ESP courses. Thus, focusing on language use through using English in classroom enables students to practice and improve their
skills. Exposing learners to the authentic language in real life situation would develop an effective communicator in the specialist field. Providing activities and tasks related to the real communication will enhance learners’ motivation in learning, as well as, integrating the four skills would make the ESP course practical. Many techniques based on the communicative approach are used in ESP courses, i.e. information gap, choice, feedback increase student’s interests and motivation. (ibid)

2.1.2. Competence

‘Competence’ as defined in the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary is the ability to do something well. Less frequent but also used is ‘competency’ which is technical and refers to the skill that one needs in a particular job or for a particular task. Competence will be retained in our current study, since more used and less technical. Competence is a notion borrowed from the language of markets, investments, and products.

Gentile and Bencini report Perrenoud's definition of competence as the faculty of mobilizing a set of cognitive resources such as knowledge, capacities, and information, to face with efficacy and pertinence a family of situations. For Rolle-Boumelic a competence is the integration of knowledge and capacities for the sake of a problem resolution. In general, competence is the ability to do a particular activity to prescribed standard.

2.2. Definition of Task Based Approach

Task based approach focuses on the use of authentic language and on asking students to do meaningful tasks using the target language. Assessment is primarily based on task outcome rather than on accuracy of prescribed language forms. This
makes TBLT especially popular for developing target language fluency and student confidence. As such TBLL can be considered a branch of communicative language teaching (CLT).

The first person who has applied TBLT to teaching programs and practice is Prabhu. Therefore, Prabhu is thought to be the originator of TBLT. Prabhu (1987) believed that students may learn more effectively when their minds are focused on the task, rather than on the language, they are using. Prabhu (1987) defined task as ‘an activity which require learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought, and which allows teachers to control and regulate that process.’ Besides Prabhu, Nunan (1989) defined a 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 in order to express meaning, and in which the intention is to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form.

2.3. Types of Task Based Approach

According to Prabhu, there are three main categories of task; information-gap, reasoning-gap, and opinion gap:

2.3.1. Information-Gap Activity, which involves a transfer of given information from one person to another – or from one form to another, or from one place to another – generally calling for the decoding or encoding of information from or into language. One example is pair work in which each member of the pair has a part of the total information (for example an incomplete picture) and attempts to convey it verbally to the other. Another example is completing a tabular representation with
information available in a given piece of text. The activity often involves selection of relevant information as well, and learners may have to meet criteria of completeness and correctness in making the transfer.

2.3.2. Reasoning Gap Activity, which involves deriving some new information from given information through processes of inference, deduction, practical reasoning, or a perception of relationships or patterns. One example is working out a teacher’s timetable on the basis of given class timetables. Another is deciding what course of action is best (for example cheapest or quickest) for a given purpose and within given constraints. The activity necessarily involves comprehending and conveying information, as in information-gap activity, but the information to be conveyed is not identical with that initially comprehended. There is a piece of reasoning which connects the two.

2.3.3. Opinion Gap Activity, which involves identifying and articulating a personal preference, feeling, or attitude in response to a given situation. One example is story completion; another is taking part in the discussion of a social issue. The activity may involve using factual information and formulating arguments to justify one’s opinion, but there is no objective procedure for demonstrating outcomes as right or wrong, and no reason to expect the same outcome from different individuals or on different occasions.

2.4. Components of Task

Tasks can be analyzed according to the goals, the input data, the activities derived from the input, the settings and roles implied for teacher and learners.
Goals refer to the general intentions for the learning task. Input is the data that forms the point of departure for the task. Activities specify what learners will actually perform with the input. Roles refer to the social and interpersonal relationship between learners and teachers in a task. Settings refer to the classroom arrangement affecting interaction entailed in the task, such as pair work or group work. When selecting, adapting, modifying and creating communicative tasks, Nunan believes that specification of all these components is needed.

2.5. The Task Based Approach Methodology

Different programs have been proposed for the task based lessons; even so, they all have in common three principal phases: pre-task, task cycle, and language focus. They are progressing from the general to the specific. That is, they reflect the chronological assumptions of the TBA.

2.5.1. The Pre-task phase

It is an introduction to topic and task in this phase the Teacher explores the topic with the class, highlights useful words and phrases, and helps learners understand task instructions and prepare. Learners may hear a recording of others doing a similar task, or read part of a text as a lead in to a task.

2.5.2. The Task Cycle Phase

It is the most important phase in the TBA framework because most of the learning takes place during this stage. This phase contains three components beginning with the task stage, the planning stage, and the report stage:
A. The task stage is a task in which the students do the task, in pairs or small groups. Teacher monitors from a distance, encouraging all attempts at communication, not correcting. Since this situation has a "private" feel, students feel free to experiment. Mistakes don't matter.

B. The planning stage is a task in which Students prepare to report to the whole class (orally or in writing) how they did the task, what they decided or discovered. Since the report stage is public, students will naturally want to be accurate, so the teacher stands by to give language advice.

C. The report stage this stage is the last one in the task cycle phase in which some groups present their reports to the class, or exchange written reports, and compare results. Teacher acts as a chairperson, and then comments on the content of the reports.

2.5.3. The Language Focus Phase

This phase consists of two stages; the first one is the analysis stage in which students examine and then discuss specific features of the text or transcript of the recording. They can enter new words, phrases and patterns in vocabulary books. The second phase of this stage is the practice; Teacher conducts practice of new words, phrases, and patterns occurring in the data, either during or after the analysis.

2.6. The Teacher and Students’ Roles in the Task Based Approach

Teacher and students' roles change within a task-based approach. TBL presents learning and teaching as collaborative work. Classes are student-centered. Teachers address students' needs and interests by becoming facilitators. According to Willis and Willis (2007), teachers who engage in Task-Based Learning promote real
language use; when doing so, they become leaders and organizers of discussion, managers of group or pair work, motivators to engage students in performing a task and language experts to provide language feedback when needed. The main issues here are the degrees to which the teacher is responsible for content. The role of the students is far from being one of the passive recipients of comprehensible input; students are now seen to take the leading role in their own learning. Van den Branden (2006) agrees with the fact that task-based lessons are student-centered, which means students take the main part in the learning process. Learners are autonomous to negotiate course content or to choose linguistic forms when performing a task. Negotiation is done by providing options for the learners; for example, the teacher may suggest a series of topics and students decide which one to begin with. Learners are also group participants. Many of the tasks are done in pairs or groups which will require adaptation for those students used to working individually or those used to whole class instruction. Another role for learners is the one of risk takers. Students constantly face challenges that involve the use of the target language. Students need to make the most of every opportunity to develop language while performing the task. Richards and Rodgers (2004) say that both teachers and learners in Task-Based Learning are responsible for the development of classroom interaction.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, it is confirmed that TBA has improved students proficiency and language skills in different English language teaching setting. In addition, the approach focuses on the learners’ needs and believes that the success of the whole learning process.
**Pre-task (including topic and task)**

**The teacher**
- Introduces and defines the topic
- Uses activities to help students recall/learn useful words and phrases
- Unsere students understand task instructions
- May play a recording of others doing the same or a similar task

**The students**
- Note down useful words and phrases from the pre-task activities and/or the recording
- May spend a few minutes preparing for the task individually

**Task Cycle**
- Planning
  - The students
    - Prepare to report to the class how they did the task and what they discovered/decided
    - Rehearse what they will say or draft a written version for the class to read
  - The teacher
    - Ensure the purpose of the report is clear
    - Acts as language adviser
    - Helps students rehearse oral reports or organize written ones

- Practice
  - The students
    - Practice words, phrases and patterns from the analysis activities
    - Practice other features occurring in the task text or report stage
  - The teacher
    - Enter useful language items in their notebooks
    - Conducts practice activities after analysis activities where necessary, to build confidence.

- Language focus
  - The students
    - Do consciousness-raising activities to identify and process specific language
    - Features from the task text and/or transcript
    - May ask about other features they have noticed
  - The teacher
    - Reviews each analysis activity with the class brings other useful words, phrases and patterns to students’ attention
    - May pick up on language items from the report stage.

- Report
  - The students
    - Present their spoken reports to the class, or circulate/display their written reports
  - The teacher
    - Acts as chairperson, selecting who will speak next, or ensuring all students read most of the written reports
    - May give brief feedback on content and form
    - May play a recording of others doing the same or a similar task

**Figure.1: the TBL framework**
Chapter Three: The Writing Skill

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Conclusion
Introduction

In general manner learning a foreign language subjects learners to the four skills that are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Learning to write is increasingly becoming a necessity in life, no matter what career one will embrace. Writing is a communication tool that translates thoughts into language, and pedagogically speaking, it is the means by which learners’ achievements are generally examined. Writing as a skill has come to play the eminent role it probably deserves in foreign language teaching because of the many benefits it provides. In much the same way as the other skills, writing may be described as helping learners to gain proficiency in the foreign language.

3.1. Definition of Writing

Writing in general means words in symbols (for example, Hieroglyphics) written down as a means of communication. (Encarta Dictionary, 1999: 2151). Writing is one of the major skills for using language, through which one can convey his thoughts. (Clark, 2003) states that "writing is a reflection of what can occur only after the main ideas are in place". (p.08). This means that the writer’s goal is to know how to say what has been discovered, not in discovering and selecting what to say.

According to Byrne (1979) writing is the transformation of sounds into letters. Furthermore, he claims that writing is making words from letters and sentences from words to make a one comprehensible message. Another definition of writing is delineated by Freeman and Richards (1996) who state that writing is the act of making utterances visible and it is the art of making meaning through forming characters and letters on paper.
3.2. Writing in ESP Setting

Writing is not only a tool of learning but also an important means of communication. It is believably the most practiced language skill in the tertiary level in general and in professional institutions and workplaces. Learners’ are assessed and evaluated upon their writing performance in tests, as well as still, good writing skills are an important measure for hiring employees in many organizations and companies in the business world.

Teaching writing practices and content in ESP contexts is based on the needs of the target workplaces to construct authentic courses and materials essential to prepare proficient learners ready to the linguistic challenges and requirements of their future jobs. Evans (1998) believes that successful writing requires the awareness of the target situations’ conventions and expectations of texts and also how texts should be written and norms to be respected while writing those texts. Therefore, specialists do not teach general writing skills in ESP classes, they utilize target genres to develop particular writing skills expected to be needed in the related professional contexts.

3.3. Components of Writing

Writing revolves around four main points, moving from the simplest activity to the complex activity of composing where the learner makes use of the elements of the language. All the constituents of this complex skill are presented below:
3.3.1. Notation

It means the substantiation of abstract thoughts into concrete graphs, in other words, it is the transformation of sounds into letters on paper. This activity requires learners’ proper organization of thoughts as well as the mastery of language structures in order to write comprehensively.

3.3.2. Spelling

Learners should be prepared with the ability to distinguish sounds and forming words through the proper combination of letters. The mastery of spelling enables the learners to communicate clearly and effectively in the next stages of their learning to write.

3.3.3. Writing practice

It is the simplest component of writing; it requires the learner to master the conversion of sounds into letters then from letters to words. Writing practice can also be defined as the knowledge of combining words to get a coherent, cohesive, and meaningful text.

3.3.4. Composition

The learner is required to master a number of skills to get a meaningful piece of writing that succeeds to achieve his/her communicative goals. Writing properly requires the mastery of a number of variables, of instance, syntax, grammar, vocabulary and all the aspects that constitute writing as well as extra or beyond sentence aspects of writing such cohesion.
3.4. Stages of Development of Writing Skills

In order to develop ability in writing, students move systematically and thoroughly through the different stages of the writing skill. Rivers sees that there are five stages: copying, reproduction, a production with major adaptations, guided writing and finally composition.

3.4.1. Copying

It is an activity that enables the learners to differentiate between the conventional graphic forms to represent the different sounds they have, in other words, copying refers to the reproduction of graphic forms that learners are already familiar with on a paper. The aim of this activity is strengthening learners’ mastery of writing components, letters in this case. The activity is necessary to learning in general at the early stages of students’ learning process.

3.4.2. Reproduction

The stage which follows copying is that of reproduction. This reproduction stage the student will attempt to write, without originality, what s/he has learned orally and read in his textbook. This s/he will be able to do all the more successfully if s/he has been trained in habits of accuracy during the copying stage.

3.4.3. Reproduction and Adaptation

In this stage, the students first carry out some drills that take different forms. To help learners develop their reproduction and adaptation skills, teachers may utilize some drills and activities, for example, substitution, transformation, and expansion
activities. The intensive practice of these activities improves learners’ writing and prepares them for the next stages.

3.4.4. Guided writing

It is the stage where the students write with the guidance of the teacher. In this stage, the teacher requires the students to write following specific directions, with the freedom in the choice of structural patterns as well as the lexical items to be used. At this stage the activity of writing is still controlled by the teacher. When the students have been exhaustively trained to write, they are ready to move to the final stage: the composition.

3.4.5 Composition

At this final stage of the writing process, the composition, the students select his/her vocabulary and structure to express their ideas. In this stage, the student cannot write correctly, concisely and meaningfully unless s/he shows a complete control of the structure, the vocabulary s/he employs to express his/her ideas, in addition to the conventions of writing, including mainly spelling and punctuation. It is worth noting that within this stage, the student develops the writing skill gradually until s/he reaches an acceptable piece of writing.

3.5. Approaches to Teaching Writing

Writing is a particularly highly-demanding and difficult skill for both native speakers and non-native speakers. The fact that developing the writing skill is not an easy task imposes the idea that teaching such a skill is not easy. Therefore, many
ESL/EFL theorists, researchers, and teachers have been endeavoring to come up with the most effective theories, approaches, and models of teaching writing.

3.5.1. The Product Approach to Teaching Writing

The Product or the ‘controlled writing approach’ was widespread in the mid-1960s, interested in the final product and mastery of linguistic features through the imitation of the teacher’s model. Thus, errors of grammar and lexis were continuously corrected. Importance was given to the surface structure of language rather than the underlying meaning. The product approach has been severely criticized because of its neglect of the learners’ needs and the stages of the writing process. It considered language as “basically a process of mechanical habit formation” (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 57), which hindered creativity and imagination of the learner.

3.5.2. The Process Approach to Teaching Writing

Hyland (2003) stated that “The process approach to writing teaching emphasizes the writer as an independent producer of texts, but it goes further to address the issue of what teachers should do to help learners perform a writing task.” (p10) adopt this approach in the writing class, teachers come to consider what their students can do (write), pay more attention to how these students approach the writing task moving through different stages of writing, and offer the writers opportunities to improve their writing through providing effective feedback and allowing time for revisions. The main pedagogical techniques employed in a process-oriented class, as suggested by Hyland (2003), include: brainstorming, planning, multiple drafts, peer collaboration…, etc.
3.5.3 The Genre Approach to Teaching Writing

The Genre Approach to teaching writing attempts to get learners aware of the different elements of writing: the topic, conventions, style of the genre and the context in which their writing will be read and by whom. The approach proposes deconstructing dominant genres, analyzing them from a linguistic point of view, reproducing them from an analysis of their structural and linguistic features, and generating their own texts that conform to the conventions of each genre.

3.6. The Teacher's Role in Writing

Teaching the four skills is very necessary to fulfill a successful process of learning. In this study, we shed the light on the writing skill as an unfavorable task for ESP learners, so teaching this skill should be given much attention by students in general and teachers in particular. Thus, the role of the teacher as facilitator, a course designer, motivator, paves the way for a flexible learning of writing skill.

3.7. Writing a letter of application

Writing letters is an art in itself, although people say it is a disappearing art. There are two types of letters, formal and informal. A formal letter is the kind of letter you would send with a job application or to the bank manager! An informal letter is a letter you would write to a friend or relation.
3.7.1. How to write an application letter?

A letter for a job application is a very important letter. The way you present the letter is your first introduction to the person who could be your new employer. There is a standard format for this kind of letter, and this makes the letter much easier to write. There are basic pieces of information you need to include in a covering letter for a job application.

A letter applying for a job should consist the following:

1. The main purpose of the first paragraph is to convince the reader to keep reading. You indicate to the job and how you learned about it. (See figure below)

2. In the second paragraph, you supply some information about yourself: the name of your school, courses completed that may relate to the job……and so on. (See figure below.)

3. In the third paragraph, list past work experience; demonstrate how it prepared you for the job which you are applying. (See figure below)

4. In the fourth paragraph, list two or three personal references with address. (See figure below)

5. In the last paragraph, demand an interview. (See figure below)
3.7.2. Example Format of Application Letter

Ms Lucy Dibawa  
Unit 3, 55 Peaches Rd  
Newtown TAS 7004  
Ph: 0400 375 120  
Email: lucym20@hotmail.com  
22 January 2011  
Manager  
Tuckerbox Foods  
PO Box 583  
North Hobart TAS 7002  
Dear Sir / Madam  

Re: Administrative Assistant Position  
I am applying for the Administrative Assistant position as advertised in the Mercury on 24 January 2011.  
My name is Lucy Dibawa and I am a former refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), arriving in Australia in 2007. In DRC, in the city of Lubumbashi which has a population of 1.4 million people, I worked as a personal assistant and administrative secretary performing many roles from accounts to marketing. My employment included working for Tenue Mining as a Secretary/Personal Assistant and at the Bureau Technique and Skie Air as Secretary and in Marketing. I enjoy this type of work and believe that my achievements were well regarded.  
I have good skills in Word, Excel, Database and email & internet applications. I am very friendly, well presented; possess excellent oral communication skills and time management skills.  
Since arriving in Tasmania I have been heavily involved in community activities, with both the Tasmanian Congolese community and also the wider community. I have been updating my skills to match the needs of the Australian workplace and am now very keen to find employment.  
I am available to be interviewed at any time. My resume, giving more details about my experience is attached.  
Yours faithfully  
Lucy Dibawa

Figure.2: Example Format of Application Letter

3.7.3. Tips in Writing Application Letter

Many people need help in writing application letter. If you don't know to write an application letter, it can be difficult to do. The site of application letter suggests the following steps to make it easier:
1. Address your cover letter to a real person.

2. Open with an attention-grabbing first sentence.

3. Less is more. Clear, focused, short sentences get the Interview.

4. Focus on what you can do to the employer.

5. Choose words that show enthusiasm and passion.

6. Request one action to be taken by the employer.

7. End your application letter with enthusiasm.

**Conclusion**

All in all, it can be said that writing application letter is a difficult skill to acquire, because it needs to be taught through formal instruction, also learners should take into consideration the subject, purpose, audience, organization and style. As well as to reach this level students must follow certain aspects of writing application letter such as: date, file number, Confidential, Salutation……and so on. Without forgot to choose a format to our letter in order to produce effective application letter.
Chapter Four: Methodology

4.1. Task Based Approach and Needs Analysis
   4.1.1. The explanation of needs analysis sheet
   4.1.2. The Data Analysis and Task Based Approach
   4.1.3. The Results of the Data Analysis

4.2. The Pre-test and the Post-test Analysis
   4.2.1. The pre-test Results
   4.2.2. Post test-Results

4.3. Discussion of the Results

4.4. Pedagogical Recommendations

Conclusion
4.1. Task Based Approach and Need Analysis

4.1.1. The Explanation of Needs Analysis Sheet

Under the light of proving the set hypothesis that implementing the task based approach improves the learning of writing in BE classes, we have carried out a need analysis sheet which aims at testing to what extent TBA enhances writing in business classes and to see whether our research investigations match the learners’ need. The analysis sheet was administered to (20) students of 3rd year Economics at the University of Kasdi Merbah, Ouargla.

4.1.2. Data Analysis and Task Based Approach

Table 1. The importance of English language in the learners’ area of study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>P %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 show that all the students (100%) agree on the importance of English in their area of study.
Table 2. The language mode the learners need

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>P%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spoken</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows that the mainstream of the sample with (50%) claimed that both modes of language are needed, whereas (30%) of them agreed on necessity of spoken language and (20%) stated that they need written mode of language.

Table 3: the purpose of learning English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>P %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To communicate</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To help you in writing documents (CV, report….etc )</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows that the majority of our sample (60%) is in agreement on that English is needed to help them writing their documents (CV, report…..etc), while (5%) see that English is needed to communicate and (3%) claim that they need it for other purposes.
Table 4. Writing tasks that are related to the speciality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>P  %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 shows that students find the writing as a difficult task since (75%) of them mark (yes), when just (5%) say it is an easy task for them.

Table 5. The difficulties when writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>P  %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In spelling</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In conversion ideas into words</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In grammar</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In vocabulary</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 illustrates that learners of (35%) encounter difficulties in writing when conversing ideas into words, while the same percentage goes with the difficulties in grammar and vocabulary and just (3%) of the sample encounter spelling difficulties.
Table 6. Number of sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>P%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: all the learners (100%) agree on the inadequate number of sessions per week to improve their writing skill.

Table 7. Learner’s views on practicing writing tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>P%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 shows that (80%) of our sample claim that they haven’t performed writing tasks, while (20%) say they have practiced tasks in writing before.
Table 8. Sessions required for writing tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>P%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 shows that (50%) of learners see that two sessions are required to perform a writing task and the same percentage (50%) goes for three sessions.

Table 9. Topics of writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>P%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 illustrates that the majority of learners with (75%) used to write a CV or report in their field of study, while (5%) have not written CV or report yet.

4.1.3 Result of data analysis:

After adopting the needs analysis sheet we have come out with the following results:

- English was very important in the area of study for the learners of our sample
- A little tendency for writing appeared among the learners answers
- Written English is demanded for the sake of writing documents such as CVs and reports
- Learners of BE saw writing as a complex task due to some difficulties encountered through the process among which we can mention: grammar, vocabulary, spelling and conversion ideas to words or sentences.
- Teaching writing skill using TBA required a numerous sessions to be handled correctly.
- BE learners have not been exposure to many writing tasks in the classroom.

4.2. The Pre-test and the Post-test Analysis

Writing as we have mentioned before is not that easy task which can be performed by learners alone especially the ESP learners, for the sake of identifying the real writing level of our sample we have administered a pre- test asking them to write a letter of application. It intends to check whether learners can write correct paragraphs or not. During this phase learners are not taught how to write and they are neither guided before giving them the task nor during doing it in the classroom.

4.2.1 The Pre-test Results:

In this test students haven’t been taught the method of writing in general and a letter of application in particular. Learners were asked to write a letter of application without the guidance of the teacher and the following data are gathered out of their writings.
Table 10. The application letter layout

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Respected</th>
<th>Disrespected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contact Information</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipient’s Contact Information</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salutation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introductory Paragraph</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body Paragraph(s)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concluding Paragraph</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing and Signature</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enclosure</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
<td>52.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11. Learners’ writing content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components of writing</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Correct</th>
<th>Incorrect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Notation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing practice</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composition</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>61.25%</td>
<td>38.75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The given data show that learners when writing a letter of application performed with (47.5%) respecting the form of the letter of application, while the
others with (52.5%) did not really respect the form of the letter, which refers to the lack of background knowledge concerning writing a business letter of application. Also, we noticed that they haven’t performed well in their content of writing with (61.25%). Whereas only (38.75%) they were not actually correct

### 4.2.2. The post-test results:

After the correction of the different written productions of the participants, it was noticed that the marks of them were higher than the ones of the pre test.

**Table 12. The Application Letter Layout**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Respected</th>
<th>Disrespected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contact Information</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipient’s Contact Information</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salutation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introductory Paragraph</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body Paragraph(s)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concluding Paragraph</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing and Signature</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enclosure</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 13. Learners’ Writing Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components of writing</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Correct</th>
<th>Incorrect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Notation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing practice</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composition</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>66,25%</td>
<td>33,75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the end, we have come out with the given results which reveal that our learners’ application letter writing performance has changed to the better thus we can see that (77%) of our learners respect the form steps while it was (47, 5%) before teaching them how to write this letter. at the same time we have tested their writing components, and the results reveal that they still have some lacks when writing (grammar, spelling, syntax …. Etc) with (66, 25%) of learners who respect the writing components and (33, 75%) who doesn’t do.

4.3. Discussion of the results

After teaching our sample for more than three sessions dealing with the communicative method in teaching and having them exposed to the steps of writing a business letter of application. First of all we taught them a lesson which main objective was how to write a correct letter of application, providing them with oral instructions as well as handing them handouts, asking them to write the first parts of the letter as a task to be done at home. Secondly, we devote two sessions for pair and group work through which the teacher communicated with his/her learners to guide and provide them with advice. Finally, the last sessions were devoted to correct the
learners’ letters. As a result of applying TBA during the post test we have remarked that our learners writing productions have been improved. That is to say teaching writing can be enriched through TBA.

4.4. Pedagogical recommendations

Change must happen in individuals first, and it is only then that this change can be extended to larger groups and institutions. That's why we recommend a change in teachers first of all, because they are the ones to implement those new directions in the teaching of English as a foreign language at Algerian university.

- The teacher should focus more on giving tasks that fit to the learners’ needs.
- Teachers should do their best to help their learners to improve their writing in their speciality.
- Learners should try to skip the difficulties and challenges that faced them when doing a writing task.
- There should be more than one English session per week, because one session is not enough to teach learners how to improve their writing skill.
- Students should increase their writing skill, since this will help them to build their schemata and make them knowledgeable in their subject area.
- Both teachers and students should make the writing course more active and full of motivate and interest tasks.
- Teachers should develop different tasks to make the writing session an enjoyable opportunity where students can express themselves.
Conclusion

The results of this study point out providing third-year business students with clear knowledge about writing a letter of application along with providing tasks to reinforce their writing skill. In short, our set hypotheses of this study are conformed and proved according to the obtained result from the pre and post tests.
References
References


Appendix
Appendix A

Needs Analysis Sheet

Age: ……years old

Sex:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dear student, would you please read the following text then answer the subsequent questions?

1. Do you think studying English is of a high important in your area of study?
   - Yes 
   - No 
   - Both 

2. Do you need spoken or written language to communicate in your field study?
   - Yes 
   - No 
   - Both 

3. What do you need English for?
   - To communicate 
   - To help you in writing documents (CV, reports, application letter)

4. How do you find writing in specialty?
   - Difficult task 
   - Easy task 

5. What are the difficulties you face when doing a writing task?
   - In conversion ideas in letters 
   -
In grammar, vocabulary

6. Do you see that one session per week is enough to improve your writing skill?
   √ Yes
   × No

7. Did you use to have task in writing?
   √ Yes
   × No

8. If YES how many sessions did you take to perform a task?
   √ One
   √ Two
   × Three

9. Have you ever written a CV or letter of application?
   √ Yes
   × No
Appendix B

The pre-test

Dear students,

You are kindly asked to help in fulfilling a dissertation about the contribution of task based approach in enhancing learners’ writing, so please write a letter of application.

Answer:

........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

Thank you
Appendix C

The post-test

Dear students,

You are kindly asked to help in fulfilling a dissertation about the contribution of task based approach in enhancing learners’ writing, so please write a letter of application.

Answer:

........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
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Thank you