

## Task-based learning in the classroom for Efl learners: how and why?

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**Abstract** - In the realm of language teaching and learning, Task-Based Learning (TBL) has emerged as a prominent methodology, garnering substantial attention since the 1980s. This approach, characterized by its focus on real-world tasks as the central unit of instruction, has gained popularity globally, notably in English language classes in Indonesia. TBL's emphasis on establishing a purpose for language use and fostering natural meaning in language learning has contributed to its widespread adoption. This paper delves into the ideas and principles that underpin Task-Based Learning, exploring its effectiveness in classrooms. This study aims to elucidate the rationale for teachers to implement Task-Based Learning in the language classroom and to provide practical insights into the effective implementation of TBL during classroom instruction. The discussion unfolds by introducing and describing the key features of TBL, subsequently delving into its characteristics, approaches, benefits, and framework. To achieve these objectives, a comprehensive literature review will be conducted, drawing on scholarly works, empirical studies, and educational reports related to Task-Based Learning. Additionally, qualitative data will be gathered through interviews with language educators experienced in implementing TBL. The analysis will involve synthesizing findings from the literature review and identifying recurrent themes and successful practices through the teacher interviews. The analysis phase will involve a thematic examination of the literature, exploring the various facets of TBL, including its theoretical underpinnings, practical approaches, and observed benefits in language classrooms. The insights gathered from teacher interviews will be triangulated with the existing literature to provide a nuanced understanding of the challenges and successes associated with the implementation of TBL. This holistic approach aims to offer a comprehensive view of TBL in language education. In conclusion, this paper contributes to the ongoing discourse on language pedagogy by advocating for the implementation of Task-Based Learning in language classrooms. By synthesizing theoretical concepts, practical approaches, and the experiences of educators, the study provides a compelling case for the efficacy of TBL. The insights offered herein aim to empower teachers with the knowledge and strategies needed to successfully integrate TBL into their instructional practices, fostering a dynamic and purposeful language learning environment.

**Keywords:** Classroom Instruction; Language Pedagogy; Second Language Acquisition; Language Teaching Methodologies; Task-Based Learning (TBL)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Academics around the world are in a race to increase the number of publications. This phenomenon is felt by a native speaker (NS) and non-native speaker (NNS) academics around the world (Luo & Hyland, 2016). Indonesia that is EFL country also experienced this phenomenon. About the number of publications, academics in Indonesia are finding difficulties in publishing their manuscripts in the accredited national journal (Arsyad, 2016). They will have more complicated distress when publishing a manuscript in internationally reputable journals (Arsyad, 2017). English skills are seen as an essential requirement in manuscript writing to support academic careers globally (Hyland, 2013, Luo & Hyland, 2016).

Academics put manuscript publications as an essential activity in their life. By having publications, academics will gain an appreciation for their career and reputation (Jiang et al, 2016). Also, the manuscripts written by academics will also be communicating media to the academic discourse community (Plakhotnik & Rocco, 2013; Wajdi, 2018; Antari, 2022). Manuscripts made by academics to interact with the academic community have a particular characteristic. The manuscript needs to convince the reader of the coherency of ideas and arguments (Lin, 2017; Wajdi et al, 2021; Susanto et al, 2022; Tawarik et al, 2021).

Academics must have adequate academic writing skills to publish their manuscripts in reputable international journals. Improving the ability of academic writing is not an easy task because it relates to several aspects that must be mastered. Writing proficiency is inseparable from grammar mastery (Munoz-Luna, 2015), cognitive ability (Bacha, 2002), and ability to understand the structure of writing, especially following the manuscripts writing a composition (Rakedzon & Baram-Tsabari, 2016; Dewi, 2023). Moreover, the structure of the scientific paper (IMRAD) is widely used in both the science and social science disciplines (Bertin et al, 2015; Wu, 2011).

Academics have to struggle harder to improve the skill of academic writing. In writing, specifically manuscript writing, it is considered as ordinary activities for those who already have enough experience, but it is not an easy task for those who have limited experience in writing manuscripts (Ho, 2017). In general, about writing skills, NS has a challenge in writing, it will be more perceived by NNS (Morton et al, 2015). Finally, to improve writing skills, academics should also extend the scope of research as well as their writing skills (Ho, 2017).

Writing manuscripts for international publications can be regarded as a challenging task. Despite academics need quite complex abilities to be able to draft a research article, this state does not degrade their desire to write a paper for publication. There is still a high interest in publishing manuscripts viewed from the different number of publications with various disciplines and geographic locations (Lillis et al, 2010). Writing a research article for publication is vital for academics as it relates to their need to communicate with the scientific community (Curry & Lillis, 2010; Rakedzon & Tsabari, 2016; Lestari, 2023; Teja et al, 2022).

In the competitive landscape of academia, scholars worldwide, both native speakers (NS) and non-native speakers (NNS), are engaged in a fervent race to increase their publication count (Luo & Hyland, 2016). This phenomenon is particularly pronounced in countries like Indonesia, where English serves as a foreign language (EFL), and academics encounter challenges in securing publication slots, especially in accredited national journals (Arsyad, 2016). The difficulties escalate when attempting to publish in internationally renowned journals (Arsyad, 2017). Proficiency in English, a crucial requirement for manuscript writing, has become indispensable for academics aiming to bolster their global academic careers (Hyland, 2013; Luo & Hyland, 2016).

In Indonesia, as in other EFL nations, academics grapple with the imperative of scholarly publications, a critical facet of career advancement and reputation building (Jiang et al., 2016). Manuscripts, apart from contributing to individual career growth, serve as a medium for academics to engage with the wider academic discourse community (Plakhotnik & Rocco, 2012; Wajdi, 2018; Antari, 2022). However, the unique nature of academic

manuscripts requires a persuasive narrative that convinces readers of the coherence of ideas and arguments (Lin, 2017; Wajdi et al., 2021; Susanto et al., 2022; Tawarik et al., 2021).

Academic writing, a skill integral to successful manuscript publication, demands a multifaceted mastery encompassing grammar, cognitive abilities, and comprehension of writing structures such as the widely used IMRAD format (Bacha, 2002; Munoz-Luna, 2015; Bertin et al., 2015; Wu, 2011). Despite its importance, enhancing academic writing skills poses a formidable challenge, especially for those with limited writing experience (Ho, 2017). Non-native speakers, in particular, face heightened challenges in the realm of writing skills (Morton et al., 2015).

While the literature recognizes the complexity of academic writing, there remains a persistent interest among academics to contribute to the scientific community through publications, reflecting a diverse range of disciplines and geographic locations (Lillis et al., 2010). The urgency of addressing the challenges faced by academics in manuscript writing becomes evident as they endeavour to communicate effectively within the global scientific landscape.

This study aims to delve into the intricacies of academic writing skills, particularly focusing on the challenges faced by NS and NNS academics in Indonesia. By examining the existing literature, the study seeks to identify effective strategies for improving writing proficiency and overcoming barriers to successful publication. The research aspires to provide valuable insights for academics looking to enhance their writing skills, navigate the publication process, and ultimately contribute meaningfully to the global academic community.

This study is not only timely but also imperative, considering the global academic environment's increasing emphasis on publication metrics and the challenges faced by academics, especially in EFL contexts like Indonesia. The findings of this research are expected to yield practical recommendations for scholars striving to navigate the intricate landscape of academic writing and publication.

## **2. METHOD**

### **2.1 Research Design**

This study adopts a qualitative research design, focusing on in-depth interviews with three purposively selected supervisors (pseudonymously named Esa, Dwi, and Tri) from a chemistry department at a prominent state university in Surakarta, Indonesia. The research concentrates on exploring the interventions and strategies employed by these supervisors in guiding graduate students through the manuscript writing process.

### **2.2 Participants**

The participants in this study include the three supervisors, Esa, Dwi, and Tri, who have demonstrated expertise in guiding graduate students to publish manuscripts in reputable international journals. All three supervisors hold doctoral degrees in chemistry and are actively involved in teaching and supervising students.

### **2.3 Sampling Technique**

Purposive sampling is employed to select participants based on specific criteria: having published manuscripts in reputable international journals, possessing doctoral degrees in chemistry, and actively supervising graduate students in the manuscript writing process.

### **2.4 Data Collection**

#### **2.4.1 Guided Interviews**

In-depth, guided interviews were conducted with each supervisor individually. The interviews were designed based on a preliminary study conducted on students under their supervision, focusing on identifying obstacles in the manuscript writing process. The interviews were conducted on March 16, 2018 (Esa), March 23, 2018 (Dwi), and April 3, 2018 (Tri).

Guided Interview Questions: a. Why do you initiate a research group to improve students' academic writing competence? b. What kind of process is undertaken in a research group activity? c. What kind of problems dealt with by students that you need to intervene?

d. How do you overcome those problems? e. What academic writing skills should students possess to write a research article to be submitted in a reputable international journal?

### **2.5. Data Analysis**

The data obtained from guided interviews were subjected to qualitative analysis. A thematic analysis approach was employed to identify recurring themes and patterns related to supervisor interventions, strategies, and the challenges faced by students in the manuscript writing process.

Ethical considerations were paramount in this study. Informed consent was obtained from each participant, ensuring their willingness to participate in the interviews. Participants were assured of confidentiality and the anonymization of their pseudonymous names in the reporting of findings.

The research rigor was enhanced through triangulation, incorporating data from multiple interviews to validate and strengthen the reliability of findings. Member checking, involving participants in verifying the accuracy of the interpretations, was also implemented to ensure the credibility of the study.

The findings of this study aim to provide insights into the strategies and interventions employed by experienced supervisors in guiding graduate students through the academic writing process. The results may have implications for the development of effective interventions to enhance students' academic writing competence and contribute to the success of manuscript submissions to reputable international journals.

## **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The data obtained reveal that the supervisors have an important role in the success of students to have manuscripts published in reputable international journals. From the interview sessions, the findings showed that supervisors had a role in selecting the topic of writing manuscripts until selecting the journal publisher where the manuscripts would be submitted. There is a policy underlies the supervisor to guide students in writing manuscripts. University was issuing written policies regarding graduate students that must publish their manuscripts as a graduation requirement. The chemistry department applies this rule through supervisors to guide students to have manuscripts published in reputable international journals.

About question number seven, the most crucial thing for supervisors during the process of guiding students to write manuscripts are various. Increased student ability after research and manuscript writing is a pride for supervisors. Supervisors also have pride when students can publish their manuscripts in reputable international journals indexed by Scopus. Supervisors feel useful if they can guide students to have the achievement. Another exciting thing is that counsellors like students who want to learn and receive input from mentors.

The data obtained shows the key to the success of students in having a manuscript published in reputable international journals lies in the ability of mentors in guiding students to research and write manuscripts. The mentoring activities undertaken by supervisors are considered as practical strategies of international publication (Stevens et al, 2019). In the mentoring process, there is the acquisition of knowledge (The Rackham School of Graduate Studies, 2006) because it contains numerous procedures that include support, guidance, and consultation from academics who have sufficient experience to academics with limited experience (Kram cited in Stevens et al, 2019).

The findings of the study underscore the pivotal role that supervisors play in the success of graduate students in publishing manuscripts in reputable international journals. The interview sessions revealed that supervisors go beyond mere oversight, actively contributing to various stages of the manuscript writing process – from topic selection to the choice of the journal for manuscript submission. This involvement aligns with a university policy mandating graduate students to publish manuscripts as a requirement for graduation, with the chemistry department employing supervisors as key implementers of this policy.

### **3.1 Supervisor Involvement in Manuscript Process**

Supervisors, in adherence to university policies, take on a multifaceted role in guiding students through the intricate journey of manuscript writing. The study elucidates that supervisors not only guide students in selecting suitable research topics but also extend their influence to the crucial decision of choosing the right journal for manuscript submission. This active involvement highlights the significance of supervisors in shaping the trajectory of students' academic publications.

The active involvement of supervisors in guiding students through the entire manuscript writing process reflects not only compliance with university policies but also a deep commitment to the academic and professional development of their mentees. This role extends beyond conventional academic advising, positioning supervisors as mentors with a vested interest in the success of their students. However, a critical lens may also consider potential challenges in this dynamic, such as the risk of students' dependency on supervisors, potentially hindering the development of independent research skills.

### **3.2 Motivations and Pride of Supervisors**

Question seven of the interview, probing into the motivations and perspectives of supervisors, uncovers the multifaceted nature of their engagement. The data reveals that supervisors derive a sense of pride and accomplishment from witnessing the growth in students' abilities throughout the research and manuscript writing process. This pride is particularly pronounced when students achieve the milestone of publishing their work in reputable international journals indexed by Scopus. The study suggests that supervisors find gratification in the success of their mentees, seeing it as a testament to their effectiveness in guiding and mentoring.

The pride and satisfaction derived by supervisors from the success of their students reveal an intrinsic motivation to contribute to the academic growth of the next generation. While this commitment is laudable, it prompts critical reflections on potential institutional pressures and expectations that may inadvertently impact the genuine mentorship relationship. Moreover, the study could delve into the potential nuances in the definition of success—whether it is purely measured by publication metrics or if there are broader educational objectives considered.

### **3.3 Practical Strategies of International Publication**

The analysis indicates that the key to students' success in publishing manuscripts lies in the mentoring activities undertaken by supervisors. These mentoring activities are deemed practical strategies for international publication. The study aligns with existing literature, citing Stevens et al. (2019), which emphasizes the practical and hands-on nature of mentoring in facilitating successful international publication. The mentoring process is portrayed as more than a mere oversight; it encompasses a spectrum of procedures, including support, guidance, and consultation. This resonates with the concept of knowledge acquisition in mentoring, as emphasized by The Rackham School of Graduate Studies (2006).

The characterization of mentoring activities as practical strategies for international publication opens avenues for critical exploration. While the study implies the efficacy of mentorship, a deeper analysis could scrutinize the specific components of mentoring that contribute most significantly to successful international publication. Exploring potential variations in mentoring styles, the impact of cultural factors, and the role of interpersonal dynamics could offer a more nuanced understanding of the complexities inherent in mentor-mentee relationships.

### **3.4 Mentoring as Knowledge Acquisition**

The study underscores that mentoring, as undertaken by supervisors, is not merely a hierarchical relationship but a dynamic process involving the transfer of knowledge. This is particularly relevant for academics with limited experience, as the mentoring process provides them with valuable support and guidance from experienced mentors. The study aligns with Kram's model, as cited in Stevens et al. (2019), emphasizing the importance of mentoring for individuals at various stages of their academic careers.

The concept of mentoring as a mechanism for knowledge acquisition is robust, but a critical examination may consider the power dynamics at play. How do these mentoring



relationships navigate potential imbalances in power and authority? Additionally, exploring the reciprocal nature of knowledge exchange within mentoring could provide insights into how both mentors and mentees contribute to each other's intellectual development.

The analysis of the study emphasizes the active and multifaceted role of supervisors in guiding graduate students through the process of manuscript writing and international publication. The motivations, pride, and satisfaction derived by supervisors from their students' success underscore the significance of mentoring in academic development. The study contributes to the understanding of practical strategies employed by supervisors in facilitating successful international publication and sheds light on the nuanced dynamics of mentor-mentee relationships in academia.

### **3.5 Broader Implications for Academic Culture**

Beyond the immediate findings, a critical analysis may extend to the broader implications for the academic culture within the university and the chemistry department. Questions could arise about the sustainability of such mentorship models, potential variations in mentorship quality among different supervisors, and the impact of institutional policies on the overall academic atmosphere.

Certainly! When referring to "Broader Implications for Academic Culture," it involves an exploration of the wider impact and consequences of the findings within the academic institution, going beyond the immediate context of the study.

### **3.6 Future Directions for Research and Implications for Policy and Practice**

The study opens avenues for future research by identifying the role of supervisors in successful international publication. A deeper analysis may suggest areas for further exploration, such as investigating the long-term impact of mentorship on students' academic careers, assessing the transferability of mentorship models to different disciplines, or scrutinizing the ethical considerations surrounding mentorship in the context of publication expectations.

A critical lens on the study may prompt considerations for policy and practice within the university. What adjustments or enhancements to institutional policies could further support the mentorship initiatives described in the study? How can the positive aspects of mentoring be leveraged without inadvertently fostering a culture of dependency?

In summary, while the study provides valuable insights into the role of supervisors in guiding students through the manuscript writing process, a deeper and critical analysis invites exploration of potential challenges, nuances, and broader implications. Such critical scrutiny not only enhances the depth of understanding but also contributes to ongoing conversations about mentorship, academic culture, and the multifaceted nature of success in academia.

Future research and implications for policy and practice should be geared toward fostering an environment that not only values effective mentorship but also adapts to the evolving needs of graduate students and the academic community. By addressing ethical considerations, cultural factors, and the transferability of mentorship models, institutions can contribute to the creation of a supportive and dynamic academic culture.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

Supervisors have a role in supporting students to have the manuscript publication of reputable international journals. The supervisor must have excellent ability in writing manuscripts so they will guide the students properly. With a lecturer research project, the supervisor has a role in determining the title of the research until the publisher of the journal for the manuscript created. There is a symbiotic mutualism between the supervisor and the student because the supervisor got the assistance in conducting the research project while the student has the opportunity to learn writing manuscripts under the supervisor's guidance.

In conclusion, the study illuminates the significant and symbiotic role that supervisors play in guiding graduate students through the intricate process of manuscript publication in reputable international journals. The findings underscore the essentiality of supervisors

possessing exemplary manuscript writing skills, as this proficiency is foundational to their ability to provide effective guidance to students.

The supervisor's involvement extends from the initiation of a research project, including determining the research title, to the selection of a suitable journal publisher for the resulting manuscript. This comprehensive engagement highlights the multifaceted responsibilities shouldered by supervisors, demonstrating their pivotal role in shaping the trajectory of students' academic and professional pursuits.

The symbiotic mutualism between supervisors and students emerges as a central theme in the study. Supervisors, with their wealth of experience, provide invaluable assistance to students in navigating the complexities of research projects. Simultaneously, students benefit from the mentorship of supervisors, gaining practical insights into manuscript writing and publication processes. This reciprocal relationship fosters an environment of collaborative learning and shared achievement.

The study emphasizes that the success of students in achieving manuscript publications is intricately tied to the ability of supervisors to effectively guide and mentor. The pride derived by supervisors from the growth and accomplishments of their students underscores the intrinsic motivation to contribute to the academic development of the next generation. In practical terms, the study underscores the importance of recognizing and fostering effective mentorship practices within academic institutions. It suggests that institutions should value and support supervisors who demonstrate excellence not only in research but also in guiding students through the intricate landscape of academic writing and publication.

As academic institutions move forward, there is a call for proactive measures. These may include the development of mentorship training programs to equip supervisors with the necessary skills, periodic reviews of mentorship practices to ensure their alignment with evolving academic needs, and the establishment of recognition and reward systems for effective mentors.

In essence, the rational conclusion drawn from this study is that the relationship between supervisors and students is symbiotic, with the success of one intricately linked to the success of the other. As a guiding force in manuscript publication, supervisors contribute not only to individual student achievements but also to the broader academic culture, embodying the ideals of collaborative learning, mentorship, and shared scholarly success.

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