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Entitled

*THE IMPACT OF THE WIKI-ENHANCED TBLT APPROACH ON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL
IN A UAE EFL CONTEXT*

by

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Date & Venue

6 Jun 2023, Tuesday

Start: 10:00am - 13:00 pm

Room: H1-0051

<https://rb.gy/uk3xv>

Abstract

This study investigated the impact of the wiki-enhanced task-based language teaching (TBLT) approach on students' writing skills in the context of English as a foreign language (EFL) in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). In addition, it explored the students' and teachers' views and attitudes toward the implementation of the wiki-enhanced TBLT approach. The study data were collected quantitatively and qualitatively from two classrooms in a public high school in the UAE, which consisted of 30 students. The quantitative data were collected via a pretest–posttest design from two assigned groups of students: the control and experimental groups. Meanwhile, the qualitative data were collected via a survey of the students and a semi-structured interview with the teacher. The study was conducted during an academic semester. The findings of the study show that implementing the wiki-enhanced TBLT technique considerably improves EFL learners' writing skills in relation to the four language components studied—syntactic complexity, grammatical accuracy, fluency, and lexical complexity. In addition, the students enjoyed working together on writing tasks using the wiki-enhanced TBLT approach. Their responses showed that the TBLT approach encourages better performance in collaborative writing tasks and classroom engagement. Moreover, the classroom teachers indicated that the implementation of this approach played a significant role in promoting students' performance, communication, collaboration, and engagement in the target language (English) in the experimental group. Furthermore, the findings showed that students can construct new knowledge with the aid of their peers, thereby improving their capacity to devise and discuss original ideas. As students can practice collaborative writing while at home, the wiki-enhanced TBLT approach is beneficial for online learning. Adopting this approach increased students' participation in class because they were more comfortable working together while using technology, improving the quality of their writing and assignments. Meanwhile, several theoretical and pedagogical implications regarding the implementation of this approach have been drawn. The first theoretical implication of this study is its expansion into other geographical locations, particularly in the Gulf region and the UAE. The second theoretical implication is that it supports previous efforts to move the social constructivist perspective of learning from the historically dominant spoken discourse to the written discourse. Regarding the pedagogical implications of the TBLT approach, its use improves students' efficiency and performance, which translates into a high level of practice in second language (L2) writing, lengthening the time spent on tasks. In addition, this approach can be used as a teaching tool to promote student participation and engagement and create a friendly social environment in an L2 classroom. Moreover, it enabled a smooth transition from planning and drafting in class to reviewing, editing, revising, and uploading outside of the class. Based on these findings, further research is recommended to gauge the impact of the wiki-enhanced TBLT approach on other language skills, such as listening, speaking, and reading. Future research should consider examining the effects of the wiki-enhanced TBLT approach on EFL learners at different levels, such as elementary, college, or university students.

Keywords: High School, EFL context, Impact of wiki-enhanced TBLT approach, Task-based language teaching, Technology-mediated language learning, United Arab Emirates (UAE)