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Entitled

*EFFECT OF COLLABORATIVE PRE-TASK PLANNING ON THE WRITING QUALITY OF YOUNG EFL
LEARNERS WITHIN THE TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING APPROACH*

by

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the collaborative pre-task planning (PTP) taking place prior to writing within the task-based language teaching (TBLT) framework. The primary aim of this dissertation is to examine how providing time for PTP has the potential to more positively enhance L2 writing performance than writing tasks performed with no planning time. Through a quasi-experimental design, a pre-test and post-test were conducted to enable the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data over a ten-week period. The actual writing instruction during the study period took place in a hybrid educational mode, and it involved a task-based writing model that was a modified version of Willis's (1996) Task-Based Learning framework and aimed at sequencing the stages for improved implementation. The quantitative data phase was first carried out by analyzing the complexity, accuracy, fluency, ideational content, and lexical richness (CAFIL) measures of the written texts, followed by a questionnaire to survey their views regarding pre-task planning. Afterwards, qualitative data were collected through classroom observations and interviews with both a teacher and students regarding their perceptions of PTP and its impact on the students' writing performance. The quantitative results revealed that PTP significantly impacted the fluency, ideational content, and lexical richness of the participants' written production, but no significant difference was found in terms of the complexity and accuracy. These findings were supported by the questionnaire results which showed that the students found PTP beneficial in promoting their language ability. The qualitative results further indicated positive views from both the teacher and the students regarding PTP, highlighting the many benefits of the strategy for their overall writing quality within the task-based context, including enhanced content planning (idea generation, lexis, and argumentation), improved organization and planning skills, and their increased self-confidence as L2 writers. Moreover, the adjusted writing model was found to be effective for L2 writing instruction and could facilitate the implementation of PTP as an essential stage of the L2 writing process. These results are discussed in light of the findings of previous planning studies, as well as the predictions of Robinson's (2001, 2011a, 2022) Cognition Hypothesis, and Skehan's (1998a, 2009, 2014a) Limited Attentional Capacity Model. The statistical analyses, along with the qualitative results, suggest that PTP reduces the demands placed on the writers' attentional resources and thus fosters L2 writing production.

Keywords: Pre-task planning, collaborative planning, task-based language teaching, CAFIL, L2 writing, writing quality