

# Developing the EFL Writing Skills and Motivation of Preparatory Stage Students via a Task-Based learning Strategy

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## **Abstract:**

*The chief purpose of the current study was to develop the second-year preparatory stage students' writing skills and motivation via a task based-learning strategy. The current study adopted the quasi-experimental research design (pre /posttest and experimental and control group). The participants of the study were 80 EFL second year preparatory stage students selected randomly from DR. Ahmed Shalaby preparatory school, Abu -Hammad directorate, Sharkia governorate, Egypt. They were equally assigned to two groups ,40 students for the experimental group and 40 for the control one. The data into this study were collected via an EFL writing skills test, that was administered to measure EFL writing skills before and after the treatment, and a writing motivation scale. This study lasted for the period of eight weeks during the first semester of the scholastic year 2019-2020. The results of the study indicated that the task-based learning strategy was effective in enhancing the EFL writing skills of the preparatory stage students and boosting their motivation towards EFL writing.*

**Key words:** Task-based learning; writing skills; Motivation.

## **I. Introduction**

As a productive skill, writing is considered as one of the four basic skills of English language. It is a n extensive ability including grammar, conception ,vocabulary ,rhetoric and other aspects of language ( **Zhang & Chen ,1989**). Writing boosts language acquisition because learners experiment with sentences ,words and other elements of writing so as to convey their ideas effectively ,and to enhance the vocabulary and grammar they are learned into classroom ( **Bello,1997** ).

**Luchini (2010)** mentioned that writing has always been regarded as an essential skill in both teaching and learning English as a foreign language. **Firstly**, Writing stimulates logical thinking, urges students to focus their attention, clear up their ideas, and enhances their ability to analyze, criticize and summarize. **Secondly**, **writing** advocates learning through thinking in and reflecting on the target language.

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**According to Harmer (2002)** there are four reasons for teaching writing to the learners of English as a foreign language. These reasons are as follows:

1. **Reinforcement:** some students acquire language in an oral/aural way; others get benefit from seeing the language written down.” The visual demonstration of language construction is invaluable for both understanding and memory”. It is useful for students to write the new language shortly after studying it

**2. Language development:** the process of writing is different from the process of speaking; the former helps us to learn as writers go along. “The mental activity of construction proper written texts is a part of the ongoing learning experiences.

**3. Learning style:** some students are quick at acquiring language just by looking and listening. Others may take longer time spent in producing language in a slower way. So, writing is appropriate for those.

**4. Writing as a skill:** the most essential reason for teaching writing is that, it is a basic skill like speaking, listening, and reading. Students need to know how to write letters, compositions, essays, and reports and how to use writing conventions.

In spite of its importance, writing is regarded the most difficult of those other skills for foreign language students. It constitutes a great confront for most students in academic context both in mother tongue and in an EFL/ESL context. Many researchers have asserted writing complexity.

**Al Samadani(2010)** pointed out writing in a second language is even more demanding because it is ‘‘a complex, challenging and difficult process’’ since writers are expected to produce written samples which are syntactically accurate, semantically acceptable and culturally appropriate.

**Abu Rass(2015)** demonstrated that’’ writing is a difficult skill for native and non-native speakers alike, because writers must balance between multiple issues in their writing such as content, organization, purpose, audience, vocabulary and mechanics, which means using the right punctuation and capitalization’’.

Due to its pivotal role in learning English, learners’ writing skill needs to be reinforced, the best way to achieve this goal is practice. During the practice of writing learners are very vulnerable to face problems. Students’ problems in writing may occur due to many factors, including psychological, linguistic and cognitive aspects.

**Huy(2015)** outlined the problems which students often encounter in learning writing as follows:

1-Lacking of vocabulary.

2-Students often spend a little time in studying vocabulary, they rarely look for

dictionary and they usually ignore new words and don't look up meaning as well as the way to use them.

3-Students have difficulties in studying grammar. Grammar limitation also affects the ability to use language. Besides, many students are not aware of the importance of grammar in studying writing skill.

4-Unsuitability of topics and exercises of writing for many students' linguistic level.

5-The correction limitation of students' written works. The time allocated for writing is too little. Thus, a teacher is unable to correct all written works for students. Furthermore, many teachers are busy with their teaching, so they don't have sufficient time to correct students' written works.

6-Students lack material sources to improve their writing skill.

7-Students lack time for learning writing skill. The time allocated for learning writing skill isn't sufficient for most students. This results in many difficulties for students in improving their language knowledge.

IN line with this, **AL Souqi (2001)** stated that one reason for EFL students' writing problems could be the adoption of a traditional approach of composition teaching. He mentioned that "through this traditional approach, teachers roughly explain what features characterize a good text, emphasizing the importance of correct grammar and spelling.

With regard to the problems which teachers encounter while teaching and developing EFL writing, **Bilal, Tariq, UddIN, Latif and Anjum (2013)** conducted a study which aimed at highlighting the problems which hinder teachers while developing English writing skills. The findings of the study outlined the factors which hinder the teachers while developing writing skills as following: **i)** An intermediate level, most of the students have poor English language background. **ii)** Proper A/V aids aren't available to the teacher. **iii)** Classes are over-crowded. **iv)** Teachers usually follow traditional approaches for teaching purpose and they are satisfied with their teaching approach. **v)** Teachers can't give proper time for writing practice during class because of lengthy syllabus and over-crowded class rooms.

Motivation is one of the most significant affective factors in learning process, which helps determine the level of proficiency achieved by learners . in terms of the motivation role in second language learning, **Gardner** argues that students with higher level of motivation will do better than students who have a lower level, and if they are motivated they will have strong motives to make themselves involved in learning activities, show desires to achieve the goal and enjoy the activities( **Gardner in Al Tamimi and Suib,2009**).

**McLeod (1987)** mentioned that Writing is an activity that is as much emotional as cognitive. Affective factors have an impact on all phases of the writing process. Motivation, with its outstanding influences, is the most essential among these affective factors. As **Bruning and Horn(2000)** stated writing successfully is a difficult and effortful activity that demands systematic attention to motivational conditions .Students need to tap all motivational resources within themselves and the support that is available in the instructional environment.

Most of the contemporary writing models (e.g **Hayes ,1996;Zimmerman &Risemberg ,1997** )have asserted the significant role of motivation in writing development and writing performance. Similarly , some studies proved that motivational factors have a great influence on the process and production of difficult tasks

such as writing. They think that learners' motivation has a crucial role in determining how students will engage in writing activities, what kind of writing tasks they will handle, and how much attention they will run through various phases of their writing process (Bruning & Horn, 2000). Kormos and Dornyei (2004) regards the task of motivation as an essential factor that can impact students' L2 writing. Along with this view, another study illustrates that students with integrative motivation were more successful in writing than those with instrumental motivation (Frazel & Ahmadi, 2011).

Thus it is clear that the teacher's role in teaching writing is not confined to teach the skill, but it is vital for teachers to act as motivators whereby they can create the right conditions for generating ideas, convincing the students with the usefulness of the activity, and urging the students to exert as much effort as possible for maximum benefit. This effort must be executed as a constant effort on the part of longer process writing sequences (Boscolo and Gelati, 2007).

There are many studies that investigated the role of motivation in writing and how to enhance writing motivation (e.g. Ackerman, 2006; Hamidun, Hashim and Othman, 2012; Lo, J. & Hyland, F., 2007; Amabile, 1985; Turner, 2015; Nourinezhad, Shokrpour & Shahsavar, 2017; Mohamad & Hussien, 2013 and Troia, Harbaugh, Shankland, Wolbers & Lawrence, 2013).

Due to the shortcomings and disadvantages of traditional approaches adopted in teaching EFL writing skills, there was an urgent need to adopt new approach in teaching EFL writing skill. The researcher adopted the task-based approach in teaching writing to the preparatory stage students.

The adoption of task-based approach TBA began long time ago in 1970s when scholars maintained that language instruction should encompass both grammar and meaning (Skehan, 2003). Prabhu (1987) is regarded as one of the first supporters for tasks or task-based language teaching. TBLT as he started was the approach in teaching secondary schools classes in Bangalore, India in 1970s.

Willis & Willis (2001); Ellis (2003) and Littlewood (2004), have called for a move in language teaching towards TBA instruction. They think that TBLT is a form of teaching that treats language mainly as a tool for communication rather than as a subject for study or manipulation. It is obvious that if learners are to develop the competence, they need in order to use a second language easily and effectively in the different kinds of situations they encounter outside the classroom, they need to experience how language is used as a tool for communication within it. Moreover, American Government Language Institutions found that with task-based instruction and authentic material the learners made far more rapid progress and were able to use their new foreign language in real world circumstances with a reasonable level of proficiency after quite short courses.

They were able to operate effective meaning system, i.e. to express what they wanted to say, even though their grammar and lexicon were often far from perfect (Leaver and Willis, 2004). As a consequence, American Government institutions turned towards task based instruction (TBL) for foreign language for adults in early 1980s.

There are two reasons which justify the use of tasks in language classes. Lynch and Maclean (2000) said that **the first justification** for task-based learning is what can be called the ecologic alone: the belief that the best way to promote effective learning is by setting up classroom tasks which reflect as far as possible the real world tasks which the learners perform, or will perform. Task performance is seen as rehearsal for

interaction to come. **The second justification** based on SLA Research.’’ Those calling for TBL, drawing on SL research, have tended to concentrate on issues as learnability, the order of acquisition of particular L2 structure, and the implication of the input, interaction and output hypotheses’’. (Lynch and Maclean, 2000, p.222).

Task-based learning is more beneficial to the student due to the fact that it is more learner-centered, permits meaningful communication, and often provides a practical additional linguistic skill building. since the tasks are likely to be familiar to the students, they are more likely to be engaged, which may further motivate them in their language learning. In addition, tasks endorse language acquisition through the kinds of language they necessitate.

**Nunan (1993) illustrates the characteristics of task-based learning**

**as follows:**

- 1-An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
- 2-The introduction of authentic texts (teaching materials) into the learning situation.
- 3-The provision of opportunities for learners to focus not only on language, but also on the learning process itself.
- 4-An enhancement of learner’s personal experiences as an important contributing element to classroom learning.
- 5-An attempt to link classroom learning with language activation outside the classroom.

**Thus, it can be concluded that the task-based teaching has many advantages. In this regard Ellis (2009)**

**highlighted the benefits of task-based teaching to ELT as follows:**

- 1-TBLT provides the opportunity for natural learning within the classroom
- 2-IT asserts meaning over form; however, it can also emphasize learning form
- 3- It offers learners a fertile input of target language.
- 4-It is intrinsically motivating.
- 5-It is consistent with a learner-focused philosophy, but also allows for teacher input and guidance.
- 6-IT serves to the improvement of communicative fluency while not overlooking accuracy.
- 7-It can be utilized together with a more traditional approach.

IN terms of the effectiveness of task based -learning approach in teaching and developing EFL writing skill, there is a great number of empirical studies that proved its effectiveness in teaching writing.

**Sari and Pangaribuan (2018) conducted a study entitled “THE APPLICATION OF TASK-BASED LEARNING (TBL) APPROACH TO IMPROVE STUDENTS’ ACADEMIC WRITING SKILL”** aimed to

develop the students' academic writing skill through the implementation of TBL approach. The study was a classroom action research (CAR) performed into two cycles. Each cycle consisted of four steps, namely planning, action, observation and reflection. The participants of the study were 21 students (18 females and 3 males). They were the fourth semester students of English language education study program of catholic university of saint Thomas in the academic year of 2017/2018. The instruments utilized in this study were pre-post academic writing test and questionnaire. The findings of the study indicated that the application of the task-based learning approach could improve students' academic writing skill, especially writing English essays. Besides, the application of TBL approach could increase the students' motivation, interest and involvement in the academic writing classes.

**Gonzalez and Lopez (2019)** conducted a study entitled '*The impact of Task-Based Language Teaching on Learners' Writing skills*' to investigate the effect of task-based language teaching on public school learners' writing skills. The study was an action research. The participants of the study were 36 seventh graders. The instruments utilized in this study were students' questionnaire, students' pretest, teacher's questionnaire, administrator's questionnaire, teacher's journal and students' post-test. The findings of the study indicated that the students achieved a notable progress in terms of vocabulary, syntax, grammar, spelling and mechanics of writing. On the whole, the implementation of task-based language teaching writing results in the improvement of students' self-confidence, and their spelling, grammar, vocabulary and mechanics of writing as well. In addition to that, the use of language in communicative contexts, being more precise when it came to produce a text or composition.

### **1.2. The context of the problem:**

Through the researcher's experience as a teacher of English, she noticed the low level of the preparatory stage students in writing skills. Furthermore, they lack motivation to write. They aren't motivated to participate in writing activities. Thus the researcher tried to make sure if the second year preparatory school students really lack the necessary competences or not. So she conducted a pilot study to investigate the actual level of the second year preparatory school students' writing skills. The researcher administered a writing test to a group of 40 students of Dr Ahmed Shalbi preparatory school. The test was administered to assess the students' actual level in writing skills. The results of this test indicated that the second year preparatory school students had problems in the following skills as indicated into the following table

**Table(1)**

**The results of EFL writing pilot test.**

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Writing skills	Number of percentage the students who mastered the
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	skill	
1- <b>Writing a minimum six sentences for a paragraph or a letter.</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>25%</b>
2- <b>Communicating ideas and purpose of writing clearly to the reader.</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>20%</b>
3- <b>Writing a suitable topic/key sentence and provide supportive details for the main idea expressed in the topic/key sentence.</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15%</b>
4- <b>Writing a cohesive and coherent paragraph.</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>22.5%</b>
5- <b>Writing meaningful and grammatical sentences.</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>20%</b>
6- <b>Using punctuation rules correctly.</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>30%</b>
7- <b>Writing words in correct spelling.</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>32.5%</b>
8- <b>Writing legibly (without handwriting mistakes).</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>40%</b>

The researcher also administered a writing motivation scale to make sure if second year preparatory school students really lack writing motivation. The results of the questionnaire showed that the students lack motivation to write.

### **1.3. The statement of the problem:**

Based the aforementioned discussion, it could be concluded that second year preparatory stage students lack writing skills and writing motivation. Therefore, this study was an attempt to improve the second year preparatory stage students' writing skills and their motivation for writing using a task-based learning strategy.

### **1.4. Questions of the study:**

The current study attempted to answer the following main question:

**'What is the effect of a task-based learning strategy on developing EFL preparatory stage students' writing skills and motivation?'**

This question was sub-divided to the following questions:

- 1-What are writing skills required for the second-year preparatory stage students?
- 2-What is the actual level of the second-year preparatory stage students' writing skills?
- 3-What is the actual level of the second-year preparatory stage students' writing motivation?

4-How can a task-based learning strategy be designed to develop the second-year preparatory stage students' writing skills and motivation?

5-What is the effect of a task-based learning strategy on developing the second-year preparatory school students' writing skills?

6-What is the effect of a task-based learning strategy on developing the second-year preparatory school students' writing motivation?

### **1.5. The purpose of the study:**

#### **This study aimed at:**

- 1- Identifying the writing skills necessary for the second- year preparatory stage students.
- 2-Enhancing the EFL second year preparatory stage students' writing skills.
- 3-Examining the effect of a task-based learning strategy on developing the EFL second year preparatory stage students' writing skills.
- 4-Enhancingthe EFL second year preparatory school students' writing motivation.
- 5-Examining the effect of a task-based learning strategy on developing the second year preparatorystage students' writing motivation.

### **1.6. The significance of the study:**

The significance of the current study lies in the fact that it is an attempt to overcome the shortcomings of the traditional teaching methods adopted in teaching writing. Besides, it asserts the importance of providing EFL second year preparatory stage students with activities and opportunities to raise their awareness of writing underlying skills.

**In addition to the previous considerations, it is hoped that the presentstudy results may contribute particularly in the Egyptian TEFL field through:**

1-Providing EFL teachers, supervisors and curricula designers with a list of writing skills necessary for the second-year preparatory stagestudents to be taken into consideration while planning and designing writing activities suitable for those students as well as in evaluating their writing performance

2-Contributing to rethinking and modifying of the teaching methods currently adopted in teaching and developing writing skills in Egyptian preparatory stage schools.

3-Providing preparatory EFL teachers with a better understanding of the communicative tasks and processes underlying the writing skills and how to benefit from this understanding in teaching writing skills.



4-Helping text book authors and curricula designers to take into consideration the principles and propositions of the task-based learning approach while designing communicative tasks to be included in pupils' textbooks as a means of fostering their overall writing proficiency and its sub –skills.

5-Paving the way for other researchers to conduct further studies on using the task-based learning approach in teaching EFL writing skills and developing motivation for writing.

#### **1.7 Instruments of the study :**

- 1-EFL writing test to measure the students' EFL writing skills before and after the statement.
- 2-Writing motivation scale to measure the students' motivation before and after the treatment.
- 3-A rubric to assess the participants' performance.

#### **1.8.Delimitations of the study:**

1-The participants of the study were delimited to a random sample of EFL second year preparatory school students at public schools (DR. Ahmed Shalbi Preparatory school). . This is because students at these schools are not good at writing skills because they are not trained well to write skillfully. Consequently, they are demotivated to writing.

2-The study was delimited to some writing skills which are necessary for the EFL second year preparatory stage students which were determined by jury members.

3-The study was delimited to EFL second year preparatory stage students' writing motivation.

4- The study was delimited to the first semester of the school year 2019-2020

#### **1.9. The procedures of the study:**

To answer the study questions the researcher tracked the following procedures:

1- Surveying the pertinent literature and the previous studies related to the EFL writing skills to derive the skills required for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year preparatory stage students.

2- Surveying the pertinent literature and previous studies related to writing motivation to determine the statements appropriate to the 2<sup>nd</sup> year preparatory stage students.

3- Surveying the pertinent literature and previous studies related to the task -based learning and its framework to determine how it can be applied in teaching EFL writing skills for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year preparatory stage students.

4- Analyzing the content of English language curriculum prescribed for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year preparatory stage students and the teacher's guide as well. To choose EFL writing skills topics.

5.Designing the instruments of the study

6.Planning and designing the treatment sessions on the grounds of the task- based learning strategy to develop the students' Efl writing skills and motivation.

7. Selecting the sample of the study randomly from the 2<sup>nd</sup> year preparatory stage students.

8. Administering the pre-test to the two groups (i.e. the experimental and control groups)

9. Administering the pre-motivation scale to the two groups (i.e. the experimental and control groups)
- 10- Delivering the strategy sessions to the experimental group, while the control group still received the traditional instruction.
- 11- Administering the post -test to the two groups (i.e. the experimental and control groups) after the experiment.
- 12-Adminstering the post -motivation scale to the two groups (i.e. the experimental and control groups) after the experiment.
- 13-Computing the results of the study statistically using SPSS program, to determine the effect of the suggested strategy on developing the students' writing skills and motivation.
- 14-Analyzing the study results statistically before and after the experimentation as well.
- 15.Explaining and discussing the results.
- 16- Introducing the summary, conclusion, recommendations, and suggestions for further investigation.

**1.10.Data analysis:**

To find out whether students' EFL writing skills and motivation advanced after the implementation of the experimental treatment utilizing the task based learning strategy, the hypotheses of the study were verified by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 19) Program.

**1.11.verifyng the study hypotheses:**

On the grounds of the present study statistical analysis, the hypotheses of the study were verified in the following way:

**Hypothesis one:**

To verify the study first hypothesis which stated that “ There would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group (exposed to the task-based learning strategy), and those of the control group (received the regular strategy) in the post administration of the writing skills test in favor of the experimental group.”, the Independent sample t-test was utilized to compare the mean scores of the experimental group students who were taught by the task based learning strategy to those of the control group students who were taught by the traditional method, in the post-test. The results are shown in the following table.

**Table ( 1 ): post t-test results of the control and the experimental groups in content, organization, grammar , vocabulary ,mechanics, genre ,and Overall EFL writing skills.**

Skill	Group	N	M	S. D	D. f	t- value	sig
1- content	Control	40	1.23	1.441		7.344	0.000
	Experimental	40	3.65	1.511			

<b>2- organization</b>	Control	40	.65	1.210	78	10.933	0.000
	Experimental	40	3.40	1.033			
<b>3-grammar</b>	Control	40	7.75	4.776		8.647	0.000
	Experimental	40	19.09	6.723			
<b>4-vocabulary</b>	Control	40	9.00	2.641		10.554	0.000
	experimental	40	16.30	3.488			
<b>5-mechanics</b>	Control	40	5.75	2.907		9.108	0.000
	experimental	40	10.45	1.484			
<b>6- genre</b>	Control	40	.95	1.239	9.560	0.000	
	experimental	40	4.08	1.655			
<b>Overall EFL writing skills</b>	Control	40	25.33	10.207	11.669	0.000	
	experimental	40	56.90	13.737			

As indicated in the table above the mean scores of the experimental group students are higher than those of the control group in the overall EFL writing skills and its sub-skills, where t-value is, (11.669) for overall writing skills, (7.344) for content, (10.933) for organization, (8.647) for Grammar, (10.554) for vocabulary , (9.108) formechanics , (9.560) for genre , which is significant at 0, 01 level of significance. consequently, this hypothesis was verified. These differences can be attributed to the task-based learning strategy.

#### **Hypothesis Two:**

To verify the second hypothesis which stated that “There would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group (exposed to the task-based learning strategy) in their performance in the pre- and post-administrations of the writing test in favor of the post administration.”, the paired sample t-test was utilized to compare the mean scores of the experimental group who were taught by the task-based learning strategy in the pre and post-test. The following table shows the results.

**Table ( 2 ):** post t-test results of the experimental group pre and post in in content, organization, grammar , vocabulary ,mechanics ,and Overall EFL writing skills.

Skill	Group	N	M	S.D	D. f	t-value	sig
<b>1- content</b>	Pre	40	1.10	1.194	39	12.407	0.000
	Post	40	3.65	1.511			
<b>2- organization</b>	Pre	40	.85	1.167		12.510	0.000
	Post	40	3.40	1.033			
<b>3-grammar</b>	Pre	40	8.68	2.464		11.016	0.000
	Post	40	19.03	6.723			
<b>4-vocabulary</b>	Pre	40	9.30	3.443		15.603	0.000
	Post	40	16.30	3.488			
<b>5-mechanics</b>	Pre	40	6.20	1.698		14.638	0.000
	Post	40	10.45	1.484			
<b>6- genre</b>	Pre	40	1.33	.944		10.020	0.000
	Post	40	4.08	1.655			
<b>Overall EFL writing skills</b>	Pre	40	27.45	6.924		19.978	0.000
	Post	40	56.90	13.737			

As illustrated in the table above the mean scores of the experimental group students in posttest are higher than in pretest in the overall EFL writing skills and its sub-skills, where t-value is, (19.978) for overall writing skills, (12.407) for content, (12.510) for organization, (11.016) for Grammar, (15.603) for vocabulary , (14.638) formechanics , (10.020) for genre , which is significant at 0, 01 level of significance. consequently, this hypothesis was verified. These differences can be attributed to the task-based learning.

### **Hypothesis Three**

To verify the third hypothesis which statedthat “ There would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group(exposed to the task-based learning strategy)and those of the

control group(received the regular strategy)in the post administration of the motivation scale in favor of the experimental group.

To verify this hypothesis, the Independent sample t-test to was utilized to compare the mean scores of the experimental group students who were taught by the task -based learning strategy to those of the control group students who were taught by the traditional method, in the post-administration of EFL writing motivation scale. The results are shown in the following table.

**Table ( 3 ):** post t-test results of the control and the experimental groups in the post-administration of EFL writing motivation scale.

Skill	Group	N	M	S.D	df	t-value	Sig
EFL writing motivation scale	Control	40	40.23	10.536	78	11.529	.000
	Experimental	40	69.95	12.447			

As shown in the table above the mean scores of the experimental group students are higher than those of the control group in of EFL writing motivation scale, where t-value is, (11.529) for overall of EFL writing motivation scale, which is significant at 0, 01 level of significance. Therefore, this hypothesis was verified. These differences can be attributed to the task based learning strategy.

**Hypothesis Four:**

To verify the fourth hypothesis which stated that “There would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group (exposed to the task-based learning strategy) in their performance in the pre- and post-administration of the EFL writing motivation scale in favor of the post administration.”

To verify this hypothesis, the paired sample t-test was utilized to compare the mean scores of the experimental group who were taught by the task-based learning strategy in the pre- and post-administration of EFL writing motivation scale. The following table includes the results.

**Table ( 4 ):** post t-test results of the experimental groups in the pre and post administration of EFL writing motivation scale.

Skill	Group	N	M	S.D	df	t-value	Sig
EFL writing motivation scale	Pre	40	36.38	8.986	39	16.413	.000
	Post	40	69.95	12.447			

As shown in the table above the mean scores of the post administration of EFL writing motivation scale are higher than the pre administration, where t-value is, (16.413) for overall EFL writing motivation scale, which is significant at 0, 01 level of significance. Consequently, this hypothesis was verified. These differences can be attributed to the task-based learning strategy.

**Hypothesis (5):**

To verify the fifth hypothesis which stated that “the task-based learning strategy would be effective in developing the second year preparatory school students' EFL writing skills and motivation.”

To verify this hypothesis, the effect size was calculated by using the paired sample t-test to compare the scores of the experimental group in the students' EFL writing skills test and motivation scale in the pre and the post administration using Cohen's formula.

$$\text{Cohen's formula} = \frac{t^2}{df}$$

$$\sqrt{\frac{t^2}{df}}$$

$$d = \frac{t}{\sqrt{df}}$$

Es =

Where  $t^2 = \text{Etsquare}$

T= t test value

Df = degree of freedom

D= Es = effect size

**Table ( 5 ):** The referential framework for identifying the effect size for T- test value.

Effect size	Interpretations
<b>From 0.2 till less than 0.5</b>	Small
<b>From 0.5 till less than 0.8</b>	Medium
<b>From 0.8 or more</b>	Large

**Table (6 ):** The effect size of the experimental group in EFL writing skills as a whole in the pre and the posttest.

Skill	Test	N	M	S.D	t-value	Eta square	Effect size
<b>1- content</b>	Pre	40	1.10	1.194	12.407	.473	.947 <i>Large</i>
	Post	40	3.65	1.511			
<b>2- organization</b>	Pre	40	.85	1.167	12.510	.579	1.18 <i>Large</i>
	Post	40	3.40	1.033			
<b>3-grammar</b>	Pre	40	8.68	2.464	11.016	.517	1.03 <i>Large</i>
	Post	40	19.03	6.723			
<b>4-vocabulary</b>	Pre	40	9.30	3.443	15.603	.511	1.02 <i>Large</i>
	Post	40	16.30	3.488			
<b>5-mechanics</b>	Pre	40	6.20	1.698	14.638	.646	1.35 <i>Large</i>
	Post	40	10.45	1.484			
<b>6- genre</b>	Pre	40	1.33	.944	10.020	.517	1.03 <i>Large</i>
	Post	40	4.08	1.655			
<b>Overall EFL writing skills</b>	Pre	40	27.45	6.924	19.978	.653	1.37 <i>Large</i>
	Post	40	56.90	13.737			

**Significant at (0, 01)**

As shown in Table ( 6 ) the effect size of the experimental group students in the post test is greater and higher than those in the pre-test in overall EFL writing skills, where the effect size is (1.37) for overall EFL writing skills, (.947) for content, (1.18) for organization, (1.03) for Grammar, (1.02) for vocabulary , (1.35) formechanics , (1.03) for genre , which is significant at 0, 01 level of significance. Consequently, this hypothesis was verified. These differences can be attributed to the task-based learning strategy.

On the basis the findings of Cohen's formula and the interpretations of the effect size, the percentage 1.37 indicated that task-based learning strategy was effective in improving the students' EFL writing skills.

**Table (7 ):** The effect size of the experimental group in the pre and post administration of EFL writing motivation scale.

Skill	Group	N	M	S.D	t-value	Eta square	Effect size
<b>EFL writing motivation scale</b>	Pre	40	36.38	8.986	16.413	.710	1.56 <i>Large</i>
	Post	40	69.95	12.447			

**Significant at (0, 01)**

As shown in Table ( 7 ) the effect size of the experimental group students in the post administration is greater and higher than those in the pre administration of EFL writing motivation scale, where the effect size is (1.56) for overall EFL writing motivation scale, which is significant at 0,01 level of significance. consequently, this hypothesis was verified. These differences can be attributed to the task- based learning strategy.

According to the findings of Cohen's formula and the interpretations of the effect size, the percentage 1.56 indicated that task -based learning strategy was effective in increasing the students' EFL writing motivation.

**The study results**

On the ground of the current study statistical analysis, the following results could be declared:

1- There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and those of the control group in their performance on the post administration of the EFL writing skills test in favor of the experimental group.

2- There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group in their performance on the pre- and post – administration of EFL writing skills test in favor of the post administration.



3- There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and those of the control group in their performance on the post administration of the writing motivation scale in favor of the experimental group.

4- There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group in their performance on the pre- and post – administration of writing motivation scale in favor of the post administration.

5- The task -based learning strategy is effective in developing the 2nd year preparatory stage students' EFL writing skills.

6- The task -based learning strategy is effective in developing the 2<sup>nd</sup> year preparatory stage students' Writing motivation.

## **II. Conclusions:**

On the basis of the present study results the following conclusions could be obtained:

1-The study results confirmed the effectiveness of the task-based learning strategy in developing the experimental group students' EFL writing skills (content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, mechanics and genre).

2-It worth mentioning that the task-based learning strategy urged the students to engage and perform actively during the writing class since it created a teaching / learning context that motivated them to write English accurately.

3-The task- based learning strategy enabled the students to write confidently and easily without any pressure. This is because the teacher's role was confined to be a motivator, facilitator, language advisor, feedback provider, and a monitor not an authority or a source of pressure.

4-The task-based learning strategy was proved to provide an optimum motivating teaching / learning environment where the students could practice actively, cooperatively, and confidently.

5- It could be noticed that the students became able to choose the vocabulary suitable for the writing topic and select the appropriate word form and words that convey the meaning precisely.

6- The students managed to write a well-organized paragraph Setting the topic sentence and conclusion clearly, Setting the beginning, middle, and end of a paragraph accurately.

7-The students became able to Write the right form of paragraph, letter or e-mail.

8-The students were able to use logical transitions for ensuring smooth flow of ideas and logical sequence of sentences.

9- The TBL strategy framework with its three stage namely , the pre-task , task ,and post task provide opportunities for the students to plan before getting to write , activate their background about the topic of writing and recall the ideas relevant to the writing topic and also enabled the teacher to provide the feedback positively on the content of the students' writings.

10 In the task -based learning strategy the teacher's role was minimized and the learning process became centered around the learner, thus the students became motivated to perform the tasks co -operatively and thus became active learners instead of being passive receivers.

### **III. Recommendations:**

On the basis of the current study results, there are various recommendations that could be beneficial in the field of the instruction of English as a foreign language. These recommendations could be declared as follows:

- EFL teachers can adopt the task -based learning strategy in teaching EFL writing skills to the preparatory stage students and other stages as well.
- Teaching EFL writing skills should be given more attention in the Egyptian TEFL context. More time should be allocated and extra efforts should be exerted to develop such essential skill and its sub-skills.
- Adequate opportunities should be provided for the learners to practice writing daily.
- EFL teachers are advocated to teach writing with its sub -skills at an early stage of educations.
- Instructors should raise the students' awareness about the importance of writing as one of the four basic skills in English language.
- Preparatory stage English teachers should give away adoption of the traditional methods of teaching English language generally and the writing skills particularly.
- EFL instructors should be aware of the factors that demotivate the learners during the writing class and work persistently to avoid them. Providing positive feedback, performing attractive tasks and creating interactive learning situation inside the classroom, all these factors, could enable the students to increase their motivation and thus practice writing with ease.
- It is recommended for the curriculum designers and planners to design the textbooks' content in accordance with the task-based learning principles, procedures and framework.
- pre- and in-service training programs should be provided for the teachers in the application of the TBL Framework in their classroom practices

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