

**The Development of Task-Based Learning to Improve English Writing Skills  
in English Course 4, Course Code E22102, for Grade 8 Students  
at Nong Rua Wittaya School, Khon Kaen, Thailand**

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**Abstract**

The purpose of this study was 1) to study the guidelines for the development of Task-Based Learning to improve English writing skills for Grade 8 students 2) to develop the English writing skills exercises based on a Task-Based Learning teaching style for Grade 8 students; the exercises were constructed to exceed the standard criteria of 80/80 3) to compare the students' writing abilities between the test scores before and after learning through the English writing skills exercises based on a Task-Based Learning teaching style and 4) to study student satisfaction with learning by using the English writing skills exercises based on a Task-Based Learning teaching style for Grade 8 students. The population was 35 Grade 8 students which was obtained by using a cluster sampling. The instruments used in this study were 6 stories with the English writing skills exercises based on a Task-Based Learning teaching style, 22 lesson plans, a satisfaction assessment form and achievement test. The statistics used in data analysis were mean, Standard Deviation and dependent samples t-test.

The finding of this study indicated the following:

1) The Development of Task-Based Learning to Improve English Writing Skills was effective. It should be prepared in the form of a skill exercise for ease of use. The teacher should study the content for the preparation of skills exercises, analyze the content to determine its purpose and design the preparation of skills training according to the purpose to have a modern style, interesting, and choosing easy to hard content.

2) The English writing skills exercises based on a Task-Based Learning teaching style for Grade 8 students exhibited an efficiency level at 80.37/80.22

3) The students' writing abilities after learning though the English writing skills exercises based on a Task-Based Learning teaching style were higher than those prior to the commencement of the experiment at the .05 level of significance.

4) The satisfaction of Grade 8 students towards teaching activities from the English writing skills exercises based on a Task-Based Learning teaching style was at a high level. ( $\bar{X}$ = 4.39, S.D. = 0.27)

**Keywords:** Improve English writing skills, Task-Based Learning teaching style, English writing, Thailand

## Introduction

Learning a foreign language in today's global society is very important in communicating for trade, education, seeking knowledge, information, and occupation. Foreign language learning requires thinking processes and language practice in various situations both in the classroom and outside the classroom. So that learners can use the language in real situations with spoken and written language. Considering that English is the international language of the world that is widely used and plays an important role in the way of life of many people due to the influence of progress modern technology and communication make people get information faster using a computer network which must use English as a medium to convey meaning. As a result, the English language is increasingly important in the world society. In addition, English is essential for education, seek knowledge, occupation, relations between different nations, understanding differences in language, thinking, society, economy, politics, government and cultural traditions and able to communicate with other nations, so it is necessary. (Ministry of Education, 2003)

English is an international language that has played an important role in many countries for a long time. Living together as a global community from many countries with differences in race, religion, language and culture. It is essential to have a common language used to communicate with each other. English is defined as a medium of communication and exchange in terms of economy, education, society and culture from various civilized countries around the world. Somkiat Onwimol, (Thai scholar, 2012) discussed the role of English in the world community that “English is now an international language. English is the language of humanity, no matter what language each person uses as their national language when dealing with people from different languages and cultures. Everyone must use English as their primary language. For this reason, every nation has included English as a second language, subordinate to the national language, as the core of all education curriculums from early childhood to lifelong education.” It is regarded that English is the language of the world that plays an important role in international communication for economic, educational, political, governance, social and cultural interests in every country. Around the world, besides English, it plays an important role as the world's international language.

English still has an influence on Thailand today because English is an important variable in dealing with international trade business in the east and west, especially with member countries

in Southeast Asia, 10 countries are Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Vietnam, Myanmar, and Thailand, known as ASEAN. ASEAN countries have an agreement to integrate into the same community to be accomplished by the year 2015. From the integration plan of the ASEAN Community, Thailand has awakened and accelerated the development of English language skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing for students and the public common in the country. This is a consequence of Article 34 of the ASEAN Charter stipulating that “The working language of ASEAN shall be English”. The working language of ASEAN is English. It can be seen that English is very important for students to develop. to be able to use English in everyday life. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of Thailand, 2012)

Basic Education Core Curriculum 2008 stated that in today's world society learning a foreign language is very important and necessary in everyday life because it is an important tool for communication, education, seeking knowledge, occupation. Understanding of the culture and vision of the global community and being aware of cultural diversity and global perspectives brings goodwill and cooperation with other countries, helping to develop learners to understand themselves and others better. Learning and understanding the differences in languages and cultures, traditions, thinking, society, economy, politics, government have a good attitude towards using foreign languages and can use foreign languages for communication as well as having easier and wider access to various knowledge bodies and having a vision of life that is the purpose of learning a foreign language. Foreign language department is intended that learners have a good attitude toward foreign languages, can use foreign languages to communicate in various situations, and seek knowledge. It can make a career and study at a higher level, including knowledge and understanding of stories and cultures. (Ministry of Education, 2003)

To learn English successfully, learners should be able to practice listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in order to be able to apply these skills to be effective and suitable for various situations, among which all four English language skills are listening, speaking, reading and writing. It can be seen that writing skills are the most difficult skills, but it is necessary to learn writing skills. Because writing skill is an important skill and very beneficial to learners, it helps to enhance learners has applied other knowledge in the English subjects learned, such as taking notes while listening or writing a summary of what they have read. In addition, writing allows students to practice thinking systematically and creatively to convey experiences, thoughts and imaginations which is of great value to language learning and development. (Sumitra Angwattanakul, 1996) In addition, writing also requires gathering information and organizing the content well first. In order to write out in accordance with the principles of the language and for the understanding of the readers. (Wantanee Saengklaicharoen, 2018) In order to write well in English and correct the rules and grammar, it must be practiced. Practicing the process of organizing the content often because writing skills have many components. Whether it is vocabulary, language structure, grammar, which is a challenge for people who use English as a

foreign language due to the influence of the mother tongue. These are parts that make learning another language difficult.

The researcher, as an English teacher of Grade 8 at Nong Rua Wittaya School, Khon Kaen, Thailand, under the Office of the Secondary Education Service Area 25, surveyed the problem of teaching and learning during the past several academic years. It was found that students had problems with English writing skills more than other skills. We notice that students have writing inability to arrange words according to the positions and functions of different types of words, spelling mistakes, etc. There is a flaw in writing according to the linguistic structure. There is lack of grammatical knowledge, inability to apply vocabulary to the written work correctly and appropriately with the written sentence. The word order in the sentence is incorrect according to the grammatical structure and lack of continuous writing skills practice. It can be seen that English writing skills become a huge problem and obstacle in organizing learning activities. If teachers do not make corrections, it may affect the learners in terms of inefficient use of English writing skills in everyday communication.

English language learning management approach has been widely used and is believed to be a learning management approach that can effectively develop the potential of using English for learners. This is a learning management approach that is consistent with the nature and principles of learning a second or foreign language. It is a task-based approach, a language learning management approach that believes that Language learning occurs when learners interact with each other while performing tasks. Task-based learning management has principles and theoretical frameworks used as the basis for organizing learning activities. Learning will occur through the actual practice of learners (Learning by Doing) and learning principles that learners participate (Active Learning) in the practice of learning activities. It is believed that the learners will learn the target language well when students have the opportunity to practice by using realistic language in a natural way and learners participate in learning activities. It also adheres to the concept of group learning activities in which students have the opportunity to interact with each other. This will encourage language learning and development. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (1996) have confirmed this issue.

Task-based learning is a learning style that requires learners to participate in expressing ideas, discussion, and interaction among learners. It is found that task-based learning has similar concepts and principles to cooperative learning. Teachers have the role of experts who are available to help students when needed. As Willis (1996) noted, the important role of a teacher is simply to be a supervisor, provide assistance (Monitor) and be a facilitator of learning. (Facilitator) is far away, not to interrupt the workload of the learners. In addition, learning management that emphasizes workload also uses the concept of psychological linguistics (Psycholinguistics) about the principle of second language acquisition (Second Language Acquisition: SLA) that learners

will learn the target language if the learner has the opportunity to participate in activities using the target language (Target Language), if they use it outside of class. They learn the target language better if they have direct experience in using the language they are learning. Task-based learning management helps learners learn languages better. Through communicating with others using the target language learned as they do with their first language. This is in line with the idea of Long (1983) that language awareness in learners is the best when students are involved in the process of negotiation of meaning (Negotiation of Meaning) in communicating with each other. This process will occur all the time in communication between human beings in society. Ellis (2003) proposed the idea that Task-Based Learning is essential to the development of language knowledge that comes from the intuition (Implicit Knowledge) within the learner.

From the background and importance of such problems, thus, the researcher was interested in developing a teaching model that focused on tasks to develop English writing skills for students to help learners using English correctly and to be able to write English correctly. This will result in higher achievement in English subjects of students. This will be useful in studying at higher levels.

### **Objective**

The research aims to 1) study the guidelines for the development of Task-Based Learning to Improve English writing skills for Grade 8 students, 2) develop the English writing skills exercises based on a Task-Based Learning teaching style for Grade 8 students. The exercises were constructed to exceed the standard criteria of 80/80, 3) compare the students' writing abilities between the test scores before and after learning through the English writing skills exercises based on a Task-Based Learning teaching style and 4) to study student satisfaction with learning by using the English writing skills exercises based on a Task-Based Learning teaching style for Grade 8 students.

### **Research Questions**

This investigation suggests answer to the research question:

1. What is the background and importance of such problems the researcher was interested in developing a teaching model that focused on tasks to develop English writing skills?
2. What does an English writing skill practice using a task-based teaching model consist of? Is it effective according to the 80/80 criterion?
3. What are the results of applying Task-based teaching style to develop English writing skills by using English writing skill exercises?
4. How satisfied are students with learning using a task-based teaching model to develop their English writing skills?

### **Literature Review**

Nget, Pansri and Poohongthong (2020) studied the effects of teaching that focused on workload to improve the English-speaking skills because of the difficulty in teaching Cambodian

language learners to have the English-speaking skills of learners with different abilities. The researchers used task-based teaching with the ninth-grade students, 78 people to study the satisfaction with the use of task-oriented teaching. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected using a speaking test and a questionnaire on student satisfaction. The results showed that students were satisfied with the use of task-based teaching to develop speaking skills, confident in speaking and increased motivation to learn English.

Phosa (2020) studied English writing skills of students learning English as a Second Language through a blended learning method. The objective was to study English writing of Thai students' undergraduates. The researcher designed a framework for teaching English writing in a face-to-face blended learning style and online learning. The results showed that the average score after the test is higher than before. Most students used online sites, online dictionary *English-Thai-English* that supports tools. And the students' satisfaction with the teaching of blended English writing was at a high level.

Halimi (2019) studied the results of using task-based language teaching to improve writing skills. The researcher used task-based language instruction as a guide for conducting the research with students who had learned the skills to write lectures in English on English literature. Writing test results descriptiveness had increased dramatically. In addition, the use of task-based language teaching can motivate students in the learning process. Almost all students agree to use task-based language instruction as a guide to their descriptive writing, and task-based language instruction can improve students' writing skills.

Hanh and Tuan (2018) studied the effect of task-based learning management to develop the ability to write English. The results showed that after studying with a learning management package that emphasized workload, the students in the experimental group had higher proficiency in writing English than before and the students in the experimental group had higher writing abilities in English than the control group.

Sari and Pangaribuan (2018) studied applying a task-based approach to learning to improve students' academic writing skills. From the analysis of qualitative data, it was found that students who learned academic writing focused on tasks had interest and motivation at a high level.

Marashi and Dadari (2012) studied the effect of task-based learning management to develop students' writing and creativity abilities. The samples used in this research were female students learning English as a foreign language. The results showed that the experimental group students had higher writing abilities and creative abilities than the control group students.

Viriya (2018) studied the effect of using task-based learning for students studying academic English. The study found that the reading-writing and speaking abilities of students by learning focused on the post-laboratory workload are higher and their satisfaction with task-based learning was at a high level.

## **Methods and Materials**

**Research Design:** The research design of this study was research and development.

**Data Collection Tools:** The tools used in this research are: English writing skill practice using a task-based teaching model, lesson plan, and achievement test on writing English.

**Sampling Method:** The population was obtained by using a cluster sampling.

**Sample Size:** The population was 35 Grade 8 students.

## **Results**

The purpose of this research was to develop a teaching model emphasizing tasks to develop English writing skills, for Grade 8 students at Nong Rua Wittaya School, Khon Kaen, Thailand. The researcher has summarized the research results as follows:

1. A guideline for enhancing English writing skills by using English writing skills exercises using a task-based teaching model can be summarized into three issues: 1) Guidelines for developing English writing skills should manage teaching by emphasizing on the students' participation in the work in a step-by-step manner in order to achieve the goal which requires the use of language. 2) The development of a teaching model emphasizing tasks to develop effective English writing skills should be the prepared material content according to the objectives, and the developer should analyze the content to determine the purpose by designing a modern, interesting format, sorting content from easy to hard. 3) Guidelines for organizing learning activities and evaluating learning with English writing skill exercises using a task-based teaching model should design a variety of workloads and creating interest and practice skills in many areas and practice with teachers to give additional advice when students do not understand.

2. The development of the English writing skill practice using the task-based teaching model found that the scores from the learning activities in the six exercises of the large group experiment had an average score of 310.23 out of a full score of 384, representing 80.37%.

3. Comparing English writing skills between pre- and post-learning test scores with English writing skills exercises using the task-based teaching model showed that the average score before the study was 20.34 points and after the study was 24.60 points. When comparing the scores before and after the study, it was found that the students' post-test scores were higher than before.

4. The average scores of the students' satisfaction with learning with the English Writing Skills Exercises using the task-based teaching model showed that students were satisfied at a high level.

## Discussion

The purpose of this research was to develop a teaching model that focused on tasks to develop English writing skills. The researcher presents a discussion of the research results as follows:

1) English writing skill exercises using a task-based teaching model were more effective than the specified criteria. This is because the English writing skill practice form created by the researcher has gone through a systematic construction process. The researcher has studied the theory course documents related research through expert debugging checks and through the trial process along with bringing the results of each trial to improve and revise in order to get a complete English writing skill practice before applying to the sample with the design of learning management that emphasizes tasks that focus on students to perform tasks based on the principles of learning management, focusing on students to use English for communication. Encouraging students to use relevant language in everyday life helped students' eagerness to learn. There is no concern about the rules or grammar of English that might hinder the student's use of English. This is in line with the task-based learning management principle of Willis (2000), which discusses four key principles in task-based learning management: 1) the language used should be the language used in real life or close to everyday life, 2) should focus on students using or producing language for communication, 3) tasks must be interesting or encouraging students to use the language and 4) teachers should focus on appropriate language rules by encouraging students to use the language. There is no concern about using the language; after students have used the language then gradually correct or develop the work to be better. Parichat Pinitwinyupap and Kotchakorn Thipatdee (2020) developed English writing skills through process-oriented writing for Grade 4 students. The results showed that the index of the effectiveness of writing process-based instruction for developing English writing skills of Grade 4 students was 0.7371. Arthit Petchree (2019) studied the effects of task-based learning management to develop English writing skills for communication of Grade 12 students. It was found that the effectiveness of the learning management that focused on the task to develop English writing skills for communication -- the efficiency was 80.11/82.44, which was higher than the specified criteria. Penpak Phinthunibat, Jiraporn Sano and Apira Chansaeng (2018), studied the results of teaching tasks to develop English speaking, communication strategies and assertiveness of Grade 8 students. Research found the efficiency of learning management was 71.10/73.37 and 74.02/77.32, which were higher than the established criteria.



2) Comparing English writing skills of Grade 8 students between pre- and post-learning test scores with English writing skills exercises using the task-based teaching model showed that Phosa (2020) studied the English writing skills of students learning English as a second language through a blended learning method. The results showed that the average score before the test was 10.66 and the average score after the test was 17.37. Viriya (2018) studied the effect of using task-based learning in students studying academic English. The study found that the reading-writing and speaking abilities of students by learning focused on the post-laboratory workload are higher. Sari, Tantra and Santosa (2017) studied the effects of task-based learning management to develop English writing skills for communication. The study found that the scores of students' ability to write English for communication were correlated with task-based learning management. Hanh and Tuan (2018) studied the effects of task-based learning management to develop English writing ability. The results showed that after studying with the task-based learning management package the students in the experimental group had higher proficiency in writing English than before. Sari and Pangaribuan (2018) studied the application of task-based learning approaches to improve students' academic writing skills. The results showed that the average student's grades continued to increase from the pre-test increased to 64, 86. In the post-1st trial, mean scores were 74, 71, in the second trial, mean scores were 86, 14. Marashi and Dadari (2012) studied the effects of task-based learning management to develop students' writing and creative abilities. The results showed that experimental group students the students in the control group had writing ability and creativity higher than the control group. Parichat Pinitwinyupap and Kotchakorn Thipatdee (2020) developed English writing skills through process-oriented writing for Grade 4 students. English writing skills through process-oriented writing of grade 4 students after learning higher than before. Kesinee Koolprueksi (2020) studied the results of using practical learning activities to enhance reading skills of business English students. The results showed that the results of the pre-test and post-test of the students who learned by using the practical learning activities had an average score of 38.57 and 44.91, respectively.

3) Assessment of the satisfaction of Grade 8 students towards teaching and learning activities from the English writing skills practice using the task-based teaching model found that the mean scores of student satisfaction at studying with English writing skill exercises using a teaching style that focuses on workload. Overall, the students were satisfied at a high level. Scott (1970) stated that job satisfaction for practical results should be related to personal aspirations. It is planned through an efficient operation and control system by setting goals to create incentives that workers should be involved in setting goals. Practitioners know the results of work directly. Viriya (2018) studied the effect of using task-based learning in students studying academic English. The study found that the students were satisfied with workload-based learning at a high level. Phosa (2020) studied the English writing skills of students learning English as a second language through a blended learning method. The results showed that the students' satisfaction with the teaching of blended English writing was at a high level. Beding and Inthapthim (2019) studied the effects of using a

task-oriented teaching model on writing skills of Thai students learning English as a foreign language at University of Phayao. The results showed that Learners were satisfied with their learning management using a positive classroom workload-oriented teaching style. Sari and Pangaribuan (2018) studied the application of task-based learning approaches to improve students' academic writing skills. The results showed that Students who learned task-based academic writing had high levels of interest and motivation. Nget, Pansri and Poohongthong (2020) studied the effects of task-based teaching on developing English speaking skills of Grade 9 students were satisfied with the use of task-based teaching to develop speaking skills, confident in speaking and increased motivation to learn English. Kesinee Koolprueksi (2020) studied the results of using practical learning activities to enhance reading skills of business English students. The results showed that the students' opinions on the overall work-based learning activities were at the highest level.

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this research was to 1) study the guidelines for the development of Task-Based Learning to Improve English writing skills, 2) develop the English writing skills exercises based on a Task-Based Learning teaching style; the exercises were constructed to exceed the standard criteria of 80/80, 3) compare the students' writing abilities between the test scores before and after learning through the English writing skills exercises based on a Task-Based Learning teaching style and 4) to study student satisfaction with learning by using the English writing skills exercises based on a Task-Based Learning teaching style.

This study found that 1) English writing skill exercises using a task-based teaching model were more effective than the specified criteria. 2) Comparison of English writing skills between pre- and post-learning test scores revealed that the points are higher than before. The teaching style that focuses on the task to develop English writing skills developed by the researcher encouraged students to study more and students have more willingness to study and 3) Assessment of the satisfaction towards teaching and learning activities from the English writing skills practice using the task-based teaching model found that the mean scores were satisfied at a high level.

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