The Impact of ENGAGE Model and TBLT Application on the Overall Writing Ability of Iranian EFL Learners

Mohaddeseh Salimpoor Aghdam[1], Javad Gholami[2]*, Mahnaz Saeidi[1]

[1]English Language Department, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Islamic Azad University of Tabriz, Iran
[2]English Language Department, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Urmia University, Iran

Abstract

The need to create more efficient approaches to teaching L2 writing has grown due to the increasing demands placed on English writing proficiency in a global setting. The present investigation aimed to explore the impacts of the ENGAGE Model and task-based language teaching (TBLT) method on Iranian EFL learners' overall L2 writing performance. According to their performance on the standard Oxford Quick Placement Test, 67 Iranian female EFL learners between 18 and 25 years old were chosen for this quasi-experimental study. The participants were divided into three groups at random: the ENGAGE group (N=22), the TBLT group (N=24), and the control group (N=21). The participants were given a writing pretest to verify their L2 writing homogeneity. Then, they went through 12 sessions of instruction. After the treatment, the participants received the writing posttest to measure the learners' development in L2 writing. One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) revealed that the ENGAGE model more substantially impacted Iranian EFL learners' overall L2 essay writing skills than the TBLT. ELT professionals, curriculum designers, English teachers, and learners can utilize the study's findings to solve linguistic and metalinguistic problems.

Keywords: *ENGAGE Model, Iranian EFL Learners, TBLT, Overall L2 Writing Performance*

Introduction

Writing in English is a fundamental skill for many second- or foreign-language learners (Santangelo & Graham, 2016). Learners often assess both the quality of their English course and their level of language learning performance based on how much they believe their spoken and written language proficiency has improved. Similarly, the best strategy to teach this skill has long been the focus of methodological controversy. Instructors and textbooks use a variety of strategies, ranging from direct approaches that focus on specific aspects of written interaction and teacher corrective feedback (CF) types to indirect approaches that promote

interaction through group work, peer CF tasks, and other tactics (Cen & Zheng, 2024; Healy & Mulholland, 2019).

In recent years, writing skills courses have been commonly included in language curricula across the globe. More effective ways to teach L2 writing are needed because of the significance of English as a global language and the growing need for competent English writing in a variety of contexts. Significant progress has been made in understanding the nature of L2 writing in the past few decades. One of the methods that this study addresses is TBLT. This method, which makes use of teaching resources based on TBLT, has recently been recognized by many educational institutions. This approach is supported by the communicative views of syllabuses and methodology, which keep influencing the way writing skills are taught in the modern classroom (Willis, 2019).

L2 writing development holds significance in the context of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Prabhu, 1987) and its integration into task-based language teaching (TBLT) (Ellis, 2022). In addition, *Brilliance by Design* has placed emphasis on how the environment influences education (Halsey, 2011) and how new curricula may be created to satisfy the demands of 21st-century learners (Halsey et al., 2018). EFL learners still need a more learner-centered strategy that promotes group projects and peer tutoring for cooperative learning, regardless of how well writing tasks are received in L2 classrooms (Ellis, 2018). In this respect, the researchers have drawn upon and extended a naturalism-based Halseyan (2011) approach to teaching and learning, which emphasizes learners' active participation in the learning process. Particularly, "the basic message of the ENGAGE model is that people learn best when they play an active, critical role in the learning process, apply what they have learned, and are encouraged to discover their meanings to places and things" (Halsey and Halsey, 2017, p. 4).

According to the current researchers' experiences in EFL classrooms, most learners lack the confidence to develop their L2 writing proficiency. Moreover, Iranian EFL learners have been reported to perform weak in L2 writing (Esfandiari et al., 2021; Sheikhi et al., 2024; Zarabi et al., 2024). Other learners lack the confidence to write in English, mainly when writing to foreigners (Jalili, 2024). They have worries about making mistakes in their writing. According to psychological theory, EFL learners are passive throughout learning and encounter difficulties writing in English (Limpo, 2018).

In particular, there is a dearth of research on the development of learners' writing skills while utilizing the ENGAGE model. In the context of ESL/EFL classroom interactions, there is often a divergence of opinions between teachers and learners. It is observed that teachers often engage in nonsensical speech, while learners tend to either struggle with their responses or choose to remain silent (Willis, 2019). The majority of these teachers voice their concern on the hesitancy of learners to engage in oral or graphic forms of self-expression (Hodge et al., 2009). Some individuals might view this scenario as particularly frustrating, particularly in cases where they do not receive any response or have their inquiries addressed. Irrespective of reports on the success of learner engagement (Hiver et al., 2024; Namkung & Kim, 2024), task-engagement in the L2 classroom (Cen & Zheng, 2024; Tsoi & Aubrey, 2024), the notion of ENGAGE, which differs from engagement perspective in its theoretical bases, due to its focus on naturalism-based Halseyan (2011) approach, has been less focused on in the L2 related studies (e.g., see Abdollahzadeh et al., 2023; Esfandiari et al., 2020, 2021).The assessment of second language writing proficiency can be conducted using several methodologies that are

based on scales or rubrics. High-stakes examinations, such as the TOEFL and IELTS, employ specialized rubrics designed to assess the writing proficiency of L2 learners. These rubrics take into account factors such as grammatical accuracy, proper lexical usage, coherence, cohesion, and task relatedness (Pusey & Butler, 2024).

Given that providing learners with ENGAGE model strategies has been successful in fields like management (Halsey & Halsey, 2017), environment and wildlife protection (Halsey et al., 2018), and medical education (Kojuri et al., 2015), it would be beneficial to do an investigation on the concept within the field of ELT, specifically within the setting of EFL, like Iran, where learning English has been fraught with difficulties. It is, nonetheless, thought to be and regarded as necessary; meanwhile just a few studies have focused on the significance of ENGAGE model in the L2 classroom (Abdollahzadeh et al., 2021, 2023; Esfandiari et al., 2020, 2021) Halsey (2011) claims that "teaching, in any forum, is the art and science of bringing out the brilliance that drives transformations" (p. xi). In this regard, the current research attempted to delve into the effects of the ENGAGE model, as a creative model, and TBLT, as a well-established method, in improving Iranian EFL learners' L2 writing.

Literature Review
In this section, the TBLT method and ENGAGE model, both of which are instructional methodologies for teaching writing in a second language, are discussed.

TBLT
As Ellis (2022) mentions, the first person who put TBLT into practice was Prabhu, an Indian scholar and teacher working in Bangalore. It is believed that communicative tasks, as opposed to notions, functions, or structures of language, serve as the foundation for the TBLT syllabus requirements (Xia, 2023). Second-language writing classes resulting from TBLT have also shown effectiveness in EFL and ESL contexts (Shomi, 2022). Insights for L2 writing within TBLT come from Byrnes and Manchón (2014), who proposed that the purpose of pedagogical tasks in L2 writing is effective written communication. Storch (2013) accounts for collaborative writing as a task-based writing practice in L2 classrooms. Likewise, Nitta and Baba (2014) argued that L2 writing could be achieved through task repetition. Sundari et al. (2018), who investigated the impact of employing task-based materials for teaching writing in Indonesian EFL classes, found that task-based learning materials help learners write better in terms of format, content, organization, and grammar.

The task-based learning methodology itself offers valuable skills. Learners acquire expertise on how to ask questions, negotiate meaning, and cooperate in groups (Do, 2023; Willis, 2019; Zohrevandi et al., 2024). EFL learners can see various problem-solving techniques when working in groups and gain insight into how people think and behave (Nunan, 2006). There are several issues with L2 teaching in the Iranian EFL context due to lack of a well-organized, centralized, and effective educational technique for teaching L2 writing in the Iranian environment (Nair et al., 2017). Moreover, learners develop only at the basic levels in the TBLT (Sari, 2024).

Irrespective of the advantages like high proficiency in real-life situations, meaningfulness, authenticity, and group work, TBLT suffers from some disadvantages, a few of which could be presented as follows: Seedhouse (1999) implies that overemphasizing tasks and conveying

meaning in TBLT may affect how you apply the language in the appropriate form. Additionally, it is critical to understand that communication involves much more than just carrying out tasks. According to Skehan (2003), TBLT could have some risks if it is not carried out properly, which could impact language learners' interlanguage development and growth. Moreover, TBLT appears to be insufficient for weak learners who are unable to communicate effectively due to a lack of grammatical competence (Xia, 2023). Therefore, some form of fossilization may occur within the learners, creating obstacles to their continued learning.

The effect of TBLT on various language abilities and components has already been worked out (Aliakbari & Jamalvandi, 2010; Amsori et al., 2023; Ellis, 2009; Gregg & Steinberg, 2016; Hejrati et al., 2017; Wu, 2018; Zohrevandi et al., 2024). Sato's (2010) research on TBLT and PPP in Japanese EFL classrooms highlights TBLT's high effectiveness in increasing learners' motivation and improving fluency. Four post-process components of L2 writing are identified by Atkinson (2003), who highlights the significance of becoming acquainted with target culture norms. He believes that writing in a second language involves knowledge of the norms of the target culture. While Sadeghi and Maleki (2015) discovered TBLT to be significant, Nitta and Baba (2014) observed that task repetition favorably impacts learners' writing. Birjandi and Malmir (2015) found task-based learning superior in teaching narrative and expository writing to advanced Iranian EFL learners. In addition, Nemat Tabrizi and Hosseini (2016) found task-based activities effective for extrovert learners.

The ENGAGE Model

Prince (2004, as cited in Halsey & Halsey, 2017) postulated that learner participation-required active learning strategies (such as presentations, interactive projects, and conversations) result in greater accomplishment, deeper understanding, and higher retention. The brain is capable of anything when it comes to listening to lectures, and it does so on a daily basis. Besides, standard teaching approaches are inadequate to pique students' intellectual curiosity (Halsey, 2011). According to Halsey and Halsey (2017), in order to keep learners engaged, naturalist education programs should incorporate active learning strategies. As part of the ENGAGE paradigm, learners actively acquire new knowledge and skills through the utilization of easily accessible digital materials. In her book "Brilliance by Design," Halsey (2011) presented the ENGAGE model, an educational paradigm. This model's six steps-based on naturalistic principles-are Energizing, Navigating, Generating, Applying, Gauging, and Extending. California, in particular, has seen major program reforms in education due to Halsey's proposal. The core idea behind the ENGAGE Model is that learners learn most effectively when they take an essential and active part in it. The best learning occurs when learners implement what they have learned and are allowed to find their interpretations of objects and environments (Halsey & Halsey, 2017).

However, encouraging others to engage in their learning actively is difficult. Since most of us are used to passive lectures where we sit and listen, it requires a confident, adventurous trainer to keep learners engaged to participate in the activities suggested by the model. However, learner involvement is crucial if we genuinely want learners to retain what we have taught them and apply that information to modify their behavior (Halsey & Halsey, 2017).

Limited references to the ENGAGE model can be discovered in the ELT literature, as it is a novel idea within the broader educational domain, specifically within the EFL setting.

(Abdollahzadeh et al., 2021, 2023; Esfandiari et al., 2020, 2021). Abdollahzadeh (2020) examined how the ENGAGE model influences Iranian intermediate EFL learners' speaking. The findings revealed that ENGAGE model improved Iranian EFL learners' L2 speaking more than TBLT and ALM Method. Qualitative learner interviews showed that the ENGAGE approach worked best, followed by TBLT and ALM. Similarly, Esfandiari et al. (2021) discovered that the novel ENGAGE model significantly improved cognitively more and less active EFL learners' speaking development. The ENGAGE model learners outperformed TBLT learners in L2 speaking regardless of their cognitive level.

In summary, the reviewed literature lays the groundwork for our investigation into the comparative effects of TBLT and the ENGAGE model on Iranian EFL learners' L2 writing skills. The following section details the methodology employed to address this research question:

RQ: *Is there any significant difference in the effects of the TBLT method and ENGAGE model on Iranian EFL Learners' overall L2 writing performance?*

Method

Participants

The participants were 67 intermediate-level female EFL learners at Urmia University Language Center aged 18–25 based on their Oxford Quick Placement Test (OPT) scores. This sample size met research sample size criteria (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). Krejcie and Morgan's sample size table required at least 66 EFL learners; the available classes had 80 (N=80). The study began with 80 intermediate EFL learners from various institute classrooms taking a typical OPT. After OPT, 67 learners with scores between 24 and 47 were chosen. At the end of OPT, scores between 24 and 39 indicate lower intermediate learners (B1), whereas 31 and 47 indicate upper intermediate learners (B2). The selected EFL learners were randomly assigned to ENGAGE model and TBLT experimental and control groups. Informed consent was obtained from all the participants. Their native language was Turkish, Farsi, and Kurdish.

Instruments

OPT

OPT was utilized to check the participant homogeneity. It is a modular test of English language proficiency produced by Oxford University Press and Cambridge ESOL, which exhibits high reliability and efficiency in time management (Hill & Taylor, 2004) (www.oxfordenglishtesting.com). It takes 30 minutes to administer and is simple. The test evaluates the knowledge of English structure and is regarded as a general indicator of language proficiency. The test has excellent reliability (α =.91). It has also been reported that the test enjoys high construct validity (Motallebzadeh & Nematizadeh, 2011).

Pre and posttests of writing

Two narrative writing tasks were pre- and posttests. A writing pretest was given to the participants to assess writing proficiency homogeneity. The writing topics were assigned to participants. Another writing activity was given as the posttest after the treatment. The data analysis considered the average rater ratings and computed pre- and posttest inter-rater reliability indices.

Data Collection Procedure

Pretest phase

Eighty EFL learners who took the standard OPT were homogenized based on their overall English proficiency. The 67 intermediate EFL learners were randomly assigned to two experimental and one control groups of 21–24 learners. Theses participants were intermediate-level female EFL learners at Urmia University Language Center aged 18–25. The selected EFL learners were randomly assigned to ENGAGE model and TBLT experimental and control groups. Informed consent was obtained from all the participants. Their native language was Turkish, Farsi, and Kurdish. TBLT was employed for one experimental group and the ENGAGE model for the other. The experimental groups' effects were compared to those of the control group. The control group received traditional L2 writing instruction. The participants took a writing pretest in the second phase to verify L2 writing homogeneity. An inter-rater reliability index measured learners' writing performance, which is noteworthy.

Treatment

Ten sessions comprised the intervention. The learners attended 12 twice-weekly classes over the semester. All groups had 90-minute sessions. The first 20 minutes of each lesson were spent warming up, teachers' ideas on increasing learning, checking learners' questions on previous activities, and practicing L2 writing. The participants received introductory writing training during the period. The control and experimental groups' classroom hours of instruction were equal. Additionally, the three groups received instruction from the researcher.

The teacher applied the ENGAGE model's principles in experimental group A (the ENGAGE model group) (Halsey, 2011). To engage the mind, this method uses active learning strategies via naturalist education programs (Halsey, 2011). Thus, in a language course, the following general viewpoints were taken into account.

Step 1 (Energizing): Energizing learners at the start of the class by engaging them in warm-ups, ice-breakers, talking and writing about everyday challenges, and using postures and gestures to encourage them.

Step 2 (Navigating): Encouraging learners to apply their own knowledge during the first session and generate novel content. Discussions led to a topic or material that both learners and the teacher agreed on. The learners and teacher collaborated on the lesson content, while the teacher mostly supervised them to discuss their own hobbies and worries.

Step 3 (Generating): Assisting learners to write about their experiences and apply what they learned. Learners were also encouraged to apply their past knowledge to classroom subjects. The learners submitted written presentations to the class on topics encompassing contemporary events, personal experiences, and views regarding recent societal occurrences.

Step 4 (Applying): Guiding learners to apply their knowledge into writing for the real world by structuring their thoughts and ideas. This was done by having learners research the classroom topic, access the internet, participate in social media, gather knowledge about a topic, and then express their own viewpoints. Learners focused on how they may improve themselves and society.

Step 5 (Gauging): Having learners evaluate and acknowledge their accomplishments. This was made achievable by self-assessment (SA) in the classroom. The learners were initially

introduced to the principles of SA using a combination of explanations and examples. Subsequently, they engaged in classroom practices to further reinforce their understanding. Finally, they progressed to the stage of developing SA checklists. Next, they self-assessed writing and grammatical tasks for the semester. They evaluated themselves using their checklists. They were then asked how prepared they were for the next steps. They were also asked to evaluate their learning at the conclusion of each class session. The teacher provided them with relative feedback, but it reduced as they improved their SA. Treatment sessions included exams and discussions in the classroom. An illustration may help:

The first lesson discussed making friends, school, cinema, parks, TV shows, clothes, cuisine, and weekend activities. In addition, learners read a short text about contacting a close friend for assistance or consulting a friend about a lesson, activity, game, etc. The teacher also required each learner to write at least one paragraph about the topic and send it to friends for feedback after one or two sessions. Learners then created questions using language from various sources and the internet and were given the opportunity to ask one another to finish filling up their exam sheets. Obviously, the researcher verified and finalized learner queries. After answering questions in writing, learners evaluated their answers for correctness. They then rated themselves as great, okay, bad, or needing improvement.

Step 6 (Extending): Helping learners write their thoughts, ideas, and viewpoints on dealing with their immediate environment and life concerns to action. This was made possible by asking learners to write about various topics, have presentations on various subjects, participate in English talks and arguments, and, if possible, employ their learned knowledge on social networking sites to make friends from around the world, watch movies, deal with day-to-day issues, and deriving pleasure from residing within the realm of the English language.

In keeping with the ENGAGE model's guiding principles (Halsey, 2011), the feedback type mainly employed in this group started with teacher feedback. Then, it paved the way for peer feedback, which was gradually converted to self-feedback and SA. Likewise, the learners relied on explicit feedback to improve the writing level of their peers. It is essential to mention that the teacher (the researcher) reviewed the final writing drafts to provide further clarity and to aid the learners in developing their L2 writing skills. The instructor employed written corrective feedback (WCF) to grab learners' attention to their errors and potential problems.

The teacher in experimental group B (the TBLT Group) concentrated on the TBLT as an application of the CLT's core concepts. With regard to the TBLT group, the researcher explicitly used the steps and tasks suggested by Prabhu (1987), Ellis (2003), Nunan (2006), and Willis (2019), and additionally, given the present level of the participants' understanding of L2 writing, pedagogical activities were utilized in this experimental group since they were more controlled than real-life tasks and were utilized in the classroom more successfully.

This group largely used peer feedback, and as learners wrote in groups, they strove to correct each other's sentences and subjects to improve their final writing. The learners used specific CF (in line with Ellis's (2009) peer CF recommendations), especially for grammar and vocabulary, but they also supported CF on content. The teacher (researcher) reviewed the final written copies for clarity and to assist learners in developing their L2 writing. The teacher employed WCF to highlight learners' mistakes and likely errors.

The TBLT group in this study performed pedagogical tasks. For example, to employ an opinion gap task, the teacher wanted learners to share their thoughts on daily life matters. The

teacher sometimes employed graphics to elicit learners' opinions, including real difficulties. Thus, visuals were suitable for eliciting learners' views in this study. Learners considered and wrote on the images. They were urged to relate the photos to their lives or bring personal family photographs and write/describe them to the class. Pictures and charts also engaged learners in information gap tasks. Learners were instructed to complete the chart or use the chart and photo to do so. They also wrote about a new occurrence like an accident or festival using photographs from the latest newspapers. This would help learners zero in on specific factors and offer their opinions. During each session, the researcher mandated that learners produce a predetermined amount of words or write for a particular duration while also utilizing specific guided writing constructions to make the L2 writing assessment more objective.

Participants in the control group used neither the TBLT nor the ENGAGE model. In contrast, the participants engaged in L2 writing processes using traditional methods, composing texts on given subjects. They subsequently received feedback on their performance from the instructor, who offered WCF. Indeed, the learners depended on the expertise of their instructor, the evaluations provided by the instructor, and their linguistic ability to compose written works in English. In this group also, the teacher used the WCF to warn learners of their mistakes and potential blunders.

Posttest phase
The writing posttest was given to all three groups after treatment. Writing tests assessed L2 learners' writing skills. After setting up an inter-rater scoring method to evaluate learners' writing exam performance, inter-rater reliability was considered. A third rater graded the papers if scores differed by more than 1. SPSS version 28 was used to analyze the data. The hypothesis was approved or rejected after comparing the findings to the study question. The results were presented and compared to previous research.

Data Analysis
The researchers employed descriptive and inferential statistics to answer the research question. The proficiency test mean and standard deviation were calculated using descriptive statistics to homogenize the participants. Pearson Product-Moment correlation and the average of the two raters' scores were used to estimate writing test inter-rater reliability.

A One-Way ANOVA was used to compare the OPT test means of the ENGAGE, TBLT, and control groups to verify that they were homogenous in general language proficiency before the treatment. Two One-Way ANOVAs were then run to compare the three groups' means on the writing pretest and posttest.

Results
Checking the Homogenity of the Groups on Pretest of Writing
The means of the pretests on writing for the ENGAGE, TBLT, and control groups were compared using a One-Way ANOVA to demonstrate that the three groups' writing abilities were similar before the main study. The groups' variances on the writing pretest were homogeneous, according to the non-significant Levene's test results (F (2, 64) =.779, p >.05) (Table 1).

Table 1

Test of Homogeneity of Variances of Pretest of Writing by Groups

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Pretest	Based on Mean	.790	2	64	.458
	Based on Median	.779	2	64	.463
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.779	2	63.493	.463
	Based on trimmed mean	.763	2	64	.471

Table 2 displays the means of the three groups on the writing pretest. The pretest of writing revealed that the means of the ENGAGE (M =25.32, SD = 4.96), TBLT (M =26.17, SD = 4.17), and control (M =25.24, SD = 4.47) groups were almost the same.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Pretest of Writing by Groups

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
ENGAGE	22	25.32	4.961	1.058	23.12	27.52
TBLT	24	26.17	4.177	.853	24.40	27.93
Control	21	25.24	4.471	.976	23.20	27.27
Total	67	25.60	4.489	.548	24.50	26.69

Finally, the one-way ANOVA results are displayed in Table 3. The findings (F (2, 64) =.296, p >.05, $\eta2$ =.009 indicating a weak effect size) showed that the means of the three groups on the writing pretest did not differ significantly. In other words, the three groups were homogenous in terms of their writing ability before administering the treatments.

Table 3

One-Way ANOVA of Pretest of Writing by Groups

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	12.204	2	6.102	.296	.745
Within Groups	1317.916	64	20.592		
Total	1330.119	66			

In order to investigate the null hypothesis, a One-Way ANOVA was undertaken to compare the means of the posttest writing scores for the ENGAGE, TBLT, and control groups. Before looking into the findings, it is worth mentioning that Levene's test, which examined the homogeneity of variances, was retained for the writing posttest. According to the non-significant Levene's test results (F (2, 64) =.630, p >.05) (Table 4), the groups had similar variances on the writing posttest.

Table 4

Test of Homogeneity of Variances of Posttest of Writing by Groups

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Posttest	Based on Mean	1.198	2	64	.308
	Based on Median	.630	2	64	.536
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.630	2	56.179	.536
	Based on trimmed mean	1.202	2	64	.307

Table 5 shows the posttest writing means for the three groups. Based on the results, the ENGAGE group had the most significant mean on the writing posttest (M = 48.95, SD = 3.30). Then came the TBLT (M = 31.67, SD = 3.63), and control (M = 26.52, SD = 4.54) groups.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics of Posttest of Writing by Groups

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
ENGAGE	22	48.95	3.302	.704	47.49	50.42
TBLT	24	31.67	3.632	.741	30.13	33.20
Control	21	26.52	4.546	.992	24.45	28.59
Total	67	35.73	10.276	1.255	33.22	38.24

Finally, the one-way ANOVA findings are displayed in Table 6. The findings showed that there were significant differences in the means of the three groups on the posttest of writing ($F_{(2, 64)}$ = 203.86, p < .05, η^2 = .864, demonstrating a large effect size). As a result, the null hypothesis that "there was no significant difference in the effects of the TBLT method and ENGAGE model on Iranian EFL Learners' overall L2 writing performance" was rejected.

Table 6

One-Way ANOVA of Posttest of Writing by Groups

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6023.638	2	3011.819	203.862	.000
Within Groups	945.526	64	14.774		
Total	6969.164	66			

The results of the post-hoc Scheffe's tests are shown in Table 7. Based on the findings mentioned above and the statistical measures evident in Table 5, it can be inferred that The ENGAGE group (M = 48.95) significantly outperformed the TBLT group (M = 31.67) on the posttest of writing (MD = 17.28, p < .05).

    A.   The ENGAGE group (M = 48.95) significantly outperformed the control group (M = 26.52) on the posttest of writing (MD = 22.43, p < .05).

    B.   The TBLT group (M = 31.67) significantly outperformed the control group (M = 26.52) on the posttest of writing (MD = 5.14, p < .05).

Table 7

Scheffe's Post-Hoc Comparison Tests for Posttest of Writing by Groups

(I) Group	(J) Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
ENGAGE	TBLT	17.288[*]	1.135	.000	14.44	20.13
	Control	22.431[*]	1.173	.000	19.49	25.37
TBLT	Control	5.143[*]	1.149	.000	2.26	8.02

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Discussion

The quantitative data analysis provided the researchers with the following findings. The analysis of the posttest data showed that the members of the first experimental group (ENGAGE Model) did much better than the members of the TBLT and the control groups. The data analysis for the current study showed that the ENGAGE model, compared to the TBLT, had a more substantial impact on the overall English language writing improvement of Iranian EFL learners as measured using the analytical scoring rubric suggested by IELTS. The ENGAGE Model teaching method is based on a thoughtful and regular conversation or writing an article about a specific topic of common interest to the participants in the classroom. In this method, students discuss different dimensions of a problem by actively participating in verbal and then written activities and in the end, they gain a deeper understanding of it. They also understand that others have opinions and their voices should be respected. This, as Hiver et al. (2024) argue, increases cooperation rather than competition. In addition, the priority of ENGAGE model over the TBLT highlights the fact that cognitive learning encompasses reasoning and listening to others' words and becoming tolerant. Learners also practice group activities and learn about group relations and discussions. In this method, the main task of the teacher is to analyze and evaluate the flow of discussion, logic, organization and appropriacy of the content. Of course, the teacher can play the role of guiding the discussion and clarifying the main path wherever the discussion reaches a dead end or deviates from the main path. Also, care must be taken that learners not digress from the topic. In this method, rather than using the book or the teacher, the students are the authors of finding results, principles and solutions, and of course this is possible, should the students be interested in the subject.

The present study findings are in line with the findings of just a few reported on the role of ENGAGE model in teaching EFL, including Esfandiari et al.'s (2021) study investigating the ENGAGE model's impact on speaking ability and Abdollahzadeh et al.'s (2021) study exploring the model's influence on various components of speaking proficiency. These studies prove that the ENGAGE model effectively enhances EFL learners' English speaking and writing skills, as is evident in this study.

As the model enjoys the six notions of energizing, navigating, generating, applying, gauging and celebrating, and finally extending learning to action (ENGAGE), the following discussion deals with examining each of these notions with respect to teaching L2 writing to the Iranian FL learners: First, *energizing* learners by focusing and exciting them about training (e.g., a podcast) (Kilbourne, 2011). The process of energizing the session starts with expressing gratitude to the participants for their engagement and promptly engaging them through the use of a stimulating inquiry, a captivating activity, or the announcement of significant training objectives (Halsey et al., 2018). Icing-breaking talks, prompts to write about everyday events,

and customizing target language themes were used in L2 writing classes. EFL classroom literature supports this idea (Abdollahzadeh, 2020; Sert, 2015; Scrivener, 2012). This step also addresses the examination of both internal and external motivation, which have been extensively explored in the context of L2 progression. (Csizér, 2017; Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2017).

Navigating is using visual, aural, and kinesthetic ways to activate different brain areas. According to Halsey (2018), the instructor uses several instructional techniques such as role-plays, games, and team exercises to both transfer knowledge and facilitate review sessions. Asking learners to traverse what they learned in the preceding session and create new content was crucial in L2 writing class. The teacher and learners also negotiated on task and activity options. This shows EFL pedagogy using a process-based syllabus (Breen, 1987) and a negotiated syllabus (Clarke, 1991).

In the third stage, *generating* drives learners to elucidate the significance of newly acquired information and its potential to enhance their learning experience and identify and address any challenges or difficulties that may arise. (Halsey, 2011). The L2 writing class operationalized this phase by having learners write reports on present affairs, their lives, and their feelings about recent social events. Ellis's (2003) TBLT principles are largely supported, particularly real language tasks.

Step four, *applying* to the actual world, requires learners to demonstrate an understanding of the new skills throughout the teaching/learning process, such as pronunciation, intonation, lexical resources, or real-world experience. In the second language writing course, learners were provided with instructions to conduct an extensive examination of the subject matter, make use of online resources, actively engage in social media platforms, collect pertinent data related to a particular subject, and subsequently express their individual perspectives through assigned written tasks within the classroom environment. Action research uses such tasks (Smith & Rebolledo, 2018).

The fifth element of the ENGAGE paradigm is *gauging* and *celebrating*, where learners evaluate their learning and progress by means of a test, crossword puzzle, or presentation and celebrate their success. The operationalization of this notion involved the implementation of teaching strategies based on SA principles, as well as the creation of checklists for assessing SA in classroom writing activities.

Extending learning to action, the sixth stage of the ENGAGE paradigm, included follow-up activities (e.g., email reminders or buddy systems) to assist learners in applying their new information or abilities (Halsey, 2011). The L2 writing class used this stage by writing about various challenges using what they learned. They were offered opportunities to explore diverse themes, participate in English debates and talks, and apply what they learned on the internet to locate foreign friends, watch movies, overcome common challenges encountered in everyday life, and derive pleasure from the English language domain (Nodine, 2016; Waddington, 2017).

To sum up, this study's results demonstrate that participants exposed to the ENGAGE model strategies for teaching had a higher success rate in generating written commands compared to their counterparts who got the TBLT approach. By employing this method, it is possible to facilitate enhanced progress in developing strategic L2 writing skills within an EFL setting. In contrast to TBLT and conventional methods, it is hypothesized that teaching

strategies rooted in ENGAGE model may provide a more conducive learning environment for L2 writing among EFL learners.

Conclusion

The analysis of the posttest data showed that the members of the first experimental group (ENGAGE Model) did much better than the members of the TBLT and the control groups. The data analysis for the current study first showed that the ENGAGE model, when compared to the TBLT, had a more substantial impact on the overall English language writing improvement of Iranian EFL learners as measured by using the analytical scoring rubric suggested by IELTS. The logical conclusion is that implementing the ENGAGE model in the English language writing program for Iranian EFL learners yielded favorable outcomes for the participants in the experimental group. Compared to the TBLT group and the control group, who did not incorporate the principles of the ENGAGE model, the experimental group demonstrated higher levels of achievement. One may postulate that by providing EFL learners with exposure to a range of strategies derived from the ENGAGE model, they will be able to learn different writing skills more effectively, which will help them learn their L2, in general, and their writing, in particular. They will also perform better on L2 in this manner.

The results of this study could be utilized by professionals in the field of ELT, curriculum developers, and EFL and ESL instructors in various educational settings. Both educators and learners of the English language can utilize the ENGAGE model as a valuable approach to effectively address both linguistic and metalinguistic difficulties. This aligns with the notion of safe training proposed by Kilbourne (2011). EFL learners may also perceive the presence of gaps and develop an awareness of a disparity between the input they receive and the content they are presently acquiring. This strategy can potentially enhance classroom interactions, facilitating the subsequent development of learners' second language proficiency.

Material designers can use the results of this study and related ones in the ELT field to create assignments that increase learners' awareness of learning. In keeping with phases 3 (Generating Meaning) and 5 (Gauging and Celebrating) of the ENGAGE model, these tasks may assist learners in moving toward self-correction, autonomy, and meaningful learning.

Several limitations were imposed on the ability of the researchers to carry out the current investigation. Individual differences are an example of something that cannot be controlled. Managing the trainees' tolerance, patience, and enthusiasm for learning was difficult. Therefore, these unique characteristics might have influenced the researchers' attempts to inspire learners to participate in class activities, especially in the ENGAGE model group. In addition, the institute where the research was conducted had set up particular rules and norms for the teachers, learners, and researchers. The researchers encountered some difficulties adhering to the study norms due to the necessity of conducting the research within separate classrooms designed exclusively for an L2 writing course. The study's remaining weakness was that all participants were female learners. Thus, it is important to be cautious when generalizing the findings regarding gender. Some study participants also came from Turkish or Kurdish backgrounds; Persian was considered their second language; consequently, English was being learned as their third language. To improve the study's quality, the anticipated impacts of L1 and L2 on the writing improvement of these learners in their L3 were deliberately ignored since they were difficult to control.

ORCID

(iD) https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2401-5683

(iD) http://orcid.org/0000-0002-4970-1110

(iD) https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1034-9404

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