

ABSTRACT

Raharjo, Pandhutama. (2023). The Effect of Cognitive Task Complexity on Effective Second/Foreign Language Writing. Thesis. English Education Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Jember. Advisors: (1) Muhlisin Rasuki, M.Pd., M.A., Ed.D. (2) Nurkamilah, M.Pd.

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Tasks play a crucial role in second/foreign language (L2) teaching by focusing on the forms, meanings, and effectiveness of language generated by students in writing tasks. However, while many researchers have examined the effects of tasks on written form and meaning, there is a scarcity of research on the impact of tasks on language effectiveness. Therefore, this study aims to investigate whether task complexity affects the effective writing of English as a foreign language (EFL) students. In accordance with the triadic componential framework initiated by Peter Robinson, task complexity was operationalized in this study as the number of elements required of students to compose effective writing.

This research employed an experimental research method involving 61 undergraduate EFL learners as research participants. These participants were asked to complete writing tasks that varied in complexity. The effectiveness of their writing was assessed based on the given task requirements. Subsequently, the assessment results were statistically measured using one-way univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) and post-hoc tests to examine several data comparisons.

The statistical analysis results demonstrate significant differences in EFL writing effectiveness based on task complexity, $F(2,177) = 42.277, p = 0.000$. Furthermore, the Tukey post hoc test revealed significant differences among the three tasks: (a) between simple and medium-level tasks ($p = 0.010$), (b) between medium and complex-level tasks ($p = 0.000$), and (c) between simple and complex-level tasks ($p = 0.000$). Overall, these findings provide evidence that the level of task complexity impacts effective L2 writing.

These findings offer valuable insights into the design and sequencing of pedagogic L2 writing tasks to help L2 learners develop their writing skills. This study concludes with some recommendations for future research in the field of task-based L2 pedagogy and L2 writing.