

نموذج نظري للتعليم القائم على حل المشكلات، مدعوم من المعلم، للكتاب العرب المتعلمين
للغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية: التوازن بين الإبداع والموارد اللغوية المنظمة

A Theoretical Teacher-Supported PBL Model for Arab EFL Writers:
Balancing Creativity and Structured Linguistic Resources

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Abstract	الملخص	
This article introduces a hybrid framework to the writing instruction that blends core principles of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) with targeted direct instruction, customized for Algerian universities. The approach tackles the limited implementation of PBL in writing classes. It aspires to blend authentic, problem-solving tasks with explicit and guided teaching instruction, classroom discussion and, collaboration to nurture students’ creative and critical thinking abilities. Additionally, the model introduces a «linguistic bank»to equip the students with topic-relevant vocabulary and	تقدم هذه المقالة نهجا هجينا لتدريس الكتابة من خلال دمج المبادئ الأساسية للتعليم القائم على حل المشكلات و التعليم الموجه المباشر، مصممة خصيصا للجامعات الجزائرية. يعالج هذا النهج الفجوة الخاصة بتطبيق التعلم القائم على حل المشكلات في حصص الكتابة، عن طريق دمجها مع التعليم المباشر والموجه، بغرض تنمية القدرات الابداعية والتفكير النقدي لدى الطلبة. أضيف الى ذلك، يقدم النموذج بنكا لغويا لتزويد الطلبة بالمفردات والتراكيب ذات الصلة المباشرة بالموضوع بهدف تعزيز كفاءتهم اللغوية و تقليل اعتمادهم المفرط على الترجمة الحرفية، فهي تعد مشكلة شائعة بين المتعلمين العرب مما يؤثر سلبا	

structure to foster their linguistic competence and restrain their over-reliance on direct translation, a common challenge among Arab learners that affect the accuracy and quality of their writing, creating a framework that promotes autonomy, creativity and relevance while preserving necessary scaffolding. Despite not being empirically tested, it puts forward a structured approach that integrates PBL into writing instruction, laying the foundations for further research about classroom implementation and potential effectiveness.	على دقة وجودة كتاباتهم. يوفر النهج النظري مزيجاً متوازناً بين الاستقلالية، الابداع، والارتباط بالواقع مع التحفظ على الدعائم الأساسية اللازمة. رغم عدم اختبار النموذج تجريبياً بعد، إلا أنه يطرح نهجاً منظماً لدمج التعلم القائم على حل المشكلات في تعليم الكتابة، ويضع أساساً لأبحاث قادمة حول آليات التطبيق و مدى فعاليته المحتملة.
Keywords : PBL, Writing instruction, Creativity, Linguistic performance, Hybrid Approach	كلمات مفتاحية: التعلم القائم على حل المشكلات؛ الكتابة؛ الابداع؛ الكفاءة اللغوية؛ نهج مزدوج

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11. INTRODUCTION

Writing, one of the core fundamental productive skills in the English Language, continues to create challenges for EFL learners, particularly in academic settings where students are expected to communicate complex ideas with a form of clarity and precision. In the Arab world, and Algeria in particular, the students' limited exposure to realistic writing contexts along with cognitive and linguistic deficiencies mostly hinder their writing performance as they struggle to construct meaning in a foreign language. One prominent issue affecting Arab learners' writing

performance is their over-reliance on direct translation from Arabic to English. By doing so, students often fail to transmit the intended meaning they want to express, or misuse the lexical items that do not correspond to the contextual meaning. As a result, their written texts come off as vague and inaccurate, with contorted expressions, undermining the cohesion and clarity of the entire text. These issues call for new instructional models that preserve the importance of teaching the structure while promoting critical and creative thinking, along with nurturing contextual vocabulary development. Addressing these challenges, this article proposes a theoretical, hybrid instructional model for teaching the writing skill. This model integrates Problem-Based Learning with guided teaching intervention, vocabulary development, and structured linguistic support adapted to meet the needs of Arab learners.

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) as an instructional approach is set to promote student-centred learning through real-world problem-solving and collaboration. When it comes to writing, it has the capability to foster creativity via nurturing autonomy and critical thinking. However, many teachers -especially in EFL contexts- remain hesitant to adopt PBL as a learning approach, despite recognizing its potential pedagogical benefits. This resistance mainly stems from concerns about its student-driven nature that typically involves minimal to no direct teaching. Put differently, teachers worry that without direct instruction, students may struggle, especially when it comes to the complex linguistic requirements in writing.

As a response to these concerns, this article proposes an integrative teaching model that incorporates PBL with targeted instructional support.

While preserving the core elements of PBL, namely problem-solving and collaboration, the model adds on structured teaching practices. In other words, teachers are expected to take an active role designing problem scenarios and cases, monitoring group discussions, and most importantly introducing a selected linguistic bank to nurture students' lexical growth. The latter is added to directly address the common challenge among Arab students: the over-reliance on direct and literal translation from Arabic to English. Something that is believed to be behind their unclear expressions and semantic inaccuracies. The suggested model aspires to preserve the cognitive and creative benefits of the PBL approach, all while ensuring that learners are fully equipped with the necessary linguistic tools to create clear, precise and meaningful pieces of writing.

1.1 Scope of the Article

This article presents a theoretically grounded pedagogical model that integrates Problem-Based Learning (PBL) into the teaching of the writing skill. The ultimate goal is to design a framework that aligns reading, writing, and problem-solving tasks that reflect real-life teaching challenges. The suggested model aspires to provide students with opportunities to think critically, collaborate and generate meaningful written output, while also enhancing their linguistic competence through structured and purposeful engagement with the language.

It is important to note that this article does not report any empirical research or any data collected from classroom implementation. Rather, it serves the role of proposing and describing an instructional framework

that may inform future research, classroom implementation, or inspire adaptation by educators and curriculum designers. The ultimate goal is to present a clear approach that may help close the gap between theoretical learning and practical implementation, especially in the Algerian context, where creating an authentic and meaningful learning experience remains a significant challenge.

By highlighting each phase of the model in depth, this article aspires to induce reflection, fosters creativity, supports creative pedagogy and, suggests teacher-friendly strategies to nurture linguistic development, students' autonomy, and innovation in writing instruction.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Creativity in EFL Writing Instruction

Creativity nowadays has become widely-recognized in the field of education due to its effectiveness in the development of the learners' potentials. Many scholars and researchers inspire teachers to engage their students' creativity. The latter serves the role of thriving new ideas that sustain in obtaining better results. It is believed to be an inspiring power that uplifts the students' capacities forward. As Maley and Peachey (2015, p 5) noted, creativity helps to foster learners' autonomy and enjoyment, encouraging students to take ownership of their language use. In Algeria, however, the writing instruction relies heavily on traditional, teacher-centred methodologies that indirectly encourage reproduction since it emphasizes accuracy over originality. As a result, students get limited opportunities to engage with the language and develop a personal voice. This may explain why students approach writing as a rigid task, rather

than an opportunity for exploration and self-expression. This gap accentuates the need for new teaching approaches that address both the linguistic development along with creative expression. For that purpose, the present article suggests a teaching model that integrates Problem-Based Learning (PBL) as a means to nurture students' creativity, foster their engagement, and create a more dynamic and purposeful writing performance.

2.2 Problem- Based Learning in Language Education

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is a learning approach that advocates active learning through real-world problem solving. According to Hmelo-silver, in PBL, students engage collaboratively in order to identify problems, research solutions and actively apply pre-existed knowledge to generate outcomes, rather than receiving direct instructions (2004, p 236). Similarly, Savery argues that in the field of education, PBL has been proven to enhance motivation, critical thinking, and communication skill (2006, p 13). Yet, PBL is hardly ever implemented in writing instruction, specifically in the Algerian context, where the educational system is still teacher-centred. On a different note, teaching the writing skill implies scaffolding, modelling, and consistent feedback. These elements are often lacking in a PBL model. This may explain the reason why many teachers perceive PBL as impractical or too demanding for a writing classroom, especially, as noted by Barrows, when they are unfamiliar with learner-centred methods or pressured for time and resources (1996, p6). Adding to these pedagogical issues, linguistic problems, especially those arising from students' over-reliance on direct translation from Arabic to English,

add an extra obstacle that hinder students' clarity and coherence in writing, something that may reduce the effectiveness of PBL in EFL contexts. To address these issues, the present article proposes a hybrid-instructional model that preserves the core features of PBL, along with structured-teaching support. The teaching aspect in the model is mainly reflected in three major areas: designing the problems as written prompts, monitoring the classroom discussions and, the allocation with the linguistic bank to help the students apply appropriate and relevant language in their written productions.

2.3 L1 influence and the Challenge of Direct Translation in Academic Writing

In most academic EFL contexts, particularly in areas where Arabic is the students' first language, many learners opt for direct translation from their L1 in order to produce texts in English. Despite the potential benefit of this strategy in providing a lexical support, it may possibly result in vague, awkward and even semantically inaccurate expressions that may diminish the clarity and coherence of their writing. Additionally, Academic Writing relies heavily on precise diction, cohesiveness of ideas along with clear links between sentences. Thus, relying on one-to-one word correspondence may trap students into easily twisting the aforementioned features (Bacha, 2002). Moreover, the Arabic language is essentially rich in metaphor, formality and, syntactic flexibility. These features make the structure and logic in it significantly different from English. That being said, students opting for direct translation generally end up violating rhetorical structures and applying inappropriate lexical items, resulting in

sentences that may appear as ambiguous or disconnected to a fluent reader (AlBataineh & Gallagher, 2021). In fact, when these sentence-level issues pile up, the entire text's communicative value is highly affected, given that academic writing operates as a unified block. Besides, research highlights that this negative transfer from L1 is mostly common in academic genres that invite the students to implement discipline-specific language (Rababah, 2003). In such cases, poorly translated sentences can easily change the intended meaning, resulting in miscommunication, lowering the evaluation outcomes and resulting in a poor learning experience. Thus, it is imperative to integrate linguistic scaffolding in an attempt to help the students to smoothly transition to English academic conventions. Based on the previously highlighted observations, the proposed teaching model includes a Linguistic bank that aims to equip the students with topic-relevant language. The latter is added in order to minimize students' reliance on direct translation and, support clarity, accuracy and logical flow in their Academic writing.

3. Theoretical and Pedagogical Foundations

The current study builds upon Constructivist principles, precisely those underlying PBL features, considering their emphasis on students' autonomy, real-world problem solving and collaboration to foster creative and critical thinking skills, as suggested by Hmelo-silver (2004). However, considering the challenges students face in structuring and articulating their ideas in written format (especially in EFL contexts where linguistic precision might be lacking), this paper proposes a hybrid framework that integrates the aforementioned principles of PBL with strategic scaffolding.

The latter, an instructional support which is gradually pulled out, is imperative in written instruction in an attempt to prevent cognitive overload and ensure students remain within their zone of proximal development (Wood, Burner, & Ross, 1976). Last but not least, the proposed model incorporates a Linguistic bank, a set of precise and relevant vocabulary and structures, to equip the students with the lexical and semantic requirements needed to express their ideas clearly and appropriately.

4.Towards a Teacher-supported PBL model

In order to address these challenges, a hybrid model that incorporates PBL principles with limited and guided teaching support is being suggested. This approach aims to preserve the student-centred nature of PBL while enabling the students to receive the necessary guidance to develop their writing skills effectively. This can fall under the same category of guided discovery learning that, as highlighted by Brown (2007, p 93), allows the learners to explore the meaning effectively within a structured environment. Thus, the teacher's role will shift towards a facilitator, who's in charge of designing writing problems and, guiding the classroom discussions while allowing the students to take control. To further support the writing process, a Linguistic bank is being introduced, mainly consisting of precise vocabulary items and relevant language structures meaningful to the writing task. This aspect is added to equip the students with accurate and more appropriate expressions, in an attempt to help them avoid vague or awkward expressions resulted from direct translation or limited linguistic competence. By balancing autonomy with the

teacher's support, this hybrid approach may address the major concerns that many teachers have about the implementation of PBL in a writing classroom. Taking into consideration that pre-existing research deal with either PBL or traditional teaching methods separately, there was little room to explore how a teacher-supported PBL model may benefit both teachers and students in Algerian EFL context. Thus, this paper argues that adopting this model can foster creativity, enhance students' autonomy, develop their linguistic competence, and offer a teacher-friendly framework for creativity and innovation in writing instruction.

5. Towards a Teacher-Supported Problem-Based Learning (PBL)

Approach: A proposed Model for the Algerian EFL Context

The proposed approach takes into consideration key principles of (PBL) and, carefully adapting it to the realities of writing in the Algerian EFL context. The model highlights core elements of PBL along with structured instructional support where the teachers remain active facilitators throughout the learning process. The pedagogical framework is built around hypothetical yet authentic real-life scenarios inspired by educational issues commonly encountered by both teachers and learners. These scenarios aim to reflect the various challenges future teachers may face, creating a sense of relevance and authenticity of the learning experience.

Phase ONE: Problem Exploration

The purpose of this initial phase is to introduce the students to educational problems and stimulate both critical and creative discussions and reflections. Students are first assigned randomly to smaller groups where

each group is provided with an authentic written scenario on real-world issues in education. The scenarios are selected based on their relevance to the future teaching careers of the students, ensuring authenticity and learner engagement. In this particular phase, students are encouraged to implement prior knowledge, raise questions, identify key issues and define the central problem. This collaborative process is essential as it sets the ground for their upcoming written production, since they will be required to engage with the issue more reflectively. The teacher adopts the role of a facilitator, circulating among groups, eliciting deeper thinking through guided questions and, clarifying any potential misunderstanding. This ensures alignment with guided discovery learning. At this stage, any recurring gaps in the students' linguistic repertoire or use of vague expressions is noted to inform the targeted vocabulary support i.e. the linguistic bank.

Phase TWO: Classroom discussion and Meaning negotiation

The purpose behind this phase is to unify students' understanding of the problem and, ensure clarity before the written production. For this particular phase, each group is expected to share their insights, understanding, interpretations and areas of confusion or uncertainty with the teacher and the whole class. The teacher will monitor the class discussions in an attempt to help the students compare perspectives, clarify misunderstandings and, deepen their grasp of the problem. During this phase, the teacher also takes notes of recurring linguistic needs to be integrated later in the linguistic bank. Also, students will be encouraged to

explore various causes and implications of the problem to expand their analytical and creative thinking.

Phase THREE: Targeted Writing Instruction (Bridging PBL and Traditional Teaching methods)

The aim of this phase is to provide explicit instruction on specific types of paragraph appropriate to the problem discussed previously. This particular phase bridges PBL with structured and explicit teaching of writing. The instruction targets a specific paragraph form and, covers essential aspects, namely structure, cohesive devices, and transitions. This particular phase fills the gap in traditional PBL by integrating explicit teaching, a common feature in traditional teaching methods. Similarly, it ensures students receiving the needed guidance to develop their academic writing skills. Teachers remain central support figures who offer clarification, modeling, and feedback to ensure students are well-equipped to move from problem exploration to written production.

Phase FOUR: Independent Reading and Problem solving

This phase thrives to support the students to develop well-informed, creative solutions. By encouraging them to do extensive reading of relevant materials, students are engaged in in-depth exploration of the problem and refine their responses. The teacher assists the students during this phase by highlighting the key aspects to be taken into consideration, encouraging their divergent thinking. At this point, the teacher also introduces the linguistic bank, a set of topic-relevant vocabulary, functional expressions and structures that aims to help the students express their ideas clearly and coherently. The addition of this linguistic input is

essential to serve both the upcoming extensive reading stage and the writing stage. For one thing, it helps the students filter reading materials more efficiently. For another, it reinforces vocabulary acquisition and retention through repeated exposure during the reading and writing phases. Consequently, students will be encouraged to implement contextually appropriate vocabulary, resulting in a more accurate language use. Learning vocabulary in this context-rich manner not only preserves relevance and ensures retention, but also leads to a more effective learning experience overall.

Phase FIVE: Written Production and Peer-review

The objective here is for the students to produce a written response that mirrors their understanding of the problem and their ability to structure and express a coherent solution. This is followed by a structured peer-review. The review is performed using a teacher-designed checklist that addresses both the content and the structure, with clearly defined criteria and scoring.

This phase has a considerable significance. For one thing, it integrates the component of formative assessment, allowing the students to be given a timely, constructive feedback prior to the summative evaluation. For another, it reduces the workload of the teacher. Ultimately, the students will develop their evaluative and critical thinking skills while learning to recognize what makes a good piece of writing. Moreover, the comparison with peers' input will allow the students to reflect on their own writing, strengthening self-awareness and autonomous learning. Finally, the

collaborative nature of the peer-review makes the process more interactive and engaging.

Phase SIX: Presentation and Oral reflection

This phase is added to activate all the four language skills and give students a room to reflect and comment about their learning and performance. For this, students are supposed to present their solutions to the class. The purpose behind this step is to allow the students to share the ideas that were possibly not fully captured in their writing and, activate their meta-cognitive reflection via sharing their growth and challenges, all while practicing listening and speaking. Additionally, this phase enriches the classroom experience, increases engagement and, provides the teacher with a deeper insight about students' thinking, understanding, progress and overall learning.

Phase SEVEN: Evaluation and Progress Tracking

After the submission of the written task, the peer-review is done followed by an oral presentation as explained previously. Once the students complete all the aforementioned steps, both written productions and presentations are assessed by the teacher using structured rubrics. Each rubric is supposed to cover a specific criteria related to content, structure, creativity, linguistic accuracy and relevance to the original problem. The teacher's evaluation is expected to play a vital role in offering an expert, summative evaluation along with the peer-review. This phase presents a combination of formative assessment (peer-reviews, classrooms discussions, feedback) with summative evaluation (grading the writing and presentations), bridging traditional language assessment tools with

PBL-driven reflective practices. Additionally, this can help teachers identify patterns of improvement, recurring issues and students' linguistic and cognitive needs more accurately. By the same token, students will get a chance to articulate their learning process, reflect on their own development and recognize process over time at the level of ideas and how to communicate them more effectively in English. This, in particular, includes their evolving control of vocabulary, grammar and academic writing requirements. Finally, this combination supports authentic assessment, where students are not judged by one final output, but more by their own growth, efforts and abilities to effectively apply gained knowledge in realistic contexts in addition to their ability to express that specific knowledge clearly and accurately in the target language.

6. Discussion and Didactical Implications

In terms of didactical implementations, the proposed model refrain from treating reading and writing as isolated linguistic skills. Instead, it integrates both linguistic instruction along with professional preparation. By doing so, the proposed approach fosters students' linguistic competence, equipping them with richer, relevant, and more precise vocabulary to express their ideas accurately and appropriately in academic and future professional settings. Additionally, the model is designed following a "phased structure" that makes it easier for teachers to scaffold the learning, and guide the students throughout the whole process, with each phase serving a very clear pedagogical aim. Teachers will be adopting different roles that vary from facilitators, mediators and evaluators, all to support the students' autonomy while maintaining

academic rigor. Moreover, including the formative assessment empowers students with evaluative skills that would reinforce their understanding of writing quality and active engagement with the learning process. Another significant didactical implementation in the model is the holistic skill development. The approach incorporates all the four linguistic skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) through problem-solving and presentations. With this being the case, the approach is believed to address a major gap found in traditional teaching methods where the skills are taught in isolation. Finally, the collaborative nature of the classroom through discussions and group work builds a sense of community within the learning environment. The latter is perceived to encourage dialogue, exchange of perspectives and critical debate, some of the key capacities needed for professional practice. All in all, this model holds the potential to remould the reading and writing instruction into a meaningful, pedagogically sound and professionally-oriented experience

7. Limitations and Future Research

In spite of the potential pedagogical benefits of the proposed approach, several limitations should be acknowledged. These limitations are mainly in regards to methodological constraints immanent in theoretical work and to anticipated challenges in real-world implementation.

7.1 Methodological Limitations

This paper does not present any empirical validation of the proposed approach. All the arguments, principles, and predicted benefits are drawn from analysis and synthesis of the literature, paired with logical reasoning instead of direct classroom experimentation. Having said that, it limits the

ability to confirm the effectiveness of the aforementioned approach. Additionally, relying mainly on secondary resources may introduce bias, considering that the interpretation of the findings varies depending on the scope and the quality of the reviewed literature.

7.2 Practical Challenges in Implementation

Implementing a conceptually sound approach into real classroom context can present unanticipated challenges. Some educational constraints may include limited instructional time, large group size, heterogeneous population of students, among many others. Other factors that may impede the classroom implementation may include the teachers' familiarity, readiness and, willingness to adopt such an approach. Finally, some systemic limitations, particularly curriculum rigidity, assessment requirement and resource limitations may hinder the adequate implementation of the framework. Thus, further research should be implemented to empirically test the effectiveness of this approach. Quantitative and qualitative methods can verify the efficacy of this framework mainly in regards to learning outcomes, students' engagement, and teachers' adaptability. Experimental and Quasi-experimental studies can confirm the approach's contribution to the students' achievements. Similarly, comparative studies across various groups of students with different language proficiency levels can help to establish its generalizability. Finally, classroom-based action research can help bridging the gap between theory and practice, setting the ground for possible refinement of the framework based on teachers and students' feedback.

4. CONCLUSION

The present article proposes a theoretically grounded teaching framework that blends core principles from Problem-Based Learning (PBL) with selected direct instruction, implemented into the teaching of the writing skill. The framework presents problem-solving tasks that portray authentic challenges to trigger students' critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, all while developing their linguistic competence. By integrating the notion of the «Linguistic Bank» and designing the framework as scaffolded phases, the approach thrives to address two major challenges among Arab learners in writing instruction, namely direct translation and limited lexical resources, while still preserving the student-driven nature of PBL. The article presents various didactical benefits. It is believed to foster creativity, develop linguistic competence and nurture students' autonomy. The teachers are flexible educators who play various roles that range from facilitators, guides, and evaluators, while maintaining academic rigor. The approach aims to transform the writing instruction into a meaningful, contextually relevant, profession oriented experience, suitable for Algerian higher education contexts. Having said that, the article acknowledges important potential limitations. Certain factors such as: time constraints, teachers' readiness, curriculum rigidity among others, highlight the necessity for empirical studies to assess the framework's efficacy, adaptability and overall impact on students' performance. In the end, this model intends to present a conceptual resource for innovation and reform in education. It invites educators, curriculum designers and, researchers to explore its principles and adapt them into various teaching/learning

contexts in an attempt to enrich the literature about integrating PBL into language education. All the collaborative efforts can contribute to an authentic, student-centered, linguistically rich and professionally relevant writing instruction.

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