



The Weaknesses of Using Task-Based Language Teaching in Teaching Speaking Skills

The corresponding author: Assist .Prof. Dr. Lina lafta Jassim

College of Art ,University of ThiQar, Nasseria, Iraq

linalafta@utq.edu.iq

نقاط ضعف استخدام تدريس اللغة القائم على المهام في تدريس مهارات التحدث
الباحثة: الأستاذة المساعدة الدكتورة لينا لافتة جاسم
كلية الآداب، جامعة ذي قار، الناصرية، العراق

Abstract

This study aims to investigate educators' experiences with task-based language strategies and show the weaknesses instructors face when using them to enhance international students' speaking abilities. This research utilizes an explanatory case study methodology, including six teachers who taught international postgraduate students in an intensive English program at the University Utara Malaysia Language Centre during the academic year 2023-2024. The data were evaluated using a qualitative technique. According to this study's findings, the weaknesses of task-based language teaching implementation are the interference of exam-oriented teaching methods and the restricted teaching hours for task-based learning; students' lack of vocabulary or prior knowledge is the main weakness of using task-based language teaching. Additionally, several suggestions for improved Task-based language teaching implementation are given.

Keywords: task-based language teaching, speaking skills, weaknesses

الخلاصة

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف تجارب المعلمين مع استراتيجيات اللغة القائمة على المهام، وإظهار نقاط الضعف التي يواجهها المعلمون عند استخدامها لتعزيز مهارات التحدث لدى الطلاب الدوليين. يستخدم هذا البحث منهجية دراسة الحالة التوضيحية، بما في ذلك ستة معلمين قاموا بتدريس طلاب الدراسات العليا الدوليين في برنامج مكثف للغة الإنجليزية في مركز اللغات بجامعة أوتارا ماليزيا خلال العام الدراسي ٢٠٢٣-٢٠٢٤. تم تقييم البيانات باستخدام أسلوب نوعي. وفقًا لنتائج هذه الدراسة، تتمثل نقاط الضعف في تطبيق تدريس اللغة القائم على المهام في تداخل أساليب التدريس الموجهة نحو الامتحانات وساعات التدريس المحدودة للتعلم القائم على المهام؛ ويُعد نقص المفردات أو المعرفة السابقة لدى الطلاب هو الضعف الرئيسي في استخدام تدريس اللغة القائم على المهام. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تم تقديم العديد من الاقتراحات لتحسين تطبيق تدريس اللغة القائم على المهام. الكلمات المفتاحية: تدريس اللغة القائم على المهام، مهارات التحدث، نقاط الضعف

1. Introduction

Although speaking is the paramount ability to acquire English language skills, it also represents the most significant challenge for EFL students (Zhang & Liu, 2018). Febriyanti (2011) asserts that developing speaking skills is difficult due to students' potential lack of enthusiasm, confidence, and exposure. Bashir, Azeem, and Dogar (2011) further assert that speaking is challenging since students require additional time to contemplate their intended discourse. Harmer (2007) asserts that students experience reluctance and anxiety while presenting their thoughts to an audience. In light of the aforementioned issues, one of the most effective pedagogical approaches to address these challenges is task-based language teaching (TBLT). TBLT is essential as it emphasizes meaning while acknowledging form, showcasing the organic development of learners' innate skills and involvement in language acquisition through meaning-making. TBLT involves learners in intentional problem-solving exercises that employ target language skills to achieve goals. These assignments replicate real-world circumstances to promote natural language usage and build speaking, listening, reading, and writing abilities. Although TBLT techniques in teaching speaking skills are increasingly acknowledged for their efficacy, their implementation can be problematic, especially in cultural or educational environments where

traditional, teacher-centered practices are entrenched. Educators may encounter several hurdles and obstacles, including inadequate resources, insufficient training and support, conventional educational culture, oversized class sizes, insufficient vocabulary and prior knowledge among students, teachers' misunderstanding of "task" and task formulation, insufficient regular use of the target language in real-life contexts, comprehending the characteristics of a task was notably intricate and perplexing. and language competency difficulties, which may hinder the effective implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in teaching speaking skills. Moreover, the distinct context of each nation or area may provide particular problems that must be addressed to guarantee the proper implementation of these strategies. The next sections will analyze these ideas.

1.2 Problem Statement

TBLT emphasizes the engagement of learners in purposeful, problem-solving activities that need the use of target language skills to achieve defined goals. These projects replicate real-world scenarios, encouraging authentic language utilization and enhancing the development of all linguistic competencies, including speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Although the efficacy of TBLT approaches in enhancing EFL students' learning of speaking skills is increasingly acknowledged, their implementation may be difficult, especially in cultural or educational environments where traditional, teacher-centered practices are entrenched. Educators may encounter several problems and obstacles, including inadequate resources, insufficient training and support, conventional educational culture, oversized class sizes, and language competence difficulties, which might impede the effective implementation of TBLT in their classrooms. Moreover, the distinct environment of each nation or area may provide certain obstacles that must be addressed to guarantee the proper implementation of this method. Instruction in the English language has gained significance in Arab countries owing to their political, social, and economic developments. The application of the TBLT approach in English language classrooms is a challenging topic since the educational system is changing from a traditional, teacher-centered framework to a more learner-centered one. Consequently, Libyan English language educators encounter distinct problems and obstacles when using the TBLT technique.

This study seeks to investigate the obstacles encountered by Malaysian English language educators in executing Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) within their intensive English courses, with the objective of identifying techniques for effective classroom integration.

1.3 The Study Aims

The study aims to identify the challenges educators face while utilizing Task-Based Learning (TBL) to improve Arab students' speaking skills at UUM and to investigate educators' experiences with Task-Based Language teaching (TBLT).

1.4 The Study Questions

The questions of this study are:

- What weaknesses do educators face while utilizing TBL strategies in their lessons?
- What were the perceptions of teachers towards implementing TBLT in lessons?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Definition of A Task

A plan necessitates learners to engage with language pragmatically to get a certain result. Consequently, they must prioritize meaning and utilize their language resources. A task is to produce language use that directly or indirectly resembles real-world language usage. Nunan (1989) characterizes a task as a piece of classroom work which engages learners in comprehending, manipulating, developing, or interacting in the target language while their attention is primarily directed towards meaning rather than form. Although these definitions differ slightly, they all underscore that tasks entail communicative language usage and attaining an objective, with learners focused on meaning rather than grammatical structure.

2.2 Definition of TBLT

TBLT is a learner-centred methodology that prioritizes real language utilization and significant communication in English Language Teaching (ELT). For Willis and Willis (2007), this approach involves engaging EFL students in meaningful tasks that require them to use English proficiency to achieve specific aims. This activity emulates real-life scenarios, fostering authentic language utilization and enhancing all linguistic competencies (Nunan, 2004).

2.3. The weaknesses of Using TBLT in Teaching Speaking Skills

Teachers must address numerous factors to teach English speaking skills using TBLT effectively. Initially, both educators and learners may encounter language competence obstacles that impede the effective execution of

TBLT (Huang, 2016). Educators may find it challenging to deliver precise and diverse information, but learners may lack the requisite linguistic competencies to participate in substantive communicative activities (Zheng & Borg 2014). Secondly, teachers should ensure active student participation in tasks. Lai and Lin (2015) discovered that students must fully engage in TBLT tasks. Students may only partially participate in learning activities due to unfamiliarity with TBLT principles (McDonough & Chaikitmongkol, 2007). Students may struggle to participate in learning activities using TBLT. This is because students need to familiarize themselves with the student-centred approach in TBLT (McDonough & Chaikitmongkol, 2007). The varied English proficiency levels among students impact the quality of their involvement. Students with inadequate English proficiency may be less engaged in projects due to anxiety over their ability to perform successfully (Burrows, 2008). Thirdly, teachers should consider classroom time while creating tasks. Bao and Du (2015) report that insufficient teaching time leads to teachers completing other tasks before students comprehend the previous activity. Fourthly, insufficient training and support: Numerous educators may not have acquired sufficient training in Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) techniques during their pre-service or in-service education, resulting in diminished confidence and proficiency in using these approaches (Farrell & Bennis, 2013; Karavas-Doukas, 1996). The lack of continuous professional development opportunities and school administration assistance might intensify this issue (Alrabai, 2017). Learning results cannot be attained due to insufficient classroom hours for assignment completion. Therefore, English teachers should be aware of these challenges to implement TBLT in their teaching effectively.

3. Methodology

This study utilized a qualitative research approach to examine and understand teachers' perspectives on the weaknesses of TBLT. It underscores the acquisition of detailed, nuanced data through interviews and observations. Creswell (2003) designates observation and interviews as the primary data-collecting methods in qualitative research. Six EFL teachers who taught international postgraduate students in an intensive English program at the University Utara Malaysia Language Centre during the academic year 2023-2024 were selected to collect this study data. Thus, the researcher utilized observation and interviews to collect instructors' experiences with the Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) approach in speaking instruction teachers' attitudes on their responses and the weaknesses obtained from TBLT. The collected data was subjected to thematic Analysis, uncovering dominant patterns, themes, and significances within the information being analyzed. Thematic Analysis is a technique utilized to assess qualitative data, involving an extensive review of datasets to uncover, comprehend, and document recurring patterns, as articulated by Christou (2022).

3.1 Participants

The study will include six Malaysian EFL teachers who taught international postgraduate students in an intensive English program at the University Utara Malaysia Language Centre (UUM) of the academic year 2023-2024 chosen to gather this study data. Homogeneous purposeful sampling was utilized due to the teachers' common qualities. Initially, they TBL strategies over six weeks, categorizing these sessions as supplementary classes primarily aimed at underperforming students. They attended their regular planned classes in the morning. Third, they are postgraduate students in teaching English as a Foreign Language and have completed comprehensive in-service training in Task-Based Language Teaching before the TBLT intervention sessions. In addition, the teachers volunteered to participate in this research. The teachers' ages ranged from 37 to 57, with EFL teaching experience spanning 11 to 29 years. Three possessed 11 to 17 years of teaching experience, while the other had over 22 years of experience.

3.2 The Study's Design And Procedures

The Researcher used classroom observation and interviews. The aim of doing observation was to delineate the events that would transpire throughout the execution of TBL techniques. For Mackay and Gass (2015), the observation protocol is frequently employed in foreign language studies because of its capacity to collect comprehensive data about specific phenomena, including language types, activities, interactions, and events occurring inside the classroom. This study employed a non-participant observation technique. The researcher monitored the activity in each classroom without engaging with the teachers or students. The researcher used non-participant observation, which is typically unstructured because it does not need an observation schedule; rather, the objective is to meticulously document participants' behaviors to construct a narrative account of those behaviors (Bryman, 2012). This study employed a temporal open observation record of three columns: time, observation, written documented notes, and comments. The initiation and termination timings of each phase in each lesson were documented in the time column. In contrast, the observational notes column included the

instructor's verbal and written instructions and the students' behaviors and verbal and written reactions during the TBLT classroom activities. The researcher saw questions or comments in the comment area that required further elucidation from the teacher. Several questions were used via the semi-structured interviews with the educators after applying the six weeks of TBLT sessions. The six Malaysian teachers asked to be observed only once during the six weeks of the BBL intervention class session and at varying times. The sessions were held weekly, each lasting one and a half hours. The objective of the semi-structured interview was to examine participants' experiences regarding implementing TBL strategies in their classrooms. Galletta (2013) characterizes a semi-structured interview as allowing participants to offer supplementary significant data while maintaining sufficient structure to address study-related issues. The interviewer has the autonomy to modify the phrasing of questions, provide clarifications for unsuitable inquiries pertaining to a certain interviewee, and include or exclude new questions. These questions focused on the instructors' comprehensive experiences with TBLT implementation. The preliminary questions were as follows.

- Have you included TBL methods in your speaking classrooms? Kindly elucidate this experience.
- Which TBL strategies employed in the lesson do you consider effective?
- What weaknesses do you face while utilizing TBL strategies in their speaking classrooms?
- Do you believe the learners' speaking skills would have been enhanced due to TBL strategies?

All interviews were held one week after completing the six-week BBL courses, scheduled at the instructors' discretion during the English course. All sessions were recorded audibly using an electronic device.

3.3 Data Analysis:

Descriptive analysis was used to uncover TBLT weaknesses experienced by English language teachers in intensive English courses at Utara Malaysian University and their suggested solutions using observation and interviews. According to Braun & Clarke (2006), transcription and theme analysis were used to analyze observation and semi-structured interview qualitative data. Thematic analysis, an approach for examining, analyzing, and identifying themes within data (ibid), was employed to analyze the interview data. This approach was selected due to its remarkable flexibility, which is especially advantageous for investigating teaching and learning contexts (Maguire & Delahunt, 2020), and its appropriateness for interview techniques (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this study, The preconceived themes were Insufficient vocabulary and prior knowledge among students, Educators' misunderstanding of "task" and task formulation, Time-Consuming activities, Insufficient regular use of the target language in real-life contexts, and low English proficiency Time-Consuming activities, Educators' misunderstanding of "task" and task formulation, and Class with diverse abilities.

The researcher meticulously reviewed the transcribed material many times to derive initial codes. Next, the researcher examined the codes for patterns or sub-themes associated with the previously established themes. Third, the researcher evaluated the themes for correctness and relevance to the research objective. The primary themes were identified and delineated to correspond with the study topics. The researcher analyzed the primary themes within the theoretical framework of this study to compose the report.

4. Results

Observations and interviews, supported by documentation, identified two themes of this study: The teachers' experiences with task-based language strategies and the problems teachers face after using TBLT in their speaking classrooms. The next sections will analyze these ideas.

4. 1 What weaknesses do educators face while utilizing TBL strategies in their speaking classrooms?

Observational findings revealed that Malaysian EFL teachers implemented TBL strategies centered on five primary topics: Insufficient vocabulary and prior knowledge among students, Educators' misunderstanding of "task" and task formulation, Time-Consuming activities, Insufficient regular use of the target language in real-life contexts, and low English proficiency. All six teachers utilized cooperative learning approaches to foster active learner participation in the classes. For instance, T2 utilized a framework known as 'Mix-Pair-Share,' whereas T4 implemented 'Round Robin.' The six teachers asked students to collaborate in groups of three or pairs; each designated distinct duties in the educational endeavor. Responses were elicited while participating in the TBLT classroom activities. The researcher recorded all observations about students' conduct and reactions at the pre-, during, and post-task phases. The researcher should focus largely on the most important aspects of the study topics during observations. The method starts with selecting an appropriate location that facilitates the researcher's acquisition of a thorough grasp of the phenomena (Zhang et al., 2014). Multiple observations are conducted throughout time upon entering the area to acquire a thorough grasp of both the site and the

students. Employing several devices to record significant notes during an observation. The researcher-observer commences the documentation of observations pertinent to the specific aims of this inquiry. The researcher, serving as a participant observer, visited all sessions in TBLT classes to examine the instructional process and the collaborative learning of Arab International students. This study involved recording all lessons in TBLT courses to guarantee that no critical data was omitted during the lectures. The recordings were then employed to examine student conduct. The benefit of these recordings was that they allowed the researcher to examine issues more carefully that may have been neglected during the observations due to inattention. The researcher identified many factors that influence the study reflections. The components of observation are as follows: One of the main themes was insufficient vocabulary and prior knowledge among students. Observational results indicated that most students exhibited an uncooperative and discouraging attitude toward the assigned activities. T1, for example, instructed that his students were "dissatisfied with their inability to execute the assignment efficiently, mostly owing to their restricted vocabulary and insufficient knowledge of the subject matter." T3 believed it would be adequately supplied with all relevant lexical elements about the issue before engaging in the activity, bolstering their self-confidence to enhance their performance. Similar replies were observed in T2, T4, and T5 classroom instruction regarding bolstering students' self-confidence to enhance their speaking abilities. Another theme was Educators' misunderstanding of "task" and task formulation. Task-Based Language Teaching was a recently introduced methodology in the EFL environment, and the prevalent "shock" among educators was common and understandable. The "Fever" associated with TBLT may stem from instructors' inadequate understanding of "task" and insufficient training. Due to their insufficient understanding of Task-based education, they were reluctant and might fail to use this strategy effectively. T2, for example, instructed his students, "I have encountered challenges in designing and managing a task that engages learners in meaningful, authentic speech while maintaining a balance between form and purpose." In another aspect, time-consuming activities were other observational results that reflected that speaking tasks, particularly those requiring group work or prolonged conversations, were time-intensive. This might restrict the time allocated for other crucial elements of language acquisition, such as grammar teaching or vocabulary enhancement. Another observation was That the target language was insufficiently used in real-life contexts. There was insufficient use of English beyond the educational environment. In the educational environment, using the target language between students and between students and the instructor was minimal in non-academic contexts. Should TBLT be used, the likelihood of these students utilizing the target language beyond the classroom was minimal. With a maximum of 90 minutes with students weekly, there was insufficient class time to enhance communication efficacy. Educators invested significant effort in instructing test-taking strategies or rehearsing pupils on multiple-choice grammar questions. Consequently, besides classroom instruction, students must practice the target language externally to enhance their communication skills. If educators are reluctant to converse with students in English, it perpetuates the perception of English as a subject limited to the classroom and lacking real-world relevance. Lastly, the observation findings revealed that one of the main weaknesses in implementing TBL strategies is that Arab international students have Low English proficiency. Both educators and learners faced language competence obstacles that impeded the effective execution of TBLT. Educators had difficulties delivering precise and diverse feedback, but Arab international students lacked the English proficiency to enable them to participate in classroom discussions.

4.2 What were the perceptions of teachers after they had implemented TBLT in lessons?

The teachers' replies after they had implemented TBL strategies were summarized into six main themes Time-Consuming activities, Educators' misunderstanding of "task" and task formulation, Class with diverse abilities, Students' low English proficiency, Students' need for familiarity with TBL strategies in the classroom, and Insufficient training and support. The interview analysis reveals many problems with using Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). The components of interviews are as follows: The first theme was associated with Time-Consuming activities. Teachers expressed concerns about the time required to prepare a task-based class. In comparison to PPP, TBLT necessitated greater preparation time for the teachers. One educator indicated that developing a task sequence from the objective task and constructing facilitating activities based on the scaffolding concept appeared difficult. Moreover, each task in the sequence must satisfy the six requirements of a task in Task-Based Language Teaching, which poses an additional challenge for educators. They additionally indicated that their non-teaching responsibilities diminished their confidence in having sufficient time to develop a task-based lesson. T1: "We typically conduct a 40-minute session. The session lasted 40

minutes, during which I lectured for around 10 minutes and allocated 15 minutes for this job. It was rapid, necessitating swift action."

T2: "I should consider the criteria of a task to create an effective assignment." I am inquiring about the duration of preparation required, in weeks or months.

T3: "I think TBLT works and is right for my students." Creating a task-based class requires lengthy and difficult planning. Teachers here have several duties, including administrative activities that complicate them. "

The second theme focused on Educators' misunderstanding of "task" and task formulation. The teachers found the six requirements of an assignment to be perplexing and intricate. During the focus group discussion and interview, the educators were consistently queried regarding their comprehension of the six characteristics of a task. They primarily perceived the six criteria as overpowering, necessitating consideration during task design, while the concept of the criteria remained perplexing. They mostly retained inquiries regarding certain criteria, including the work plan, real-world processes, and communicative outcomes. They could assist in comparing TBLT with PPP in terms of the ease of designing and developing PPP activities.

T1: "The six criteria of the tasks could be more easily comprehensible. Once you comprehend them, you must be capable of creating the most challenging one."

T2: "I struggle with real-world process requirements, work goals, and conveying results. I needed help completing a task despite their simplicity. Conversation with you is helpful."

T3: "The criteria for the work plan and communicative outcome are somewhat perplexing to me." The work is designed to provide students with choices, while the communicative outcome seeks to achieve learning results beyond just language forms. However, I still cannot assert that they are easily implementable."

T4: "There is difficulty in comprehending the characteristics of a task that was notably intricate and perplexing." The third theme was related to classes with diverse abilities. Teachers need help to create communicative assignments that meet all students' demands in the mixed-ability speaking classroom. T3 indicated that the aptitude difference in that diverse classroom was my challenge. The students want to learn to speak, but they generalize my technique based on their different abilities. Undoubtedly, their different learning objectives lead to different expectations. Students who needed speaking skills for job applications thought they could learn them in a month. Teacher 2 added that this combined ability sometimes distracts the teachers because they must focus on multiple skills. They must also watch their instructional rate. More experienced students could finish the activities without assistance, leaving the weaker pupils much behind. Additionally, there exists a possibility that these students may become 'off-task.' Consequently, when the pupils complete the assignment, they will likely become disinterested and increase their noise level. This distraction can detract from the concentration of the entire class and can be disruptive for those endeavoring to complete the assignment. Another theme was Students' low English proficiency. Educators contended that a significant aspect hindering the execution of TBLT was the students' inadequate English proficiency. During oral tasks in class, educators expressed dissatisfaction with students' verbal performance, attributing it to their restricted vocabulary and insufficient grammar.

T1: "Students did not fully meet my expectations regarding task completion. Their language proficiency was inadequate."

T5: "Certain students encounter challenges in oral tasks due to their restricted vocabulary and grammatical knowledge, which impede their ability to articulate clearly in class."

Furthermore, a teacher indicated that students' pronunciation was a significant obstacle to their spoken communication with peers in the class. Several students' inadequate pronunciation hindered their ability to articulate themselves effectively and engage in verbal interactions with peers and the instructor during class discussions or activities.

T6: "While performing tasks in class, I observed that some students mispronounced words..." Comprehending them consistently required time on my part."

The online reflecting notes exacerbate the detrimental impact of pupils' inadequate language ability on classroom task performance. Interview findings also revealed students need to familiarize themselves with TBL strategies in the classroom. Educators reported challenges in executing TBL strategies due to students' need for more familiarity with the methodology in the classroom. Students were used to actively participating in assignments, cooperating with others, and assuming responsibility for their learning. The pupils were accustomed to conventional teacher-centered instruction, where the educator guided the learning process. Consequently, students may need help in adapting to a more student-centered methodology.

T4: "When I instructed the students to collaborate on the activities, they appeared confused regarding communicating with their partners and completing the assignments. They appear to be unfamiliar with the TBL technique." Furthermore, students needed more practical communication skills and techniques when executing assignments, impeding their ability to communicate and interact successfully with their classmates. The last theme revealed from the teachers' opinions was insufficient training and support. Many teachers emphasized in their responses that they did not receive sufficient training in TBLT during their pre-service or in-service training, resulting in decreased confidence and proficiency in using these techniques. Moreover, T4 added that "the lack of continuous professional development opportunities and assistance from intensive English course administrators might intensify this problem."

5. Discussions

It is vital to address the weaknesses reported by the teachers in the survey. Preparation time is a significant problem that teachers encounter while preparing and implementing a task-based session. This specific issue has also been documented in other pertinent investigations (Widodo, 2006; Rubaiat, 2018). The lack of appropriate instructional materials, technology, and physical infrastructure may hinder the implementation of TBLT (Alaidarous & Madini, 2016). Educators may have difficulty locating or developing resources corresponding to these methodologies, especially in environments with restricted access to related materials or technology. Several studies indicate that TBLT is more effective in classroom settings (Sheen, 2006; Shintani, 2011). Consequently, while it requires some time for educators to develop a task-based class, the effort will ultimately provide rewards. Another challenge is related to a mixed-ability class; teachers find it difficult to implement communicative assignments that address the diverse needs of the pupils. This extent results in an increase in preparation time. Furthermore, students possess varying expectations throughout their educational experience. The problem is readily apparent when educators implement group work among students of varying proficiency levels to accomplish a shared objective. The more advanced students could accomplish the activities with minimal or no assistance, leaving the less proficient students much behind. Additionally, there exists a possibility that these kids may become 'off-task.' Consequently, once the pupils complete the activity, they will become bored and then increase their loudness level. This form of distraction can detract from the concentration of the entire class and can be disruptive for those endeavoring to complete the assignment. Moreover, some causes have been discovered for instructors' reluctance to embrace TBLT. These explanations encompass obstacles stemming from student-related variables, including their limited proficiency in English and their unfamiliarity with Task-Based Learning methodologies in the classroom. This specific issue has also been documented in other pertinent investigations (Sheen, 2006; Liu et al., 2021; Jing et al., 2021). The discovery that inadequate training and support pose a considerable obstacle to the adoption of TBLT shows the necessity for continuous professional development opportunities customized to the specific requirements and settings of Malaysian EFL educators. This discovery emphasizes the significance of teacher cooperation and the establishment of communities of practice to promote the sharing of ideas, experiences, and resources. The debate of the pros and challenges has provided a clear understanding of the perceived success of TBLT training or coaching and its implementation. A singular seminar, conference, or workshop aimed at delivering TBLT coaching to educators is inadequate to meet the anticipated standards of actual classroom implementation (Littlewood, 2004). A teacher's beliefs regarding their prior practices may be firmly entrenched (Jing et al., 2022). Consequently, a follow-up on TBLT training or coaching, such as ongoing discussions about TBLT and mentorship, is crucial to assist instructors in implementing TBLT in practice.

6. Recommendations

To find solutions to implementing TBLT among EFL teachers, informal discussions were conducted with six Malaysian teachers to suggest numerous proposals. Initially, numerous educators believed that offering models significantly influenced language intake and contextual knowledge. Before executing a certain job, a video clip, complete with subtitles and pertinent material, should be presented to the students. The students saw the tape and annotated notes before engaging in the exercise. Subsequently, they may be requested to provide broad information on the composition of an interview or a forum debate. Subsequently, the students might ask the teacher about vocabulary and structure, or the teacher could elicit information from the students. Consequently, the students might acquire many expressions related to the issue and attain a fundamental comprehension of the task model. Secondly, Task-Based Language Teaching is the most preferred and successful style of language instruction, given its significant focus on enhancing learners' communicative ability. Although TBLT has been demonstrated to be impracticable and unsuitable in certain educational environments, the researcher firmly

believes that it is advantageous to use TBLT by amalgamating it with conventional approaches such as Presentation-Practice-Product (PPP) and Test-Teach-Test (TTT). For novice learners, educators should guide students from the precision of language input (grammar, vocabulary) to the fluency of task execution and subsequently return to accuracy. Thirdly, the study's findings indicate a necessity for sufficient in-service training for educators to use TBLT effectively. Participants in the study said that certified educators must possess the knowledge and abilities necessary to implement Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT).

Furthermore, most participants said that training in practical applications, as opposed to lectures and theoretical concepts, was more advantageous for them. Additionally, some participants indicated that colleague assistance facilitated the generation of valuable teaching ideas. Consequently, as Fang (1996) proposed, educators should help instructors comprehend how to navigate the intricacies of classroom dynamics and implement theory within the limitations imposed by those realities.

7. Conclusion

The study examined instructors' views on the weaknesses of adopting Task-based Language Teaching in speaking classrooms. The observations and interviews with the six teachers reveal several troubling concerns. The challenges in adopting TBLT among EFL instructors may be related to students' unfamiliarity with Task-Based Language Teaching and insufficient vocabulary or previous knowledge, which are significant obstacles for many teachers in implementing TBLT. From the instructors' viewpoint, their infrequent usage of the target language is believed to adversely affect their execution of Task-Based Language Teaching. Secondly, this study has identified various recommendations to solve the difficulties based on insights gathered from teachers' interviews. They supply models, amalgamating Task-Based Language Teaching with conventional approaches, and deliver in-service training or seminars for educators. The above-described challenges and suggestions will assist those contemplating the implementation of TBLT in enhancing their students' speaking skills.

This study had several possible limitations, the most significant of which were the breadth of the investigation and the number of instructors who participated in the inquiry. A total of six EFL instructors may not yield findings sufficiently representative of the circumstances EFL teachers face in Malaysia. It is also possible that the teachers' perspectives are not the same as those of students. Future research may mitigate these constraints by executing larger-scale studies that encompass a broader spectrum of participants and use diverse data-gathering methodologies, including observation and document analysis. Future studies may examine the efficacy of various techniques to surmount the problems and obstacles to TBLT implementation, as well as assess the influence of the TBLT approach on students' language learning results and their attitudes and motivation about language acquisition.

References

- Alaidarous, K., & Madini, A. A. (2016). Exploring EFL students' perception in blended learning environment in Saudi technical education context. *International Journal of Educational Investigations*, 3(6), 69-81
- Alrabai, F. (2017). Saudi EFL teachers' perspectives on learner autonomy. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 9(5), 211-231
- Bao, R., & Du, X. (2015). Implementation of task-based language teaching in Chinese as a foreign language: Benefits and challenges. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 28(3), 291-310
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
- Farrell, T. S., & Ives, J. (2015). Exploring teacher beliefs and classroom practices through reflective practice: A case study. *Language teaching research*, 19(5), 594-610
- Huang, D. (2016). A study on the application of task-based language teaching method in a comprehensive English class in China. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 7(1), 118
- Jing, Y., Newton, J., & Jing, Z. (2022). A case study of curriculum aspirations and classroom realities for TBLT in a remote rural secondary school in Northwestern China. *TASK*, 2(2), 248-268
- Lai, C., & Lin, X. (2015). Strategy training in a task-based language classroom. *The Language Learning Journal*, 43(1), 20-40
- Littlewood, W. (2004). The task-based approach: Some questions and suggestions. *ELT journal*, 58(4), 319-326
- Maguire, M., & Delahunt, B. (2020). Reading to be: The role of academic reading in emergent academic and professional student identities. *Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice*, 17(2), 1-1

- McDonough, K., & Chaikitmongkol, W. (2007). Teachers' and learners' reactions to a task-based EFL course in Thailand. *Tesol Quarterly*, 41(1), 107-132
- Nunan, D. (1989). *Designing tasks for the communicative classroom*. Cambridge university press.
- Nurhadhilah, H. Y. (2023). EFL student's responses on technology-mediated task-based language teaching in speaking classroom: a narrative inquiry. *PROJECT (Professional Journal of English Education)*, 345-354.
- Rubaiat, S. (2018). The effectiveness of task based language teaching in improving ESL learners' leading and writing skills. *BRAC University, Dhaka, Banglades*
- Sheen, R. (2005). Focus on forms as a means of improving accurate oral production. *Investigations in instructed second language acquisition*, 271-310
- Shintani, N. (2011). Task-based language teaching versus traditional production-based instruction: Do they result in different classroom processes? *University of Sydney Papers in TESOL*, 6, 97-120.
- Vjay, A. (2023). Challenges In Implementing The CLT Approach For Non-Native English Learners. *Journal for ReAttach Therapy and Developmental Diversities*, 6(10s), 2104-2113
- Widodo, H. P. (2006). Approaches and procedures for teaching grammar. *English teaching: Practice and critique*, 5(1), 122-141.
- Willis, J. (1996). A flexible framework for task-based learning. *Challenge and change in language teaching*, 52(1), 52-62.
- Zhang, Y., Chang, T. R., Zhou, B., Cui, Y. T., Yan, H., Liu, Z., ... & Shen, Z. X. (2014). Direct observation of the transition from indirect to direct bandgap in atomically thin epitaxial MoSe₂. *Nature nanotechnology*, 9(2), 111-115
- Zheng, X., & Borg, S. (2014). Task-based learning and teaching in China: Secondary school teachers' beliefs and practices. *Language teaching research*, 18(2), 205-22
- Appendix :Confirmation of Completing the Data Collection of the Study from University of Utara Malaysia



PUSAT PENGAJIAN BAHASA, TAMADUN DAN FALSAFAH
SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES, CIVILISATION AND PHILOSOPHY
Bangunan Komunikasi dan Bahasa Modern
Universiti Utara Malaysia
06010 UUM SINTOK
KEDAH DARUL AMAN
MALAYSIA



Tel: 004-828 5691/5701/5707/5581
Faks (Fax): 004-828 5709
Laman Web (Web): www.stip.uum.edu.my

Ref. : UUM/SLCP/1-9/2
Date : 5 June 2023

Ms. Lina Lofta Jassin (902547)
School of Languages, Civilization and Philosophy
Universiti Utara Malaysia

We want to confirm that Mrs Lina has conducted interviews and collected the necessary data for her research.

The data was collected from the participants at the intensive English Course centre at Universiti of Utara Universiti.



Yours sincerely,

Juwari Abdullah
Coordinator

Aslinda Ahmad
Financial Clerk

