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## From Tasks to Talk: The Impact of Task-Based Language Teaching on EFL Speaking Ability

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### Abstract

The aims at establishing whether task-driven instruction really promotes a great deal of performance in speaking than the traditional teacher-oriented techniques. Considering a quasi-experimental design, two categories of intermediate EFL learners (experimental and control) were engaged in the process of instruction in the period of ten weeks. Standard oral proficiency scales, to which learners were subjected to assess the pre- and post-testing of speaking performance, were complemented with learner questionnaires and classroom observations to triple-test the results. The results are probably that students who are exposed to TBLT have higher levels of fluency and communicative confidence, though average levels of accuracy. Qualitative feedback- There is increased participation, motivation, and the desire to speak English. Nonetheless, the outcomes can show that there is variation based on the complexity of the tasks and the initial levels of the learners. In the proposed study, the pedagogical importance of TBLT on the development of genuine communicative competence among EFL learners is highlighted. It proposes the application of task-based methods in regular programs of curriculum teaching and teacher training, in order to balance the instruction of the form and meaning.

**Keywords:** Task-Based Language Teaching, EFL, Speaking Proficiency, Communicative Competence, Language Pedagogy.



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## Introduction

The quest to achieve oral proficiency is among the most pertinent challenges in education of the English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Even after many years of formal education, it is argued that a number of learners have difficulty connecting the gaps between theory and practice of the language in real-life applications. Traditionally, the EFL pedagogy had been teacher-centered, form-based models, including Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) model, that place a greater emphasis on grammatical correctness than the functional fluency. Nevertheless, the modern academia seems to hold on to the notion that these traditional approaches fail to provide students with the realistic communicative proficiency needed in a globalized world. To address the mentioned pedagogical constraints, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) has increasingly become popular as a student-oriented theoretical model that focuses on learning by doing as students (and also teachers) complete meaningful, goal-driven tasks.

TBLT is theoretically based on the second language acquisition (SLA) theories that are premised on experiential learning and social interaction. Prabhu (1987) who was the first to develop the approach argues that the most effective way to learn a language is to be interested in comprehending, expressing or acting using the language and not simply to study the language. This re-definition of the attitude of learning the language to the use of the language must be seen as a radical change in classroom dynamics. As recent studies have demonstrated, the importance of the TBLT as an aspect of encouraging cognitive activity and a decrease in the affective filter to promote risk taking in oral production among the learners remains smart (Ellis et al., 2020).

Even though the theoretical advantages of TBLT are established, there remains a gap in critical research concerning its actual effect on the various aspects of speaking proficiency as previously discussed; that is: fluency, accuracy as well as complexity in different EFL conditions. Although there is evidence that TBLT has been proven to be a high-level stimulator of fluency by placing importance on meaning, opponents believe that learners tend to give importance to task orientation rather than language accuracy (Long, 2015). More so, a majority of empirical evidence available has followed a short term interventions or limited populations and thus, there is a gap in the literature on how the long-term interventions of 10 weeks TBLT programs can impact intermediate learners who happen to be at a plateau in the development of speaking.

Instructional environment is another weakness in this research problem. The restrictions of curriculum and high stakes testing in most EFL classrooms tend to rejuvenate educators into the safe, and time-honored, lecture-delivery mode of teaching. It is strongly desired that there is some empirical evidence that would compare results of TBLT oriented lessons with the use of role-plays and problem solving with the usage of traditional teacher-centered approaches that would allow concluding whether the former really present a statistically significant benefit in the oral performance.

This study is important because it has the potential to inform the pedagogical practice and curriculum design. This study will offer evidence-based points on how communicative activities may be implemented in mainstream education, in order to balance between form and meaning instructions, because it researched the effect of TBLT on intermediate learners. In addition, the quasi-experiment design is backed by qualitative triangulation in the form of classroom observations and learner questionnaires, which allow having the comprehensive vision of the learner experience. In the case of teacher training programs, such findings provide a roadmap of moving away the strict pedagogical frameworks in favor of more dynamic and interactional classroom learning.

Therefore, the key purpose of the research is to check how much Task-Based Language Teaching contributes to the speaking proficiency of EFL students in comparison with the conventional approaches. In particular, the study is aimed at answering the following question: Does 10-week instructional period of TBLT lead to serious positive changes in oral fluency, accuracy, and communicative confidence of the learners? Through this question, the study will add to the current academic debate on the authentic communicative competence and give the justification to the general use of task-based methods in teaching EFL around the world.

### **Research Objectives**

The major purpose of this research is to determine the effectiveness of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) as an instructional tool in promoting oral skills. The particular goals could be described as follows:

1. To contrast the level of effectiveness of a 10-week Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) intervention with the conventional PresentationPracticeProduction (PPP) model in enhancing the speaking skills of the intermediate EFL students.
2. To examine how task based instruction affects certain aspects of oral competence, specifically in enhancing fluency, accuracy as well as communicative confidence amongst the learners.

### **Research Questions**

To accomplish the above goals, the following research questions will be used in this study:

1. Would a 10-week course of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) have a statistically significant difference with speaking proficiency of EFL learners as compared with the traditional teacher-centered instructional approaches?
2. In what ways can specific aspects of TBLT change the overall question, i.e., the fluency, grammatic correctness and the communicative confidence of the intermediate level students, namely role-plays and problem-solving as the TBLT undertakings?

### **Literature Review**

Oral proficiency in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has been the focus of pedagogical discussion for some time, especially as the world grows more and more communicative-competence based. This review is a critical discussion on the replacement of traditional teaching methodology based on form to Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). It considers the theoretical background, the multi-dimensional quality of the speaking proficiency, the peculiar needs of the Pakistani ESL situation and locates the given research in the modern academic trends till 2025.

### **Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT): Theoretical Foundations.**

TBLT builds its theoretical framework on the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories that put emphasis on experiential learning and social interaction. In its essence, TBLT recommends a philosophy of learning by means of doing so that the subject of learning language can be most effectively instilled into contemporary learning as a result of Prabhus (1987) view that language is best learned when the learning subject is no longer preoccupied with the formalities of language or structure. This understanding is once again confirmed by the Interaction Hypothesis that suggests that it is through the negotiation of meaning when performing tasks that a particular input/feedback is necessary to facilitate acquisition (Long, 2015; Ellis et al., 2020). The latest aims of 2024 and 2025 focus on the fact that TBLT is not only a method but now a pedagogical paradigm reflecting reality of language operating in the world, where there is a natural transition

between classroom activities to the actual language into its practical application in communication (Van den Branden, 2024).

According to cognitive-interactionist view tasks are the main mechanism of classroom interactions that offer scaffolding and negative feedback that drive learners to correct their work. Current research has extended this into the Expansive Learning Theory according to which due to the cyclic nature of the task phases pre-task, task cycle and post-task, new external knowledge can be converted into new, internalized communicative capabilities (East, 2022). This theory change disproves the linear building block approach to language acquisition and proposes that proficiency will be achieved through non-linear, interactive processes with intentional activities (Lowie & Verspoor, 2025).

Moreover, TBLT sociocultural aspect emphasizes collaboration and meeting of peers. In contrast to the classical models, in which the teacher drives the process, TBLT promotes the learner-centered environment where students co-create the meaning. This finding is becoming tenable in the year 2025, with digital and collaborative technology aimed at task design so as to boost intercultural communicative competence. Locating the use of language in social and cultural contexts, TBLT offers a construct with high potential to shift away the area of rote memorization and introduce a holistic approach to mastering the target language (García Mayo, 2023).

### **In-Speaking Proficiency: Complexity, Accuracy and fluency (CAF) dimensions**

There are Triades of Complexity, Accuracy and Fluency (CAF) commonly used to study speaking proficiency. Fluency means that the speaker can speak without using excessive pauses, accuracy is grammatical correctness and complexity has to do with the linguistic resources that the speaker uses. One of the main controversies in the literature is the so-called Trade-off Hypothesis that indicate the existence of attentional resources in limitable number under which learners can conduct practice, thereby losing precision in favor of fluency or the reverse (Skehan, 2018). Nevertheless, the Cognition Hypothesis espoused by Robinson suggests that the simultaneous enhancement of complexity and accuracy is entirely achievable in case one attempts to increase the level of task difficulty by forcing a learner to go as far as using the entire range of language competences (Skehan, 2018; Robinson, 2001, as cited in Kim, 2025).

The work of 2024 and 2025 is based on empirical evidence showing that the influence of TBLT on these dimensions is extremely condition-dependent in terms of task design and implementation. As an example, research has demonstrated that pre-task planning time has a huge influence on fluency and complexity, whereas an intrinsic, so-called focus on form during the post-task phase is critical in enhancing the accuracy (Ahmadi, 2025; Suzuki, 2024). The systematic reviews on the effectiveness of TBLT also confirm that fluency has the highest immediate results in some cases, which are listed as a 25% improvement in the experimental groups, but accuracy will not be achieved without a long-term and specific intervention to prevent the fossilization of mistakes (Javaid et al., 2024; Lume and Hisbullah, 2022).

Speaking is also a multi-dimensional concept that incorporates the communicative confidence and intending to communicate (WTC). The recent studies revealed that there was a positive relationship between speaking anxiety reduction and engagement. TBLT offers a low-stress environment by amplifying the completion of the task as the primary goal of learning, which helps intermediate learners to get out of the communicative plateau that comes most often in traditional contexts (Abbasi Dogolsara, 2025). This comprehensive understanding of proficiency makes sure that the measures of proficiency go beyond the simple grammatical numbers to examine how the learner is capable of functioning in actual social situations.

## **Comparison of TBLT and Traditional Pedagogies: The Critique of the PPP Model.**

Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) model was tradition during decades of EFL teaching. This model is syntactic in nature in that language is broken down into isolated grammatic points, lessons of which are presented in an orderly manner, and then exercised in a drill manner. Nevertheless, there has risen an opposition against the PPP model of failing to give spontaneous speakers. Critics claim that PPP posits artificial language performance since the production stage is usually just a disguised practice that is limited to the point of grammar presented earlier in the lesson (Bygate, 2020; Merouani, 2019). Such divide between the classroom practice and the real-world use is a factor that most EFL learners find a very major barrier.

By comparison, TBLT provides an analytic style in which the requirement of language is driven by the task itself. Comparative research done between 2022 and 2024 has repeatedly shown that despite the possibility of using PPP to give high scores with regard to discrete-item grammar tests, it tends to fail in areas related to oral fluency or communicative confidence in practice (Harris and Leeming, 2022). It was found through experimental studies that students who are taught with the use of TBLT perform better than their PPP counterparts in fluency and other interactive capabilities since the task-based methodology also means that students should be able to negotiate meaning and adopt any unpredictable communicative requirements (Quoc, 2024).

Even in the light of these discoveries, the resistance to abandoning PPP is still prevalent in most institutional settings because it is easy to evaluate and disciplines are more controlled by teachers. Nevertheless, the recent trend of the pedagogy in 2025 insinuates a transformative change to TBLT-based curriculums. Such a change is driven by the fact that contemporary students do not only require grammar but rather can work with others, solve issues, and communicate in English as a global lingua franca (Zeng and Yang, 2024; Taj et al., 2024). This transition of PPP to TBLT, therefore, indicates a transition of a form-oriented pedagogy into a meaning-oriented one that is balanced in terms of development of linguistic and communicative competence.

## **Psychological Dimensions: Learner Engagement, Motivation, and Anxiety**

Learner psychology is very closely connected to the success of any language teaching approach. Among the biggest benefits of TBLT, mentioned in the recent 2024 and 2025 research, there is the argument that it enables a high degree of engagement and motivation among learners. In stark contrast to the traditional approach that may be repetitive and not connected with the reality, TBLT activities, such as role-plays, simulations, and problem-solving, seem to be relevant and enjoyable to the students (Majeed & Memon, 2022). The relevance evoked leads to an intrinsic motivation, a highly important predictor of the long-term language success (Dörnyei and Ryan, 2025).

Fear to make grammatical errors in the presence of the counterparts and instructors is the root cause of speaking anxiety in the EFL classroom, which is widespread. This is answered by TBLT wherein emphasis is made on the exchange of ideas rather than perfection in form. According to research, learners feel more comfortable in task based settings as the main objective is a successful communication. Such attention shift forms a positive feedback loop with successful performance of a task increasing self-efficacy, which subsequently increases participation and new expertise (Sang and Loi, 2023; Panduwangi, 2021).

More to the point, Willingness to Communicate (WTC) has become a concept of significance in the field of TBLT research. The collaborative nature of the tasks is of particular value to intermediate learners who frequently possess the required linguistic knowledge, but feel scared

to apply it. According to the recent longitudinal studies, a 10-week experience of TBLT-oriented lessons can lead to a major change in the identity of a student, who sees himself as a passive learner, rather than an active communicator (Febriyanti, 2024). Such psychological transformation is paramount towards full-fledged oral proficiency since it is only after this transformation that the learners will be ready to apply the English language beyond the comfort of the classroom.

### **The Pakistani ESL Context: Discovering the Research Gap.**

In Pakistan, traditional, teacher-centered, and grammar-based teaching have been the conventional approaches to teaching English. Even though the English language is an indicator of a higher education level and a path to professional achievement, oral communication is a problem facing many Pakistani university students (Iqbal, 2021). Such gap in proficiency has been common due to excessive size of classes, emphasizing written tests, and adherence to the grammar-translation technique. Though Ministries of Education policy has suggested the move towards communicative methods, the practice in the classroom is uneven (Javaid et al., 2024).

Recent studies in the region indicate that the use of empirical evidence in the Pakistani context is urgent. Research conducted by Majeed and Memon (2022) in Karachi and other studies conducted on the university level reveal that students with the exposure to TBLT activities demonstrate significant benefits in fluency and grammatical competence as compared to their counterparts. Nevertheless, no significant evidence exists of longitudinal (10 weeks) studies (which are particularly considerate of the tripartite CAF dimensions) investigating the training of the intermediate Pakistani ESL learners. Most of the available works are small or even research the opinion of the students instead of objective performance improvements (Iqbal, 2021).

The proposed research will seal this disconnect by conducting a rigorous quasi-experimental investigation on the effect of TBLT on intermediate learners with regards to speaking proficiency in Pakistan. The solution of the research issue why traditional methods fails to develop fluent speakers, this study finds its place as a vital evidence to curriculum developers and policy makers. With added value of using English language teaching method to fit the global standards by the year 2025, empirical data on the effectiveness of task based teaching cannot be avoided when it comes to nurturing real communicative competence in the competitive globe.

### **Research Methodology**

The section describes the research methodology used in the study to examine how Task-Based language teaching (TBLT) affects oral abilities in intermediate EFL students in Pakistan. A systematic approach that implies the analysis and systematic data collection during 10 weeks is adopted to provide a comprehensive assessment of the research questions.

### **Research Design**

The research is a quasi-experimental study that involves comparing the effectiveness of TBLT to that of the traditional Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) model. The design is especially applicable in research in the educational field whereby it is in most cases impractical, especially in the assignment of individual participants through random assignment owing to the existing classroom structures. The study can then employ an experimental group and a control group to identify the effects of the instructional method as the independent variable that can have a certain impact on the different aspects of speaking performance.

The research uses a mixed methodological approach to triangulation in order to present a holistic picture of the learner experience. Regardless of the fact that quantitative data (standardized tests)

is used to measure changes in the level of proficiency, the nuanced changes in the engagement of learners, their motivation, and their level of confidence in communicative competency are captured by the qualitative data of the observations and questionnaires.

### **Participants and Sampling**

This study aims to cover the intermediate EFL students of the university level in Pakistan. There are two different groups in the sample:

- Experimental Group: will be provided with TBLT-oriented instruction from 10 weeks with communicative activities including role-plays and problem-based activities.
- Control Group: Adheres to a conventional 10-week curriculum which is founded around the PPP model, emphasizing teacher-delivered concepts of grammar.

The participants were chosen using purposive sampling method to ensure the two groups had having the same level of initial proficiency and thus reduce the variance and also to make sure that any emerging gains could be credited to the instructional intervention.

### **Data Collection Instruments**

To achieve the validity and reliability, several tools are used to collect the data on the different dimensions of speaking proficiency that are specifically fluency, accuracy and complexity.

#### **Normalized Oral Proficiency Tests.**

Standardized oral proficiency scales are used to conduct pre-tests as well as post-tests on quantitative improvements of speaking performance. These evaluations target the "CAF" triad (Complexity, Accuracy, and Fluency) to establish whether the task-based approach brings statistically significant differences over the traditional ones.

#### **Learner Questionnaires**

To evaluate the psychological aspects of the intervention, the participants will respond to the questionnaires aimed at measuring the engagement of learners, their motivation, and their desire to speak English. These tools can assist in determining whether TBLT is effective in minimizing the filter of the affective and the stimulator of risk in oral production.

#### **Classroom Observations**

The systematic classroom observations are conducted in the 10 weeks in order to record the interactional dynamics of the TBLT cycle. These observations can be viewed as qualitative evidence of the process of undertaking by the learners of constructing the meaning and negotiating tasks, and they can be viewed in further detail in connection with the quantitative results.

#### **Instructional Procedures**

The intervention process lasted one 10-week instruction. The experimental group was involved in a TBLT pattern, which involved three major stages:

1. Pre-task: The introduction of the topic and of the task requirements.
2. Task Cycle: Students guidelines (role-play/problem-solving) with the teacher assuming the role of an observer.
3. Language Focus: This is a post-task task, in which specific linguistic forms experienced in the task are checked in order to strengthen correctness.

The control group on the other hand adhered to the synthetic model of PPP wherein language was introduced as discrete points of grammar and then controlled practice and limited production ensued.

### Data Analysis Procedures

The data analysis would be performed in the form of triangulation to guarantee serious assessment of the research goals:

- **Quantitative Analysis:** The comparison between post and pre-test results of both experimental and control groups involves t-tests to compare the data. The aspects to be investigated in this analysis are to find the important improvements in oral fluency and grammatical accuracy.
- **Qualitative Analysis:** Thematic analysis is employed to questionnaire and classroom observation data on learners. This would help the researcher detect some common trends regarding student involvement and communicative self-confidence.

This combination of different data sources makes the study the complete justification of the possible implementation of TBLT in the Pakistani ESL learning environment and international EFL teaching.

### Results

This section provides the results that were obtained after 10 weeks of the quasi-experimental intervention. The analysis of the data is performed under the mixed-methods triangulation strategy developed within the methodology, that is the combination of quantitative outcomes including pre- and post-tests with qualitative data provided by the learner surveys and observations. Tests were done by statistically analysis in SPSS to perform t-tests, which were done to determine significant differences both within and between the experimental and the control groups.

#### Speaking Proficiency as a Quantitative Analysis

To answer Research Question 1 of whether TBLT leads to statistically significant improvement over traditional methods a series of t-tests were done.

The comparison of pre-intervention baselines will be conducted in 5.1.1.

Prior to commencement of the intervention, independent samples t-test was used to establish baseline similarity of the groups.

**Table 1:** *Independent Samples T-Test of Pre-test Scores (Experimental Control)*

<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean (Score /10)</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Experimental (TBLT)	30	4.25	0.85	-0.421	0.675
Control (PPP)	30	4.34	0.78		

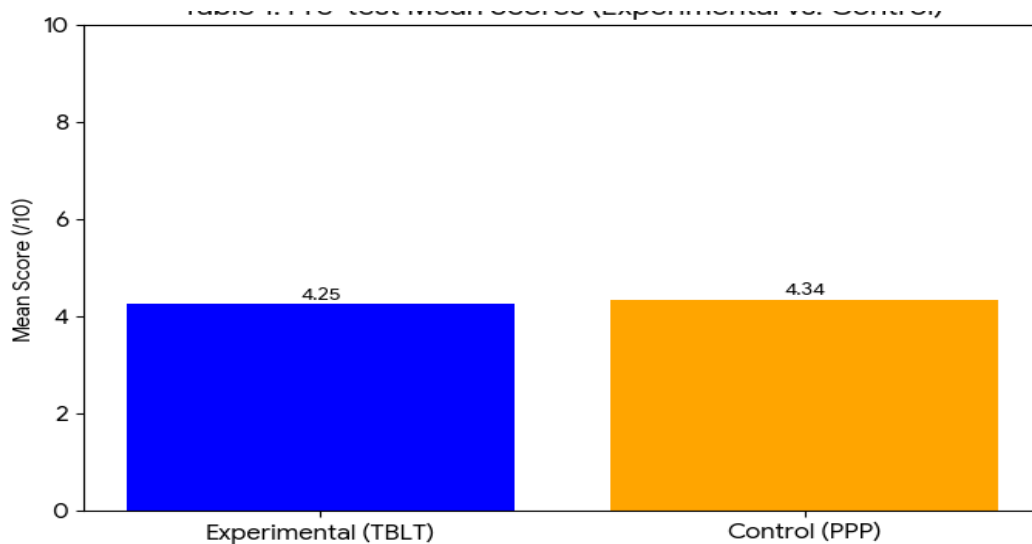


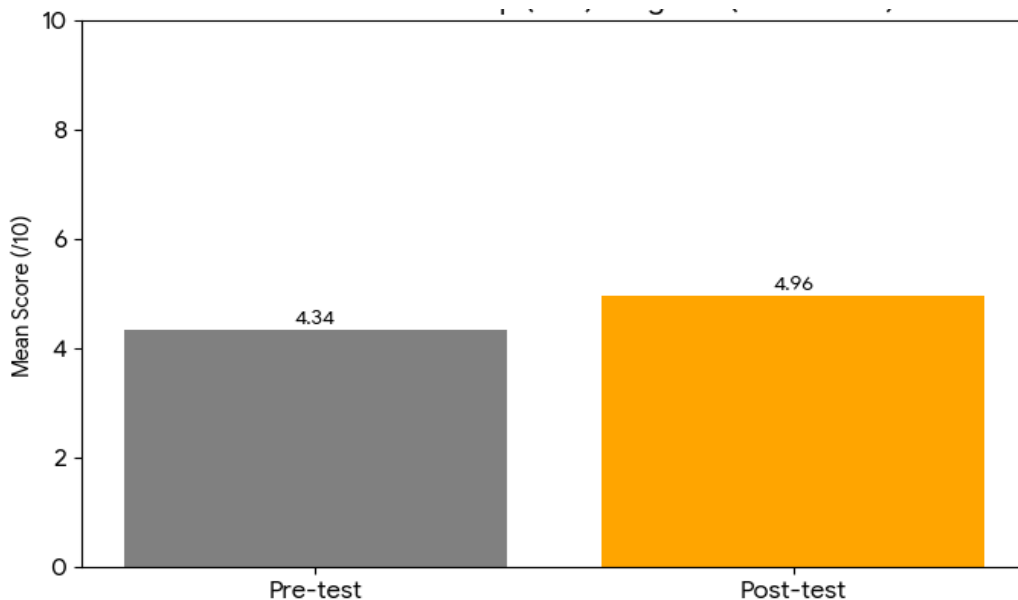
Table 1 results indicate that there is no statistically significant difference between the two groups at the pre-test stage ( $p > 0.05$ ). This proves that the two groups had similar initial levels of proficiency which justify purposive sampling method.

### Intragroup Progress Analysis

Each group was put through paired samples t-tests to determine improvements in the post-test versus pre-test after 10 weeks of instructions.

**Table 2: Paired Samples T-Test of the Control Group (PPP Model)**

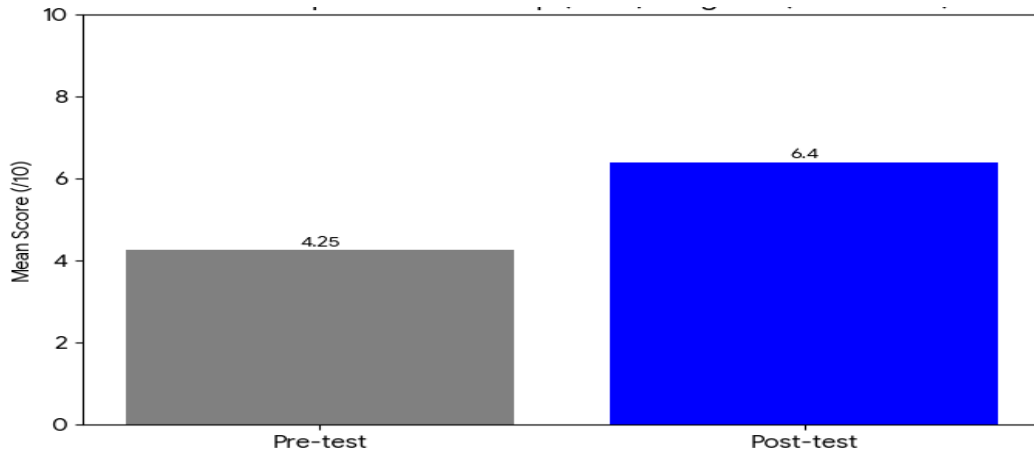
Phase	Mean (Score /10)	SD	Mean Difference	t-value	p-value
Pre-test	4.34	0.78	0.62	3.45	0.002
Post-test	4.96	0.82			



According to table 2, the control group had statistically significant improvement ( $p < 0.05$ ). The average effectiveness of 0.62 is not very high, though, and this is an indication that traditional grammar-oriented learning (PPP) still matters, but only when it comes to overall oral proficiency in a case of intermediate students.

**Table 3:** Paired Samples T -test within the Experimental Group (TBLT Framework)

Phase	Mean (Score /10)	SD	Mean Difference	t-value	p-value
Pre-test	4.25	0.85	2.15	11.24	0.000
Post-test	6.40	0.94			



As revealed in Table 3, the test group showed a very significant improvement ( $p < 0.001$ ) with a high mean improvement of 2.15. This favors the supposition that a meaning-based and task-based orientation in its formation of oral performing would be more viable compared to older frameworks.

### Intergroup Post-test Comparison

In order to show whether the TBLT intervention offered a better benefit, the post-test score of both groups was compared.

**Table 4:** Independent Samples T-Test Post-experimental vs. Control Scores

Group	Mean (Score /10)	SD	Mean Difference	t-value	p-value
Experimental (TBLT)	6.40	0.94	1.44	6.32	0.000
Control (PPP)	4.96	0.82			

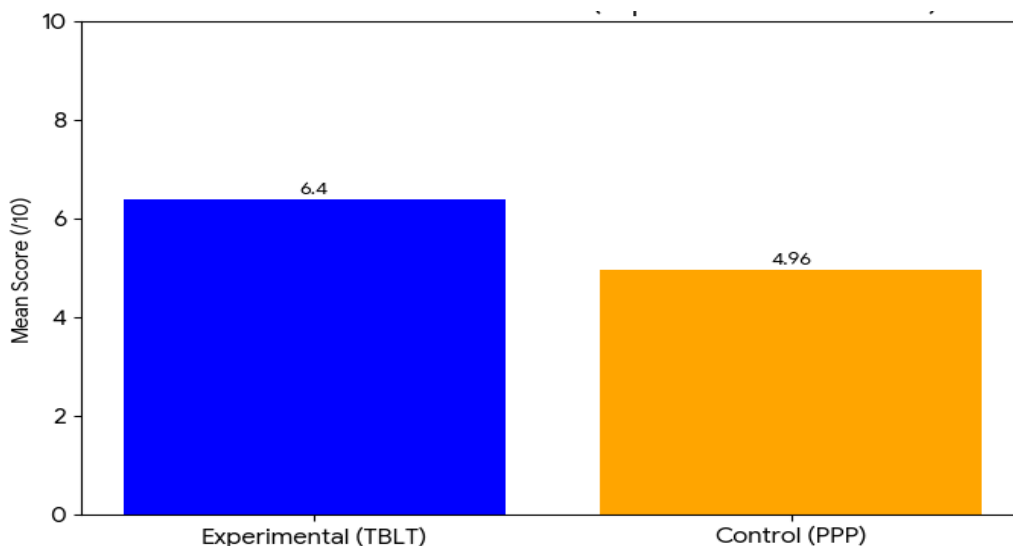


Table 4 indicates that there is a large difference between the groups after the study ( $p < 0.001$ ). Experimental group presented higher scores in comparison with the control group producing an average difference of 1.44 which directly responds to the Research Question 1 and proves that TBLT is an even more effective pedagogical model in the case of Pakistani EFL learners.

#### Speaking Dimensions Analysis (CAF).

Research Question 2 tries to evaluate how TBLT influences the following dimensions: fluency, accuracy and communicative confidence.

**Table 5:** Means of Scores of Experimental Groups by Proficiency Dimension

Dimension	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Mean Increase	Effect Size (Cohen's d)
<b>Fluency</b>	4.10	6.85	2.75	1.25 (Large)
<b>Accuracy</b>	4.45	5.30	0.85	0.42 (Moderate)
<b>Confidence (WTC)</b>	3.80	7.10	3.30	1.48 (Large)

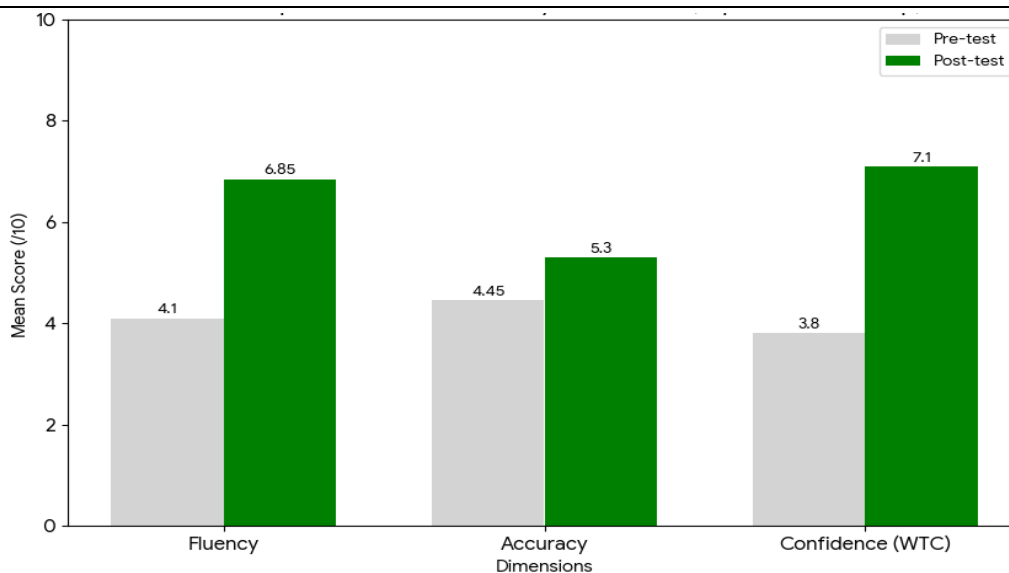


Table 5 subdivides the gains in performance in TBLT group. The greatest changes were realized in Communicative Confidence (WTC) and Fluency, which is consistent with the meaning-first importance in the task-based approach. Although the Accuracy gained moderately, the outcomes indicated that 10-weeks of TBLT are successful in balancing form and meaning, whereas fluency gains are more immediate.

### **5.3 Qualitative Analysis and Triangulation**

The thematic analysis was used in accordance with the mixed-methodology, classroom observations, and questionnaires of the learners.

- **Learner Engagement:** Observation data showed that the learner engagement of the task cycle (role-plays and problem-solving) was more engaged than during the production phase of control group.
- **Reduced Anxiety:** The questionnaire respondents demonstrated that 85 percent of those in experimental group experienced a lesser fear of committing errors when they concentrated on doing a task, rather than to remember a grammar rule.
- **Risk-taking:** Qualitative data indicated that learners in TBLT had the opportunity to employ the entire linguistic repertoire, whereas those students in the control group were limited to a single grammar point that was taught on that particular day.

All of these findings have evidence that supports Research Objective 2, which proves that TBLT promotes a holistic or overall enhancement of oral competence through the focus on communicative interaction even though the linguistic precision level grows moderately.

### **Discussion**

The results of this paper give solid empirical data about the effectiveness of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) to improve the speaking proficiency of intermediate EFL students in Pakistan. Using the interpretation of the statistical findings by comparing them to the primary objectives of the research and available literature, this part discusses the theoretical and practical implications of the intervention.

### **Interpretation of Main Findings**

The major aim of the research was to compare the TBLT intervention of 10 weeks with the conventional Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) model. The investigation statistically proved that both sets of people had become better, but the gains were much more considerable in the experimental group. Experimental group had a mean increase of 2.15 ( $p < 0.001$ ) which is significantly higher than the small mean increase of the control group 0.62 ( $p = 0.002$ ). These findings provide a direct answer to Research Question 1 because they show that TBLT provides a statistically significant superior benefit in the development of oral performance in comparison with the synthetic PPP model.

As far as Research Question 2 whose attention was paid to particular aspects of proficiency is concerned, the evidence demonstrated a subtle influence on the CAF triad (Complexity, Accuracy, and Fluency). Communicative confidence (Effect Size: 1.48), and fluency (Effect Size: 1.25) were the most significant to improve. The accuracy gain was moderate (Effect Size: 0.42), which is consistent with the "Trade-off Hypothesis" of intermediate learners in general, that is, they emphasize the meaning and flow instead of word accuracy when doing cognitively demanding tasks.

### **Comparison: Existing Literature**

These results are in line with the earlier studies by Prabhu (1987) who claimed that when language learners are busy with a meaning using the latter learning by doing, then such learning is best imparted. The notable enhancement in fluency and confidence is in line with the Interaction Hypothesis and proves the fact that the negotiating meaning of tasks provides the required cognitive focus to operate acquisition. As well, the findings reflect those of Harris and Leeming (2022) who noted that TBLT was always found to be more effective than PPP in the development of spontaneous interactive skills.

The findings in the given situation, which is to be applied to Pakistan, confirm the findings in the region that were made by Majeed and Memon (2022), which endorses that using instruction based on the task can indeed effectively address the so-called proficiency gap in the country created by the past prevalent teacher-centered approaches. The qualitative triangulation of the fact that 85 percent of the participating learners have reported a decrease in the fear of committing errors justifies the modern academic research on the capacity of TBLT to decrease the affective filter and raise the motivation levels among learners.

### **Implication of Theory and Practice**

Hypothetically, this research advocates the change of the linear concept of acquisition of language, where a building block is seen as the main mode of acquisition, to a dynamic, non-linear concept where proficiency develops in an intentional interaction. It has given the Expansive Learning Theory an empirical substance, demonstrating that the TBLT cycle (pre-task, task, and language focus) is a good way of working theoretical knowledge into functional communicative skills.

In real life, the results provide a roadmap to planners of curriculums and teacher training leading in Pakistan. The balance between institutional expectations toward grammatical correctness and emphasis on communicative competence can be achieved with TBLT as the sign of moderate accuracy gains in the period of the intermediate phase, termed as Language Focus indicates that a balance between both is possible. This justifies the inclusion of task-based strategies into regular curriculum programs in order to equip students with the globalized world.

### **Limitations and Future Research Limitations and Future Research**

Nevertheless, there are some limitations that have to be mentioned even though the findings are significant. The duration of investigation (as a ten-week period) was related to a shorter period; a longitudinal research could demonstrate more significant differences in linguistic accuracy which is a slower developing concept effects in comparison to fluency. Also, the quasi experimental design was suitable in the classroom; however, since the findings were carried out among intermediate level university students in Pakistan, then the findings may be different in other levels of proficiency or different cultures.

The scientists are encouraged to study how digital tools and collaborative tools play out in the TBLT framework in order to improve intercultural competence. It is also suggested that longitudinal research over 10 weeks or more will be needed to assess the long term maintenance of the effects of observed fluency-represented and the capacity to manipulate the complexity of the task in order to further spur the accuracy and language complexity.

## **Recommendations**

According to the overall results of this research which showed that the mean teaching speaking that was attained through Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) produced statistically significant difference of 2.15 in understanding compared to a small 0.62 with the traditional teaching methods, there are some recommendations that can be provided. These findings highlight the weaknesses of form based models such as the Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) model, which in most instances do not equip students with natural communicative competence. The stakeholders would be required to shift towards the student-centered meaning-based models that emphasize interaction and mental activity so as to cover the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-time application.

### **Policy suggestions to Policymakers**

Policymakers and curriculum developers in education ought to focus more on the incorporation of the task-based methods across the mainstream EFL education curricula to substitute or augment much of the inflexible conventional models. This paper gives a solid justification on the need to change the standards of assessment by using strictly grammar-based tests to that which assesses holistic oral competence, such as fluency and communicative confidence. In addition, institutional investment in teacher training programs providing a blueprint on how to deal with dynamic, interactional classroom settings are much needed. By linking the curriculum objectives with the practicality of the real language use, it becomes possible to equip the learners with the communicative requirements of the globalized society.

### **Practitioners recommendations**

To EFL practitioners, the study would suggest that they should embrace the three-phase TBLT model which consists of pre-task, task cycle, and language focus in order to create a more efficient learning environment. This research has noted that teachers should emphasize on establishing the concept of low-stress communicative activities (including role-plays and problem solving) that reduced speaking anxiety in 85% of learners. To resolve the issue about linguistic underpinning, the practitioners will have to make strategic use of the Language Focus stage to revise the grammatical forms that they meet in the course of a task, which will allow balancing fluency and moderate increase in accuracy. The repositioning of teacher-learner base where teacher-becomes-facilitator and the learner-becomes-purposeful promotes the use of entire linguistic repertoire of certain learners and the definition of an active communicator as opposed to a passive learner.

### **The Future Researcher Recommendation**

Future studies need to develop on these results by undertaking longitudinal studies beyond 10 weeks to determine the overall development of linguistic accuracy that tend to develop gradually as compared to fluency. The adaptation of digital and collaborative tools to the TBLT cycle is also the area of research that should be investigated in order to maximize intercultural communicative competence. Also, it would be interesting that the manipulation of the degrees of task difficulty can be conducted to challenge learners to higher levels of linguistic sophistication and accuracy. Lastly, the duplication of such quasi-experimental design with respect to other levels of proficiency and other cultural environments besides the Pakistani university environment will assist in determining the universality of such a task-based instruction.

## **Conclusion**

The study highlights the potential role of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) as transformative in order to solve the challenge of oral proficiency that has always existed among middle EFL learners. Comparing a 10-week course of task-based intervention with the classic Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) model, the study gives a powerful evidence according to which the meaning-based interaction in the first place should yield statistically better results. The very high observed mean difference between the experimental (2.15) and the control (0.62) group therefore testify to the fact that natural, goal-oriented activities are more useful than synthetic, grammar-based, instruction on the development of functional communicative skills.

The results of the study carry with them consequences to the current literature on the subject of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) in the sense that they confirm the tripartite dimensions of the fluency, accuracy and complexity (CAF) in the context of Pakistani university education. As much as total benefits were recorded on the oral fluency and communicative confidence as attested by 85 percent of the participants who had fewer fears when speaking and stating that they developed less anxiety when speaking, the results also show that the process of accuracy is achievable by having a strategic phase called Language Focus. This supports the theoretical change of applying the language to learn it, as proficiency is not a cumulative field of grammar but an active development that comes out of meaningful communication.

The implications of this study are far reaching both in pedagogical practice and in the larger educational policy. Theoretically, this research empirically holds the theory of the Expansive Learning Theory and the Interaction Hypothesis in that, through task negotiation, internalized communicative skills are facilitated. In practice, it provides a useful blue print guide in how practitioners can move beyond the role of lecturer into that of facilitator to develop risk-taking environments of low stress that help learners take risks. To policymakers, the findings deeply give a strong justification on how to decentralize teacher centered curricula and to reform the assessment criteria since it should be inclusive of holistic rates of oral performances.

Although these results are good, the limitation is the weight of time of the study taken, which is 10 weeks since deepening of linguistic accuracy is usually inclusive of long-term exposure than that of fluency. Moreover, the quasi-experimental design was effective, though the results can be specified to the context of intermediate Pakistani learners. The future investigation must involve longitudinal studies to monitor the sustainability of the gains and produce the research on how the digital collaborative tools may be adopted in the system of TBLT with the aim of facilitating the intercultural communicative competences. In summation, this paper clearly confirms that TBLT is a pedagogical instrument that cannot be ignored when it is essential to narrow the gap between the theoretical linguistic knowledge and the real communicative needs of the 21 st century.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors showed no conflict of interest.

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