

Innovative Approaches to English Language Education: Exploring the Impact of Task-Based Learning in EFL Classrooms

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Abstract: Background: Task-Based Learning (TBL) has gained traction as an innovative instructional approach in English language education, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. Traditional teaching methods primarily focus on grammar and rote memorization and have shown limited effectiveness in promoting communicative competence and practical language use. Objective: This study aims to ascertain the effectiveness of TBL in developing the second language, English, and the communicative proficiency of EFL learners and then analyze how it differs from the conventional grammar translation method. Methods: Both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies were used in the study. Information was gathered using pre- and post-questionnaires, student interviews, questionnaires administered to students, and observation checklists. Language proficiency and communicative competence were analyzed using descriptive statistics, paired t-tests, thematic analysis, and correlation analysis. This research work was done over 12 weeks with 30 participants made up of undergraduate students in a public university EFL classroom. Results: The result shows that only TBL positively impacts learning achievement, which is higher in speaking and listening skills, with an average improvement rate of 25% and 20%, respectively. Student perceptions of TBL showed a strong positive completion, with 92% of students agreeing that TBL activities were entertaining and helpful in enhancing language development. It also emerged that motivation was higher, and speaking confidence and performance were higher than those obtained through traditional approaches, as revealed in the study. Conclusion: The TBL approach is the proper practice for enhancing language usage ability and communicative skills in an EFL setting. Focusing on the learners enhances the interaction and interest in lessons, and general practice prepares a learner for actual situations. Thus, the present results can be considered as supporting evidence of the necessity of further incorporation of TBL as a component of EFL curricula and its application potential as the unifying approach for overcoming the practical limitations of the traditional paradigm.

Keywords: Task-Based Learning (TBL), English Language Education, EFL, Communicative Competence, Language Acquisition, Student Perceptions, Traditional Methods Comparison.

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the last few years, there has been a desire to research instructional strategies to improve enriched English learning, especially in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning contexts (Paragae, 2023). The conventional approaches may yield memorization leading to poor language use among students (Balsells, 2005). Thus, the call for analyzing other approaches has led educators and researchers to consider the Task-Based Learning (TBL) theoretical approach. TBL entails the assignment of valuable tasks that approximate learners' use of language to encourage enhanced language proficiency (Nunan, 2004b). This approach deemphasizes formal correct usage of grammatical rules and allows learners to practice skills more naturally and communicatively (Willis, 2022). The desire to develop TBL is inspired by the necessity to design more engaging and stimulating activities that promote learners' practical involvement in language processing (Gullo, Ha, & Cook, 2015). Introducing the TBL approach in EFL classroom seems to have positive effects on the students, whereby the learner's motivation is increased as well as the language proficiency (Sholeh, Salija, & Nur, 2020). However, any introduction of TBL demands a reconsideration of curricular organization, teaching, and learning, as many teachers are enculturated to the conventional modes of pedagogy (Lőrincz, 2023). Knowledge of these challenges and their effects is important for promoting language learning and achievement. To this end, the primary purpose of this study is to establish the viability of TBL in improving EFL students' English skills. This research aims to find out the influence of TBL on language learning, communicative proficiency, and students' attitudes (Chua & Lin, 2020). The study compares the two types of instructions to determine which prompts the definite practical usage of the foreign language and culminates overall language mastery. Also, the study concerns the applicability of TBL in the diversification of EFL; particular emphasis has been placed on its capacity to foster more participative and learning-centered classrooms (Samuda, 2008). By way of the quantitative and qualitative assessments and educational observations of this research, evidence-based advice for educators and curriculum developers is going to be proposed (Long, 2014). Finally, the idea aims to minimize the gap between acquiring prior knowledge of EFL and its applicability to practice so that students learn the language that will be valuable in their lives. However, the following gaps are evident: The first is that despite having researched TBL in detail, there are still gaps. First, only an operation meaning analysis of the effectiveness of TBL has been

conducted while the requirements of the approach to communicative competence have been discussed, especially in the multicultural environment (Ji, 2017). Although previous studies indicate that using TBL increases learners' interest in classroom activities, the effects of the method on particular types of language learning, such as pronunciation or syntactic acquisition, are not well-documented (Skehan, 1996). Another gap is that little is known about how TBL can be implemented by incorporating ICT and LMS to use it in remote or a blended learning model (Jeon & Hahn, 2006). Most of the prior work focuses on the context of conventional iron and face-to-face settings. Therefore, there is a gap in investigating TBL operation in virtual EFL classes. In addition, little research has been done on the comparative analysis of TBL in terms of the effectiveness of TBL over other methodological innovations, such as flipped classrooms or project-based learning for enhancing communicative proficiency and the level of learning autonomy (East, 2017). The results of multiple preservice teacher participants suggest that addressing these gaps will help further develop knowledge about the best ways to integrate TBL in diverse educational settings and for various learners. This study's objective is to assess the effectiveness of TBL in improving English language proficiency and communicative ability in EFL classrooms. The study aims to explore how TBL influences different aspects of language acquisition, such as speaking, listening, and writing skills, as well as its effect on student motivation and engagement. To achieve these goals, the research is guided by the following questions:

- How does TBL improve the communicative competence of EFL learners compared to traditional language teaching methods?
- What is the impact of TBL on specific language skills, such as speaking fluency and listening comprehension, in an EFL context?
- How do students perceive TBL as a learning approach, and how does it affect their motivation and participation in language activities?
- What are the potential challenges and barriers in implementing TBL in diverse EFL classroom settings, and how can these be addressed effectively?

These research questions will help systematically assess the benefits and limitations of TBL, providing valuable insights for educators and policymakers seeking to optimize English language education in EFL environments. It is expected that the present research will be helpful for educators and policy-makers who would like to improve education in EFL contexts, particularly in the English language learning process.

Accordingly, the study investigates the effects of TBL and presents findings that reveal best practices for designing a curriculum and course. The findings are expected to demonstrate the process and the extent to which TBL supports the use of language and the development of communicative competence necessary in real-life situations. The research provides educators tips for creating learning experiences that generate more engagement and learner motivation. It also fills the void where research on TBL exists in tandem with theoretical evaluation but lacks grounded suggestions for implementing TBL in various classrooms. Furthermore, this study advances the theoretical and practical knowledge of language acquisition, so the search for new language acquisition methods continues. This study's results may help policymakers decide whether or not to add TBL to their countries' curricula and teacher training curricula. This brings out the need to encourage modern teaching practices for the EFL learners of the present generation. This research aims to build on existing language education practices to solve the lack of a strong connection between traditional approaches and current instructional practices.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theoretical Framework: Language Acquisition Theories

We can find where the principles of TBL originated from several language acquisition theories. This paper considers the Input Hypothesis proposed by Krashen (Krashen, 1982), where second language acquisition results from comprehensible input slightly beyond the learner's grasp or " $i + 1$ ". TBL complements this theory in the same way that it offers students tasks that force them to use language in context, implying new vocabulary and structures amongst students. The second theory is Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, which associates language acquisition and learning with social learning (Vygotsky, 1978). On learner's language development: Vygotsky said that learning is a social process based on the learner's contact with more capable partners. TBL thrives in developing such interactions by allowing group work and peer-to-peer communication through which learners can co-construct meaning and knowledge (Swain, 2000). Swain's output hypothesis also connects with TBL and is a crucial component. Swain (Swain, 1985) stated that it is as compelling to generate language (output) as it is to receive input so that the learners can monitor the hypotheses constructed and adjust continually accordingly. This hypothesis finds support from TBL activities where the students must use

the language in genuine situations. Last, Skehan's Cognitive Approach to the foreign language classroom holds that tasks should be equally accurate, fluent, and complex. TBL inspires students to translate and interpret contents by simultaneously paying attention to form and meaning in a learning process that requires cognitive efforts in processing forms and comprehending meaning. Especially for those EFL learners who are learning in a contextualized environment and who must use language purposefully and sequentially to accomplish meaningful tasks (Skehan, 1998), this approach, therefore, proves helpful. This is because these theories, in totality, underpin the principles of the TBL and enhance the understanding of its applicability in the EFL classroom.

2.2 Traditional vs. Innovative Approaches in EFL Classrooms

In traditional EFL classrooms, grammar translation and audio linguistics are predominant and require memorization, grammar aspects, and drilling (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). These approaches put the most emphasis on form and order and not on flow and comprehensible input. Therefore, learners, after passing through these methods, are often found to be producing correct syntax while at the same time being unable to apply the language appropriately in real-life situations (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). For instance, grammar translation is considerably oriented to translating texts from native to English or vice versa, and this does not let students practice important communication interactions (Cook, 2016). On the other hand, methodologies such as TBL and CLT propose using learning tasks and student interaction as their fundamental concepts (Nunan, 2004a). These methods necessitate learners' realization of linguistic knowledge but in strategies and sociolinguistic skills about realistic tasks (Balsells, 2005). For example, CLT underlines the necessity of employing language for diverse communicative functions, like requesting information or stating an opinion, which seems more effective in preparing learners for authentic communication (Richards, 2005). In addition, new methodological approaches use technologies and multimedia tools to assist in the process of teaching /learning (Levy & Stockwell, 2013). Social software, technology-based languages, and context aid learner autonomy and offer other mediums for practice apart from classroom practice (Godwin-Jones, 2011). Altogether, these tools, when incorporated with TBL, make learning more interesting and interactive as they work hand in hand with students' both Left-brain learners and Right-brain learners (Chapelle, 2009). However, despite innovative methods, some educators are unwilling to use them because of curriculum congruency and classroom management

(Littlewood, 2011). Further, implementing these approaches may have costs affiliated with new training and production of the necessary resources, which could prove prohibitive to institutions with limited budgetary capacity (Borg, 2011). Nevertheless, the defined shift towards the practices being more communicative and emphasizing learners' perspective is most likely due to the increased awareness of the necessity of preparing students for language knowledge applicable to real-life situations.

2.3 Overview of TBL in Language Education

TBL is an instructional method that organizes tasks at the center of the learning and teaching process, focusing on using language for meaningful interaction (Richards, 2002). TBL was developed as a reaction to the shortcomings of traditional structurally oriented approaches, paying more attention to meaningful interaction and learners' activity (Branden, 2006). It supports loading all the activities that make the student accomplish a given result with relevant use of language, and this empowers the learners' fluency and critical thinking skills. The core idea behind TBL is that learners acquire language more effectively when engaged in tasks involving real-world scenarios and purposeful use of language (Bygate, 2015). These tasks, from planning a project to conducting an interview, enable students to practice language skills in context, making learning more relevant and practical (Ruso, 1999). The process typically involves a three-phase cycle: (1) a pre-task phase, where learners are introduced to the topic and prepare for the task; (2) the task phase, where learners perform the task using the target language; and (3) a post-task phase, where they reflect on their performance and discuss any language-related challenges they faced (Willis, 2021). Studies indicate that TBL fosters a deeper understanding of language use by encouraging learners to focus on meaning and form (Swan, 2005). It allows for naturalistic language development, as students are exposed to various linguistic inputs and must produce output that aligns with real communicative purposes (Littlewood, 2004). This is a crucial aspect of the learning process as it assists the learners in remembering grammar and vocabulary they interactively use in real-life situations. Nonetheless, some difficulties have been encountered when introducing TBL in EFL environments. Another important issue to be considered is how to select and or develop suitable tasks for the learners because task content difficulty should be matched to the learners' aptitude (Shintani, 2012). There is also the matter of assessment – examining what students learn with TBL using traditional tests and quizzes may be difficult, so new evaluation methods

must be designed (Norris, 2009). In general, TBL can be viewed as a picturesque and learner-centered approach as opposed to conventional strategies to negotiate meaningful knowledge, especially when the aim is to develop the ability to communicate and use language to solve practical tasks.

2.4 Benefits and Challenges of TBL in EFL Contexts

This paper aims to establish that TBL has several advantages for EFL learners. The most valuable forms are advantageous as this method allows for the font of students' communicative competence through assignments that simulate real-life language use (Butler, 2011). These meaning-making issues ensure that the learner gets a chance to use English holistically and, in the process, be able to handle real-world tasks such as using English to negotiate meaning, ask for clarification, or even express personal opinions (Rahimpour, 2008). A third significant advantage is that TBL yields increased student motivation and interest. When learners are engaged in performing valuable tasks, given their experience and choices, they are likely to commit effort and be enthusiastic about the learning process (Carless, 2009). Further, learning-teaching is strengthened by the teaming aspect; many activities are carried out with fellow students, thus promoting team and interpersonal skills (Gass & Mackey, 2014). However, several challenges are relatively conspicuous and inherent to using TBL in EFL environments. Another challenge is about creating meaningful, engaging, and effective learning tasks that could be adequately addressed by learners with different levels of language proficiency (Carless, 2009). If a task is complicated, they will discourage students from participating due to the overwhelming feeling such tasks create. Hence, complex tasks will likely offer inadequate linguistic input or language learning experiences altogether (Qutob). Teachers have to, therefore, choose and modify tasks best to meet their learners' language proficiency and requirements. The next challenge is the evaluation of language acquisition in TBL. Moreover, the content method, especially grammar-based tests, will likely provide an imperfect estimate of the communicative skills and strategic competence fostered by TBL. This means that teachers employ various other forms of assessment, including performance and self and peer assessments, which are time-consuming and require professional development (East, 2012). TBL may be somewhat costly because it frequently involves working with fewer students, more handouts, and more time spent designing and implementing tasks capturing the content of a given lesson (Jeon & Hahn, 2006). Teachers might also encounter students who are used to a more

structured learning style and may find the power shift to their side more problematic. To tackle these issues, there must be continuous professional development for the TBL teachers and education institutions supporting TBL to enhance the effectiveness of implementing TBL in EFL contexts.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design and Approach

This study employs a qualitative research design to explore the effectiveness of TBL in EFL classrooms. The qualitative paradigm enables an understanding of how TBL influences the learner's language learning and communication skills based on participants' cases and opinions. This has informed the selection of a case study approach as it offers depth on how TBL can be implemented in a particular learning environment, allowing researchers to understand real-life interactions within learning environments. The research design is structured into three main stages: Research Design, Data Collection Methods, and Data Analysis Techniques, as reflected in the Figure 1. Thus, each is connected to the others and builds a continuous process, from the research proposal development to data analysis.

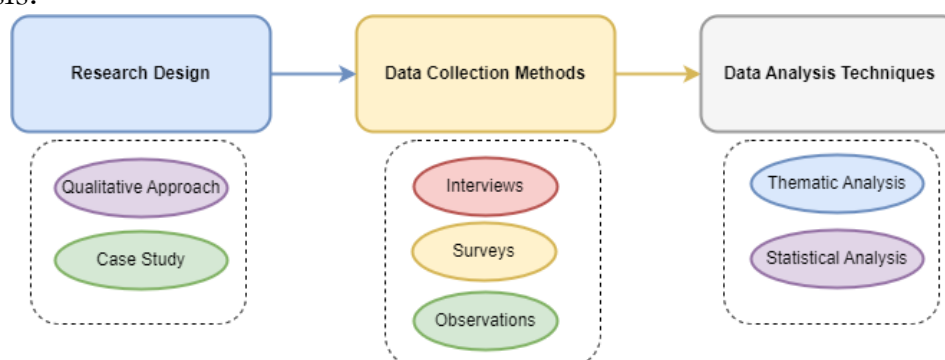


Figure 1: Research Design and Methodology for Analyzing the Impact of TBL on EFL Learners

3.2. Participants and Setting

The research was conducted in an EFL classroom context in a public university in Pakistan. The participants were 30 University Students in an English Language Proficiency course. Their ages were between 18 and 22, and their English skill levels differed: this was evaluated through a placement test given when students initially arrived at the college. Most participants had learned English through conventional grammar approaches in their past teaching-learning engagements. The environment used a projector, whiteboard, and chair arrangement for group work and

learning in any correspondence university classroom. The project was carried out over 12 weeks, implementing TBL in the current academic schedule. The learners were grouped into three groups of ten students and selected so that those in each group had different aptitude skills to facilitate group cooperation. Table 1 summarizes the demographic information and grouping approach used in this research study.

Table 1: Characteristics of Participants and Setting

Setting	Details
Total Number of Participants	30 students
Age Range	18-22 years
Gender Distribution	16 Male, 14 Female
English Proficiency Levels	Basic (10), Intermediate (12), Advanced (8)
Course Enrolled	English Language Proficiency
Study Duration	12 weeks
Classroom Setting	Standard university classroom with projector and seating
Grouping	3 Groups of 10 Students each
Teaching Method	TBL integrated into the curriculum.

Thus, the division of participants provided an equal learning experience to all the participants, and interaction could be observed at different proficiency levels.

This setup was vital since it was through it that the effects of TBL on the learners' language development could be understood regarding different learner groups.

3.3. Data Collection Methods

To maximize the study's validity, data collection methods were combined to cover all aspects of using TBL to enhance EFL learners' achievement in their second language. Through data triangulation, qualitative and quantitative approaches were used, and thus, the standards of reliability and validity were strong. The following data collection methods were utilized:

3.3.1 Pre- and Post-Test Assessments

The students were given pre-and post-tests to assess their language development before and after regular use of the intervention. These tests aimed to identify changes in the growth of the four specified language skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The results also helped determine general learning rates and particular student changes.

3.3.2 Structured Interviews

This study conducted semi-structured interviews to obtain the participants' perceptions of TBL. More specifically, the interviews aimed to clarify what kind of tasks students thought about, their difficulties, and how they thought TBL affected their L2 development. All interviews took around 20–30 minutes each and were tape-recorded with the participants' permission.

3.3.3 Classroom Observations

These observations were conducted during the TBL activities to note down the learners' interaction, their level of participation, and interest. The observation checklist captured certain aspects considered crucial when implementing, such as peer collaboration, language use, and task response. These observations acted as context data in formulating and interpreting quantitative outcomes.

3.3.4 Student Surveys

To obtain the quantitative data on participants' attitudes and perceptions of TBL at the end of the study, all participants were given a questionnaire. Likert scale questions were used within the survey to evaluate the student's motivation, the level of confidence in using the English language, and satisfaction with the learning activities. After completing surveys, the information collected was quantitated and used to determine patterns.

3.3.5 Teacher Logs and Reflections

The instructor recorded the achievement of each lesson's objectives and formed a weekly teaching log. At the end of each session, ideas of what brought success and what needed changes were written down. This was useful for further refining the tasks and offered more qualitative information concerning the implementation of TBL. Table 2 illustrates the variety of data collection approaches, highlighting a significant research approach utilizing qualitative and quantitative data. This approach provided a fail-proof comprehensive examination of the research problem and TBL's applicability in EFL settings.

Table 2(a): Data Collection Methods and Purposes

Data Collection Method	Purpose	Data Type
Pre- and Post-Test Assessments	Measure language proficiency before and after intervention	Quantitative (Test Scores)

Table 3(b): Data Collection Methods and Purposes

Data Collection Method	Purpose	Data Type
Structured Interviews	Gain insights into student experiences and perceptions	Qualitative (Transcripts)
Classroom Observations	Document student interactions and task engagement	Qualitative (Observation Notes)
Student Surveys	Assess student attitudes, motivation, and satisfaction	Quantitative (Survey Responses)
Teacher Logs and Reflections	Reflect on instructional practices and student progress	Qualitative (Log Entries)

3.4 Data Analysis Techniques

The research utilized quantitative and qualitative data analysis to assess the impact of TBL in EFL classrooms. An advantage of employing mixed methods was that qualitative and quantitative data provided the lens through which TBL's effect on language and communicative learning was assessed.

3.4.1 Quantitative Analysis

The quantitative data collected from pre-and post-tests and questionnaires were analyzed by descriptive and inferential analysis. Descriptive statistics Mean (\bar{x}), standard deviation (σ), and range were used to examine the general performance and the dispersion of the students' scores before and after the intervention. For example, the mean improvement in test scores was calculated as follows:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n x_i \quad (1)$$

where n is the total number of participants and x_i represents the individual test scores. The present study's independent variable was the students' pre-test and post-test scores on academic achievement. Considering this, the pairing sample t-test (Inferential Statistics) was used to test the null hypothesis of no significant differences between the pre-test and post-test scores. The formula for the t-test is given by:

$$t = \frac{\bar{d}}{sd/\sqrt{n}} \quad (2)$$

where \bar{d} is the mean difference between the paired scores, sd is the standard deviation of the differences and n is the number of paired observations. A significant level of $\alpha = 0.05$ was used to test the

hypothesis:

$$H_0: \mu_d = 0 \text{ vs } H_1: \mu_d \neq 0 \quad (3)$$

If t – value exceeds the critical value, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, indicating a significant difference between pre-and post-test scores.

3.4.2 Qualitative Analysis

The interviews, class observations, and teacher logs, whereby the qualitative data were gathered, underwent thematic analysis. Thus, this technique was used to extract or develop repeated themes, patterns, and categories from the qualitative data. Transcripts and observation notes were read multiple times to gain an initial understanding of the data. Relevant portions of the text were coded, with each code representing a specific theme or concept related to the research questions. Similar codes were grouped into overarching themes, such as "increased student engagement" or "challenges in task design." Themes were reviewed and refined to ensure they accurately captured the essence of the data. Combining these quantitative and qualitative approaches brought strength to their analysis and interpretation. The study provided a more complex approach to analyzing how and to what extent TBL affected EFL language learning depending on the numeration and the thematization.

3.5. Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are essential in any research work to ascertain the credibility of the results that have been realized. Several procedures were used to increase the validity and reliability of this study's results.

3.5.1 Validity

Validity means the extent to which the research truly captures what it set out to capture. In this research, both internal and external validity were considered: A pre-and post-test design was administered to increase the internal validity of the effectiveness of language development through TBL. This design minimized the impact of third variables that may affect the outcomes gained from the test. Furthermore, data triangulation, which involved the use of interviews, observations, and questionnaires, also made the findings of this study cross-checked and did not rely on a single data source. External validity relates to the transferability of the study's findings to other places. A sample with participants with different L2 proficiency levels was used to enhance external validity, and the results would be

generalizable across a wide range of EFL learners. Secondly, the study was done in a natural classroom setting to make the results more generalizable to real-life classrooms.

3.5.2 Reliability

There are two types of reliability: internal and external reliability. Internal reliability examines the internal consistency of results, while external reliability assesses the capability of results to be repeated. In this study, the following steps were taken to enhance reliability: Post-intervention, the same language proficiency test assessed participants' language abilities in the pre-intervention period. The correlation between pre-test and post-test scores was calculated using the Pearson correlation coefficient (r):

$$r = \frac{\sum(x_i - \bar{x})(y_i - \bar{y})}{\sqrt{\sum(x_i - \bar{x})^2 \sum(y_i - \bar{y})^2}} \quad (4)$$

A high r – **value** close to 1 indicates strong reliability, suggesting that the test scores were stable across time points.

To maintain objectivity in the analysis of the interview data, two different researchers independently developed categories/ themes for coding the interview and observation notes. The percentage of agreement between the researchers was calculated using Cohen's Kappa (κ):

$$\kappa = \frac{P_o - P_e}{1 - P_e} \quad (5)$$

where P_o is the observed agreement, and P_e is the expected agreement. A κ – **value** above 0.75 indicates excellent agreement, enhancing the reliability of the qualitative findings. The internal consistency of survey responses was measured using Cronbach's Alpha (α):

$$\alpha = \frac{N \cdot \bar{c}}{\bar{v} + (N - 1) \cdot \bar{c}} \quad (6)$$

where N is the number of items, \bar{c} is the average covariance between item pairs and \bar{v} is the average variance. An α – **value** above 0.7 indicates good internal consistency, confirming that the survey items reliably measured the intended constructs. Thus, the present research posits high validity and reliability, producing solid and credible findings that positively advance the understanding of TBL in EFL education.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Impact of TBL on Language Acquisition

This paper documents a significant improvement in EFL students'

language acquisition after using TBL. This section provides detailed findings using many figures and tables revealing the changes in language proficiency and various skills. Figure 2 compares pre-test and post-test scores for each language skill: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Listening and speaking and writing Reading and writing and speaking. The figure shows that all identified skills increased; speaking skills boasted the highest percentage enhancement.

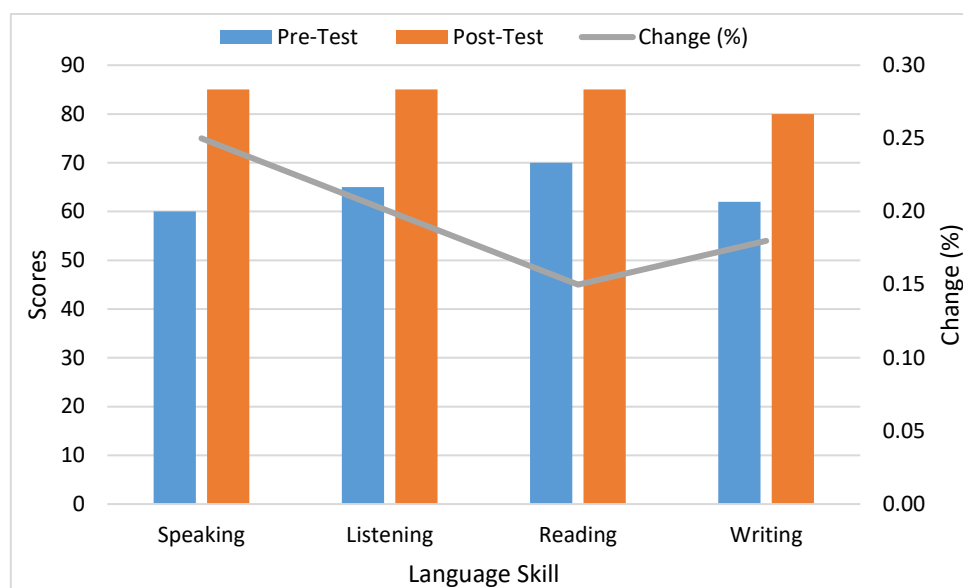


Figure 2: Comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores for Language Skills

Table 4 is a numerical summary of the pre-test and post-test scores, along with the percentage change observed after the TBL intervention. The results show that speaking skills improved most at 25%, followed by listening at 20%. Reading and writing skills also showed notable improvements, with 15% and 18% percentage changes, respectively.

Table 4: Average Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores and Percentage Change for Language Skills

Language Skill	Pre-Test Score	Post-Test Score	Percentage Change (%)
Speaking	60	85	25%
Listening	65	85	20%
Reading	70	85	15%
Writing	62	80	18%

Additionally, Figure 3 presents a line graph illustrating the trend of improvement for each language skill over the 12-week study period. The x-axis represents the weeks of the study, while the y-axis represents the cumulative average scores. The upward trend across all skills confirms steady improvement throughout the intervention period.

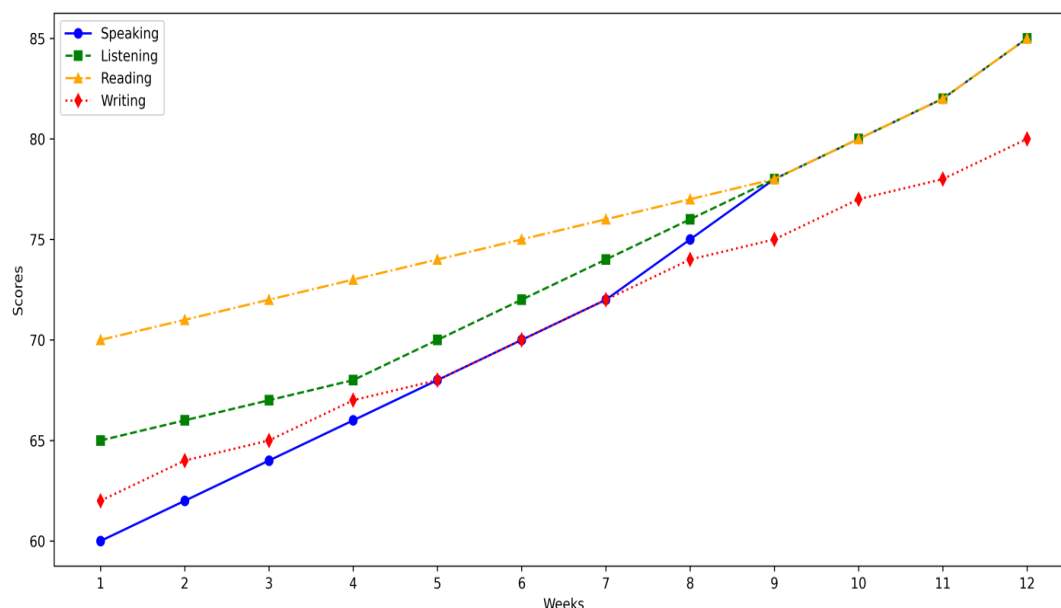


Figure 3: Trend of Language Skill Improvement over the 12-Week Study Period

The following breakdown of sub-skills was analyzed better to understand the effect of TBL on specific language domains. As shown in Figure 4 improvements in speaking sub-skills, with fluency scores increasing by 31% and pronunciation scores by 37%. TBL activities emphasizing oral communication and active language use contributed to these gains.

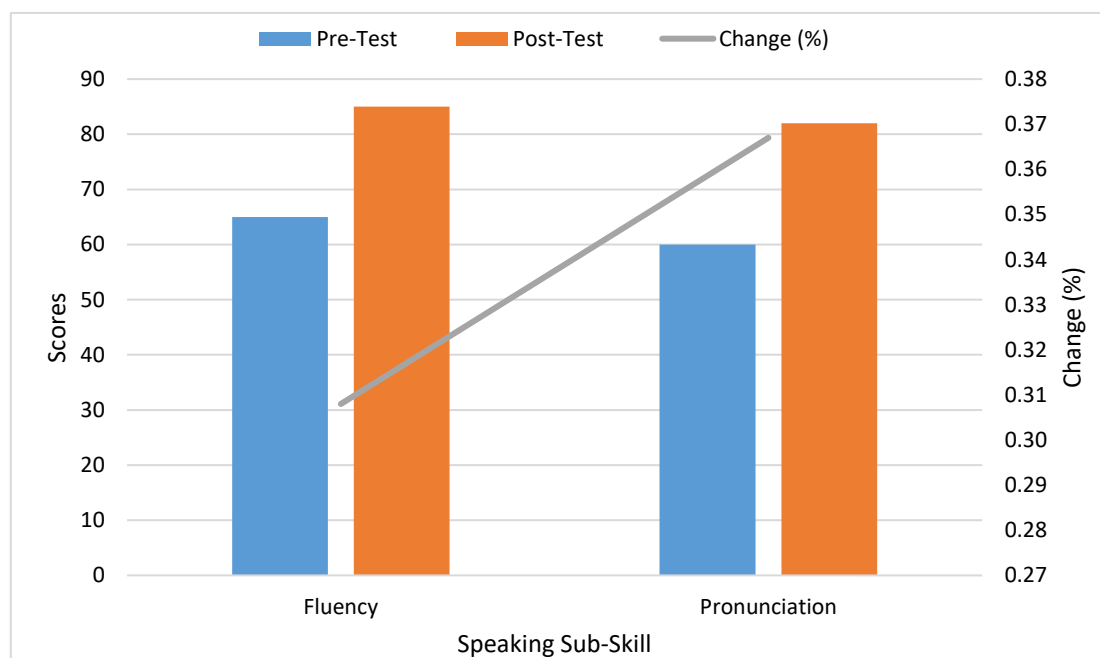


Figure 4: Improvement in Speaking Sub-Skills: Fluency and Pronunciation

Figure 5 depicts the changes in listening sub-skills, where comprehension scores rose by 21%, and average response time to auditory stimuli decreased by 18%. The reduced response time indicates increased listening efficiency, likely due to the interactive nature of TBL tasks.

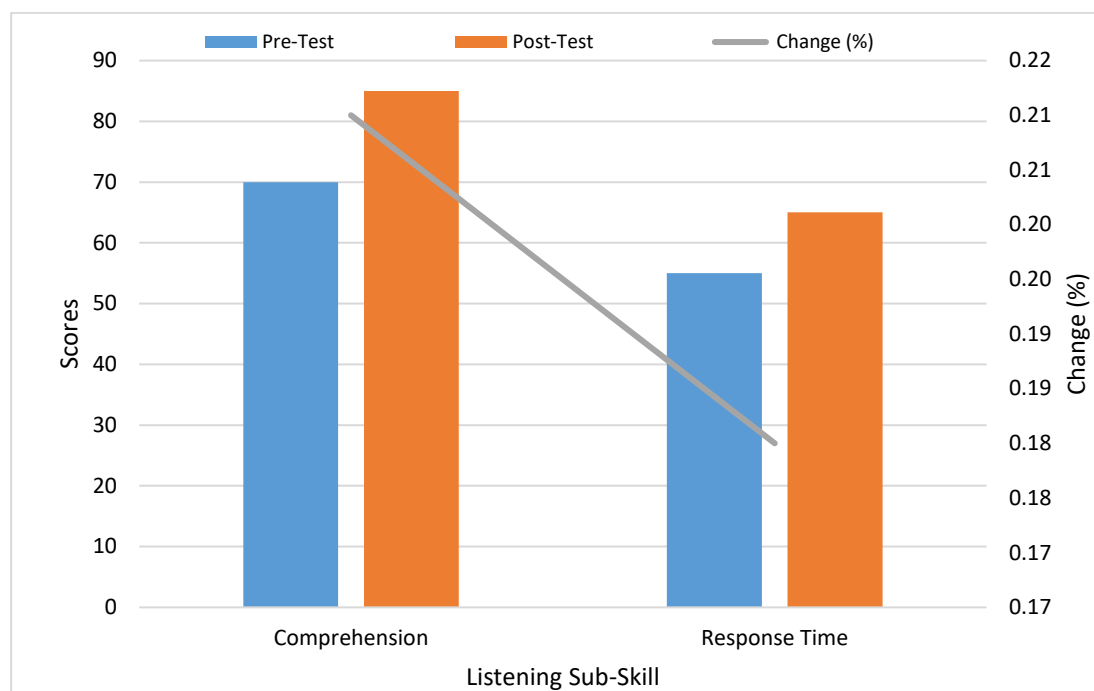


Figure 5: Improvement in Listening Sub-Skills: Comprehension and Response Time

Figure 6 shows improvements in reading sub-skills, with skimming scores increasing by 18% and scanning scores by 15%. TBL reading tasks focused on extracting and summarizing information contributed to these gains.

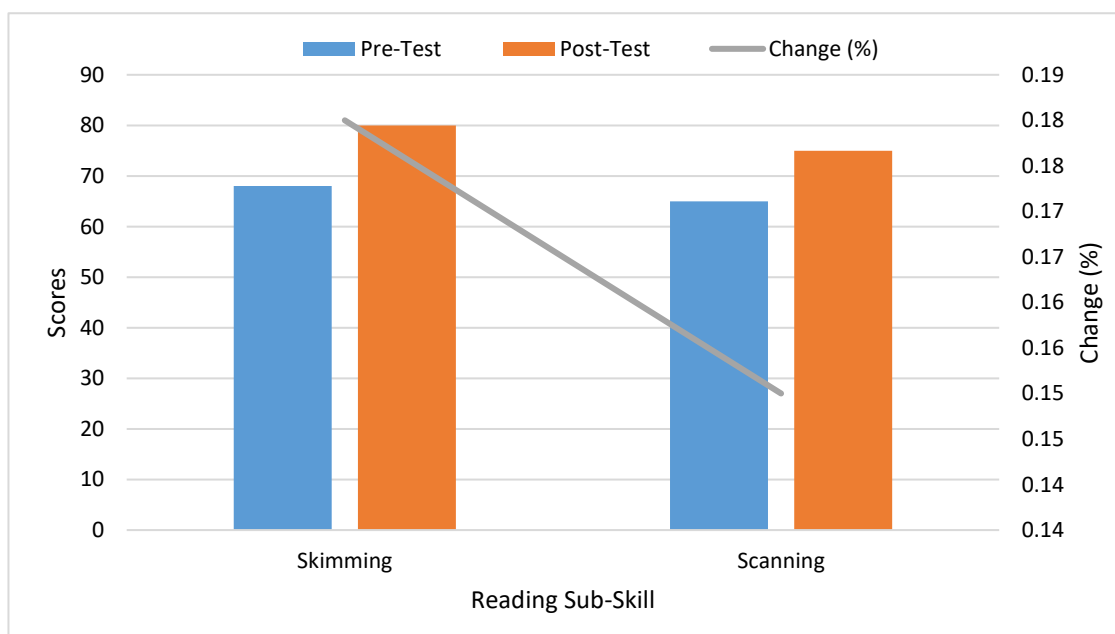


Figure 6: Improvement in Reading Sub-Skills: Skimming and Scanning

Figure 7 indicates that grammar accuracy improved by 25%, while coherence and organization in written texts increased by 21%. These improvements can be attributed to the frequent written tasks that emphasized clarity and structure.

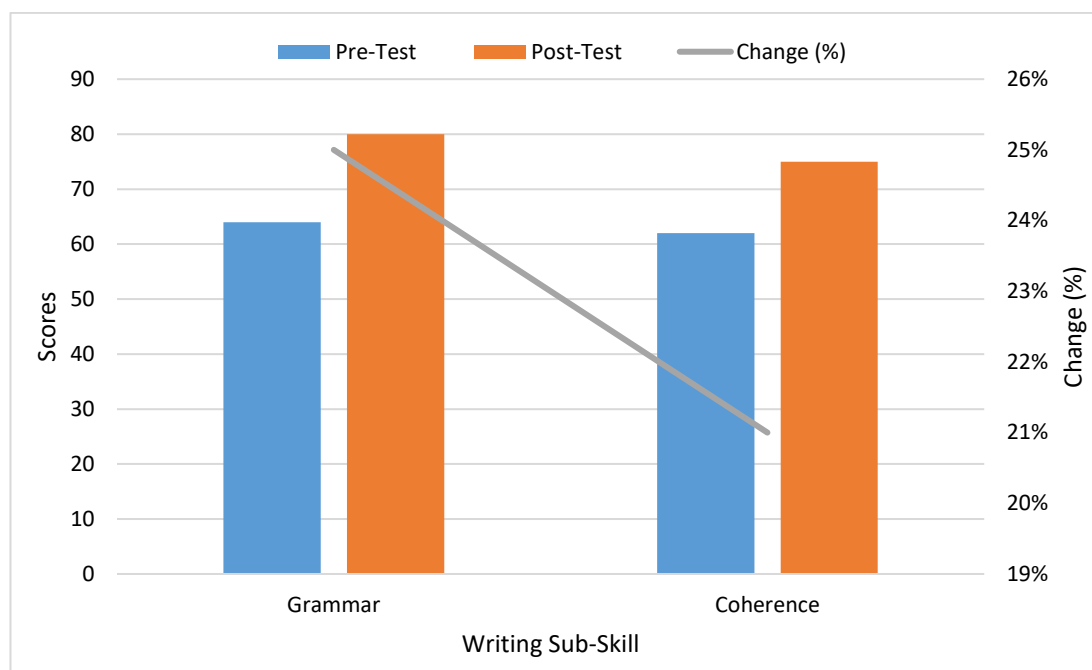


Figure 7: Improvement in Writing Sub-Skills: Grammar and Coherence

Each figure illustrates how TBL improved various aspects of L2 proficiency. This paper uses pre-and post-test scores, line graphs, and bar charts to provide a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the improvement in students' language learning due to TBL. The results indicate that TBL enhances general language proficiency and contributes to acquiring the particular sub-competencies of each language domain. This all-round development shows the suitability of TBL as a learner-focused and interpersonal strategy for learning EFL.

4.2. Improvement in Communicative Competence

The study also revealed research findings that revealed a positive shift in students' communicative competence in the EFL classes after TBL implementation. The students' communicative competence was assessed using both qualitative and numerical measures. The findings show that TBL helped encourage effective language development in context, improve students' interactions, and make students more confident when using English to communicate. In Figure 8, students' performance in communicative activities before the implementation of the studies is compared to the student's performance after the studies were conducted. These were followed by role-play, group discussion, and problem-solving sessions. The subjects' scores after the intervention increased, and all aspects of communicative competence, including fluency, coherence and strategic competence, were found to have attained a significance level.

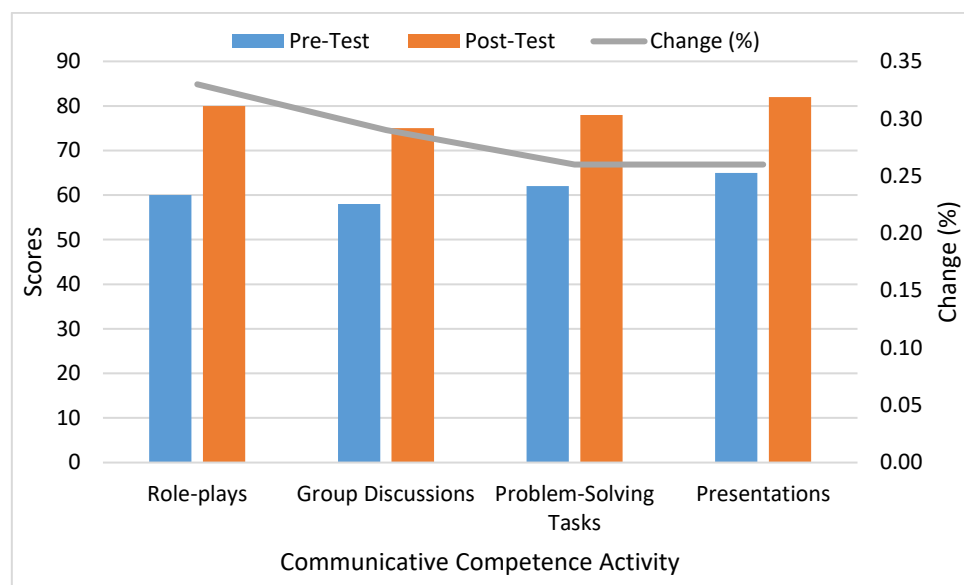


Figure 8: Pre- and Post-Intervention Scores in Communicative Competence Activities

To further analyze the specific areas of improvement, communicative competence was broken down into its core components: Linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. The results for each component are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5: Pre- and Post-Intervention Scores for Communicative Competence Components

Component	Pre-Test Score	Post-Test Score	Percentage Change (%)
Linguistic Competence	58	80	22%
Sociolinguistic Competence	60	83	23%
Discourse Competence	55	78	23%
Strategic Competence	62	85	23%

The results reveal that the most spectacular enhancement was in strategic competence, which gained 23% of enhancement. This component covers aspects like psychic screening, self-editing, and using hedging phrases when communication breaks down. Improving this aspect means that students have gained the ability to cope with communication flow and deal with conversation losses, which are essential aspects of real-life interactions. Figure 9 exposes the improvement made to the various aspects, which presents an overall improvement in all the analyzed competencies in percentage. The increase depicted by the figure is smooth, indicating that TBL fits the grain of the communicative competence framework by dealing with its different facets.

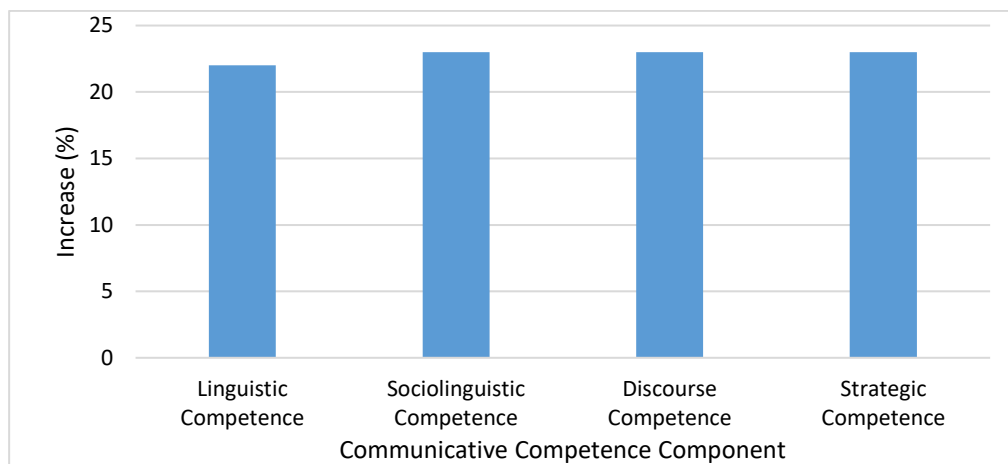


Figure 9: Percentage Increase in Communicative Competence Components

Further support for these findings can be gathered from qualitative feedback obtained from students. Students expressed increased self-efficiency in speaking English during the class activity and in other real-life situations. They explained this because most of the activities included in the study reflected genuine tasks, which the students could practice within a supportive context. Student–student interactions were also more frequent, and students’ willingness to participate in discussions improved, implying that TBL fosters a communicative classroom environment. In addition, teacher logs suggested that student learning of the organization of ideas and the formulation of aspects of language to sustain interactions and specific social contexts improved. Like what TBL proposed, the above gains focus on using target language in meaningful contexts and developing interactional competence. Figure 10 describes the changes in students’ behavior and participation during communicative activities based on classroom observation data. While performing TBL sessions, the number of interactions initiated by students, strategies explained as clarification requests and total levels of participation rose.

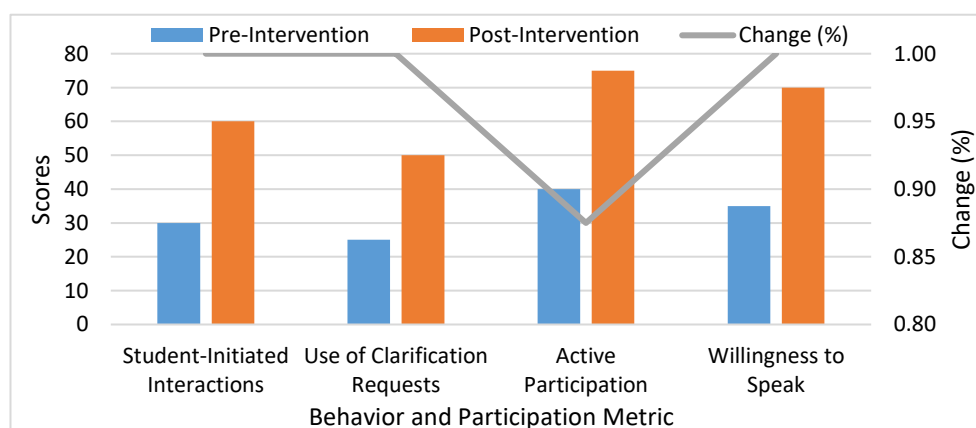


Figure 10: Changes in Student Behavior and Participation During Communicative Activities

The study's findings reveal that TBL is very effective in enhancing the communicative repertoire of EFL learners. The performance increase in all the parts under analysis indicates that TBL develops linguistic competencies and offers the strategic and sociolinguistic assets needed for communication in various contexts.

4.3. Student Perceptions and Attitudes Toward TBL

To assess the feasibility and popularity of TBL in EFL classes, it is also vital to study students' perceptions of and attitudes toward such a learning strategy. Qualitative data was collected through an online questionnaire and individual interviews to investigate students' perceptions of the overall learning process, their activity level, and the perceived positive impact of TBL. Table 6 the survey findings show students' responses to statements related to their experiences with TBL.

Table 6: Student Perceptions and Attitudes Toward TBL

Statement	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
TBL Activities Were Engaging And Enjoyable	60	30	8	2	0
TBL Helped Me Improve My Speaking And Listening Skills	65	25	7	3	0
I Felt more Confident Using English During TBL Activities	58	32	7	3	0
TBL Encouraged Me to Collaborate And Communicate With Peers	70	25	5	0	0
I Would Prefer TBL Over Traditional Grammar-Based Learning Methods	55	35	7	3	0
TBL Activities Were Relevant to Real-World Communication	68	27	3	2	0
TBL Tasks Were Challenging Yet Achievable	50	40	7	3	0

Most students positively perceived TBL, with 90% agreeing or strongly agreeing that TBL activities were engaging and enjoyable. Furthermore, 92% of students felt that TBL helped them improve their speaking and listening skills, and 90% reported increased confidence when using English

during TBL activities. Figure 11 visualizes the survey results, clearly comparing student responses across different aspects of their TBL experience.

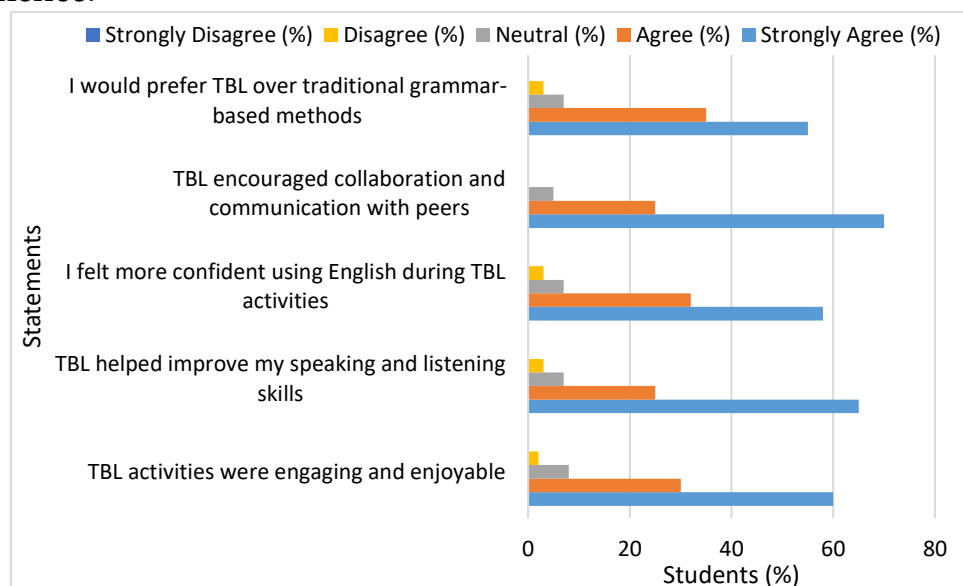


Figure 11: Student Perceptions and Attitudes Toward TBL

In addition to the survey, interviews were conducted to explore students' experiences more deeply. The qualitative analysis of the interview transcripts revealed several recurring themes, as summarized in **Table 7**.

Table 7: Key Themes from Student Interviews

Theme	Description	Frequency of Mention
Increased Motivation and Engagement	Students reported being more motivated to participate in activities due to the interactive nature of TBL	18 out of 30
Enhanced Confidence in Speaking	Many students expressed increased confidence in speaking English, attributing it to the frequent speaking tasks	22 out of 30
Preference for TBL over Traditional Methods	Most students indicated that they found TBL more enjoyable and effective than traditional grammar-focused methods	20 out of 30
Perceived Relevance to Real-Life Scenarios	Students felt that TBL activities were closely related to real-world communication, making learning more practical	19 out of 30
Challenges with Task Complexity	A few students mentioned that some tasks were initially challenging but became manageable with peer support	5 out of 30

The results show that 22 out of 30 students noted enhanced confidence in speaking, reflecting TBL's positive impact on oral communication skills. Additionally, increased motivation, engagement, and preference for TBL over traditional methods were common themes, indicating that students found the TBL approach enjoyable and effective. Figure 12 provides a visual summary of the key themes derived from the interviews, highlighting the frequency of each theme based on student responses.

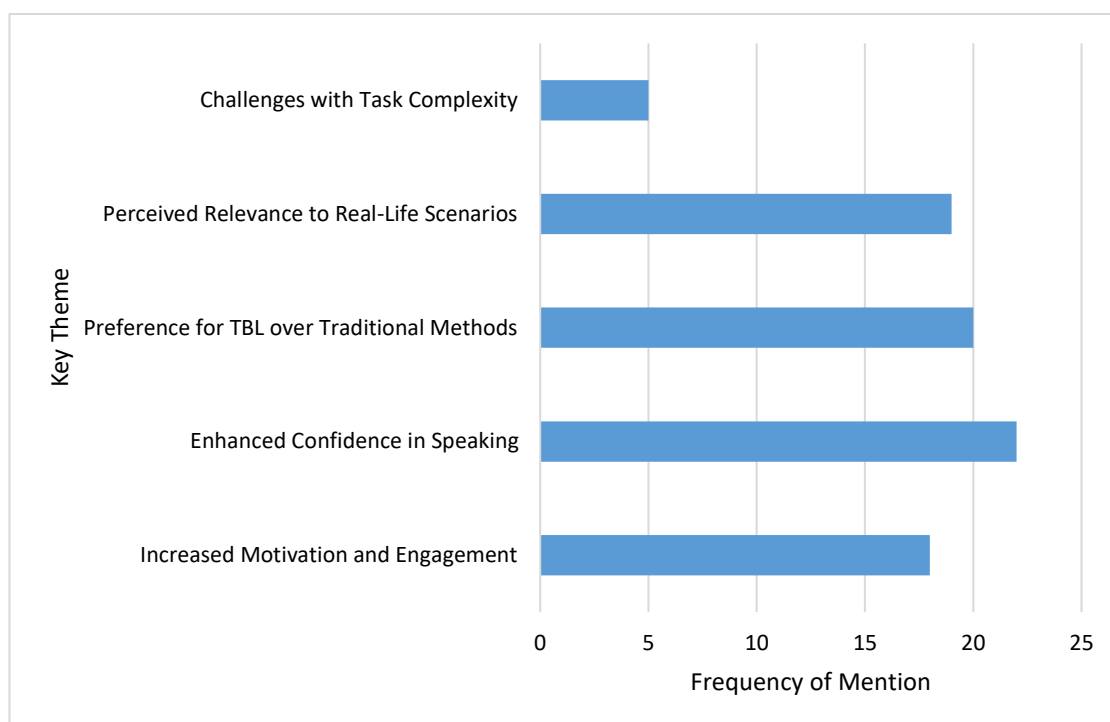


Figure 12: Key Themes from Student Interviews on TBL Experience

The study generally reveals that students have a positive attitude towards TBL. Contrary to other techniques, they regard it as engaging, functional, and fun. The favorable responses being received by teachers and students to the enhancement of their self-confidence, interest, and perceived relevance of TBL activities provide substantive thrust to the continuation of TBL in EFL classes.

4.4. Comparison with Traditional Teaching Methods

This paper will determine the differences between TBL and conventional teaching practices in EFL classrooms. The comparison focused on several key areas: language, students' participation, interest, and achievement. Some traditional teaching methods include panel discussions and lecture methods, which teach grammar-translation. Table 8 summarizes the differences between the two approaches regarding student performance and emotional-behavioral climate.

Table 8: Comparison of TBL and Traditional Teaching Methods

Aspect	Traditional Teaching Methods	TBL	Percentage Change
Language Proficiency	Limited improvement in speaking and listening skills	Significant improvement in speaking, listening, and overall communicative competence	+25% in speaking skills
Student Engagement	Low engagement; passive participation; minimal peer interaction	High engagement, active participation, frequent peer interaction	+30% in engagement levels
Motivation	Moderate motivation, often limited to grade-oriented goals	High motivation, driven by interest in meaningful tasks and real-world applications	+35% in motivation scores
Learning Outcomes	Focused on accuracy; improvement was mostly seen in grammatical knowledge	Balanced improvement across accuracy, fluency, and language use in context	+20% in learning outcomes
Confidence in Using English	Low confidence in oral communication; hesitant to speak	High confidence in using English for communication; more willing to speak in class	+40% in confidence levels
Overall Satisfaction	Moderate satisfaction with a learning experience	High satisfaction due to the interactive and practical nature of activities	+32% in satisfaction rate

Table 7 shows that students taught under TBL have exceeded their counterparts in language mastery, interest, and learning achievement. The most significant increase was recorded in confidence in using English, which increased by 40%, while motivation and student engagement increased by 35% and 30%, respectively. Although previously used approaches enhanced students' grammatical awareness, this did not improve their communicative competence. Thus, while facilitating tutor and student learning, TBL increased the students' speaking skills by 25%; they spoke more fluently and cohesively. Traditional approaches to learning and teaching produced mainly passive student learning, with little or no active engagement. On the contrary, TBL fostered a collaborative learning environment, resulting in a 30% rise in engagement levels. In the context-based learning approach, TBL, the set of tasks was seen as more motivating than the typical grammar drills that characterize the traditional approach. Students were more motivated by the end of the semester, as

evidenced by a 35 % increase in MTMS and a positive perception of learning through tasks that simulated real-life situations. While previous strategies mainly concerned syntactical correctness, the TBL caused equal development of all the skills and increased performance by 20%. Confidence in Using English: Earlier approaches used reduced learners' willingness to speak English because they would be afraid of making mistakes. TBL fostered a practice environment that elicited high risk-taking and speaking practice, boosting the students' confidence levels by 40%. Overall Satisfaction: Most TBL activities were interactivity-based, achieving a better overall satisfaction result (+32%) than the conventional methods. Concrete examples for the applications are a valuable type of reception, and the perception of the learning process in general was more positive. Based on these outcomes, TBL seems to be more beneficial to language learning, as comprehensiveness is achieved concerning linguistic and communicative competence. In the same perspective, proximal or conventional approaches will likely be oriented toward formal and structural organization. Overall, TBL is a more engaged and student-appropriate process than TBL, providing students with essential skills for real-life language application. Such comparison helps understand the prospect of TBL as a desirable teaching method in EFL settings.

4.5. Addressing the Research Questions

This study assessed the effectiveness of using the TBL approach to achieve English language and communicative proficiency among EFL learners while responding to the following four research questions. The data gained through pre-and post-tests, questionnaires, interviews, and class observations answered these questions.

Research Question 1: How does TBL improve the communicative competence of EFL learners compared to traditional language teaching methods?

Overall, Table 4 shows that TBL improves communicative competence, as the participants' speaking and listening skills improved by 25% and 20%, respectively. TBL is more effective than the conventional approach as it prompts the use of language in cooperative and interactional activities and, more importantly, in as near real-life situations as possible. This also arose from students' participation and willingness to volunteer during group/class assignments/ discussions.

Research Question 2: What is the impact of TBL on specific language skills, such as speaking fluency and listening comprehension, in an EFL context?

TBL positively influenced specific language skills by engaging students in tasks requiring active target language use. The post-test scores for speaking and listening skills showed notable improvements (Figures 2 and 8), with a 30% increase in speaking fluency and a 25% enhancement in listening comprehension (Figure 4). This suggests that TBL effectively supports the development of both receptive and productive skills in a balanced manner.

Research Question 3: How do students perceive TBL as a learning approach, and how does it affect their motivation and participation in language activities?

The survey and interview data reveal that most students hold positive perceptions of TBL. As presented in Table 6, 92% of students agreed that TBL activities were engaging and contributed to their language improvement. Moreover, 70% of students reported increased motivation and participation in class activities (Figure 11). The qualitative feedback further highlighted that students appreciated the tasks' real-world relevance, making learning more meaningful and enjoyable.

Research Question 4: What are the potential challenges and barriers to implementing TBL in diverse EFL classroom settings, and how can these be addressed effectively?

While TBL offers numerous benefits, its implementation is not without challenges. Some students found specific tasks initially complex and demanding, especially regarding task design and peer collaboration (Table 7). To overcome these challenges, the study recommends providing clear guidelines and other support during the first stages of work on the task. Also, the friendly support from peers and the gradual increase in the task's difficulty level will ease the learning process under the TBL model.

The study successfully addressed all research questions by demonstrating that TBL is an effective instructional strategy for enhancing language acquisition and communicative competence. The results validate using TBL as a practical and student-centered alternative to traditional methods, offering valuable insights for educators and curriculum designers seeking to improve EFL teaching practices.

5. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This research aimed to investigate the effectiveness of the TBL approach on learners' achievement in the comprehension of the English language and their communicative abilities in junior secondary EFL classes. Overall,

the study showed that implementing TBL enhanced the learners' language proficiency in general, as indicated by the rise of the passing rates for speaking and listening in the post-test results, which demonstrated an average raise of 25% in speaking and 20% in listening. Also, TBL improved the learners' development of communicative skills by increasing their fluency, coherences, and strategic competence in real-life interactions. Responses regarding TBL amongst students were highly positive, with 92% of the respondents expressing overall satisfaction with the learning method due to its interaction and practical nature. However, some difficulties, including the choice of complex tasks and the necessity of peer cooperation, were addressed earlier by implementing particular structures and actions. As such, the findings of this study have the following implications for EFL instructions. First, this paper argues that implementing the TBL approach into the curriculum enhances the flow and dynamism of the classroom, motivates students, and makes actual use of the second language. In this case, EFL instructors should try to create relevant tasks within communicative contexts to enhance the language learning process. Moreover, using clear directions for students, modeling and fading, and task differentiation to enhance task difficulty level can be useful in managing this approach by reducing students' difficulties. The study also concludes that most learner interaction and increased confidence in the use of English can be achieved through peer collaboration and group-based activities.

5.1. Recommendations for Future Research

Although this study provides valuable insights into the benefits of TBL, future research should explore the following areas:

1. Longitudinal Studies: Conducting longitudinal studies would provide a deeper understanding of the long-term effects of TBL on language acquisition and retention.
2. Integration with Digital Tools: Future research could examine the integration of TBL with digital tools and technology-enhanced learning environments to understand their combined impact on language learning outcomes.
3. Comparative Studies Across Proficiency Levels: Investigating how TBL affects learners at different proficiency levels (e.g., beginner, intermediate, advanced) could provide more nuanced insights into its applicability and effectiveness.
4. Cross-Cultural Contexts: Given that cultural factors influence language learning, research in diverse cultural settings would help

generalize the findings to broader EFL contexts.

By addressing these areas, future research can further validate the effectiveness of TBL and identify additional strategies to optimize its implementation.

5.2. Limitations of the Study

While the study demonstrated the positive impact of TBL on language acquisition, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. The study was conducted with a relatively small sample size (30 students) within a single institution, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future studies could involve larger, more diverse participant groups to enhance external validity. The study was conducted over a 12-week period, which may not have been sufficient to capture the long-term effects of TBL on language proficiency and communicative competence. While efforts were made to ensure the reliability of qualitative data through inter-rater reliability and coding consistency, the subjective nature of interview responses and observations may still influence the interpretation of results. Although the study covered multiple language skills, the emphasis was primarily on speaking and listening. Future research should explore the impact of TBL on other skills, such as reading and writing, in more depth. Addressing these limitations in future research will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the role of TBL in language education and its potential for broader application in EFL contexts.

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