TBLT Strategies on Students' Speaking Achievement: An Experimental Study

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ABSTRACT

This study looked at how seventh-grade students' speaking abilities were affected by task-based language teaching methods. The Merdeka curriculum gave teachers and students the freedom to encourage creativity, and task-based learning encouraged engagement and hands-on learning. The researcher separated the 58 students into two groups using a cluster random selection method in a quantitative framework and a true experimental design: VII-H, which had 29 students, was the experimental group; VII-I, which also had 29 students, was the control group. The primary data collection method was an oral examination, and the findings of the pre-tests and post-tests were analysed using SPSS version 19. The null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected since the results' significance value (0.000) was less than the 0.05 threshold, whereas the alternative hypothesis (H_1) was accepted. These results showed that students' communication skills in descriptive texts were enhanced by task-based learning strategies.

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INTRODUCTION

Communication is one of the basic abilities needed for language development, and the Merdeka curriculum gives teachers and students more latitude to do so. The curriculum emphasises Pancasila ideals and places a high priority on developing students' character and skills (Rahma and Rahayu, 2024). Susanti et al. (2024) declare that the learners themselves should be at the centre of education and that the curriculum should prioritise the needs, opinions, experiences, and interests of students in order to achieve learning results. In this setting, students were urged to talk more freely and imaginatively. Language learners can evaluate how well they are learning a language by looking at how much their spoken language skills have improved (Leong et al., 2017). The need of critical thinking, which helps individuals to become active and effective life-long learners, achieve understanding, evaluate different perspectives, improve problem-solving ability (Pardede, 2020), good communication, and active involvement in discussions were all heavily emphasised in this curriculum. Consequently, the Merdeka curriculum provided students with the chance to practice speaking via activities that were relevant to the actual world. This made them more able to deal with future challenges. Students' speech also demonstrated their ability to communicate and express ideas, as well as their grasp of language elements including grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. It also showed the students' freedom of creative thinking.

The seventh-grade students at SMPN 34 Surabaya were still experiencing communication difficulties, according to the researcher. Many students struggled to improve their speaking abilities in a number of ways (Kusuma and Rahayu, 2024). These components include confidence, fluency, and eloquence. Sukmana et al. (2023) asserted that the ability to use a range of words and effectively convey meaning while speaking a language smoothly and with few uncomfortable pauses is a sign of fluency. The investigation found that the average score in this case was 66, the highest possible score. Many students fell short of the KKM (*Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal*) criteria of 75 with scores below 66. The problem with the seventh-grade students was that they were confused and had difficulty appropriately pronouncing English words. For example, they pronounced "chubi" instead of "chubby" /ˈtʃʌb.i/. Their lack of exposure to direct English practice led to this. Alternatively, their anxiety of speaking a foreign language caused them to lack confidence. Students are afraid of making a mistake because they think speaking English is difficult (Hotmaria, 2021). Students' degree of self-confidence had a major influence on their ability to speak in front of an audience or in groups without feeling nervous or terrified. Students who lacked sufficient speaking skills usually struggled to express their ideas and opinions. Their overall academic performance may deteriorate because of their decreased desire to study.

The manner of instruction was one element that influenced the way students spoke. The instructor may plan learning needs based on students' skills and available time to manage resources and schedule learning activities, hence improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the learning process. The steps students take to get the most out of their education are known as learning methods (Salam et al., 2020). Junior high school is an important period in a child's educational journey since it is at this time that they acquire critical language and cognitive abilities (Nurjati & Rahayu, 2023). At a junior high school in Surabaya, the teacher employed monotonous and uninteresting study methods that typically

did not engage the students or promote active engagement. One-way teaching approaches, in which the instructor explains most of the content while the students only listen, make students submissive and less likely to speak up, which restricts their opportunities for personal development. An informed and creative teacher is one of the key components of effective teaching, as they are the individuals who animate the classroom and motivate students to engage in discussion (Octavia et al., 2023). Additionally, having the freedom to use a range of strategies helps students take charge of their education, which improves academic satisfaction and outcomes (Obergriesser & Stoeger, 2020) in (Jiang, 2023).

Task-based language teaching, known as TBLT, is one approach to address the challenges mentioned earlier. Of the various methods available to improve language learning in the classroom, TBLT offers chances to engage in practical and purposeful activities that encourage the use of communicative language (Sumarsono et al., 2020). Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), which makes use of relevant and genuine tasks, is the primary method for motivating students to speak English. The first phase in task-based language learning is task selection, when teachers choose tasks that are engaging and relevant to the students. These assignments should be based on real-world scenarios that require the use of language. In agreement with Azmy and Nanda (2024) TBLT fosters creativity in students by providing them with timely feedback on their work and exposing them to natural language acquisition in the classroom. They also underlined that one of the many advantages of TBLT for English language learners is that it involves students in spoken classroom activities.

The teacher provided the students with the required background information and an outline of the task and subject in the second phase. The way a teacher views classroom instruction has a big impact on students' foreign language acquisition (Sumarsono et al., 2020). The third step was called the task stage, during which the teacher watched while the pupils focused on speaking and interacting naturally. This is achieved by assigning assignments or learning exercises that enable students to practice language use in relevant circumstances (Panduwangi, 2021). During the post-task phase, students also thought about and assessed their performance. The final stage of TBLT was evaluation, which placed more emphasis on students' ability to utilise language in real-world situations than on grammatical accuracy. The combined evaluation of teachers and students revealed that the learning process had an effect on speaking abilities. According to a study by Aflah (2021) students won't be afraid to make mistakes when doing the job, which can help them become more proficient speakers. According to the results of the evaluation, pupils were given the freedom to freely express their ideas and grow as individuals.

Research has been done on how TBLT affects speaking abilities. According to a prior study by Sabil (2020), many students have shown a great desire to become fluent in English, particularly in the area of oral communication, in relation to the use of task-based language training to enhance students' speaking abilities. Furthermore, according to Sabil (2020), students expressed a strong desire to learn English effectively through task-based language instruction (TBLT). Lume and Hisbullah (2022) a previous study examined the efficacy of task-based language teaching (TBLT) in enhancing speaking skills. The results show that task-based language instruction works well for raising pupils' speaking ability. It boosts their interest and zeal for studying in addition to helping them do better on speaking assessments.

Sabaruddin and Melati (2022) carried out an earlier study that employed TBLT to help Indonesian secondary high school students become more proficient English speakers. According to their research, TBLT is an effective language teaching strategy, particularly for enhancing speaking abilities.

The gap was that most earlier studies concentrated on instructional techniques linked to content delivery and classroom management. This study demonstrated that this strategy has not been properly used by actively involving students in the learning process. Students therefore have a fantastic opportunity to continuously practice speaking and get better at it. The study question was formulated as follows: Is there a significant difference of using task-based language teaching strategies on student's speaking achievement?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Numerous research has investigated how students' speaking abilities are affected by task-based language instruction. The outcomes demonstrate how well this method works to enhance students' speaking abilities. The research on "The Effectiveness of Task-Based Language Teaching to Teach Speaking Skills" has been done by Lume and Hisbullah (2022). In the academic year 2020–2021, the study sought to determine how well task-based language teaching (TBLT) improved the speaking abilities of eleventh-grade students at SMK NW Darul Abror Kuta in Central Lombok. Lume and Hisbullah (2022) noted that task-based language teaching is a successful strategy for raising students' speaking proficiency. It not only enhances their performance in speaking assessments but also increases their motivation and engagement in the learning process. The important variations in test comparison of the experimental and control groups' scores provide strong evidence supporting the adoption of TBLT in language education.

Furthermore, research conducted by Sabaruddin and Melati (2022) also supports these findings. Research with topic "Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) to Increase English Speaking Skill of Indonesian Secondary High School Students," evaluate the benefits and challenges using task-based language teaching (TBLT) in raising secondary school students' proficiency in speaking English. Sabaruddin and Melati (2022) confirms that TBLT is a valuable approach in language education, particularly in enhancing speaking skills. Its emphasis on practical tasks helps learners develop fluency, accuracy, and confidence, making it a recommended method for teaching spoken English effectively.

In general, these two studies show that task-based language teacher has a major beneficial influence on the speaking skills students. Research conducted by Lume and Hisbullah (2022) and Sabaruddin and Melati (2022) shows similar findings in terms of task-based language instruction's efficacy. TBLT significantly enhances English speaking skills by improving fluency, accuracy, and confidence among learners. This strategy not only helps students in evolving their speaking skills, but also increase their motivation and participation in the learning process.

In the context of language instruction, task-based language teaching or TBLT, has been extensively studied and implemented. However, research studying the direct effects of TBLT on speaking ability at the junior high school level is still very limited. Students participated in the learning process in this study. Throughout this study, descriptive text is used as TBLT, and speaking assessments are used to score it.

How to Apply Task-Based Language Teaching
Language learning steps consist of task-based language teaching. Three phases comprised the core of TBLT: pre-task, task cycle, and post-task. According to Li (2023) the following are the steps of TBLT instruction: (1) The instructor provided the assignment, the information needed to finish it, the task's requirements, and the procedures for carrying them out; (2) Task cycle: One individual completed a variety of tasks in groups of two, and the group reported to the class when the tasks were finished; (3) Post-task: Consisted of two components: practice (students worked on language challenges with teacher assistance) and analysis (students examined and assessed how other groups completed tasks).

Teaching speaking with Task-Based Language Teaching
As a primary means of encouraging students to communicate in English, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) used relevant and authentic tasks to teach speaking. Selecting tasks was the first step in task-based language teaching. In learning, teachers should choose tasks that are relevant and interesting to students. These tasks should reflect real-life situations that require the authentic use of language. In agreement with Azmy and Nanda (2024) Due to the fact TBLT gives students immediate feedback on their work, it exposes them to natural language learning in the classroom and encourages them to be more creative. They emphasized that TBLT offers several advantages for improving English language proficiency, including encouraging students to participate in speaking exercises in the classroom.

Then, in the second stage is to introduce the topic and task to students, as well as provide the context needed. The third stage is the task stage, where students perform the main task by focusing on their own natural communication and language use, with the teacher playing a monitoring role. Learning activities or assignments that were intended to motivate students to practice the functional use of language in a relevant context were used to accomplish this (Panduwangi, 2021). Furthermore, in the post-task stage, students reflect and evaluate their skill in finishing the assignment.

In the last stage, evaluation is needed in TBLT which focuses on students' ability to use language in real contexts, not just on grammatical accuracy. With the evaluation of teachers and students together, they can find out that the learning that has occurred impairs speaking skills. Based on study handled by Aflah (2021) as a result, students won't be scared to make mistakes when completing the work, which can help them become more proficient speakers. Students were able to freely express their opinions and improve their skills based on the evaluation results.

RESEARCH METHODS
This study had a true experimental design and employed a quantitative research methodology. Through a controlled and measurable intervention, the goal was to assess how task-based language teaching (TBLT) strategies affected students' speaking abilities. Numerical data from the pre-test and post-test administered to the experimental and control groups were gathered, examined, and interpreted using quantitative methods.

Research Design

The study had employed a proper experimental design, including a control group before and after the test. A pre-test and a post-test were given to ascertain the findings' statistical significance. According to Sugiyono (2019) in Adinda and Rahayu (2023), The study's methodology was:

Table 1. Quantitative Research Design

Group	Pre-Test	Treatment	Post-Test
Experimental	O_1	X	O_2
Control	O_3		O_4

The experimental and control groups' pre-test results were denoted by O_1 and O_3 in this design. X indicated that only the experimental group received the TBLT approach treatment. Post-test results were represented by O_2 and O_4. First, tests were administered to both groups to assess their initial speaking proficiency. Traditional direct instruction was given to the control group, while TBLT was used to instruct the experimental group. After the initial knowledge test, both groups took the same post-test to find out and evaluate the progress.

Population and Sample

Seventh-grade students at SMPN 34 Surabaya made up the study's population. Using the cluster random sampling technique, 58 students represented the samples. Class VII-H (29 students) was chosen as the experimental group, and class VII-I (29 students) was chosen as the control group. The researcher chooses at lottery which class is the experimental group and which is the control group.

Data Collection Methods and Instruments

Before the treatment intervention started, to determine the students' beginning knowledge levels, a pre-test was given to both groups (identified as O_1 for the experimental group and O_3 for the control group). This study used a speaking test to assess students' fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. Students were asked to speak in front of the class by describing people. Then, a speaking aspect assessment rubric was used to assess their performance. Expert validity was used to ensure the validity of the data, with two speaking lecturers assessing the content validity of the test by evaluating whether the content of the test was in accordance with the learning objectives and the level of the students. The reliability of the test is guaranteed by two raters (inter-rater reliability) from English teacher at SMPN 34 Surabaya. Both raters score the test results independently using the same scoring rubric, and the concordance of their scores indicates that the instrument is reliable. The time given to students to conduct the pre-test and post-test was 45 minutes for preparation. Students are given 1 to 3 minutes to speak in front of the class. Both pre- and post-tests were administered to both the experimental group, which was treated, and the control group, which was not. Different treatment methodologies were used by each group. The experimental group was taught by the researcher using task-based language teaching (TBLT) strategies, while the control group received regular direct instruction. An oral

comprehension test was used by the researcher as the evaluation tool for the study. The data collection approach used in this study is divided into several components. Both before and after the treatment, tests were conducted. Students in the experimental and control group completed a post-test in the last meeting, to see whether TBLT improved learning outcomes. Information of the meeting 1 to 6 is informed on Table 2.

Table 2. Teaching Activities on Experimental and Control Group

Meeting	Experimental Class	Control Class	Description
1.	Pre-test (describe facial expression picture cards).	Pre-test (describe facial expression picture cards).	a. Both groups complete a pre-test to assess their initial understanding of descriptive text. b. The experiment class receives an introduction to the task-based language teaching.
2.	Learning descriptive text using TBLT (mention the physical characteristics of chairmate).	Learning descriptive text by teacher explains the material (mention the physical characteristics of chairmate).	a. The experiment class learning using task-based language teaching (describing a peer). b. The control class learning using material that explains by teacher (describing a peer).
3.	Learning descriptive text using task-based language teaching (make a sentence based on picture cards).	Learning descriptive text by teacher explains the material (make a sentence based on picture cards).	a. The experiment class learning using task-based language teaching by picture cards. b. The control class learning by teacher explains the material using picture cards.
4.	Learning descriptive text using task-based language teaching (combined).	Learning descriptive text by teacher explains the material (combined).	a. The experiment class learning using task-based language teaching by describing a peer and describing picture cards. b. The control class learning using teacher explain the material by describing a peer and describing picture cards.
5.	Make a descriptive text, such as poster.	Make a descriptive text in worksheet.	a. The experiment class make a descriptive text in the form of poster on canva. b. The control class make a descriptive text in worksheet.
6.	Post-test (describe picture cards expressing emotional situations).	Post-test (describe picture cards expressing emotional situations).	Both classes conducted a post test to evaluate the learning outcomes.

The researchers assessed the students' speaking abilities after they finished each level, and the results are shown inside Table 2. Following that, the pre- and post-test results for the two groups were compared.

Data Analysis Methods

The t-test in IBM SPSS Statistics 19 was used to examine the impact of task-based language teaching (TBLT) techniques on students' speaking proficiency. Using a three-stage testing technique, the researchers collected assessment data both before and after the test. Descriptive statistics, a normality check, and the Mann-Whitney U test were all part of this process.

FINDINGS

This section displays the findings from pre- and post-tests that were administered as part of a task-based language teaching (TBLT) strategy to improve students' speaking skills. IBM SPSS 19 (Statistical Product and Service Solutions) was used to examine the data and compare the experimental and control groups' learning outcomes. Prior to the Mann-Whitney test, a normality test was performed to ensure that the data had a normal distribution. These results are explained in the next sections.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Pre-test and Post-test

Description	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-Test Experimental	29	16	50	66	55.59	4.571
Post-Test Experimental	29	11	73	84	77.93	3.206
Pre-Test Control	29	15	50	65	54.76	5.104
Post-Test Control	29	16	60	76	66.14	5.902

The findings of the descriptive statistics analysis, which was performed on a sample of 29 participants in total, are shown in Table 3 and show that the results varied among the various classes. At the conclusion of the trial, Overall learning outcomes improved as evidenced by the average score of the experimental group, which increased significantly from 55.59 (SD = 4.571) to 77.93 (SD = 3.206). Conversely, on the posttest, the control group's mean score increased from 54.76 on the pretest to 66.14.

Table 4. Normality Test of Pre-test and Post-test

| | Class | Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a] | | |
		Statistic	df	Sig.
Result of English Study	Pre-Test Experimental	.163	29	.047
	Post-Test Experimental	.140	29	.151
	Pre-Test Control	.283	29	.000
	Post-Test Control	.197	29	.005

Because the experimental group's pre-test data did not follow a normal distribution, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results showed a significance value of 0.047 rather than 0.05. However, with a p-value of 0.151, which is greater than 0.05, the post-test results indicated a normal distribution. A non-normal distribution was suggested by the pre-test and post-test significance values of 0.000 and 0.005, respectively, for the control group being less than 0.05. This led to further investigation into the facts. Significant changes in the speaking skills of students before and after the language education intervention were assessed using the Mann-Whitney U Test. The standards for evaluating hypotheses are provided.

1. If value Asymp Sig. (2-tailed) < 0,05 there was significance
2. If value Asymp Sig. (2-tailed) > 0,05 there was no significance

Table 5. Mann-Whitney U Test (Pre-test) Experimental and Control Group

	Result of the Study
Mann-Whitney U	354.500
Wilcoxon W	789.500
Z	-1.034
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.301

Table 5 reveals that the estimated asymptotic significant value (2-tailed) was 0.301, which exceeds the specified significance level of 0.05. The outcome implies the pre-test scores for the experimental and control groups do not differ statistically substantially. Consequently, both groups met the criteria for statistical assessment.

Table 6. Mann-Whitney U Test (Post-test) Experimental and Control Group

	Result of the Study
Mann-Whitney U	46.000
Wilcoxon W	481.000
Z	-5.844
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

The two-tailed asymptotic significance value in Table 6 is 0.000, which is less than the predefined significance criterion of 0.05. This result demonstrates the presence of differences between the two groups under comparison that are statistically significant. As a result, the observed difference between the two classes cannot be explained by chance alone since a significant effect is at work. As the study's findings show, the factors that were taken into consideration did have an effect and contributed to the discrepancies that were found.

DISCUSSION

According to the research findings, the experimental group's average pre-test score was 55.59, while their average post-test score rose to 77.93. On the other hand, the control

group scored 54.76 on the pre-test and 66.14 on the post-test. As a result, the mean scores before and after the intervention distinguished themselves significantly. The two-tailed significance value was also discovered to be 0.000, which is below the 0.05 limit. Consequently, it may be said that although H_1 (the alternative hypothesis) recognises the significant benefits of task-based language teaching (TBLT) techniques, H_0 (the null hypothesis) maintains that these instructional approaches have no appreciable impact on students' speaking abilities. A mean difference of less than 0.05 is shown by the final significance level of 0.000. An examination of the experimental class scores, which increased significantly compared to those of the control class, revealed that task-based language teaching strategies had a positive effect on students' speaking ability through descriptive text tasks. Thus, it can be said that using task-based language learning techniques significantly improved students' ability to speak through their descriptive texts. This was in line with previous research findings by Faridaman et al. (2024), contend that the task-based language teaching (TBLT) approach significantly enhances student engagement and effectively aligns language learning with real-life experiences. Furthermore, they assert that task-based language learning strategies serve to motivate students in addressing challenges and cultivating their own solutions. Another previous study by Azmy & Nanda (2024) claim that Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) fosters student creativity by offering immediate feedback on their performance and immersing them in authentic language learning experiences within the classroom. In addition to improving language skills, TBLT also has a notable emotional influence on children (Milon et al., 2023). This was consistent with previous research that explored task-based language teaching through an examination of perceptions and its implementation in speaking instruction, encouraging collaborative learning not only fosters language acquisition but also enhances connections among students (Prianty et al., 2022). Based on previous studies, it was proven that TBLT influenced students' abilities; in this study, TBLT specifically influenced students' speaking ability. TBLT also made students, especially seventh graders, more confident in front of the class and improved their skills. These claims emphasise how crucial task-based language teaching (TBLT) is for improving students' speaking abilities. Furthermore, a major factor in students' growth as better speakers is their passion for TBLT. The limitations of this study were to measure the effect of task-based language teaching (TBLT) strategies on students' speaking ability. This research did not examine the opinions, attitudes, or challenges that students might have experienced during the learning process. It solely measured how TBLT influenced students' speaking achievement. Therefore, this study served as a foundation for future research. Extending the application of task-based language teaching to descriptive texts and other genres would have been highly beneficial. Additionally, further studies could have explored its implementation in other language skills such as listening, writing, or reading.

CONCLUSION

Using a non-parametric method, the Mann-Whitney U test revealed a significant difference (p-value of 0.000) between the experimental and control groups, and additional statistical analysis confirmed the treatment's substantial influence. All things considered, these results suggest that task-based language instruction improved the experimental group's learning

results, particularly in speaking. The learning method of the control group, which relied on the direct technique and shown less development, was less successful than the experimental group's intervention. The p-value for the null hypothesis (H_0) is 0.301, which is greater than 0.05, while the p-value for the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is 0.000, which is less than 0.05. These results showed that students' communication skills were significantly affected by task-based language teaching. TBLT not only improved students' speaking ability, but also increased their confidence in describing people in front of the class.

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