

TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING (TBLT) TO INCREASE ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILL OF INDONESIAN SECONDARY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate the benefits and challenges of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in the development of students' speaking ability in Indonesian Secondary School Context. This study used comprehensive literature review from various sources. From the discussion, it is informed that TBLT is useful to increase English speaking competence of students. Firstly, TBLT is applicable to fosters students' oral fluency. Secondly, TBLT can improves the speaking accuracy of students. Thirdly, TBLT helps students to enhance their speaking confidence. However, several challenges need to be addressed by the English teachers in order to use TBLT effectively. The finding of this study provides valuable literature for English teachers in Indonesia regarding the use (benefits and challenges) of TBLT to teach speaking skill.

Keywords: Task-Based Learning, Language Teaching, Speaking, Indonesian Secondary Education

Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui manfaat dan tantangan Pengajaran Bahasa Berbasis Tugas (TBLT) dalam pengembangan kemampuan berbicara siswa dalam Konteks Sekolah Menengah Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan tinjauan pustaka yang komprehensif dari berbagai sumber. Dari diskusi diketahui bahwa TBLT bermanfaat untuk meningkatkan kompetensi berbicara bahasa Inggris siswa. Pertama, TBLT dapat diterapkan untuk membina kefasihan lisan siswa. Kedua, TBLT dapat meningkatkan akurasi berbicara siswa. Ketiga, TBLT membantu siswa untuk meningkatkan kepercayaan diri berbicara mereka. Namun, beberapa tantangan perlu diatasi oleh guru bahasa Inggris agar dapat menggunakan TBLT secara efektif. Temuan penelitian ini memberikan literatur yang berharga bagi guru bahasa Inggris di Indonesia mengenai penggunaan (manfaat dan tantangan) TBLT untuk mengajarkan keterampilan berbicara.

Kata kunci: Pembelajaran Berbasis Tugas, Pengajaran Bahasa, Berbicara, Pendidikan Menengah Bahasa Indonesia

1. Introduction

Mastering speaking skill is essential for English learners. It is because in speaking, they can deliver information through expressing their ideas, experience with others and gain information as well as knowledge worldwide (Hasan, 2014). Even though students in Indonesia have been studying English for many years, only limited numbers of the students can converse using English (Mattarima & Hamdan, 2016). Therefore,

to provide valuable information for English educator in Indonesia, this study investigated some benefits of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in improving English speaking ability of students. Speaking skill is defined as a form of language composing which is used by communicators to create and deliver information (Carter & McCarthy, 1997). (Hasan, 2014) “Speaking is one of the productive skills that enable us to convey or to express something in a spoken language.” In addition, English speaking skill consists of five main elements: pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, accuracy, and fluency (Itkonen, 2010). Therefore, to convey or deliver information through spoken English efficiently, students are expected to master those components of English speaking skill.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is proposed as one of the suitable approaches to improve English speaking skill of learners. TBLT is an approach in language teaching which uses the language in real situation setting not as an object for study (Ellis, 2003). The core concept of TBLT is that implementation tasks as the primary element of the learning process (Lai & Lin, 2015). The task is a work plan in the form of language teaching material consisting of some input and some instructions which should be done by students to achieve the learning outcomes (Ellis, 2000). In completing the task, the students have many opportunities to practice target language (Hasan, 2014). There have been many research studies depicting the usefulness TBLT in teaching English speaking. For example, a research conducted by Albino, (2017) demonstrates that speed production, grammatical accuracy, vocabulary and confidence of students are increased through TBLT implementation in teaching English speaking skill. TBLT also influences the development of students’ speaking proficiency (Khoshsima & Shokri, 2016). From the literature, this paper discussed and analyzed the benefits of TBLT to improve speaking ability of students in Indonesian secondary school context.

2. Method

The method for this study was a comprehensive review, analysis, and synthesis surrounding the notion of Language Teaching, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), Speaking Skills. To ensure relevant studies were located in order to complete a comprehensive and integrative review of the literature, the writer completed an exhaustive review of referred and non-referred publications. This comprehensive review utilized literature and research available on the online education databases and journal articles of Monash University and other reliable sources including ERIC, JSTOR, Google Scholar, and Research Gate in which keyword such as, Task-Based Learning, Task-Based Language Teaching, speaking development, speaking skills. The gathered literature than analysed. From the literature analysis to find out the main themes on the literature, Three main themes are the benefits of TBLT, the challenges of TBLT and some possible ways to minimize the challenges.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1. Benefits of TBLT in Developing Speaking

3.1.1. Enhancing English Speaking Fluency of Students

The first benefit of TBLT is that develops the oral fluency of learners. Fluency is the ability to produce the target language rapidly without pausing or hesitation (Ellis, 2003). Fluency in speaking is essential because it helps the conversation to run smoothly (Klammer, 2013). BavaHarji et al. (2014) find that the oral fluency of students is enhanced under TBLT approach. Implementing the TBLT approach in language teaching can improve the oral fluency of students due to two reasons. Firstly, TBLT provides abundant opportunities for the students to practice their English speaking (Bao & Du, 2015; Muhammadipour & Rashid, 2015). This means that students are facilitated in communicating using

English rather than only knowing the language itself. These opportunities are offered via tasks which are designed to promote learners in using language communicatively (Ellis, 2009). Providing the English learner with many opportunities helps them to practice their speaking, which makes them fluent in producing utterances in English (Chacon, 2012 as cited in Bao & Du, 2015). For example, through TBLT approach, students are exposed to the tasks where “tasks are goal-oriented activities and meaning-centered” (Rodríguez-Bonces & Rodríguez-Bonces, 2010). In completing the tasks in the classroom, students practice the target language more frequently through interactions with other students. The intention is that by interacting with their peers using English intensely, the students develop their fluency. Albino (2017) finds that by active engagement in tasks, students tend to improve their oral fluency. Rohani (2011) also argues that students’ interactions with one another in performing the tasks assist the students in enhancing automaticity in their oral production. Hence, because of these multiple opportunities provided by TBLT to interact using the target language, the learners are encouraged to practice their English speaking skill. This results in enhancement of their oral fluency.

The second reason is that TBLT promotes authentic interactions among students which allows them to experience a real-life communication (East, 2013). This genuine conversation motivates the students to keep practicing the language not only in school but also in daily life interaction (Hakim, 2015). This is because real language environment afforded in TBLT encourages the students to use the language in public setting (Ganta, 2015). Zúñiga (2016) also implies that the contextualized language activities support language acquisition of the students. For instance, the students could use English in interacting with their English teachers or friends outside the school time since they have learned how to communicate using English in the classroom previously. By interacting using English in real-life conversation, students could improve their unconsciousness in uttering English words or expressions. Hasan (2014) states that communicating using English often assist the students to speak the language more communicatively and more spontaneously. Hence, English speaking fluency of the learners could be advanced by uttering English in their daily communication regularly.

In brief, TBLT could help the students in improving their oral fluency due to plenty opportunities and authentic language atmosphere provided by TBLT. Those things facilitate the students in practicing the target language more frequently not only in a school but also in a public area. This results in the advancement of their oral fluency

3.1.2. Increasing English Speaking Accuracy of students

Besides enhancing students’ speaking fluency, TBLT is also beneficial to increase learners’ speaking accuracy. Ellis (2003) defines accuracy as an ability to use language like a native and free of language errors. “Accuracy refers to the right use of the grammatical structures, pronunciation, syntax, and meaning of messages of the language in the oral production” (Trejos et al., 2013). Based on study handled by Wahidin (2016), speaking accuracy of students can be developed through TBLT. It is because TBLT provides the students with a season for evaluating their grammatical mistakes and getting corrective feedbacks regarding their language errors in post-task phase (Hasan, 2014). The corrective feedbacks are from their instructors as well as other students. For instance, after completing the tasks instructed by the teachers, students are offered an opportunity to evaluate themselves as well as other students’ performance (Zúñiga, 2016). This students’ evaluation aims to identify their grammatical mistakes that they make in their speaking. By doing so, they could learn new knowledge from others such as new vocabularies, phrases, grammar structure, and how to pronounce words correctly (Wahidin, 2016). Therefore, by giving corrective feedbacks from one to another

regarding language errors found in their speaking practice, the English learners could raise their English speaking accuracy.

3.1.3. Developing Students' Speaking Confidence

Apart from enhancing English speaking accuracy, students confidence to speak in English can also be developed under TBLT approach. Confidence is “the belief that you are able to do things well”. According to Haidara (2015) ,one of the factors that affect English speaking ability of Indonesian students is the level of students' confidence. Thus, to help the learners in developing their English speaking skill, English teachers in Indonesia should improve students' self-determination. Ganta (2015) argues that implementing TBLT in teaching English can increase the speaking confidence of students. TBLT help the students to develop their speaking confidence because it promotes a safe and comfortable learning environment (McDonough & Chaikitmongkol, 2007). TBLT can provide the safe and enjoyable learning setting since TBLT facilitates a student-centered learning (Hakim, 2015). In this learning style, the role of teachers is a facilitator. They help the students in preparing the tasks and guiding the students when the students encounter problems in the learning process (Ganta, 2015). The students feel assured to speak in English because they are allowed to use the language creatively (Hasan, 2014). They also fell secure because they are free in expressing their ideas rather than controlled by the teachers (East, 2013). As an example, the students can use lexical resources and grammatical rules that they know in completing the tasks (Ganta, 2015). This language freedom encourages students to speak more and reduce their anxiety (Albino, 2017). Therefore, feeling secure and comfort drives students to become more confident in producing spoken language.

Furthermore, TBLT can increase the students' speaking confidence as it facilitates collaborative work. Working collaboratively, the students can encourage one another to present the task in the class. When the learners fell encouraged, their speaking anxiety is reduced (Kessler, 2010 as cited in East, 2013). For example, in pre-task, students work in pair or group to prepare the task. In this preparation, students will discuss what they should do in the tasks and help one another to perform the task better. As a consequence, all group members feel motivated to participate and confident to speak to perform the task in front of their peers. According to a research handled by Bao and Du (2015), students' speaking anxiety is reduced to some degree when they work together on preparing and performing the tasks. Therefore, working collaboratively, the students become more confident to speak in English.

All in all, TBLT could assist the students to develop their speaking confidence because it promotes a safe and enjoyable learning process and facilitates a collaborative work among the students. The students feel confident to speak because they are allowed to use the target language creatively, and they are also encouraged through working together. Therefore, by engaging the students on collaborative work and enjoyable learning process, their speaking confidence could be developed.

3.2 Challenges to TBLT Implementation

To apply TBLT in teaching English speaking skill efficiently, English teachers should consider several issues. Firstly, the teachers should make sure that their students participate actively in doing tasks. Lai and Lin (2015) find that students do not involve maximally in performing a task provided in TBLT approach. The students may not fully involve in learning activities because they are not familiar with the principle of TBLT (McDonough & Chaikitmongkol, 2007). For instance, the students experience difficulties to participate in learning activities using TBLT. It is because the students are not familiar enough with the student-centered learning approach which is embodied in

TBLT (McDonough & Chaikitmongkol, 2007). The different level of English proficiency among the students also contributes to the quality of students' participation. The students with low English proficiency sometimes involve less in doing a task because they are anxious as to whether they can perform the tasks well or not (Burrows, 2008). Secondly, the teachers should bear in mind the availability of classroom hours when designing a task. Bao and Du (2015) inform that inadequate teaching hour initiates the teachers to conduct another task, before the learners understand what they learn in the prior task. As a consequence, the outcomes of the learning process cannot be achieved because the classroom hours are not enough to perform the tasks. Therefore, The English teachers should be aware of those issues to apply TBLT in their teaching practice efficiently.

To minimize the effects of those issues, some possible ways to cope with the challenges are offered. The first, English teachers are suggested to familiarise the students with the concept of TBLT. Burrows (2008) states that the students' participation increases since they understand the rationale of TBLT. The teachers also should design a task which relevant to the level of students' language proficiency, so the students can engage with and participate actively in doing the task (Calvert & Sheen, 2014). Furthermore, to implement effective teaching using TBLT, the English instructors are proposed to implement a task which is appropriate with the time allocation of the classroom. McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007) suggest reducing the number of materials and activities in each task. As a result, the learners can internalize what they learn before moving to another task, and the teachers also have enough time to address the students' needs. In brief, even though several challenges are encountered in applying TBLT, the teachers can implement TBLT in their teaching practice effectively by considering some possible ways explained above to cope with the issues.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, TBLT has some benefits to enhance English speaking skill of students. Having investigated some advantages of TBLT on the improvement of speaking ability of English learners, this paper argues that TBLT is beneficial to develop the speaking competence of students. There are three rationales as to why TBLT is useful. Firstly, TBLT is advantageous to increase the oral fluency of English learners. It is because TBLT provides multiplied opportunities to practice their English speaking. Secondly, TBLT is beneficial to enhance the students' speaking accuracy. Through TBLT, students are facilitated to give and get comments or feedbacks regarding their language errors. It results in improvement of their speaking accuracy. Thirdly, TBLT helps the students to boost their confidence. TBLT creates a safe and enjoyable learning environment, and it also promotes collaborative learning among the students. Those things improve the students' confidence to participate in the learning process and to practice their speaking. Even though several challenges emerge related to the implementation of TBLT, those can be minimized by considering some possible ways to overcome the issues. Therefore, due to some advantages of TBLT in enhancing the oral skill of students, English educator in Indonesia is proposed to implement TBLT in their teaching practice. Hence, their students can gain the benefits of TBLT in developing their English speaking competence.

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