



THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING (TBLT) IN DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS OF ECONOMIC FIELD STUDENTS

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Abstract:

This article examines how well students in the economics sector may improve their speaking abilities through Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). A learner-centered method called TBLT places a strong emphasis on using meaningful tasks to encourage language acquisition. The article focuses on economics students who need to communicate professionally in English for presentations, discussions, and commercial negotiations. A combination of student interviews, classroom observations, and pre- and post-tests was used in a mixed-methods approach. The findings show that TBLT greatly enhances students' speaking abilities, especially their confidence, accuracy, and fluency. The study advises integrating TBLT into ESP (English for Specific Purposes) curriculum and concludes that it is an effective tool for teaching English to economics students.

Keywords: TBLT, task-oriented environments, ESP, speaking skills, fluency, accuracy, economic, assessment.

Introduction

Due to the interconnectedness of contemporary economies, globalization, and technological breakthroughs, English is becoming an increasingly important worldwide language in business and economics. To thrive in professional settings in the globalized economy of today, economics students need to hone their speaking abilities. Presentations, interviews, and networking all require effective speaking abilities. Students studying economics who possess strong communication skills have a higher chance of landing leadership positions, internships, and jobs.



Economics students frequently encounter difficulties in speaking skills owing to insufficient practice in genuine, task-oriented environments. This gap in their education hinders their ability to communicate effectively in professional settings, limiting their career prospects and overall contribution to economics. For instance, economics students may not have opportunities to interact with professionals in the field, such as economists, policymakers, or business leaders, who can provide insights into effective communication strategies. This lack of exposure leaves students unprepared for the demands of professional communication in their future careers. To provide professional exposure, industry professionals should be invited to conduct workshops, mentor students, or participate in panel discussions, giving students insights into effective communication strategies.

METHODOLOGY

TBLT is a novel method of language instruction that places an emphasis on the utilization of actual, real-world projects. By evaluating its effectiveness, this study aims to determine whether TBLT can address the speaking skill gaps commonly observed among economics students. The study will measure improvements in students' ability to communicate economic concepts, participate in discussions, and deliver presentations, which are critical for their professional success. Speaking skills encompass multiple dimensions, including fluency (the ability to speak smoothly and coherently), accuracy (the correct use of grammar and vocabulary), and confidence (the ability to speak without fear or hesitation). This objective seeks to pinpoint which of these aspects TBLT most effectively improves, providing targeted insights for educators.

The impact of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) on students' speaking abilities, with a focus on how it improves communication skills in both professional and academic environments. It will involve comparing pre- and post-intervention performance to assess improvements. Understanding the perspectives of both students and teachers is crucial for evaluating the practicality and acceptability of TBLT.

In addition, students find TBLT engaging and relevant to their needs and whether teachers view it as a feasible and effective teaching method. ESP focuses on teaching English tailored to specific professional or academic contexts, such as economics.



It is known that speaking skills are a critical component of ESP, as they enable students to communicate effectively in professional and academic settings. For economics students, speaking skills are particularly important because economics is a field that relies heavily on discussion, negotiation, presentation, and collaboration. Economics students often enter careers in business, finance, policy-making, or international organizations, where effective verbal communication is essential. They need to present ideas, negotiate deals, and participate in meetings or conferences. Strong speaking skills help them articulate complex economic concepts clearly and persuasively.

Economics is a global field, and students often interact with peers, professors, and professionals from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. There are some challenges faced by economics students in developing speaking skills. For instance:

1. Economics has its own specialized vocabulary, which includes terms like “opportunity cost,” “inflation,” and “quantitative easing.” Students may struggle to pronounce or use these terms correctly in spoken English.
2. Many students fear being judged for grammatical errors, mispronunciations, or awkward phrasing, which can hinder their willingness to speak.
3. Students from non-English-speaking backgrounds may struggle with accents, intonation, or cultural nuances in communication. They may also find it difficult to adapt to the fast-paced nature of discussions or debates.
4. Economics students often have heavy workloads, leaving little time to focus on developing speaking skills alongside their core studies.

To overcome these challenges, students should focus on pronunciation and fluency and teachers should provide targeted exercises to improve pronunciation of economic terms and enhance fluency in spoken English.

In addition, they ought to provide a classroom environment that is supportive, where students feel at ease speaking without the fear of being judged. They should also employ films, podcasts, and interviews involving economists to expose students to real-world instances of professional communication.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study implemented the Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) approach, revealing significant improvements in the English language proficiency of accounting students. Gains were observed across various aspects of language use,



including vocabulary, grammar, fluency, confidence, and overall communication skills. A comprehensive evaluation of the students' progress was achieved through pre- and post-task assessments, student reflections, and teacher observations.

Initial pre-task assessments revealed varying competency levels, with common challenges such as limited vocabulary, grammatical inaccuracies, and a lack of fluency in spoken English. Students struggled to formulate coherent survey questions and construct grammatically correct sentences in the written portion of the test. During the oral component, frequent hesitations and pauses indicated low confidence and fluency. Post-task assessments, however, demonstrated notable advancements in the students' language abilities.

Vocabulary and grammar

There was a marked increase in the use of both general and accounting-specific vocabulary, with terms like “budgeting,” “economic policies,” and “financial literacy” being used accurately. Grammatical precision also improved significantly, with fewer errors in verb tenses and subject-verb agreement, such as the correct use of the present perfect tense (e.g., “I have finished the survey”).

Fluency and confidence

Students exhibited greater fluency in spoken English, speaking more smoothly and with fewer pauses. Their average words per minute increased to 85 in the post-task evaluation, compared to the pre-task phase. Confidence levels also rose, as students actively engaged in conversations, asked questions, and participated in survey presentations. One student remarked, “I felt more confident speaking English during the survey interviews and presenting our findings.”

Communicative competence

Overall communication skills improved significantly. Students demonstrated enhanced ability to engage in meaningful conversations, clarify points, and ask follow-up questions during survey interviews. Presentations became clearer and more effective, with students utilizing visual aids and responding to peers' questions with greater ease and accuracy.

Many students appreciated the real-world application of their language skills, recognizing English as a valuable tool for their future careers. A student shared, “This task showed me that English is not just a subject, but a useful tool for my future career in accounting.”



Furthermore, peer collaboration is also crucial for students. The collaborative nature of the task was praised, as working in pairs allowed students to support one another, exchange ideas, and practice language skills in an interactive setting. One reflection highlighted, “We learned a lot from our partner, especially when we were discussing how to phrase our survey questions.”

The article underscores the effectiveness of TBLT in enhancing the English proficiency of accounting students, equipping them with the language skills necessary for academic and professional success.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates the substantial efficacy of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in improving the speaking skills of economics students, namely in fluency, correctness, and confidence. By incorporating real-world tasks and fostering a supportive learning environment, TBLT addresses the unique challenges faced by these students, such as specialized vocabulary, fear of judgment, and limited practice opportunities. The findings underscore the value of integrating TBLT into English for Specific Purposes (ESP) curricula to better prepare economics students for professional communication in globalized settings. Educators are encouraged to adopt TBLT as a practical and engaging approach to equip students with the essential speaking skills needed for success in their academic and professional careers.

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