Research Article

Investigating EFL and ESL Teachers' Perceptions, Attitudes, and Implementation (acceptance/avoidance) of the Task-Based Language Teaching: A Comparative Cross-Contextual Study

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ABSTRACT

This mixed-methods study investigates and compares the perceptions (understandings), attitudes, and implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers. This research aims to identify how teachers in different contexts perceive TBLT, examine its implementation in classrooms, and explore the factors influencing its acceptance or avoidance among the participants. A total of 60 high school teachers (30 EFL and 30 ESL) participated in the study, which employed a survey design for the quantitative phase and classroom observations and semi-structured interviews for the qualitative phase. Quantitative data were collected using a Likert scale questionnaire, and the responses were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, including independent samples t-tests. The qualitative data from observations and interviews were transcribed, coded, and analyzed to provide a comprehensive understanding of TBLT practices. Results indicated significant differences in perceptions between EFL and ESL teachers, with EFL teachers showing more resistance due to practical challenges such as large class sizes and inadequate materials. However, both groups demonstrated favorable attitudes towards TBLT, and its overall implementation by them showed no significant difference. A key finding was the significant disparity in the tendency to avoid TBLT, influenced by contextual factors such as institutional support and resources. These findings underscore the importance of addressing contextual barriers to facilitate the effective adoption of TBLT. The study recommends integrating TBLT principles into English textbooks, providing adequate resources and training for educators, and fostering supportive institutional policies to enhance language learning outcomes.

Introduction

According to Ellis (2001), Communicative Language Teaching appeared as a response to less effective methods in authentic communication such as audio-lingual method. Communicative language teaching (CLT) shifted the focus from merely repetition and grammar-based methods to developing communicative competence. CLT paved the way and laid the foundation for modern teaching approaches such as Task-based Language teaching (TBLT).

Task-based language Teaching (TBLT) has gained prominence recently due to its potential to enhance ESL and EFL learning outcomes. Research has demonstrated that TBLT can significantly improve language performance (Willis, 1996; Ellis, 2005; Nunan, 2004). However, its success depends on teachers' understanding and adherence to its principles (Skehan, 2003). Despite its potential benefits, implementing TBLT faces several challenges.

Some factors may be considered challenges for adopting TBLT in many EFL settings. Adams and Newton (2009) stated that these challenges are divided into three main factors: institutional, teacher, and student factors. These factors are described below.

Shehadeh (2010) identified various institutional and teacher-related factors that hinder the adoption of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings. Institutional barriers include focused exams and assessments, large class sizes, and mixed-proficiency classes. Additionally, Shehadeh (2010) outlined three primary teacher-related challenges. Firstly, teachers often express uncertainty and doubts regarding the implementation and effectiveness of TBLT due to a lack of familiarity with its methodologies. Secondly, many teachers feel more comfortable with traditional, teacher-centered instruction,

perceiving it as providing a greater sense of security and control. Finally, TBLT is often viewed as an unfamiliar and incompatible concept by teachers in EFL settings, as it needs to align with their past experiences of language learning and teaching (Shehadeh, 2010).

In TBLT lessons, the teacher is generally a 'facilitator.' Facilitating learning involves balancing the amount of input and the use of language, and ensuring they are both of suitable quality.

Willis (1996) discusses the multifaceted role of the teacher in guiding learners through a course, stating:

> "The teacher is also the course guide, explaining to learners the overall objectives of the course and how the components of the task framework can achieve these. A summary of what they have achieved during or after a series of lessons can help learners' motivation" (pp. 40-41).

Shehadeh (2010) found that many students express doubts about the effectiveness of TBLT, their teachers' views, and their conservative parental beliefs about education.

It is alleged that the implementation of TBLT needs to be sufficiently investigated in both foreign language learning settings (Shehadeh, 2012; Xiongyong & Samuel, 2011) and second language learning contexts (Douglas & Kim, 2014). Another problem involved in TBLT discussion may be caused by misunderstandings and misconceptions in its comprehension (Ellis, 2009). Furthermore, there is a direct relationship between what teachers believe and know about the effectiveness of practice (their cognitions) and what they do in their classroom settings (their practices) (Zheng & Borg, 2015). Teachers' perceptions and implementation of TBLT will impact their classroom instruction. However, teachers may need help with TBLT and unintentionally deviate from its principles when

attempting to incorporate it into their teaching practices (Plews & Zhao, 2010).

Herrera (2019) classified teachers' perspectives on TBLT into three categories: positive, mixed, and negative. Positive results indicate that TBLT improves students' English language levels or is perceived as beneficial. Mixed results reflect some positive aspects, such as positive perceptions or implementation, but no significant change in students' language levels or teachers' willingness to continue using TBLT. Negative results indicate either no linguistic improvement in students or perceptions of TBLT as a complicated or ineffective approach (Herrera, 2019, p. 60).

Most studies have reported positive perspectives on TBLT (e.g., Alwi, 2015; Chacón, 2012; Dunne, 2014; Mora, 2004; Quintanilla & Ferreira, 2010; Rohani, 2011; Shintani, 2014; Tinker Sachs, 2009; Vilches, 2003; Weaver, 2012). However, some studies reveal mixed or negative perspectives (e.g., Adamson & Tong, 2008; Chan, 2012; Deng & Carless, 2009, 2010; Galvis, 2011; Li, 1998; Mustafa, 2010; Zheng & Borg, 2014). These mixed results suggest various challenges may hinder teachers' positive attitudes towards TBLT implementation. One primary challenge is the lack of understanding of TBLT (Nahavandi & Mukundan, 2012; Zheng & Borg, 2014), which impacts teachers' perceptions. Another challenge is that some teachers possess the necessary knowledge but have never attempted to implement TBLT (Galvis, 2011).

The implementation of TBLT in EFL and ESL contexts has shown varying outcomes due to several influencing factors. Based on the studies conducted, TBLT in second language (SL) contexts has yielded more positive results (Andon & Eckerth, 2009; Calvert & Sheen, 2015). However, the implementation of TBLT in SL contexts has not been without problems. In ESL contexts with abundant natural language input, teachers often lack a thorough understanding of TBLT, leading to its misapplication as less effective models like the presentation–practice–production (PPP) model (Plews & Zhao, 2010).

Moreover, TBLT implementation in EFL contexts has encountered various and more significant obstacles related to specific cultural contexts. Several governments, particularly in Asian countries, have legislated TBLT as the primary language teaching approach for educating second language learners (L2s) (Carless, 2003; Cheng & Moses, 2011; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Vilches, 2003). Despite its legislation, TBLT has produced different outcomes and has been less efficient in EFL contexts compared to ESL environments (Lai, 2015).

These differences in TBLT implementation outcomes in EFL and ESL contexts raise the question of whether the avoidance of TBLT is due to contextual differences or personal perspectives. This research explores and compares the challenges and reasons for the differing outcomes of TBLT implementation in EFL and ESL contexts from teachers' perceptions and attitudes. Previous studies have been conducted separately in EFL and ESL environments, each showing distinct yet some common results regarding teachers' perceptions, attitudes, and reasons for avoiding or accepting TBLT. However, no study has compared whether these results are due to differences in contexts or are entirely related to teachers' personal perspectives.

By examining these challenges separately, this study aims to determine if the implementation of TBLT based on teachers' perspectives is indeed different in these two contexts and compare them to see if ESL contexts have shown better outcomes than EFL contexts. Additionally, this study seeks to determine whether the obstacles are context-specific or influenced by teachers' personal

perspectives. By identifying the probable weak points in EFL contexts and comparing them with those of ESL contexts, the goal is to identify what the EFL educational system can do to achieve similar success as ESL contexts in applying TBLT in classrooms.

This research fills this gap by investigating the primary factors driving teachers' decisions—whether environmental or personal—and comparing their perceptions and attitudes towards TBLT. Understanding these factors is crucial for developing better educational systems and materials that support effective teaching practices. The results of this study will also aid in creating targeted strategies to train teachers inappropriately implementing TBLT in their classrooms.

Literature Review
Theoretical Studies

Although TBLT has recently gained popularity, it is a concept introduced previously. Prabhu was the first critical scholar to develop TBLT. Prabhu (1987) defined a *task* as "an activity that required learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought and which allowed teachers to control and regulate that process" (p. 432). American government language institutions also utilized task-based instruction (TBI) for foreign language learning in the early 1980s. TBLT began to be recognized and widely discussed in language teaching and research in second language acquisition (SLA). Over the last decades, there has been enormous interest in task-based language learning and teaching.

Ellis (2003) stated that developing a task-based lesson necessitates careful consideration of the many stages or components that comprise a lesson with a task as its central element. Various designs have been proposed. However, they all have three principal phases that reflect a task-based lesson's chronology. The initial stage, referred to as

the 'pre-task' phase, encompasses a range of activities that both teachers and students can engage in before commencing the task. This may include allocating time for students to strategize and prepare for the task's execution. The second phase, the 'in-task' phase, centers on the task itself and affords various instructional options, including whether students must operate under time pressure. The concluding phase, known as the 'post-task' phase, encompasses the protocols implemented to ensure proper follow-up on the execution of the job.

'Role' refers to the part that learners and teachers are expected to play in carrying out learning tasks and the social and interpersonal relationship between the participants" (Nunan, 2004, p. 64). Richards and Rodgers (1986) extensively discuss the responsibilities of learners and teachers.

According to Ellis (1997) "TBLT is no different from any other instructional approach. Also, like other types of teaching, TBLT can be both learner- and teacher-centered" (p. 237).

Ellis (2007) Believed that implementing Task-Based Teaching (TBT) with novice learners can be challenging. To address this issue, teachers should enhance their comprehension of the input-based nature of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and recognize its potential to enhance competency through a sequence of situational tasks.

Empirical Studies

It seems that Prabhu's Communicational Teaching Project in Bangalore (Prabhu, 1987) was a significant landmark in the process of "changing winds and shifting sands" (Brown, 2000, p. 13) towards this new language teaching paradigm (Leaver & Willis, 2004). The findings of this study revealed that Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) could serve as an adequate replacement

for the existing instructional approaches of the 1980s, as posited by Tarone and Yule (1989).

Based on the comprehensive literature analysis, it is evident that the majority of studies have been carried out in Asian nations including China, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Taiwan, Turkey, and Vietnam (e.g., Cheng & Moses, 2011; Mustafa, 2010; Nahavandi & Mukundan, 2012; Ooyoung, 2013).

There have been fewer studies conducted in European countries such as France, Spain, and Turkey (Genc, 2012; McAllister, Combes & Perret, 2012; Malicka & Levkina, 2012; Xhaferi & Xhaferi, 2014), in Australasia in New Zealand and Australia (East, 2012; East, 2014; Rolin-Ianziti, 2010), in North America in The United States of America (Leaver & Kaplan, 2004; Macias, 2004: Mora, 2004; Herrera, 2012), and in South America in Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Venezuela (Arias, Roberto, & Rivera, 2013; Chacón, 2012; Córdoba, 2016; Dunne, 2014; Quintanilla & Ferreira, 2010; Galvis, 2011; Herazo, Jerez, & Arellano, 2009; Lopez, 2004; Morales & Ferreira, 2008; Passos de Oliveira, 2004; Peña & Onatra, 2009).

By integrating the results of these studies, we provide readers with an overview of the current state of research on Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). Every study adds a distinct aspect to our comprehension of this teaching method. However, within this extensive body of research, there is a notable gap: the distinct impact of various educational settings, such as EFL (English as a Foreign Language) and ESL (English as a Second Language), on how teachers perceive and apply TBLT (Task-Based Language Teaching) remains an interesting and relatively unexplored area. This is the central focus of the ongoing research project. The objective of this study is to offer specific insights that can enhance the implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching

(TBLT) by examining the unique obstacles and opportunities presented by different contexts.

According to Jeon and Hahn (2006), while tasks have been found to have educational advantages in language learning settings, their successful execution is not assured unless the teacher, who plays a crucial role in overseeing and guiding task performance, possesses a comprehensive understanding of how tasks function within the classroom environment. TBLT as an instructional method is more than just giving tasks to learners and evaluating their performance. The teacher's successful implementation of TBLT necessitates a comprehensive understanding of the instructional framework, encompassing its strategy, process, and assessment.

These studies collectively pave the way for the current research, which seeks to uncover the nuanced factors that shape the effectiveness of TBLT in diverse educational contexts. Through this endeavor, we aim to bridge the gap in the existing literature and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how TBLT can be optimized to meet learners' diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds in EFL and ESL environments.

Research Questions

1. What are EFL and ESL teachers' perceptions (understandings) of Task-Based Language Teaching?

2. Is there a statistically significant difference between EFL and ESL teachers' perceptions (understandings) of Task-Based Language Teaching?

3. What are EFL and ESL Teachers' attitudes to implementing Task-Based Language Teaching?

4. Is there a statistically significant difference between EFL and ESL teachers' attitudes toward implementing Task-Based Language Teaching?

5. What are the main reasons EFL and ESL teachers mention for applying or avoiding the implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching?

6. Is there a statistically significant difference between EFL and ESL teachers implementing Task-Based Language Teaching?

Methodology

Research Design

The present study was designed with a mixed-methods approach, employing qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods. In the quantitative section, questionnaires were primarily used; thus, a survey-type of research was done. In the qualitative phase, classroom observations and semi-structured interviews were employed, and the data were analyzed according to qualitative data analysis methods.

Participants

The study participants were 60 teachers of both genders working at high schools. They were chosen from both English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) backgrounds. More precisely, a total of 30 teachers were selected from English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings in Iran and Turkey, while the remaining 30 participants were chosen from English as a Second Language (ESL) settings in Canada and Australia.

Instruments

TBLT Understandings, Attitudes, and Implementation Likert Scale Questionnaire

A Likert scale questionnaire for teachers has been developed based on previous relevant studies, such as the adaptation of Jeon and Hahn's (2006) research on "Exploring EFL teachers' perceptions of Task-Based Language Teaching." To minimize ambiguity, closed-ended questions were employed, based on the approach of Richards and Lockhart (1994), to find out participants' perceptions of

TBLT. Additionally, open-ended questions are included to allow participants to freely express their opinions. The questionnaire included 27 Likert-type items and two open-ended items. The five-point Likert scale ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The first section measured teachers' understanding of the task and TBLT with seven questions. The second part (items 8-15) discussed teachers' views on implementing TBLT. Section three will consist of five questions (items 16-20) regarding why teachers apply TBLT, and finally, section four (items 21-27) will determine why teachers avoid applying TBLT. Table 1 indicates the internal consistency and reliability coefficient of the questionnaire. The reliability of the test, as measured by Cronbach alpha for the entire questionnaire, was 0.90.

Table 1

Internal Consistency Reliability of Questionnaire

Scale	Alpha
Reliability	.903

Observation

The second instrument was a two-week observation of job performance evaluations for an entire class period. The observed lessons were part of their required classroom instruction and representative of their TBLT implementation quality. The class sizes ranged from 10 to 24 students, and classroom observations were analyzed to gain insight into participants' responses to TBLT. Classroom observation was conducted based on the three principal phases of task-based instruction. The researcher utilized Willis's (1996) framework on teachers' roles in all three stages of the Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) method to observe the teacher's implementation of TBLT. 'Pre-task' is the first phase in which students and teachers engage in various activities before they start the task and get into the second phase, such as

the time given to the students to plan the task performance. The second phase, the 'in task' phase, focuses on the task itself, and the students are afforded various instructional options in pairs or small groups while the teacher monitors them from a distance. The final phase is 'post-task,' in which there are procedures to follow up on the task's performance.

Interview

The third instrument was a teacher-made interview conducted with a focus on teachers' perceptions of TBLT, their attitudes towards TBLT, and the implementation of TBLT in their classes to find out the teachers' personal opinions about their main reasons for avoiding or applying TBLT in different contexts. The interview consisted of three questions. Two PhD experts in language testing and design reviewed the interview questions' content validity.

Data collection procedures

The questionnaire was created using Google Forms to facilitate easier access and completion for teachers in four different countries. The collected data from the questionnaires was then tabulated for further analysis. In this way, the participants' perceptions and implementation of TBLT were assessed using their answers to different sections. In the second phase, ten teachers (five EFL and five ESL) were chosen randomly from the participants, and their classes were observed and video-recorded for two weeks (about 10 hours). Their classes were observed and video-recorded for two weeks, totaling about 10 hours. The researcher, originally from Iran but currently working in Turkey, conducted the observations in both EFL and ESL contexts.

For the EFL context, the researcher took advantage of the two-week winter break in Turkey to travel to Iran. She personally observed and recorded classes in Iran, having obtained permission from the school authorities. Upon returning to Turkey, she asked three of her colleagues, who also participated in the questionnaire part of the study, to allow her to observe their classes. In the ESL context, three teachers from Australia and two from Canada participated. The researcher obtained the necessary permissions from the school authorities. Because she was unable to physically observe these classes, she requested that the teachers connect via Zoom and keep their cameras on, allowing her to observe and record all three stages of their lessons. In the third phase, the same ten participants whose classes had been observed were interviewed. The interviews were audio-recorded for further analysis. The interviews were done through SKYPE and Zoom, and the researcher interviewed the participants individually. After each session, the researcher evaluated the teachers' responses according to the evaluation scheme.

Data analysis

The study analysis employed an explanatory Quantitative-Qualitative mixed method of data analysis. After gathering the questionnaire from the participants in the two groups, the responses to the questionnaire were submitted to SPSS 16.0 version to obtain descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics determined the central tendency of teachers' answers to the questionnaire, and inferential statistics were employed to use an independent sample t-test to compare the mean scores of the two groups. All the interviews and participant observations were recorded as handwritten and word-processed field notes. Afterward, the transcribed text from each participant was analyzed. Finally, the results obtained through questionnaires were compared to those of interview responses and class observations to produce a final result based on the combination of quantitative and qualitative data.

Results and Discussion

This study sought to investigate EFL/ESL teachers' perceptions (understandings), attitudes, and implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching and the reasons for using or avoiding this method. In order to reach these aims, six research questions concerning implementing TBLT in an EFL context were examined in this study.

Quantitative Results of Research Question One

Teachers' Perceptions (Understandings) of TBLT

One of the purposes of this study was to scrutinize whether there were any differences between EFL and ESL English teachers' understandings of TBLT. An independent samples t-test was run to examine differences between teachers in the EFL and ESL contexts; the related descriptive statistics are reported in Table 2 reports the related inferential statistics findings.

Table 2

Descriptive statistics of teachers' perceptions (Understandings)

Teacher's group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. error mean
ESL	30	4.1714	.36451	.06655
EFL	30	4.4952	.50852	.09284

Questionnaire Results

The descriptive statistics for teachers' perceptions of the Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) method reveal notable differences between ESL and EFL teachers. The mean perception score for ESL teachers is 4.1714 while the mean score for EFL teachers is higher at 4.4952. This indicates that, on average, EFL teachers have a more favorable perception of the TBLT method compared to ESL teachers. Table 4.2 demonstrates whether this difference is statistically significant or not.

Quantitative Results of Research Question Two

Table 3

Independent Samples T-Test of teachers' perceptions

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	lower	upper
Equal variances assumed	5.322	.025	-2.835	58	.006	-.32381	.11423	-.55247	-.09515
Equal variances not assumed			-2.835	52.57	.006	-.32381	.11423	-.55297	-.09465

Questionnaire Results

The t-test revealed a statistically significant difference in perceptions between the two groups (t = -2.835, df = 52.57, p = 0.006). The statistically significant p-value (< 0.05), leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis, confirming that the difference in perceptions between the two groups is statistically significant. And also supports the

conclusion that the observed difference in mean perception scores between ESL and EFL teachers is unlikely to have occurred by chance, highlighting a meaningful distinction in how these two groups view the TBLT method.

Quantitative Results of Research Question Three

Table 4
Descriptive statistics of teachers' attitudes

Teacher's group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. error mean
EFL	30	4.1958	.47421	.08658
ESL	30	4.0958	.31942	.05832

Questionnaire Results

The mean attitude score for EFL teachers is 4.1958, whereas the mean score for ESL teachers is 4.0958. This indicates that, on average, EFL teachers report a marginally more positive attitude towards implementing TBLT compared to their ESL counterparts. These descriptive statistics suggest a slight preference for TBLT among EFL teachers, warranting further inferential analysis to determine the significance of this difference.

Teachers' attitude towards implementing TBLT

The second section of the questionnaire asked respondents to give their attitudes toward implementing TBLT in their classes. Table 4 demonstrates the overall mean scores for all respondents' attitudes towards the questioned issue.

Quantitative Results of Research Question Four

To further investigate whether the slight difference in attitudes towards implementing the Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) method between ESL and EFL teachers is statistically significant, an independent samples t-test was performed. Table 5 demonstrates whether this difference is statistically significant or not, providing a comprehensive evaluation of the initial descriptive statistics.

Table 5.
Independent Samples T - Test of teachers' attitudes

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	lower	upper
Equal variances assumed	3.589	.063	-.958	58	.342	-.10000	.10439	-.30895	-.10895
Equal variances not assumed			-.958	50.82	.343	-.10000	.10439	-.30958	-.10958

Questionnaire Results

The hypothesis under investigation was whether there exists a significant difference in the attitudes towards TBLT between the two groups of teachers. The t-test results showed a t-value of -

0.958 with 58 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.342. The mean difference of -0.10000, coupled with a 95% confidence interval ranging from -0.30895 to 0.10895, suggests that the observed slight difference in mean scores is likely attributable

to random variation rather than a substantive difference in attitudes. Therefore, the hypothesis that there is a significant difference in attitudes towards TBLT between ESL and EFL teachers is not supported by the data. This indicates that both ESL and EFL teachers have similar attitudes towards implementing TBLT in their classes.

Quantitative Results of Research Question Five
Teachers applying or avoiding TBLT

Table 6

Descriptive statistics of teachers' reasons for applying or avoiding TBLT

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
apply	ESL	30	4.2867	.51376	.09380
	EFL	30	4.3333	.34971	.06385
avoid	ESL	30	3.2056	.53010	.09678
	EFL	30	3.4944	.40703	.07431

Questionnaire Results

For the 'apply' category, EFL teachers reported a slightly higher mean score (4.3333, SD = 0.34971) compared to ESL teachers (4.2867, SD = 0.51376), suggesting a marginally greater inclination towards using TBLT. In contrast, for the 'avoid' category, EFL teachers also exhibited higher mean scores (3.4944, SD = 0.40703) than ESL teachers (3.2056, SD = 0.53010), indicating a stronger tendency to avoid TBLT despite a general positive disposition towards its application. This variation highlights a complex attitude towards TBLT, where teachers may recognize its benefits but also perceive significant challenges or drawbacks in its implementation.

Quantitative Results of Research Question Six

To assess the statistical significance of the observed differences in teachers' reasons for applying and avoiding Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), independent samples t-tests were conducted.

Table 7

Independent Samples T-Test of teachers' reasons for applying or avoiding TBLT

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		f	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-taile d)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Apply	Equal variances assumed	6.859	.011	-.411	58	.682	-.04667	.11347	-.2738	.18047

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.	Mean Diff	Std. Error	Lower	Upper
	Equal variances not assumed			-.411	51.124	.683	-.04667	.11347	-.2744	.18112
Avoid	Equal variances assumed	2.344	.131	-2.36	58	.021	-.28889	.12202	-.5331	-.0446
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.36	54.375	.021	-.28889	.12202	-.5334	-.0442

Questionnaire Results

Two distinct hypotheses were tested: first, whether there is a significant difference between ESL and EFL teachers in their reasons for applying TBLT; second, whether there is a significant difference in their reasons for avoiding it. For the application of TBLT, the t-test revealed no statistically significant difference between the two groups (t = -0.411, df = 58, p = .682), indicating that both ESL and EFL teachers are similarly inclined to apply TBLT, albeit with minor variations in favorability. In contrast, the reasons for avoiding TBLT yielded a different outcome. The t-test demonstrated a significant disparity (t = -2.36, df = 58, p = .021), with EFL teachers showing a stronger inclination to avoid TBLT compared to ESL teachers. This significant result supports the hypothesis that barriers and challenges associated with TBLT are perceived more acutely by EFL teachers, influencing their decision to avoid its implementation more strongly than their ESL counterparts.

Qualitative Results
Classroom Observations in ESL and EFL Contexts

To gain deeper insights into the implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in different contexts, classroom observations were conducted in both ESL and EFL settings. A total of ten teachers (five EFL and five ESL) were randomly selected for observation. The researcher observed and video-recorded their classes for two weeks, totaling approximately 10 hours of observation.

Key Findings and Implications:

The findings from the classroom observations revealed significant differences in the implementation of TBLT between ESL and EFL teachers:

1. **Consistency and Comprehensiveness:** ESL teachers consistently incorporated all phases of TBLT, reflecting a comprehensive approach to task-based instruction. EFL teachers, however, showed inconsistency, particularly in the task and post-task phases.

2. **Collaborative Learning:** Collaborative learning activities, such as pair and group work, were prevalent in ESL classrooms but rarely observed in EFL settings. This suggests that EFL teachers may face challenges in facilitating collaborative learning experiences.

3. **Instructional Support:** The structured support observed in ESL classrooms, including detailed feedback and the use of recordings, was less evident in EFL settings. This points to potential gaps in teacher training or resource availability in EFL contexts.

Qualitative results from Interviews
 Introduction

The third phase of the research involved conducting interviews with the same ten teachers (five EFL and five ESL) whose classes had been observed. These interviews aimed to gather in-depth insights into the teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), as well as their implementation practices. The interviews were guided by three questions, reviewed by two PhD experts in language testing and design to ensure content validity. The

interviews, conducted via Skype and Zoom, were audio-recorded for further analysis.

Teacher Perceptions and Attitudes towards TBLT
EFL Teachers' Perspectives

EFL teachers predominantly expressed resistance to adopting TBLT, adhering firmly to traditional, teacher-centered approaches. Their primary focus was on preparing students for examinations and achieving high scores. These teachers cited limited knowledge and information about TBLT as a key reason for their reluctance to implement it in their classrooms. They emphasized the importance of examination preparation, which they felt was better served by traditional methods.

ESL Teachers' Perspectives

In contrast, ESL teachers demonstrated a different attitude. Despite acknowledging incomplete and imprecise knowledge about TBLT, they reported actively implementing this approach in their classrooms. They attributed their adoption of TBLT to expectations set by their textbooks and management policies. These teachers expressed a willingness to implement TBLT despite their limited understanding, indicating a commitment to follow prescribed instructional methods.

Reasons for Applying or Avoiding TBLT
EFL Teachers

During the interviews, EFL teachers identified several obstacles to implementing TBLT:

- Large Class Sizes: Managing large groups made it difficult to conduct task-based activities effectively.
- Time Constraints: Limited classroom time prevented thorough implementation of TBLT stages.
- Inadequate Textbook Materials: Existing textbooks did not fully align with Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

principles, hindering the effective use of TBLT.
- Students' Prior Knowledge: Students' lack of necessary background knowledge made it challenging to engage them in task-based activities.

ESL Teachers

ESL teachers emphasized the importance of teacher training as a prerequisite for successful TBLT implementation. They recognized that limited knowledge of task-based instruction (TBI) among teachers could lead to unfavorable outcomes. However, they noted that their textbooks were designed to promote TBLT, and their students generally exhibited positive attitudes towards this approach.

Research-Based Findings and Implications

The interviews highlighted contrasting attitudes and practices between EFL and ESL teachers regarding TBLT:

- EFL Teachers: Their resistance to TBLT suggests a preference for traditional methods and a focus on exam-oriented instruction. The challenges they face, such as inadequate materials and large class sizes, underscore the need for better resources and training.
- ESL Teachers: Their willingness to implement TBLT, despite limited knowledge, reflects the influence of supportive textbooks and management policies. This indicates that external factors play a significant role in the adoption of TBLT.

The qualitative findings from the interviews provide valuable insights into the obstacles and enablers of TBLT implementation in different contexts. The resistance of EFL teachers highlights the importance of addressing contextual challenges, such as providing suitable materials and extensive teacher training. Conversely, the willingness of ESL teachers to adopt TBLT, driven by external support, underscores the potential of

structured programs and policies to facilitate pedagogical change. These insights contribute to the existing body of knowledge by emphasizing the importance of tailored interventions and support systems to promote innovative teaching methods like TBLT in diverse educational settings.

Discussion
Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Results
Discussion on Research Question One:
What is EFL and ESL teachers' perception (understanding) of Task-Based Language Teaching?

The perceptions of TBLT among EFL and ESL teachers were assessed through questionnaires, interviews, and observations. Questionnaire results showed that EFL teachers generally had lower mean scores in their perception of TBLT compared to ESL teachers. Interviews revealed that EFL teachers expressed limited understanding and resistance towards adopting TBLT, primarily due to a lack of suitable instructional materials and a strong focus on exam preparation. Observations confirmed these findings, showing minimal implementation of TBLT phases in EFL classrooms. In contrast, ESL teachers showed a more favorable perception of TBLT, influenced by supportive textbooks and institutional policies.

Research by Chang (2011), Jeon and Hahn (2006), and Li (1998) supports these findings. Jeon and Hahn (2006) emphasize that the successful implementation of TBLT depends not only on the tasks but also on the teacher's understanding and management of task execution. Chang (2011) and Li (1998) highlight the importance of teacher preparation in implementing communicative-oriented techniques like TBLT, underscoring the need for equipping teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills.

Integration of Findings:

The alignment of quantitative and qualitative data indicates that EFL teachers' limited understanding and resistance to TBLT are significant barriers. Conversely, the positive perception among ESL teachers, supported by institutional resources and policies, highlights the importance of contextual support. These findings suggest a need for targeted professional development and resources to enhance EFL teachers' understanding and implementation of TBLT.

Discussion on Research Question Two
Is there a statistically significant difference between EFL and ESL teachers' perceptions (understandings) of Task-Based Language Teaching?

Quantitative data analysis from the questionnaire showed a significant difference in perceptions between EFL and ESL teachers, with EFL teachers perceiving TBLT less favorably. This was supported by qualitative findings, where EFL teachers expressed concerns over practical challenges, while ESL teachers reported positive perceptions due to supportive materials and policies.

Integration of Findings:

The significant difference in perceptions is consistently reflected across questionnaire, interview, and observation data. This highlights the importance of addressing practical challenges in EFL contexts to improve perceptions and facilitate the adoption of TBLT.

Discussion on Research Question Three
What are EFL and ESL Teachers' attitudes to implementing Task-Based Language Teaching?

Questionnaire results indicated no significant difference in attitudes towards TBLT between EFL and ESL teachers. However, interviews and

observations revealed a gap between attitudes and actual classroom practices. While both EFL and ESL teachers reported positive attitudes towards TBLT, EFL teachers faced practical challenges such as large class sizes, time constraints, and insufficient materials, which hindered their implementation. ESL teachers, despite limited knowledge, actively implemented TBLT due to supportive textbooks and management policies.

Carless (2007, 2004), Ellis (2004), and Willis and Willis (2011) advocate for a comprehensive approach to TBLT, highlighting the need for methodological innovation and the use of linguistically oriented materials. These scholars argue that such materials enhance the communicative and interactive aspects of language learning, facilitating the successful implementation of TBLT.

Integration of Findings:

The positive attitudes towards TBLT reported in questionnaires and interviews are not always reflected in practice, especially for EFL teachers. The practical challenges observed in EFL contexts suggest that positive attitudes alone are insufficient for effective implementation. Addressing these barriers through comprehensive support and resources is crucial for translating positive attitudes into effective practice.

Discussion on Research Question Four
Is there a statistically significant difference between EFL and ESL teachers' attitudes toward implementing Task-Based Language Teaching?

Quantitative analysis from the questionnaire revealed no significant difference in attitudes towards implementing TBLT between EFL and ESL teachers. However, qualitative data from interviews and observations indicated that, despite positive attitudes, practical challenges hinder EFL teachers from implementing TBLT effectively.

Integration of Findings:

While questionnaire results show similar attitudes towards TBLT among EFL and ESL teachers, qualitative data highlights that practical barriers are more pronounced in EFL contexts. Addressing these barriers could bridge the gap between positive attitudes and actual implementation.

Discussion on Research Question Five
What are the main reasons mentioned by EFL and ESL teachers for applying or avoiding the implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching?

Questionnaire results, supported by interviews and observations, highlighted several reasons for applying or avoiding TBLT. EFL teachers avoided TBLT due to logistical challenges, inadequate materials, and a focus on exam preparation. Observations confirmed these barriers, showing limited use of TBLT phases in EFL classrooms. Conversely, ESL teachers cited institutional support, positive student attitudes, and curriculum alignment as reasons for applying TBLT, despite acknowledging their own limited knowledge.

Integration of Findings:

The alignment of questionnaire, interview, and observation data underscores the significant barriers faced by EFL teachers in implementing TBLT. Addressing these logistical and resource-related challenges through targeted interventions could facilitate broader adoption of TBLT in EFL contexts. For ESL teachers, supportive materials and policies are key enablers of TBLT implementation. Najjari (2014) emphasizes the need to adapt and cope with existing materials to address textbook shortcomings, enhancing the effectiveness of TBLT implementation.

Discussion on Research Question Six

Is there a statistically significant difference between EFL and ESL teachers' implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching?

Quantitative findings indicated no significant difference in the reported application of TBLT between EFL and ESL teachers. However, qualitative observations showed that ESL teachers were more consistent in implementing TBLT phases, while EFL teachers often avoided it due to various challenges.

Integration of Findings:

The lack of significant quantitative differences contrasts with qualitative observations of implementation consistency. This discrepancy suggests that while EFL and ESL teachers may report similar levels of application, the quality and consistency of TBLT implementation are higher in ESL contexts due to fewer barriers.

Connecting Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

The integration of qualitative (interview and observation) and quantitative (questionnaire) findings provides a comprehensive understanding of TBLT implementation in EFL and ESL contexts. The positive attitudes towards TBLT among both groups, highlighted by the questionnaire and interviews, are not always reflected in practice, especially for EFL teachers. This discrepancy is primarily due to logistical challenges, inadequate resources, and a strong focus on exam preparation in EFL settings.

To bridge this gap, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Professional Development:** Provide targeted training to enhance teachers' understanding and skills in TBLT.
2. **Resource Allocation:** Develop and distribute instructional materials aligned with TBLT principles, particularly for EFL contexts.
3. **Policy Support:** Implement policies that reduce class sizes and allow for more flexible time management to facilitate TBLT activities.

By addressing these areas, stakeholders can support teachers in effectively implementing TBLT, thereby enhancing language learning outcomes in both EFL and ESL contexts. Future research should continue exploring the long-term impacts of these interventions and further investigate the contextual factors influencing TBLT adoption.

The findings from this study align with the research conducted by Chang (2011), Jeon and Hahn (2006), Li (1998), Carless (2007, 2004), Ellis (2004), Willis and Willis (2011), and Najjari (2014), highlighting the importance of teacher preparation, resource development, and methodological innovation in the successful implementation of TBLT. Addressing the practical challenges faced by EFL teachers and leveraging the supportive structures in ESL contexts can promote the effective adoption of TBLT, enhancing language teaching and learning across diverse educational settings.

Jeon and Hahn (2006) found that teachers' understanding of TBLT significantly impacts its success, as those with greater knowledge and confidence in task-based instruction are more likely to implement it effectively. The results of this study support this claim, demonstrating that ESL teachers, who typically receive more structured guidance and have access to suitable materials, perceive TBLT more favorably and implement it more consistently than EFL teachers, who report uncertainty and resistance due to contextual constraints.

Chang (2011) emphasized that teacher training plays a crucial role in facilitating communicative approaches like TBLT. Similarly, Li (1998) identified teachers' lack of preparation as a key barrier to adopting communicative language

teaching (CLT) approaches, particularly in Asian EFL contexts. The present study aligns with these findings, as EFL teachers who lack formal training in TBLT often struggle with its implementation, whereas ESL teachers, who have greater institutional support, are better equipped to apply TBLT principles in their classrooms.

Carless (2007) found that in EFL contexts, teachers frequently cite large class sizes, time constraints, and curriculum rigidity as barriers to implementing TBLT. Additionally, Carless (2004) argued that despite teachers' positive attitudes towards communicative teaching methods, practical constraints often prevent them from applying TBLT effectively. The findings of this study confirm these challenges, as EFL teachers reported similar difficulties, leading to a gap between their stated attitudes and their actual classroom practices.

Ellis (2004) highlighted that successful TBLT implementation requires methodological flexibility and the integration of meaningful linguistic input. Willis and Willis (2011) further argued that well-designed task materials are essential for promoting student engagement and interaction. The current study extends these insights by demonstrating that ESL teachers, who have access to linguistically structured textbooks and supportive management policies, show more consistent application of TBLT phases, while EFL teachers lack the necessary instructional materials to do so effectively.

Finally, Najjari (2014) emphasized the need for teachers to adapt existing resources to align with TBLT principles, particularly when faced with textbook limitations. The findings of this study support this recommendation, as EFL teachers cited inadequate materials as a major barrier to TBLT implementation. Without the flexibility to modify content or receive alternative task-based resources, their ability to apply TBLT remains limited.

Conclusion

This study explored how different educational contexts influenced the perceptions, attitudes, and implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) among EFL and ESL teachers. The research employed a mixed-method approach, encompassing qualitative and quantitative analyses, to understand the subject matter comprehensively.

The quantitative results revealed intriguing differences between EFL and ESL teachers regarding their perceptions of TBLT. EFL teachers exhibited higher levels of perception in this instructional method than their ESL counterparts. However, despite their favorable perceptions, many EFL teachers from both groups reported not implementing TBLT in their classrooms due to challenges they faced in practical application. These challenges may be attributed to various institutional factors, as Adams and Newton (2009) suggested. Nonetheless, both EFL and ESL teachers demonstrated predominantly positive attitudes towards TBLT. This shared positive sentiment underscores the potential value and appeal of TBLT as a practical language teaching approach.

Regarding implementing TBLT, the study found no significant difference between EFL and ESL teachers. Both groups appeared to utilize TBLT to a similar extent in their classrooms. However, a noteworthy distinction emerged concerning the avoidance of TBLT. The results indicated that, based on their educational contexts, EFL and ESL teachers significantly differed in their inclination to avoid using TBLT as a teaching method. The qualitative findings further enriched our understanding of these differences and highlighted the significant role of institutional factors in TBLT adoption in EFL settings. In line

with Adams and Newton's (2009) observations, the study identified various institutional factors unique to EFL and ESL contexts that hindered the widespread adoption of TBLT. Teachers cited these institutional factors as obstacles to incorporating TBLT into their teaching practices. Incorporating quantitative and qualitative data in this study provided a holistic perspective on the complexities of TBLT implementation within diverse educational settings. By exploring the perceptions, attitudes, and actual practices of EFL and ESL teachers, the research offers valuable insights into the impact of institutional factors on adopting TBLT.

In conclusion, the study underscores the importance of considering different educational contexts when implementing pedagogical approaches such as TBLT. By acknowledging and addressing the institutional barriers that teachers face, educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers can create more supportive environments that are conducive to the successful implementation of TBLT and, by extension, enhance language learning outcomes. Future research may delve deeper into identifying specific institutional factors that impede TBLT adoption, aiming to devise targeted strategies to promote effective language teaching practices in both EFL and ESL settings.

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