

A Study on the Effect of Meaningful Cognitive Tasks and Focused Tasks on WTC Self-confidence and Enjoyment of EFL Oral Interaction

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Abstract

Introduction: It is believed that the performance of different tasks makes EFL educators and curriculum designers more sensitive to the role of task types to improve language skills. The present research aimed to investigate the effects of concentrated and meaningful cognitive tasks on oral EFL learners' satisfaction, self-confidence, and willingness to communicate (WTC).

Methodology: To achieve the aim, data were collected using various instruments including semi-structured interviews, the Sinclair and Coulthard Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) Model, the Enjoyment Questionnaire, the Willingness to Communicate context (WTC) Scale, and the Self-confidence Questionnaire. A normality test was conducted to ensure the data distribution was normal, and learners' interaction achievement, WTC, self-confidence, and enjoyment of EFL oral interaction were measured before and after the treatment using descriptive statistics.

Findings: The findings showed that form-focused tasks (pre-scripted role play tasks) combined with meaningful cognitive task types (information gap, opinion, and reasoning gap) significantly increased WTC, self-confidence, and enjoyment of EFL oral interaction. According to this research, relevant and form-based exercises are essential for improving students' oral contact abilities, which in turn promotes higher WTC and greater enjoyment in communicating. The study also discovered that enjoyment, self-confidence, and WTC advancement are strongly correlated with success in EFL oral interaction.

Conclusion: The results have some implications for EFL teachers, EFL learners, curriculum planners, education administrators, and researchers.

Key Words: EFL Oral Interaction, Enjoyment, Focused Tasks, Meaningful Cognitive Tasks, Self-confidence

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Introduction

Interaction refers to direct engagement between individuals, involving verbal or non-verbal communication such as written or spoken words, as well as physical cues like touch, proximity, eye contact, and facial expressions. The primary aim of interaction is to facilitate the exchange of information, thoughts, feelings, or ideas, thus maintaining effective communication between parties (Ellis, as cited in Tuan & Nhu, 2010). The main aim of learning a language is to use it in communication in its spoken or written forms. Classroom interaction is a key to reach that goal. It is the collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings or ideas between two or more people, leading to a mutual effect on each other. Oral interaction implies that students interact with others by speaking in class, answering and asking questions, making comments, taking part in discussions, and communicating effectively (Azeez, 2023). Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an educational approach focused on enhancing students' ability to communicate effectively in a second language. It places equal emphasis on transactional communication—using language to transmit information—and interactive communication—making and sustaining relationships with people (Brown & Yule, 1983; Ellis, 2003, p. 27). CLT can be used in different ways and to different extents, termed as 'weak' or 'strong' approaches, depending on the context (Howatt, 1984). It is believed that engaging in diverse tasks enhances the awareness of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) educators as well as curricula developers to the needs of learners.

According to Yildiz (2022), the communicative aspect of language acquisition has become increasingly important in response to the demands of the 21st century. Consequently, researchers have focused on various factors influencing learners' communicative abilities. One of these individual characteristics that affects students' communicative abilities is willingness to communicate (WTC), which has been thoroughly studied in a variety of language learning contexts. In recent EFL/ESL research, concepts like WTC and self-confidence have garnered significant attention as they encompass numerous factors determining L2 learners' engagement in L2 communication (Karnchanachari, 2019). L2 linguistic self-confidence, as highlighted by Al-Murtadha (2020), is considered part of L2 motivation, predictive of L2 proficiency, and integral to the WTC construct. Chaisiri (2023) emphasizes the critical role of WTC in English language classrooms for successful EFL learning. Moreover, some studies have explored dynamic shifts in language learners' WTC to understand the influence of cognitive, affective, social, and contextual factors (Wiertelak, 2021). Analyzing such influences in a language classroom context allows for the identification of variables potentially manageable by teachers, thereby facilitating optimal language development conditions. Ducker (2022) underscores the significance of WTC as an individual learner difference that can explain divergent rates of language-learning success. Considering the significance of student discussion as a teaching tool, researchers and educators frequently look for ways to pinpoint

and adjust critical factors that improve students' WTC and foster higher levels of students' conversation.

Actual participation in communication depends not only on speakers' proficiency but also on their emotional state. According to MacIntyre (2002), self-confidence and willingness to communicate (WTC) are two important emotional characteristics that affect communication. WTC is the probability that, given the chance, one will communicate (McCroskey & Baer, 1985). While WTC is generally stable in one's own language (L1), MacIntyre et al. (1998) contend that, depending on the circumstance, it can fluctuate in a second language. WTC is defined here as the propensity to speak with particular people under particular conditions. According to MacIntyre et al. (1998), the speaker's confidence in their capacity to communicate well in a particular setting is the primary factor influencing this predisposition. Clément et al. (1977) defined self-confidence as a combination of the speaker's low levels of fear when using the second language and their perception of their communicative ability. Some studies have demonstrated an association between WTC and self-confidence (Ramachandran & Kaur, 2021; Saka & Merç, 2021; Tekdal & Sonmez, 2018; Tran & Lewis, 2012). Considering enjoyment of EFL oral interaction as one of the main variables of this study, it is worthy to note that the adverse effect of anxiety on foreign language communication has been showed in literature (Horwitz, 2010), but enjoyment, which is observed as a positive emotion that runs parallel to the negative emotion of anxiety has only recently received attention in studies (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Dewaele et al., 2018; MacIntyre & Vincze, 2017). In fact, high levels of foreign language enjoyment are linked to low levels of foreign language anxiety overall (Dewaele et al., 2018), and correlate positively with learners' self-confidence (MacIntyre & Vincze, 2017). Although this relatively new body of research does not focus specifically on the role of enjoyment in FL interaction, it shows that enjoyment is related to self-confidence, which plays an important role in FL interaction. Regarding the existing gaps, the current study tried to ascertain how focused activities and meaningful cognitive tasks affect WTC, enjoyment, and self-confidence in oral EFL engagement. To achieve this goal, the study posed the following research questions:

Research questions

Does Iranian WTC, self-confidence and enjoyment of EFL oral contact significantly change with cognitive task training?

Do focused tasks significantly affect Iranian EFL learners' WTC?

Methodology

This study comprised two groups of participants. There were six Iranian female English teachers in the first group who were selected from Jihad Institute in Ilam, Iran, through convenience sampling based on accessibility consideration. As a general definition, "Convenience sampling involves using available cases for a study. Using a large undergraduate class, using the students in your classroom as a sample, or taking volunteers to be interviewed in survey

research are examples of convenience sampling" (Ary, Jacobs., & Sorensen, 2010, p. 156). The second group of the participants included 120 Iranian female intermediate learners of the above teachers in the form of six classes, each consisting of 20 learners. They were studying English at the Jihad Institute, Ilam, Iran. They were chosen using convenience sampling, with ages ranging from 18 to 29 and Persian being their native language.

The data gathered from the interviews were analyzed through the implementation of content analysis. Consultation with previous researchers and experts and similar studies in the fields concerned has led to the development of a protocol for interviews. For the convenience of participants, interviews were carried out in English on an individual basis over social networking platforms such as WhatsApp and Telegram without time limits. All interviews were done by the researchers, who was transcribing them as a whole for analysis. After transcribing, the data underwent coding (open, axial, and selective) in order to detect repeated patterns, themes and their categories and sub categories. The second instrument involved Willingness to communicate context (WTC) scale, developed by MacIntyre, et al. (2002) and modified by Hamzehnejad and Shariati (2014). It was used to measure the participants' WTC. The reliability of the scale was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, resulting in a value of .86. Moreover, its validity was confirmed by expert judgment. The learners' self-confidence was also measured using the Self-confidence Questionnaire developed by Perkins (2018). The reliability of the scale in this study was evaluated by employing Cronbach's Alpha, resulting in a value of .82. Moreover, its validity was checked by expert judgment. In order to measure enjoyment level of the learners, the Enjoyment Questionnaire developed by Davidson (2018) was employed. The reliability of the scale was evaluated in this research by employing Cronbach's Alpha, yielding a score of .75. Furthermore, expert judgment was utilized to establish the validity of the scale.

The qualitative phase of the study commenced with the researchers who conducted the interviews with the teachers. In the quantitative phase of the study, before the treatment period, six available classes, each consisting of 20 female intermediate EFL learners were selected, observed and video-recorded for three consecutive sessions by the researchers as a non-participant observer. Each class was held twice a week and lasted about one hour and thirty minutes. It is worth mentioning that the classes were being held through Adobe Connect Software, and both teacher and students were aware of the video-recording process. Next, all the six classes were asked to fill the three questionnaires described above including WTC Questionnaire, Enjoyment Questionnaire, and Self-confidence Questionnaire as their level of oral interaction enjoyment, WTC and self-confidence need to be measured before the treatment phase. It should be noted that a standard placement test namely Oxford Online Placement was conducted before the treatment to ensure that all the participants were homogenized in terms of their language proficiency. Then, the treatment period started and all the six groups participated in 10 regular classes of Jihad Institute, Ilam, Iran. However, as a program designed for this study, three classes

benefited from types of tasks which are meaningfully cognitive (reasoning, information and opinion task types), and three others from form focused tasks (pre-scripted role play task) within the last 30 minutes of each class session. In a more specific sense, in the first 60 minutes of class sessions, all the six classes were exposed to the mainstream routine educational materials provided in English intermediate classes of Jihad Institute, wherein Top-Notch Book is taught.

To be more precise, in line with Ellis (2003), information gap tasks were employed to facilitate language learning. These tasks involve students lacking necessary information to complete a task or solve a problem, necessitating communication with their peers to fill in the gaps. In this research, participants were grouped into pairs, where one participant was assigned a picture to explain to their partner. To expose the students to the pre-scripted role play task (i.e., an activity which gives students the opportunity to assume the role of a person or act out a given situation), the learners were divided into pair groups. Then, they were provided with audio-recorded materials to which they were to listen. Next, they were asked to act out and play the role of each individual according to the tape. After the end of treatment period, again all the six classes were observed and video-recorded for three consecutive sessions by the researchers as a non-participant observer. Next, similar to what happened before the treatment phase, all the six classes were asked to fill the three questionnaires described above including WTC Questionnaire, Enjoyment Questionnaire, and Self-confidence Questionnaire as their level of oral interaction enjoyment, self-confidence and WTC needs to be measured after treatment phase. Finally, the researchers once again conducted the interviews via Telegram and WhatsApp applications in order to gather the teachers' perspectives on various task types, and the effect of task types and their features on the oral interaction after the treatment period. The interview questions and procedure followed for the interview were the same as that used for pre-treatment interview.

At the qualitative level, the researchers transcribed verbatim both the video-recordings of classroom interactions and the audio-recorded interview data. Subsequently, a comprehensive examination of the interview transcriptions was carried out through the implementation of coding techniques, which encompassed open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. During the quantitative phase of data analysis, descriptive measures, including standard error of the mean, standard deviation and mean were computed. Inferential statistics comprised regression analysis and paired samples t-tests. Regression analysis was utilized to investigate whether improving willingness to communicate, EFL oral interaction enjoyment and self-confidence could encompass changes in achievement in EFL oral interaction. The statistical technique, paired sample t-tests were carried out to determine whether implementing meaningful cognitive task types (reasoning, information and opinion task types) and form-focused tasks (such as pre-scripted role play tasks) resulted in enhanced oral interaction, self-confidence, EFL oral communication enjoyment and WTC.

Research Findings

To address the inquiry regarding whether the implementation of meaningful cognitive task types (reasoning, information and opinion task types) and form-focused tasks (such as pre-scripted role play tasks) enhances self-confidence, EFL oral communication enjoyment and willingness to communicate., descriptive statistics as well as paired samples t-tests were conducted on the scores of WTC, self-confidence, and enjoyment of EFL oral interaction for both experimental groups (i.e., the group exposed to meaningful cognitive tasks and the group exposed to form-focused tasks). Tables 1 and 2 display the results of descriptive statistics and paired samples t-tests for WTC scores of the meaningful tasks group.

Table 1: Results of WTC meaningful tasks group before and after the study

| | Group | N | Mean | SD | Std. Error Mean |
|--------|------------------|----|-------|-----|-----------------|
| Before | Meaningful Tasks | 60 | 45.92 | .65 | .37 |
| After | Meaningful Tasks | 60 | 68.33 | .79 | .25 |

As seen in Table 1, the mean and standard deviation of the group's WTC before the study was 45.92 and .65, respectively. The mean and standard deviation values were 68.33 and .79 after the study. To check the statistical significance of this difference, a paired samples-test was run which led to the following results (Table 2).

Table 2: Paired-samples t-test for WTC of meaningful tasks group

| Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | | |
|---|------|------------------------------|------|----|----------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--|-------|
| | F | Sig. | t | df | Sig. (2tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | | | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| Equal variances assumed | 1.40 | .24 | 7.92 | 59 | .00 | 22.41 | .41 | 1.61 | 3.26 |

Table 2 indicates that the difference observed in the WTC of the meaningful tasks group before and after the study was significant ($t=7.92$, $df=59$, $p<.05$). Therefore, it can be said that the meaningful tasks group's WTC significantly improved after the study in comparison to its WTC before the study. Based on the results, the standard deviation and mean of the self-confidence of the group before the study was 152.30 and 3.16, respectively. The value of the mean was 171 and the value of standard deviation was 2.10 after the study. A paired sample t-test was conducted to assess the statistical significance of this variance. Result shows that the difference observed in the self-confidence of

the meaningful tasks group before and after the study was significant ($t= 9.10$, $df=59$, $p<.05$). Therefore, it can be said that the meaningful tasks group's self-confidence significantly improved after the study in comparison to its self-confidence before the study. Based on the results, the mean and standard deviation of the group's enjoyment of oral interaction before the study was 12 and .56, respectively. The mean and standard deviation values were 18.90 and .70 after the study. To check the statistical significance of this difference, a paired samples-test was run. Result shows that the difference observed in the enjoyment of oral interaction of the meaningful tasks group before and after the study was significant ($t= 6.50$, $df= 59$, $p<.05$). Therefore, it can be said that the meaningful tasks group's enjoyment of oral interaction significantly improved after the study in comparison to its enjoyment of oral interaction before the study.

The same statistical tests were run for the form-focused tasks group. Tables 3 and 4 present the findings of the paired sample t-test and descriptive statistics for the WTC scores of the form-focused tasks group.

Table 3: Results of WTC form-focused tasks group before and after the study

| | Group | N | Mean | SD | Std. Error Mean |
|--------|--------------------|----|-------|-----|-----------------|
| Before | Form-focused Tasks | 60 | 38.33 | .70 | .42 |
| After | Form-focused Tasks | 60 | 52.70 | .99 | .55 |

As depicted in Table 3, prior to the study, the group's mean WTC score was 38.33 with a standard deviation of 0.70. Following the study, the mean WTC score increased to 52.70 with a standard deviation of 0.99. To evaluate the statistical significance of this disparity, a paired samples t-test was conducted, the results of which are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Paired-samples t-test for WTC of form-focused tasks group

| Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | |
|---|------|-----|------|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---|-------|------|
| F | Sig. | t | df | Sig. (2tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | | |
| | | | | | | | Lower | Upper | |
| Equal variances assumed | 4.00 | .39 | 5.66 | 59 | .00 | 14.37 | .52 | 3.20 | 5.14 |

As shown in the table 4, the difference observed in the WTC of the form-focused tasks group before and after the study was significant ($t= 5.66$, $df=59$,
[Biannual Journal of Education Experiences, Vol 8, No 1, Winter and Spring, 2025](#)

$p < .05$). Therefore, it can be said that the form-focused tasks group's WTC significantly improved after the study in comparison to its WTC before the study.

Tables 5 and 6 present the descriptive statistics and paired sample t-test results for the form-focused tasks group's self-confidence scores.

Table 5: Results of self-confidence of form-focused tasks group before and after the study

| | Group | N | Mean | SD | Std. Error Mean |
|--------|--------------|----|--------|------|-----------------|
| Before | Form-focused | 60 | 140.55 | 2.70 | .30 |
| After | Form-focused | 60 | 163.40 | 1.90 | .45 |

As shown in Table 5, the standard deviation and mean of the group's self-confidence before the study was .30 and 140.55, respectively. The mean and standard deviation values were 163.40 and 1.90 after the study. A paired sample t-test was conducted to assess the statistical significance of this variation, with the findings presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Paired-samples t-test for self-confidence of form-focused tasks group before and after the study

| Before and after the study | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------|------|------|----|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|---|-------|
| Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | | | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | |
| | F | Sig. | t | df | Sig. (2tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | | | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| Equal variances assumed | 7.60 | .14 | 8.33 | 59 | .00 | 22.85 | .80 | 5.00 | 7.25 |

As illustrated in Table 6 the difference observed in the self-confidence of the form-focused tasks group before and after the study was significant ($t = 8.33$, $df = 59$, $p < .05$). Therefore, it can be said that the form-focused tasks group's self-confidence significantly improved after the study in comparison to its self-confidence before the study. Tables 7 and 8 show the results of descriptive statistics and paired sample t-test for EFL oral communication enjoyment scores of the form-focused task group.

Table 7: Results of enjoyment of EFL oral interaction of form-focused tasks group before and after the treatment

| Group | N | Mean | SD | Std. Error Mean |
|-------|---|------|----|-----------------|
|-------|---|------|----|-----------------|

| | | | | | |
|--------|--------------|----|-------|-----|-----|
| Before | Form-focused | 60 | 11.70 | .45 | .80 |
| After | Form-focused | 60 | 17.50 | .60 | .50 |

As shown in Table 7, the standard deviation and mean of the group's enjoyment of oral interaction before the study was 11.70 and .45, respectively. The values of the mean and standard deviations were 17.50 and .60 after the study. The statistical significance of this difference was assessed by conducting a paired sample t-test, and the findings are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Paired-samples t-test for enjoyment of EFL oral interaction of form-focused tasks group before and after the treatment

| Focused tasks group before and after the treatment | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|------|------------------------------|----|----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---|-------|
| | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | |
| | F | Sig. | t | df | Sig. (2tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | | | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| Equal variances assumed | 11.20 | .34 | 7.13 | 59 | .00 | 5.80 | .78 | 5.00 | 8.00 |

Table 8 indicates that the difference in the enjoyment of oral interaction of the form-focused tasks group before and after the study was significant ($t=7.13$, $df=59$, $p<.05$). Therefore, it can be said that the form-focused tasks group's enjoyment of oral interaction significantly improved after the study in comparison to its enjoyment of oral interaction before the study.

To answer the question 'Does development in WTC, self-confidence, and enjoyment explain achievement in EFL oral interaction?', multiple regression analysis was run. The results are displayed in Table 9.

Table 9: Results of regression analysis

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | T | Sig. | Collinearity Statistics | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|-------------------------|-------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | Tolerance | VIF |
| (Constant) | 8.938 | .929 | | 9.625 | .000 | | |
| 1 WTC | .093 | .019 | .448 | 4.823 | .000 | .699 | 1.430 |
| Self-confidence | .046 | .015 | .280 | 3.018 | .003 | .699 | 1.430 |
| enjoyment | .080 | .018 | .400 | 3.910 | .000 | .699 | 1.430 |

According to the data presented in Table 9, the WTC model accurately predicted 44% of the variability in EFL oral interaction achievement. Furthermore, the level of self-confidence has the potential to forecast 28% of

the variation in achievement in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) oral communication. Additionally, 40% of the variance in EFL oral interaction variance was explained by enjoyment of oral interaction.

Based on the results of the related tests, the application of meaningful cognitive task types (information gap task, opinion gap and reasoning gap tasks) and form focused tasks (pre-scripted role play task) contributed to significant improvements in WTC, self-confidence and enjoyment of EFL oral interaction. As a justification for this finding, it can be said that since as proved by the results of the present study, meaningful and form-based tasks contribute to significant improvements in the learners' oral interaction, they contribute to more WTC and enjoyment of oral interaction in them. That is, when learners have more proficiency in oral interaction, they are more willing to interact and communicate. Moreover, higher oral interaction among the learners induces higher self-confidence and enjoyment of interaction in them. Accordingly, it can be said that progress in willingness to communicate, EFL oral interaction enjoyment and self-confidence elucidated success in EFL oral communication.

Discussion

The present research analyzed the utilization of meaningful cognitive task types (reasoning, information and opinion task types) and form-focused tasks (like pre-scripted role play tasks) in order to enhance willingness to communicate, EFL oral interaction enjoyment, and self-confidence. The study unveiled that indeed, the application of these task types resulted in notable improvements in willingness to communicate, EFL oral interaction enjoyment and self-confidence. Consistent with this study, Cutrone and Siewkee (2018) showed significant improvements in EFL learners' WTC as a result of being exposed to different types of tasks. Similarly, Marzban and Mahmoudv (2013) reported the positive effect of using tasks on WTC of learners in different contexts. This finding is also in line with what Tiu (2011) has found in his study regarding the positively significant effects of meaningful and form-based tasks on WTC of learners.

The literature review conducted by the researchers did not uncover any empirical studies examining the effectiveness of meaningful and form-based tasks on EFL oral interaction enjoyment and self-confidence. Therefore, this finding cannot be compared with the previous studies. As demonstrated by the received data and careful analysis, meaningful and form-based tasks lead to substantial enhancements in learners' oral interaction skills, thereby fostering increased willingness to communicate (WTC) and enjoyment during oral interaction. In other words, heightened proficiency in oral interaction among learners encourages greater engagement and communication. The other main

objective of this study was to gain insight into the effects of oral interaction on students' self-confidence and enjoyment and based on the results before and after the study, it was found that that oral interaction instigated a significant increase in learners' self-confidence and enjoyment. That is to say, the form-focused tasks group's self-confidence and enjoyment of oral interaction significantly improved after the study in comparison to the mentioned variables of oral interaction before the study. Thus, higher oral interaction among the learners induces higher self-confidence and enjoyment of interaction in them.

In addition, the researchers proposed that the mediating role of learners' motivation which has contributed to higher oral interaction among the learners, has finally led to higher willingness to communicate, EFL oral interaction enjoyment and self-confidence among them. Furthermore, the researchers believes that another possible justification for the positive effect of form-based and meaningful tasks on WTC, self-confidence of enjoyment of oral interaction is that such tasks increase learners' learning independence and this leads to their significant improvement in their WTC, self-confidence of enjoyment of oral interaction. When independence is enhanced, self-esteem is also improved, therefore, it is possible that the increased self-esteem of learners has also played a mediating role in the impact of form-based and meaningful tasks on self-confidence, oral interaction enjoyment and WTC. The justification which can be stated for this finding is tasks enhance cooperative learning (Tekdal & Sonmez, 2018) and it can contribute to improvement of their WTC, self-confidence and enjoyment of oral interaction.

Regarding the research question concerning whether the success of self-confidence, enjoyment and WTC explains the achievement and progress in EFL oral communication, the study revealed that progress in self-confidence, enjoyment and WTC significantly accounted for achievement in EFL oral communication. All the justifications and comparisons made between the findings of the present study and those of the previous studies are true about this finding. In justifying this finding, an argument can be referred to according to which form-based and meaningful tasks improve learners' attitudes towards EFL learning (Tran & Lewis, 2012) and this can improve their WTC, self-confidence and enjoyment of oral interaction. In fact, when the language learners have more proficiency in oral interaction, they are more willing to interact and communicate. The validity of the arguments and comparisons made between the current study's findings and previous research questions extends to this particular finding as well. Findings are in line with a study by Mahmoodi and Moazam (2014) who found the significant correlation between WTC and foreign language achievement. Considering self-confidence, Hasan et al., (2020) analyzed the relationship between students 'self-confidence and

students' speaking abilities. They found a significant relationship between students' self-confidence and their oral communication. Besides, Saka and Merç (2021) indicated a positive relationship between students' WTC and their perceived communication competence and self-confidence. In the same year, Ramachandran and Kaur (2021) indicated that WTC is positively correlated with communication confidence. Finally, in a more recent study by Cormier and Langlois (2022), a strong correlation was achieved between oral performance and the enjoyment of doing oral presentations. On the contrary, the results are not in line with a study by Van-Batenburg et al. (2019) who investigated the effects of instructional focus and task type on language EFL learners. The findings indicated that learners' enjoyment of EFL oral interaction was not affected by instruction, and willingness to communicate (WTC) decreased over time. Furthermore, data analysis showed that development in learners' WTC and enjoyment did not have predictive value for achievement in EFL oral interaction.

CONCLUSION

The study revealed that the implementation of meaningful cognitive task types (reasoning, information and opinion task types) along with form-focused tasks (such as pre-scripted role play tasks) led to notable enhancements in learners' self-confidence, enjoyment of oral communication and willingness to communicate (WTC). The finding suggests that meaningful and form-based are essential for improving of the learner's oral communication skills, thereby fostering greater WTC and enjoyment in communication. Essentially, as learners demonstrate increased proficiency in oral interaction, their inclination to engage and communicate also rises. Additionally, heightened levels of oral interaction among learners correlate with increased self-confidence and enjoyment in communication. Furthermore, the study observed that improvements in WTC, self-confidence, and enjoyment significantly contributed to the achievement of EFL oral interaction skills.

EFL teachers' perceptions of different types of form focused and meaningful tasks and their effects on oral interaction of EFL learners were remarkably positive at the end of the study. This shows that teachers' familiarity with and practice of different types of form focused and meaningful tasks have changed their perceptions of the effectiveness of various task types. It can also be concluded that different kinds of tasks have the potential to impact EFL learners' oral interaction. The results of the present study are enlightening and useful taking this issue into account that recently, TBLT has been more emphasized and touched from different angles with the focus on meaning, real-world language use, and communicative-oriented activities in an attempt to

merge different language skills (Firouzi & Khabiri, 2018). With a view to the enhanced dominance of TBLT and teachers' perceptions of TBLT in the recent studies in the field, the stated findings are of high utility.

The implication of the results for EFL teachers is that they can benefit from meaningful and form-focused tasks to make EFL learners more motivated, engaged and active, interactive and communicative, autonomous, goal-oriented, willing to communicate, self-confident and happy with EFL oral interaction. Given that such factors as motivation, engagement, WTC, self-confidence have been found to be significantly effective on EFL learning in the existing literature, this implication may contribute to positive results in terms of EFL achievement of learners. Additionally, EFL curriculum planners can take useful insights from the findings and apply them in planning future EFL materials and curricula. More specifically, they can develop future EFL curricula in a way that teachers and instructors inevitably use different types of meaningful and form-focused tasks in their EFL classes.

Like any other research, the present study was constrained by some factors. The first one is due to the inability to examine all the factors influencing teacher' perception on different task types and their features. The second one was related to the changes in participants' perceptions before and after the study. The third limitation addresses the number of the sample of study. We assume much more participants were needed to be involved in such studies to generalize the findings easily.

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