



The Impact of a Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) on Students' Grammar Skills Using on Line Application: A Classroom Action Research

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Abstract. The present study is to develop students' grammar skills in learning tenses through a Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). This study adopts a classroom action research design that required the researcher to play an active role in the classroom and collect the data through interviews. It has been studied with 30 students from the first semester during a two-month process. Throughout the process, students firstly are introduced to a topic and a task, and secondly in the task cycle, students are instructed to make a short dialog in which grammatical rules of tenses applied. The aim is to find out to what extent a Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) influences students' understanding and writing of tenses mastery. By reviewing students' responses, this study provided insight that a Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) can be used to develop teaching and learning tenses in EFL classroom. The researcher anticipates that this study benefits EFL teachers and EFL researcher in developing instructional strategies that promote grammar skill in writing tenses among EFL students in the classroom.

Keywords: TBLT; Grammar; Classroom Action Research.

1 Introduction

Grammar is one of the components supporting the four basic skills in English, such as listening, speaking, reading and writing as well. It is a must for all learners of English to master it, since it takes an important role in frame of creating excellent English proficiency in global communication. Therefore, it can be a trigger for all to learn English more deeply. It should be easy as long as people learn English grammar as a habit through starting learning grammar from the simplest sentence.

According to Douglas Biber (2019), grammar refers to the system of rules and principles that govern the structure and use of a language. It encompasses the way words are formed, how they are organized into phrases and sentences, and how they function in communication. Biber's work, such as the "Longman Student Grammar of Spoken and Written English," focuses on analyzing and describing the grammar of English in both spoken and written contexts. His approach involves examining patterns and variations in language use across different genres, registers, and social contexts.

According to Blum, Johnson and Shell, there are three types of grammar, namely: Traditional Grammar, Structural Grammar and Transformational Grammar. In traditional grammar, each word is considered a part of speech. Meanwhile, structural grammar refers to how sounds, word forms and word positions influence meaning. Meanwhile, transformational grammar is the result of adding, subtracting or rearranging words from declarative sentences or positive sentences.

In grammar, we will be introduced to Tenses-Aspects. Tenses-aspects are the most crucial grammar structures in English. The most important thing about the two is that tenses are often used in both oral and written communication. Some grammarians have defined what tenses are. according to Greenbaum tense is a grammatical category that is realized through verb inflection. Meanwhile, Swan says that tense is a grammatical system for showing time relationships through changes in verb form. So, it can be concluded that tense is a grammar used to express time and action through modifying verb changes.

Apart from tenses, there are other grammars used to express time. Some experts have defined it as an aspect. According to Greenbaum and Quirk aspect is a grammatical category that reflects the way in which the action of a verb is related to time. Likewise, according to Swan, aspects are associated with time.

Learning grammar, especially English, is a frightening prospect for students, although some are able to follow and understand grammar when explained by teachers or lecturers, it is difficult for them to express it verbally because they are fixated on patterns (Tambunsaribu et al, 2021). On the other hand, there are also those who are able to express it verbally but they do not understand what pattern they are using.

One method that is very helpful is Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) which focuses on activities in the classroom. Good teaching results come from the interaction process in the classroom which is mediated by teaching activities (Richard, 2017). Therefore, using the TBLT (Task Based Language Teaching) method is a solution for mastering grammar not only focused on patterns, but they can also verbalize it orally with good grammar (Yildiz, 2017). Apart from that, to strengthen their motivation in learning grammar, the learning is supplemented with tools in the form of online application media as a means of practice. There are two previous studies that focused on TBLT in English teaching and learning. Barnard & Nguyen (Viet, 2010) conducted research on how an English teacher from Vietnam knows and believes TBLT as a model in teaching. The research uses a narrative framework through in-depth interviews and self-reflection (Barnard et al, 2010). The same thing was also reported by Tavakoli, Lotfi, and Wang (Tavakoli & Biria, 2019) who conducted research on the effectiveness of technology mediation in TBLT in motivating Iranian students who were not majoring in English. The results illustrate that there is a significant influence on the use of mediation technology in TBLT in motivating students in teaching (Tavakoli et al, 2021). TBLT is a teaching method based on interaction in the classroom. In TBLT's view, language learning is based on an interaction process and the best way to carry it out is through task instructional design (Richard, 2017). This is based on class factors. Language classes are full of students, the diversity of students' abilities, and the development of teaching materials, preparation of materials combined with skills takes a long

time, and inappropriate teaching materials can cause students' disengagement in teaching (Yanto, ES, 2021).

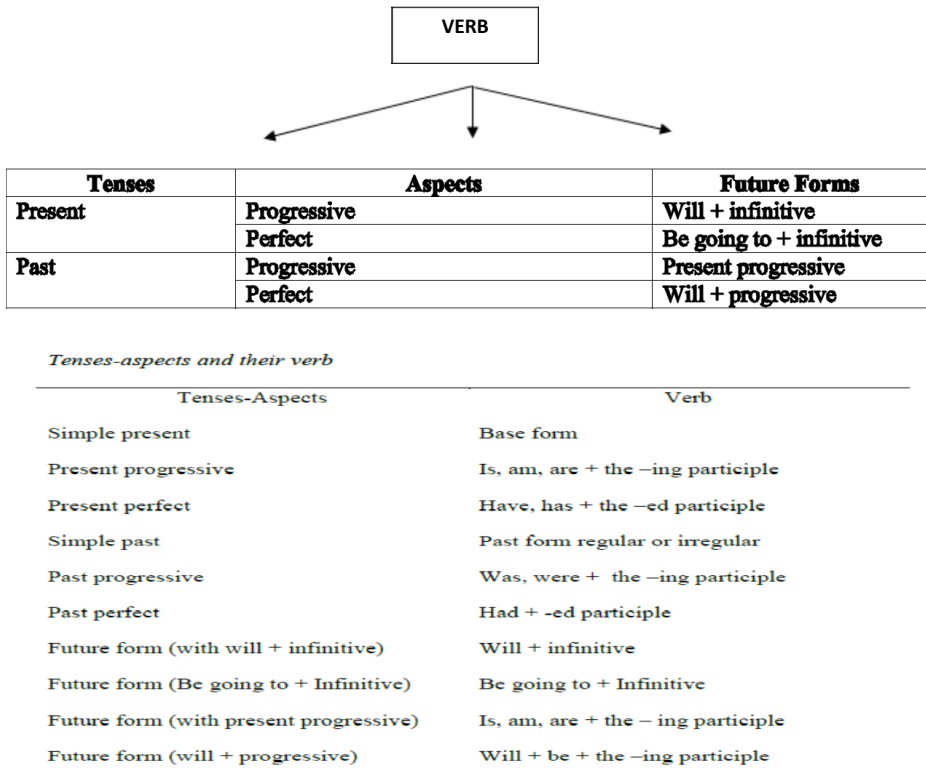


Fig. 1. The conceptual framework

This research also has the potential to contribute to knowledge in accordance with the Unsika Research Roadmap in the fields of Social Humanities, Arts and Culture and Education with the fields of Economics and Human Resources studies through the research topic Education with character and competitiveness. The target according to the Unsika Research Roadmap is educational supporting technology (digital learning) where the application of technology in TBLT equips and helps teachers and students to be more interactive and effective in learning. This is also in accordance with the proponent's research roadmap which emphasizes the use of technology in learning by 2023.

TBLT is expected to be one of the best alternative methods in learning grammar or other learnings because this method is collaborative in nature and stimulates students who want to develop their potential, starting from preparing material, creating groups, looking for problem solving or solving problems. problem, followed by a group presentation which closes with analysis and feedback from the teacher or lecturer as facilitator.

This research focuses on examining the influence of TBLT and technology in Grammar learning which is able to help students to actively participate in the learning process and provide insight into TBLT and technology-based teaching design in learning. The

benefits of this research are expected to be TBLT teaching designs and technology that equip teachers and students in active learning. Finally, this study investigates EFL students' reflection on the impact of TBLT to learn grammar in their classroom. Therefore, the current research endeavours to address the following research questions: *"What are students' responses toward the implementation of TBLT when learning Grammar?"*

2 Methods

This study aims to investigate the impact of TBLT in learning Grammar using on line application in their classrooms. To achieve this, a critical participatory action research method was used (Fig. 2). The use of such research design would help obtain comprehensive answers.

One research question guided this study: What are students' responses to the implementation of TBLT in learning Grammar? To answer the research questions, this research uses action research, as stated by Kemmis, McTaggart, and Nixon, "Action Research focuses on changing people's practices, understanding what they practice and the conditions or circumstances in which these practices are implemented" (2014). Also, they add that "Action research itself is a social practice, a practice that changes the way people practice, which does not ignore theoretical areas that might help participants to start doing from a critically informed view of social life" (2014). Based on this justification, the use of TBLT in learning English Grammar used in this research is a way to change and improve students' grammar learning.

The first author's responsibilities include writing research questions; preparing the associated instruments; determining research paradigms; reviewing the literature review; collecting data; and preparing consent forms. The second and third authors help the first author gather and organize data and find references.



Fig. 2. Cycle of Action Research (Adapted from Kemmis, Mc. Taggart, & Nixon, 2014)

2.1 Participants

The research was carried out in the English Language Education department class by taking class samples covering all population units from students in semester 1 of the

2023/2024 academic year. The number of students who were the subjects of research were 30 people. This research using the TBLT approach was carried out on September 21 – November 16 2023, using qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The research location is the Singaperbangsa University Karawang campus which is located at Jalan Jl. HS. Ronggo Waluyo, Puseurjaya, Telukjambe Timur, Karawang, West Java 41361.

2.2 Instructional Procedure

All respondents underwent three stages of activities, namely Pre-Task activities, Task Cycle, and Language Focus activities (1996) (Fig. 3).

Pre-Task Activities. The lecturer prepares a short text containing several grammar features to be discussed, displayed via online padlet media which can be viewed via a projector or in focus in class. In this initial stage the lecturer introduces topics and assignments through TBLT. Before participants worked on Grammar lessons using the TBLT method, one of the researchers who acted as a lecturer explained the purpose of using TBLT in the classroom. Students are introduced to learning material. Then, the lecturer makes a tenses assignment in the Padlet application.

Task-Cycle Activities. There are three stages in learning grammar through this task-cycle, namely: Task, Planning and Report. First, Task Activities. Students work in groups to choose a specific topic related to the dialogue text and discuss several important points about the chosen topic. Second, Planning Activities. In the second stage, each group concludes their discussion to present to the class. Third, Report Activities. In the third stage, each group sends a representative to report the results of their discussion in front of the class. After all groups presented the results of their discussions using the online Padlet media where the overall results of each group's presentation could be seen, the lecturer explained the conclusions of the short dialogue text.

Language Focus Activities. There are two aspects to this language focus activity, namely: Analysis and Practice. First, Analysis. The lecturer selects several sentences from the text with the target form and explains the rules of the grammar forms which are displayed via the online media Padlet. Second, Practice. Each group is asked to write the conclusion of their text using the target form that has been explained. The lecturer asked several students to report back in front of the class and correct language errors using target forms.



Fig. 3. Framework by Willis (1996)

2.3 Data Collection and Data Analysis

To find out students' responses regarding the impact of TBLT in learning Grammar using an online application, the author collected data from student interviews and test. The author uses structured interviews; This is a type of interview where the researcher has prepared questions before entering the class. Questions for the six interviewees were collected from students' responses about the influence of TBLT in Grammar learning.

To categorize all data, Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis was used. We reviewed the data, took notes, and began grouping the data into categories. The aim of this analysis is to critically identify patterns and develop themes. All data is coded and labeled using highlighted keywords or phrases. The six steps in thematic analysis fluctuate between these phases: familiarize, generate, search, review, define and name, and produce.

First, familiarize: This is the phase to familiarize the researcher with the data collected. The researcher needs to transcribe the data (that is, the interview form needs to be transcribed into written form by typing it and saving it in a computer file) and re-check the data by replaying the data to maintain its authenticity. Then, we read and reread all the data. The reason is to familiarize all aspects of the data with the depth and breadth of content to search for meaning and begin flagging ideas for coding that will be re-examined in the next phase. Second, produce initial coding: We highlight the texts we want to analyze. This coding helps us discover themes or patterns that emerge from the data in relation to the research questions. All relevant data in the form of quotes, sketches, snapshots, illustrations and narratives were coded for further data analysis. Third, look for themes: We list and sort the highlighted data to identify broader data patterns. Searching for key themes from the findings allowed us to analyze the coded data carefully. Fourth, review themes: The researcher re-reads and cross-checks the coded themes against the data set to determine whether they emerge important features of the data, which are relevant to the research question. This theme review allows for

careful and detailed thematic data analysis. Five, defining and naming themes: We developed a refined analysis of each finding theme. We also compiled the scope and focus (essence) of each finding theme. Sixth, Writing: We weaved together and analyzed the data using critical discourse analysis (CDA) because data categorization and coding were incomplete and because thematic analysis is a relatively easy form of qualitative analysis.

Meanwhile, the quantitative method is implemented by referring to calculating numbers based on the results of students' grammar assessments in writing short dialogues. The resulting data is formal data, consisting of grammar component assessment scores through a rubric. The score includes assessment of structure, sentence structure, punctuation, spelling, and sentence parts. The results of the analysis are presented in table form which is explained in narrative, using descriptive data presentation techniques. The scores obtained from the analysis of the five letter components above are then accumulated into a total percentage score (%) which refers to the letter marks according to what applies at Singaperbangsa Karawang University, namely percentage scores of 85-100% (A), 70-84% (B), 55-69% (C), 45-54% (D), and 40-44% (E).

3 Results and Discussion

This section presents the findings and the discussion of the thematic data analysis. In the discussion section, the results are presented on four themes: responses toward the implementation of TBLT in learning Grammar, and the use of on line application (padlet) integrated with TBLT in learning Grammar, and test result of grammar knowledge before and after TBLT. Both quantitative and qualitative data are compared, combined, and discussed.

Based on research, students show a positive response to the influence of TBLT in learning grammar. Data was taken from the results of interviews with 6 students regarding their responses to the influence of TBLT in learning grammar. Most of them don't know about TBLT, but after studying and experimenting, they say this TBLT method is useful, effective, builds interest in learning grammar, helps them to learn grammar, is able to improve their writing skills with correct grammar and acquire new vocabulary.

3.1 The impact of TBLT makes Grammar learning effective

These findings are based on students' experiences that "TBLT learning has a positive impact on the grammar learning process because it focuses on communication, not just understanding grammar, because it involves social interaction and communication, so we can improve our speaking, listening, reading and writing. Apart from that, it can also increase motivation and develop collaboration, negotiation and problem solving skills." (R1)

"Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) may improve the students' grammar competence in the way that it allows attention to grammar through focus on form at some stages of TBLT and facilitates remedial grammar activity". (R2)

"TBLT can have positive impacts on learning English grammar. By engaging in meaningful tasks, learners have opportunities to encounter and use grammar in a contextualized and purposeful manner. This approach promotes a deeper understanding of grammar as it is integrated into authentic communication. It also helps learners develop their fluency, accuracy, and ability to apply grammar rules in real-world situations". (R3)

"TBLT can have a positive impact on English language learning by improving communication abilities, developing problem-solving skills, increasing motivation, providing contextual learning, and promoting collaboration and interaction in language learning." (R4)

"TBLT is able to increase focus on developing students' communication skills, not only grammar itself but several other skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. (R5)

"Learning English grammar through TBLT allows learners to develop a solid understanding of grammar structures in meaningful contexts. It enhances their ability to use grammar naturally and appropriately while focusing on effective communication". (R6)

3.2 Integrated on line application in learning Grammar

One of on line application supporting TBLT in learning Grammar is padlet.com. Students can do the task cycle via padlet.com that can be shown in the classroom while making a presentation as well as be seen back on their mobile phone as a review. Students could analyse back their competence and other group students via padlet.com. The findings related to the use of padlet.com integrated with TBLT in learning grammar are as follows:

"In our opinion, learning grammar integrated with technology like padlet really help us to collecting the tasks of our classmate. But when we make a padlet it's kind of difficult because we never really explored this website." (R1)

"Using technology such as Padlet into grammar learning can be beneficial, as it provides interactive and collaborative opportunities for students to practice and strengthen grammar skills. Makes the learning process more interactive and engaging." (R2)

"Learning grammar integrated with technology, such as using Padlet, can be an effective approach to enhance students' understanding of grammar concepts. Padlet is an online tool that allows for collaborative learning and provides students with authentic ways to use language. Some benefits of using Padlet for grammar instruction include:

1. Engagement: Padlet offers an interactive and immersive learning experience, making it more engaging for students
2. Practice: Padlet allows students to practice and learn new vocabulary and grammar concepts from the meaning to using them in a sentence, providing a comprehensive learning experience
3. Collaboration: Padlet promotes collaboration among students, allowing them to learn from each other and share their knowledge

Overall, integrating grammar instruction with technology, such as Padlet, can lead to a more engaging, personalized, and effective learning experience for students.” (R3)

“Integrating technology, including platforms like Padlet into grammar teaching can be beneficial by making the learning process more interactive and engaging. This can create collaborative activities and multimedia resources, and enhance grammar learning in modern contexts.” (R4)

“Padlet gives an opportunity to the students to learn from each other.” (R5)

“We agreed that Padlet can support us in learning to write. The simple design of Padlet makes it easier for us to use it in our writing activities. Also, Padlet's features can bring us into an interesting learning process. Thus, they can learn independently by utilizing the existing features.” (R6)

3.3 Students' Grammatical Proficiency Before and After using TBLT

Before using TBLT, most students found grammar difficult. Yet, after using TBLT, students find grammar easy enough to understand. To find out the result of grammar proficiency, teacher gave students grammar task through task cycle. The quantitative method is implemented by referring to calculating numbers based on the results of students' grammar assessments in writing short dialogues. The resulting data is formal data, consisting of grammar component assessment scores through a rubric. The score includes assessment of structure, sentence structure, punctuation, spelling, and sentence parts. The results of the analysis are presented in table form which is explained in narrative, using descriptive data presentation techniques. The scores obtained from the analysis of the five letter components above are then accumulated into a total percentage score (%) which refers to the letter marks according to what applies at Singaperbangsa Karawang University, namely percentage scores of 85-100% (A), 70-84% (B), 55-69% (C), 45-54% (D), and 40-44% (E).

Table 1. Students' Average Score

| Model | Before TBLT | After TBLT |
|-----------|-------------|------------|
| Excellent | - | 4 (13%) |
| Good | 3 (10%) | 26 (87%) |
| Fair | 2 (7%) | - |
| Poor | 25 (83%) | - |

From the Table 1, it is clear that before using Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT), students got difficulty in learning Grammar. There are only 10% of the total students to gain good score, and 7% have fair one, while 83% of them were still poor. However, after using TBLT, there is a significant change of students in learning grammar. The data shows that 4% of total students have excellent score after using TBLT, previously no one has. And then, 87% of students have good scores.

4 Conclusion

Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) which is integrated with on line application (padlet.com) can be one of alternative solution in learning and teaching grammar more effectively and efficiently. It is in line with the students' responses above that TBLT affords to help students learn grammar more easily. Especially, in task cycle, students do not only have to know the pattern but also afford to implement it contextually through making a short dialog in a situational conversation both written and spoken. Besides, they find new vocabulary to be improved more. In addition, the result of grammatical test shows that before TBLT implemented, students' score was still low and only 10% had good score and 7% were fair, most of students still had poor score until 83%. However, after TBLT implemented, there is a significant improvement of students' grammar proficiency, it shows that almost 87% students have good score, while the rest has excellent ones. It is hoped that this research provides a significant contribution for other researchers in implementing teaching and learning grammar through TBLT.

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