RESEARCH ARTICLE

Evaluating a task-based lesson plan: A case study of Turkish EFL learners

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Abstract
The world has seen a rise in the demand for foreign language instruction in recent years, and traditional textbook-based teaching strategies are unlikely to satisfy the demands of today's students. As a result, the interest in the Task-Based Language Teaching (TBL) approach has increased. This article describes and assesses a newly created, task-based English course that will be incorporated into the curricula. The lesson was designed, pilot-tested and revised before being introduced. This study investigates students' reactions to a task-based EFL lesson at a Turkish state university. Thirty-two Turkish preparatory students (20 female and 12 male) participated in the study. Learner impressions were investigated through oral and written data elicited through a questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, and audio recordings of the interaction in the task. The data analysis shows that despite initial hesitations, a TBL lesson brings variety into the EFL classroom; learners prefer learner-directed lessons with more opportunities to express themselves. They also confessed that their academic needs were sufficiently met and felt more independent. The study provides a model TBL lesson for educators to benefit from and inspires them to design their lesson programmes by integrating task-based activities. These results validate the potential of TBL for language learning. Thus, it should be considered an indelible part of EFL syllabi and courses.

Introduction

Language teachers today understand the importance of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which helps students grasp the language in context and develop successful outside of the classroom, as well as the value and applicability of the student-centred, hands-on, functional, and adaptable approach (Shank & Cleary, 1994). Many facets of education have altered as a result. The teaching of second languages is not an exception to this paradigm change. In this sense, TBL has emerged as a popular approach in foreign language education, drawing the interest of educators, curriculum

designers, and researchers. Prabhu, regarded as the first significant figure who brought TBL into the ELT world (1987), describes a task as "an activity which allowed teachers to control and regulate that process, and required learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought" (p. 24).

TBL achieves its primary goal by assigning students tasks where they need to negotiate meaning with one another. It implies that although students should have an objective to meet after the task, learning is primarily facilitated by the process rather than the outcome. Since communication is the foundation of language learning, tasks like "reading a map and giving directions, making a phone call, writing a letter and reading a set of instructions and assembling a toy" offer opportunities for meaning-making (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 238). In short, the tasks are expected to encourage the four language skills by being regarded as the target language's input as well as output (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). As a result, TBL uses realia, including the internet, television, and newspapers, and thus, learners are exposed to the target language through authentic materials (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

TBL has grown in popularity over the past few years and is advised as the future of ELT. Research has shown that TBL is effective for language learning, and more teachers across the globe are implementing it in their classrooms (Branden et al., 2009). In the history of foreign language instruction, tasks have taken on greater significance as the focus has shifted toward learner-centred and teacher-guided methods. This is because tasks give students meaningful contexts in which to use L1. The language tasks that form this methodology's foundation are crucial in language learning objectives because they aim to establish an environment where learners can engage in meaningful communication to support language acquisition.

In traditional learning environments, such as audio-lingual and grammar-translation, the language itself is the main focus rather than the meaning it expresses or how it is interpreted and used. The teacher's goal is for the students to learn the language's new vocabulary and grammatical rules. In order to help students become more proficient communicators, TBL is gaining popularity since it is a student-centred approach that helps them learn language forms, meanings, and functions by allowing them to engage in activities relevant to their everyday lives. According to Albino (2017), students perceive the connection between TBL and improved speaking ability and

vocabulary knowledge positively. As Chen and Wang (2019) have noted, TBL supports students' learning processes, helps them become more autonomous and capable of self-regulation, and improves their cognitive abilities from a sociocultural and SLA perspective. Carless (2012) claims that TBL is more successful in higher education in this regard. Given these, TBL serves as a viewpoint within the CLT framework, representing real-world problem-solving situations for educational objectives. Harmer (2001) advocates TBL by stating that students acquire the target language through task performance or problem-solving rather than learning language structures and their purposes.

A TBL program is organised around tasks chosen based on the findings of the needs analysis and arranged in a syllabus. Students' ultimate, program-ending goals are these primary tasks or the task types developed from them. By completing a series of pedagogic tasks to provide them with the language practice they need to complete the course's final objectives or target tasks, eventually, learners in a TBL program improve their language proficiency as they strive to master the course's main tasks. The features, conditions, and complexity of pedagogic tasks are changed to promote specific forms of language development (Norris, 2009). For instance, input provision, collaborative production, meaning negotiation, noticing and awareness optimisation, and feedback are alternately emphasised.

The assessment of program participants and program evaluation are the last phases in a TBL setting (Norris, 2009). Although these last steps are essential to TBL (Long & Crookes, 1993; Long & Norris, 2000; Norris, 2009), descriptions of TBL implementation hardly ever mention them (for a discussion of the difficulties in program evaluation, see Alderson and Beretta, 1992; Weir & Roberts, 1994; Ellis, 2003). While some researchers have provided examples of evaluations of TBL curricula (McDonough & Chaikitmongkol, 2007; Towell & Tomlinson, 1999; Van den Branden, 2006), others have offered frameworks and justifications to help systematise the design and implementation of performance assessment in an effort to integrate assessment and evaluation in TBL (Bachman, 2002; Byrnes, 2002; Byrnes at al., 2006; Mislevy et al., 2002). These studies used a range of qualitative instruments (diaries/learning notebooks, questionnaires, and observations) to evaluate the participants' experiences, perceived

language proficiency, and language results. The paucity of research in this field suggests that more program assessment models are desperately needed, with an analysis of the best instruments for conducting evaluations and a deeper comprehension of how to carry out potential post-evaluation programmatic adjustments. By offering an assessment of a TBL program that includes quantitative, qualitative, and comparative measures of its effectiveness, this article demonstrates an attempt to close this research gap.

Literature Review

Task-based learning

Task-Based Learning (TBL) was introduced by Prabhu in 1987 and further developed by scholars such as Nunan (1989) and Willis (1996) in response to shortcomings in traditional language teaching methods like the PPP (presentation, practice, production) model. TBL addresses criticisms aimed at the arbitrary selection of grammar points and the inadequacy of production stages that often do not align with learners' needs. Unlike conventional approaches, TBL emphasises the use of natural language through meaningful tasks that allow students to leverage their existing linguistic capabilities. This method prioritises the outcomes of tasks over the accuracy of language form. Although some studies (Ellis et al., 2002; Shintani & Ellis, 2010; Zhao & Ellis, 2022) have focused on tasks that invoke specific linguistic features, TBL proponents endorse unfocused tasks that foster organic language acquisition, aligning more closely with the principles of communicative approaches to language instruction.

The concept of a task in Task-Based Learning (TBL) has been defined by several scholars. Prabhu (1987) sees a task as an activity requiring learners to use information to achieve a specific outcome, while Nunan (1989) describes it as classroom work that engages learners in the target language with a focus on meaning rather than grammatical form. Willis (1996) emphasises that tasks involve using the target language for communicative goals to achieve tangible results. Despite the shared emphasis on communication over strict linguistic structure, the implementation of TBL faces challenges, including teachers' lack of understanding of tasks and an overreliance on grammar-based instruction. Learners accustomed to traditional methods may struggle to grasp task purposes, especially with low language proficiency. Additional structural

issues, such as large class sizes and inadequate resources, further complicate TBL application. Consequently, some scholars advocate for reevaluating or discontinuing TBL in certain educational contexts (Littlewood, 2014).). Willis also agrees with different definitions but highlights, not the definition but the primary purpose by stressing that "tasks aim to create a real purpose for language use and to provide a natural context for language study" (Willis, 1996, p.1), which will also be taken as the primary focus for this study.

Task-Based Learning (TBL) can present several challenges in educational settings, as noted by Ellis et al. (2020). Teachers often struggle to grasp the nature of tasks and remain overly concerned with grammar, leading them to depend on explicit language instruction. Moreover, students who are accustomed to traditional teaching methods may find it difficult to understand task objectives and struggle with assignments due to low linguistic proficiency, often reverting to their first language. Structural issues, such as large class sizes and limited resources, further complicate the implementation of TBL, prompting some scholars to question its viability (Littlewood, 2014). Nonetheless, educators retain the autonomy to adapt TBL to their contexts, and it is important not to disregard its methodological advantages in resource selection and syllabus design (Ellis, 2024). Contextual factors are essential for effective TBL application, not as a reason to abandon the approach but as indicators for applying flexible techniques to address real-world teaching challenges (Ellis, 2018; Long, 2014). Overall, TBL promotes a holistic approach to language learning, encouraging the integration of various language skills to meet communicative needs and fostering joint meaning-making among learners.

Task-Based Learning (TBL), as described by Nunan (2015), emphasises the importance of communicative language teaching by prioritising meaning over language structure in classroom activities. The central aim is to immerse students in realistic language use that extends beyond basic objectives, facilitating tasks relevant to everyday life, such as ordering food or navigating directions. While scholars have varying definitions, several core characteristics of TBL are widely recognised: a focus on real-world applications, a learner-centred approach, a balance between naturalistic language use and accuracy, and the necessity of teacher intervention to maximise task

effectiveness (Swan, 2005). TBL employs authentic communicative tasks and can incorporate post-task activities to enhance language accuracy. Moreover, tasks can draw from diverse sources, including written texts, recorded data, and students' personal experiences, thereby engaging learners through various methods like games and interviews.

The fundamental principle of task-based learning (TBL) emphasises experiential learning, suggesting that language skills are acquired through engagement and interaction (Dewey, 1938). In this context, the focus should be on the meaning conveyed rather than solely on the tasks being performed. Participants should be encouraged to employ a range of lexical and structural choices to express their thoughts, reflecting authentic language use as seen in non-academic contexts. Various task types are recognised, including problem-solving, decision-making, opinion exchange, and creative sharing of personal experiences, as well as topic-based tasks such as listing and comparing, alongside both real-world and pedagogic tasks (Pica et al., 1993; Willis & Willis, 2007; Nunan, 1989; Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Teacher and learner roles

Task-based learning (TBL) is rooted in the principle of experiential learning, positing that language acquisition occurs through engagement and interaction, as noted by Dewey (1938). The emphasis is placed on meaning rather than merely task execution, with participants encouraged to utilise diverse lexical and structural options to articulate their thoughts, mirroring natural language use in real-life settings. TBL encompasses a variety of task types, including problem-solving, decision-making, opinion exchange, and sharing personal experiences, as well as topic-centric tasks such as listing and comparing. This approach incorporates both real-world tasks and pedagogical tasks, as outlined by scholars including Pica et al. (1993), Willis & Willis (2007), Nunan (1989), and Richards & Rodgers (2014).

Implementation of TBL

Task-based learning (TBL) offers an innovative framework for teachers. In TBL, the content of lessons is determined through central tasks rather than pre-determined subject matter. Effective lesson design is essential in TBL, focusing on three key phases of language acquisition. The pre-task phase helps students recall relevant vocabulary and

introduce new terms. Teachers provide clear guidance and examples to prepare students for the assignment. Activities during this phase aim to scaffold learning and enhance task completion, thereby fostering language acquisition.

The task cycle comprises three key components: group or pair work, reporting, and teacher support. During the planning phase, students engage in conversational lessons and formulate messages while the teacher monitors their progress and offers assistance. Students then prepare short reports on their tasks, rehearsing in their groups and seeking clarification from the teacher as needed. In the reporting phase, students present their findings to the class, with the teacher determining the presentation order and providing feedback. This stage emphasizes the importance of reflection, comparison, and addressing communication challenges, ultimately aiming to enhance learners' language skills through repeated practice and support.

The task cycle emphasises the structure of naturally occurring language, comprising two main stages: analysis and practice. In the analysis stage, the instructor highlights significant passages for students to examine, encouraging exploration of language forms and their meanings through activities that raise awareness, such as identifying relevant vocabulary and verb tenses. The practice stage follows, where the teacher selects language areas tailored to students' needs, providing exercises to build confidence and vocabulary. An optional follow-up allows learners to revisit similar tasks, identify patterns, and provide feedback on their experiences, further enhancing their engagement with the language.

Advantages and disadvantages of TBL

Task-Based Learning (TBL) presents numerous benefits for English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners by fostering active participation and enhancing motivation among students (Willis, 1996). This approach enables students to express their understanding through actions and aligns teaching more closely with their needs. TBL facilitates the application of procedural knowledge in real-world contexts, enriching students' comprehension of academic concepts and providing a basis for developing future discourse. Collaborative tasks encourage students to engage towards common objectives, allowing diverse perspectives to contribute to meaningful dialogues. The nature of these tasks results in outcomes suitable for group

evaluation, where students can assess their peers' work and reflect critically on their own contributions. Thus, TBL nurtures reflective practice and promotes critical awareness in learners (Ki, 2000).

The advantages of TBL can be summarised (Hişmanoğlu, 2011). Task-Based Learning (TBL) provides students with authentic language exposure, utilising various forms of input such as teacher talk, peer interactions, and texts for analysis. This approach allows for the production of spontaneous and meaningful language, even if not grammatically perfect. TBL encourages learners to engage in real-like tasks, enabling them to experiment with language through turn-taking, drafting, and revising reports during different task stages. By involving students in problem-solving activities, TBL motivates them to actively read, write, and listen, enhancing their awareness and reflection skills. Additionally, the approach enables students to focus on language form while balancing the natural chaos of language use, allowing for individualised progress without the constraints of a pre-selected language focus, in contrast to traditional PPP methods.

Task-Based Learning (TBL) has been recognised for its significant pedagogical advantages in promoting communication and authentic language use in language classrooms. However, it also faces notable criticisms. Ellis (2003) identifies three primary theoretical issues with task-based teaching: the challenge of teaching language purely as communication, the restricted nature of task-based communication, and the cultural relativity inherent in task-based approaches. Despite these concerns, the pedagogical value of tasks in fostering communication remains largely undisputed (Ellis, 2003, p. 328).

- TBL may be less effective for systematic language teaching in EFL contexts due to limited class time and lack of out-of-class exposure, suggesting better suitability for ESL environments.

- Requiring instant communication can overwhelm students, as they are expected to navigate their interlanguage and implement strategies like paraphrasing without prior training.

- TBL tends to favour more outspoken students, potentially alienating quieter individuals from group interactions.

- Students accustomed to traditional, teacher-centered methods may resist the lack of formal instruction and modeling in TBL.

- While interaction in TBL can be meaningful, it does not ensure grammatical accuracy, as learners prioritize task completion over correctness.

- TBL is aimed at providing a more effective language learning framework compared to PPP, but this is often not achieved in practice.

- Key aspects of TBL, such as task types and evaluation criteria, remain under-explored, risking ineffective implementation if applied without caution.

- The integration of TBL into school settings is insufficiently discussed, especially in challenging environments like crowded classrooms and under-resourced schools, alongside a lack of teacher training.

Finally, TBL proposes that language should be taught by connecting language learning to real-world situations, which may not be ideal for all contexts.

Recent studies

The studies looking into TBL and relevant to this study will be presented in this section. The effects of TBL on adult L2 learning were examined in Otake's (2016) study. It was discovered that both cognitive and non-cognitive factors influenced L2 learning success with TBL. Although it was unable to promote people's cognitive variables directly, TBL may have supported "explicit learning" and "extremely high motivation" as "non-cognitive variables." The input from TBL evolved into an "immersion experience" for effective language acquisition. The results confirmed that TBL aided in the accomplishment of adult L2 learners.

Ismaili (2012) investigated how TBL affected EFL students' speaking abilities. Sixty university students took part. TBL was used to instruct the experimental group for eight weeks. A speaking rubric was used to evaluate the oral proficiency of the students both at the start and finish of the course. A five-point Likert-type questionnaire gathered information on students' attitudes regarding TBL. The results demonstrated that students' post-test scores were higher. The findings show that TBL is a valuable approach for enhancing their communicative competence and that authentic materials were helpful. The assignments, in the opinion of the students, were inspiring and helpful

in expanding their vocabulary. The students preferred group and real-world activities over activities from the course book.Zhaochun (2015) contrasted the PPP and TBL teaching approaches to examine the impact of TBL on writing achievement. One group of Chinese second-grade English primary university students studied language through TBL, while the other group studied through PPP. A 16-week English writing course served as the treatment. They completed eight writing assignments, comprising six essay assignments, a pre-test, and a post-test. The findings demonstrated that TBL is useful for improving students' writing performance and competency in English writing classes in Chinese EFL settings.

Chen (2018) carried out a study to look into the connection between listening motivation among English majors and TBL. The study aimed to validate TBL's impact on students' motivation for listening and their achievement in listening. The study also demonstrated how TBL affected motivation across language proficiency levels. Lastly, the impact of TBL on students' motivation to learn English was investigated. High motivation levels sparked learners' interest in language learning and helped them complete tasks by lowering anxiety.

Alvarado and his colleagues (2023) analysed how teachers felt about using the TBL approach in public schools. 106 English teachers voluntarily responded to investigate EFL teachers' opinions regarding TBL instruction in classroom practice. Most English teachers stated that they benefit from TBL in their language classes. However, few teachers would use the approach in their classrooms due to inadequate texts and the challenge of large class sizes. This study is valuable because it demonstrates the opinions and comprehension of English as a foreign language instructor.

Sholeh (2023) provides a comprehensive picture of the difficulties and achievements related to the application of TBL by obtaining data from teacher interviews to understand TBL in language learning thoroughly. The study makes a strong case for TBL's effectiveness by combining theoretical ideas, real-world strategies, and educators' experiences. Sholeh (2023) advocates that teachers can successfully incorporate TBL into their teaching methods by providing teachers with information and techniques.

In another recent study (Almanza Molina, 2024), seventh-grade students' English-speaking abilities are studied to determine whether they are enhanced through gamification as a teaching strategy using a TBL approach. Based on students' preferences, a set of four tasks with game elements was proposed and then put into practice, and the data gathered from surveys, audio recordings, and field notes was assessed. It revealed that students gained confidence through gamified tasks and improved their fluency and pronunciation.

Al Kamli and Almalki (2024) conducted a mixed-methods study to examine difficulties experienced by 93 male and female EFL instructors in tertiary settings through TBL. The study's conclusions indicate that although EFL teachers demonstrated a solid understanding of engaging tasks, they still require more focused training on applying learning-oriented assessment. Additionally, the study demonstrates that the teachers encountered institutional, pedagogical, practical, and attitudinal barriers that hindered their ability to implement tasks better.

The assessment of TBL and its integration into the current curriculums are some of the crucial steps in Task-Based Learning (TBL). Nevertheless, they are often overlooked in discussions of TBL implementation. While some studies have provided examples of evaluating TBL curricula, a limited amount of research focuses on systematic design and integration of assessment within TBL. Various qualitative methods have been utilised to assess participants' experiences and language proficiency, highlighting the need for more comprehensive program assessment models. This article aims to address the existing gap by presenting a TBL lesson design and its evaluation that incorporates both quantitative and qualitative measures of effectiveness and recommendations for future evaluations and adjustments.

Research questions

The study findings will be guided by these research questions.

1. What are the preparatory English students' opinions about the TBL lesson?

2. How does the TBL lesson plan influence the preparatory English students' classroom performance?

3. How satisfied are the preparatory English students with the task and pre-task stages of the lesson?

Methodology

This study applies TBL to improve motivation and learning by collecting data through questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and audio recordings and assessing the TBL lesson taught. According to Gibbs (1995), educational development aims to enhance teachers' methods in the classroom. Additionally, altering a lecturer's conceptions of teaching and practices accordingly and testing other methods, such as TBL, helps a lecturer better understand her students and their accomplishments for "a change essential for sustained pedagogical development" (Gibbs, 1995, p.18).

Participants

This lesson will be taught at a Turkish preparatory university class, where students must attend at least one year of full-time English classes to pass a final exam at the end of the year. The school follows a modular system covering grammar, vocabulary, listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The class consists of 32 students; 20 female (62,5%) and 12 male (37,5%). They are all native Turkish speakers. Their ages vary from 18 to 25. Their levels also range from low intermediate to intermediate. In general, the group loves activities that make them interact. They tend not to focus on producing correct language. They know complex grammar structures, but they do not reflect them on their performances; it is only at the knowledge level. This is also valid for their lexis knowledge. In reading, they can understand the whole text if it is not written in academic language.

Planned lesson

In this study, a TBL lesson was designed, implemented, and evaluated. The syllabus and the lesson materials (the coursebook in use) used in the School of Foreign Languages rely mainly on the PPP model. However, considering the benefits of TBL, which focuses on accurately using the target language, the preparatory students' attitudes were examined by the designed TBL lesson researchers (See Appendix 1 for the detailed lesson plan and lesson materials).

Lesson Objectives

1. To find out whether TBL works well with Intermediate students,

2. To find out whether they can utilise their previous knowledge without pre-teaching any language focus,

3. To find out whether students will be able to end up with a product,

4. To find out students' attitudes towards a task-based lesson,

5. To find out how students communicate when the focus is mostly on meaning,

6. To find out if having a real-life purpose motivates learners and

7. To determine whether TBL helps learners find their strengths and weaknesses.

Methods of Evaluation

Self-evaluation: The lesson will be recorded, and a questionnaire will be filled out.

Student evaluation: The students in my lesson will be asked to complete a questionnaire to express their feelings about the experience.

Data collection and analysis

The data for this study were collected in the spring semester of the 2023–2024 school year. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected by conducting a survey, semi-structured interviews and audio recordings for this investigation. In order to assess learners' reactions to task-based learning, the survey had three sections. It was adapted from Nunan's (2004) communicative task evaluation checklist. Using a five-point rating system went from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". Students' opinions regarding their own performance in the TBL lesson were discussed in the first section. Secondly, they were asked to assess the lesson itself in general. Lastly, learners were asked to share their justifications, responses, and thoughts regarding the lesson (See Table 1).

The survey was used to gather the quantitative data, and SPSS (Version 21) was used to analyse the answers statistically. According to Munn and Drever (1990), answers become more dependable when participants answer the same questions similarly. Nunan (1989) asserts that questionnaires can be used to investigate any facet of the teaching and learning process. By examining these questionnaires, teachers also

have the opportunity to learn about the effect of teaching strategies they employ in the classroom.

Analysing survey data for students' perceptions of the task was the first step in the data analysis process to determine how students felt about TBL. The interview and audio-recorded data were typewritten. The researcher reviewed the data several times to become acquainted with it as a first step. After that, the transcription and coding were completed. The coded data from the survey and the interviews were grouped under themes and sub-themes to present the findings. As noted by Creswell and Poth (2016), findings from several data sources were triangulated to support the evidence and ensure its reliability. Furthermore, a peer-reviewing procedure was carried out with the assistance of two colleagues. Quotations from the interview transcriptions were used as proof of themes and subthemes for the validity of the qualitative data, along with a peer review or debriefing of the data.

A qualitative content analysis approach was used to analyse the qualitative data gathered through interviews and audio recordings to fill in any gaps the quantitative data might have missed. There are multiple steps involved in this process. With the aid of the recordings, the data were first transcribed. The researcher then carefully reviewed these transcripts to group the data into pertinent categories and offer a meaningful reading of the examined material. The interviewees' answers to questions that emerged during the sessions and those posed during the semi-structured interviews also helped with the data classification. The interviewees' perspectives on pertinent data were summed up, contrasted, and illustrated using these quotes during the analysis stage. All of the interviews were conducted in Turkish and were translated into English. The participants were assured that only pseudonyms would be used for ethical purposes and that their identities would remain private.

Results

Survey results

32 translation and interpreting students completed the questionnaire to rate their performance in the TBL lesson and the lesson itself with a five-point Likert-type survey (totally disagree 1, disagree 2, I don't know 3, agree 4, totally agree 5). Table 1 below

can be interpreted as a satisfying lesson based on the learners' responses. Most of them said they enjoyed the task and found the lesson design interesting.

Table 1.

Survey Results

Part I. My performance	Mean
1. I have cooperated in group work.	5
2. I have solved the language-related problems by checking some resources (dictionary, book, website)	4.4
3. I have communicated mostly in English.	5
4. I have contributed sufficiently to the final product.	4
5. I can ask a question to a friend when I don't understand.	4.2
6. I have made suggestions to the group.	4.6
7. I have remembered words related to food and cooking.	4.4
8. I have used sequencers to give the instructions (First, next, then, after that, etc).	4.8
9. I am happy with my group's final product.	4.6
Part 2. The lesson	**Mean**
1. The lesson topic was useful.	5
2. The lesson held my attention.	5
3. The lesson was learner-centred.	4.8
4. The instructions were clear and easy to understand.	5
5. I enjoyed working with my friends.	4.2
6. The teacher gave us a chance to ask our questions.	5
7. The teacher has allowed us to practise the language focus.	5
8. The pace of the lesson was good.	4.6
9. I found the teacher's feedback helpful at the end of the activities.	5
10. The lesson was staged well.	4.6

However, some of them stated that they were shocked and felt stressed by the burden of the activity without being explicitly taught anything. In general, the lesson went well, and students worked collaboratively to produce the final version of the task. They were also willing to share their menu and were excited about choosing the best one for the jury.

The questionnaire results also show that the teacher's instructions and the aims of the lesson stages were clear. They found the task interesting and engaging. Students

confessed that they had realised their strengths (group work, taking notes, related) and weaknesses (related lexis, presentation skills). Students' needs were evident from the questions they asked in the planning and reporting phases of the task cycle. One of the weaknesses of the procedure was that as they did not focus on the language, the accuracy of their sentences failed, and their lack of lexical knowledge also challenged them.

Semi-structured interview results

At the end of the lesson, students were asked whether they would participate in a complementary interview to discuss their responses to the survey. Thirty per cent of the participants confirmed and stated their views about the lesson (n=10). Students loved experiencing participating in a popular competition task. They were grouped randomly. Apart from the language focus part, the lesson was fully student-centred. The teacher monitored students and observed how much they could do when they enjoyed the activity. The teacher challenged them by asking them to present their work in spoken and written forms, and they were happy and proud in the end. Some of the student statements are given below.

I enjoyed the lesson; I felt like I was in the Masterchef competition. S5

I am really pleased with myself and my teammates as we have spoken only English and everybody in the group was so responsive and involved throughout. S8

I found this lesson more learner-centred genuinely because the lesson was structured around what we can do and know. S9

The lesson was all about what we have produced in the end, so everybody loved it because it was so much more learner-centred. S10

I hope the lessons are always like this (like a task, competition). I was very busy doing the tasks, so I never got bored. S2

Following the instructions made us reach the final product. S7

I found the lesson enjoyable and useful because I can use the structures (transition words, adjectives, quantifiers) elsewhere. S6

Some students were triggered by the competition, which motivated them to show their best. However, in the groups, they cooperated very well and nominated themselves

for different jobs (scribbler, vocabulary finder, presenter). They used many structures and vocabulary that were the lesson's focus. They had an apparent goal for the task, so their motivation was high, and they used only the target language throughout the task. They stated they can now give a recipe more effectively in different forms after the lesson's language analysis and practice stages. Another point worth mentioning is that if they did not get on well as quickly as possible, they would lose time, not finish it on time, and fall behind. If the responses were checked, one member from a group found the time allowance more than enough (they were asked to rehearse for their presentation). However, the other group struggled to decide many things about the task (even the dish's name) and wasted some time there. Some students were unhappy with some partners, which affected their motivation to finish the task on time.

> *Actually, everything was very good, but I felt like I worked harder in this lesson.*
>
> *I did not like my partner.S3*
>
> *The time given for some stages was tight (writing instructions).S1*
>
> *We had a longer time than needed for some stages (writing instructions).S9*

Audio-recorded data results

Students' interactions were recorded and transcribed, which confirms that they adapted to the lesson well and used all their linguistic repertoire to complete the task. The tasks were designed to make students discover the structures implicitly. The task was meaningful for them because it gave them a purpose. The students and I thought the task was worthwhile even though it lasted about two lessons (85 minutes).

Sample 1

> *S1: How do we serve it?*
>
> *S2: In a big plate, I put the fish, and I put potato and onion on it.*
>
> *S3:I feel it like a big dish, and I just add some salad, and serve it.*
>
> *S4: I can't touch the fish, your fingers smell fishy. (Group 2)*

Sample 2

> *S1: Wash your hands.*

S2: And after you you wear gloves.

S1: Okay.

S3: Clean please.

S4: Then wash your fish.

S1: Wash your fish.

S2: Cut fish and

S5: Carrots (Group 3)

Task-based interaction had a few notable and unique features (Seedhouse, 1999). After giving the students assignments, the teacher stepped back to let them handle the interaction independently. If the students faced difficulties with the task, they could seek assistance from the teachers as they circulated the classroom, observed the interactions, and occasionally stepped in to help. To complete a task, the students communicated with one another; the task's completion -rather than the language used- was the pedagogical and interactional focus. Participants followed a turn-taking procedure, which was appropriate for effectively completing the task. As seen in task-based interaction samples 1 and 2, the participants collaboratively shaped the interaction's trajectory.

As students were noting and talking simultaneously, repetitions were common. The scribbler requested repetition when they did not yet complete noting the first piece of information, and the other participants oriented to her/him, and they all backtracked. As the extracts above showed, speakers tended to minimise the linguistic forms. There was a general tendency to use as little language as possible and to produce only what was required to complete the task. Turns were typically straightforward and brief syntactic constructions (Duff, 1986). Task-based interaction tended to result in highly indexical or implicit and context-bound interaction. Therefore, it was difficult for readers to understand if they were unfamiliar with the participants' tasks. Therefore, the task interaction appeared unimpressive when read in a transcript (Seedhouse, 1999).

These samples showed that TBL provides students with more learning opportunities than an upside-down PPP. It allows students to experience the target language regardless of studying it before. The data results and the researcher's

observation showed high satisfaction with the assigned tasks, and the students confirmed that the lesson's tasks aided their learning.

Evaluation and reflection

The assignment of creating a recipe sparked full participation from the students. They concentrated on meanings and put their ideas into words. There was a noticeable improvement in the students' performances in all stages of the task and a sense of alertness after the task was finished, which allowed me to keep the students' attention for longer. They were asked in lighthearted conversation whether they enjoyed the task and whether there was anything that could have been done better, and if so, how. A few students, for example, stressed that they felt proud because they used the target language during the whole task. Another group commented that they had the feeling of "not doing any grammar but still studying grammar" in the lesson for the first time.

Throughout the assignment, the teacher noted the students' responses to assess the task by seeing how it functioned and whether it fulfilled the objectives. From firsthand observations, it was noticeable that allowing students to express their opinions and make their own decisions increased their self-confidence. They seemed self-satisfied for successfully completing a challenging task. Some said they felt ecstatic to give a recipe like a native speaker on a food show.

More precisely, some male students who do not often participate in the lessons came up with the most creative ideas and were eager to express themselves. They also nominated themselves to present their final version of their dish. However, the analysis reveals that learners often minimised linguistic complexity during task-based interactions, opting for straightforward and brief constructions (Duff, 1986). This tendency leads to highly implicit and context-dependent interactions, making them challenging for outsiders to comprehend without prior knowledge of the tasks. Consequently, the resulting transcripts of these interactions may appear unremarkable (Seedhouse, 1999), as discussed in the analysis of the audio-recorded data section.

The importance of tasks based on students' responses to real-world events should be highlighted here. Firstly, they help students see English as a language they can use to express themselves, not just the narrow range of textbook information.

Second, learners unconsciously become exposed to the target language and begin to perceive language as more than just a linguistic entity subject to rules. Instead, students might associate the target language as a practical tool for expressing and exchanging ideas. Thus, a teacher can better design a task-based lesson by considering their student's areas of interest to raise their motivation and performance.

Discussion

This study examines how preparatory students feel about learning through a TBL lesson. Different patterns of interaction focusing on the student rather than the teacher talk only is vital for language learning (Al Kamli &Almalki, 2024). For the lesson based on TBL, students left insightful comments on nearly all tasks, expressing their satisfaction. According to Willis (1996) and Chen (2018), well-selected tasks encourage learners to engage in full interactions, which boosts motivation. Results indicate that students find presentations a very motivating task type. Although students left very positive comments on assignments, it is impossible to ignore the significance that they placed on presentations. Thus, students found great motivation from their presentations, which is a type of task. In survey and interview results, students only wanted to write about the tasks and how much they enjoyed their interactive language classes.

The study's findings were presented and guided by the research questions. Students had to read the assignment carefully in order to prepare a signature dish for a cookbook that was going to be published by a popular American master chef. Thus, they had to decide every detail of the task (recipe, ingredients, presentation, appearance, story) and employed all their linguistic repertoire to complete the task (cooking verbs, food nouns, quantifiers, sequencers, present tenses, etc.). According to Willis (1996), "students are reacting to the content and processing the text for meaning in order to complete the goals in all these tasks" (p. 30). A few studies (Al Kamli & Almalki, 2024; Alvarado et al., 2023; Chen, 2018; Lightbown & Spada, 1993) posit that communicative need is one of the elements that raise motivation in learning. Thus, it can be tracked that the students prepared and made their presentations with high motivation and expressed their extreme satisfaction with it.

Conclusion

This article examines whether the designed TBL lesson is viable and can be used in any EFL curriculum, from general-purpose EFL and ESL language courses to ESP courses at a private college or higher education settings. The results presented here are specific to EFL language classes at a state university in Türkiye. Both participating teachers and researchers benefited greatly from the development, application, and assessment of the tasks, which informed the teacher in terms of the weaknesses and strengths of learners, as well as how to address these weaknesses best. The study also emphasised that teachers can take control of their classroom by designing interesting, engaging, real-life-like tasks. Designing such a task can be daunting but also beneficial and fulfilling for a teacher. The teacher in this study attempted to improve the effectiveness of her lesson with a task-based lesson through critical, systematic examination and reflection. The teacher's perspective on TBL also improved due to her effective TBL lesson design. In conclusion, this article also sets an example for other educators willing to change the cycle of PPP lesson flow, design more learner-centred lessons, motivate their students by giving them tasks with clear outcomes and finally bring variety to their classrooms. The limitations of this study should be acknowledged due to the limited sample size and lack of task familiarity. Thus, we cannot draw broad conclusions about the Turkish EFL context or Turkish language teachers. We also note that the teacher only had two lessons to observe, which produced intriguing descriptive information about what happened in the classroom. However, many issues raised here are similar to those raised by earlier studies and will have broader applicability in the Turkish context. Seeing more TBL lessons would have given us a better foundation for generalisations. Despite these drawbacks, this research still contributes to our knowledge of the attitudes of students and teachers who integrate TBL into their EFL lesson plans.

Teaching with tasks is a popular approach, and research has shown that there are consequences to using these tasks in a classroom setting. Numerous studies have recommended using tasks in language classrooms, arguing that students become more motivated due to assigned tasks. Even though some researchers cautiously approach it regarding efficacy, TBL has come a long way in the last thirty years and is still a potentially helpful method worth-employing for many ESL/EFL teachers.

Ethics Committee Permission Information

This research study was conducted with the Research Ethics Committee approval of Gaziantep Islam, Science and Technology University, dated 03.04.202 and numbered 240000697.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

TBL Lesson Plan

AIMS

Main Aims By the end of the lesson, the learners will have presented a signature dish recipe for applying to a cooking competition.

Supporting Aims By the end of the lesson, the learners will have reviewed vocabulary related to food and cooking.

PROCEDURE

Time	Stage	Stage aims	Procedure	Interaction	Materials
13:00-13:05 5 (5)	**1. Pre-task**	Warm-up/ Generate interest in the topic and motivate Ss	Show pictures of some food and make them guess what they are going to study today. Ask sts to discuss the questions (4) What's your favourite homemade dish? What are the ingredients? How do you make it? How does it taste? How do you serve it? How often do you cook it? Elicit answers from the students.	T – Ss Pairs S-S T-Ss	Powerpoint slideshow with related pictures & questions
13: 05-13:28 23 (28)	**2. Task Cycle /Task** **Task Cycle/Plan**	Review and practise lexis about food and cooking. Write the different stages of a recipe. Edit the language of the recipe. Ensure students produce a well-written recipe.	Show them the jury members of Masterchef in 3 different countries (the UK, USA and Turkey) and elicit Masterchef competition and then show them the competition worksheet. You are going to design a signature dish to apply for Masterchef. You are going to work in a group of 4(depending on the attendance on the day) to come up with a dish. Stage 1: Decide the name of the dish, ingredients, cooking tools, level of difficulty, time and special features **(Task phase)** (5) Feedback: can you stop and give me feedback about what you have done. (2) Stage 2: Write the instructions (10) **(Task phase)**	T – Ss Pairs S-S T-Ss Ss-T	Powerpoint slideshow, the task, group work

			Feedback: Can you stop and give me feedback about what you have done. (2) Stage 3: Edit what you have done and get it ready to report. Decide who is going to present it. **(Plan phase)** (4)		
13:28-13:38 10 (38)	**3. Task Cycle/Report**	Present a recipe in oral and written forms. Listen to other groups' presentations and assess their work.	Ask Ss to present their work. The group members listen to other groups, use a checklist and assess their work. **(Report phase)** Please present your dish (10).	T – Ss S – Ss Ss-T	Powerpoint slideshow, the while-listening task
13:38-13:45 7 (45)	**4. Language Focus/Analysis**	Elicit the language used for writing a recipe. Study the language used for writing a recipe.	Ask students the language they used and needed for designing the recipe (7) **(Analysis Phase).** When writing your recipe, What kind of language helped you with ingredients/instructions? Where have you struggled more? Which parts were easy to do? T takes note of their answers on a Word document. Show them the language that helped them, go through them and ask if they need more help on any of them.	T- Ss Ss-T T-Ss	Powerpoint slideshow, the task worksheet
13:45-13:52 7 (52)	**5. Language Focus/Practice**	Practise the language used for writing a recipe.	Show them the recipe prepared by a Masterchef candidate and ask them to fill in the missing parts. Look at the recipe worksheet written by a Masterchef candidate and do the activities in pairs (5) **(Practice phase)** Get the answers and then show the answer key. (2)	T-Ss Pairs S – S T-Ss	Powerpoint slideshow, the gap-filling activity, group work
13:52-13:55 3(55)	**6. Review**	Consolidate and review the lexis and structures needed for writing a recipe. Clarify the language focus of the task and summarise the lesson.	What have we learned today? (3) Can you use these skills in your real life? Please fill in the questionnaires and send them back to me.	T-Ss Pairs S – S T-Ss	Powerpoint slideshow, student survey

MATERIALS

Material 1: The Task

Master Chef Competition

Hello Competitors,

Welcome to MASTER CHEF! I am Gordon Ramsay and today is the day you have ALL been waiting for. Your challenge is to create ONE signature recipe for my new cookbook. Not only will this challenge determine the best recipe in your class, but you will get paid as your dish is served in my restaurant.

I am asking you to write a recipe and present it well.

Material 2: The Worksheet for the Task

Master Chef Competition

1. **Name of the dish. (Stage 1) 5 mins.**

   Be original and make up a trendy name for your dish.

2. **Ingredients:**

   Write the ingredients that you need and the quantities. (Types of vegetables,

   fruit, meat and fish, spices and herbs, dairy products, drinks and others)

3. **Cooking tools:**

   Write the cooking tools you need.

   Bowls, pans, spoons, knives, plates, trays, oven, microwave, fridge, freezer, etc.

4. **Level of Difficulty**

   Mark the level of difficulty for cooking the dish.

   Easy   Medium   Difficult   Expert

5. **Time**

   Say how much time you will need.

6. **Special features**

   Low fat   Fat-free   Suitable for vegetarians   Suitable for celiacs

7. **Instructions (Stage 2) 10 mins.**

   Write the instructions for making your recipe step by step.

   Use

   - Time linkers: First, then, next
   - Example: Peel the potatoes, when it boils,… You can preheat the oven.

8. **Use pictures in your recipe.**
   - Edit what you have done and get it ready to report. Decide who is going to present it **(Stage 3) 4 mins.**

Material 3: While-Listening Task

MASTERCHEF WHILE-LISTENING TASK

- Listen to what other group(s) has done and take notes.
1. What is their signature dish?
2. What are the ingredients? (Write 5 of them)
3. What are the instructions? (Write 3 processes)
4. What do you think of the dish in general?

5. Is there anything you find exciting?
6. What do you think of the presentation?
7. Is there anything in common with other group's work?
8. Do you think they can have a chance in Masterchef? Why (not)?
9. Make suggestions on how the group might improve their work.
   Adapted from Ribe & Videl (1993). Project Work.p. 73

Material 4: The Practice Task

Chef's Salad

A. Read this recipe for a chef's salad and fill in the gaps with the words given.

‣ add   ‣ boil   ‣ cut   mix   pour   put   remove   serve   slice   ‣ salad

Instructions	Chef's Salad
• 1) ……………………. the eggs for 10 minutes.	**Ingredients**
• 2) ……………………. up the lettuce leaves and put them into a salad bowl.	2 eggs
	8 lettuce leaves
• Cut the cheese and the chicken into small pieces and add them to the bowl.	150g Edam cheese
	4 slices chicken breast
• 3) ……………………….. the cucumber and cut the tomato into pieces, then add them to the bowl.	1 small cucumber
	1 large tomato
• 4) ………………………. the shell from the eggs, slice them and put them on top of the 5) ……………………… .	
	Dressing
For the dressing	2 tablespoons mayonnaise
• 6) ……………………….. the mayonnaise, tomato ketchup, olive oil and vinegar into a small bowl and ……………………… them well. 8) ……………………… salt and pepper.	1 tablespoon tomato ketchup
	1 tablespoon vinegar
	1 tablespoon olive oil
• Finally, 9) ……………………. the dressing over the salad.	Salt and pepper
• 10) ………………………… with fresh bread.	

B. Work with a partner. Tell the recipe with sequencers (First, then, next,…).

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