

## Teachers' Perception of Task-Based Language Teaching in Teaching English Writing at Indonesian Secondary School

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### Abstract

*This study investigates teachers' perceptions of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in the context of teaching English writing at Indonesian secondary schools. Through semi-structured interviews with three English teachers who working in SMA Insan Cendekia Seych Yusuf, the research revealed a complex interplay of beliefs regarding the effectiveness and challenges of implementing TBLT. The findings indicated that while teachers generally recognize the potential of TBLT to enhance student engagement and improve writing skills, significant barriers remain. These include students' readiness for collaborative tasks, institutional constraints related to an exam-oriented curriculum, and the need for professional development to equip teachers with the necessary skills for effective TBLT implementation. The study highlights the importance of addressing these challenges through targeted training and curriculum alignment to facilitate the successful integration of TBLT in language education. Ultimately, the insights gained contribute to the growing body of literature on TBLT and underscore the need for further research to explore effective strategies for overcoming barriers to its implementation.*

**Keywords:** *Task-Based Language Teaching, English writing, teacher perceptions, Indonesian secondary schools*

### INTRODUCTION

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) has emerged as a prominent approach in the field of language education, particularly in the context of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). TBLT focuses on the use of meaningful tasks as the primary vehicle for language learning, allowing students to engage in authentic communication and practical application of language skills Ellis (2018), Lin & Wu, 2012). This approach is particularly relevant in Indonesia, where English is taught as a foreign language in secondary schools, yet traditional methods often

dominate the classroom environment (Prianty et al., 2021). The shift towards TBLT reflects a broader recognition of the need for more interactive and student-centered pedagogies that align with contemporary educational goals (Srimunta et al., 2020).

This research aims to investigate teachers' perceptions of TBLT in the context of teaching English writing in Indonesian secondary schools. Understanding these perceptions is crucial, as teachers' beliefs and attitudes significantly influence their instructional practices and the overall effectiveness of language teaching (Fojkar & Perret, 2019). By exploring the views of teachers regarding TBLT, this study seeks to identify both the potential benefits and challenges associated with its implementation in the Indonesian educational landscape.

A growing body of literature highlights the effectiveness of TBLT in enhancing language proficiency and promoting learner engagement (Demiröz & Yeşilyurt, 2015; , Erlam, 2015). Studies indicate that TBLT fosters a more active learning environment, where students are encouraged to use their existing linguistic resources to complete tasks (Chen et al., 2020). However, challenges remain, particularly in contexts where traditional, teacher-centered approaches prevail (Ya, 2021). Research has shown that teachers may face difficulties in adapting to TBLT due to a lack of training, resources, and familiarity with the approach (Şeker, 2021; , Thompson & Millington, 2012). Furthermore, cultural factors and educational norms can impact the successful implementation of TBLT in various contexts, including Indonesia (Tusino et al., 2020; , Lin & Wu, 2012).

The theoretical framework guiding this research is rooted in constructivist learning theories, which emphasize the importance of active participation and experiential learning in language acquisition (Calvert, 2014). By examining teachers' perceptions through this lens, the research aims to uncover insights into how TBLT is understood and applied in practice.

The primary research problem addressed in this study is the gap between the theoretical benefits of TBLT and its practical application in Indonesian secondary schools. Specifically, the study seeks to answer the following questions: What are teachers' perceptions of TBLT in teaching English writing? What challenges do they face in implementing this approach? The objective of this research is to provide a comprehensive understanding of these perceptions and to identify strategies that can facilitate the effective integration of TBLT in the classroom. This research occupies a distinctive position by focusing specifically on the Indonesian context, contributing to the limited literature on TBLT in Southeast Asia and offering insights that may inform future educational practices and policies.

## **METHOD**

This study employs a qualitative research design to explore teachers' perceptions of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in the context of teaching English writing at Indonesian secondary schools. Qualitative research is particularly suited for this investigation as it allows for an in-depth understanding of participants' beliefs, attitudes, and experiences regarding TBLT (Sharmin (2023), Kawa, 2023). This approach facilitates the exploration of complex phenomena in educational settings, providing rich, descriptive data that can inform pedagogical practices (Vieira, 2017).

The data for this research were collected from English language teachers working in SMA Insan Cendekia Syech Yusuf. The selection of participants aimed to include a diversity range of teachers in terms of experience, educational background, and teaching contexts. This diversity

ensured a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions surrounding TBLT (Meng & Cheng, 2010).

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and surveys. Semi-structured interviews allowed for open-ended responses, enabling participants to express their thoughts and feelings about TBLT in detail (Chen, 2017). Surveys complemented the interviews by providing quantitative data on teachers' attitudes and beliefs regarding TBLT, which can be statistically analyzed (Guan, 2023). The combination of these methods enhances the validity and reliability of the findings (Pervan, 2023).

The primary instruments for data collection included an interview guide and a structured questionnaire. The interview guide consisted of open-ended questions designed to elicit detailed responses about teachers' experiences with TBLT, perceived challenges, and benefits (Moore, 2018). The structured questionnaire included Likert-scale items to quantify teachers' attitudes towards TBLT and its implementation in their classrooms (Zhang, 2019). Both instruments would be pilot-tested to ensure clarity and relevance before the actual data collection.

The data collection process involved several steps. First, ethical approval would be obtained from the relevant educational authorities. Afterward, potential participants would be contacted to explain the purpose of the study and to seek their consent to participate. The interviews would be conducted in a comfortable setting to encourage open dialogue, while the surveys would be distributed electronically or in paper format, depending on participants' preferences (Chen, 2023). Data collection would be conducted over a period of three months to allow for adequate participant recruitment and engagement.

The qualitative data obtained from interviews would be transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis, which involves identifying and interpreting patterns or themes within the data (Erlam, 2015). This method facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the various perceptions of TBLT among teachers. The quantitative data from the surveys was analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize the findings and identify trends in teachers' attitudes towards TBLT (Bryfonski & McKay, 2017). The integration of both qualitative and quantitative analyses provided a holistic view of the research problem, allowing for triangulation of the results (Iveson, 2015). This methodology is designed to yield rich insights into teachers' perceptions of TBLT in Indonesian secondary schools, contributing to the understanding of how this approach can be effectively implemented in language education.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Findings**

This section presents a detailed analysis of three English teachers' perceptions of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) based on data obtained from semi-structured interviews. The findings reveal a range of beliefs and attitudes towards TBLT, highlighting both the potential benefits and the challenges faced in its implementation.

### **Teachers' Perceptions of TBLT in Teaching English Writing**

#### *1. Positive Attitude Towards TBLT*

Teacher 1 expressed a strong belief in the effectiveness of TBLT for enhancing student engagement and improving writing skills. She noted, "*When students work on tasks, they become more involved and motivated to use English.*" This aligns with the constructivist theory, which

posits that active participation in meaningful tasks fosters deeper learning Andersen (2021). Teacher 1 emphasized that TBLT allows students to practice language in real contexts, which they found beneficial for developing writing fluency.

## 2. Concerns About Student Readiness

Moreover, teacher 1 raised concerns about students' readiness for TBLT. She stated, "*Many of my students are not used to working in groups or engaging in discussions. They often prefer direct instruction.*" This perception reflects a common challenge in transitioning from traditional teaching methods to TBLT, where students are expected to take a more active role in their learning (Yasmeen, 2022). Her experience highlights the need for gradual implementation and scaffolding to help students adapt to this approach.

## 3. Institutional Barriers

Next, teacher 2 identified institutional barriers as a significant challenge to implementing TBLT effectively. She remarked, "The curriculum is very exam-oriented, which limits the time I can spend on tasks." This concern aligns with findings from other studies that indicate a mismatch between teachers' beliefs about TBLT and the realities of standardized testing environments (Kailani & Rafidiyah, 2022). Her experience underscores the importance of aligning educational policies with innovative teaching practices to facilitate TBLT.

## 4. Mixed Feelings About TBLT

Teacher 2 also exhibited mixed feelings about TBLT, acknowledging its benefits but also expressing skepticism about its practicality. She stated, "While I see the value in TBLT, I worry that it may not cover all the necessary grammar points that students need for exams." This perspective reflects a common tension between communicative approaches and traditional grammar-focused instruction (Rahman, 2023). Her concerns highlight the need for a balanced approach that integrates TBLT with explicit grammar instruction.

## 5. Need for Professional Development

Furthermore, teacher 3 emphasized the importance of professional development in successfully implementing TBLT. He noted, "I have attended workshops on TBLT, but I still feel unprepared to use it effectively in my classroom." This sentiment echoes findings from previous research that highlight the necessity of ongoing training and support for teachers to adapt to new pedagogical approaches (Ansori et al., 2019). He suggests that targeted professional development can enhance teachers' confidence and competence in using TBLT.

## 6. Positive Impact on Student Writing

Finally, teacher 3 also reported observing a positive impact on students' writing skills as a result of implementing TBLT. He stated, "I have seen my students become more confident in their writing. They are willing to take risks and express their ideas." This aligns with the theoretical framework of TBLT, which posits that engaging students in meaningful tasks can lead to improved language proficiency (Xiong, 2016). His observations provide evidence of the potential benefits of TBLT in enhancing students' writing abilities.

## Discussion

The findings from the interviews with three English teachers reveal a nuanced understanding of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in the context of Indonesian secondary schools. This discussion synthesizes their perceptions, highlighting the interplay between their beliefs, challenges faced, and the implications for effective language teaching.

Many teachers expressed a positive attitude towards TBLT, recognizing its potential to enhance student engagement and improve writing skills. For instance, teachers noted that TBLT encourages students to use language in meaningful contexts, which aligns with the principles of communicative language teaching Dirgeyasa (2018), Liu et al., (2018). This aligns with existing literature that emphasizes the effectiveness of TBLT in fostering authentic language use and promoting learner autonomy (Huang, 2022, Milarisa, 2019).

The positive perceptions expressed by Teacher 1 and Teacher 3 underscore the potential of TBLT to enhance student engagement and writing skills. Teacher 1's observation that "students become more involved and motivated to use English" aligns with the constructivist principles that emphasize active learning through meaningful tasks Страновска et al. (2017). Similarly, Teacher 3 noted improvements in students' confidence and willingness to express their ideas, which supports the notion that TBLT fosters a more dynamic and interactive classroom environment (Park & Chitiyo, 2010). It resonates with existing literature that advocates for TBLT as an effective approach to language acquisition, particularly in promoting communicative competence (Aspfors et al., 2021).

However, Teacher 1's also concerns regarding students' readiness for TBLT highlight a significant barrier to its implementation. The reluctance of students to engage in collaborative tasks reflects a broader issue within the educational culture that prioritizes traditional, teacher-centered methods (Wardhani et al., 2018). This observation is consistent with research indicating that students accustomed to rote learning may struggle to adapt to more interactive pedagogies (Zhang et al., 2022). Teacher 2's insights suggest that a gradual introduction of TBLT, coupled with explicit instruction on collaborative skills, may be necessary to facilitate student adaptation.

Next, teacher 2's identification of institutional barriers, particularly the exam-oriented curriculum, further complicates the implementation of TBLT. The pressure to prepare students for standardized tests often leads teachers to prioritize grammar and vocabulary over communicative tasks (Nah & Ng, 2022). This tension between pedagogical beliefs and curricular demands is a common challenge faced by educators globally, as highlighted in previous studies (Guilfoyle et al., 2020). Teacher 3's experience underscores the need for educational reforms that align assessment practices with innovative teaching methodologies like TBLT.

Furthermore, the mixed feelings expressed by teacher 2 regarding the balance between TBLT and grammar instruction reflect a broader debate within language education. While TBLT emphasizes communication and fluency, the necessity of explicit grammar instruction remains a concern for many educators ("Primary Science Teachers' Perceptions towards STEM Education in Public Schools in Qatar", 2022). Teacher 2's perspective suggests that a hybrid approach, integrating TBLT with targeted grammar instruction, may provide a more comprehensive framework for language teaching. This approach aligns with the findings of other researchers who advocate for a balanced curriculum that addresses both communicative competence and grammatical accuracy (Eapen et al., 2017).

In addition, teacher 3's emphasis on the need for professional development highlights a critical factor in the successful implementation of TBLT. Despite attending workshops, Teacher 3 expressed feeling unprepared to apply TBLT effectively in their classroom. This sentiment is echoed in the literature, which emphasizes the importance of ongoing training and support for teachers transitioning to new pedagogical approaches (Kourieos & Evripidou, 2013). Providing teachers with the necessary resources and training can enhance their confidence and competence in implementing TBLT, ultimately benefiting student learning outcomes.

The discussions from this study suggest several implications for practice. First, there is a need for educational institutions to foster a supportive environment that encourages the adoption of TBLT. This includes aligning curriculum and assessment practices with communicative approaches and providing teachers with adequate training and resources (Chaya, 2023). Second, gradual implementation of TBLT, coupled with explicit instruction on collaborative skills, may help students adapt to this pedagogical shift. Finally, a balanced approach that integrates TBLT with grammar instruction can address the diverse needs of learners while promoting effective language acquisition (Hämäläinen et al., 2022).

To sum up, the perceptions of the three English teachers reveal both the potential benefits and challenges of implementing TBLT in Indonesian secondary schools. Addressing these challenges through targeted professional development, curriculum alignment, and a balanced pedagogical approach will be essential for the successful integration of TBLT in language education.

## CONCLUSION

This study explored the perceptions of English teachers regarding Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in the context of teaching English writing at Indonesian secondary schools. Many teachers recognized the potential of TBLT to enhance student engagement and improve writing skills. These perceptions align with the constructivist principles that emphasize active learning and meaningful communication. Teachers noted that when students engage in tasks, they become more motivated and confident in using English, which supports the theoretical underpinnings of TBLT as an effective approach to language acquisition.

However, it also noted the critical challenges faced by teachers in implementing TBLT that is students' readiness for collaborative tasks reflect a broader issue within the educational culture that prioritizes traditional, teacher-centered methods. Additionally, the identification of institutional barriers, particularly the exam-oriented curriculum, underscores the tension between innovative pedagogical approaches and standardized assessment practices. These challenges are consistent with existing literature that emphasizes the need for educational reforms to align curriculum and assessment with communicative teaching methodologies.

Moreover, the mixed feelings expressed by another teacher regarding the balance between TBLT and grammar instruction reveal a common debate in language education. While TBLT emphasizes fluency and communication, the necessity of explicit grammar instruction remains a concern for many educators. This suggests that a hybrid approach, integrating TBLT with targeted grammar instruction, may provide a more comprehensive framework for language teaching.

Overall, the perceptions of three English teachers reveal the benefits of TBLT, significant challenges remain in its implementation. Addressing these challenges through professional

development, curriculum alignment, and a balanced pedagogical approach is crucial for successful TBLT integration in Indonesian secondary schools.

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