The Implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching Principles in Speaking Class

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Abstract

In teaching speaking for EFL, teacher has to consider a strategy that exposes students to speaking practices. This study aims to determine the implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) principles in English learning, especially speaking. The approach used was descriptive qualitative. The instruments were classroom observations and interviews and the research subjects were 1 English teacher and 25 students of Class IXA at Darunnajat Islamic Boarding School Bumiayu Brebes. This study reveals that the teacher has implemented the seven principles of TBLT namely scaffolding, task dependency, recycling, active learning, integration, reproduction, and reflection suggested in teaching speaking. They were reflected in the activities that students experience in the classroom.

Keywords: Speaking, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

Penerapan Prinsip-Prinsip Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) dalam Pembelajaran

Dalam mengajar berbicara untuk EFL, guru harus mempertimbangkan strategi yang memaparkan siswa pada praktik berbicara. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui implementasi prinsip-prinsip Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris khususnya berbicara. Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif. Instrumen penelitian adalah observasi dan wawancara kelas dan subjek penelitian adalah 1 guru bahasa Inggris dan 25 siswa Kelas IXA di Pondok Pesantren Darunnajat Bumiayu Brebes. Penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa guru telah menerapkan tujuh prinsip TBLT yaitu scaffolding, ketergantungan tugas, daur ulang, pembelajaran aktif, integrasi, reproduksi, dan refleksi yang disarankan dalam mengajar berbicara. Mereka tercermin dalam kegiatan yang dialami siswa di kelas.

Kata Kunci: Speaking, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is an activity that a person uses to communicate with other people. In English learning, speaking is considered the most basic skill to master. According to Richards (2008), speaking skill is often used as a benchmark in learning English. In the context of foreign language learners in Indonesia, speaking is considered an important skill to be mastered by high school students, both in senior high schools and vocational high schools.

In the process of learning speaking in English subject, students often find difficulties. Sawir (2005) mentions that students' lack of exposure to the use of English, lack of self-confidence, and lack of motivation are the reasons why English-speaking skill becomes difficult. In line with this, Kusumo et al. (2020) confirms that students' anxiety in speaking is due to lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, inaccurate pronunciation and use of grammar.

Speaking skill is also considered challenging because students need more time to think, must have the courage to speak (Bashir et al., 2011) and require knowledge of speaking skill (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). In addition, some students often feel reluctant to speak because they feel nervous about expressing themselves in front of others (Putra, 2017). It commonly happens in our daily routine. When people talk, they interact and use language to express their ideas, feelings and thoughts. They also share information with others through communication. In other words, students should be given the opportunity in class to explore various aspects in learning English so that their skill—especially speaking—improves.

The aforementioned problems are also experienced by students at the Darunnajat Islamic Boarding School. Therefore, it calls for the teacher's role to motivate the students, as said by Taufiqulloh et al. (2018) that teacher's competence affects students' motivation in learning English. The teacher may start by making a lesson plan that offers practicality and possibility. Such kind of plan will allow the teacher to embrace what the students fancy learning (Rachmatika, 2019). In this case, the teacher implemented Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in teaching speaking.

Nunan (2004) suggests that the most important conceptual basis in TBLT is experiential learning. The personal direct experience of the learner is the starting point of the learning experience. Intellectual development occurs when the learner engages and reflects on a series of tasks. Thus, the active involvement of the learner is central to the TBLT approach, and the process is reflected in learning-by-doing activities.

Student learning experiences are obtained through the tasks given. Ellis (2017) explains that tasks can be divided into two; real-world tasks and pedagogic tasks. Real-world tasks are given in order to maintain the authenticity of language use situations based on target tasks encountered in the real world. While pedagogic tasks, although the authenticity of the situation is lacking, aims to maintain the authenticity of the interaction. Ellis et al. (2019) emphasized that the success of this task should be assessed in terms of fulfilling the task, not targeting the production of the language.

Nunan (2004) states that there are seven principles that must be adhered to in the framework of Task-Based Language Teaching, namely scaffolding, task dependency, recycling, active learning, integration, reproduction, and reflection. First, the principle of scaffolding ensures that students are provided with sufficient knowledge of the language before they work on tasks. Second, task dependency means that several tasks carried out by students are related to each other as a unified pedagogical process. Third, recycling in language use shows that students can use a language item in different contexts. Fourth, active learning is learning by direct practice. Fifth, integration means combining linguistic forms, communicative functions, and semantic meanings in the learning process. Sixth, reproduction means that students can

develop the use of language that has previously been exemplified by the teacher. Seventh, reflection is to provide opportunities for students to reflect on what they have learned and how well they are doing. These principles must be understood by teachers so that they can implement TBLT in the classroom well.

However, in implementing TBLT, teachers often face challenges (Córdoba Zúñiga, 2016; Phuong, 2016) despite of the positive views they have (Liu et al., 2021). Córdoba Zúñiga (2016) identified objective challenges such as class size, mismatch between curriculum and TBLT focus, preparation time, unclear teacher roles and lack of improvement in grammatical competence; and subjective challenges such as the teacher's lack of skill in assessing task-based performance. Even Hu (2013) found that when teachers in China were asked to implement TBLT in their classrooms, their responses were quite varied, such as refusal, passive acceptance, but there were active implementations. While Aliasin et al. (2016) stated that even though teachers understand TBLT theory, its implementation in the classroom will be influenced by personal attitudes and choices that often creates gaps between theory and practice.

Many studies on the implementation of TBLT in the learning of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) have been carried out but they do not specifically discuss the implementation of TBLT principles. Kafipour et al. (2016) applied TBLT in Analytic Writing learning by using experimental methods. The results of his research show that TBLT can improve students' writing skill. In learning speaking, Cutrone & Beh (2018) found that TBLT had a positive effect on Japanese students' speaking interest in communicating using English. Meanwhile, research by NamazianDost et al. (2017) focuses on increasing students' motivation and knowledge of grammar in learning English in secondary schools.

Based on the description above, this research was conducted to find out how TBLT is implemented in speaking learning for Darunnajat Islamic Boarding School students based on the principles suggested by (Nunan, 2004).

METHOD

This study uses qualitative approach. The research subjects were 1 English teacher and 25 students of Class IXA at Darunnajat Islamic Boarding School Bumiayu Brebes in December 2021. The English learning processes were observed to determine the implementation of TBLT principles. The data were gathered by conducting observations and interviews. Through classroom observations, the researchers could see the process of learning speaking using TBLT from beginning to end. The researchers took notes and recorded the teaching and learning activities in the classroom. The interviews were conducted with the teacher and students to support and confirm the results of observations. The interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia based on the instruments that have been prepared.

The next step was data analysis that involved three stages; data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Miles et al., 2018). Therefore, the researchers could find out the implementation of the TBLT principles in the English class.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The objective of this study is to find out how teacher implements TBLT in speaking class and whether or not the implementation reflects the seven TBLT principles suggested by Nunan (2004), namely scaffolding, task dependency, recycling, active learning, integration, reproduction, and reflection.

By observing an English class and conducting interviews with the teacher and students, it was found that the learning activities have implemented all of the seven principles. The data can be presented in table 1.

Table 1. TBLT Principles Implemented in the English Class

No.	Principle	Implementation		Form of Activity
		Yes	No	
1	Scaffolding	√		- Learning vocabulary, expressions, and conversation text samples - Learning vocabulary, structure of speech, and speech sample
2	Task Dependency	√		- Making a conversation
3	Recycling	√		- Students use English outside the class
4	Active Learning	√		- Writing a speech text and delivering the speech
5	Integration	√		- Writing a speech text which contains linguistic forms, communicative functions, and semantic meanings
6	Reproduction	√		- Creating a speech after the example was given
7	Reflection	√		- Learning from teacher's feedback for writing a speech text - Addressing students' difficulty in pronunciation

This section elaborates the results of the research in detail both from observations and interviews. The data are presented in Bahasa Indonesia and English so that they are easier to understand by readers of different language backgrounds.

The English teacher in Class IXA Darunnajat Islamic Boarding School Bumiayu Brebes teaches once a week. The teacher communicates with students using English and applies TBLT. Before teaching English lessons, the teacher prepares a lesson plan. There are three stages of the lesson plan; opening session, main session, and closing session.

On Monday, December 6, the teacher gave speaking material. The teacher began the lesson by greeting, asking the student's condition, and checking the student attendance list. In addition, the teacher prepared students for learning in class. Before the teacher gave a new material, the teacher mentioned the material that had been studied last week. After that, she continued in the main session the new material that will be taught.

The teacher gave a task in the form of a conversation. First, the teacher gave some vocabulary to the students. In this meeting, the teacher gave vocabulary about "Family". Then the teacher asked the students, "How many members are there in one family?" Students answered, "One family consists of father, mother, brother, sister, grandmother, grandfather, aunt, and uncle." Students answered the teacher's questions in Bahasa Indonesia, then the teacher repeated using English, pronounced it with the correct pronunciation, and students were asked to follow it. In addition, the teacher provided examples of conversational texts as models for students.

Based on classroom observations, the researchers saw that the implementation of TBLT to teach speaking was based on the scaffolding principle, which states that the lessons and materials chosen must ensure that learning can take place. In this principle, the teacher applied

it by giving vocabulary, expressions and sample texts to provide the language they need to complete the task. By providing vocabulary, students can add new vocabulary. By providing various expressions, students can use them in the context of the right conversation. And the sample text gives students an idea of how their conversation should be structured. Thus, when given a task in the form of a conversation, students can use it to communicate. This activity is categorized as scaffolding principle because in this lesson, the task is given to be used as a basis for completing the next task.

After giving vocabulary, expressions, and model texts, the teacher gave instructions to students to have a conversation with friends based on the topic that had been given by the teacher. During the conversation, the researchers observed the students to ensure that the students did the task seriously or they really practiced it. The researchers observed and recorded the conversation while the students were practicing it. An example of a student conversation is as follows:

> S1 : *Hi Riza, how are you?*
> S2 : *Hi Jihan I am good. How about you?*
> S1 : *yeah,, I am well. what are you doing?*
> S2 : *I am waiting my mother*
> S1 : *Oh, I see. By the way are you the last daughter in your family?*
> S2 : *No, I am oldest one. I have one sister. She is the youngest and the last. How about you?*
> S1 : *I have two brothers and I am the youngest.*
> S2 : *How old your brother is?*
> S1 : *The first is twenty eight and the second is twenty three.*
> S2 : *Any way, what are you doing here? Are you waiting for someone?*
> S1 : *I have brought novel from book store. I think I should go now. See you.*
> S2 : *See you.*

This activity includes in the second principle of TBLT, that is task dependency. As stated by Nunan (2004), task dependency is a task that is related to the previous task because this sequence must tell a "pedagogical history". After students learn about vocabulary and phrases related to family, students make meaningful conversations.

At the second meeting, as usual before the teacher gave a new material, the teacher asked again about the lesson learned last week. The teacher asked some students about the vocabulary and expressions given last week. Then she continued by giving material about public speaking. At this meeting, the researchers found another strategy used by the teacher in carrying out TBLT in the form of public speaking. The teacher gave an example of a speech text then discussed its parts starting from the introduction, body/content, and closing. Thus, students would understand how to make a speech. This activity demonstrates the implementation of scaffolding principle where the teacher provides knowledge about the structure of speech.

After that, the teacher divided the class into 5 groups of 5 students. The teacher gave 5 different topics, namely health, religion, education, environment, and cleanliness. The teacher provided an explanation of the topics by asking students several questions, for example "What efforts should we do during the pandemic?", "How is the development of education during the current pandemic?". From this explanation, the teacher gave a task to students to make a speech text based on the given topic.

Students were given time to write a speech text based on the topics that have been given by the teacher. This activity implements the principle of reproduction where students creatively compose speech texts by referring to the examples that have been previously discussed together. From the results of the teacher's explanation through questions, students develop the results of class discussion to write the text.

In the following week, students were asked to deliver their speech in front of the class. In making speech texts, students usually look for references from books related to the topic given by the teacher. Students usually work together with their peers, starting from looking for vocabulary, then composing it into a speech text. Even though they have difficulties in writing speech texts, they have solutions to overcome them. They look for vocabulary in a dictionary and then arrange it according to the structure explained by the teacher.

In learning activities, each student is required to bring a dictionary when they want to look for other vocabulary, or will correct pronunciation during conversation so that they are accustomed to talking with friends in English. This will improve students' speaking ability.

The second principle used by the teacher is active learning. This principle focuses on the premise of "learning by doing" because language learning is considered good if the target language is used actively. The activity of writing a speech text refers to the principle of active learning because students are asked to make their own speech texts after the teacher presents the topics to students. Then students develop it by looking for references from books.

Students made a speech text and submitted it to the teacher. After that, the teacher corrected the students' writing as an evaluation and returned the text to the students. After receiving feedback from the teacher, students were given the opportunity to ask the teacher about the difficulties they faced when doing the task of writing a speech text. Some students told the teacher that they had difficulty in pronouncing some vocabulary. Then, they asked the teacher how to pronounce the vocabulary correctly or found out in the dictionary how to pronounce it. This activity refers to reflective principle where students are given the opportunity to reflect back on the material they have learned, what difficulties they have faced, and how well they have done in doing the task.

At the third meeting, the researchers took part in learning activities in class to observe the students' performance in speaking. At this meeting, the first group of students who had made a speech based on the topic performed in front of the class. This activity refers to the principle of integration because students have written a speech text, which contains linguistic forms, communicative functions, and semantic meanings, to be delivered to an audience.

In the classroom observation, the researchers found that each student had different skills and constraints. There were some students who were able to make speech texts based on correct grammar, use varied vocabulary, and deliver speeches using correct pronunciation and good fluency. There were also students whose speech texts were written correctly according to the correct grammar, but when delivering their speeches they found obstacles for the correct pronunciation. In addition, there were some students whose speech texts use not completely correct grammar during the preparation time, but they were fluent in delivering their speech in class and their pronunciation was correct. Even though the students had some problems, they were able to complete the given task, starting from writing the text to delivering it in front of the class.

Furthermore, from the results of the interviews, the researchers explained the process of learning English at Darunnajat Islamic Boarding School. Based on class observations and interviews, the researchers got an idea of how teachers teach speaking. The following are data obtained based on teacher and student interviews.

Based on the results of teacher and student interviews, it can be concluded that, first of all, teachers use various techniques in teaching speaking. The teacher implemented TBLT in English class. As a student says:

"Kita ada latihan untuk berbicara, yang pertama adalah percakapan setelah guru menyampaikan materi atau topik, kita diminta untuk membuat transkrip percakapan kemudian mempraktikannya di kelas. Jika hari ini kita mendapatkan materi baru dari guru, maka pertemuan berikutnya kita akan mempraktikannya."

(We have speaking practice, the first is a conversation after the teacher conveys the material or topic, we are asked to make a transcript of the conversation and then practice it in class. If today we get new material from the teacher, then the next meeting we will practice it.)

From the answer above, it can be concluded that the use of TBLT strategy using conversation is in accordance with the TBLT principle, namely task dependency.

Another task given by the teacher in the use of TBLT is public speaking. As the teacher said:

"Siswa dibagi menjadi beberapa kelompok, masing-masing kelompok terdiri dari 5 siswa. Sebelumnya siswa mendapat giliran untuk menulis teks pidato dan dikoreksi oleh guru, kemudian diberikan waktu untuk menghafal teks tersebut sebelum maju di depan kelas."

(Students are divided into several groups, each group consists of 5 students. Previously, students had a turn to write a speech text and it was corrected by the teacher, then they were given time to memorize the text before performing in front of the class.)

The answer to the teacher interview above is one of the tasks that the teacher gives to students. In its activities, making speech texts is categorized as a principle of reproduction. Due to the provision of vocabulary, speech structure, and topic explanation at the beginning of the task given by the teacher, students can develop them by making speech texts. As stated by Nunan (2004), "Students first reproduce the language given by the teacher, and then, they are able to use similar language items more creatively".

In addition, the teacher equips students with the ability to speak when they need it. One student said:

"Kosakata dan lingkungan penting untuk pengajaran bahasa. Kami tidak hanya diberikan kosakata di dalam kelas, tetapi kami juga mempraktikkannya langsung di luar kelas."

(Vocabulary and environment are important for language teaching. We are not only given vocabulary in class, but we also practice it directly outside of class.)

According to the teacher's answer, the implementation of TBLT can improve students' speaking ability. Students can speak English during the lesson. If students practice their English in class, they will also be able to use the language outside of class. This demonstrates the recycling principle whereby language learning is facilitated by the teacher so that a language item can be used by students in different contexts.

The teacher also has different ways of teaching speaking. This is how the teacher conducts learning in the language class:

> *"Disela-sela pelajaran biasanya ada* ice breaking. *Tujuannya agar siswa tidak bosan saat mengikuti kegiatan pembelajaran. Hal ini dapat meningkatkan semangat siswa dalam belajar. Kami biasanya mengadakan* spelling bee. *Dimana guru melafalkan satu kosa kata, kemudian siswa diminta untuk mencari kosa kata tersebut di kamus Oxford dan kemudian mengejanya dengan benar."*

> (In between lessons there is usually an ice breaking. The goal is that students do not get bored when participating in learning activities. This can increase the students enthusiasm ofin learning. We usually have a spelling bee, where the teacher says a vocabulary, then students are asked to look up the vocabulary in the Oxford dictionary and then spell it correctly.)

In between the English lessons, the teacher gave an ice breaker to increase students' enthusiasm in learning. The teacher gave an ice breaker in the form of a spelling bee by providing vocabulary related to lesson on that day. This is also related to the speaking aspect, that is how students can pronounce vocabulary correctly. A student also said:

> *"Setelah itu ada intermezzo dengan menyanyikan lagu yang mengandung kosakata atau siswa diminta menyimpulkan dari pidato yang disampaikan oleh temannya. Terkadang kita disuruh mencari kosakata yang sulit lalu mengucapkannya dengan pengucapan yang benar."*

> (After that, there is an intermezzo by singing a song that contains vocabulary, or students are asked to conclude the speech delivered by their friend. Sometimes we are told to look for difficult vocabulary and then pronounce it with the correct pronunciation.)

Based on the teacher and student statements above, the teacher implements the principle of task dependency. By providing vocabulary and the correct pronunciation, then students can use it in the next task. In addition, it can also build students' enthusiasm so that they are more motivated to do the task given by the teacher.

Next, the researchers asked the teacher whether the English learning process using TBLT was effective. Then the teacher answered:

> *"Tentu sangat efektif. Dengan penerapan TBLT siswa tidak hanya belajar berbicara, tetapi siswa yang tidak dijadwalkan sebagai pembicara, mereka dapat belajar bagaimana menjadi pendengar yang baik, yang nantinya dapat memberikan kesimpulan dari pembicara."*

> (Of course, it's very effective. With the implementation of TBLT, students not only learn to speak, but students who are not on schedule to be speakers can learn how to be good listeners, which can later give conclusions from the speaker.)

And from the third interview question, the researchers asked the challenges that the teacher faced in implementing TBLT. The teacher found that there were some students who had difficulty in speaking. The teacher states:

> *"Faktornya adalah ada beberapa siswa yang tidak menyukai Bahasa Inggris sehingga mereka tidak mengikutinya dengan serius."*

(The factor is that there are some students who don't like English so they don't take it seriously.)

The teacher also found that when speaking, some students took it only as an obligation to do the task, that is by merely memorizing the speech text but they did not pay attention to how to pronounce it correctly, or simply ignored the appropriate intonation.

The problem identified earlier in the introduction was the students' passivity to speak English. They were afraid of making mistakes, so they were reluctant to participate (due to a lack of vocabulary and grammar) in speaking activities, and their pronunciation and intonation was unclear. When they tried to express themselves verbally, they only uttered scattered words, and unstructured and incomplete sentences make their speech production poor and meaningless.

However, during the learning process by implementing TBLT, students actively involved in communication and gave positive feedback on the tasks given in the speaking class. Although the improvement was slow, students who actively participated in discussion could speak English clearly, were able to participate in the learning process and could work together. They did their best to take advantage of all the opportunities offered. In other words, the results show that the task framework provides opportunities for students to experiment with language.

CONCLUSION

After conducting research on the implementation of TBLT principles in teaching speaking at Darunnajat Islamic Boarding School Bumiayu Brebes, it can be concluded that teachers have implemented the TBLT principles suggested by Nunan (2004). The teacher has implemented the seven TBLT principles, namely scaffolding, task dependency, recycling, active learning, integration, reproduction, and reflection to complete conversation and public speaking tasks.

Although the teacher still faces some obstacles, implementing TBLT to teach speaking in English can help teacher in the learning process. The students also have learning experiences that can directly train them to speak English so that they not only understand the material but can also communicate orally well.

This research is limited to the implementation of TBLT principles as a whole. However, to be able to determine the effect of each of these principles on students' motivation and speaking ability, further research is still required.

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