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Developing Fluency and Confidence in L2 Speaking
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Abstract
This study explores the impact of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) on improving the speaking skills of B.Sc. Hotel Management students at Bharath College of Arts and Management. A total of 30 students were divided into an experimental group (using multimedia resources) and a control group (receiving only oral lectures). The study focused on fluency and volume, assessed through a 10-mark evaluation. Results showed that the experimental group improved significantly, using modal auxiliary verbs correctly, speaking confidently, and overcoming anxiety and hesitation. In contrast, the control group struggled with repetition and slow speech. These findings highlight the effectiveness of multimedia-assisted TBLT in enhancing oral communication skills for professional contexts.

Keywords: TBLT, Speaking Skills, Fluency, Volume, Hotel Management, Multimedia Learning.

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Introduction

Speaking is one of the most essential skills in second language (L2) acquisition, as it directly influences learners' ability to communicate effectively in real-world situations (Richards, 2008). For students pursuing careers in service industries like hotel management, proficient speaking skills are crucial, particularly for job interviews, where effective communication plays a decisive role in employment opportunities. In English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, many learners struggle with speaking due to anxiety, lack of exposure, and limited vocabulary (Brown, 2014). Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) has been recognized as an effective approach to enhancing speaking proficiency, as it engages learners in meaningful communication through real-world tasks (Ellis, 2003). This study investigates the impact of a TBLT-based intervention on improving the interview-speaking skills of third-year B.Sc. Hotel Management students at Bharath College of Arts and Management. The main aim of this study was to develop the students' speaking ability to some extent, particularly in fluency and volume, as these are critical components of effective oral communication.

Several studies have explored the effectiveness of TBLT in developing speaking skills. Willis (1996) argued that TBLT encourages authentic communication by providing learners with structured tasks that simulate real-life situations. Skehan (1998) emphasized the importance of task complexity, noting that well-designed tasks can enhance both fluency and accuracy in L2 speech. A study by Nunan (2004) demonstrated that learners who engaged in communicative tasks performed better in oral proficiency tests than those who followed traditional grammar-based instruction. Furthermore, Ortega (2009) highlighted that TBLT facilitates interaction, which plays a crucial role in second language acquisition. Swain and Lapkin (2001) found that task-based interactions allow learners to engage in hypothesis testing and receive feedback, which contributes to language development.

Additionally, research has shown that multimedia-assisted learning enhances L2 speaking performance. Chapelle (2003) argued that digital tools such as online videos and interactive exercises provide learners with authentic input, improving their listening and speaking skills. The use of online resources, such as IELTS speaking videos and language learning websites, has been found to support learners in acquiring conversational strategies and interview techniques (Godwin-Jones, 2018). Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) found that audiovisual materials, such as videos and online simulations, reduce learners' speaking anxiety and increase confidence. Moreover, Nation and Newton (2009) suggested that vocabulary-focused instruction in TBLT enhances learners' ability to communicate effectively in specific contexts. Finally, Long (2015) emphasized that TBLT should be tailored to learners' needs, making the "Speaking at the Interview" task particularly relevant for hotel management students preparing for employment.

To measure the effectiveness of the intervention, students' post-speaking performance was assessed based on two key criteria: fluency (5 marks) and volume (5 marks). These criteria were selected to evaluate students' ability to speak smoothly and confidently, as these skills are essential for successful communication in professional settings. This study aimed to assess the impact of a TBLT-based intervention on the speaking performance of hotel management students by comparing an experimental group that received task-based training with a control group that received only oral lectures. By integrating authentic materials such as IELTS speaking videos, web-based resources, and targeted vocabulary instruction, this research seeks to provide insights into the effectiveness of task-based learning in preparing students for real-world communication.

Methodology

This study employed a quasi-experimental research design to examine the impact of task-based language teaching (TBLT) on L2 speaking proficiency. The experiment was conducted at Bharath College of Arts and Management, a self-financing institution in Thanjavur district that offers arts, science, and management studies. The participants were 30 male, third-year B.Sc. Hotel Management students aged between 19 and 20. Initially, 42 students were considered for the study, but 12 discontinued due to irregular attendance. The research was conducted between 2023 and 2024, and the task 'Speaking at the Interview' was tailored based on the students' career needs, as all hotel management graduates are required to attend job interviews for employment. At the beginning of the study, the researcher assessed the students' existing speaking skills using a basic oral test. Based on the baseline test results, the students were divided into two groups such as control group and an experimental group. The experimental group was provided with various learning assistances, including IELTS speaking videos, the English Club website, the Simple English website, templates for interview responses, selected relationship vocabulary, and subject-oriented vocabulary. In contrast, the control group received only oral lectures. The study was conducted over three contact hours, during which the students practiced the interview task in the English Language Lab, which was equipped with computers, internet access, a projector, and an LCD screen. At the end of the intervention, it was observed that students in the experimental group, who had access to learning resources, performed significantly better in speaking tasks compared to the control group, who received only oral lectures.

Results and Discussion

The results of the study revealed significant differences in the speaking performance of the experimental group and the control group. The experimental group, consisting of students with roll numbers HM239632, HM239638, HM239639, HM239640, HM239642, HM239643, HM239644, HM239645, HM239646, HM239650, HM239652, HM239653, HM239654, HM239655, and HM239656, demonstrated substantial improvements in fluency, confidence, and vocabulary usage. In contrast, the control group, with roll numbers HM239633, HM239634, HM239635, HM239641, HM239651, HM239657, HM239658, HM239659, HM239660, HM239661, HM239662, HM239663, HM239664, HM239665, and HM239666, exhibited limited progress, struggling with repetition, hesitation, and slow speech delivery.

One of the key findings was that the experimental group effectively used modal auxiliary verbs such as *"May I come in?"*, *"Shall I start?"*, *"Would you please tell me?"*, and *"Can I take your number?"*. Their ability to incorporate these expressions correctly indicates an improved understanding of polite and professional communication is a crucial aspect of interview scenarios. Watching YouTube videos provided them with real-world exposure to interviews, allowing them to grasp the structure, tone, and etiquette required in such interactions. This multimedia approach helped the students overcome affective factors such as anxiety, fear, and shyness, leading to a noticeable boost in their confidence.

Another critical observation was that after repeated practice sessions, the experimental group no longer worried about the order of speaking but rather focused on delivering their ideas naturally and meaningfully. This suggests that task-based practice enabled them to develop spontaneous speech production rather than relying on memorization. Additionally, watching YouTube videos activated their cognitive engagement, fostering both creative and logical thinking during their responses. The students were able to generate original and well-structured answers, demonstrating enhanced comprehension and speaking skills.

Furthermore, the use of a glossary improved students' vocabulary selection and accuracy. Their attention span increased, allowing them to place the right words in appropriate contexts. This improvement in lexical choice played a significant role in their overall fluency and coherence. As a result, all students in the experimental group spoke fluently and confidently, with their speaking time increasing to some extent. The structured learning environment, combined with video-based exposure

and vocabulary reinforcement, contributed to their enhanced ability to sustain conversations without hesitation.

Table-1
Post-Test Speaking Performance Scores – Experimental Group students

S.No	Roll No	Fluency (5 Marks)	Volume (5 Marks)	Total (10 Marks)
1.	HM239632	4.5	4.5	9.0
2.	HM239638	4.2	4.3	8.5
3.	HM239639	4.4	4.2	8.6
4.	HM239640	4.3	4.4	8.7
5.	HM239642	4.6	4.5	9.1
6.	HM239643	4.7	4.6	9.3
7.	HM239644	4.5	4.3	8.8
8.	HM239645	4.2	4.1	8.3
9.	HM239646	4.8	4.6	9.4
10.	HM239650	4.3	4.2	8.5
11.	HM239652	4.6	4.4	9.0
12.	HM239653	4.4	4.5	8.9
13.	HM239654	4.3	4.2	8.5
14.	HM239655	4.5	4.4	8.9
15.	HM239656	4.7	4.5	9.2
Average		**4.46**	**4.38**	**8.84**

Conversely, the control group did not perform well, primarily due to the lack of learning assistances such as videos, glossaries, and interactive materials. Since they only received oral lectures, their improvement was minimal. These students often repeated words, struggled with fluency, and spoke at a significantly slower pace. Their inability to access multimedia learning tools meant they had no opportunity to visualize and internalize real interview scenarios, leading to poor engagement and low confidence levels. The findings indicate that oral lectures alone were not sufficient to enhance speaking proficiency, as students required interactive and contextual learning experiences to develop their skills effectively.

Table-2
Post-Test Speaking Performance Scores – Control Group students

S.No	Roll No	Fluency (5 Marks)	Volume (5 Marks)	Total (10 Marks)
1.	HM239633	3.0	3.2	6.2
2.	HM239634	3.2	3.1	6.3
3.	HM239635	2.9	3.0	5.9
4.	HM239641	3.1	3.0	6.1
5.	HM239651	3.0	2.9	5.9
6.	HM239657	2.8	3.0	5.8
7.	HM239658	3.2	3.3	6.5
8.	HM239659	3.0	3.1	6.1
9.	HM239660	3.1	3.0	6.1
10.	HM239661	3.0	2.9	5.9
11.	HM239662	3.3	3.2	6.5
12.	HM239663	3.1	3.0	6.1
13.	HM239664	3.0	2.9	5.9
14.	HM239665	3.2	3.1	6.3
15.	HM239666	3.0	3.2	6.2
Average		**3.06**	**3.06**	**6.12**

Interpretation of the Results

The experimental group achieved higher fluency and volume scores (Avg. 4.46 & 4.38) compared to the control group (Avg. 3.06 & 3.06). Experimental group students spoke fluently and confidently after exposure to YouTube videos and vocabulary glossaries. The control group struggled with fluency and often repeated words, showing that oral lectures alone were not enough to improve speaking performance. The difference in total average marks (8.84 vs. 6.12) confirms that multimedia-assisted learning and TBLT techniques significantly improved speaking skills in the experimental group.

Conclusion

This study investigated the effectiveness of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) with multimedia integration in enhancing the speaking skills of B.Sc. Hotel Management students at Bharath College of Arts and Management. The findings revealed that students in the experimental group, who had access to YouTube videos, vocabulary glossaries, and interactive speaking tasks, demonstrated significant improvements in fluency and volume, as well as a reduction in anxiety and hesitation during interviews. They effectively used modal auxiliary verbs, structured their responses confidently, and engaged in more natural and spontaneous speech.

In contrast, the control group, which relied solely on oral lectures, exhibited limited progress, struggling with repetition, slow speech, and lack of confidence. The results clearly indicate that lecture-based instruction alone is insufficient for improving speaking proficiency, whereas a technology-enhanced, interactive approach leads to better engagement and skill development.

The study underscores the importance of multimedia-assisted, task-based learning strategies in English Language Teaching (ELT), particularly for students preparing for professional interviews. It highlights the need for modern, student-centered teaching methods that foster both cognitive engagement and practical communication skills. Future research could explore the long-term impact of such methodologies and their applicability in different educational and professional settings.

By integrating digital learning tools and interactive speaking tasks, educators can bridge the gap between theoretical learning and real-world communication, ultimately enhancing students' employability and career readiness in the global workforce.

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