
Research Article

Speaking Skills in EFL Classroom: Islamic college Students' Perceptions on Task-Based Language Teaching

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Abstract

Speaking is a crucial skill in English acquisition, presenting significant challenges for EFL learners. This study explores Islamic college students' perceptions of the implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching to improve their speaking skills at STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh. This study adopted a qualitative case study design. The research sample encompassed 15 students and an English teacher. The instruments used in this research were interviews, supported by classroom observations. The findings found that Islamic college students positively evaluated Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in speaking classes. Implementing TBLT enhances classroom dynamics. The combination of TBLT and collaborative learning improves speaking skills for both individuals and groups. The implications of these findings suggest that EFL teachers in Islamic higher education institutions should incorporate more task-based activities into speaking classes. Teachers can design tasks that reflect students' academic, social, and cultural contexts, including topics related to Islamic values and contemporary issues. Such integration may increase student motivation and participation while fostering meaningful communication.

Keywords

Implementation; speaking skills; students' perceptions; task-based language teaching

Introduction

Some countries use English as a foreign language, including Indonesia. English is one of the lessons that students should be taught at all levels of Indonesian education. Acquiring four fundamental competencies is imperative for language learners, encompassing listening, speaking, reading, and writing. While speaking is the most important ability to master in learning English, it poses the greatest challenge for EFL students. When they want to express their views and opinions, they need more time to think about what they will say (Sevy-Biloon, 2019; Shin & Brenna, 2018). They have low motivation, confidence, and exposure (Naida & Astutik, 2026, pp. 24–25). Also, some students experience reluctance and anxiety when presenting their thoughts to others (Mulyadi et al., 2021).



According to Murad et al. (2023) noted that speaking is an important skill for learning a foreign language, as it provides opportunities to practice English and further improve. The ability of students to articulate their thoughts verbally serves as a significant benchmark for assessing their proficiency and mastery of the target language. However, such a task is very challenging to develop because of a lack of extensive exposure to the language, along with the difficulty of becoming fluent spontaneously and maintaining grammar accuracy (Murad et al., 2023).

Students were actively motivated and incentivized to participate in the art of public speaking during a multitude of diverse occasions, by means of engaging in a variety of speaking tasks which were specifically designed to not only develop their oratory skills but also to satisfy the comprehensive requirements set forth by the Public Speaking course. Three speaking patterns used to score students' speaking performances: topical speech, chronological speech, and persuasive speech (Hongsa et al., 2023).

Firstly, a fundamental and comprehensive framework is present that acts as a crucial motivator for students to engage in the application of language, as they forge a link between this linguistic involvement and the central content being examined. The topical speech format signifies the primary method adopted in the arrangement of diverse speeches, especially in the context of successfully conveying information to varied audiences, given that the organizational structure incorporating multiple subtopics is both relevant and applicable to a broad range of subjects and speech categories, consequently enhancing the lucidity and engagement of the presented material. For instance, in organizing a five-paragraph essay, subtopics are typically divided into three sections. Secondly, for chronological speech, students were instructed to methodically arrange their speaking points in either a chronological sequence, which follows the natural order of events as they occur over time, or a reverse-chronological sequence, which starts with the most recent events and moves backward to the earliest occurrences. Speakers must strive to convey their ideas with utmost clarity and in a logical, chronological framework, ensuring their audience can easily follow the progression of their thoughts and arguments. This structured approach not only enhances the coherence of the presentation but also significantly contributes to the overall effectiveness of communication, facilitating a deeper understanding for the listeners. Thirdly, persuasive speech employs the ability to effectively persuade and influence an audience through the art of public speaking encompasses a wide array of discussions that can vary dramatically, ranging from the intricate and often contentious realm of political debate, where rhetoric and argumentation play crucial roles, to the seemingly mundane yet equally significant consideration of what one should choose to eat for dinner, illustrating the profound impact that persuasive communication can have on both serious and trivial matters of daily life.

In recent decades, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) has garnered substantial popularity within the higher education levels in Indonesia, considering that this approach is in line with the latest curriculum framework for tertiary institutions which is *Kerangka Kualifikasi Nasional Indonesia* (KKNI) or Indonesia Qualification Framework (Setiawan, 2020). KKNI represents a competency qualification framework designed to harmonize and amalgamate educational attainment, vocational training, and experiential learning in order to validate occupational competencies across diverse sectors (Solikhah, 2022). The implementation of KKNI in language education is to achieve communicative competence (Latif, 2017). Communicative competence denotes an individual's capacity to engage in effective communication within authentic contexts, utilizing a specific language. It involves understanding and using various linguistic components, such as syntax, vocabulary, prosody, and social interaction competencies, to facilitate effective communication. Furthermore, communicative competence entails awareness of the social, cultural, and situational frameworks in which communication occurs, ensuring that messages are conveyed appropriately. Therefore, to develop this competence, some English teachers in Indonesia adopt the TBLT strategy in the language classroom, which emphasizes developing students' communicative skills through active participation in authentic



communicative tasks. It includes a variety of activities that allow students to use the language in meaningful communicative situations. The aim aligns with the aims of the Indonesian National Qualifications Framework (KKNI), which seeks to prepare individuals to participate proficiently in social and professional activities in English (Islami & Senom, 2024; Latif, 2017).

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is a highly effective teaching strategy for English (Wibowo et al., 2024, p. 5170). It emphasizes engaging students with authentic tasks central to their learning experience. It establishes an environment in which students can confidently use the target language to complete communicative activities based on real-life events. By participating in these practical activities, students not only improve their language skills but also gain confidence as they negotiate situations similar to those they may encounter outside the classroom. This soft, supportive technique encourages a stronger connection between language and its everyday use, making learning more relevant and pleasurable.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) promotes an educational paradigm centered on the learner, in which English language educators support students by presenting essential terminology and monitoring their scholarly endeavors. In contrast, learners employ their first language throughout the phases of orientation and task execution (Willis, 2006). It also constitutes a pedagogical framework that has been recognized and implemented in language education for nearly 5 decades. Recent developments indicate a transition towards an augmented integration of technology within Task-Based Language Teaching (González-Lloret, 2016), alongside a convergence of TBLT with critical language pedagogy (Ellis, 2021). Foreign and second-language curricula are currently being significantly influenced by TBLT (Belda-Medina, 2021), prompting many teachers to apply TBLT strategies in their classrooms (Dao & Newton, 2021). Further, the significant advantages of TBLT have established it as a practical pedagogical approach in the classroom, and IT can enhance students' motivation, confidence, collaboration, and learning competencies (Azmy & Nanda, 2024).

According to Ellis R (2003) and Willis J (1996), TBLT implementation divides into three main stages in the classroom: pre-task, on-task, and post-task (Ellis, 2003; Willis, 1996; Zakiya Mumtaza et al., 2025). The objective of the pre-task phase is to equip students with the skills necessary to execute the designated task and assimilate the target language successfully. During this phase, the teacher introduces the topic and assigns exercises that facilitate the acquisition of essential vocabulary and expressions requisite for task completion. This process encompasses activating students' prior knowledge of the topic through reading or listening activities, highlighting significant vocabulary and phrases, and engaging them in strategic preparation.

Afterward, there are three task cycles in the on-task section: task, planning, and report. (1) Task: students engage in collaborative efforts within small groups or pairs to fulfill the assigned task. The teacher addresses any issues that arise and provides necessary support and clarification as appropriate; (2) Planning: students prepare to present their work to the class. This presentation may be conducted either orally or in written form. When deemed necessary, the instructor offers support and linguistic assistance. (3) Report: Following the presentations of their findings to the class, the teacher provides feedback regarding both the language used and the content presented. In the context of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), the teacher considers a range of potential solutions to the problem at hand, rather than anticipating identical outcomes from each student.

The last stage is the post-task phase, also known as the language focus phase, which provides learners with the opportunity to examine specific elements of the task. The teacher may provide form-focused guidance or engage students in practice exercises utilizing newly acquired vocabulary, thereby enabling them to document new lexicon and phrases they have assimilated. This phase significantly enhances students' capacity to use language coherently and intelligibly. Students are encouraged to engage in self-correction with the teacher's guidance and constructive feedback.



On the other hand, Hafiz Abdul Sani et al. (2025) revealed that there are three key features of TBLT: focus on meaning, real-world relevance, and learner-centeredness (Hafiz Abdul Sami et al., 2025). Focus on meaning: students actively participate in a variety of tasks that require significant and meaningful communication, a process that not only fosters their engagement but also substantially enhances their ability to use language spontaneously and effectively, thereby promoting a higher level of linguistic proficiency (Leeser & Dao, 2023); Real-world relevance: the various tasks implemented within the framework of language learning are designed to closely replicate genuine scenarios in which the target language is used, thereby reflecting the intricate and multifaceted communication challenges individuals often encounter in real-life interactions (Li & Fu, 2022); Learner-centeredness: the thoughtfully designed and structured tasks aim to closely match the distinct requirements and individual preferences of learners, thereby cultivating an atmosphere that not only inspires but also substantially boosts their active involvement and intrinsic motivation during the learning process (Loewen & Sato, 2021).

Previous studies found that TBLT played a very important role in improving students' functional adequacy in English writing. Among the four dimensions of functional adequacy, TBLT brought positive effects on content, task requirements, and comprehensibility performance (Wei & Zhao, 2024). It is postulated that task-based language pedagogy is a promising solution in the context given, with special regard to its influence on student well-being (Turula, 2025). In speaking skills, TBLT has a meaningful and positive impact on students' speaking proficiency (Naida & Astutik, 2026). Besides that, it was implemented through distinct phases, namely pre-task, task, and post-task, and was characterized by methodical planning and active participation within the classroom environment. Learners demonstrated increased motivation, self-efficacy, and engagement, especially when the tasks were aligned with their personal experiences and were augmented by affirmative teacher feedback and collaborative peer interaction (Zakiya Mumtaza et al., 2025). In reading skills, most researchers revealed that TBLT is an effective reading teaching method in the classroom (Dollar, 2017; Husni Mubarak & Nina Sofiana, 2017; Nahavandi, 2011). As a result, meaningful tasks in reading instruction are critical, as they improve students' reading comprehension.

However, this research differs from some previous studies, as it investigated the perceptions of Islamic college students regarding the implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching among those currently taking English courses in Indonesia, particularly regarding its impact on improving speaking skills. The findings of this investigation will assist teachers in devising and implementing authentic communicative tasks, while also offering a comprehensive understanding of teachers' practices within the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Indonesia.

Method

This research employed a qualitative methodology within a case study design (Cohen et al., 2007). Regardless of the number and varied identities of the participants, qualitative research aims to investigate particular phenomena and complex cases, thus allowing the researcher to derive a comprehensive analytical interpretation from the participants' perspectives (Yin, 2003). The researcher asserts that the most appropriate methodological strategy for this study is a case study, which provides a concise overview of the specific phenomena under examination.

This study gathered data through semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. The participants in this research were the students. The researcher examined the students' perceptions regarding the implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in the development of speaking skills at STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh, located in West Aceh, Indonesia. The researcher collected the data of students' perceptions through interviews and corroborated them with classroom observations. The sample for this research consisted of 15 students and an English teacher. To



analyze the teacher's implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), the researcher also conducted observations of live classroom activities and interactions with a class of 37 students, of whom 11 were male and 26 were female. The researcher obtained informed consent from the participants, allowing the use of all provided information for academic publication and research purposes, as documented in the consent form.

This research used the case study design as delineated by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) for data analysis. During the analytical procedure, the researcher meticulously performed the procedural stages, including data condensation, data visualization, and the derivation of conclusions, as well as validation (Miles et al., 2014). The investigator identified corroborative evidence to address the research questions, drawing on a variety of reputable sources to validate the findings. Moreover, the researcher conducted a comparison and verification of the data obtained from interviews and classroom observations. Then, the researcher will exclude the irrelevant data to enhance focus on addressing the research problems.

Results

The Teacher's TBLT implementation in Teaching Speaking

The first result of this research revealed that the teacher had already implemented TBLT effectively in teaching speaking through the three main stages proposed by Ellis, R. (2003) and Willis, J. (1996) in his classroom. This table shows the implementation:

Table 1. TBLT Implementation in Teaching Speaking

Stages	Teacher	Students
Pre-task,	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brainstorming 2. introduces the topic (a communicative task) 3. explains the procedures doing the task 4. gives a similar example task related to the topic 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. answer the questions 2. focus on the introduction 3. take note and ask the questions about the unclear procedures 4. underline the essential points
On-task,	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. organizes the group work 2. asks them to speak and discuss the task by using English fully 3. observes their work in group 4. helps and motivates them to speak English 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. sit in their group work and focus on the task 2. perform task assigned by the teacher 3. process the task result (report) to prepare for sharing or presenting it
Post-task	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. organizes them to share or present their the task result (report) through English 2. evaluates their language problems that arise from students' completing task 3. summarises their speaking performances in using the English language coherently and intelligibly 4. concludes the activities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. analyse and evaluate the result of tasks by other groups 2. practice language difficulties under teacher's guidance 3. encourage engagement in self-correction with the teacher's guidance and constructive feedback

Regarding the data, the teacher stated that:

“Talking about TBLT, it is such a wonderful approach to use in the classroom, especially when the topic is engaging and the students are familiar with and enjoy it. That is why I chose an up-to-date topic related to students' daily lives, such as smoking, online gaming, or bullying (some of communicative tasks). These are fascinating subjects I can dive into with the students. These topics interest them in speaking English” (teacher)

The result above is consistent with the findings of Basireddi et al. (2025), who investigated ways to improve students' speaking skills in engineering colleges through task-based language teaching. They concluded that the tasks for the TBLT (Task-Based Language Teaching) sessions were designed to



closely align with students' real-life communication needs, including group discussions, presentations, and interviews (Basireddi et al., 2025). The tasks formulated for the Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) sessions were carefully designed to ensure a close and meaningful connection with the authentic communication requirements students face in their daily activities, including group discussions, presentations, and interviews. This deliberate alignment not only rendered the educational experience markedly more pertinent and applicable but also fostered greater student engagement, thereby enriching the overall educational environment. Moreover, the TBLT methodology significantly fostered a collaborative learning atmosphere, enhancing students' self-confidence and alleviating the anxiety typically associated with the acquisition of speaking skills, thereby establishing a more supportive and encouraging framework for language learning.

Taley and Nkrumah (2025) assert that teachers should consider the engagement and relevance of real-life tasks, which aim to create authentic connections with students' experiences. This approach not only motivates students but also enhances their understanding and retention of the material (Taley & Nkrumah, 2025). The selected tasks should be meticulously tailored to align with their requirements and pique their interest. The teacher should construct the task to be meaningful, helping students understand the goals and the reasons for their engagement (Bardy et al., 2024). Learners should perceive that the tasks they are preparing to undertake are relevant to their daily experiences.

In the next data, the researcher discovered that the teacher invited the students to explore some exciting new vocabulary related to the topics. The effectiveness of English teaching depends on the adaptability of instructional methods, the integration of learners' linguistic resources, and teachers' sensitivity to cultural and linguistic diversity (Jagtap, 2025). Widanta (2023) suggested that vocabulary enrichment and stimulating questions were effective in increasing students' speaking performance, learning motivation, and enthusiasm. Moreover, by practicing in front of their group and succeeding in performing such tasks, they became more motivated to do better. Therefore, they made their learning meaningful (Widanta, 2023). Also, proficiency in vocabulary significantly impacts students' oral communication, as individuals with superior vocabulary tend to demonstrate improved speaking skills (Pratiwi & Suryadi, 2025).

Additionally, the teacher designed a similar example task on the topic, thereby supporting students in executing specific processes as they worked on it. He believed that giving examples could help them more easily understand what they want to do. This step is similar to Phrabu's classification of task types, which was cited by Azad Mohamedamin (2025). There are three types: gaps in information, gaps in reasoning, and gaps in opinion (Azad Mohamedamin, 2025). Gap in information means that the information transferred from one person to another, from one form to another, or from one location to another; The purpose of gap in reasoning is to derive some new information from given information via the processes of inference, deduction, practical reasoning, or a perception of relationships or patterns; and the definition of gap in opinion is articulating a preference, feeling, or attitude in response to a given situation. Then, some students said that:

“The teacher not only shares the directions for our main task with us, but also provides a delightful example of an English activity on our daily routines and explains it in English” (student 1 and 13)

“Besides that, he allowed us to discuss the differences between the primary task and the example task in more detail.” (student 3 and 10)

“We encourage the teaching-learning process by using TBLT” (student 2, 4, and 7)

Saragih et al. (2022) also found that the use of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) can increase students' engagement in the English learning process (Saragih et al., 2022). TBLT is known to prioritize learning through challenging and real situation-oriented tasks, allowing students to actively

engage in language use in relevant and meaningful contexts. Thus, this approach encourages students' active participation in learning, which in turn can improve their English skills. The others added:

“What is truly exciting about implementing TBLT is when the teacher gives us clear feedback and insightful conclusions on our unique speaking performances at the thrilling conclusion of the lesson”.
(student 6, 11, and 8)

According to the findings presented by David (in Prianty et al., 2022), providing students with specific and illustrative examples can significantly enhance their ability not only to recall information but also to develop a deeper understanding of the task at hand (Prianty et al., 2022, p. 105). It is also supported by Tauchid et al. (2025), aligning meaning-based communicative tasks with learners' natural processing strengths creates instructional conditions that effectively accelerate oral proficiency development, implying that pedagogical planning should integrate communicative tasks that stimulate meaningful interaction while supporting learners' processing preferences to enhance spoken language learning outcomes (Tauchid et al., 2025). Additionally, Task-Based Learning (TBL) creates a multitude of opportunities for learners to engage in the intricate process of negotiating meaning, as well as to receive constructive feedback, all of which significantly contribute to the enhancement of the linguistic output they generate through a variety of authentic, real-world activities that closely mirror the complexities of everyday communication (Nassaji & Kartchava, 2021).

Considering the psychological aspect, TBLT has been shown not only to enhance learners' proficiency in oral communication but also to have a significant motivational impact, indicating that the pedagogical approach rooted in task-based methodologies engages both cognitive and affective dimensions of learning (Gortaire Díaz et al., 2023; Saleem et al., 2025).

The Students' Perception toward Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in Improving Speaking Skills

The first result was students' perceptions of Task-Based Language Teaching's impact on speaking skills. The observations revealed that the students demonstrated a high level of involvement when the teacher motivated them to engage in collaborative dialogue with their classmates. More adept students extended support to their less proficient counterparts, thereby promoting greater cooperation among them. The interview results support it, a student stated “It really helps me speak English because I am so comfortable having fun conversations with my friends in class. Also, I do not feel shy at all if I make some mistakes while speaking” (Student 5).

Based on the data above, the student claimed that he can engage in active English communication and that Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) through collaborative learning strategies has the potential to improve both his and his peers' speaking skills. These findings are consistent with Mudinillah et al. (2024), who found that TBLT enhances language acquisition, particularly in developing speaking and listening skills, and emphasizes meaningful communication and real-world language use. TBLT focuses on having learners complete tasks that mirror authentic language use, thereby promoting both linguistic and communicative competence (Mudinillah et al., 2024). Furthermore, it significantly enhanced four key elements of communicative competence: grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic. Students exhibited improved accuracy and diversity in structures, coherence in organization, appropriateness in expressions, and strategic application in interactions. Learners demonstrated increased motivation and confidence derived from the collaborative and significant nature of the tasks (Novita Nurmayanti, 2025).

Also, the students said that:

“The teacher always encourages us to express ourselves boldly, without fear. He also shares fantastic tips related to our discussions, providing valuable assistance, such as teaching us exciting new vocabulary” (student 10, and 12). “By implementing Task-Based Language Teaching in our speaking class, we can significantly improve our speaking abilities as never before.” (student 14 and 15).

From the findings above, a significant proportion of students demonstrate a strong motivation to achieve proficiency in English. The students asserted that achieving proficiency in English is essential for their practical engagement in the near future. The individuals involved in this research expressed their intention to improve their English comprehension, recognizing its significance for effective interaction in future situations. This finding demonstrates a good attitude towards students' perspectives on the implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching.

Classroom interaction became more effective when the teacher used engaging discussion topics. This assertion is consistent with Arend and Carlson (2023) findings, which state that five principles guide instructors in creating meaningful tasks. The first principle emphasizes alignment with learning outcomes. The second principle stresses the importance of personal relevance and cultural affirmation. The third principle underscores the necessity for tasks to be challenging, empowering, and growth-oriented. The fourth focuses on authenticity and real-world value. The fifth principle asserts that tasks should be skill-based and pertinent to professional contexts (Arend & Carlson, 2023). Assigning students meaningful tasks can significantly enhance their communicative competencies. Additionally, students stated that “The teacher utilized TBLT as an innovative methodology to teach speaking skills”. (student 9)

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is recognized as a particularly effective instructional strategy when educators trust their students, thereby providing substantial opportunities for students to interact with and apply the language autonomously, which ultimately enables learners to discern and express their own linguistic needs and educational goals. Maming et al. (2025) assert that assigning students tasks made an enjoyable learning atmosphere, allowed them to acquire meaningful learning experiences, fostered their oral and written English practice, and encouraged their active participation in the English learning class (Maming et al., 2025). Subsequently, educators introduce form-focused activities designed to facilitate the learners' development of linguistic skills, which are essential for their progression, and follow this with a repetitive task that provides a structured environment in which learners can effectively integrate and apply some of the language elements they have previously acquired during the initial stages of instruction. This methodological sequence not only enhances learners' language proficiency but also fosters a deeper understanding of the language through practical application, creating a comprehensive learning experience that bridges theoretical knowledge with real-world use. Yang et al. (2024) supported this perspective, stating that " Tasks provide a variety of teaching methods and can stimulate students' learning initiative, and achieve better learning outcomes (Yang et al., 2024).

Moreover, Lume and Hisbullah (2022) noted that students who participated in activities involving Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) exhibited substantial advancements in their linguistic articulation. The goals of TBLT tasks, which necessitate a level of interaction in realizing communicative experiences, also significantly contributed to the enhancement of the two primary facets of language, fluency and accuracy (Lume & Hisbullah, 2022). The research results demonstrated that tasks rooted in Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) fostered greater adaptability and creativity in learners' linguistic applications, thereby alleviating anxieties related to verbal communication.

Conclusion

Islamic college students had a positive perception of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), particularly in speaking classes. Adopting Task-Based Language Teaching in speaking classes cultivates



a more effective classroom atmosphere. The integration of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) with collaborative learning frameworks can advance not only his speaking skills but also those of his peers. In addition, the teacher revealed a deeper understanding of his responsibilities within the instructional and learning processes of the speaking class. In his role as a motivator, the teacher expressed his ongoing commitment to inspire students to participate in discourse by selecting engaging topics relevant to their everyday experiences for discussion. The implications indicate that how the teacher designs the task knowledge for classroom implementation is related to what the teacher has understood about TBLT.

Additionally, the Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) implementation has afforded learners numerous opportunities not only to generate their own ideas but also to engage in truly meaningful communication, while simultaneously preparing them for interactions they may encounter in the real world outside the classroom. Furthermore, TBLT has been instrumental in cultivating a dynamic and stimulating learning atmosphere, one in which students are encouraged to express themselves without reservation and to actively delve into the depths of their own knowledge and understanding. Consequently, the study's results strongly suggest that TBLT is a highly effective pedagogical strategy for significantly enhancing students' speaking abilities. As such, it is imperative to recognize the value of TBLT in educational settings, particularly in its capacity to promote language acquisition and communicative competence among learners.

However, this study was limited by its short duration. As the teacher implemented the intervention over a relatively brief period, the results reflect short-term improvements in students' speaking skills. Future research might aim to apply TBLT over a longer period to examine its long-term effects on students' speaking development more comprehensively.

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