

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INSPIRED TBLT FRAMEWORK IN ENHANCING STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Students' engagement is essential in enhancing quality of learning experiences. In TBLT setting, it has received a little attention from the scholars despite it is an approach where the students participation actively during task completion. This article reports a study of students' engagement where inspired-TBLT framework was implemented in speaking class. The research methodology that employed by the author in the current study was a micro ethnography study which describe, interprets the value, behavior and students' beliefs. The participants were 46 EFL learner in a private university in Indonesia consisted of 30 females and 16 males. That data was collected through a questionnaire adapted from Handelsman's et al., and semi-structured interview where six students voluntarily take a part in the process. The result of current study shows that inspired-TBLT framework engages the students in speaking class. Three types of engagement -behavioral, emotional, and cognitive- were existed during the implementation of the framework. Behavioral engagement can be identified from participate actively in a discussion, asking a question, students' attendance and completing the homework given. Meanwhile, the emotional engagement was seen from students' desire, students' confidence and doing well on the test. The last but not least, students' cognitive engagement reflected from applying course to students' life, finding ways to make course interesting and doing some strategies to improve learners' speaking skills.

Keywords: Inspired-TBLT, Engagement, Speaking

A. INTRODUCTION

Over the last decades, several approaches and methods in English language teaching particularly in the EFL context have been developed (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). These include the Grammar-Translation method which language teachers rely on this for so long due to the lack of linguistics possessed by students within the class, the Audiolingual method which students learn through modeling and repetitive dialogues, up to communicative language teaching (CLT) which focus more on the authenticity, fluency, meaning-making, and learner-centeredness. The latest gained more appreciation from both researchers and language teachers due to its adaptability (Kim, 2019; Kim et al., 2017; Douglas & Kim, 2015). It emerged from dissatisfaction with a structured-based method that emphasized structural aspects rather than functional ones (Littlewood, 2007).

Along with constructivist learning theories, CLT significantly contributes to the development of language teaching. One of its manifestations is task-based language teaching or TBLT (Ellis, 2013; 2017; Long, 2016). As the latest realization of CLT (Nunan, 2004), TBLT can be implemented in teaching a language due to its solid theoretical grounding. Practically, it can be integrated and even adapted as well to traditional method that is used during teaching. In the Asian context, the integration of TBLT has been very popular as a teaching approach. Even in some Asian countries such as Japan, Hongkong, South Korea, and China, TBLT has implemented TBLT as an official pedagogy of curriculum to teach English. It reveals that there is a higher demand for a quality-oriented education model, in which students can develop their language skills (Ji, 2018) in those countries.

In terms of adaptation and modification, a few studies have been conducted. For example, (Kim et al., 2017) who combined TBLT and PPP in teaching English. They call it as hybrid model that was claimed by McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007) as localized TBLT where some parts of learning procedures use TBLT framework. Another study conducted by Kim (2019) who applied step by step TBLT in her EFL class in Korea. She used conventional method at first before fully apply that is assessed by Ellis (2013) as strong version of TBLT. She claimed that a conjunction is needed to provide students particularly in EFL context before implementing TBLT due to several factors such as linguistic inputs and familiarity. These studies extend prior argument that implementation of TBLT is difficult without adaptation and modification into local context in foreign language context (Klapper, 2007; Shehadeh, 2005; Butler, 2011; Wright & Chen, 2016).

In the current study, the author uses different formula in implementing TBLT but in same spirit with Kim et al. (2017), Kim (2019) and Wright and Chen (2016) that there should be “a bridge” before implementing real TBLT in order to get the students used to it. Therefore, this study tried to modified several steps of TBLT and call it as Inspired-TBLT framework. However, this article focuses on discussing the students’ engagement towards the framework rather than its’ implementation in a speaking class.

1. Students’ Engagement

Recently, Students’ engagement has been the attention of scholars since it is a factor that contribute to successful learning particularly self-development. It is defined variously in both broader and specific definition. Kuh (2010) for example, he defined engagement as time and effort that dedicated by learners towards the learning activities in order to achieve the outcome. Meanwhile, Barkley and Major (2010), he viewed students’ engagement broader where it is the frequency of students to get involve effectively in learning activities inside and outside class. Students’ engagement cannot only be seen from students’ attendance in the class (Clark et al., 2010). Fredricks and Paris (2016) asserted that engagement covered three dimension or type namely behavioral, emotional and cognitive engagement. Behavioral engagement usually can be identified from two ways. First is positive conduct such as obeying the rules, students’ presence and applying norms in the classroom. Secondly, it can be seen from the students’ involvement of learning and academic task such as attention, asking a question and participating in discussion.

Not only from students’ behavior, engagement can be seen as well from students’ affection or know as emotional engagement (Aubrey et al., 2020) This type of engagement refers to students’ affective reaction in the classroom that include interest, boredom, happiness, sadness and anxiety. Specifically, Nguyen et al. (2016) assumed emotional engagement is

the relation between students' feeling and classroom activities. This type of engagement is important to be identify since it relates to students' motivation in learning. Meanwhile, the last type of engagement is cognitive engagement. It is often referred as academic investment during learning. Conceptually, this engagement covers flexible problem solving, psychological investment and self-regulation. In other words, by having cognitive engagement means that students can arrange their strategy to achieve their goals in learning.

2. Inspired-TBLT Framework in Teaching Speaking

Over the last three decades, task-based learning or task-based language teaching (TBLT) has gained its popularity and is presumed as one of the most effective teaching approaches in second and foreign language learning (Skehan, 2016; Bygate, 2015; Ellis, 2017). It is the latest realization of communicative language teaching (CLT) (Nunan, 2004) where it promotes student-centered learning (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). In TBLT, the task is used as the center of instruction to learn a language (Kumaravadevelu, 2001) that focus on the communicative and collaborative environment (Bygate, 2015; Long, 2016). Practically, in TBLT, the students are given authentic tasks which require them to focus mainly on exchanging meaning and using language for real-world purposes (Ellis, 2017). Therefore, the premise is that when students are task-focused and allowed to practice it, they will learn the target language better than when the focus of teaching is primarily on language form (Yahya, 2019). In the current study, the author proposed a framework inspired by TBLT in teaching speaking class. There are several steps that can be seen in the figure 1 below:

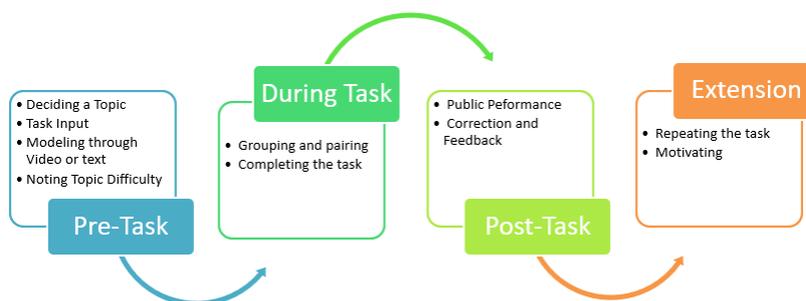


Figure 1. Inspired-TBLT Framework

In pre-task stage, several sub-activities given to assure the learners have better preparation before they go to main speaking class. The First sub-activity was informing and deciding a topic that the students need to complete during the class. The topics that selected were based one learners' interest that relates to their experiences and their proficiencies. The second sub-activity is to identify the unknown vocabulary. It is important in constructing the students' speaking, structure, and pronouncement which are essential features of speaking. The third sub-activity is giving the students time to comprehend the topic. The last is noting topic difficulty. Figuring out the difficulty of the student towards the topic given before the main class is beneficial, particularly in students' learning engagement/interaction.

While, During task activity which is the main activity of the speaking class, the students work individually and in pairs (depending on the topic). Furthermore, in post task phase, the outcomes of the task are assessed through various activities. In this study, the activity is in the form of public speaking or class performance where the students are asked to perform the tasks in front of the class. It gives the learner another opportunity to use and interact with the target language. While the students are performing, the teacher takes a note and lists the

incorrect words, grammar, pronouncement, and even the context and gives them the correction and feedback on the students' work. The feedback is given in the last session since it will be useful for the students as they will be doing another task in another session. Last, in extension stage not only is the feedback in post-speaking, but this design also provides an extension to extend their understanding by repeating the task. When they repeat a task, their production improves in several ways such as complexity, and clearer expression, and they become more fluent. In this study, students are repeating a similar task. However, since the time allotted for speaking class is often limited, this step is conducted outside the class through video recording where the students record themselves in the video and share it to the class WhatsApp group and lecturers' E-mail. This activity is beneficial since it exposes students more to the target language. The video that shared is also be reviewed strengthen the feedback.

A scarce of studies on task-engagement motivates the researcher to figure out how inspired-TBLT framework affects students' engagement during the class. Therefore, the current study aimed at describing students' engagement in inspired-TBLT framework that is implemented in speaking class. It is important to see whether inspired-TBLT affects students' engagement during learning or not since students' engagement is a crucial thing in successful learning.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a research design which is called by Garcez (2017) “micro ethnography classroom”. This is a qualitative study where the researcher describes, interprets the value, behavior, and students' beliefs. This study observes the students' engagement in a class where inspired-TBLT framework was implemented for one semester. The participant of this study was 46 students consist of 30 female and 16 males in intensive speaking class in a private university in Indonesia. In collecting the data, the researcher employed two ways of collecting namely questionnaire and interview. The researcher distributes a set of questionnaires adapted from Handelsman et al. (2005) through Google form. It is chosen since the questionnaire cover the three dimensions of engagement in a package. In the current study, the researcher adapted 15 items of the questionnaire of Handelsman et al. (2005) consisted of 4 items of behavioral, 5 items of emotional, and 6 items of cognitive engagement. In addition, semi-structured interview was also conducted to six students (2 active students, 2 average students, and two less active students) to add further information in detail where they can describe about their experiences on TBLT. The interview was conducted in Bahasa and also recorded to get more and comprehensive information.

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the questionnaire that distributed, the result covers three types of engagement in speaking class where inspired-TBLT was implemented namely behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement. It can be seen in the table 1 below.

Table 1. The Result of Students' Engagement Questionnaire

No	Items	Types of Engagements	Scale (%)				
			5	4	3	2	1
1	Participating actively in group discussions		78	15	7	0	0
2	Asking questions when I don't understand	Behavioural	54	35	10	0	0
3	Doing all the homework given		85	15	0	0	0

4	Coming to class on time		100	0	0	0	0
5	Really desiring to learn the material		89	8	3	0	0
6	Being confident that I can learn and do well in the class		82	12	6	0	0
7	Being organized	Emotional	73	24	3	0	0
8	Getting a good grade		36	30	34	0	0
9	Doing well on the tests		85	10	5	0	0
10	Staying up on the finding materials		43	36	6	15	0
11	Making sure to study on a regular basis		78	13	9	0	0
12	Finding ways to make the course material relevant to my life	Cognitive	89	11	0	0	0
13	Applying course material to my life		92	8	0	0	0
14	Listening carefully in class		67	25	8	0	0
15	Finding ways to make the course interesting to me		63	30	7	0	0

Students' Behavioral Engagement

Behavioral engagement defined as the time on task or participation (Philp & Duchesne, 2016) and academic engage time (Gettinger & Walter, 2012). In broader definition, Suherdi (2018) claimed that behavioral engagement is a type of engagement where the students devote their time during the learning. Based on the table 1, there are four items of behavioral engagement that spread through questionnaire in order to see students' engagement towards inspired-TBLT framework in speaking class. Item no 1 is about "*participating actively in small group*". The result was 78% of 46 respondents admitted that they actively involved in small group discussion towards task completion. In addition, the result of interview indicates similar points where the respond was positive as can be seen from the table 2 below:

Table 2. Students' Responses on Participating Actively in Small Group discussion

S1	"Before I joined this class, I never experienced discussing a topic with friends, but since this speaking class demands to cooperate with peer particularly in task completion, so I should actively participate".
S2	"I like to talk to friends when in discussion"
S3	"I have limited vocabulary, and I'm shy to speak"
S4	"The topic given should be discussed with friends, so to share my opinion about the topic I should talk actively to my group"
S5	"Talking to friends in a group discussion is interesting because we will know what other's thoughts"
S6	"We are free to speak in group discussion"

Involvement, participation or taking apart in a learning process is essential. It is in line with (Philp & Duchesne, 2016) who stated that students' involvement in task-based learning is the core of the process. It implicates the outcome that achieve (Gettinger & Walter, 2012). In other words, the active the students in a learning, the bigger opportunity for the students to develop. However, not all respondent stated that taking a part in inspired-TBLT is helpful. Based on the interview, a students stated that he avoided to take apart in discussion when the language used was English due to limited vocabulary and shyness. To solve this situation, the lecture should make sure that the members of group feel free to say anything related to the topic given.

Besides participate actively, asking a question when the learner does not understand is also part of behavioral engagement. Based on the survey, 54% of 46 participants stated that it is very characteristic of them to ask a question. While 35% of 46 explained that it was their characters and only 10% admit that it was moderately character of them. Asking a question is a part of inquiry. By asking a question, means they want to know more about particular topic. Egbert (2005) assessed that raising a question indicates that the learners have a critical thinking to show which is part of 21 Century skill. In addition, when a learner asks a question, he or she constructs his / her own knowledge and also training lifelong social skill (Caram & Davies, 2005).

In other sides, the easiest way to see students' engagement towards the learning process is based on the presence of students during the class. The survey shows that 100% students in speaking class recognized that coming to the class on time will help them and keep their focus on the material given. However, their presences will not mean anything without taking participation actively. In terms of homework given, majority students admitted that doing homework helped them to be familiar with the topic given. Based on the result, 85% participants agreed that it improved their speaking performances. Cooper et al. (2012) defined homework as academic tasks that should be done outside class. It is mostly associated with students' self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation (Kitsantas & Zimmerman, 2009). By giving homework, the learner will explore and deepening their knowledge and it enhances students' academic achievement. It is in line with Bembenutty and White (2013) who believed that homework is beneficial for developing students' achievement.

Students' Emotional Engagement

In the current study, emotional engagement is feeling-related. It is in the same breath with Yazzie-Mintz (2009) as quoted by Philp and Duchesne (2016) who described emotional engagement as students' feeling of connection (or disconnection) towards class activities, their teacher as well as their friends. Based on the result in table 1, students' emotional engagement received significant percentages. Five items that given, "*really desiring to learn material*" received the highest percentage of all. Almost 89% admitted that they eager to learn the topic given deeply, thus they can deliver during public speaking in the classroom. The result of interview shows similar points as can be seen below:

Table 3. Students' Responses on Desire to Learn

S1	"When the lecture gives the task, I browse through the internet to find more information that I need."
S2	"Speaking class is demanding. We should speak English about a topic. My friend and I usually discuss after the class to completing the assignments"
S3	"The topic that given always relevant to daily life. Thus, I want to understand and use it in real life"
S4	"When I don't understand, I ask a question to lecturer to get additional information related the topic given"
S5	"The Topic given is interesting to be discussed. However, I have difficulty especially in vocab and grammar"
S6	"The model that is used in speaking class is challenging where every meeting we should speak in front of the class. In addition, the assist from lecturer particularly about difficult words that can be used is really helpful in task completion."

On the other side, when students emotionally engaged in a learning, they will be more confident in completing the task given. 82% of participants admitted that when they are engaged, they become more confident in learning process. It is the impact from the efforts done when they really understand about the topic. Interview result indicates the similar information as can be seen below:

Table 4. Students’ Responses on Confidence in Learning

S1	“When I know the topic well, I become more confident in speaking in front of my friends. But when I’m not, it is hard to say something publicly”
S2	“Speaking depends on vocabulary that we have. When I have rich vocab about particular topic, I feel confident to speak . This class, before we start, the lecture provides some vocabularies that useful so we can use them in our speaking”
S3	The model that is used by the lecturer is unique. He shared a topic a day before the class begin and give us the example. By doing so, I feel good to go to the class since I prepare myself before the class.

Confidence is an essential thing in speaking a foreign language (Lar & Maulina, 2021). In addition, it is a foundation in every learning. In inspired-TBLT framework that developed, the lecture facilitates the learner to prepare themselves in order they ready to receive the material given during the class. However, learner’ confidence is not always in line with the result achieved. From the table 1, we can see that the learners’ satisfaction in final result or “final grade” is different. 36% out of 100% admitted that they very satisfy about the result. 30% said satisfy and the rest or 34% claimed that they moderately satisfy with the grade given by the teacher at the end of semester. It is a normal case since the final score is an indicator of learning. In addition, the learners expect a good grade in every subject they take.

Students’ Cognitive Engagement

The last type of engagement is cognitive engagement which relates to students’ investment during the learning. Helme and Clarke (2001) identified that this type of engagement is a process that involves self-regulation and strategies. In the current study, there were six items in the questionnaire that represent this type of engagement. The highest percentage of this engagement can be seen from the statement “*Applying course material to my life*”. 92% of the participants admit that they have tried to apply the material given into their life. In TBLT setting, authenticity is the key (Long, 2016). In other words, the task given should be relevant to the students’ real life. That is why the percentage of this item was high. In addition, several results from interview can be seen as follow:

Table 5. Students’ Responses on Applying Course Material

S4	“What I get from the class, I try to applicate it in real life. By doing so I understand the topic more”
S6	“The topics that given are life-related. I can apply what I have learned during the class into real life. For example, ordering food, booking hotel and many more”

In addition, since the participants were the university students, majority of them are familiar with self-regulated learning. They can adjust and figure out what they need, what they want and what things to do to solve their difficulties. Ziegler and Moeller (2012) labeled self-regulated as the ability to control one’s own learning. It includes several strategies that is conducted to make the learning as easy as it can be. The item “*finding ways to make the course interesting to me*” is the manifestation of self-regulated in this inspired-TBLT

framework. The result shows that 63% of the participant confessed that they take it the course as they want. Meanwhile the interview result shows as follow:

Table 6. Students’ Responses on Strategy that Used to Make the Course Interesting

S1	“To improve my understanding, I discuss with friends about the topic”
S2	“Intensive speaking subject pushes the students to speak in every meeting. To make it more interesting, I sometimes look for other materials or ways that can help me completing the assignments given”
S3	“I watch many videos from Youtube to give me more information about the topic given, how should we deliver, what kind of things we can say, and many more”
S4	“ Asking a question to lecturer or friends always helpful to understand the instruction”
S5	“I watch references from internet to help me understand about the material”
S6	“Sometimes I take notes particularly difficult words so I can remember”

Based on the table above, several strategies were taken by the learners to make the course interesting to them. Discuss with friends, look for material in the internet, watching some videos from Youtube, and take notes were the option that can be used to prepare and improve their speaking performances. Additionally, listening and study on regular basis were also types of investment that can be done by the learners. These received 78% and 67% respectively based on the survey that spread. One of the students explained while interview as follow:

Table 7. Students’ response on strategy that used in learning

S3	“Learning in regular basis consistently and paying attention during the class are two beneficial activities particularly in constructing a topic given therefore I can arrange what things to say when I speak in front of the class
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CONCLUSION

Based on the result, three types of engagement -behavioral, emotional and cognitive- were existed during the implementation of inspired-TBLT framework in a speaking class. The three types of engagement were positively responded by the learners. Behavioral engagement can be seen from students’ active participation in the class. Whereas emotional engagement can be seen from students’ affection towards the learning process. In other sides, students’ cognitive engagement was reflected from their effort in doing some strategies to make the course interesting. Additionally, the information from questionnaire and interview show that students were enthusiastic in the speaking class despite the various final score that gained. However, the current study has some limitation. First, the speaking topics given were agreed by majority participants. It means, the least participants probably had their own interest in deciding a topic. When the topic is chosen by individual, students’ engagement would be worthwhile investigating. Secondly, the participants of semi-structured interview were six students voluntarily. Therefore, the future study may want to exploit all the participant to get more comprehensive information.

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