

**TECHNOLOGY-MEDIATED TASK-BASED LEARNING (TTL)
TO IMPROVE STUDENT'S PRODUCTIVE SKILLS
IN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Dodi Ahmad Haerudin^{1*}, Irfan Fajrul Falah², Rita Kusumah³
¹dodi@upmk.ac.id, ²irfan_fajrul@upmk.ac.id, ³rita25@upmk.ac.id

UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH KUNINGAN

ABSTRACT

English language skills, especially speaking and writing, are essential since it can help the students to express their ideas and thoughts. However, developing these skills takes work and require serious effort. The combination of technology and technology-mediated task-based learning (TBLT) is a suitable formula to improve speaking and writing skills, especially for students in elementary schools. This is a mixed-method study where qualitative and quantitative approaches complement each other. A total of 56 4th-grade elementary school students who were divided into experimental groups (n=28) and control groups (n=28) became participants in this study. The data collection techniques used were tests, observation, and interviews. Meanwhile, for data analysis, this study used statistical analysis for quantitative data and content analysis for qualitative data. The results indicate that the use of technology-mediated task-based learning had an effect on students' speaking and writing skills. This can be seen from the statistical test results of Asymp. Sig two-tailed (0.037) that is lower than 0.05. In addition, using Technology-mediated task-based learning has several advantages, including creating exciting learning and increasing students' engagement. However, several challenges must also be considered, including teacher creativity in designing and the need for students to adapt to the implemented design.

Keywords: Primary School, TBLT, Technology, Speaking, Writing

A. INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English has been introduced in elementary schools for the past few decades as one of the additional subjects or local content (Zein, 2018; Alwasilah, 2013). Meanwhile, in the Merdeka Curriculum era, which is the national curriculum, the status of English has received more serious attention (Falah et al., 2023), where this subject is included in the curriculum structure that must be introduced to students to equip students to be able to communicate related to everyday life (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). In the modern era, English language skills, especially speaking and writing, have become a necessity for every individual, especially in education (Hamied & Musthafa, 2019). These skills allow a person to further develop their potential and more easily express ideas comprehensively. This is in

line with Richard (2017), who argues that having good English communication skills (speaking and writing) gives a person a greater opportunity to compete locally and globally.

However, English learning in elementary schools has so many challenges (Cahyati & Madya, 2019). It needs a lot of work to do, not only from the school but also others party. One problem that often arises, especially that related to developing productive skills (speaking and writing), is the need for more opportunities for students to explore these skills in the classroom (Musthafa & Hamied, 2014). Vocabulary memorization activities and grammar teaching are still favoured and often used in English learning in elementary schools by the teacher. Meanwhile, the time used for practice is relatively limited. This must undoubtedly be a concern for teachers so that the allocation of time for students to practice their understanding can be more significant. Another problem is the need for students' willingness to try, which is caused by low motivation, fear of making mistakes, and embarrassment when speaking or expressing something in English (Lie, 2017). Therefore, teachers need to create a safe learning environment (Artini, 2017) so that students dare to try and are not afraid of making mistakes but also challenging because mistakes made in learning a language are normal (Ellis et al., 2019; Nunan 2004). In addition, selecting inappropriate learning models or methods also affects the quality of learning. Most teachers who teach English in elementary schools are not graduates of English study programs or need adequate English language skills, so they have difficulty choosing the appropriate model or method to use in learning (Zein, 2016). These problems must be fixed immediately so that English learning can be maximized, especially in developing productive skills in elementary schools.

An alternative English language teaching method that can be used to overcome the above problems is task-based learning (TBL) (Ellis, 2003). TBL itself is a form of realization of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Littlewood, 2007; Long, 2016), which emphasizes the aspect of direct practice (*experiential learning*) (Nunan, 2004). Several experts argue that by practicing, students will better understand and comprehend the material taught in class, thus making learning more meaningful (Bryfonski & McKay, 2019; Branden, 2016; East, 2021). This task-based learning has several principles, including emphasizing the use of the target language, providing opportunities for students to explore their language skills, and the relevance between the material and its use outside the classroom (Willis & Willis, 2011; Ellis, 2019; Nunan, 2004). If we refer to these principles, task-based is very suitable for improving students' English language skills.

Research related to the implementation of TBL has proven that this model can improve essential aspects of language learning. (Iveson, 2019; Yahya, 2019) His research reported that students' motivation to learn English tends to increase compared to other approaches. This is due to the provision of tasks in learning so that students feel challenged to complete the tasks given. This is certainly a motivation for students to learn English. In addition, using TBL itself can increase student engagement in learning. In their research, Aubrey et al. (2020) indicated that students are much more involved in learning when introduced to the topic. This is undoubtedly very important, considering that engagement is one of the determining factors in learning success. Regarding language skills, several studies have also shown that task-based learning is not partial but can be used to improve students' language skills, including speaking, reading, listening, and writing. In other words, the effectiveness of this task has been tested, so it can be used as an alternative approach to teaching English in EFL contexts such as in Indonesia. However, these studies are primarily conducted at the

secondary and tertiary education levels, where language learners already have the initial capital to learn English. Meanwhile, task-based use has received little attention from teachers and researchers in elementary schools.

TBL is a flexible approach that can be used in various contexts. Flexibility means that task-based learning can be adjusted to students' learning needs by modifying the implementation stage (Kim et al., 2017; Kim, 2019). This must be done because each context will have different implementations, results, and challenges. In this study, the modification made was by integrating technology into TBL. The role of technology itself in the world of education has been so massive today. Therefore, this integration increases effectiveness, especially in teaching English in elementary schools. The integration of technology referred to in this study is the provision of tasks that are usually done conventionally, diverted into an interactive display via a laptop or projector, and using technology-based applications. By using these technology-based devices, the visualization of the material and tasks given will be more precise, and the implementation will be more enjoyable.

Not many researchers or teachers have focused on integrating technology; only a few have based their research on language teaching (TBL). In fact, in Indonesia, technology integration in TBL has yet to be touched when viewed from the lack of available literature. This phenomenon certainly provides significant space for this study to determine whether technology can be integrated into TBL in elementary schools and how this integration impacts students' English skills, especially speaking and writing. Therefore, it is essential to conduct this study to see the extent to which the integration is compelling so that it can be a reference for developing English learning in elementary schools, especially in Indonesia. This study will focus on the implementation of TBL in elementary schools, especially in improving productive skills that include speaking and writing, so that through this study, we will get an overview of how it is implemented and what impacts are produced.

B. METHOD

This study uses a mixed-method approach. This is because researchers want to see both quantitative and qualitative data. In addition, the mixed method itself is an approach that can produce more comprehensive information (Creswell, 2013). In collecting quantitative data, this study uses a test consisting of a pre-test and a post-test. The pre-test was conducted at the beginning of the meeting before the implementation of technology-assisted task-based. In the pre-test, students were allowed to write and speak about the items given, such as writing down the activities in the pictures and mentioning what they could identify from the test questions. Likewise, the same thing was done in the post-test to assess students' writing and speaking skills.

Meanwhile, several data collection techniques were used qualitatively, including observation and interviews. For observation, researchers were assisted by co-observers who observed and recorded findings during the four weeks of learning. This was done so researchers could focus more on teaching activities and be more optimal. In addition, interviews were conducted in the final session of the study to identify obstacles or problems participants faced while learning how to use technology-assisted TBL. The interviews were conducted in Indonesian to avoid misunderstandings that could affect the information conveyed.

Participants involved in this study were 56 students in grade 4 at an elementary school in Indonesia who were divided into two groups, namely the experimental (n-28) and control (n-28). In addition to having the same number of students, they were also chosen because their class had used the Merdeka curriculum, which taught English as one of the subjects in the curriculum. Regarding English proficiency, 12 students had and still take additional English courses outside the classroom, either privately or in groups. The students only knew English from their family, friends, and previous classes. For more details, the table below explains the participants' demographics in this study.

In analyzing the data, the current study employed statistical descriptive analysis through SPSS 21, where normality and hypothesis tests were organized to analyze quantitative data. Meanwhile, the current study employed content analysis for qualitative data, including observation and interview results (Dörnyei, 2014), where transcribing, pre-coding, coding, and data display were taken to confirm and clarify the information obtained.

Technology-mediated TBL in the current study

One of the focuses of this study is to identify whether the integration of technology in task-based learning can improve productive skills, including speaking and writing. As for the steps taken in its implementation, the current study adopts the TBL framework developed by Willis and Willis (2011), which includes pre-task, task cycle, and language focus (post-task), as seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Task Design

Pre-task		
The teacher explores the topic with the class		
Task Cycle		
Task	Planning	Report
A group of students is asked to come forward	Students plan to report on the task given (discuss with the group). The teacher will stand by and scaffold in case the students need help.	Students present the report in front of the class
<i>Speaking:</i> Guess the anagram and say it in a simple sentence.		
<i>Writing:</i> Choose at least three pictures from wordwall.net displayed in front and create a picture description on their book.		
Language Focus		
Analysis		Practice
- Students examine and discuss		Students practice the new words.
- Teacher gives feedback		

Pre-task

At this stage, the teacher explains the learning topic that will be discussed. The teacher also conveys vocabulary and phrases that students might need when completing the task.

Task Cycle

At this stage, there are several activities that students must go through, including giving tasks, planning, and also reporting. The task in this study was given directly to the group, where they were asked to guess the correct word from the anagram displayed and then make a sentence orally from the guessed word (sleeping - Anto is sleeping in the bedroom), as shown in Figure 1. This was done to drill their speaking skills



Figure 1. Tasks

After that, the group chooses three pictures from wordwall.net to describe in writing in their respective group books (see Figure 2). Students are asked to discuss and plan what to write. They are expected to be able to work together so that collaboration between them will improve. After they complete the task, each group will be asked to present their writing results in front of the class.



Figure 2. Describing picture

Language Focus

At this stage, students and teachers evaluate the reported task together. If there is an error in the task being done, the teacher provides an evaluation and feedback so that students do not repeat the same mistake in the next task. In addition, the teacher also practices new words or sentences with students.

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Technology-mediated tasks Improve students' productive skills.

One of the focuses of this study is to identify whether integrating technology in task-based learning can improve productive skills, including speaking and writing. To find out, the researcher conducted tests (pre- and post-tests) on students in both the experimental and control groups. The pre-test and post-test results from the two groups were obtained, as shown in Table 2.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-Experiment	28	50	80	62.14	9.172
Post-Experiment	28	70	100	85.36	9.222
Pre-Control	28	50	80	63.93	8.751
Post-Control	28	70	90	80.00	7.698
Valid N (listwise)	28				

Table 1 shows that both groups experienced an increase in the pre-test and post-test results, whereas the experimental group had 64.14 to 85.36, and the control group had 63.93 to 80.00. This shows that both technology-mediated tasks implemented in the experimental class and conventional learning used to teach English in the control class were equally successful in improving learning outcomes in English learning, especially in speaking and writing skills. In order to identify which approach is more effective, the next step that must be taken is to conduct a hypothesis test. Before conducting a hypothesis test, researchers must go through several stages of testing, such as the normality test, as seen in Table 2, which will affect what kind of hypothesis test is used. Since the data was not in a normal distribution, as the alternative to the independent-samples test, this study employed the Mann-Whitney test (see Table 3). The result shows that using technology-mediated TBLT effectively promoted student's productive skills (speaking and writing). It can be seen from asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) indicated .037 or lower than 0.05 ($0.03 < 0.05$). In other words, there is a difference in students' productive skills in English using technology-mediated T.B.L.T. (experimental group) and those who do not use it (control group).

	Class	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a		Shapiro-Wilk			
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Learning Outcome	Experiment (Pre)	.200	28	.006	.873	28	.003
	Experiment (Post)	.255	28	.000	.872	28	.003
	Control (Pre)	.256	28	.000	.866	28	.002
	Control (Post)	.214	28	.002	.812	28	.000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Learning Outcome	
Mann-Whitney U	272.000
Wilcoxon W	678.000
Z	-2.084
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.037

a. Grouping Variable: Class

The results obtained based on statistical tests in this study align with several previous studies. For example, (Chen, 2021) reported that using technology improves students' speaking skills. Even in the speaking component, Albarqi (2024) indicated that student's fluency and speaking accuracy increased significantly after technology-mediated TBL was implemented. In addition, the results of this study confirm the findings produced by (Wang, 2022), Who stated that students who learn using TBL are more skilled in writing because TBL itself provides maximum space for students to explore their abilities and engage students since they enjoy the activity. Various aspects caused the increase in previous studies and this study. For example, in this study, students' desire to try and great opportunities made them more optimal in language development. This is by what was stated by (Levy, 2006), who believed that technology-mediated tasks extend students' opportunities. In addition, the challenges in completing the tasks motivate them and push them to the limit (Chen, 2021; Wang, 2022). Another factor that can be identified during the implementation that differentiates technology-mediated tasks from others is the authentic material that is relevant and essential. Therefore, they can correlate it with their respective contexts.

Student's response toward technology-mediated TBL

Students' responses are certainly needed to improve the quality of learning. Likewise, they are related to the implementation of technology-mediated TBL. Researchers conducted interviews with several students to find out their responses to the implementation of technology-based tasks. The results of the interviews were categorized into several themes, including effectiveness, challenges, and the process of completing the tasks given, as seen in the table 5.

Table 5. The Interview Results

Effectiveness	I like the steps of learning The learning is efficacious in improving my speaking I learn many vocabularies My writing skill gets better I can write English words now
Difficulty	Sometimes, I can't handle my friend's desire in a group I was too shy to speak I never write sentences, only vocabulary Sometimes, I don't understand the task given
Task completion	Working In a group is helpful The tasks given were enjoyable I feel challenged to do the task

Based on the table 5 above, technology-mediated TBL received a positive response from students, especially regarding its effectiveness. This can be seen from the information provided by students, such as "I like the steps of learning," "I learn many vocabularies," and "I can write English words now." The learning steps taken in this study were different from what students usually get in previous learning. The use of technology affects students' learning methods since it offers something different. This is similar to Oskoz & Elola (2014), who have shown that by using technology, students are offered something interesting since so many features can be used to motivate the students to get into learning. In addition, the

use of technology in doing tasks facilitates the student to have a transparent displays; thus, they can easily remember what they have seen and learned (Chin & Wang, 2021).

2. Benefits of technology-mediated TBL

Several benefits can be obtained based on the implementation of technology-mediated TBL, including student enthusiasm and engagement. Students have yet to become accustomed to the technology-mediated TBL approach in the early stages. Most students feel awkward and stiff, especially since the teacher who teaches is not their homeroom teacher but someone they just met. However, slowly but surely, after several meetings, students are open to new things, including the learning approach used. As we all know, student enthusiasm depends on the learning process. The more attractive a learning process is, the more enthusiastic students are to participate in the learning process. In other words, when student enthusiasm is visible, it will be easier for teachers to direct and develop their potential. In implementing technology-mediated TBL, student enthusiasm is seen when the teacher asks them to come forward in groups and answer the tasks given. This is in line with what was stated (Andon, 2018) in his research, which states that students are more interested in working on tasks in groups. This does not mean that task-based learning cannot be given to students individually; instead, they are more enthusiastic about completing the tasks given by being in groups.

In addition, student enthusiasm was also seen when each group volunteered to get the first turn. Unlike the initial learning conditions (meeting 1), where students tended to be careful and wait for their turn after being familiar with the approach, they seemed to want to show what they could do in front of the teacher and their friends. This is certainly something positive because their desire is a reflection that they can accept the learning they do they can accept. When students' desires are seen, the teacher must accommodate their desires so that their enthusiasm does not decrease, which can impact the quality of learning carried out (Bryfonski & McKay, 2019).

Not only do they come forward to answer and choose a picture to write, but their involvement is also seen during the planning and reporting process at the task cycle stage. Each group member discusses interpreting and determining what sentences they will write in the description. In fact, for some students who are not so dominant, this phase is their favorite phase because they are helped by the emergence of ideas and thoughts from their colleagues. In addition, during the reporting task, several groups allow each member to present their results, although some groups are only represented by their leaders. Apart from these problems, the involvement of each group member is a positive point because that way, they can construct their understanding and knowledge about a particular topic. This finding also strengthens the results of research conducted by Falah et al. (2023) and Yahya (2019), showing that each student can develop their potential in task-based learning.

3. Challenges of Technology-mediated TBLT

In addition to the positive responses and some benefits obtained from implementing technology-mediated TBL, several obstacles were also faced in this study. Among them are teacher's creativity in designing tasks, different proficiency of students, and student adjustment. Teacher creativity is very much needed in learning, not only in teaching English. Most English teachers in elementary schools in Indonesia are homeroom teachers who are also mature in age (Zein, 2018). Therefore, in this technology-mediated TBL, teacher creativity, especially in designing tasks, needs to be considered (Mgboro et al., 2019) because not all English teachers in elementary schools are familiar with technology, especially with applications that can be used in presenting task-based learning.

In addition, based on the results of the research conducted, the heterogeneous abilities of students should also receive more attention because not all children have good basic English skills since not all of them can afford additional English courses after school. Teachers must be able to design tasks relevant to students' abilities (Baecher et al., 2012) so they can develop together. In this context, differentiated learning, especially in content, will be one of the most essential and will significantly help the learning process to be more effective for all students according to their learning needs.

Last but not least is the student's adjustment. Students generally need adjustment (Andrade, 2009) to every approach or learning model in the classroom. Likewise, in the implementation of technology-mediated TBL. This can be seen from the first meeting, where they still had difficulty following the rhythm presented in this technology-mediated TBL, so teachers must learn and start trying to integrate technology from basic things such as using a laptop or available projector. This will significantly help students when implementing technology-mediated T.B.L.T. Thus, the results will be more optimal.

D. CONCLUSION

This study aims to see the impact of using technology-mediated task-based learning to improve elementary school students' productive skills (speaking and writing). The study's results showed that the use of technology-mediated TBLT significantly influenced speaking and writing skills. This can be seen from the asymp. Sig 2-tailed obtained (0.037) is smaller than 0.05. In addition, the use of technology-mediated T.B.L.T. also has an impact on enthusiasm, interaction, and student engagement in learning English. However, there are still some obstacles that may have to be the focus of future research related to teacher creativity in compiling materials using technology, where most teachers who teach English in elementary schools are class teachers who do not necessarily master technology. In addition, the adaptation period needed by students when moving from one model to another must also be considered by teachers so that they can carry out a more optimal learning process. In conclusion, technology-mediated TBLT can be used as an alternative to create interactive learning and improve students' language skills, especially speaking and writing.

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