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Teachers' Perceptions Towards the Effectiveness of TBTM on Pupils' Motivation and Engagement in Reading English as a Second Language in Morogoro Municipality, Tanzania

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The study investigated the teachers' perceptions towards the effectiveness of TBTM on pupils' motivation and engagement in reading English as a Second Language in Morogoro municipality, Tanzania. The research employed a quantitative descriptive design to measure learners' motivation and engagement. The sample included 18 respondents selected through purposive sampling comprising English and non-English language teachers. Data were collected using Secondary data and questionnaires. The study ensured the reliability and validity of its instruments. Analysis of the data revealed that task-based instruction was more effective than traditional exercise-based methods in enhancing reading skills and language proficiency in Tanzanian primary school pupils.

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INTRODUCTION

The task-based teaching method is an approach to language teaching that focuses on the use of

language in real-life situations. The approach emphasizes the importance of pupils' use of language to accomplish specific tasks, rather than simply learning grammar rules and vocabulary in

isolation. The origins of task-based teaching can be traced back to the 1960s and 1970s when there was a growing recognition that traditional language teaching methods, which focused on grammar and vocabulary, were not always effective in preparing pupils to use language in real-life situations.

N. S. Prabhu first performed a Task-based teaching method through his Bangalore research report published in 1982. TBLT is a learner-centred approach to teaching. Richards (2010) states that this learner-centred approach keeps learners at the centre of all aspects of language teaching, including planning, teaching, and evaluation. Emphasizing the importance of TBLT, Ellis (2003) opines that this approach seeks the converse- texts that are learner-centred, discursive practices encouraging learners to actively engage in shaping and controlling the discourse; and social practices that help them in allowing and resolving social trouble. Here, the learners participate and use language to complete these tasks. They help each other in learning; monitor each other's tasks and suggest that fellow learners improve; and interpret messages with their full linguistic knowledge and prior experiences.

The task is in the center of the class activity where learners need to process their thoughts while learning a second or foreign language. Prabhu (1987) defines a language task as an activity that requires learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought and which allows teachers to control and regulate the process. The teacher does not predetermine the lesson, rather s/he prepares the students to engage in communicative tasks using most of their time talking, discussing, negotiating, and helping each other learn a language through meaningful communication. He/she selects the tasks from the texts which help to enhance the learners' curiosity and involvement in learning a language.

While students are at the centre of this approach, the teacher plays the role of an advisor, monitor, or facilitator of his or her students' tasks. He/she selects appropriate language tasks based on their age and interest; however, the difficulty level of these tasks increases as the students become more competent. First, the teacher gives clear instructions to the students about the task topic; helps them with

difficult words, phrases and sentences, and then takes them to take the real task. The active involvement of the students and their interaction with pairs, in groups, and even working individually on the tasks enhance their communicative skills.

Language Tasks

A language task is a meaningful piece of classroom work that a teacher uses to engage the learners to interact, manipulate, comprehend, and produce some result in the second or target language. Tasks are the key components of task-based language teaching. Ellis (2003) states a language task engages learners in productive or receptive, and oral or written skills along with other cognitive processes. Language tasks, if implemented effectively, enhance students' communicative abilities. Language tasks are purposeful, and they are developed from the students' real-life experiences. These tasks may include making travel plans or itineraries, preparing a recipe for their favourite meals, and making discussions regarding their agreement or disagreement on them, and learning language collaboratively.

Emphasizing the use of tasks in language learning, Lambert (2019) asserts, "The use of tasks in L2 instruction is predicated on the notion that language learning is an incidental process that takes place in line with learners' communicative needs while they are focused on achieving communicative outcomes". The real-world pedagogical tasks may include completing various forms, expressing feelings through literary genres, arguing and defending a position, interviewing, writing essays, letter writing and discussing travel plans, and others which help to foster the learners' communicative ability.

A language teacher uses various tasks in his or her class based on the level and interest of the learners. Prabhu (1987) mentions three different task components in his project: information-gap activity, reasoning-gap activity, and opinion-gap activity. The difficulty level of these activities increases as the learners' familiarity and confidence in the target language increases. The information-gap activity involves a transfer of information from one situation to another. For example, the learners are assigned a task to work with an incomplete picture or table with

the information available in a given piece of text. Reasoning-gap activities engage learners in finding new ideas by applying processes like logic, practical reasoning, or observation. Prabhu (1987) states an example of this activity as learners learning out a teacher's timetable based on some given class timetables.

Debates or speeches on some socio-cultural or environmental issues can be arranged as tasks in which students engage to include factual information logically to justify their opinions. These tasks are of comparatively higher level difficulty to the learners. However, other tasks include questions and answers, dialogues, matching items, filling the gaps or any activity that involves students' active participation in learning a second or foreign language with some purpose. For the effective implementation of TBLT as an approach, Nunan (1989) proposes pedagogical tasks that include jigsaw tasks, information-gap tasks, problem-solving tasks, decision-making tasks, and opinion exchange tasks. Jigsaw tasks engage students in combining different pieces of information to form a story or any other complete bit of information.

Classroom Procedure

Willis (1996) proposes three phases for teachers to plan for around a task: the pre-task phase, the task cycle, and the language focus. Only a creative can prepare, implement and evaluate the students' work on language tasks efficiently. In the pre-task phase, as Willis (1996) states, the teacher introduces the topic relating it to their prior knowledge, helps them learn new vocabulary and the structures; instructs the process and task outcome of the next phase, and exposes them to some complete sample tasks. When the students demonstrate the outcome of their tasks to the entire class, the teacher evaluates and provides feedback so that, in the post-task phase, they will do the tasks both on form and content more meaningfully. The post-task phase offers students an opportunity to reflect on their performance and to perform the task again to develop an in-depth understanding and confidence in the language tasks they involve.

The reading process, in a sense, is to recognize sounds, syllables and words, to convert them into

sound and its reporting process in a systematic form, in a gradual structure that textual components require one another such as sentence, word, syllable, and sound. In another sense, the reading process is a reader's extrapolation process about sentences and words in the text by activating his background knowledge at a higher level in the direction of instructions of the text (see Alderson, 2000; Treiman, 2003). Motivation is defined as an inner ability, a stimulus that pushes a person to take action to achieve a goal. Motivation, which is by definition tripwire, multifaceted, and prompt in using mind and language, is a fact that changes depending on time (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000).

Motivation has a very important role in the reading process. Many teachers state a lack of motivation is the origin of the problems they face within the learning environment (see Edmunds & Bauserman, 2006). However, teachers define a lack of reading motivation as the fundamental problem that they face regarding mere reading concerns (Gambrell et al., 1996). It is known that reading motivation contributes to students' comprehension of what they read and their success at school. Nevertheless, the reading motive has a determining effect on students concerning how much they will read (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000; Schraw et al., 1998; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997).

Task-based teaching has seemed to emerge in different time intervals as proved by various pieces of evidence. For example, in their study on task-based language teaching in Tanzania, Rubagumya (2019) and Emmanuel et al. (2018) note that the use of task-based teaching is influenced by the communicative language teaching approach. Kithuka (2018) suggests that the adoption of this approach in Kenya and East Africa is linked to the broader trend towards communicative language teaching. The authors note that task-based teaching has been used in Kenya to develop pupils' language skills in a way that is relevant to their lives and experiences and that this approach has been seen as a way to promote communicative competence and intercultural understanding.

Given this body of knowledge, none of these studies focused on the effectiveness of task-based teaching methods in improving the reading skills of learners

of the English language at the primary education level. Although previous studies did not recognize its importance as much as it should have, TBLT holds significant importance for comprehending higher levels of learning in the future. This study aims to address and provide more understanding of teachers' perceptions towards the effectiveness of TBTM on pupils' motivation and engagement in reading English as a Second Language in Morogoro municipality.

METHODOLOGY

Research Approach and Design

The research employed a quantitative descriptive design to measure learners' motivation and engagement. The rest data was used quantitative design so as to accomplish the goals. It was carried out in Morogoro Municipal because there are limited research studies available on the effectiveness of TBTM in improving the reading skills of primary pupils, so there is a need to fill such a gap. The proposed sample included two public primary schools. The reason for selecting these two schools was just because of the unsatisfied Standard Seven English Language National Examination Results of 2022.

Targeted Population

The targeted populations in this study were English and non-English language teachers from two selected primary schools. Sampling procedures involved both purposive and simple random sampling. The researcher used this method to get two primary schools to represent the rest. Also, random sampling was used to get 18 teachers from selected schools. The researcher used Slovin's formulae from two public primary schools being selected to get the expected respondents. The study used a sample size of approximately 18 to achieve a 95 per cent confidence level with a margin of error of 5 per cent. Data collection methods employed were questionnaires, documentary reviews (primary & secondary sources) and observation.

Instruments

The researcher prepared open and closed questions to be submitted to English and non-English language

teachers. The questionnaires were formed aiming to identify Teachers' perceptions towards the effectiveness of TBTM on pupils' motivation and engagement in reading English as a Second Language in Morogoro municipality, Tanzania. All selected schools' teachers received the same questions so as to extract more information from accurate sources.

Data Analysis

The data was analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics software version 21. The trustworthiness of the study was adhered to through direct observation within the classroom's teaching and learning activities, transparency and transferability of the findings. The researcher adhered to the important Ethical considerations issues like obtaining clearance from the VC of the Muslim University of Morogoro (MUM), (RAS) of Morogoro region and lastly, the DED of Morogoro Municipal Council to carry out the study. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the study, assured of confidentiality and privacy as well as requesting them to participate at their will and freely. They also assured security for their provided information.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The objective on the effectiveness of TBTM towards pupils' motivation and engagement in reading activities. Based on such objective, respondents (school teachers) were required to identify the roles of TBTM in Pupils' ability to extract meaning, thinking skills, and vocabulary acquisition whereby 17 (94.5%) of respondents admitted that TBTM motivates learners to have the ability to extract the meaning, while only 17 (94.5%) respondents confirmed that TBTM fosters thinking skills essential for comprehension and followed by 17 (94.5%) respondents affirmed that TBTM improves pupils' vocabulary acquisition.

Apart from that, about Pupils' participation, contextual understanding, and fluency in reading, 18 (100%) respondents admitted that TBTM motivates active participation, leading to better understanding, followed by 17 (94.5%) respondents confirmed that TBTM promotes contextual understanding and aiding comprehension and only 16 (89.9%)

respondents admitted that TBTM facilitates fluency in reading.

Furthermore, concerning Pupils' practical implication and detection of the main idea from the text given, 18 (100%) of respondents affirmed that TBTM helps pupils in the application of practical reading, while 17 (94.5%) of respondents admitted that TBTM prepares tasks that connect pupils to the real-life scenarios, followed by 18 (100%) respondents proved that Task-based teaching method enhances students' skills in identifying main ideas and supportive details.

In connection to Pupils' engagements and making connections by using TBTM, about 18 (100%) of respondents affirmed that TBTM encourages students to make connections between prior knowledge and new information, while 17 (94.5%) of respondents responded that the method makes reading more enjoyable, understanding of different genres. 16 (89.9%) of respondents confirmed that TBTM makes pupils more engaging in reading activities.

In addition to that, TBTM facilitates Pupils' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, eagerness and enjoyment in reading. Whereas 18 (100%) of respondents

admitted that TBTM makes reading more enjoyable, fostering a positive attitude towards learning, followed by 18 (100%) of respondents who responded that TBTM creates a sense of curiosity and eagerness to explore reading materials. 17 (94.5%) out of 18 respondents confirmed that the method boosts pupils' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to read. Through this statistical analysis, it is clear that TBTM motivate pupils more reading since they are exposed to various tasks that make them have experience in many fields.

Based on the same track, TBTM uplifts Pupils' socialization, relevance, accomplishment and feedback during the learning and teaching process, whereby 17 (94.5%) respondents appreciated that TBTM enhances pupils' socialization in reading. 18 (100%) of respondents confirmed that it provides immediate feedback, followed by 11 (61.1%) certified that it sparks a sense of relevance and only 11 (61.1%) respondents confirmed that it instils a sense of accomplishment among the pupils. Through such statistical evidence, TBTM makes pupils feel involved in the learning and teaching process and finally facilitates a high rate of reading skills among pupils. These findings are summarized in Table 1 below as follows:

Table 1: Illustrates the Respondents' Level of the Effectiveness of TBTM Towards Pupils' Motivation and Engagement in Reading Activities Among Primary Schools.

Attributes	Responses	n	%
Task-Based teaching enhances student's ability to extract meaning from texts.	Agree	17	94.5
TBTM fosters thinking skills essential for comprehension.	Agree	17	94.5
Student's engagement in TBTM improves vocabulary acquisition.	Agree	17	94.5
TBTM encourages active participation, leading to better understanding.	Agree	18	100
TBTM promotes contextual understanding, aiding comprehension	Agree	17	94.5
TBTM positively correlates with increased fluency in reading	Agree	16	89.9
TBTM helps practical application in reading	Agree	18	100
Improved comprehension is observed when students connect tasks to real-life scenarios.	Agree	17	94.5
TBTM enhances students' skills in identifying main ideas and supporting details	Agree	18	100
Increased engagement in reading tasks positively impacts comprehension	Agree	16	89.9
TBTM encourages students to make connections between prior knowledge and new information	Agree	18	100
TBTM make reading more enjoyable, leading to better comprehension	Agree	17	94.5
TBTM contributes to more understanding of different genres, enhancing overall comprehension	Agree	17	94.5
Task-based teaching boosts students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to read.	Agree	17	94.5

Attributes	Responses	n	%
TBTM make reading more enjoyable, fostering a positive attitude towards learning	Agree	18	100
Engaging in tasks creates a sense of curiosity and eagerness to explore reading materials.	Agree	18	100
Collaborative tasks in TBTM enhance students' socialization in reading	Agree	17	94.5
Task-based teaching provides immediate feedback.	Agree	18	100
Task-based teaching sparks a sense of relevance, (increasing student engagement)	Agree	11	61.1
Task-based activities instil a sense of accomplishment, positively impacting motivation.	Agree	11	61.1

Source: Field Data, 2024

Table 1 indicates the respondents' responses concerning the effectiveness of TBTM towards pupils' motivation and engagement in reading activities in primary school.

Through Observation, the researcher discovered that teachers had knowledge about TBTM and appreciated that it helped their pupils to be motivated during reading activities. He also found that few teachers with TBTM experiences delivered well their lessons and the kind of tasks provided to pupils were relevant towards real-life situations, something which didn't appear to teachers who had no such experiences.

Moreover, the researcher discovered that some teachers had faced challenges concerning TBTM. For instance, about 8 (72.7%) out of 11 teachers had attended the Task-based teaching method below one week while only 3 (27%) had attended the TBTM seminar over one week. Again, he discovered that apart from teachers' TBTM experiences they had, they didn't employ it in teaching activities. For example, about 12 (66.7%) out of 18 teachers do not use Task-based teaching methods in their learning process. To some extent, this attributes pupils' motivation and engagement to be less.

This result is in line with the findings of some empirical studies concerning the value of TBTM in motivating students to learn or acquire the language. For example, Ruso (2007) found out that TBTM provided students with opportunities for the target language receptivity in the language lessons, hence effectively motivating them to learn. Moreover, in Asian EFL teaching contexts, Poorahmadi (2012) revealed that TBL could enhance EFL students' motivation in reading comprehension because it not

only created a cooperative learning environment but also involved students in developing the language communicatively and cognitively. Furthermore, Fani et al. (2011) studied the effect of TBLT on EFL high school students' reading comprehension and their ability to paraphrase texts, it was revealed that TBI not only positively affected the learners' performance in reading comprehension, but also increased their reading speed and motivation.

On that basis, researchers do agree with the given studies to some extent because they have shown the way pupils benefit through TBTM. However, the researcher's point of view is that it would be better if all teachers could be given a chance to uplift their knowledge of the English language teaching methods so as to fit their respective areas. These findings underscore the necessity for comprehensive and sustained professional development for teachers to effectively adopt task-based teaching methods and maximize the associated benefits for student learning and motivation.

The current study's limitations included; participant characteristics (language proficiency level) and contextual side (primary) which was not applicable to other contexts. For instance, school infrastructures like classes that allow high ventilation for group discussion with enough space and qualified teachers with more knowledge about various teaching methods. Also, the duration of the intervention did not capture the long-term effects of task-based teaching on reading skills.

IMPLICATIONS

Some significant implications might be drawn for teaching and learning reading comprehension at Tanzanian primary schools. TBTM which promotes

meaningful, active and cooperative language learning could be an innovative alternative to teaching reading comprehension for EFL students in the context. Reading tasks should be appropriately designed to motivate students to take part in the reading comprehension process. For instance, with some texts in chronological order, teachers should design types of ordering and sorting tasks to arouse students' curiosity and interest.

Additionally, students should be exposed to the language through the meaningfully interactive learning process. Through the process, students could gain not only academic achievement but also interpersonal skills, which have increasingly become target requirements in a number of educational settings. For example, cooperative reading tasks (like putting events in chronological order, and playing the role of a tourist guide to introduce a historic place) aimed to foster students' skills such as negotiation skills, communication skills and decision-making skills.

CONCLUSION

Basically, the research findings have indicated that TBTM facilitated pupils' motivation and engagement in reading skills. This was mostly observed in the experimental group whereby respondents were seen to be motivated to read the tasks provided by the researcher through having a desire to understand/know different words' meaning, requesting many tasks so as to improve their reading proficiency and completing tasks on time among others. In the control group, the rate of motivation was not satisfied due to the method employed in the teaching and learning process compared to the E.G. where the researcher applied the Task-based teaching method.

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