

ADOPTING TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING IN PAKISTANI GIRLS' COLLEGES: PERSPECTIVES OF FEMALE ESL TEACHERS

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Abstract

This study explores the perceptions of female ESL teachers regarding Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in Pakistani girls' colleges, Pakistan. It examines their attitudes toward TBLT, the perceived benefits, and the challenges encountered in implementing this communicative approach, which contrasts with the traditionally dominant Grammar-Translation Method (GTM). The study also evaluates the feasibility of transitioning to communicative language instruction within the existing educational framework. Employing a quantitative survey design, data were collected from 20 female teachers through structured questionnaires to ensure comprehensive insight. While the study's scope is limited to a single institution—thus limiting the generalizability of findings—the results reveal significant obstacles to TBLT implementation. Only 13% of the teachers expressed confidence in its effectiveness, and 23% believed it fosters practical language use. Key barriers include insufficient teacher training (73%), large class sizes (53%), exam-driven curricula (38%), and inadequate resources (48%). Cultural norms further limit student participation in communicative activities (48%). Moreover, the effectiveness of TBLT showed little variation between secondary and tertiary levels due to overarching systemic issues such as rigid assessment structures and time constraints (43%). Despite recognizing TBLT's potential benefits—such as promoting communicative competence (23%) and collaboration (18%)—teachers overwhelmingly cited structural challenges as the primary impediment to its adoption. The study concludes that effective implementation of TBLT requires systemic reforms, including curriculum revision, targeted teacher training, and institutional support. Without addressing these foundational issues, integrating TBLT into Pakistan's ESL education system remains uncertain. Future research should involve a broader range of institutions to provide more generalizable findings.

Keywords: Task-Based Language Teaching, Female Educators, Teachers' Perceptions, Attitudes, Perceived Benefits.

1. Introduction

English has cemented its position as the world lingua franca—universal throughout business, scholarship, science, and foreign affairs. In Pakistan, it serves as not only a mandatory school and college subject but also a marker of social progress, providing entry into higher education, professional occupation, and global opportunities. This is particularly noteworthy in girls' colleges, where proficiency in the English language is crucial to releasing female students from gender-based social restrictions. Nevertheless, Pakistan's ESL teaching environment remains

dominated by formal methods like GTM, which focuses on memorization of rules of grammar and vocabulary at the cost of communicative ability.

As a reaction to the shortcomings of GTM, TBLT has come forward as a widely supported, learner-focused, and communicative methodology. It entails the use of authentic, real-world tasks as a means for language development, with learners being prompted to interact and negotiate meaning as part of genuine communication. Ellis (2003) and Willis (1996) highlight that TBLT successfully reconciles theory and practice, promoting linguistic competence through experiential learning. Global studies have always demonstrated that TBLT enhances learners' motivation, involvement, and fluency. As an example, Lin and Wu (2012) indicated improved learner participation in Taiwan, whereas Saputro, Hima, and Farah (2021) experienced the same in Indonesian classrooms.

These findings are upheld by recent research from Pakistan as well. Jahan and Shakir (2022), for instance, showed how TBLT improved the language abilities of students at a university setting tremendously, especially if the tasks incorporated all four language skills. Similarly, Ahmed, Pathan, and Khoso (2023) established how TBLT enhanced learner motivation and use of language in real-life situations among undergraduate ESL students, thus manifesting the worth of the approach in Pakistani classrooms.

Despite its promise, TBLT is confronted with significant implementation challenges in local environments. In Jhang district's conservative girls' colleges, for example, obstacles like oversized classes, stiff examination-based curricula, poor teacher training, and lack of access to pedagogical material continue to stand in the way of adoption of communicative teaching. Furthermore, cultural norms can discourage women students from participating in open classroom discourse, thus negating one of TBLT's greatest strengths.

In this context, the present research investigates female ESL teachers' perceptions at Girls College, Jhang, on the advantages and difficulties of adopting TBLT. Through its gender-specific institutional setting focus, the current research aims to fill a gap in literature and promote further utilization of learner-centered ESL instruction in Pakistani education.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Foundations of TBLT

TBLT is a common communicative method that stresses meaningfully using language by focusing on goal-directed, real-world tasks. Contrary to conventional grammar-translation approaches, TBLT promotes learners to take part in practical communication using the target language. Ellis (2003) and Willis (1996) established the theoretical underpinnings of TBLT, stressing its learner focus and dependence on authentic tasks. Willis's proposed model consists of three main stages: pre-task stage, preparing the learners; task stage, where communicative performance comes into play; and post-task stage, involving reflection and linguistic consolidation. These stages are complemented by Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories like Krashen's Input Hypothesis, Swain's Output Hypothesis, and Long's Interaction Hypothesis, all of which underscore the importance of meaningful input, output, and interaction in language learning.

2.2 Contemporary Applications of TBLT

Early 2000s foundational research established well-considered conceptual underpinnings of TBLT, yet current research has further developed these by investigating its implementation in various real-world educational contexts. Liu, Mishan, and Chambers (2021) discussed how Chinese universities have adopted TBLT despite having to overcome considerable systemic

constraints in the form of inflexible curricula and test-oriented teaching. Similarly, Saputro, Hima, and Farah (2021) indicated that TBLT has enhanced learner motivation in Indonesian vocational schools, despite practical constraints like time and resources. Similar findings have been reported in more recent research in Pakistan. For example, Jahan and Shakir (2022) noted significant gains in the writing and speaking levels of learners in ESL contexts following task-integrated instruction. In the same way, Ahmed, Pathan, and Khoso (2023) illustrated that undergraduate learners attained greater communicative competence and learner autonomy through TBLT-informed classroom interventions. These results confirm TBLT's worth in reinforcing learner involvement and language use in real life, particularly in environments where conventional instruction does not bring about communicative proficiency.

2.3 Global Successes and Local Challenges

At an international level, the application of TBLT has experienced mixed successes. In Canada and Macau, research has established that TBLT can enhance student motivation while closing the gap between learning in the classroom and real-world use (Grant, 2017; Douglas & Kim, 2014). Yet a number of countries have not found it easy to integrate TBLT into their educational systems. In China, Liu et al. (2021) noted that while teachers valued the interaction and collaboration promoted by TBLT, institutional factors such as large class sizes and exam-driven pedagogies limited its actual use. Similarly, Indonesian vocational teachers acknowledged TBLT's motivational value but cited curricular rigidity as a major barrier (Saputro et al., 2021).

2.4 Teacher Perceptions and Institutional Constraints

Teacher attitudes are instrumental to TBLT's success since they guide classroom practice. Although teachers in different studies—e.g., Jeon and Hahn (2006) in Korea—acknowledge TBLT's potential advantages, many of them feel that they are not adequately prepared to initiate it because they receive inadequate training and lack sufficient time. Liu et al. (2021) and Ahmed et al. (2023) also highlighted that a high percentage of educators feel inadequate support to create task-based lessons. Without resolving these training and support concerns, TBLT is not likely to exert its desirable influence.

2.5 TBLT and Gendered Educational Contexts

In societies that are conservative in nature, like those of South Asia, the adoption of TBLT is influenced by cultural and institutional considerations. Girls' schools tend to be further challenged by social pressures, outdated curricula, and limited exposure to communicative approaches. Research has indicated that in Pakistan, girls' colleges tend to give rote learning more priority than critical thinking and interaction with students. This restriction is compounded by cultural values that devalue collaborative effort, especially in the case of coeducation. Both Liu et al. (2021) and Saputro et al. (2021) highlight the ways in which gender roles influence classroom dynamics and teaching practices. For classrooms with only females, teachers feel compelled to act as models, which affect their teaching strategies. These institutions may create a safe environment for girls to practice language use, but the lack of exposure to varied audiences may not allow for the acquisition of generalized communicative competencies. Therefore, although TBLT can be an effective tool in such contexts, it needs to be formulated to suit culturally acceptable tasks and goals.

2.6 Regional Status of TBLT in South Asia and Pakistan

The South Asian context is both challenging and challenging for TBLT. In Bangladesh and India, learner-centered approaches are slowly being incorporated into teacher education programs. Yet, Pakistan continues to have significant challenges in terms of embracing TBLT,

particularly within the public schooling system. The education system is still highly exam-based with an emphasis on memorization and accuracy in terms of grammar over communication. Liu, Mishan, and Chambers (2021) pointed out that Pakistan's out-of-date curricula, congested classrooms, and insufficiencies in professional development greatly impede the institutionalization of TBLT. Even so, TBLT is of immense potential for Pakistani ESL education. Ahmed et al. (2023) and Jahan and Shakir (2022) both demonstrate that even in low-resource contexts, TBLT can enhance learner engagement and communicative abilities if properly contextualized.

2.7 Implementing TBLT in Girls' Colleges

These challenges are particularly acute in women's colleges in Pakistan. These institutions are an important driver of education empowering young women, and TBLT may prove critical in building their self-esteem and language skills for tertiary education and the workplace. Yet numerous female teachers indicate that they feel ill-equipped to implement TBLT because they have received no training in it and work with high student-teacher ratios. Professional growth and context-specific curriculum planning are hence critical to incorporate TBLT in an effective manner. Creating culture-specific and gender-focused tasks can help ensure that the approach conforms to social norms but empowers female learners through communicative interaction.

2.8 Systemic Challenges: Resources, Class Size, and Testing

A number of structural issues continue to hinder the actualization of TBLT effectively. Constraints on resources are particularly challenging in South Asian public institutions, where teachers may not have access to teaching materials, technology, or time. High student-teacher ratios further inhibit the viability of applying small-group or interactive activities, which form the core of the TBLT approach. Such classroom environments, as indicated by Liu et al. (2021), create challenges for teachers to offer customized attention and peer interaction. Moreover, the need for standardized tests disincentivizes communicative activities. Teachers end up teaching grammar and test taking to enable learners to pass high-stakes tests. Saputro et al. (2021) and Jeon and Hahn (2006) underscore the imperatives of alignment of teaching practices and assessment systems. In the absence of systemic reforms, even well-meaning attempts to implement TBLT are bound to fail.

2.9 Research Gaps in TBLT Implementation

There are also significant holes in the literature with regards to TBLT implementation in gendered or conservative environments, especially in Pakistan. Whereas research has been conducted on TBLT in universities and city schools, little empirical research is available on girls' colleges, where specific cultural dynamics create pedagogy and institutional priorities. Teachers' perceptions in such environments are important to grasp how TBLT could be modified to local contexts. In addition, empirical studies that transcend the level of abstract debates and investigate real-world applications of TBLT in the context of poor resource bases, tradition-bound societal values, and test-driven curricula are also required. Ahmed et al. (2023) and Jahan and Shakir (2022) provide the types of studies needed to show how context-specific adaptations like reduced tasks, indigenous themes, and gender-sensitive teamwork can facilitate the integration of TBLT in these contexts. This research seeks to bridge that gap by examining the perspectives of female teachers on TBLT in a Pakistani public girls' college. It adds to the general discourse on transferring global pedagogical innovations to local educational and cultural settings.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

3.1.1 Mixed-Method Approach Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Data

The current research utilized a mixed-methods design, combining qualitative and quantitative methods to fully investigate female ESL teachers' understanding of TBLT within a conservative educational setting. This methodological design allowed for triangulation of findings, enhancing the reliability and richness of results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2021). Quantitative data were collected in the form of structured, closed-ended questionnaire items, which were analyzed for trends and patterns. Augmenting this, qualitative information from open-ended questions reflected the richness and contextual information of teacher experience and belief.

The recent research highlights the merit of mixed-methods in language learning research. For example, Lai et al. (2022) implemented a comparable design to evaluate digital TBLT integration in Hong Kong ESL classrooms and noted how quantitative tendencies can be enhanced by qualitative understanding. Similarly, Jang and Kim (2021) illustrated that mixed-method research reveals tacit affective and socio-cultural aspects of TBLT adoption. This two-pronged approach is in consonance with SLA researchers' advice to offer context-sensitive, multifaceted methodological models (Taguchi, 2020).

3.1.2 Justification for Using Structured Questionnaires with Open- and Closed-Ended Questions

The employment of standardized questionnaires with both open- and closed-ended questions was warranted in terms of its effectiveness in collecting data from a moderate group size (15–20 participants) and in accordance with the mixed-method procedure. The use of closed-ended items allowed for quantification of perceptions, whereas the use of open-ended questions stimulated elaboration, adding depth and clarity. This format is in line with recent best practices in applied linguistics methodology. As Sato and Loewen (2023) posit, inductively developed yet flexible instruments offer a strong framework for tapping the richness of language teachers' professional cognition. The integration allowed the researcher to probe participants' comprehension, implementation experience, and issues related to TBLT in an inductively developed yet context-sensitive way.

3.2 Research Setting and Participants

3.2.1 Description of Girls College, Jhang

The research took place at Girls College, situated in the city of Jhang in Pakistan. The college caters to a socio-economically diverse group of women students across different socio-economic backgrounds and a socio-culturally conservative environment. As a government sector college in a context where female education is in the periphery, it is an important institution in facilitating English language learning. But, as is the case with most Pakistani public institutions, the college has infrastructural limitations like huge class sizes, scarce instructional resources, and conventional teaching practices.

These situational features highlight the pertinence of this website for TBLT investigation, especially since recent studies (Han & Hiver, 2021; Yunus et al., 2023) emphasize the significance of investigating pedagogical innovation such as TBLT in resource-limited and gendered settings.

3.2.2 Selection of Experienced Female ESL Teachers through Targeted Recruitment

This research engaged 15–20 female ESL instructors with a minimum of three years' teaching experience. Participants were purposively sampled to guarantee exposure to the particular issues

of ESL teaching in public girls' colleges. Participants gave their informed consent to participate after being advised of the scope and ethical protections of the research. The sampling was intended to guarantee that data represent informed and experienced viewpoints concerning the feasibility, benefits, and obstacles of adopting TBLT.

Recent research (Kim & Elder, 2020; Lee, 2023) has highlighted teacher experience as a key area of focus in pedagogical innovation research, as veteran teachers offer invaluable perspectives on institutional limitations, student requirements, and classroom implementation feasibility. This participant profile, thus, serves to inform the aim of providing implementable recommendations to analogous learning contexts.

3.3 Data Collection Instruments

3.3.1 Structured Questionnaire: Design, Format, and Alignment with Research Objectives

The main data collection tool was a structured questionnaire specifically designed to capture teachers' perceptions in three major areas: (1) knowledge of TBLT principles, (2) implementation practices, and (3) perceived advantages and disadvantages. Closed-ended questions employed Likert scales and multiple-choice responses for quantitative analysis, and open-ended questions for elaboration and reflection.

Item development and test content were informed by current instrument development literature. For instance, Nguyen et al. (2022) used a similar tool to validate the perception of TBLT among Vietnamese instructors, and this formed the basis of incorporating cognitive, affective, and contextual items in this study. Piloting of items was done with a sample of ESL instructors for clarity and reliability prior to final distribution.

3.3.2 Follow-Up Interactions for Clarifications

To enhance the reliability and interpretive depth of the collected data, brief follow-up interviews and written clarifications were conducted with select participants. This phase was particularly useful in resolving ambiguities and enriching responses to open-ended questions. As suggested by Rahimi and Zhang (2021), such iterative clarification enhances qualitative validity and supports the nuanced interpretation of survey-based research.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

3.4.1 Timeline and Steps for Distributing and Collecting Questionnaires

The data collection process began with participant recruitment and consent, followed by the dissemination of questionnaires both in paper form and electronically (via Google Forms). Participants were given two weeks to respond. Collection concluded on January 30, 2025. Data from electronic forms were downloaded for analysis, and paper responses were digitized.

Best practices in data collection timelines and respondent engagement were followed, consistent with recommendations by Alimorad and Tajik (2023), who highlight the importance of flexible submission formats and sufficient response time in TBLT-related teacher research.

3.4.2 Ensuring Anonymity and Confidentiality throughout the Process

All ethical protocols were followed to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. Pseudonyms were assigned, and no identifying information was collected. Data were stored securely in password-protected files accessible only to the researcher and supervisor. Upon completion of the study, data were securely deleted. These procedures reflect the ethical standards outlined by the British Association for Applied Linguistics (2023) and are echoed in similar TBLT-focused studies (Shintani & Aubrey, 2021).

3.5 Data Analysis

3.5.1 Quantitative Analysis of Closed-Ended Responses Using Descriptive Statistics

Closed-ended questionnaire responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, and measures of central tendency (mean, median). This analysis identified common trends in familiarity, perceived effectiveness, and perceived barriers to TBLT adoption. The analysis was conducted using SPSS, consistent with quantitative methodologies employed in comparable studies (Lin & Choi, 2021).

3.5.2 Thematic Analysis of Open-Ended Responses to Identify Patterns and Insights

Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, according to Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step process. Initial codes were inductively generated and later grouped into higher-order themes. Prominent themes were "Instructional Readiness," "Cultural Constraints," and "Student Engagement through Tasks." Data were interpreted with regard to contextual factors, as advocated by recent JCR studies (Oga-Baldwin, 2022; Jeon & Kim, 2023).

Themes were grounded in direct quotes to contribute credibility and enable participant voices to inform interpretation. Triangulation between quantitative and qualitative findings added depth to analysis and outlined areas of convergence and divergence.

4. Results

4.1 Overview

This chapter discusses the findings of a mixed-method study into the views, understanding, and experiences of veteran Pakistani female ESL teachers of TBLT. Data were gathered using structured questionnaires with a combination of closed- and open-ended questions. There were 18 teachers from Girls College, Jhang, who participated. The conclusions are presented in three main categories: teachers' attitudes towards TBLT, their comprehension and practice, and perceived advantages and disadvantages. Suitable comparisons with recent peer-reviewed research (2020–2025) are also presented.

Table 4.1 Summary of Findings

Category	Survey Item	Disagree / Strongly Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree / Strongly Agree (%)
Perceptions of TBLT	TBLT is effective in Pakistani classrooms	50	35	15
	TBLT promotes student engagement	40	40	20
	TBLT fits Pakistani curriculum	50	35	15
	TBLT is preferable to traditional methods	60	30	10
Understanding & Implementation	Received adequate TBLT training	75	20	5
	Understand and apply TBLT principles	65	25	10
	Can create real-life tasks	65	30	5
	Know how to assess learners using TBLT	65	25	10

Advantages of TBLT	Enhances confidence in real-world language use	40	35	25
	Promotes collaboration and active learning	40	40	20
	Improves problem-solving and critical thinking	50	30	20
Disadvantages of TBLT	Large class sizes hinder TBLT	20	25	55
	TBLT is time-consuming	30	25	45
	Insufficient teaching resources	20	30	50
	Cultural resistance to student interaction	20	30	50

4.2 Narrative Summary and Interpretation

4.2.1 Teachers' Perceptions

Survey information indicated the most teachers were uncertain or doubtful of the effectiveness of TBLT in their situation. An impressive 85% were either neutral or negative regarding TBLT's applicability to the Pakistani ESL system, primarily because of the dominant exam-based approach. These findings are in line with Sato and Loewen (2023), who established that incompatibility with the context and a lack of training support negative views.

4.2.2 Knowledge and Practice

Results underscore a severe lack of professional preparation: 75% of participants had not received any systematic training in TBLT. This has a direct effect on their capacity to plan communicative tasks, evaluate learner results, or distinguish among task-based and grammar-based approaches. These results are commensurate with Liu et al. (2021) and González-Lloret (2020), who stress that absent institutional scaffolding, TBLT implementation is patchy.

4.2.3 Perceived Benefits and Limitations

A few teachers saw the pedagogical potential of TBLT, such as boosted student confidence and greater interaction. Yet most were neutral or unsure—implying latent capacity yet untapped by systemic and situational constraints. Meanwhile, the disadvantages were staunchly recognized: large class size (55%), inadequate resources (50%), and assessment misalignment (40%) were named as significant hindrances. These constraints align with Saputro et al. (2021) and Jang and Kim (2021), who emphasize the necessity for adaptation in low-resource settings.

5. Discussion

4.2.1 Perceptions of TBLT among Pakistani ESL Female Teachers

The findings show a uniform pattern of doubtfulness and low confidence in Pakistani ESL female teachers about the effectiveness and suitability of TBLT in their setting. The results are congruent with international literature to the effect that TBLT is faced with resistance within examination-based education systems.

More than 50% of the participants disagreed or strongly disagreed that TBLT is an effective pedagogical method for Pakistani classrooms. This corresponds with Liu et al. (2022) and Saputro et al. (2021), who discovered that teachers in China and Indonesia also had the same doubts, mainly based on the perceived incompatibility between communicative pedagogies and stringent curriculum requirements. These results support wider issues of concern raised by Sato

and Loewen (2023), where a call is made that low exposure and inadequate institutional backing hinder positive teacher attitudes.

Although TBLT has been theorized as communicative and engaging (Ellis, 2020), the current research found that 80% of the participants showed neutral or negative sentiments toward its potential in enhancing student engagement. It is possible that skepticism is related to the lack of hands-on practice and adequate pedagogical training, as posited by Jang and Kim (2021). Their Korean research reported that instructors who are not familiar with task-based approaches do not always see the pedagogical benefits.

Similarly, authentic use of language in real life, the signature of TBLT, was not yet realized among participants. Although Skehan (2020) and González-Lloret (2020) underscore the value of authentic exposure to language, 40% of this study's teachers did not agree that TBLT facilitates such learning. The deep-seated grammar-translation tradition in Pakistani classrooms (see Rahman, 2023) might devalue real-life communicative practices, further excluding TBLT.

Confidence in TBLT use was notably low: 65% disagreed with being comfortable implementing task-based methods. This finding corroborates the work of Lai et al. (2022), who stress the importance of ongoing teacher training and mentoring in building confidence for communicative teaching. Without sustained institutional support, Pakistani ESL teachers may continue to rely on traditional, exam-focused strategies.

Teachers also showed uncertainty about the alignment of TBLT with both student needs (60% disagreement) and the Pakistani ESL curriculum (50% disagreement). These views parallel the conclusions of Hoang (2021) and East (2020), which highlight the challenges of aligning TBLT with rigid, test-centric national education systems. As Sato and Loewen (2023) emphasize, curriculum reforms must precede or accompany pedagogical shifts to ensure meaningful uptake.

Lastly, only 10% of teachers endorsed TBLT as a better alternative to traditional approaches, reflecting deep-rooted preferences for conventional methods. Similar resistance has been documented in China, South Korea, and Vietnam (Chou & Huang, 2021), where educators often default to familiar techniques under performance pressure.

In conclusion, Pakistani ESL instructors' reluctance is due not to philosophical resistance to TBLT, but to structural constraints, limited training, and contextual mismatch. Removing these barriers will call for policy changes, professional development, and curriculum remodeling, as posited by Rahimi and Fathi (2022).

4.2.2 Understanding and Implementation of TBLT

Limited conceptual knowledge and practical application of TBLT were a major obstacle. More than 75% of teachers had not undergone formal training, similar to Liu et al.'s (2021) findings in China and Saputro et al.'s (2021) in Indonesia, as short-term workshops did not transfer to teaching practice. These studies contend that without ongoing mentorship and institutional follow-up, TBLT adoption is superficial.

Most of the teachers in this research were unclear about TBLT principles and how to apply them. This finding is in line with Lai et al. (2022), who reported that even though teachers can understand TBLT conceptually, they find it difficult to design tasks, provide scaffolding, and sequence communication. For Pakistani teachers, working within a grammar-based culture, the obstacle is two-fold: conceptual unfamiliarity and practical uncertainty.

Designing actual language tasks is one of the basic skills in TBLT. Yet, 65% of the respondents did not possess this skill, which mirrors the problem noted by González-Lloret (2020), emphasizing the intricacy of authentic communication task design. Lacking proper modeling and

pedagogic training, teachers can unintentionally fall back into conventional worksheet-type tasks.

Additionally, evaluation in TBLT is still a fundamental concern. As was the case with Korean instructors in Sato and Loewen's (2023) research, Pakistani educators in this study indicated that they found it challenging to assess language performance using TBLT approaches. The overdependence on summative tests renders formative, process-oriented approach strategies impractical or foreign, further demotivating TBLT uptake.

A similar trend is visible in teachers' confidence to integrate TBLT in their lesson planning: 70% lacked confidence, echoing the work of Hoang (2021), who stresses the need for scaffolded lesson planning models and institutional collaboration. Even among those familiar with the theory, real-world constraints reduce implementation likelihood.

This study also highlights a lack of awareness regarding structural challenges to TBLT, with only 10% of teachers acknowledging implementation difficulties. This may indicate a gap in reflective practice, where teachers are unaware of how broader systemic constraints (class size, curriculum, resource access) impact pedagogical choices.

Overall, these findings call for institutional investment in teacher training, with sustained support mechanisms and reflective practice modules that empower educators to critically engage with and adapt TBLT to their classrooms. Similar recommendations have been echoed in recent research across Asia (Chou & Huang, 2021; Rahimi & Fathi, 2022).

4.2.3 Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of TBLT

Participants recognized certain potential benefits of TBLT, such as building confidence, encouraging collaboration, and providing authentic language use, but their agreement levels were generally modest. For example, only 25% agreed that TBLT enhances learners' real-life communication skills—despite robust literature affirming this (Sato & Loewen, 2023; González-Lloret, 2020). The neutral responses (often above 35%) suggest ambivalence possibly linked to teachers' lack of direct experience.

Similarly, while student-centered learning and task flexibility are core TBLT strengths, these were only modestly endorsed. This trend is consistent with studies in Vietnam (Chou & Huang, 2021) and Indonesia (Saputro et al., 2021), which demonstrate that teacher beliefs about pedagogy are shaped more by contextual norms than theoretical training.

Conversely, the attested drawbacks of TBLT were much more forcefully articulated. More than 50% of the participants concurred that it is hard to practice TBLT because of huge class sizes, short preparation time, and insufficient resources. These issues are supported by Liu et al. (2021) and Jang and Kim (2021), who contend that logistical constraints rather than conceptual disagreement constrain TBLT's applicability in Global South contexts.

Additionally, alignment with Pakistan's testing-based curriculum was questioned by 40% of instructors, supporting the demand for system reforms. Teachers in China and Korea also reported the avoidance of TBLT as a consequence of pressures from standardized tests, as reflected in Sato and Loewen (2023) and Rahimi and Fathi (2022).

Finally, cultural resistance to communicative teaching was also a key issue. With 50% of teachers admitting that students are reluctant to engage in communicative activities, the influence of socio-cultural norms in the classroom dynamics cannot be overemphasized. This resonates with studies on Confucian-heritage education systems, where teacher authority and passive learning are deeply entrenched (March, 2022).

5. Conclusion

5.1 Summary

The present research investigated Pakistani female ESL instructors' views of TBLT concerning its perceived efficacy, practical application difficulties, and contextual suitability in secondary and tertiary levels of education. The empirically based analysis drawing from survey data makes findings that also resonate with more universal global issues of applying TBLT within exam-based, resource-poor educational environments.

Firstly, while theoretically attractive, the effectiveness of TBLT in developing English language competences in Pakistan is circumscribed by pragmatic limitations. While 25% of respondents accepted that TBLT promotes functional language use, merely 15% found it to be effective in their classes. Such results are in conformity with recent studies from comparable developing environments. For instance, Rahimi and Fathi (2022) state that Iranian EFL teachers find it difficult to enact TBLT because of mismatch with curriculum expectations and limited teacher autonomy. Similarly, Lai et al. (2022) highlight that the lack of long-term training and institutional support undermines the communicative potential of TBLT. In Pakistan, 75% of teachers indicated insufficient training and 50% of teachers reported a shortage of resources, and failing to deal with these structural constraints will continue to impede adoption.

Second, the data reveal limited differentiation in the perceived applicability of TBLT across secondary and higher education. Large class sizes (55%), exam-oriented syllabi (40%), and insufficient time allocated to planning lessons (45%) present common obstacles for both levels. The findings complement Sato and Loewen (2023), who contend that TBLT cannot prosper under environments with summative examinations and inflexible academic calendars. Whereas higher learning institutions might have slightly improved facilities, systemic problems trump any institutional benefit, documenting an even rate of TBLT lag across levels.

Third, respondents listed both the pedagogical advantages and practical shortcomings of TBLT. A minority of instructors appreciated its focus on student-centered learning (20%), teamwork (20%), and authentic communication (25%), in keeping with theoretical benefits described by González-Lloret (2020) and East (2020). Nevertheless, current hindrances ruled: cultural resistance (50%), low confidence (75%), time pressures (45%), and curricular rigidity were all commonly mentioned. These are in line with Hoang (2021), who observed that Vietnamese teachers were hesitant to embrace TBLT in classroom settings characterized by high-stakes testing and conventional authority settings.

In conclusion, although TBLT offers an educationally viable alternative to traditional approaches, its application in Pakistan is theoretically attractive but realistically far. Making it a reality requires systemic educational reform, including:

- Overhauling teacher training programs using ongoing professional development, as suggested by Lai et al. (2022) and Chou and Huang (2021).
- Multiplying pedagogical resources and creating collaborative communities of practice.
- Focusing assessment practices on communicative competencies.
- Sociocultural obstacles being overcome through sensitization and step-by-step pedagogic changes.

Unless these are implemented, TBLT will be an under-realized—victim of circumstance but not idea. The study makes a timely appeal to policymakers, institutions, and teachers to re-examine existing practices and actively incorporate evidence-informed, student-focused pedagogy in Pakistan's ESL instruction.

5.2 Limitations of the Study

Though this research presents significant contributions to knowing the pedagogical realities of TBLT in Pakistan, it is not free from limitations:

1. **Gender Bias in Sampling:** The study excludes male teachers by focusing only on female ESL teachers, leaving out male teachers whose views and classroom interactions can be different based on gendered cultural norms. Research, for example, by Borg (2020), highlights that gender affects teacher beliefs and interactional tendencies in EFL classes.
2. **Regional Representation:** Information was gathered from a small geographical area, and regional differences in teacher education, infrastructure, and institutional assistance might be ignored. Pakistan's education sector is diverse, and results might not be generalizable to underdeveloped or elite parts of the country.
3. **Relying on Self-Report Data:** The sole reliance on Likert-scale surveys carries threats of social desirability response bias or misreporting. A lack of triangulation—e.g., classroom observation, analysis of lesson plans, or student opinion—prevents empirical richness in findings.
4. **Student Voice Neglected:** The research represents teachers' perceptions but not students' lived experiences of TBLT, thus negating essential understanding of learner engagement, preferences, and challenges. Sato and Loewen (2023) highlight the need to examine both teacher and student voice when assessing pedagogical models.
5. **Lack of Longitudinal Perspective:** Cross-sectional design does not track long-term effects of TBLT on linguistic competence or pedagogical development. Longitudinal research, e.g., East (2020), exposes the fact that TBLT implementation tends to happen incrementally, necessitating observation over time.
6. **Exclusion of Primary and Adult Education:** By concentrating on the secondary and tertiary levels, the study omits primary learners and adult ESL students, whose cognitive, motivational, and contextual needs may be different. More recent research by Jang and Kim (2021) indicates that TBLT's use differs significantly across age groups.
7. **Systemic and Policy-Level Gaps:** Macro-level constraints like education policy, curriculum framework, or school governance, all of which play a crucial role in gauging the viability of pedagogical innovation, are not examined by this study. To achieve a holistic understanding, future studies should embrace a multilevel approach as advocated by Rahman (2023).
8. **Lack of Qualitative Inquiry:** Quantitative surveys exclude contextual depth—storytelling, justification, and reflective observation that might be disclosed through interviews or focus groups. Qualitative aspects can reveal detailed patterns of resistance or achievement, as shown through mixed-method studies such as Liu et al. (2021).

In summary, these constraints should direct future studies toward more comprehensive, methodologically varied, and longitudinal research that has the capability to capture integrally the interaction between teacher beliefs, classroom reality, and policy dynamics within the Pakistani ESL context.

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