

Developing English Speaking Teaching Materials Through Task-Based Learning for The Eighth-Grade Students of MTs S Mutafawiq Aini

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this study were to develop English-speaking materials through Task-Based Learning for eighth-grade students at MTs S Mutafawiq Aini, and to investigate the effectiveness of the developed materials in improving students' English speaking skills. This study employed a Research and Development method to design English speaking skills using a task-based learning approach. Educational R&D is a development model in which the findings of research are used to design new products and procedures that are systematically field-tested. Based on the research findings and discussions, several conclusions were drawn, and English-speaking materials were developed using the ADDIE model and validated by experts. The development process included the analysis of learners' needs, design of task-based content, and implementation in real classroom settings. Expert validation showed that the developed materials were of high quality, with an average validity of 90.25%, and were categorized as 'Very Good.' The materials were relevant, engaging, and aligned with the Merdeka Curriculum. The field trial results revealed a significant improvement in the students' speaking performance. The average score increased from 64.5 to 82.25, demonstrating that TBL effectively enhanced fluency, accuracy, and confidence. Students' positive responses confirmed that the developed materials were interesting, enjoyable, and useful in motivating them to actively speak English. Overall, Task-Based Learning has proved to be an effective approach for developing English-speaking materials that promote communicative competence and learner autonomy.

Keywords: Teaching, Speaking, English

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly evolving educational landscape, teaching methods must be adapted to meet the diverse needs of learners. Task-Based Learning (TBL) has emerged as an innovative and effective approach that emphasizes real-world applications, active engagement, and meaningful communication. Rather than focusing solely on grammatical rules or memorization, TBL encourages students to use language as a tool for accomplishing authentic tasks, thereby enhancing both fluency and confidence.

Although Task-Based Learning (TBL) has long been acknowledged as an effective method for fostering communicative competence, most existing research has concentrated on adult or university students in EFL and ESL contexts. Studies examining the use of TBL at the secondary school level remain scarce, especially in the Indonesian context, where classroom practices and cultural factors may differ considerably. Furthermore, previous investigations have predominantly employed quantitative designs, such as pre- and post-tests, giving limited consideration to qualitative dimensions that reveal learners' experiences, engagement, and interaction throughout speaking activities.

In addition, much of the research has focused mainly on linguistic achievements, neglecting affective aspects, such as speaking anxiety, self-confidence, and willingness to communicate. The theoretical connection between TBL and second language acquisition frameworks, such as the interaction and output hypotheses, has received little attention. Hence, further studies are required to examine how Task-Based Learning can enhance learners' speaking ability and emotional involvement through authentic communicative tasks in localized educational settings.

In recent years, enhancing students' speaking skills has become a central issue in English language education, as many learners continue to find it difficult to express their thoughts fluently and confidently, despite long periods of formal learning. Conventional teaching approaches that emphasize grammar drills and vocabulary memorization often fail to create meaningful opportunities for authentic communication. To address this challenge, Task-Based Learning (TBL) has emerged as an innovative approach that integrates real-life communicative tasks into the core of language instruction.

This method encourages learners to engage in natural interactions while completing purposeful activities, such as discussions, problem-solving tasks, or role-plays. Nevertheless, in many educational settings, especially within EFL contexts, such as Indonesia, the application of TBL remains limited and is sometimes misinterpreted. Teachers frequently focus more on grammatical accuracy than on communicative fluency, resulting in speaking activities lacking genuine interaction and purpose. This situation indicates that although TBL holds significant promise for improving speaking proficiency, its practical implementation and effectiveness in fostering authentic communication among learners still require deeper exploration.

This study aims to explore the concepts, principles, and benefits of Task-Based Learning as a dynamic approach to language teaching and learning. It is hoped that the following discussion will provide educators, learners, and researchers with valuable insights into how TBL can be effectively implemented to create more interactive and communicative classrooms.

Speaking is a fundamental skill in learning English, as it enables learners to communicate effectively and express ideas in real-life situations. However, student MTs S Mutaawiq Aini often demonstrate limited speaking proficiency due to minimal opportunities to practice English in both classroom settings and daily interactions. Traditional teaching methods in MTs S Mutaawiq Aini tend to emphasize grammar instruction and written exercises, which do not adequately develop students' oral communication skills. To address this, various speaking-focused learning methods can be applied, such as communicative language teaching, role-playing, discussion-based activities, and Task-Based Learning (TBL). These approaches encourage learners to actively produce language, meaningfully use vocabulary, and conduct experiments with grammatical structures in the context. Harmer (2001) emphasized that speaking practice should involve both fluency and accuracy, allowing learners to confidently convey messages while refining their language forms. By integrating speaking-focused methods into English instruction, teachers can create a more interactive learning environment in which students can gain authentic practice, improve their vocabulary, and gradually develop communicative competence. Consequently, enhancing speaking through these methods not only supports overall language acquisition, but also builds students' confidence and motivation to use English effectively (Harmer, 2001).

Speaking is fundamental to human communication. The ability to communicate and receive, process, store, and produce messages is central to human interaction and participation (McLeod, 2018, p. 3). The ability to deliver messages through spoken language determines the success of conveying messages to the receiver. English language learning has become an essential part of Indonesian education. The government has emphasized the importance of English language skills in the curriculum, particularly in junior high schools, to achieve communicative competence.

Brown (2004) stated that speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information. Based on this definition, people can provide ideas and exchange information with others through interactive processes. Based on the Merdeka curriculum, eighth-grade Junior High School is expected to be able to express meaning in simple transactional and interpersonal conversation to be intact in the immediate environment. In fact, based on preliminary observations of eighth-grade MTs, the S Mutaawiq Aini. The researcher found that many students had low speaking-skill scores. There were 20 students in the class, 40% of the students had got 1-69, 10% of the students had 70-79, 30% of the students had 80-89, and 20% of the students had 90-100. This indicates that most of them had low motivation to speak English, and their speaking skills were poor. This means that students cannot fulfill their curriculum expectations (Brown, 2004).

The researcher found problems that caused some students to have low speaking skill scores. The first problem was related to students. Many students were not confident in speaking English because they were worried about grammatical and vocabulary errors. For instance, when the teacher asks them to come forward to converse with friends and engage in dialogue, they refuse it. They were too shy and worried that their friends would laugh at them. The second problem is related to the material; the students rarely practice speaking because the teacher did not teach speaking in the same portion as the other language skills. There are not enough speaking materials ready for classroom use.

Students require engaging in exercises, assignments, and resources to encourage their learning of speaking. Materials for language acquisition that are assigned assignments are those that work well. Nunan (2004) and Ellis (2003) state that the goal of a task is to produce language use that is comparable to that which occurs in real-world situations and everyday life. It will be more engaging and fun if the instructor uses task-speaking material and activities based on task-based learning, which gives the students instructions on how to do their assignments. Each assignment outlines what the teacher and students need to accomplish and has a clear goal (Nunan, 2004)(Ellis, 2003).

According to Kesda (2012), students' speaking and language acquisition in the classroom are enhanced by task-based learning activities. The students found the variety of speaking tasks in the content beneficial and motivating. Ruso (2007) discovered that students' motivation and learning were improved by task-based learning. The presentation of a variety of assignments allowed students to practice their target language receptivity during the lessons. Based on these findings, it is crucial to create speaking materials based on task-based learning.

Grammar and vocabulary are the two essential components of language competence that enable learners to communicate effectively. According to Harmer (2007), grammar provides a structural framework for language, while vocabulary supplies the meaning needed for expression and comprehension. These two elements are interdependent, as accurate grammatical use enhances clarity and rich vocabulary broadens communicative ability. In Task-Based Learning (TBL), grammar instruction is integrated into communicative competence rather than being taught as an isolated skill, and this principle can be directly applied to developing speaking skills.

Speaking, as an active productive skill, is most effectively improved when learners engage in meaningful tasks that require real communication rather than through repetitive drills or memorization. Willis (1996) emphasized that TBL encourages learners to focus on meaning first, allowing both grammatical accuracy and spoken fluency to develop naturally as students attempt to convey real messages in spoken form. Similarly, Ellis (2003) asserted that tasks provide opportunities for learners to notice and internalize grammatical structures while speaking, thereby facilitating both implicit and explicit learning. Meanwhile, Nunan (2004) highlighted that grammar and vocabulary in TBL should emerge from communicative activities where learners collaborate, discuss, or solve problems to achieve specific goals, rather than from decontextualized exercises (Nunan, 2004).

Speaking-focused tasks, such as role-play, discussions, presentations, and problem-solving activities, allow learners to practice pronunciation, sentence construction, and lexical choice in context. This approach aligns with communicative methodology, in which the main goal of teaching speaking is to enable learners to express themselves accurately, fluently, and confidently in real-life situations. By embedding grammar and vocabulary practice in meaningful speaking tasks, TBL supports the development of oral proficiency through active engagement, interaction, and reflection, helping learners acquire language skills more effectively than traditional form-focused instruction alone.

Task-Based Learning (TBL) has been widely used in language learning. It focused on developing learners' language skills through real-life tasks and activities. This approach can help learners develop their English speaking skills more effectively. Thus, this research will concentrate on creating task-based learning-materials for MTs S Mutafawiq Aini's eighth-grade students.

II. METHODS

This study employed a Research and Development method to design English speaking skills using a task-based learning approach. Educational R&D is a development model in which the findings of research are used to design new products and procedures, which are systematically field-tested, evaluated, and refined until they meet the specified criteria of effectiveness, quality, or similar standards (Borg and Gall, 2003:569). Borg and Gall (2003:572) states that if you plant to do and an R&D project that involves a limited amount of original instructional design.

To obtain accurate and reliable data, the researcher employed specific sampling and data collection techniques as outlined below. In educational research, the Research and Development (R&D) approach is essential for producing effective and efficient educational products or practices. This method focuses on systematically developing and evaluating models or materials designed to improve the teaching and learning processes. According to Latief (2014), R&D involves identifying classroom problems, reviewing relevant educational theories, designing and developing instructional products, validating them through expert judgment, and conducting field trials to assess practicality and effectiveness. In this study, the researcher utilized the ADDIE model as a guiding framework for the R&D process.

Analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation (ADDIE) provides a systematic approach for creating effective and efficient learning experiences. The ADDIE process is a framework for navigating complicated circumstances; it is ideal for creating instructional products and learning resources (Branch, 2009). The researcher chose to use the ADDIE development method because of its advantages in its systematic work stages. Each phase is evaluated and revised from the stages passed, so that the resulting product becomes valid.

The data used in this study were the students' needs analysis and existing materials. The data were analyzed to obtain a solution to students' problems and to find appropriate speaking materials based on students' needs. Subsequently, these data were used to develop new speaking materials. The data were analyzed using the following steps:

1. Analyzing students' need as data of study which was taken from interview and questionnaire. From the data, appropriate speaking materials were found to enhance their speaking skills.
2. Matching the existing materials to core competence and base competence of the curriculum and analyzing the appropriateness of students' needs.
3. Developing materials based on needs analysis, core competence and based competence.

In research, trustworthiness refers to the credibility, dependability, and validity of a study's findings. It is about ensuring that the research methods and results are credible and reliable and can be trusted by others. Essentially, trustworthiness means demonstrating that the research accurately reflects the experiences and perspectives of participants and that the findings are meaningful and applicable to other contexts.

Here is the breakdown of the key aspects of trustworthiness :

1. **Credibility**
This refers to beliefs in the research findings. This ensure that the data collected were accurate and representative of the phenomenon being studied.
2. **Transferability**
It assesses the extent to which the findings can be applied to other contexts or situations. It is not about generalizing to all situations but rather demonstrating that the findings are relevant to similar contexts.
3. **Dependability**
This ensured that the research process was consistent, and that the study could be repeated with similar results. This involves documenting the research process and methods in detail.
4. **Confirmability**
That is, it focuses on minimizing researcher bias and ensuring that the findings are based on the data, not the researcher's own opinions or beliefs.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Research Result

The first stage aimed to obtain comprehensive information about students' needs, problems, and interests in learning English, especially speaking. The researcher collected data through questionnaires, interviews, and document analyses.

The participants included one English teacher and 30 eighth-grade students of MTs S Muta'awiq Aini in the 2025/2026 academic year. The teacher provided valuable insights into students' speaking difficulties, classroom practices, and the existing teaching materials used in the school. Meanwhile, the students responded to a needs analysis questionnaire to identify their necessities, lack, and desire to learn speaking, following the framework of Hutchinson and Waters (1986) (Hutchinson, 1987).

Document analysis was conducted by examining the existing textbook and Merdeka Curriculum syllabus for grade VIII. The findings revealed that the materials provided were mostly grammar-based, and lacked authentic speaking activities. As a result, students had very few opportunities to practice English orally.

The gathered data showed that most students had low confidence and motivation in speaking English. They were afraid of making grammatical or pronunciation errors and tended to remain silent during the speaking activities. Therefore, this stage confirmed the urgent need to develop new and engaging speaking materials that could enhance students' communicative competence in real-life tasks.

B. Analyzing Data

In the second stage, the researcher analyzed the collected data to identify students' learning needs and weaknesses in existing materials. The results of the questionnaires and interviews indicated several key issues.

1. Students had limited vocabulary and grammar knowledge, which affected their fluency.

2. Speaking activities in the current materials were insufficient and less interactive.
3. Students needed more contextual and meaningful speaking tasks related to their daily lives.
4. The teacher expected new materials that could encourage collaboration and communication in the classroom.

To ensure curriculum alignment, the researcher matched existing materials with the Core Competencies (KI) and Basic Competencies (KD) of the Merdeka Curriculum. The analysis found that while the curriculum emphasized communicative ability, the materials used in the school did not fully support task-based and interactive learning. Therefore, it was concluded that new speaking materials should be developed using a Task-Based Learning approach to meet both curriculum requirements and students' needs.

Table 1. Data of The Respondents

Respondents	Gender	
	Male	Female
Grade VIII students of MTs S Mutawafiq Aini	8	12

The results of the research indicated that students of MTs S Mutafawiq Aini faced significant challenges in speaking English. The questionnaire and interview data revealed that many students were afraid of making mistakes, lacked confidence, and rarely practiced speaking. Existing materials, which emphasize grammar and written exercises, do not provide sufficient opportunities for communicative interaction. Consequently, the students' fluency and willingness to speak were low.

The needs analysis showed that students preferred interactive and collaborative speaking tasks such as discussions, role-plays, and problem-solving activities. They expressed a desire for materials that were fun, contextual, and related to daily life. These findings are consistent with Harmer (2007), who emphasized that learners need meaningful communication and authentic practice to develop both fluency and accuracy in speaking (Harmer, 2001).

Furthermore, the teacher interviews supported students' feedback. The English teacher noted that while grammar and vocabulary were taught regularly, speaking activities were limited and often not aligned with the students' real-life communication needs. This confirmed that new materials are needed to address both the affective (motivation, confidence) and cognitive (grammar, vocabulary) aspects of learning.

After identifying these problems, the researcher designed TBL-based speaking materials according to the pre-task, during-task, and post-task (Willis, 1996).

4.3.2 Expert Validation results

Two experts validated the developed materials based on the following four criteria: content relevance, language clarity, task design, and layout attractiveness. The validation used a four-point Likert scale (1 = poor, 2 = fair, 3 = good, and 4 = Very Good).

Table 2. Expert Validation Result

Aspect	Expert 1 Score	Expert 2 Score	Mean (%)	Category
Content Relevance	45/48	44/48	92%	Very Good
Language Clarity	34/40	35/40	86%	Very Good
Task Design & Creativity	27/30	28/30	92%	Very Good
Layout & Attractiveness	28/32	30/32	91%	Very Good
Overall Average	-	-	90.25%	Very Good

C. Discussion

Both the validators agreed that the developed materials were valid and suitable for use. These materials effectively integrated language functions, tasks, and visual elements. Minor revisions were made based on the validators' comments, including enlarging the font size, simplifying the instructions, and adding sample conversations in Units 3 and 4.

The validation results from the experts indicated that the materials were appropriate, contextually relevant, and aligned with the curriculum. However, some revisions have been made to simplify the instructions and provide more vocabulary support. Once revised, the final product successfully integrated authentic communication tasks, contextual vocabulary, and integrated grammar learning, thus addressing identified student needs.

The findings of this study are in line with the theoretical framework of Task-Based Learning proposed by Nunan (2004), Willis (1996), and Ellis (2003).

According to these scholars, language learning occurs most effectively when learners are engaged in meaningful tasks that promote real communication, rather than rote memorization or grammar drills.

In this study, the implementation of the TBL principles was evident in the designed materials.

1. The Pre-task phase activated students' prior knowledge, motivated them, and contextually introduced the topic.
2. The During-task phase encouraged real communication through problem-solving, discussions, and role-play, allowing learners to focus on meaning while naturally improving fluency.
3. The Post-task phase provided reflection and feedback opportunities that helped the students refine their accuracy and vocabulary.

This process reflects Nunan's (2004) principle of scaffolding, in which each activity builds on the previous one to promote gradual language development. The integration of grammar and vocabulary into communicative tasks also corresponds to Ellis (2003), who emphasized that linguistic accuracy develops best when form and meaning are learned simultaneously within communicative contexts (Ellis, 2003).

Moreover, the findings align with Tomlinson's (1998) theory of materials development, which suggests that effective materials should attract learners' interest, be relevant to their experiences, and stimulate their emotional and intellectual involvement. The newly designed materials achieve these characteristics by including relatable topics, visual support, and meaningful speaking activities that require active participation (Tomlinson, 1998).

The results of this research are supported by several previous studies:

1. Kesda (2012) found that Task-Based Learning improves students' motivation and participation in speaking classes by providing a variety of communicative tasks.
2. Ruso (2007) concluded that TBL enhances students' speaking ability and classroom engagement through interactive group activities.
3. East (2012) emphasized that teachers who implemented TBL reported increased learner autonomy and confidence (East, 2012).

Similar outcomes were observed in this study, where the use of task-based materials encouraged collaboration and peer interaction, helping students to become more confident speakers. The designed materials also promoted learner-centered instruction, reduced teacher dominance, and gave students more opportunities to express themselves freely in English.

Therefore, this study reinforces the argument that Task-Based Learning is effective in developing students' communicative competence, especially in EFL contexts such as Indonesia, where classroom speaking opportunities are often limited.

The implementation of TBL-based speaking materials has several pedagogical implications:

1. For Teachers: The materials serve as a model for integrating communicative, learner-centered tasks into daily teaching. Teachers can adapt to various contexts and proficiency levels.
2. For Students: The TBL approach helps learners use English as a communication tool, not just as a subject to study. This fosters self-confidence, collaboration, and problem-solving skills.
3. For Curriculum Development: The findings support the Merdeka Curriculum's emphasis on student autonomy, creativity, and real-world learning. TBL aligns with these goals by engaging learners with authentic language use.
4. For Future Research: The success of these materials suggests that similar task-based approaches could be developed for other language skills such as listening, reading, or writing.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research findings and discussions, several conclusions were drawn, and English-speaking materials were developed using the ADDIE model and validated by experts. The development process included the analysis of learners' needs, design of task-based content, and implementation in real classroom settings. Expert validation showed that the developed materials were of high quality, with an average validity of 90.25%, and were categorized as 'Very Good.' The materials were relevant, engaging, and aligned with the Merdeka Curriculum. The field trial results revealed a significant improvement in the students' speaking performance. The average score increased from 64.5 to 82.25, demonstrating that TBL effectively enhanced fluency, accuracy, and confidence. Students' positive responses confirmed that the developed materials were interesting, enjoyable, and useful in motivating them to actively speak English. Overall, Task-Based Learning has proved to be an effective approach for developing English-speaking materials that promote communicative competence and learner autonomy.

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