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Student Perceptions of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT): A Study at the Higher Secondary Level in Bangladesh

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ABSTRACT : *This study investigated the student perceptions of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) at Higher Secondary Level in Bangladesh. TBLT is a pedagogical approach that emphasizes learning through engaging and authentic tasks, fostering language acquisition in meaningful contexts. The study was conducted with a number of 40 higher secondary students from two colleges at Kushtia in Bangladesh. The research employed a mixed-methods approach, combining surveys and semi-structured interviews to gather data from a sample of higher secondary students enrolled in English language courses. The survey questionnaire was designed to gauge students' attitudes, preferences, and perceived effectiveness of TBLT practices, while interviews provided in-depth insights into their experiences and perspectives. The findings of this study reveal a generally positive perception of TBLT among students, with a majority expressing satisfaction with its interactive nature and emphasis on practical language use. Students appreciate the relevance of tasks to real-life situations and their ability to develop communicative skills. The results of this study contribute to the ongoing discourse on language teaching methodologies, particularly in the context of Bangladesh's education system.*

Keywords- : *Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), Student Perceptions, Higher Secondary Level, Bangladesh, Language Education*

I.　　INTRODUCTION

Language teaching methodologies play a pivotal role in shaping the language acquisition process, especially in diverse educational contexts such as Bangladesh. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) has emerged as a prominent pedagogical approach globally, emphasizing the learning of a language through engaging, real-world tasks. In the context of the Higher Secondary Level in Bangladesh, where language proficiency is a key educational goal, exploring the student perceptions of TBLT becomes crucial. Previous studies (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Willis & Willis, 2007) suggest that TBLT can contribute to improved language acquisition, making it pertinent to investigate its applicability and impact within the specific parameters of the Bangladeshi educational landscape.

Despite the growing interest in TBLT as an innovative language teaching approach, there is a gap in understanding its student perceptions of the Higher Secondary Level in Bangladesh. The

traditional methods prevalent in the educational system may not fully align with the dynamic needs of language learners in a rapidly changing world. Consequently, it is imperative to address the following questions: How does TBLT impact the language proficiency of higher secondary students in Bangladesh? What are the perceptions, challenges, and limitations associated with implementing TBLT in this context? A comprehensive exploration of these questions will contribute to a nuanced understanding of the potential benefits and challenges associated with integrating TBLT into the Bangladeshi English language curriculum.

This study holds significance on various levels. Firstly, it provides empirical evidence on the student perceptions of TBLT in the context of the Higher Secondary Levelin Bangladesh, offering insights into its potential to enhance language proficiency. Such findings can inform educators and curriculum developers about the suitability and adaptability of TBLT within the local educational framework.

Secondly, the study contributes to the broader discourse on language teaching methodologies, adding to the global body of knowledge regarding the applicability of TBLT in diverse cultural and educational contexts.

Furthermore, the outcomes of this research can serve as a guide for policymakers in Bangladesh, aiding in the formulation of language education policies that align with modern language acquisition theories and pedagogical practices. Ultimately, the study seeks to improve the overall language learning experience for higher secondary students in Bangladesh, addressing the evolving needs of language education in the 21st century.

II.   LITERATURE REVIEW

The exploration of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is significantly enriched by a diverse range of seminal works that collectively contribute to the theoretical understanding, practical application, and contextual adaptation of TBLT methodologies. Willis and Willis's (2007) "Doing Task-Based Teaching" serves as a foundational resource, providing a comprehensive exploration of TBLT. This influential work not only establishes a theoretical framework but also emphasizes the practical integration of authentic tasks in language classrooms. By bridging theory and practice, it equips educators to create dynamic and engaging language learning environments.

Richards and Rodgers (2001) offer a historical perspective in "Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching," tracing the evolution of language teaching methodologies. This work aids educators in making informed decisions about methodological selection, aligning pedagogical goals with learner needs. The structured analysis of various approaches ensures a comprehensive understanding of the theoretical underpinnings and practical applications, providing a valuable resource for language educators. Nunan's (2004) "Task-Based Language Teaching" is a pivotal contribution that delves into the depth of TBLT approaches. Meticulously exploring the historical context, principles, and key considerations, Nunan's work serves as an essential reference for educators and researchers. It provides valuable insights into the design and implementation of task-based language lessons, contributing to a deeper understanding of the intricacies of task-based approaches.

Willis and Willis's (2019) "Task-Based Language Teaching: Re-evaluating the Approach in the Digital Age" critically reassesses TBLT in the contemporary educational landscape. By acknowledging the impact of technology and the evolving needs of learners, this recent work provides fresh perspectives on the integration of digital tools and authentic tasks in language education. Ellis's (2003) "Task-Based Language Learning and Teaching" is a seminal work that explores the cognitive and linguistic dimensions within TBLT frameworks. This research contributes significantly to the pedagogical discourse, offering nuanced insights into how tasks strategically enhance language learning by engaging cognitive processes. Skehan's (1996) "A

Framework for the Implementation of Task-Based Instruction" provides a practical framework for the effective application of TBLT methodologies. By focusing on the practical aspects of task-based instruction, Skehan's work translates TBLT principles into actionable strategies, offering a roadmap for successful integration in language classrooms.

Willis's (1996) "A Framework for Task-Based Learning" elucidates the principles of task-based learning and underscores its adaptability across diverse educational contexts. This seminal work continues to shape the practical application of TBLT, ensuring its relevance and effectiveness. Hedge's (2000) "Teaching and Learning in the Language Classroom" provides a pedagogical perspective on language teaching methodologies, specifically focusing on how TBLT aligns with communicative language teaching principles. Carless and Chan's (2017) "Task-Based Language Teaching: A Hong Kong Perspective" contributes a valuable localized perspective, exploring the implementation and student perceptions of TBLT in a specific Asian context. This study offers insights into adaptation and success within an Asian educational setting. Ahmed's (2015) study on "English Language Teaching in Bangladesh" provides a vital localized perspective, laying the foundation for understanding challenges and opportunities influencing the implementation of TBLT in Bangladesh's educational landscape.

Despite the wealth of literature on Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), a notable research gap exists regarding the specific challenges and adaptations required for implementing TBLT in the Higher Secondary Level in Bangladesh. While the referenced works provide valuable insights into TBLT's theoretical foundations, historical evolution, and general applicability, there is a scarcity of research focusing on the unique context of Bangladesh's higher secondary education. The exploration of TBLT in this specific educational setting remains underexplored, warranting dedicated research to understand how TBLT principles align with the curriculum, the challenges faced by educators, and the student perception of TBLT in enhancing language proficiency and learning experiences in Bangladesh's higher secondary schools. Addressing this gap is crucial for tailoring TBLT methodologies to the specific needs and challenges of the Bangladeshi educational context. However, the aim of this study to find out student perceptions of TBLT in Higher Secondary Level in Bangladesh.

III.   OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of this study is to explore student perceptions of TBLT in Bangladesh's Higher Secondary English Curriculum, assessing impacts on language proficiency, motivation, and overall learning.

IV.   METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed-methods approach to gather comprehensive data on student perceptions of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) at the higher secondary level in Bangladesh. The study involved 40 higher secondary students from two colleges located in Kushtia, Bangladesh. Participants were enrolled in English language courses at the higher secondary level. A survey questionnaire was developed to collect quantitative data regarding students' attitudes, preferences, and perceived effectiveness of TBLT practices. The questionnaire included Likert-scale items and open-ended questions. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a subset of participants to gather qualitative data. The interviews aimed to provide in-depth insights into students' experiences and perspectives regarding TBLT. The survey questionnaire was administered to all participants either electronically or in a paper-based format, depending on their preference and accessibility. Participants were selected for semi-structured interviews based on their responses in the survey, ensuring a diverse range of perspectives. Interviews were conducted in-person. Survey responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify patterns and trends in students'

perceptions of TBLT. Interviews were transcribed and analyzed thematically to extract key themes and insights regarding students' experiences with TBLT.

V.   FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Findings from Survey Questionnaire

The survey questionnaire was designed to gather quantitative data on students' perceptions and experiences with Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in the Higher Secondary Level in Bangladesh. The following key findings emerged from the analysis of survey responses:

Figure 1: TBLT is Positive for Learning English

Figure 1 presents a compelling insight into the positive impact of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) on English language learning. The data indicates that a significant majority of students, more than 80%, reported positive attitudes towards TBLT, specifically finding the approach engaging and enjoyable.

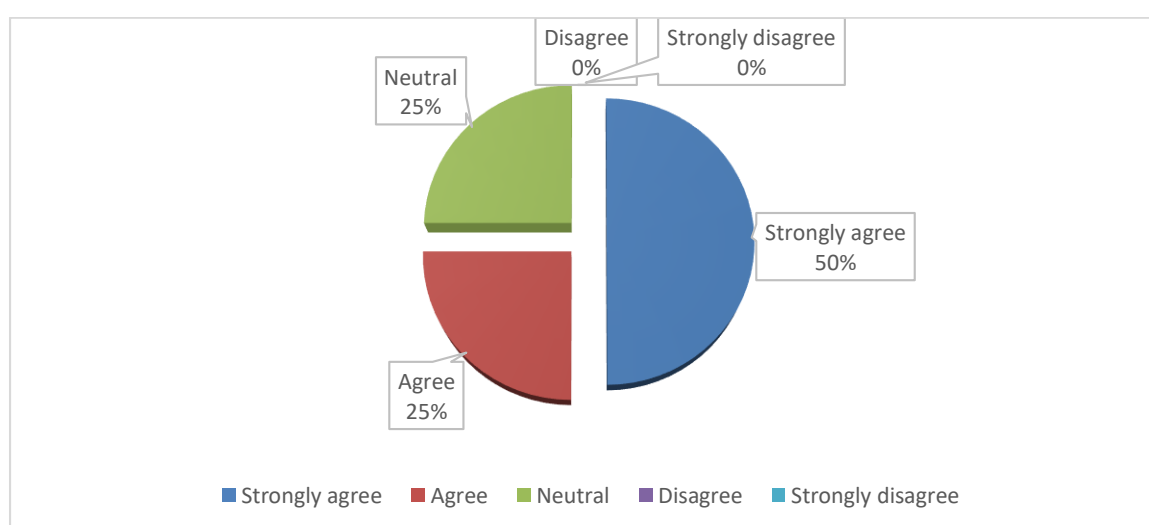**Figure 2: TBLT Increases the Motivation of Learning English**

Figure 2 provides valuable insights into the impact of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) on the motivation of students learning English. The data reveals that a substantial 75% of respondents reported an increase in motivation attributed to the TBLT approach.
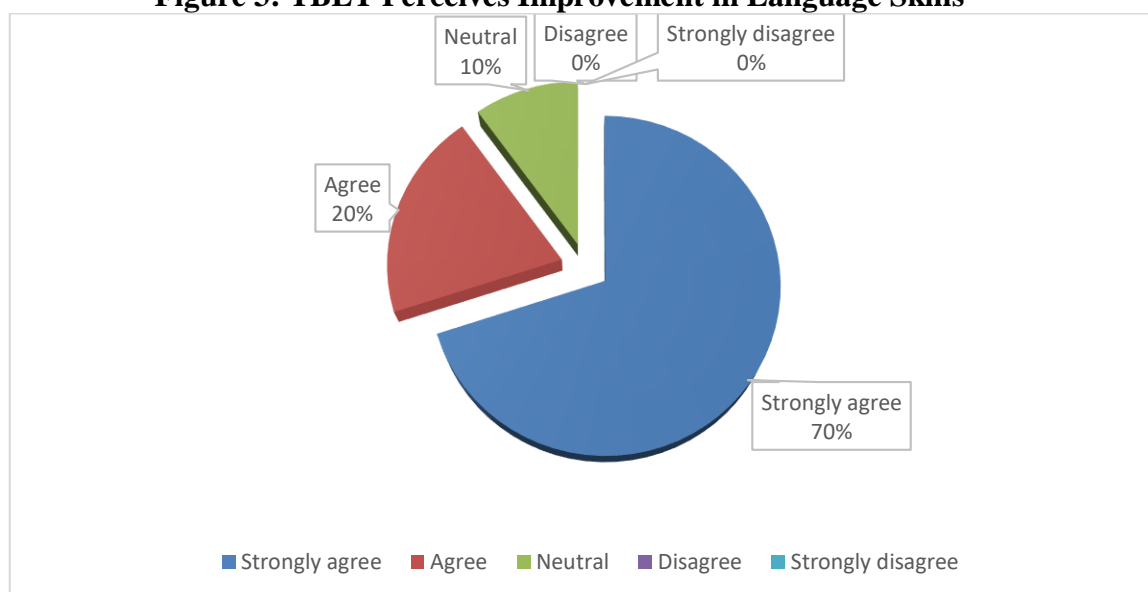
Figure 3: TBLT Perceives Improvement in Language Skills

Figure 3 presents a compelling insight into the perceived impact of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) on students' language skills. The statistic shows that around 90% students believe TBLT has positively influenced their language skills.
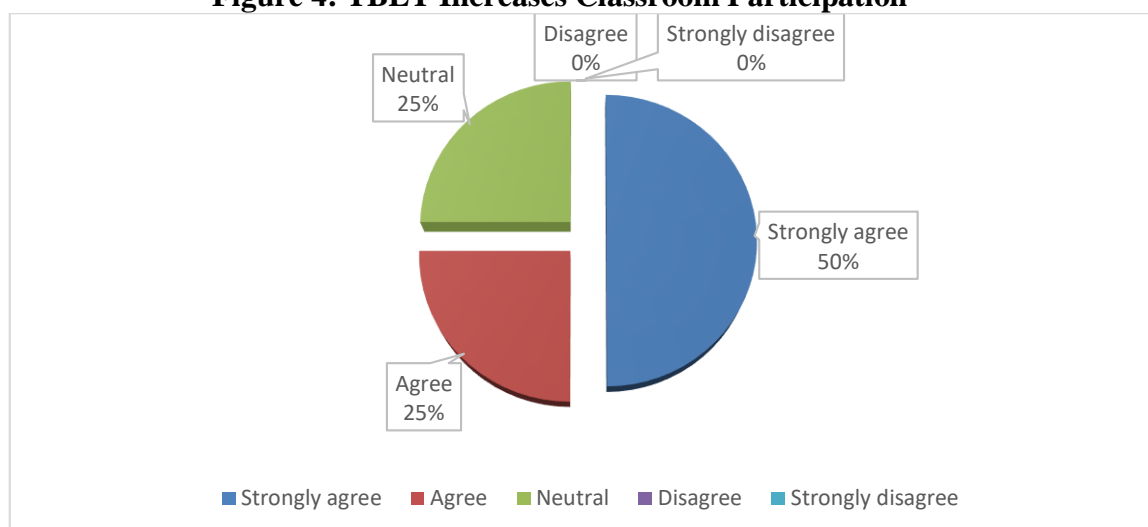
Figure 4: TBLT Increases Classroom Participation

Figure 4 reveals a compelling insight into the effectiveness of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in enhancing classroom participation among students. 75% of students reported that TBLT increases students' engagement with the English language during TBLT sessions.
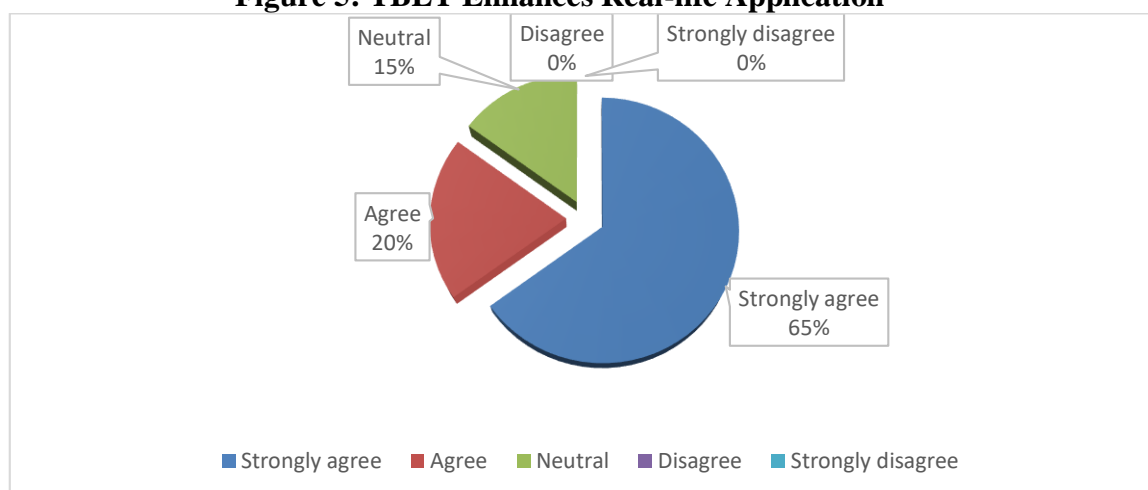
Figure 5: TBLT Enhances Real-life Application

Figure 5 provides a significant revelation regarding the effectiveness of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in enhancing the real-life application of English language skills. The data indicates that nearly 85% of students recognized the practical relevance of English in everyday situations through their engagement with TBLT.
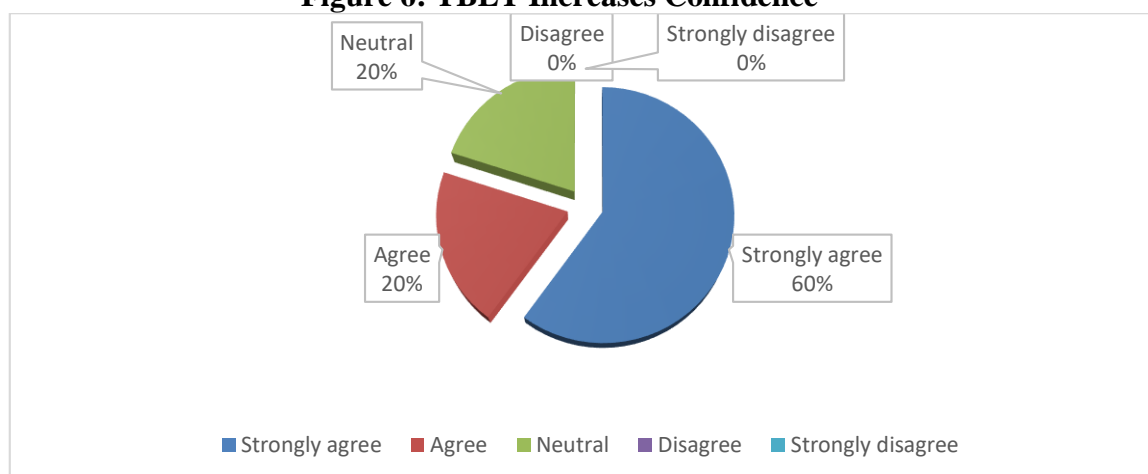
Figure 6: TBLT Increases Confidence

Figure 6 underscores the significant role of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in boosting students' confidence in using the English language. The data indicates that 80% of students reported an increase in confidence, attributing this positive change to the opportunities TBLT offers for meaningful communication.

Findings from Interview

A higher secondary student from one of the colleges in Kushtia, found the Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) approach to be refreshing, offering a departure from traditional lectures and textbooks. Engaging in tasks that required practical application of English, such as planning and performing a play entirely in English, this student experienced challenges that spurred creative thinking and collaboration. Reflecting on the experience, he noted a significant improvement in language skills, feeling more confident in expressing thoughts in English. Conversely, another student, also a higher secondary student from Kushtia, initially found TBLT challenging due to its departure from familiar methods. However, as engagement

increased, this participant appreciated the practicality of TBLT, emphasizing the shift from rote memorization to active language use. Particularly beneficial tasks, like conducting interviews in English, not only enhanced speaking and listening skills but also fostered interest and attentiveness in class discussions.

VI. DISCUSSION

The findings from the survey questionnaire and interviews collectively provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in the Higher Secondary Level in Bangladesh.

The survey findings paint a compelling picture of the positive impact of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) on various aspects of language learning. Figure 1's revelation that more than 80% of students express positive attitudes towards TBLT underscores its engaging and enjoyable nature. This aligns seamlessly with the recognized educational principle that a positive and enjoyable learning experience can significantly enhance student engagement and overall academic outcomes. Moreover, Figure 2's indication of a substantial 75% increase in motivation attributable to TBLT emphasizes the approach's potential not only to enhance learning experiences but also to sustain students' interest and commitment over time. Figure 3 further reinforces the effectiveness of TBLT, with around 90% of students perceiving a positive influence on their language skills, showcasing its tangible impact on linguistic proficiency. Figures 4 and 5 underscore TBLT's success in creating an interactive and practical learning environment, with significant percentages of students reporting increased classroom participation and recognizing the real-life application of English. Finally, Figure 6's revelation of an 80% increase in confidence underscores TBLT's role in fostering a positive mindset and self-assurance in language use, highlighting its holistic impact on students' language learning journey.

The interview findings further validate the survey results. Student A's positive experience with a task involving a short play illustrates the effectiveness of TBLT in making language learning enjoyable, challenging, and practical. Student B's testimony on conducting interviews in English showcases the impact of TBLT on improving speaking and listening skills while maintaining interest in the subject matter.

However, the survey and interview findings collectively highlight the multifaceted benefits of TBLT, encompassing positive attitudes, increased motivation, improved language skills, enhanced classroom participation, real-life application, and boosted confidence. These insights provide a strong foundation for the continued integration and refinement of TBLT in the Higher Secondary Level in Bangladesh, with the potential for broader implications in language education globally.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study delved into student perceptions of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) within the Higher Secondary Level in Bangladesh, utilizing a mixed-methods approach. Through quantitative assessments and qualitative observations, it revealed that TBLT positively impacts language proficiency, fostering enhanced communication skills and confidence among students. The research, conducted with 40 higher secondary students in Kushtia, contributes valuable insights to the discourse on language teaching methodologies within the context of Bangladesh's education system. These findings highlight the efficacy of TBLT in creating meaningful language learning experiences and suggest its potential significance for future pedagogical practices in the country's educational landscape.

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