

ABSTRACT

The English language holds a crucial position in the globalized world, and its demand is undeniable. Individuals worldwide seek to learn English to secure a competitive edge in today's fast-paced environment. Mastery of English is essential for modern communication, including media, academic publications, and internet information. Consequently, non-English speaking countries are increasingly adopting English as the primary language of instruction across all educational levels, a trend that is rapidly gaining momentum. Among developing nations, India recognizes the importance of English proficiency. The Position Paper on English in India's National Curriculum Framework (2005) states, "English is in India today a symbol of people's aspirations for quality in education and a fuller participation in national and international life." This paper emphasizes "communicative competence," suggesting that English teaching should aim to develop students' linguistic abilities for diverse real-life situations.

In Assam, English is mandated as a compulsory second language from the primary level. Students in English medium schools generally find it easier to learn English since all subjects are taught in English. However, in government and provincialized schools, English is primarily taught as a subject rather than as a skill. Traditional teaching methods dominate, focusing on writing accuracy and exam preparation, often sidelining oral communication and practical language use. Factors such as students' socio-economic background, parental literacy, and resource limitations further impede language acquisition. As a result, many students pass the HSLC Examination but lack basic English communication skills. The struggle of government and provincialized secondary schools to provide quality English Language Teaching (ELT) environments is a significant concern.

This study aims to design an intervention program using Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) for upper primary students (Class VIII) to enhance their English language skills, focusing on listening, speaking, reading, and writing (LSRW). Additionally, it seeks to evaluate students' attitudes toward the TBLT approach. By integrating TBLT into English language education in Assamese medium schools, the research addresses existing gaps. A TBLT module based on the Class VIII English

textbook is developed to assess its impact on students' language skills and proficiency. The study examines how the TBLT module aligns with experiential learning principles, promotes integrated language skills, and meets the contextual needs of Assamese medium school students. Through a thorough evaluation of TBLT implementation and its outcomes, this research aims to provide valuable insights into ELT in India.

The thesis is systematically organized into six chapters, each with a specific focus, outlined as follows:

The first chapter offers an overview of the study's background by discussing the status of ELT in India and Assam, its significance in contemporary times from both global and national perspectives, various ELT approaches, and the emergence of TBLT. It explores different aspects of TBLT and includes the statement of the problem, study objectives, hypotheses, rationale, significance, operational definitions of terms, and the study's limitations.

The second chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the literature reviewed from various published sources, including doctoral theses, articles, research papers from journals, books, policy documents, and online publications. The literature encompasses a broad range of studies and is organized by international and national research on topics such as contemporary approaches in ELT, TBLT for developing integrated and segregated LSRW skills, students' attitudes towards TBLT, and task complexity and planning. A critical appraisal of the reviewed literature, including an emerging trend analysis in ELT and identification of research gaps, offered theoretical and empirical support for the continuation of the present study

The third chapter outlines the methodological design adopted for this study, detailing the population, sample, tools used, data collection procedures, data tabulation, and analysis techniques. A Quasi-Experimental Design approach, specifically the Pretest-Posttest Non-Equivalent Control Group Design, was employed. The study population consisted of all Class VIII students, with an average age of thirteen, in provincialized schools of Assam. The sample comprised 179 Class VIII students from two provincialized schools in the Kamrup Metro district. Simple random sampling (lottery method) was used to select the schools, and from these schools, Class VIII students were chosen using intact group sampling. Two measurement tools were created: the

English Language Skills Test (ELST) and the Student TBLT Attitude Scale, along with an intervention tool, the TBLT module.

The fourth chapter focuses on the analysis and interpretation of the data. The data for this study has been analyzed using quantitative methods. Techniques employed include descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Additionally, inferential statistics like Repeated Measures ANOVA, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) have also been utilized.

In the fifth chapter, the findings from the study are analyzed according to the study's objectives. This chapter not only addresses the results but also explores the context and reasons behind them. It allows the researcher to provide explanations based on their field experiences and prior research in the area, offering a personalized perspective.

Finally, the sixth chapter wraps up the study by summarizing the main findings and offering practical recommendations for teachers, educational administrators, policymakers, and other stakeholders. It also addresses the study's limitations. Additionally, the chapter suggests potential areas for future research that could enhance the understanding and implementation of TBLT in all levels of ELT, with a particular focus on upper primary education in Assam.

Keywords: ELT, Task-Based Language Teaching, LSRW skills, tasks