THE IMPACT OF TASK-BASED APPROACH ON VOCABULARY LEARNING IN ESP COURSES

Case of 3rd year LMD students of Urban Management at Larbi Ben M’Hidi University- Oum El Bouaghi

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Master in Language Sciences and Teaching English as a Foreign Language

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Dedication

I dedicate this modest work to:

My beloved parents

My brothers: Abdelhafid, Abdelrahim and Aymen

My sister: Fatima Zahra

All my lovely friends

To optimism and skepticism; to persistence and fatigue

They have all taught me a lot indeed.
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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the effect of using Task-based approach (TBA) on vocabulary learning in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses. For fulfilling the purpose of this study, a quasi-experimental research was conducted to Urban Management students at the University of Larbi Ben M’Hidi in Oum El Bouaghi. Participants who were students taking ESP courses were assigned to two groups of 15, a control and an experimental group. The experimental group was taught on the basis of the task-based approach, whereas the control group was taught using the traditional method. After the treatment period, a post-test was administered to the groups, to determine the influence of the treatment on the experimental group. The results indicated that, task-based approach was more effective in teaching vocabularies compared to the traditional approach used before the implementation of TBA. Therefore, the present study suggests that Task-based approach is efficient in improving vocabulary learning in ESP courses.

Keywords: task, task-based approach, ESP, vocabulary learning.
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1. CA  Communicative Approach
2. CLT  Communicative Language Teaching
3. CM  Communicative Methodology
4. DPRTs  Direct System-Referenced Tests
5. DSRTs  Direct Performance-Referenced Tests
6. EAP  English for academic purposes
7. EFL  English as a foreign language
8. ELT  English language teaching
9. EOP  English for occupational purposes
10. ESL  English as a second language
11. ESP  English for specific purposes
12. FA  Formative Assessment
13. FLP  Foreign Language Pedagogy
14. FLT  Foreign Language Teaching
15. GTM  Grammar Translation Method
16. L2  Second Language
17. LSP  Language for Specific Purposes
18. MC  Multiple Choice
19. MOI  Medium of Instruction
20. MT  Mother Tongue
21. NA  Needs Analysis
22. PPP  Presentation, Practice, Production
23. PRTs  Performance-Referenced Tests
24. TBA  Task-Based Approach
25. **TBL**  Task-Based Learning

26. **TBLT**  Task-Based Language Teaching

27. **TBT**  Task-Based Test

28. **TBTs**  Task-Based Tests

29. **TL**  Target Language

30. **UK**  United Kingdom

31. **USA**  United States of America
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GENERAL INTRODUCTION
Over the years, within the field of English language teaching a debate has been developed over which approaches are more effective for structuring, planning, and implementing lessons. Under this debate, different approaches, methods and procedures have been presented to help students learn a second language. As a reaction to the previous debate, and within a communicative framework for language teaching, a Pabhu Bangalore project 1960’s proposes the application of task-based approach. According to recent studies and what is proposed by the Prabhu’s project (1960) learners in this approach are presented with a task or a problem to be solved, however; their focus is not going to be on language features during performance, because of the nature of these tasks; they are related much more to meaning i.e., meaning-focused. This new trend, the use of the task-based approach seems to be the best to apply in the teaching of English for specific purposes. Since its beginning in the 1960’s the focus of ESP courses was on the need to satisfy the teaching of specialized vocabulary, with taking into account that vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write. Different opinions swung for and against the teaching of vocabulary to ESP learners through the use of the task-based approach. In the course of time, there was and still there is a problem concerning whether the task-based approach is appropriate for teaching vocabulary in ESP courses.

Statement of the problem

In any ESP classroom learners appear to have multiple problems, and one of them is learning vocabulary. It is believed that teaching vocabulary to ESP learners should include effective tasks that become an integral part of learning vocabulary for the ESP students. It is also believed that learners do have some knowledge about learning vocabulary in ESP courses. As a result students failed to have a general useful scientific vocabulary. Appropriate tasks should be provided by teachers to the ESP learners, because they need to exhibit a wide range of academic papers, and even presenting oral or written evaluation of methods or results
in many cases (Barber, 1962; Ferrel, 1990). In conducting a research in the department of Techniques of Urban Management at the University of Larbi Ben M’Hidi Oum El Bouaghi, we will try to see whether teaching ESP students through the task-based approach can be influential and practically useful in their vocabulary improvement.

**Purpose of the study**

This study is going to examine the importance of using tasks in the ESP classrooms. Therefore, it aims at investigating the teaching of vocabulary in ESP courses under the paradigm of task-based approach, focusing on Urban Management students. So, it is an attempt to show how much teaching on the basis of task-based approach is more effective than the traditional one. Also it is going to show what kind of tasks should be used, and how to include them in teaching.

**Research question and hypothesis**

The present study aims at raising one main research question:

- Does teaching on the basis of task-based approach improve ESP learners’ vocabulary?

Based on the main question, it will be hypothesized that:

- If the task-based approach is used while teaching ESP classes, better improvement will be noticed on learners’ acquisition of vocabulary

**The Null Hypothesis:**

- If we implement the task-based approach in an ESP context, there will be no significant difference, in terms of vocabulary learning, between teaching via the task-based approach or the traditional approach.

**Population and Sampling**

A sample made up of fifteen students for the experimental group, as well as a sample of fifteen students for the control group. This sample will be chosen by randomization from different ages, gender, abilities, social and cultural backgrounds to guarantee that any member
of the group will have an equal chance to receive the experiment. In sum, we will have a population which includes thirty students.

**Methodology**

In order to collect data for this study, an experimental method is going to be followed to reach our research objective. Two groups chosen from third year university students in the department of techniques of urban management are going to be our sample. The first group will be the control group of the Study and the second group will be the experimental one.

Here, two tests will be given to those two groups. Initially, a pre-test will be given to the control group and the experimental one in order to establish a baseline for determining vocabulary growth through the instructional process. The students will be asked to classify vocabulary terms into categories, in relation to the field of urban planning and then to define certain technical vocabulary terms. Second, a period of treatment will be carried out; the experimental group will be taught on the basis of task-based approach. However, the control group will be taught traditionally without integrating any kind of tasks. Third, a post-test will be administered. After that, collected data will be analyzed. Beginning by a comparison of the results of the pre-test of both the control group and the experimental group. Then, comparing the post-test results of both of them to see if there is any impact of task-based approach on learners’ vocabulary learning.

**Structure of the Study**

This research will consist mainly of three chapters. Chapter number one will be devoted to the Task-based approach as a core point of this research. The second chapter will be about ESP and Vocabulary learning and of course in relation to the task-based approach. Chapter number three will be devoted to field work, i.e., explaining the results of using task-based approach on the learners’ vocabulary learning.
CHAPTER ONE

Task-based approach

Introduction

The first chapter provides an overview about the task-based approach TBA. To begin with, it introduces the history of foreign language pedagogy, and then explores in detail the TBA literature. Furthermore, this chapter opens the door to navigate within the field of teaching/learning English as a foreign language on the basis of this last. More important than this, it shows how the focus shifted from the job of teachers to cast light on student’s role as a part of foreign language learning.

1.1. The History of TBA

Within TBA a brief description concerning the history of foreign language pedagogy (FLP) is going to be provided, at the same time, an introduction to the communicative language teaching (CLT) will take place, which locates TBA within the broad picture of foreign language teaching (FLT).

1.1.1. The History of Foreign Language Pedagogy Internationally

According to many scientists, schoolars, and researchers the history of foreign language teaching pedagogy internationally is a reflection of its environments and contexts socially, politically and philosophically (Bell, 2003; Pennycook, 1989). Its history can be divided into three distinct eras: the pre-method era (prior to 1800), the method era (1800-1960s) and the post-method era (1970s onward). For describing the ways in which languages are taught, it will be said that, there are several terms frequently used for this description, including pedagogy, method and approach. This study uses pedagogy\(^1\) as a general term referring to

\(^1\) Some studies (Zheng & Adamson, 2003; Zheng, 2005) define pedagogy as “a teacher’s personal construction of beliefs and practices about teaching and learning”, which is actually the same as “the implemented or operational pedagogy” in this study.
both specific methods and broad approaches. Also, many other definitions of these two terms are attempted in the past; this study adopts the definitions of “method” and “approach” in Anthony (1963). According to Anthony (1963), “approach” constitutes the assumptions or theories dealing with the nature of language, learning, and teaching, while “method” refers to a set of fixed and packaged prescriptions or plans for a systematic presentation of language based on a selected approach. Therefore, TBA is an approach rather than a method.

In the pre-method era prior to the nineteenth century, there was no standard way to teach a foreign language. By the nineteenth century, the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) became the first widely used method based on a set of specifications for how languages should be taught (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). From the 1880s to the 1970s, there was a robust century-long search for the ultimate super-method, which was believed to be a set of predetermined principles or procedures to be strictly followed so as to solve all teaching problems and cater to all teaching contexts (Nunan, 1995; Richards, 2001a). This research resulted in the “pendulum effect” in language teaching (Nunan, 1995), with different methods coming and going like fads and fashions. The main methods that were once in fashion in the western world during the method era were:

- Grammar Translation Method (1800 - 1890)
- Direct Method (1890 - 1930)
- Structural Method (1930 - 1960)
- Reading Method (1920 - 1950)
- Situational Method (1950 - 1970) (Richards, 2001b)

It is worth noting that the methods most frequently documented by the western mainstream overviews of language pedagogy were paralleled by methods that existed in nonwestern contexts. In the 1970s, the notion of a prescribed all-purpose method began to be
questioned by academics and language teachers alike. The fixed, static and context-free set of rules and principles inherent in many, if not all methods, that were normally imposed on teachers and learners, failed to cater to the dynamic and changing process of language teaching and learning (Prabhu, 1990; Richards, 2001a). Researchers started to look for alternatives to methods instead of alternative methods. Many scholars proposed the use of broader approaches or theories (post-methods), which teachers could interpret and enact into varieties of personalized and contextualized methods in their specific local teaching milieu. Then, the communicative approach (CA) or communicative language teaching (CLT) came to take a wide place, which was considered by some researchers (e.g. Richards & Rodgers, 2001) as a turning point in the language teaching literature and the beginning of the post-method era\(^2\).

1.1.2 CLT and TBA

According to (Nunan, 1995) CLT is a broad approach focusing on communication and message conveyance. It is mainly based on theories of language, namely, sociolinguistics and pragmatics (Johnson & Johnson, 1998; Richards & Rodgers, 1986). It is considered as an umbrella theory, which was explained into different specific teaching procedures called communicative methodology (CM) in Johnson and Johnson (1998). For Johnson & Johnson, CM involves the teaching of appropriateness of speech acts, simulates learners’ psycholinguistic processes in which learners are encouraged to communicate in the target language. It is meaning-focused and provides learners with opportunities for holistic practice. Richards and Rodgers (1998) say that there are many different versions of CM which share the same assumptions with CLT, including the British model, the Natural Approach, Cooperative Language Learning, Content-based Instruction and TBA.

Therefore, TBA is regarded as a logical and compatible development of CLT (Nunan, 

\(^2\) Some scholars (e.g. Bell 2003) argue that the post-method era does not imply that methods are dead, but rather the co-existence of both method and post-method.
2004; Skehan, 1996) and a more specific description of CLT procedures. As a post-method approach (Ellen, 2005), TBA is considered as an effective alternative to methods and can cater to the dynamic teaching process and promote students’ acquisition of the target language.

### 1.1.3. The Development of TBA

To begin with, the term “tasks” first appeared in vocational training in the West and in the US military training in the 1950s (Gong & Luo, 2003 cited in Ellen, 2005). Since the beginning of the 1980s, “tasks” have attracted increasing interest and have been widely used in the field of applied linguistics as language pedagogy, as a unit of second language syllabus design, and as an assessment instrument (Ellen, 2005).

In the literature, there have been numerous terms used to refer to pedagogy based on tasks. Namely: task-centered practice, task-based learning, task-based language learning, task-based teaching, task-oriented teaching or task-driven methodology, task-based language teaching, task-based language pedagogy, the task-based approach, task-based language instruction, task-based methodology and task-based language teaching and learning (Ellen, 2005).

As second or foreign language pedagogy TBA has become the fashion in language teaching, especially in ESL and EFL contexts. Many researchers believe that TBA can most effectively promote second or foreign language acquisition (Ellen, 2005). Therefore, TBA has been introduced into the educational curricula and syllabi in many.

In some countries or areas around the world, it has been tested or even implemented in schools. For example, the Bangalore Project in India was the earliest programme to explore TBA from 1979 to 1984 (Prabhu, 1987).
1.2. What is TBA?

Richards and Rodgers (2001) define TBA as an approach based on the use of tasks as the core unit of planning and instruction in language teaching. Since tasks have been used as units of language teaching from the mid 1980s, there have been numerous varieties of definitions of what a task is.

1.3. Defining TBA and Tasks

In Figure (1), some definitions of tasks are given by scholars of applied linguistics chronologically. As a summary of these definitions, the main characteristics of a task are: 1) communication-oriented; 2) with a non-linguistic product; 3) then it includes a cognitive-process; 4) also very contextualized and authentic; 5) and of course meaning-focused. These characteristics are also the criteria on which tasks are designed and used. Contrasting with a task which is a form-focused activity, also called ‘an exercise’ in some studies (Ellen, 2005). It calls for primarily uncontextualized, unauthentic, and form-focused language practice or use, which leads to a linguistic product in the end.

Figure 1: Definitions of tasks (1)
Figure 2: Definitions of tasks (2)

- A task is a piece of work undertaken for oneself or for others, freely or for some reward. In other words, by ‘task’ is meant the hundred and one things people do in everyday life, at work, at play, and in between. (Long, 1986, p. 89)

- An activity which requires learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought and which allowed teachers to control and regulate that process was regarded as a ‘task’. (Prabhu, 1987:24)

- A piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form. (Nunan, 1989: p10)

- One of a set of differentiated, sequencable, problem-posing activities involving learners and teachers in some joint selection from a range of varied cognitive and communicative procedures applied to existing and new knowledge (Candlin, 1987)

- Is assumed to refer to a range of workplans which have the overall purpose of facilitating language learning – from the simple and brief exercise type, to more complex and lengthy activities such as group problem-solving, simulations and decision-making. (Breen, 1987)

- A vehicle for the presentation of appropriate TL samples to learners – input which they will inevitably reshape via application of general cognitive processing capacities – and for the delivery of comprehension and production opportunities of negotiable difficulty. (Long & Crookes, 1992.)
task

is an activity which is designed to help achieve a **particular learning goal**. A number of dimensions of tasks influence their use in language teaching. These include goals, procedures, order, pacing, **product**, learning strategy, assessment, participation, resources and **language**. (Richards, 1992)

is an activity in which: 1) **meaning** is primary; 2) there is some **communication problem** to solve; 3) there is some sort of **relationship to comparable real-world activities**; 4) **task completion** has some priority; 5) the **assessment of the task** is in terms of outcome. (Skehan, 1998)

...a task is an activity, susceptible to brief or extended pedagogic intervention, which requires learners to use language, with **emphasis on meaning**, to attain an **objective**. (Bygate, 2001)

is a piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting **in the target language** while their attention is **focused on mobilizing their grammatical knowledge** in order to **express meaning**(Nunan, 2004)

...tasks are always activities where the **target language** is used by the learner for a **communicative purpose (goal)** in order to achieve an **outcome**. (Willis, 1996)
1.3.1. A communicative purpose

The ultimate purpose of TBA is to facilitate learners’ language acquisition (Breen, 1987). Each specific task stipulates a specific communicative purpose for learners to achieve, in terms of doing something in the process of communication and interaction with others. For example, to conduct an interview or a survey, to describe a person or a thing, to get information by email, to fill in an application form and so on, all of these can be the purposes of tasks. Motivated by these purposes, students try to use the language they have learned to communicate with their teacher, their peers, or even the other people after class, in order to complete any given tasks (Ellen, 2005).

1.3.2. A primary focus on meaning

One of the remarkable things is that, most definitions of pedagogic tasks have a primary focus on meaning, namely, students use TL in a contextualized situation (Ellen, 2005). This is an important characteristic distinguishing a task from an exercise. An exercise calls for a primary focus on linguistic forms of a language irrespective of a context. Students are supposed to primarily learn, rather than use, the language (Ellis, 2003).

1.3.3. A non-linguistic product

A very important difference between an exercise and a task is that the former will normally see the production of certain linguistic forms in the end, while a task often leads to a non-linguistic concrete product (Ellis 2003). The product can be a name list, a route drawn from a map, a conclusion reached, some feasible solutions to a problem, and so on. The task outcome can be used as a tool to assess students’ performance.

1.3.4. The involvement of cognitive processes

Undertaking tasks involves a variety of cognitive processes, including thinking, problem-solving, selecting, reasoning, classifying, negotiating, perceiving differences, sequencing information and transforming information (Ellen, 2005). Involving learners in different kinds
of cognitive processes and drawing their attention to accuracy, fluency, or complexity in their production will improve both their cognitive and linguistic skills, which may in turn facilitate their language acquisition (Skehan, 1998).

1.3.5. The authentic use of the target language (TL)

Many researchers have emphasized tasks’ relationship with real life situations. Some of them (e.g. Long, 1997; Long & Crookes, 1992; Norris, 1998; Nunan, 2004) suggest that a needs analysis be completed to identify the target tasks learners need to fulfill in their real lives, and propose these real-world tasks be used in language learning. It is not easy to use real-world tasks in classroom teaching, because usually there is insufficient time to finish the normally complicated real-life tasks and cater to learners’ diversified needs (Long & Crookes, 1993 cited in Ellen, 2005). In spite of this, tasks should manifest some relationship to students’ real life, or at least simulate real life activities.

Many definitions have also argued for the use of only authentic TL in the process of performing tasks to maximize students’ exposure to the language. The skills of the TL are integrated into TBA to facilitate the students holistic development in a given language.

1.4. The Rationale for TBA

The rationale for TBA includes its underlying theories of language, theories of language learning and theories of language teaching.

1.4.1. Theories of language

Although TBA is primarily based on theories of language learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1998), it still contains some assumptions about the nature of language, which are summarized by Richards and Rodgers (2001) as follows:

- Language is primarily a means of making meaning
Multiple models of language inform TBA (instruction): structural, functional and interactional models of language.

Lexical units are central in language use and language learning.

“Conversation” is the central focus of language and the keystone of language acquisition

1.4.1.1. Theories of language learning

According to Ellen (2005), TBA is believed to be able to effectively facilitate a learners’ acquisition of the target language, which can be justified by the following theories of language learning:

- **Interaction Hypothesis**: by engaging learners in interacting communicatively and purposefully in meaning negotiation in the TL, tasks can promote language learning
- **Input and Output Hypothesis**: tasks provide both input and output processing, which fosters language acquisition
- **Cognitive Approach**: tasks may influence different aspects of language acquisition, since different task variables can influence learners’ focus on fluency, accuracy or complexity in their productions
- **Motivational principle**: tasks provide learners with highly motivating activities including physical activity, partnership and collaboration, experience sharing and varieties of authentic communication experiences
- **Communication principle**: tasks promote learning through involving learners in authentic meaningful communication which is closely related to their real-life situations

1.4.1.2. Theories of language teaching

In TBA, the primary function of teaching is to maximize the learners’ exposure to the target language, especially in ESL and EFL contexts. By drawing the learners’ attention to the
linguistic form implicitly from time to time (Willis, 1996), teachers help students to acquire the TL according to their individual learning pace and style. Skehan (1996) identifies the pedagogic goal of TBA as maximizing the chance to achieve an optimum balance between a focus on form (accuracy and complexity) and a focus on communication (real-time processing, lexicalized language and fluency).

1.5. Implementing TBA

This section looks at different forms of TBA, and the various frameworks of implementing TBA in classroom teaching, out of which the framework of foreign language pedagogy (FLP) is drawn for the purpose of this study.

1.5.1. Different Forms of TBA

For describing the implementation of TBA, Skehan (1996, 1998) and Ellis (2003) proposed a weak form and a strong form of TBA. A weak form of TBA is called “task-supported language teaching” while a strong form of TBA “task-based language teaching” (Ellis, 2003). A weak form of TBA considers tasks an opportunity for learners to do freer and more communicative practice of the language items they have learned in a teacher-controlled way. Therefore, tasks are only supplementary activities before or after the form-focused instruction. They are necessary, but not sufficient, for language teaching and learning (Ellis, 2003).

A strong form of TBA takes tasks as the only unit of language teaching, in which students acquire the TL by experiencing its use in contextualized meaning-focused communication. Tasks are both necessary and sufficient activities for language teaching and learning (Ellis, 2003).

1.5.2. A Conceptual Framework of TBA Implementation

As mentioned previously, an approach is a set of assumptions dealing with the theories of language, language teaching, and language learning. According to Anthony (1963), the
approach is then transferred into different specific methods. Each method is an overall plan for classroom teaching, which is operationalized into a teaching procedure utilizing different teaching techniques. The techniques and the method must be harmonious with the approach (Anthony, 1963).

Later, Richards and Rodgers (1986) reformulated Anthony’s model and renamed the three levels “approach, design and procedure”, in which “an approach” was put under the umbrella term “method”. They developed a detailed scheme to discuss, analyze, and compare a method, which included six elements, namely, objectives, content, activities, learners’ roles, teacher’s roles, and the function of instructional materials.

However, in the post-method era, methods have been given less attention while approaches and principles have become the central issue in language teaching practice (Ellen, 2005) Corresponding with current trends, Anthony’s approach-centred model appears to be more appropriate than Richards & Rodgers’ method-centred model. Another limitation of Richards and Rodgers’ model is in its neglect of the importance of assessment in the process of language teaching. In the message system of foreign language education in Bernstein (1973), assessment is one of the four indispensable components. The wash-back effect (Bachman, 1990), which refers to the fact that teaching is greatly influenced by the assessment practice, also shows that assessment should be one of the corresponding elements in analyzing a teaching pedagogy such as TBA.

Therefore, two other important elements related to FLT are also included in the framework of analyzing TBA as FLP, namely, the medium of instruction (MOI) and the ways in which grammar rules are taught. They are highlighted in the seven question framework\(^3\) for understanding foreign language pedagogy (FLP) (Johnson 2001 cited in Ellen, 2005).

\(^3\) The other five elements of the model in Johnson (2001) are the central insights, theories underlined the pedagogy, the engagement of mind in the classroom activities, the authenticity of the target language, and the emphasis of the four skills in the input content.
The framework incorporates two levels of practice. The first level is teachers’ interpretation of an approach into specific methods in their mental or written lesson plans. Different teachers may come up with different interpretations and planning of the same approach. Then they operationalize their plans into practice, which is normally dynamic and contextualized. On the other hand, based on the practical process of enacting teaching plans, teachers may also develop their understanding or knowledge about their FLP and adjust their lesson plans or perceptions accordingly. Both their lesson planning and teaching procedures are closely related to nine interrelating elements, including objectives, content, activities, teachers’ roles, students’ roles, materials, assessment, MOI and grammar teaching. This
framework can also be used to analyze other FLP, such as the Grammar-Translation Method, the Audiolingual Method and Communicative Language Teaching.

1.5.2.1. Teaching objectives

Objectives are developed from the general goal of the curriculum. They reflect the focus of language learning and specify what a language teaching course sets out to achieve. The objectives may be cultivation of learning habits or mastery of some language-related skills, e.g. listening, speaking, reading, writing or communication skills. They may give priority to learning grammar and memorizing the vocabulary of a language, or they may focus on students' communication skills in the target language.

Many researchers (Long, 1997; Long & Crookes, 1992; Nunan, 2004) have pointed out that the learning objectives of TBA should be decided primarily by needs analysis of what tasks the learners need to undertake in the real life situations, especially in the strong form of TBA. Teachers should provide students with opportunities to conduct or simulate these real-world tasks in the classroom setting. In the medium form of TBA, the students’ interests and needs in the real world are often taken into account when teachers set the objectives of their teaching. In the weak form of TBA, teachers often predetermine the teaching objectives irrespective of students’ needs in the real world (cited in Ellen, 2005).

1.5.2.2. Teaching content or syllabus

A syllabus specifies the teaching content and the ways to select and sequence the content. Different pedagogies make use of different specifications of language as units of teaching and different criteria to grade the content. These units of syllabuses include vocabulary, grammatical items, topics, notions, functions, tasks and so on.

1. Units of content in TBA

In the strong form of TBA, tasks are the sufficient unit for planning teaching content. Tasks are chosen according to students’ needs in the real world and stress the use of authentic
target language. Prabhu’s procedural syllabus in the Bangalore Programme was the first attempt to develop a syllabus of tasks exclusively. The tasks involved were mainly problem-oriented and sequenced according to difficulty (Beretta, 1990; Prabhu, 1984). Explicit form-focused teaching was involved incidentally as exceptions and grammatically incorrect responses were accepted.

In the medium form of TBA, tasks are the main unit of teaching content, while some language forms and functions are also explicitly laid out in the material. The syllabus suggested by Nunan (1989) is one example. Besides tasks, the syllabus specifies topics, grammar, and vocabulary as the basic teaching content. Both tasks and exercises are arranged in the syllabus.

In the weak form of TBA, language forms and functions comprise the main part of the teaching content. One example of this is the notional / functional syllabuses developed by Wilkins (1976), which is actually a linguistic syllabus specifying the linguistic content to be taught. It is analytic and “external” to the learners (Ellis, 2003).

2. Sequencing content

After the content has been chosen, it is then sequenced in a certain way to make sure the demands of the content are appropriate to learners at a given level of language proficiency (Bygate, 2001). Task difficulty is the primary standard to differentiate and sequence tasks (Crookes, 1986). Many researchers have listed the possible factors that may affect the difficulty of the tasks (Ellen, 2005), including the input, learner, activity, context, outcome and so on. Ellis (2003) attempted to synthesize the various factors that influence task complexity and difficulty. However, the complicated table of criteria only produced a general ranking of difficulty and most of the criteria seem to have been based on speculation or common sense, instead of hard evidence. Further, with these criteria interacting with each other, it was quite problematic to apply these criteria to sequencing tasks. Therefore,
designers normally select and sequence tasks informally, according to their intuition and experience of how learners respond to tasks. This forms one of the major challenges in the implementation of TBA (Ellen, 2005).

1.5.2.3. Materials

Instructional materials are the further specification of the teaching content. They explain in detail the objectives and content, as well as illustrate the activities to be used in classroom teaching. Normally, the content selected in a textbook reflects its designers’ perceptions of language teaching, though indicating or explicitly recommending certain pedagogy.

The teaching materials in the strong form of TBA provide a sufficient repertoire of sequenced classroom tasks. Since tasks are supposed to relate to real-life situations, varieties of authentic materials are used (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). These materials include newspapers, radio & TV programmes, resources from the Internet, and so on. Teachers often adapt the existing materials and design supplementary materials according to students’ needs.

In the teaching materials in the medium form of TBA, tasks are the main activities recommended, while some form-focused activities or exercises are also included. Authentic materials are mainly used with a balance of linguistic materials. Teachers sometimes take into account students’ needs and interests when they adapt existing materials and design supplementary materials sequenced classroom tasks. Since tasks are supposed to relate to real-life situations, varieties of authentic materials are used (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). These materials include newspapers, radio and TV programmes, resources from the Internet, and so on. Teachers often adapt the existing materials and design supplementary materials according to students’ needs.

In the teaching materials in the weak form of TBA, language items, structures and functions are listed in the textbooks. Form-focused activities are the main activities recommended, while tasks are also occasionally recommended. Linguistic materials are
mainly used with some authentic materials. Teachers seldom consider students’ needs and interest when they adapt existing materials and design supplementary materials.

1.5.2.4. Activities

The types of activities selected depend on the objectives and types of syllabus. Activities are the basic units of classroom teaching, which serve as key components to distinguish teaching pedagogy. Different teaching methods involve different types of activities and different patterns to organize students’ participation and interaction, including solo work, pair work, group work, or whole class learning (Richards, 2002). For TBA, which is based on special activities like tasks, the choice of activities is a key pedagogical feature.

1. Types of Activities in TBA

Tasks are the necessary and sufficient units of classroom activities in the strong form of TBA. The medium form of TBA involves mainly tasks and partly form-focused activities, while the weak form of TBA includes mainly form-focused activities and uses tasks as supplementary activities.

2. Selecting tasks

When designers or teachers select a task, they consider not only the difficulty or complexity, but also the taxonomy of tasks. In the literature, there have been many attempts to classify tasks. Ellis (2003) summarized four approaches to task classification Table (1), each of which was based on different rationales or theories: a pedagogic classification aims at directing tasks to be applied to the training of specific skills and knowledge; a rhetorical classification draws on theories of rhetoric; a cognitive classification is based on the cognitive operations involved in different tasks; and a psycholinguistic classification relates tasks to their potential for language learning.
Table 1: Types of tasks (Ellis 2003)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pedagogic</td>
<td>Listing, ordering and sorting, comparing, problem-solving, sharing personal experiences, creative tasks, etc. (Willis, 1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rhetorical</td>
<td>Genre-based tasks, e.g. political speeches, job application letters, good / bad news letters, medical consultations, and radio-telephonic flight control messages, etc. (Swales, 1990)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cognitive</td>
<td>Information-gap tasks, reasoning-gap tasks and opinion-gap tasks, etc. (Prabhu, 1987)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>psycholinguistic</td>
<td>One-way tasks, two-way tasks, convergent tasks, divergent tasks, closed tasks, open tasks, etc. (Long, 1981; Duff, 1986)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Ellis 2003 cited in Ellen, 2005, p., 21)

It is worth noting that there has been a significant lack of uniform criteria to categorize tasks exhaustively. Although there have been studies focusing on the effectiveness or comparison of different types of tasks, the complexity of task taxonomy makes it difficult for teachers to choose proper types to match their students’ needs and abilities.

3. Organizing students in tasks

Students can work independently, in pairs, in groups, or in a whole-class context during the process of conducting tasks. Although there are both advantages and disadvantages in each of the four ways to organize students (Ellis, 2003), the class pattern is an important factor influencing the classroom interaction, teachers’ and students’ roles and their relationships.

The strong form of TBA involves a variety of class patterns, and students are organized in different ways, in which interaction and meaning negotiation with the teacher and their peers are maximized. The medium-form of TBA often involves all four ways to organize students,
yet sometimes one or two patterns dominate classroom teaching with the result of limited interaction. The weak form of TBA involves primarily one or two of the four ways, in which interaction and negotiation in the classroom is usually limited.

1.5.2.5. Teacher roles

Teachers and their students play different roles in the process of English Language teaching. Teacher roles are related to teachers’ status and functions, the degree of their control over the learning process, including setting up learning objects, choosing content, monitoring learning process, and assessing learning outcome, and so on. Teacher roles ultimately reflect the teaching objectives, the theories or rationale underlying the pedagogy used.

In tasks, teachers are supposed to enable learners to acquire the TL through their meaningful communication with the teachers or their peers in the TL under contextualized circumstances. Tasks are learner-centred activities (Littlewood, 1993; Nunan, 1988), in which teachers play mainly progressive roles of task organizer, facilitator, language adviser, monitor or process manager, motivator, and participant. These progressive roles contrast with conventional roles such as transmitter, dominator, controller, discipliner, initiator, etc.

1. Needs assessor

In order to engage students in interesting and meaningful classroom activities, teachers are supposed to know about their students’ interest and their needs in the real life situations. Thus, they can adjust the classroom teaching to cater to students’ interest, needs and characteristics (Nunan, 1988; Willis, 1996).

2. Resources developer

Teachers need to analyze and evaluate the textbook used in the teaching course. They can then adjust the content taken from the textbook according to students’ interest, needs and reaction to the materials. They also apply supplementary materials, as well as design and develop other teaching resources if needed (Nunan, 1988).
3. **Task organizer**

Teachers select, adapt, and sequence tasks in classroom teaching. They also arrange and distribute resources and organize students to conduct tasks in a smooth way (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Willis, 1996).

4. **Facilitator**

In tasks, teachers do not dominate the classroom teaching. They keep providing conditions and assistance for students’ learning, including sufficient exposure to target language and maximum chances to use the TL in communication and interaction (Richards, 2001b).

5. **Monitor / process manager**

During tasks, teachers stop teaching and allow students to carry on tasks themselves. They observe and monitor students’ performance to make sure all students are properly on task. Sometimes, they act as timekeepers and chairmen during the presentation or public report period, in which they introduce the presenters, state the purposes of listening, set the order of speakers, keep the time and sum up in the end (Willis, 1996b).

6. **Language adviser**

Teachers occasionally try to arouse learners’ attention and awareness to grammatical forms during the process of communication when they do tasks, which will enhance their internalization of these items. They work as language advisers during group discussions. They provide help to students only when there is a breakdown in the communication or when students are experiencing obvious difficulty (Richards, 2001b; Willis, 1996).

7. **Motivator or stimulator**

Teachers involve all students in tasks and encourage them to make full use of the language they have learned. They motivate students to take risks in using the TL and create an atmosphere for students to cooperate with and help each other (Willis, 1996).

8. **Task participant**
Teachers may also act as participants, who take part in students’ discussion and perform the task with the students. By doing so, they can better understand their students in terms of their interests and abilities, and thus can shape their teaching more effectively, according to the specific needs of their students (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

In the strong form of TBA, teachers adopt all the above-mentioned progressive roles in their teaching. In the medium form of TBA, teachers play some of the above-mentioned progressive roles together with other conventional roles, such as knowledge transmitters, drillers, and so on. In the weak form of TBA, teachers mainly play the conventional roles and only partly the progressive roles.

1.5.2.6. Learner roles

Learner roles indicate how learners contribute to the learning process. Learners’ roles are shown in the types of activities the learners conduct, the degree of their control over the learning process, including setting up the learning objects, choosing the contents, monitoring the learning process and assessing the learning outcome.

In tasks, learners are supposed to acquire the TL through their meaningful communication with the teachers or their peers in the TL under contextualized circumstances. Tasks are learner-centred activities, in which learners play many progressive roles as interactors / negotiators, group participants, monitors / assessors, risk-takers of the target language and cooperators. These progressive roles contrast with conventional roles, such as receivers, followers, listeners, responders, etc.

1.5.2.7. Assessment

The ways teachers assess their students often have a washback effect on their teaching and students’ learning, respectively. The washback effect refers to the effect of assessment on teaching and learning. What is assessed should be what has been taught in the classroom. Otherwise, the assessment will probably have negative effect on the teachers’ teaching
(Bachman, 1990). Therefore, the content of assessment should match the teaching content. There are two types of assessment in TBA, task-based tests for summative assessment, and formative assessment.

1. Task-based tests (TBTs)

Summative assessment in TBA refers to the use of task-based tests (TBTs) to assess students’ performance at the end of a period of teaching. According to Ellis (2003), there are two ways to classify language tests. The first categorizes tests into system-referenced tests (SRTs) and performance-referenced tests (PRTs). SRTs are used to assess learners’ knowledge of language as a system while PRTs assess learners’ ability to use the target language in specific contexts and their particular performance in the process of communication. The second categorizes tests into direct tests and indirect tests. Direct tests are holistic in nature and are based on a contextualized sample of the testee’s use of language. The measure of proficiency needs to be derived from the testee’s performance, for example, by obtaining an external rating. The direct tests are the opposite of the indirect tests, which are artificial and uncontextualized. Students’ proficiencies are measured through specific linguistic features obtained from the tests.

Ellis (2003) argues that TBTs include only direct system-referenced tests (DSRTs) and direct performance-referenced tests (DPRTs), in that they are both holistic tasks assessing what learners do or the authentic TL they used in real-world activities Table (2).
Table 2: Examples of tests (Ellis 2003)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test type</th>
<th>Direct (holistic)</th>
<th>Indirect (analytic)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| SRTs      | Traditional tests of general language ability:  
- free composition  
- oral interview  
Information-transfer tests:  
- information-gap  
- opinion-gap  
- reasoning-gap | Discrete-item tests or linguistic knowledge:  
- multiple-choice grammar or vocabulary tests  
- elicited imitation of specific linguistic features  
- error-identification tests-integrative tests  
- cloze  
- dictation |
| PRTs      | Specific purpose tests:  
- tests based on observing real-world tasks  
- simulations of realworld tasks | Tests that seek to measure specific aspects of communicative proficiency discretely:  
- tests of specific academic sub-skills  
- tests of the ability to perform specific functions or strategies. |


Students’ performance in both types of tasks can be measured using three methods. First, they can be measured by the outcomes during the process of tasks or after the completion of the tasks. Second, the linguistic features in students’ conversation during the tasks can be recorded, transcribed, and analysed with discourse analytic methods. Third, external assessors can grade students’ performances according to some pre-determined descriptors after they observe students complete the tasks. It is worth noting here that all three methods of measuring TBT are quite time-consuming, especially the discourse analytic method.

In the strong form of TBA, both direct system-referenced tests (DSRTs) and direct performance-referenced tests (DPRTs) are primarily used to assess students. In the medium
form of TBA, mainly direct tests and partly indirect tests are used to assess students. In the weak form of TBA, mainly indirect tests and partly direct tests are used to assess students.

While TBT might lead to positive washback effect on teaching, there are also some unresolved problems with it (Norris, 1998). First, besides the characteristics of tasks, there are other contextual factors that will influence learners’ performance in TBTs, including the roles the testers and testees play, as well as their personality and knowledge about the subject content involved in the tests. There is no solid evidence that shows how these factors should work and interact with each other; so that learners’ can perform in the way they are supposed to be tested. Second, it is problematic to guarantee both situations and interactions involved in the tests to be truly authentic. Third, it is difficult to ensure that the performance tested in TBT is the same as the real-life performance. Fourth, the factors of personal dispositions of the testees, the management conditions of the tests, and the inconsistency among testers make error-free assessment quite a challenge. Last, developing and managing TBA manifests a higher cost and places a greater demand on teachers than traditional tests, which also brings about the problem of impracticality.

2. Formative assessment (FA) in TBA

Formative assessment refers to activities undertaken by the teacher, the students which provide information or feedback to be used to adapt or modify teaching and learning (Black & William, 1998). Improving classroom-based formative assessment can improve the quality of teacher-pupil interactions, stimulate students to take an active part in their own learning, encourage pupils with low attainment to make progress and cultivate habits of life-long learning (Black & William, 1998). Formative assessment in TBA includes both the planned and incidental types of assessment (Ellis, 2003). The former refers to the use of the above-mentioned task-tests in the process of teaching. The latter can be either teachers’ observations during the process of conducting a task or teachers’ and students’ post-task reflections.
However, there has been little evidence to prove the reliability and validity of teachers’ judgment in the formative assessment.

According to who conducts the assessment, formative assessment can be categorized to self-assessment, peer assessment, and the conventional teacher assessment. In self-assessment, students are given opportunities to reflect on their own performance. In peer assessment, students reflect and comment on their peers’ performance. Involving students in the process of assessment can help encourage learner autonomy and develop their abilities to monitor their learning (Nunan, 2004).

In the strong form of TBA, formative assessment is primarily used to assess the performance of students in tasks. In the medium form of TBA, formative assessment is used to assess students’ performance mainly in tasks and partly in form-focused activities. In the weak form of TBA, formative assessment is used to assess mainly students’ performance in form focused activities and partly those in tasks.

**1.5.2.8. Medium of Instruction (MOI)**

MOI reflects teachers’ perceptions of the roles the TL and the learners’ mother tongue (MT) play in the process of learning.

Since the objective of tasks is to maximize learners’ exposure to the TL and engage learners in free and meaningful use of the TL (Willis, 1996), learners are exposed to and encouraged to use spontaneous language, while their attention is drawn to certain linguistic features from time to time. Many proponents of tasks (Ellis, 2003; Willis, 1996) argue that the TL should be used as the main medium of teaching, even in the teaching of beginners.

In the strong form of TBA, students are supposed to be immersed in communication in the authentic TL, which is the only language used in the classroom teaching. In the medium form and the weak form of TBA, because some other form-focused activities are involved,
learners’ MT may be used to clarify the understanding and maintain the communication process.

1.5.2.9. Grammar teaching

There are two ways to teach grammar rules: deductive and inductive (Johnson 2001). In a deductive way, the teacher first introduces a rule to the learners. Then, some examples are used to demonstrate how the rule works. It follows a rule-to-example sequence. In an inductive way, some examples of the target language are given, according to which the learners work out the rules. Since the learners are supposed to summarize the rules after they analyze the examples, sometimes the rules are not stated explicitly. The ways teachers teach grammar reflect their understanding of how students learn or acquire the TL.

In the strong form of TBA, rules are always taught in an inductive way. Grammar tasks or focused tasks are applied to direct students to a particular predetermined language feature while maintaining students’ communicative use of the TL. In the medium form of TBA, grammar rules are mainly taught in an inductive way while partly in a deductive way. In these two forms of TBA, errors are not corrected unless they break the flow of communication (Willis, 1996). In the weak form of TBA, grammar rules are taught in a deductive way. Students’ errors are often corrected to guarantee the accuracy of their language production.

1.5.2.10. Procedure of implementation of TBA

Many scholars suggest that TBA be implemented with three stages of classroom teaching, including pre-task, during-task [(which is also called while-task or task cycle in Willis (1996)], and post-task.

1. Pre-task

In the pre-task stage, teachers and students undertake preparatory activities before they begin the task. These activities are used 1) to introduce or highlight the target language that is to be used in the task; 2) to recycle and practice the target language in either a controlled or
freer way; 3) to introduce the topic and set the context of the task; or 4) to explain, demonstrate or rehearse the task process (Ellis, 2003; Nunan, 1989, 2004; Skehan, 1998; Willis, 1996). These activities can be form-focused instruction or practice, authentic listening, reading, observing or writing activities, and some similar but smaller tasks.

2. During-task

The during-task stage is the central part of TBA, in which students do the task individually, as a whole class, in pairs or in groups. After students complete the task with certain outcomes or products, the teacher gives them some time to prepare for the sharing or report of the product. In the end students normally share, present, and report their products to the entire class. Sometimes, there are form-focused activities to draw students’ attention to the fluency, accuracy, and complexity of their language (Skehan, 1998).

3. Post-task

A post-task stage is not always necessary (Nunan, 2004; Willis, 1996). It concerns activities for students to analyze and examine the language used in tasks, or to practice and consolidate the target language items with more form-focused activities or other tasks.

Ellis (2003) pointed out that for the strong form of TBA, only the meaning-focused application-based during-task stage is “obligatory” while the form-focused pre-task and post-task stages are “non-obligatory”. In the medium form of TBA, teachers involve mainly the during-task stage activities and partly form-focused pre-task and post-task activities. In the weak form of TBA, pre-task and post-task activities dominate classroom teaching while only a little time is spent on the during-task stage.

1.5.3. Different Forms of TBA Implementation

The above analysis of different forms of TBA, in terms of the teaching objectives, content, activities, teacher roles, learner roles, materials, assessment, MOI and grammar teaching, is summarized in Table (3).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Strong form</th>
<th>Medium form</th>
<th>Weak form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Based primarily on learners’ needs</td>
<td>Often consider learners’ needs</td>
<td>Seldom consider learners’ needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Content Tasks as basic unit</td>
<td>Tasks balanced with forms and functions</td>
<td>Mainly forms and functions and partly tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>Authentic tasks</td>
<td>Authentic tasks balanced with linguistic activities</td>
<td>Mainly linguistic activities and partly authentic tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Tasks</td>
<td>Tasks balanced with form-focused activities</td>
<td>Mainly form-focused activities and partly tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher roles</td>
<td>Progressive roles</td>
<td>Progressive roles balanced with conventional roles</td>
<td>Mainly conventional roles and partly progressive roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner roles</td>
<td>Progressive roles</td>
<td>Progressive roles balanced with conventional roles</td>
<td>Mainly conventional roles and partly progressive roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Task-based assessment (direct tests, observation and reflection)</td>
<td>Task-based assessment balanced with indirect tests, form-focused assessment</td>
<td>Mainly form-focused indirect tests and partly task-based formative assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOI</td>
<td>Authentic TL</td>
<td>Authentic TL, MT is used if needed</td>
<td>Mostly unauthentic TL and MT is often used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar teaching</td>
<td>Inductive teaching balanced with deductive teaching</td>
<td>Deductive teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedure</td>
<td>Primarily during-task stages</td>
<td>During-task stage balanced with pre-task and post-task activities</td>
<td>Mainly pre- and post-task activities and partly the during-task stage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Ellen, 2005, p. 30).

1.5.4. Implementing TBA in EFL Contexts

This section proposed the effectiveness and appropriateness of TBA and introduces some previous studies on the process of TBA implementation. (Challenges)

1.5.4.1. Challenges of Implementing TBA in EFL contexts

Due to the fact that TBA is a relatively complicated and controversial approach, Ellen (2005) argued that there are some problems and challenges in its implementation, which are unavoidable and unresolved.

First, some scholars have argued that the use of tasks may not result in real-life communication in the classroom, but probably only in similar cognitive processes that may happen in natural communication in the real world. There is a need to enrich the underlying rationale to justify the TBA in language teaching.

Second, there are some unsolved problems existing in the practice of TBA in selecting and sequencing tasks in their syllabus and classroom teaching as well as in assessing and evaluating learners’ task-based performance.

Third, TBA places a very high demand on teachers in terms of their linguistic ability as well as their pedagogic ability: 1) teachers’ language proficiency should be native-like and expose learners to authentic use of language; 2) teachers are expected to have the competence to select and sequence the tasks for classroom teaching; and 3) teachers should be sensitive to
students’ differences and adjust tasks accordingly. These qualifications are extremely difficult for most EFL teachers to achieve.

Fourth, the impracticality and inappropriateness of TBA in EFL contexts may also attribute to some contextual reasons that 1) TBA is seen as an Anglo-American creation and might be conflicting with EFL cultural contexts; 2) there may be limited class time allocated for teaching the foreign language, which may prevent teachers from giving students extensive opportunities to use the target language in a natural, slow, and gradual process; 3) the large class sizes also make it difficult for non-native speaking teachers to involve students in interactive learning in pairs or groups while argues that large class size may involve more class time for students to report the outcomes of tasks; 4) there is a lack of English-speaking environment in many EFL contexts; 5) teachers and students are required to adopt mainly progressive roles in TBA, which may challenge the authority of teachers in such EFL cultures and 6) teachers in EFL may find it too time-consuming to design tasks, especially when there is a lack of teaching resources or practical support.

Last, the actual effectiveness of TBA on learners’ acquisition has been inferred mainly from non-classroom settings, with a lack of solid evidence based on longitudinal studies in task-based environments.

Due to these existing problems in TBA, some researchers are highly skeptical about the cursory advocacy of a task-based language syllabus without achieving a holistic perspective of both the advantages and disadvantages of its adoption. Further research on the empirical application of TBA in EFL contexts as well as its actual effects on language acquisition and learning is needed, where there are very few empirical studies on the implementation of English Language pedagogy.
CHAPTER TWO

ESP and Vocabulary learning

2.1. English for Specific Purposes

Introduction

The study of language for specific purposes (LSP) has a long and valid history (Streven 1977 cited in Johns & Dudly-Evans, 1998). English for Specific Purposes has gained ascendancy in different fields, especially today since the focus of research is centered on the English language (Johns & Dudly-Evans, 1998). Recent world events have underscored the need to increase understanding and to improve communication. To meet these communication needs, more and more individuals have highly specific academic and professional reasons for seeking to improve their skills (Hortas, 2002). ESP has been referred to as applied ELT as the content and aim of any course is determined by needs of a specific group of learners (Dudly-Evans, 1998). According to Robinson (1991), ESP is a major activity around the world today. All the engineers, general practitioners, doctors, managers, tourists, and even secretaries must know English. They have to keep up-to date and improve their knowledge of the field. Howatt (1984) introduced ESP as an innovative activity in the domain of language teaching.

2.1.1. The Definitions and Origins of ESP

It was believed that, it was impossible to produce a universally applicable definition of ESP (Robinson, 1991). But, lots of definitions have been proposed. In the following overview some of them will be provided.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) imply that ESP is actually an approach and that it doesn’t specify any special kind of language and teaching methodology.
Strevans (1988 cited in Dudly-Evans & St John, 1998, p. 3) defines ESP in terms of four absolute characteristics and two variable characteristics. The absolute characteristics are that ESP consists of English Language Teaching which is:

- Designed to meet the specified needs of the learner;
- Related in content (that is in themes and topics) to particular disciplines, occupations and activities;
- Centered on language appropriate to these activities in syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics and so on, and analysis of the discourse;
- In contrast with ‘general English’.

And the variable characteristics are that ESP:

- Maybe restricted to the learning skills to be learned (for example reading only);
- May not be taught according to any pre-ordained methodology.

Later, the definition proposed by Strevans (1988) for ESP in terms of absolute and variable characteristics was modified (Dudly-Evans & St John, 1998).

Absolute characteristics:

- ESP is designed to specifically meet the needs of the learner;
- ESP makes use of underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves;
- ESP is centered on the language appropriate to these activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse and genre.

Variable characteristics:

- ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines;
- ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of General English;
- ESP is likely to be designed for intermediate or advanced students;
- Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language systems.

As an attempt to explain ESP, a number of features which are thought to be critical to ESP are provided. “ESP is goal-directed, it is based on a needs analysis, ESP learners are adults, not children and ESP courses consist of identical students from the same kind of work or specialist studies” (Robinson, 1991, pp., 2-4).

The same point was clarified in which: “ESP is not a matter of teaching specialized varieties of English, nor is just a matter of science words and grammar for scientists. It is also not different in kind from any other form of language teaching as far as principles of effective and efficient learning are concerned” (Hutchinson and Waters, 1993, p., 18). So they believe that ESP is an approach to teaching which aims to meet the needs of particular learners.

According to Dudly-Evans & St John (1998), the growth of the ESP movement is a result of the fast development of the world economy and has been greatly influenced by ELT methodology and the development of Applied Linguistics. The first dominating approach to ESP course design focused on the grammatical and lexical items of a particular field of English. With the popularity of Communicative Language Teaching, language use became the key emphasis in the ESP world, known as functional-notional approach. In the early 80s, it was found that there was a certain need to underly a particular language use and, in addition, the process of learning and learning skills needed to be taken into account.

For the emergence of ESP, three reasons have been referred to (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). The reasons are presented as follows:
1. The demands of a brave new world (advancement in technology and commerce caused everyone to learn English as a key factor);
2. A revolution in linguistics (the purpose of language learning shifted from dealing with forms to using language for communication); and
3. Focus on the learner (learners’ needs came to be important).

2.1.2. Classification of ESP

ESP (English for Specific Purposes) has been referred to as applied ELT as the content and aim of any course is determined by the needs of a specific group of learners. ESP is often divided into EAP (English for Academic Purposes) and EOP (English for Occupational Purposes). Further sub-divisions of EOP are sometimes made into business English, professional English (e.g. English for Doctors or Lawyers), and vocational English (English for tourism, nursing, aviation, and bricklaying) (Dudly-Evans, 1998).

Robinson (1991) refers to two versions of the ESP family tree. In his first Figure, that is, **Figure 4**, a distinction is made between EOP and EAP. EOP involves work related needs, while EAP involves academic-study needs.
The other Figure, **Figure 5**, shows another version of ESP family tree. In contrast to the first version, here learning in ESP is for academic, professional and vocational purposes and each branch is divided into some sub-branches in turn. For example, in terms of professional ESP, some students might learn language for business purposes, some for social purposes and some others for technical purposes.
Figure 5: ESP in the US (the second version)

Adopted from (Robinson, 1991, p., 4)
2.1.3. Needs Analysis

As it was noted, in Streven’s definition of ESP (1988 cited in John & Dudly-Evans, 1991), two components of ESP are referred to as needs assessment and discourse analysis. Also, it was confirmed that “the main concerns of ESP have always been, and remain, with needs analysis, text analysis, and preparing learners to communicate effectively in the tasks prescribed by the study or work situation” (Dudly-Evans and St john, 1998, p., 1).

Nowadays, with the advant of technology, life is changing very fast in nearly all aspects. This rapid change brings new needs and requirements, so the ability to identify these needs and devise appropriate strategies will take place (Zandmoghadam, 2007).

As far as learnering is concerned, learners’ needs are changing too. In fact, the courses the learners take must be relevant to their needs. In case of language learning, it was stated that “one of the ways in which foreign and second language educators have responded to the changing situation is by basing more their courses on the findings of surveys of learners’ needs” (Long, 2005, p. 19).

The purpose of needs analysis has been clarified. In that it was believed that when the elements of the target English situation are identified they can be useful as the basis of ESP/EAP instruction; therefore, teachers will provide specific language they need (Johns 1991 cited in Benesch, 1996).

NA, which is sometimes called needs assessment, is consirded as the corner stone of ESP (Dudly-Evans &St John, 1998).

Needs assessment was defined as “an array of procedures for identifying and validating needs, and establishing priorities among them” (Platt 1980 cited in Richards, 1992, p. 1).
However, different types of needs have been introduced to the literature so far. Needs are classified as target needs and learning needs. “Target needs refer to what the learner needs to do in the target situation, whereas learning needs are what the learner needs to do in order to learn” (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p.54). Further, they introduce ‘necessities’, ‘lacks’ and ‘wants’ as the elements which constitute the target needs.

Also, needs can mean “what the user-situation or society at large regards as necessary or describes to be learnt from a program of language instruction” (Mountford 1981 cited in Robinson, 1991, p. 7).

Widdowson (1981 cited in Robinson, 1991, p.7) introduces goal-oriented needs, which can refer to « students’ study or job requirements » which are what they have to be able to do at the end of their language course. Elsewhere, Widdowson refers to process-oriented definition of needs and relates to traditional behavior, the means of learning. It is “what the learner needs to do actually acquire the language” (1981 cited in Robinson, 1991, p. 7). Then, Robinson (1991) believes that what the learners themselves would like to gain from the language course can be another kind of need. He also agrees with Hutchinson and Waters (1987) in what they call ‘lacks’ as another interpretation of needs. Moreover Long (2005) introduces task-based needs as a new approach which is based on task as the unit of analysis.

ESP (especially nowadays) is not only about making learners “able to read texts in their subject specialism” It’s more than that.
2.2. Vocabulary learning

Introduction

It was assumed that “vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write” (Richards and Renandya, 2002, p. 255). The notion of vocabulary itself, both as a component of language and as an area of language instruction must be understood in light of 1) the distinction between spoken and written English, 2) the full range of devices available to the speaker, and 3) the norms of speaker-addressee interaction (Baxter, 1980). In addition, it was assumed that a speaker is not likely to have immediate access to almost every known lexical item in every situation. (Baxter, 1980). It is also claimed that “vocabulary cannot be construed only in terms of an accumulation of items, but also must be seen as including the dynamics of use pedagogically” (Baxter, 1980, p. 49). This implies the fact that vocabulary is a dynamic notion and thus the teachers cannot predict which words are to be taught and learned. However, the students/learners are required to be able to express their meaning in an appropriate manner. A good mastery of vocabulary is essential for ESL/EFL learners, especially for those who learn for specific purposes or expect to operate at an advanced level in English. Then, it is wise to direct vocabulary learning to more specialized areas when learners have mastered the acceptable number of words for general usefulness in English (Ntion, 2001).

2.2.1. Vocabulary and its importance

The term vocabulary has a range of meanings. For example, some teachers use the term to mean sight-word vocabularies, referring to students’ immediate recognition of words in print; other teachers refer to words students understand as their meaning vocabularies. Still other teachers use the term to mean listening vocabularies, or students’ understanding of words that
they hear in the spoken language. Content teachers use the term academic vocabulary to refer to content-specific words. Vocabularies include conceptual knowledge of words that goes well beyond a simple dictionary definition. Students’ vocabulary knowledge is a building process that occurs over time as they make connections to other words, learn examples and nonexamples of the word and related words, and use the word accurately within the context of the sentence (Snow, Griffin, & Burns 2005 cited in Antonacci & O'Callaghan, 2012).

Since it is a core component of language proficiency, it is then central to language and of critical importance to the typical language learners (Coady and Huckin, 1997). Vocabulary as one of the language aspects has to be learned when people are learning a language. Good mastery of vocabulary is important for anyone who learns the language used in listening, reading, and writing. A learner of the foreign language will speak fluently, write easily, or understand what he/she reads or hears if he/she has enough vocabulary and has capability of using it accurately (Coady & Huckin, 1997).

Of course, vocabulary is not an optional or unimportant part of a foreign language. Still less it is an aspect of knowledge that can be disposed of without much effect on the language being learned. Words are the building blocks of language and without them there is no language. It was succinctly noted that without grammar very little can be conveyed, and without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed (Willinks, 1972). Recent language learning theory suggests that reducing the volume of vocabulary acquired by learners may actually harm the development of other aspects of language (Milton, 2009).

In addition to the statements above, Graves (2009) states some points about the importance of vocabulary, those are as follows:

a. Vocabulary knowledge is one of the best indicators of verbal ability;

b. Vocabulary knowledge contributes to young children’s phonological awareness, which in turn contributes to their word recognition;
c. Vocabulary difficulty strongly influences the readability of texts;
d. Teaching vocabulary can improve reading comprehension for both native speakers and English language learners;
e. Learning English vocabulary is one of the most crucial tasks for English language learners.

2.2.2. Receptive and productive knowledge

Mirzaee (2009) in a study investigated the effects of using dictionary on English language learners’s vocabulary learning and argued that many researchers (e.g. Henriksen, 1999 and Lee, 2003) agree upon the following levels of word knowledge: 1) unknown; 2) knowledge that the word exists; 3) partial knowledge; and 4) complete knowledge.

It is exemplified that the number of words that a learner understands when hearing them spoken or reading them written in context can be considered as receptive. While, the number of words he/she actually uses in conversation and writing is productive (Blachowich, et al. 2005 cited in Mirzaee, 2009).

According to Laufer (1998), in most models of L2 vocabulary acquisition, receptive knowledge precedes the more complex productive knowledge and use of vocabulary. His study showed that learners’ L2 receptive vocabulary developed to a higher extent than their productive vocabulary, attributed to the lack of production tasks that elicited and provided practice for using recognized or new vocabulary.

Henriksen (1999) emphasized the importance of converting learner’s receptive vocabulary into productive vocabulary by getting learners to actively use recognized and new words. Laufer and Paribakht (1998) claimed that learners with larger recognition vocabulary can also have larger controlled active vocabulary in writing.
On the contrary, Lee’s (2003) experiment showed that learners do not automatically put their recognition vocabulary to productive use, but are able to expend their active controlled vocabulary after explicit vocabulary instruction. His study also revealed that new vocabulary gained from a reading activity does not automatically transfer into productive and productive and teachers need to provide opportunities for learners to use recognition and new vocabulary in in a contextually related writing task.

Blachowicz, Fischer and Watts-Taffe (2005), asserted that generally the goal of a comprehensive vocabulary program is to expand both receptive and productive vocabularies, and to continually move words from receptive level to the productive level (cited in Mirzaee, 2009).

2.2.3. Teaching and learning vocabulary

Considering the complexity of the vocabulary learning tasks, it is impossible for the teachers to give explicit teaching of all vocabulary to learners. Since individual learning of vocabulary will benefit learners, it is necessary for teachers to encourage learners to develop their own vocabulary learning tasks among which guessing strategies, dictionary strategies and memory strategies are mainly accepted (Gu & Johnson, 1996). The following are some learning and teaching strategies which are provided by Jordan (1997), Arsenijevic (2009) and Jaingwen & Binbin (2007).

a) Contextual Guessing

Contextual guesswork means inferring meaning from clues in the context. This process takes place in all kinds of reading activities, but in this particular case, students draw on their scientific knowledge in order to guess the meaning of a word. It is very important to explain the theory behind the guessing to students so that that they are aware of what they are doing.
The teacher should also teach some strategies which are useful in this kind of guesswork, such as working out what part of speech the word is and using one’s knowledge of word formation in order to guess the meaning of the new word. Furthermore, the teacher should be careful about the proportion of words in the text to be guessed, in order to be successful in this activity. They are expected to read the sentence carefully, try to guess meaning of the word in bold by relying on their knowledge and then explain the meaning (Arsenijevic, 2009).

b) Memorization

Memory strategies involve relating the word to be retained with some previously learned knowledge which facilitates the storage and retrieval of words. As Nattinger (1988) observes, words in our lexicon are tied to teach other not only by meaning, form and sound but also by sight. That means visualization is a useful aid in fixing words in memory (cited in Jordan, 1997).

c) Affixes learning

In English vocabulary, there is a relatively small group of very useful accessible affixes that can be introduced to learners when they are at appropriate level of their language development. For example, law intermediate learners may start with affixes like, able, er, ish, non, un, etc (Jiangwen& Binbin, 2007).

d) Independent Vocabulary Learning

Independent vocabulary learning strategies are absolutely necessary and useful strategies to be developed by learners themselves in spite of some drawbacks. But the fact is that individual learners have different styles of acquiring unfamiliar vocabulary or they are not at the same level of the proficiency in English. Therefore, it is worthwhile for teachers to teach
vocabulary explicitly considering these factors. Explicit teaching can be carried out through teacher instruction or classroom activities (Arsenijevic, 2009).

e) Repitition and Recycling a Word

Learning about a word needs a process, one meeting is not at all sufficient. Only by meeting the word repeatedly can learners develop a full understanding of its use and meaning (Jordan, 2007).

f) Repeating the Word in Reality

The use of mental images in the classroom is highly appreciated in vocabulary teaching because it gives some idea that is easier to conjure up a mental image of a concrete item than an abstract one (Gairns & Redman, 1993). It is better to try to imagine the new word by using wall charts, flashcards and pictures. With everything considered, “the most effective way for students to increase their active vocabulary store is for them to be centrally involved in the learning process” (Jordan, 1997, p. 162). This maybe under the direction of a teacher, doing group work with other students or during independent study time.

g) Matching

Another typical activity which is useful for revising and testing vocabulary and which develops both reading and understanding is matching. Most students have a good awareness of their capacity to cope with a task, so it is a good teaching strategy to let students work in pairs. This allows them to make decisions on how to do an activity, which helps them to become more autonomous learners (Arsenijevic, 2009).
h) Gap Filling

Another activity which focuses on vocabulary and its accurate use is gap-filling. The difficulty of these activities can be controlled by changing the number of sentences/the length of the text and by increasing/decreasing the number of words given. The more advanced students should be challenged by being asked to use their previous knowledge and write in a suitable word or phrase without looking at the words which are provided for the weaker students (Arsenijevic, 2009).

i) Brainstorming activities

Doing brainstorming activities is another way to learn or accumulate learner’s vocabulary. It generally refers to brainstorming associations that a word has and then diagramming the results. For example, when asked to give words learners thought of when they heard the word ‘bank’, most learners would generate a number of words and phrases: money, account, deposit, accountant, invest, loan, debit, counter, credit card etc. then they can cluster these words together that they think go together (Jiangwen& Binbin, 2007).

2.2.4. Which vocabulary type should the ESP teacher teach

In terms of teaching vocabulary in ESP, it is most important to make a distinction between two types of vocabulary: technical and semi-technical. Two broad areas related to technical vocabulary have been suggested (Dudly-Evans& St John, 1998, p., 83).

1. Vocabulary that is used in general language has a higher frequency of occurrence in specific and technical description and discussion.

2. Vocabulary that has specialized and restricted meanings in certain disciplines and which may vary in meaning across disciplines.
It is quite clear that the first area area would be referred to as semi-technical and the second area would be regarded as technical vocabulary.

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987) ESP should be seen as an approach to language teaching, which is directed by specific and apparent reasons for learning. Nowadays, most of the second language learners who are attending UK or USA universities learn English not for general purposes but rather for specific purposes. Their specific and apparent reasons for learning English is for academic purposes and their academic study will involve specialized areas across different disciplines in physical sciences as well as in social sciences. The aim of their vocabulary acquisition is surely academic vocabulary. For Barbar (1962) a rational behind this is that, learners who will do academic study in English must focus on academic vocabulary which is variously known as a general useful scientific vocabulary, which Farrel (1990) calls semi-technical vocabulary because they need to exhibit a wide range of academic skills like reading about research papers in their own fields, listening to teachers speak about their work, writing academic papers and presenting oral or written evaluations of methods or results in many cases.

With its importance shown here, academic vocabulary or semi-technical vocabulary should be given priority in teaching by ESP teachers because, according to Dudly-Evans and St John (1998), this type of vocabulary is used in general life contexts but has a higher frequency occurrence in scientific and technical descriptions. ESP teachers should teach learners general vocabulary that has a higher frequency in scientific field such as:

- Academic: trial, study, standard, ethics, period and order…..
- Medicine: overload procedure, chronic, treatment, fluid and drug……
- Verbs: report, control, convert, receive, give and randomize……
- Collocations: carry out, find out…….
2.3. Task-based language teaching and vocabulary learning researches

Although many studies have been conducted about the role of task-based approach (TBA) on macro-skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking), few researches have investigated the effect of task-based instruction on vocabulary learning in ESP courses.

According to Leaver and Willis (2004), task-based language teaching helps language learners make real efforts to communicate as best as they can in the foreign language which they are learning. Willis (2004) contends that task-based instruction is in fact a meaning focused approach that reflects real world language use for purposeful communication.

Bitchener (2003) focused on the value of negotiated interaction for vocabulary learning. Bitchener pointed out that learners are able to access target language data for developing their L2 vocabulary when negotiating the meaning of communication difficulties. Thirty low-intermediate ESL learners performed a two-way information gap task and a decision-making task during each of the three twenty minute conversations. The study found that task-based negotiation has a worthwhile role to play in the incidental acquisition of concrete nouns and, to a lesser extent, abstract nouns and adjectives. Task differences were also found to affect negotiation opportunities and rates of vocabulary retention.

Newton (2001) investigated on options for vocabulary learning through communication tasks and claimed that in a task-based approach to learning, learners will often meet new vocabularies ‘in passing’, as they pursue communicative goals. He also argued that such encounter can be turned to the learners’ advantage. Teachers should consider a number of cooperative options for exposing learners to new words during task-based interactions. The paper examined data from a number of classroom tasks where learners had to deal with new words during task performance without access to a dictionary or a teacher’s intervention. The result suggested not only rich language use resulted from negotiating new words, but also the
meaning of many of these words was retained in the days after the task performance. The study concluded by considering a number of task-post options for vocabulary learning.

On the other hand, De la Fuente (2006) studied classroom L2 vocabulary acquisition and investigated the role of pedagogical tasks and form-focused instruction. The results indicated that task-based lessons seemed to be more effective than what is known as the Presentation, Practice and Production (PPP) lessons. The analysis also suggested that a task-based lesson with an explicit focus-on-forms component was more effective than a task-based lesson that did not incorporate this component in promoting acquisition of word morphological aspects. The findings of this study provided evidence for the value of a proactive form-focused approach to task-based L2 vocabulary learning, especially structure-based production tasks. Overall, they suggested an important role of pedagogical tasks in teaching L2 vocabulary.

In another Iranian study, Karimi (2010) focused on the effect of using information-gap tasks on Iranian EFL lexical development. For the purpose of this study, five different kinds of information-gap tasks were chosen and practiced with the experimental group. Then, with the help of a t-test between the post test results of the experimental and control groups, the data were analysed. Results showed that using information-gap tasks as a teaching technique in the classroom did affect the lexical development of Iranian EFL pre-intermediate learners significantly.

Ghaemi and Kargozari (2011) investigated the effectiveness of the type of written exercises on L2 vocabulary retention. Based on the target words, three types of task were designed. These tasks consisted of sentences fill-in task, multiple choice (MC) and sentence writing task. All the sentences used in the sentence fill-in task and multiple choice (MC) task were taken from different dictionaries. The analysis of the data revealed that the MC group
significantly outperformed the other groups. The differences between the groups were considerable.

Lee (2011) aimed at investigating the role of post-task written exercises in task-based instruction. He studied on 27 Hong Kong learners who benifited from a combination of an authentic task and written vocabulary exercises in terms of receptive and productive retention of the target words. The results indicated the superiority of a communicative task plus written exercises over a task alone. Although results showed that the use of communicative tasks could indeed promote vocabulary learning at various levels, but a written exercise component that lasted no longer than 15 minutes could raise the gain more significantly. Therefore, the use of vocabulary exercises as a post-task was highly feasible in classrooms with limited facilities, as well as in institutes which couldn’t afford advanced technology.

2.4. Task-based language teaching and ESP courses researches

One of the concerns of ESP courses is teaching vocabulary from the general and professional points of view. Vocabulary plays a key role in teaching foreign languages in general and in professional courses in particular. ESP teaching implies teaching the vocabulary of a special text. The emphasis, consequently, is on the technical vocabulary which is, as it was, the skeleton of every special text. However, general vocabulary is never taught properly at school and has to be acquired at University level (Arestova& Rjabtseva, 2006). Task-based language teaching as a rather new and validated approach provided innovative techniques in teaching technical vocabulary in ESP courses.

Kavaliauskiene (2005) in the research article “task-based learning and learning outcomes in the ESP classroom” explained teaching through tasks creates favorable learning conditions for students who study English for specific purposes. Kavaliauskiene pointed out, task-based learning involves students in performing tasks relevant to their future profession, increases
learners’ motivation and does not emphasize linguistic issues in the primary stages. Language analysis is incorporated only after learners have performed a task and depends on the needs, which becomes apparent only after performance. Task-based learning (TBL) seems to grant meaningful use of language and can promote autonomous learning. Moreover, it implies meaningful use of language and provides unthreatening environment for learning. However, this approach has not been universally accepted by English language practitioners and linguists due uncertainies in assessing learning outcomes. Kavaliauskiene addressed this research into learners’ attitudes to TBL, which is thought to have advantages over the more traditional and rather simplified Present, Practice, Produce approach, and the investigation of TBL influence on learning outcomes in the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classroom. Research into application of Task-Based Learning has shown that respondents are in favor of performing a variety of tasks in the ESP classes. The most well-liked tasks in descending order have been:

1) Problem-solving tasks: analysing real situations, 83% are in favor;
2) Sharing personal experiences: giving opinions and comments, 83% are in favor;
3) Listening tasks: fact-finding is supported by 61%;
4) Comparing tasks: finding differences is favored by 67%, finding similarities by 56%;
5) Ordering-sorting tasks: classifying, 53% are in favor;
6) Creative tasks: fact-finding is supported by 50%.

It was stated that, there is a tight connection between ESP and principles and techniques of teaching vocabulary. If a learner spends most of his/her time in studying grammar, his/her English will not improve very much. The learner will see the most improvement if he/she learns more words and expressions. It also believed that ESP students should be exposed to a large variety of materials and to a large number of styles. An ESP vocabulary syllabus should offer a combination of materials: textbooks (for formal, didactic/pedagogic style), newspaper articles (for written and journalistic style), tape recorded business presentations (for formal
and oral style), tape recorded/videotape recorded casual conversations (for informal style), and even songs or movie fragments (for slang) (Nito, 2004).

Cubillo and Brenes (2009) examined task-based instruction in an ESP course in the computer center at the University of Costa Rica. This study presented the advantages of using Task-based learning to help learners infer the rule of the superlative from adjectives in English. This group of learners was taking an ESP course that was team taught by two instructors. The course lasted four months, and the instructors covered four different units. It is important to mention that the methodology based on tasks helps learners pay more attention or concentrate more on meaning. Task-based language learning is an approach in which learners concentrate more on meaning than on form. By doing this, students perform different communicative tasks, which happen to be more meaningful because they are close to the learners’ reality, instead of doing form-based discrete exercises, which are usually decontextualized and meaningless because they do not see a reason for doing them. In the lesson presented in this article, the computer center students were asked to express their own ideas, either orally or in a written mode, about the topic of the lesson, the superlative form of the adjectives in English. Cubillo and Brenes (2009) concluded that it is important to point out that the implementation of the TBL methodology in an ESP context is a challenging task for language teachers. In fact, finding appropriate materials (i.e. newspaper or magazine ads) is time consuming due to the fact that instructors have to obtain samples of authentic discourse for the learners; thus they can use them during the different stages of the lesson. In task-based instruction as Brown (1994) pointed out, the priority is not the bits and pieces of language but rather the functional purpose for which language must be used. Consequently, when deciding to use TBLT, instructors have to be seen as motivators and facilitators of the learning process since the idea is to make learners responsible for their own learning, and as a result, autonomy must be favored when using this approach. Obviously, teachers should take advantage of
different approaches and techniques and combine them to help learners improve their skills. Subsequently, by implementing task-based instruction, learners as well as teachers will certainly benefit from a different approach to language pedagogy because it is more motivating. Challenging, innovative, appealing and meaningful to students than other traditional grammar-translation based approaches.

In conclusion, teaching technical vocabulary through task-based approach in ESP courses will be an attempt to cast more light on technical vocabulary as a basic part in ESP teaching courses to fill the aforementioned gaps.
CHAPTER THREE

Fieldwork

Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology and provides a description of: the choice of the method, the description of the sample, the tools used to carry out the study. It also will discuss the statistical methods used for the analysis of the data and a summary, implications as well as limitations and suggestions for further research.

3.1. Research methodology

3.1.1. Choice of the Method

In fact, there is no best way which is recommended to classify the research methods within the field of education. Therefore, the selection of the method of investigation is imposed by the nature of the subject being investigated. In other words, it depends on the topic of the research, the aim to be reached, the sample put under investigation, as well as the data collected. By employing the quasi-experiment, the investigator is approaching the true experiment in which he has a control over what Campbell and Stanley (1963, cited in Cohen, Manion, and Morrison 2000, p. 216) refer to the “who to whom measurement” but lacks control over “the when and to whom exposure”. Under this condition, we see that the best way or method to do this work is a quasi-experimental design to achieve the aims set behind.

3.1.2 Description of the Sample

The participants of this study are chosen from the third year LMD learners of ESP. They are Urban Planning (Urbanism) students of Larbi Ben M’Hidi University, in the department of Techniques of Urban Management (Département de Gestion des Techniques Urbaines). Thirty of those students, who are already taking their ESP courses, are chosen randomly. As a first step, and after attending three sessions and observing the participants to know about their general vocabulary knowledge, thirty (30) of them were selected and assigned randomly to two groups of
fifteen (15), namely a control and experimental group. After selecting the students and dividing them into two groups, a teacher made a pre-test, to examine the student’s knowledge about their vocabulary, in a form of two exercises i.e., the first one includes the classification of some technical terms in accordance to their factors, while the second exercise includes a definition of some other technical terms.

3.1.3. Data Collection and Procedures

The used design for conducting this study is mainly a “quasi-experimental” design. We can say that it includes three phases namely: a pre-test, a period of treatment and an immediate post-test.

Now, let us display the schemata of the design of the provided experimentation which is as follows:

- **The experimental/ The control group**: pre-test, treatment, post-test
- **The experimental group**: Consists of 15 participants.
- **The control group**: Consists of 15 participants as well.

**The Pre-Test Phase:**

It was presented in a form of two written exercises. The first exercise includes the classification of twelve (12) technical vocabulary terms, in relation to the previous knowledge of the learners in their field of Techniques of Urban Management, see (Appendix1).

However, the second exercise they were asked to define seven (07) vocabulary terms, see (Appendix 1).

**The Treatment Period:**

After finishing the pre-test, each treatment session took a 45 minutes span. The experimental and control groups –during the remedial period- are exposed to study short passages, however; the members of the experimental group are going to be taught on the basis of TBA i.e. they are targeted to study the technical vocabulary terms with the use of tasks,
which is not the case with the control group. And the aim behind using TBA is to raise students motivation toward learning new vocabulary in terms of implementing new tasks namely: guessing from contexts, independent vocabulary learning, repeating and recycling a word,…etc.

According to what was noticed in the first period of treatment, students were motivated and the atmosphere in the class was enjoyable since they were allowed to interact with each other using the target language. About the second phase of treatment, it is said to be that, it was in the same form of the first period, i.e., students were asked to read short passage, and then they were asked to solve exercises concerned with explaining words belonging to the chosen passage. Also, they were asked to employ the words they have explained so far in sentences and reading them loudly, and the same thing in the third and fourth session. On the other hand, the control group was taught in the traditional way without integrating any new types of tasks, using the same content. And what was also noticed is that, students have shown a great desire for expressing the knowledge they have using the English language, what was totally missed in the beginning of the study.

**The Post Test Phase:**

The post-test is going to be in the same form as the pre-test as it has explained previously (Appendix2). Here, one should bear in mind that the achievement test is administered the same (the pre-test as the post-test) for nothing, but to see if there were any important discrepancies between the scores gained from the two tests or not.
3.2. Data Analyses and Discussion

3.2.1. Results of the pre-test and the post-test

Table 4: The Frequency of the Experimental and Control Groups’ Scores of technical vocabulary terms classification and definition:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Experimental Group</th>
<th>Control Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-test Frequency</td>
<td>Post-test Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4,5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6,5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7,5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13,5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2.2. Control Group Vs Experimental Group Scores on the Pre-test

Table (4) shows that the control group outscored the experimental group on the pre-test. The former with a mean $\bar{X}_c = 7.93$ (a score which is approximately near to the average 7.5/15 and the later with a mean $\bar{X}_E = 5.07$ (a score which is less than the average).

For the total 30 scores, we have as follows:

**Control group:**

\[ 9 \geq 7.5 \to 60 \% \geq 7.5 \]
\[ 6 < 7.5 \to 40\% < 7.5 \]

**Experimental group:**

\[ 3 \geq 7.5 \to 20\% \geq 7.5 \]
\[ 12 < 7.5 \to 80\% < 7.5 \]

From frequency polygon 1, we can deduce that the control group’s frequency polygon starts at 3 (which is the lowest score) and ends at 12 (which is the biggest score) with a peak at 9 (which is the most frequent score). On the other hand, the experimental group’s frequency polygon begins at 1 and ends at 10 with two peaks at 4 and 4.5. The most frequent scores of the control group are bounded by the scores; 5, 10 and 11; however, the experimental group’s most frequent scores are bounded by 4 and 4.5

3.2.3. Control Group Post-test Vs Control Group Pre-test

Frequency polygon 2 denotes that while pre-test control group scores have three peaks at 1, 4, 7 and 8, post-test scores have a peak at 5. Furthermore, the scores which are below the average in the pre-test are high frequent than those above the average which is mainly the case with the post-test.

For the total 15 scores, we have:

**Pre-test:**

\[ 9 \geq 7.5 \to 60 \% \geq 7.5 \]
\[ 6 < 7.5 \to 40\% < 7.5 \]

**Post-test:**

\[ 5 \geq 7.5 \to 33.33 \% \geq 7.5 \]
\[ 10 < 7.5 \to 66.67 \% < 7.5 \]
The control group recorded a post-test mean $\bar{X}_{po} = 6.93$ which is significantly lower than the pre-test mean $\bar{X}_{pr} = 7.93$. To diagnose the extent of improvement from pre-test to post-test, difference scores were calculated for each subject by subtracting the pre-test from the post-test score (table 5). The mean difference score is $\bar{d} = -1$. This means that the improvement in the learners’ ability to explain words related to the field of urban planning and to classify them correctly into categories between pre-and post-test (Figure 6). Since the control group did not show any improvement in the learning vocabulary items which were within the short passages, we can conclude that the treatment period (teaching vocabulary in a traditional way without including task-based approach) has no significant effect on subjects’ learning of technical vocabulary items.

**Table 5: Control Group’s Pre-test and Post-test Difference Scores of Word definition and classification**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Students</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>+1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>+0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>+1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>06.5</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>+0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>-3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>-4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2.4. Experimental Group Post-test Vs Experimental Group Pre-test

Table (6) and figure (7) denote that the experimental group’s scores have developed significantly between pre- and post-test. We can notice also that all the post-test scores are above the average whereas nearly all pre-test scores are below the average.

For the total 15 scores, we have:

**Pre-test:**

\[
3 \geq 7.5 \rightarrow 20 \% \geq 7.5
\]

\[
12 < 7.5 \rightarrow 80\% < 7.5
\]

**Post-test:**

\[
00 \geq 7.5 \rightarrow 00 \% \geq 7.5
\]

\[
15 < 7.5 \rightarrow 100 \% < 7.5
\]
**Table 6: The Experimental Group’s Pre-test, Post-test and Difference Scores of Words definition and classification**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Students</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>+11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>+11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>+09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>+8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>+11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>+09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>+7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>+10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>+05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>+09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>+09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>+06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>+3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>+10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>+08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \bar{X} = 05.07 \quad \bar{X} = 13.6 \quad \bar{d} = 8.4 \]

**Figure 7: Experimental group’s scores of word definition and classification**

![Graph showing pre-test, post-test, and difference scores for individual students.](image-url)
In addition, the experimental group’s pre-test frequency polygon starts at 1, and ends at 10 with two peaks at 4 and 4.5. However, the post-test frequency polygon begins at 12 and ends at 15 with a peak at 14 and this is what frequency polygon 3 shows.

Moreover, the experimental group recorded a post-test mean $\bar{X}_{po}=13.6$ which is higher than the pre-test mean $\bar{X}_{pr}=05.07$. The mean difference $\bar{d}=08.5$; it is extremely significant. Actually, these results denote that the subjects’ performance on the word definition and classification tasks was perfectly affected by the treatment period (the implementation of TBA).

To diagnose whether the differences between the experimental group’s pre-test scores and post-test scores have been affected by the manipulation of the independent variable namely using tasks (definition and classification) on learning technical vocabulary (which is our research hypothesis) or they have occurred due to chance (the null hypothesis), we followed a statistical test is known by “the paired-samples t-test”.

**3.2.4.1. The Paired-Samples t-test**

We apply the paired-sample t-test in the situations in which each participant contributes two test scores, and the participants belong to the same group. Chen (2005,p.32) argued that a common scenario in SLA research is a group of subjects with a pre- and a post-test and a treatment or intervention between the two tests; the research interest is to examine whether the treatment has any effect or not.

**3.2.4.2. Procedure for Applying a Paired-Samples t-test**

To test the null hypothesis that the difference between a sample group’s scores before and after intervention (a period of treatment) is likely to have been a chance finding, the following procedure is followed:
1. Calculate the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores for each participant by subtracting the pre-test from the post-test score. It is very crucial to distinguish positive and negative differences.

2. Calculate the mean difference, \( \bar{d} \).

3. Calculate the standard deviation of the differences, \( S_d \), and use it later to calculate the standard error of the mean difference, \( SE(\bar{d}) = \frac{S_d}{\sqrt{N}} \).

4. Calculate the t-statistic, which is given by the formula: \( t = \frac{\bar{d}}{SE(\bar{d})} \). Under the null hypothesis, this statistic follows a t-distribution at N-1 degrees of freedom.

5. Enter a table of the t-distribution at N-1 degrees of freedom, choose the level of significance required (normally \( p = 0.05 \)) and read the critical t-value.

6. If the calculated (observed) t-value exceeds the critical t-value, it can be said that the differences between the two tests’ scores are significant at that level of probability. As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected in favor of the research hypothesis.

Following the above mentioned procedure, a paired-samples t-test has been applied to compare the experimental group’s pre- and post-test scores.

**The Mean difference**

\[ \bar{d} = \frac{\Sigma d}{N} \] ; where \( \bar{d} \) = mean, \( d \) = difference scores, \( N \) = number of subjects, and \( \Sigma \) = sum

\( \bar{d} = 126/15 \)

\( \bar{d} = 8.4 \)

**The Standard Deviation of The Differences**

\[ S_d = \sqrt{sd^2} = \sqrt{\frac{\Sigma d^2}{N} - \bar{d}^2} \]

Where \( S \) = variance, and \( \Sigma d^2 \) = sum of the square difference scores
\[
S_d = \sqrt{\frac{1135}{15} - (8.4 \times 8.4)} = \sqrt{75.67 - 70.56} = \sqrt{5.10}
\]

\[S_d = 2.26\]

**Table 7: The Experimental Group’s Square Difference Scores of Words definition and classification Tasks.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Students</th>
<th>Difference scores d</th>
<th>Square difference (d^2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>+11</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>+11</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>+09</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>+8.5</td>
<td>72.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>+11</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>+09</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>+7.5</td>
<td>56.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>+10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>+05</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>+09</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>+09</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>+06</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>+3.5</td>
<td>12.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>+10.5</td>
<td>110.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>+06</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\sum d = 126)</td>
<td>(\sum d^2 = 1135)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The standard error of the mean difference

\[
SE(\bar{d}) = \frac{S_d}{\sqrt{N}}
\]

\[
SE(\bar{d}) = \frac{2.26}{\sqrt{15}} = \frac{2.26}{3.87}
\]

\[SE(\bar{d}) = 0.58\]

**The t-statistic**
\[ t_{N-1} = \frac{\bar{x}}{SE(d)} \]

\[ t_{20-1} = \frac{8.4}{0.58} \]

\[ t_{14} = 14.48 \]

Depending on the given table of critical values of \( t \) which provides us with the value our t-ratio should exceed to be statistically significant. The experimental group size is 15, which makes a degree of freedom (df = \( N-1 \)) of 14. This means that with this group size, any t value below the critical value would have occurred by chance alone. The level of probability we set for this study is \( p = 0.01 \); therefore the t critical value is 2.97. It is obvious that the observed t-value highly exceeds the critical t-value.

\[ t_{obs} > t_{crit} (5.31 > 2.97) \]

Therefore, we notice that the difference between the experimental group’s pre-test and post-test scores is high. This means that the obtained results were due to the manipulation of the independent variable and not due to chance. This allows us to reject the null hypothesis. We conclude that using TBA do bring a significant improvement in the learning the target technical vocabulary for ESP learners.

3.2.5. Experimental Group Vs Control Group on the Post-test

Table (1) and frequency polygon 4 clearly show that the experimental group got significantly higher scores than the control group. Note that the control group exceeded the experimental group on the level of the pre-test. The experimental group scored a post-test mean \( \bar{X}_E = 13.6 \) which is higher than that of the control group which is; \( \bar{X}_c = 6.93 \).

We can say that, while the control group’s post-test frequency polygon starts at 4.5 and ends at 11 with a peak at 5, the experimental group’s frequency polygon starts at 12 and ends at 15 with a peak at 14 which is extremely bigger than the controls’ peak.
In order to study the significance of the difference between the experimental and control groups’ post-test mean scores, we have applied the independent-samples t-test.

3.2.5.1. The Independent-Samples t-test

The independent-samples t-test is used to see if there is any statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups of the study mainly, an experimental group and a control group with different subjects in each or not.

Likewise the paired-samples t-test we already stated above, the independent-samples t-test reveals, with a very tiny error probability, the effects of the independent variable on the dependent variable. This t-test is presented by the following formula:

\[
t_{N_1+N_2-2} = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2 \sqrt{(N_1 + N_2 - 2)N_1N_2}}{\sqrt{(N_1S_1^2 + N_2S_2^2)(N_1 + N_2)}}
\]

The calculated t must exceed the tabulated t at a particular level of probability (the level we set for this study was \( p = 0.01 \)) to affirm the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable, and consequently reject the null hypothesis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Xx</th>
<th>individual score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(\bar{X}_n)</td>
<td>group mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(X^2)</td>
<td>square score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nx</td>
<td>number of subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\sum Xx) = sum of the individual scores</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\sum X^2) = sum of square scores</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sx</td>
<td>sample variance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Pre-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental group</th>
<th>Control group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$\sum X_1 = 76$</td>
<td>$\sum X_2 = 119$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\sum X_1^2 = 5776$</td>
<td>$\sum X_2^2 = 14161$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\bar{X}_1 = \frac{\sum X_1}{N_1}$</td>
<td>$\bar{X}_2 = \frac{\sum X_2}{N_2}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\bar{X}_1 = \frac{76}{15}$</td>
<td>$\bar{X}_2 = \frac{119}{15}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\bar{X}_1 = 5.07$</td>
<td>$\bar{X}_2 = 7.93$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Post-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental group</th>
<th>Control group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$\sum X_1 = 204$</td>
<td>$\sum X_2 = 104$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\sum X_1^2 = 2785.5$</td>
<td>$\sum X_2^2 = 779$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\bar{X}_1 = \frac{\sum X_1}{N_1} = \frac{204}{15}$</td>
<td>$\bar{X}_2 = \frac{\sum X_2}{N_2} = \frac{104}{15}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\bar{X}_1 = 13.6$</td>
<td>$\bar{X}_2 = 6.93$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### The sample variance

**Experimental group**

$$S_1^2 = \frac{\sum X_1^2}{N_1} - \bar{X}_1^2$$

$$S_1^2 = \frac{2785.5}{15} - 13.6 \times 13.6$$

$$S_1^2 = 185.7 - 184.96$$

$$S_1^2 = 0.74$$

**Control group**

$$S_2^2 = \frac{\sum X_2^2}{N_2} - \bar{X}_2^2$$

$$S_2^2 = \frac{779}{15} - 6.93 \times 6.93$$
Table 8: Square post-test scores of both groups on words definition and classification tasks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Experimental group’s scores $X_1$</th>
<th>Square scores $X_1^2$</th>
<th>Control group’s scores $X_2$</th>
<th>Square Scores $X_2^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>4,5</td>
<td>20,25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>6,5</td>
<td>42,25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>13,5</td>
<td>182.25</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
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<td>225</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>196</td>
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<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>6,5</td>
<td>42,25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>6,5</td>
<td>42,25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>13,5</td>
<td>182.25</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\sum X_1 = 204$</td>
<td>$\sum X_1^2 = 2785.5$</td>
<td>$\sum X_2 = 104$</td>
<td>$\sum X_2^2 = 779$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The t-value

\[ t_{N_1+N_2-2} = \frac{X_1 - X_2 \sqrt{(N_1+N_2-2)N_1N_2}}{\sqrt{(N_1S_1^2+N_2S_2^2)(N_1+N_2)}} \]

\[ t_{15+15-2} = \frac{13.6-6.93 \sqrt{(15+15-2)\times(15\times15)}}{\sqrt{(15\times0.74+15\times3.91)(15+15)}} \]

\[ t_{28} = \frac{6.67 \sqrt{28 \times 225}}{\sqrt{(11.1+58.65) \times 30}} \]
When entering a t-table at 28 degrees of freedom, we find a tabulated t-value of 6.40 at the 0.01 level of significance. It is obvious noted that the t observed is largely higher than the t critical.

\[ t_{obs} > t_{crit} (6.40 > 2.76) \]

Consequently, the difference between the two groups’ post-test means is highly significant. Therefore, \( H_0 \) is rejected, and \( H_1 \) is strongly adopted, so there is no probability that the observed mean difference occurred due to chance alone. That is to say, we have 100% of probability that it was due to the manipulation of the independent variable (the use of TBA).

We can deduce that the integration of tasks have a significant influence on the learners’ vocabulary learning.
GENERAL CONCLUSION

As it was discussed in the previous chapter, those ESP learners who have been taught vocabulary through task-based approach outperformed those learners who have been taught vocabulary through traditional approach. According to the given results it is clearly stated that, the null hypothesis i.e. there is no significant difference between teaching vocabulary through TBA and the traditional approach (translation) in ESP courses was rejected. This means that, teaching vocabulary through TBA did have a significant effect on the learner’s vocabulary learning. And the significant positive effect means that, there was absolute improvement or enhancement. Therefore, we can say that ESP learners benefited from TBA more than the traditional approach.

Summary of the study

The present research was an attempt to provide new evidence for the efficacy of using task-based approach to vocabulary learning improvement. The data were obtained through a pre-test and a post-test. Afterward, appropriate statistics were applied and the procedure of data analysis was explained. The results achieved in these subjects were discussed. In the following lines the major findings of the study are summarized.

The experiment

As a first step, the attendance of three sessions has taken place, to observe and to know about learners’ vocabulary knowledge. On the basis of this observation, learners were assigned to two groups, control and experimental, then a teacher administered a vocabulary pre-test. After that, the statistical analyses were done. As the findings show, the students of the experimental group performed remarkably better than those of the control group on the final vocabulary post-test. This implies that the better performance of the ESP learners in the
experimental group was probably due to raised motivation which was showed in a higher degree of openness to experience during the course of the study, we hope, will stimulate ESP teachers to alter classes from the traditional atmosphere to the more dynamic and communicative situations.

Implications of the study

- Theoretical implication

This study was emphasizing the effectiveness of the task-based approach on vocabulary learning of ESP students. The current research provided evidence that, the task-based language teaching is definitely more effective than the traditional approach in teaching vocabulary, and the student’s vocabulary improved substantially with the application of task-based instruction. In the ESP context, in which learners do not have any contact with native speakers of English, the focus of classroom teaching should be placed on changing the classroom practice from the traditional passive presentation of lectures to a more active group learning so that learners can be provided with more opportunities for target language use. The task-based approach seems to be the best methodology for teaching collaborative learning because it is quite interactive and follows some of the collaborative learning principles.

-Pedagogical implication

The findings of this research can have several implications in ESP, language methodology, materials development and teacher-training programs. As far as ESP is concerned, ESP learners can benefit better from task based teaching of vocabulary.

With regard to language teaching methodology, the findings of this study emphasize the role of task-based approach in teaching vocabulary. In fact, everything turns around tasks and task completion in this approach. In other words, providing the students with the appropriate
tasks for a better learning of vocabulary i.e. guessing from the context, fill in the gaps, and so on.

Concerning materials development, the new textbooks to be designed for ESP learners must be as communicative as possible. They must pay equal attention to all the four language skills and sub-skills especially vocabulary acquisition. They must be designed based on tasks. In fact, tasks must be building blocks for such books. The tasks used in the books should include both real-world and pedagogical tasks to provide students with opportunities of communication. The most important point is that, writers in designing tasks should invite the subject-matter professionals to cooperate with them. On the whole, ESP teachers, ESP writers and even subject matter specialists must motivate ESP learners to use language to learn it through various kinds of tasks.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further research

This study was an attempt to determine the effect of task-based approach challenging the use of the traditional approach in an ESP course. There were certain limitations of this study which needed to be understood:

The first limitation is concerned with the participants’ number. It was not that enough (too broad), which makes the generalization of these results a little bit difficult. In addition it would be more valid if the selection of the participants was not only limited to one particular university i.e. it is better if we involve other participants from other universities in similar cases (experiments) like the proposed one.

The second limitation was due to the textbook, which was primarily designed according to the traditional approach, so it was difficult for the researcher to create tasks.
With regard to the limitations of the study discussed above, suggestions for future studies can be as follows:

Due to the fact that this study involved three dimensions of language teaching and learning (task-based methodology, vocabulary and ESP), lots of suggestions can be given in each domain. However, task-based approach can be applied to teach other language skills and sub-skills to Urban Management ESP students. Task-based instruction of vocabulary can also be used to teach vocabulary to ESP learners of other domains, such as ESP learners of Medicine, Nursery, Humanities, etc.

In addition, task difficulty and its effect on ESP vocabulary learners can be a topic for further research as well. Lastly, longitudinal studies that examine the value of task-based approach within specific contexts need to be conducted, so that the developmental patterns of vocabulary acquisition within the TBA can be examined. In particular, its value in foreign language programs needs to be explored.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


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Appendix A

Pre-test

Task 1:

In the following table, classify the technical terms of Urban Planning according to their aspects:


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aesthetics</th>
<th>Safety and security</th>
<th>Slums</th>
<th>Decacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Task 2:

Define the following terms:

Urban = ........................................................................................................

Architecture = ..............................................................................................

Urban design = .............................................................................................

Strategic plans = ..........................................................................................

Neighborhood plans = ..................................................................................

Industrial city = ..........................................................................................

Urban renewal = ..........................................................................................
Appendix B

Post-test

Task 1:

In the following table, classify the technical terms of Urban Planning according to their aspects:

Environmental protection, gardening, urban canyon, brand and large cities, sustainable urban infrastructure, lands cape, hyper-tall urban environments, cycling paths, microclimate, Arco logy, Kowloon and central, district cooling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environmental planning</th>
<th>Scope</th>
<th>Light and Sound</th>
<th>Brand new master planned cities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Task 2:

Define the following terms:

Environmental = …………………………………………………………………………

Microclimate = ……………………………………………………………………………

Gardening = ……………………………………………………………………………...

Landscape = ……………………………………………………………………………...

Urban canyon = ……………………………………………………………………………

Cycling paths = ……………………………………………………………………………

Brand and new large cities = …………………………………………………………

Appendix C:

Treatment session 1

Text 1:

**Environmental factors**: Environmental planning

*Environmental protection* and conversation are of utmost importance to many planning systems across the world. Not only are the specific effects of development to be mitigated, but attempts are made to minimize the overall effect of development on the local and global environment. This is commonly done through the assessment of **sustainable urban infrastructure** and **microclimate**.
Appendix D:

Treatment session 2

Text 2:

Scope

In most advanced urban or village planning models, local context is critical. In many, gardening and other outdoor activities assume a central role in the daily life of citizens. Environmental planners focus now on smaller and larger systems of resource extraction and consumption, energy production, and waste disposal. A practice known as Arco logy seeks to unify the fields of ecology and architecture, using principles of landscape architecture to achieve a harmonious environment for all living things.
Appendix E:

Treatment session 3

Text 3:

Light and Sound

The urban canyon is a colloquial, non-scientific term referring to street space bordered by very high buildings. This type of environment may shade the sidewalk level from direct sunlight during most daylight hours. While an oft-decried phenomenon, it is rare expect in very dense, hyper-tall urban environments, such as those found in lower and Midtown Manhattan, Chicago’s Loop and Hong Kong’s Kowloon and central.
Appendix F:

Treatment session 4

Text 4:

**Brand new master planned cities**

In the 21st century, countries in Asia and the Middle-East have embarked on plans to build **brand new large cities**. Many of these new cities are built to use new technologies such as **District cooling** and automatic waste collection in GIF or **Personal Rapid Transit**. 

……..Saudi Arabia is building 5 new cities to control congestion and sprawl in existing cities. While India is building 7 new cities to provide space and facilities that missing in existing cities, such as **cycling paths**, parks, and public transport
Résumé

En raison de l'effet actif dans l'apprentissage Réalisée par T.B.A (Task-Basée-Approche) dans l'apprentissage de la vocabulaire notamment dans le domaine (ESP) en tant que facteur contribuant pour encourager et stimuler le désir des étudiants qui étudient l'anglais à des fins spéciales pour avancer dans l'apprentissage des langues étrangères et par la fourniture des conditions appropriées conformément à l'application de cette approche (TBA), ceci va certainement ouvrir la porte à tous les étudiants pour être un élément fondamental ayant un rôle efficace pour entrer dans l'atmosphère de la concurrence afin d'apprendre les langues étrangères, en particulier avec l'accélération du rythme de la recherche scientifique.

Dans ce sens, l'apprentissage de "vocabulaire" et son développement pour les étudiants (ESP) nécessite inévitablement l'intégration des technologies et de nouvelles stratégies comme "TBA" de sorte qu'elle soit capable de bénéficier du progrès et d'avancement dans le domaine de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche scientifique et avoir l’esprit de défi.

الملخص:

نظراً للتأثير الفعال الذي يقوم به النهج القائم على التمارين "تي-بي-آي" في تعلم مفردات اللغة لا سيما في مجال "إي-آس-بي" باعتباره عملاً مساعداً على تشجيع وتحفيز رغبة الطلبة الذين يدرسون اللغة الإنجليزية لأهداف خاصة للمضي قدماً في تعلم اللغات الأجنبية. ومن خلال توفير الشروط المناسبة المتماشية مع تطبيق هذا النهج "تي-بي-آي"، فإنه حتماً سيفتح المجال لجميع الطلبة لجميع الطلبة لأن يكونوا عنصراً أساسيًا ذو دور فعال في دخول جو المنافسة لتعليم اللغات الأجنبية، خاصة مع تزايد وتيرة البحث العلمي.

ومن هذا المنطلق فإن تعلم مفردات اللغة وتطويره بالنسبة لطلبة "إي-آس-بي" يتطلب حتماً إدماج تقنيات و استراتيجيات جديدة كـ "تي-بي-آي" بحيث تكون قادرة على الاستفادة من التقدم والرقي في مجال التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي والتحدي.