
**SUDANESE EFL UNIVERSITY INSTRUCTORS' PERSPECTIVES ABOUT USING
TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING IN ENHANCING EFL LEARNERS'
COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE: A CASE STUDY OF UNIVERSITY OF WEST
KORDUFAN**

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ABSTRACT: *The aim of this study is to investigate Sudanese EFL university instructors' perspectives about using task-based language teaching in enhancing EFL learners' communicative competence in the Faculty of Education, at West Kordufan University in Elneihud City in Sudan during the second semester of the academic year 2020-2021. Fifteen EFL university instructors are randomly selected as a sample of this study. To collect data, the study depends on a structured interview. The results of the study reveal that majority of the interviewed instructors believe that task-based language teaching enhances Sudanese EFL university learners' communicative competence to large extent because it enables students to work with their peers in pairs or groups and this enables them to feel more comfortable in using language more naturally than with their teachers. However, the participants do believe that they have experienced some difficulties in using task-based language teaching approach for example slow and low-proficient students do not get more opportunities to enhance better communicative competence because group working, discussions and presentations are dominated and overshadowed by proficient students. In addition to that, some students lack the sufficient lexical competence and the topical knowledge in English. The participants think that these difficulties have impact on the developing and enhancing of communicative competence of Sudanese EFL university learners to large extent. Finally, the study recommends that the learning tasks should address students' language needs and interests and the students should be grouped according to their levels of proficiency besides that teachers must simplify the language required to undertake the task and make it easier for the students.*

KEYWORDS: Sudanese, EFL instructors, perspectives, task-based language teaching, communicative competence.

INTRODUCTION

Attitudes towards language teaching have changed from the traditional grammar-translation and audio-lingual methods towards communicative language teaching (CLT) and task-based language teaching (TBLT), or sometimes referred to as task based instruction (TBI) (Nerlicki, 2011- cited in ,Le, V. Tuyen (2014) . According to Murat Hismanoglu, M. & Hismanoglu,S. task-based language teaching has become a significant topic in the field of second language acquisition in terms of fostering process-focused syllabi and devising communicative tasks to enhance learners' real language use. As a result, the last two decades have witnessed an increasing and extensive implementation of TBLT in the EFL classes around the world. To learn English better, Namaziandost, et.al (2019) as cited in. Aliia, Abdussalam, M. et al (2019) indicate that employing task-based instruction in language teaching is a successful method since it deals with how languages are learned. For the better use of English language as a medium of instruction, task-based instruction plays an important role. TBLT focuses on the learner's involvement in tasks. It tries to prepare efficient learners for successful handling of real-world performance and communication. For Skehan (1996: 22) in Shams Hosseini, H. and Rahbar,M. (2012) TBLT provides learners the opportunities to make use of lexical resources they have either from previous knowledge or the pre-task input. Through interactions or negotiation of meanings, students can eventually develop greater fluency; however, such approaches can lead to the use of "prefabricated chunks" in communication. In this regard, TBI enables learners to engage in situations similar to those found in the real world. That is, the aim of TBLT is to provide students with a natural context for language use. When language students work together to complete tasks, they have different opportunities to interact with each other. Researchers think that such interaction facilitates language acquisition as meaning is negotiated (Larsen-Freeman, 2003). Thus, the purpose of this paper is to investigate EFL university instructors' perspectives about the use of TBLT. Another purpose of this paper is to explore the challenges experienced by EFL university instructors when using TBLT.

Statement of the Problem:

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) is probably one of the most widely adopted teaching approaches in almost all language courses and programs .No doubt, TBLT is an effective tool to enhance EFL learners' communicative competence. However, task-based language teaching is neglected by many EFL university instructors and they neglect its role in enhancing EFL learners' communicative competence .On the basis of the researchers' observation, EFL university instructors at University of West Kordufan have experienced difficulties in the implementation of task-based teaching approach in the classroom context. Therefore, it is the main thrust of this paper to investigate the perspectives of EFL university instructors about using task-based language teaching in enhancing EFL learners' communicative competence at University of West Kordufan and to shed light on the difficulties facing EFL university instructors in using task-based language teaching.

Questions of the Study:

This study addresses the following questions:

- 1-What perspectives do Sudanese EFL university instructors hold towards using task-based language teaching?
- 2- How often do Sudanese EFL university instructors use task-based teaching approach inside the classroom?
3. To what extent does task-based language teaching enhance Sudanese EFL university learners' communicative competence?
- 4-What difficulties do Sudanese EFL university instructors experience in using task-based language teaching?
- 5-To what extent, do these difficulties impact the developing and enhancing of communicative competence of Sudanese EFL university learners?
- 6 What solutions would be recommended by the Sudanese EFL university instructors to overcome the potential difficulties in using task-based language teaching?

Hypotheses of the Study:

Based on the questions, the study hypothesizes that:

- 1-Sudanese EFL university instructors hold positive attitudes towards using task-based language teaching
- 2-Sudanese EFL university instructors always use the task-based teaching approach inside the classroom.
- 3- Task-based language teaching enhances EFL learners' communicative competence of Sudanese EFL university learners.
- 4-Sudanese EFL university instructors face some difficulties in the implementation of task-based language teaching.
- 5-These difficulties have negative impacts on the developing and enhancing of communicative competence of Sudanese EFL university learners.

Objectives of the Study:

The study aims at achieving the following objectives:

- 1- To investigate the perspectives of Sudanese EFL university instructors about using task-based language teaching.
- 2- To find out to what extent the Sudanese EFL university instructors use task-based language teaching approach.
- 3- To shed light on the impact of using task-based language teaching on the developing and enhancing of communicative competence of Sudanese EFL university learners.
- 4- To identify and analyse the difficulties facing Sudanese EFL university instructors in using task-based language teaching.
- 5- To shed light on the impact of these difficulties on developing and enhancing of the communicative competence of Sudanese EFL university learners.

6- To suggest practical solutions that can be adopted by Sudanese EFL university instructors to overcome these difficulties.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its attempt to investigate the perspectives of Sudanese EFL university instructors about using task-based language teaching. It also examines the challenges experienced by Sudanese EFL university instructors in using task-based language teaching. The study hopes to be of great importance to EFL university instructors and learners by shedding light on these challenges and their impact on improving communicative competence of EFL learners. Moreover, EFL university instructors and learners can get benefit from the results arrived at in this study by changing their teaching and learning strategies or methodologies and implementing them in classroom, and these may well lead to successful results. It is hoped that the findings of this study in a classroom context will broaden the insight of EFL university instructors into the issues of English language teaching in general and about using task-based language teaching approach in particular.

Limits of the Study:

The study is mainly devoted to investigate the perspectives of Sudanese EFL university instructors about using task-based language teaching in enhancing communicative competence of Sudanese EFL university learners at University of West Kordufan, Faculty of Education, Department of English language in the academic year 2020/2021 during the second semester. The population of this study covers all EFL teaching staff in the Department of English Language in the above-mentioned college. A structured interview is used as a tool for collecting data.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Background of task-based language teaching

Task-based language teaching (TBLT), also known as task-based instruction (TBI), focuses on the use of authentic language and on asking students to do meaningful tasks using the target language. Such tasks can include visiting a doctor, conducting an interview, or calling customer service for help. Assessment is primarily based on task outcome (in other words the appropriate completion of real-world tasks) rather than on accuracy of prescribed language forms. That is to say, the activity must reflect real life and learners' focus on meaning; learners are free to use any language they want. Playing a game, solving a problem or sharing information or experiences, can all be considered as relevant and authentic tasks. This makes TBLT especially popular for developing target language fluency and student confidence. As such, TBLT can be considered a branch of communicative language teaching (CLT).

Jeon & Hahn (2006), as cited in Rahimpour, M & Magsoudpour, M (2011), believe that the task-based view of language teaching, based on the constructivist theory of learning and communicative language teaching methodology, has evolved in response to some limitations of the traditional PPP approach, represented by the procedure of presentation, practice, and performance (Ellis, 2003;

Long & Crookes, 1991). Hence, it has the significant implication that language learning is a developmental process enhancing communication and social interaction rather than a product internalized by practicing language items, and that learners master the target language more powerfully when being exposed to meaningful task-based activities in a natural way.

The first person, who has applied TBLT to teaching programs and practice, as Rad ,N. Fatehi & Jafari,A.Mohammad (2013) argue, is Prabhu (Wang, 2006). Therefore; Prabhu is thought to be the originator of TBLT. Prabhu (1987) believes that students may learn more effectively when their minds are focused on the task, rather than on the language, they are using. In task-based teaching, the tasks are central to the learning activity. Prabhu (1987) defines task as ‘*an activity which requires learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought, and which allows teachers to control and regulate that process*’ (Van den Branden and others, 2006). According to this definition, reading a train timetable and deciding which train one should take to get to a certain destination on a given day is an appropriate classroom task (Richards and Rodgers, 2001- as cited in Rahimpour,M & Magsoudpour, M (2011). Besides Prabhu, Nunan (1989) acknowledges the special nature of classroom- based interaction defining a task as

"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, and in which the intention is to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form".

According to Rad ,N. Fatehi & Jafari,A.Mohammad (2013),Rahimpour (2007, 2008, 2009, 2010) claims that task-based language teaching creates a favorable condition for language development and consequently facilitates language acquisition. He further argues that the task in task-based language teaching is considered central to the whole instructional design process, from the identification of learner needs to the measurement of student achievement.

For Rahimpour , M & Magsoudpour, M (2011),task-based language teaching can make language learning in classrooms "closer to the natural route and may reach a higher rate of language acquisition because it provides learners with a clear communicative goal, interaction is needed to reach the goal, and comprehensive input can occur, and then language acquisition is facilitated" (Wang, 2006).

Definition of task-based language teaching (TBLT)

Task- Based Language Teaching (TBLT) refers to an approach based on the use of tasks as the core unit of planning and instruction in language teaching” – Richards and Rogers (2001; 223) .Task-based language learning, sometimes referred to as *Task-Based Instruction*, ‘makes the performance of meaningful tasks central to the learning process’ (Harmer, 2007; 71). Douglas, S. Roy & Kim ,M. (2011) define task-based language teaching as an approach to language teaching that provides opportunities for students to engage in the authentic use of the target language through tasks. As the principal component in TBLT, the task provides the main context and focus

for learning, and it encourages language use similar to the way language is used outside of the classroom. Students learn language and develop skills as they work toward completing the task, which motivates them to stretch their available language resources (Ellis, 2003a).

According to Cubillo, P. Córdoba and Brenes, C. Navas (2009), task-based language learning is an approach in which learners concentrate on meaning rather than form. That is, students carry out a group of communicative tasks instead of doing form-based discrete exercises. Students are expected to express their own ideas, either orally or in a written mode, about the topic of the lesson. These ideas should be based on the analysis of meaning derived from a communicative activity.

For Rad, N. Fatehi and Jafari, A. Mohammad (2013), TBLT is an approach to teaching a second / foreign language that seeks to engage learners' interactional authentic language use by having them perform a series of tasks. It aims to both enable learners to acquire new linguistic knowledge and systematize their existing knowledge (Ellis, 2003).

Principles of TBLT

Nunan (2004), as cited in LISTN 2015, Sholeh, M. Badrus (2020:3), proposes the following principles of task-based language instruction:

Principle 1: Scaffolding

- Students should get support from the lessons and materials. That is, lessons and materials should provide supporting frameworks within which the learning takes place. At the beginning of the learning process, learners should not be expected to produce language that has not been introduced either explicitly or implicitly.

Principle 2: Task dependency

- Every activity and task will build on the previous task. That is, within a lesson, one task should grow out of, and build upon, the ones that have gone before. Each task should exploit and build on the ones that have been carried out before, as learners are led step by step to the point where they are able to perform the final task.

Principle 3: Recycling

- Recycling language maximizes opportunities for learning and activates the 'organic' learning principle; language skills gradually "grow". Teachers should reintroduce the linguistic items in different environments so that students could see how language are used in different circumstances. The language recycling will maximize the learning opportunities

Principle 4: Active learning

- Learners learn best by actively using the language they are learning. They learn best through the constructive use of the language they are using. In other words, they learn by doing. Thus, most class time should be devoted to opportunities for learners to use the language as they

learn best through actively constructing their own knowledge rather than receiving it by their teacher.

Principle 5: Integration

- Learners should be taught in ways that make clear the relationships between linguistic form, communicative function and semantic meaning. That is, language should not be taught at the lexical or grammatical level only and should be integrated into a communicative function.

Principle 6: Reproduction to creation

- Learners should be encouraged to move from reproductive to creative language use. Students should not only learn and practice what was written for them, but they should also be able to use their imagination and creativity to solve real-world problems.

Principle 7: Reflection

- Learners should be given opportunities to reflect on what they have learned and how well they are doing.

Feez (1998:17), as cited in Gizem Korkmaz (2014), summarizes the key assumptions of task-based instruction as follows:

1. The focus is on process rather than product.
2. Basic elements are purposeful activities and tasks that emphasize communication and meaning.
3. Learners learn language by interacting communicatively and purposefully while engaged in the activities and tasks.
4. Activities and tasks can be either: those that learners might need to achieve in real life; or those that have pedagogical purpose specific to the classroom.
5. Activities and tasks of a task-based syllabus are sequenced according to difficulty.
6. The difficulty of a task depends on a range of factors including the previous experience of the learner, the complexity of the task, the language required to undertake the task, and the degree of support available.

According to Jasim, B. Yahya and Yousif, M, Tahseen (2012), Richards (2006:12) lists the basics of the TBA as follows:

1. Making real communication the focus of language teaching
2. Providing opportunities for learners to practise and develop both accuracy and fluency
3. Being tolerant of the learners' errors since there is evidence on building communicative competence
4. Linking all language skills together

Nunan (1991: 279), as cited in Yildiz, M and Senel, M (2017), defines the main characteristics of TBLT, which has an emphasis on tasks in teaching, as follows:

1. An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
2. The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.

3. The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only to language, but also on the learning process itself.
4. An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.
5. An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom.

The definition of Task:

The term 'task' is one of the key concepts in task-based learning and teaching. That is, the TBLT is based on the notion of "task". This notion has been viewed differently by different scholars and practitioners. For example, Long (1985:89) defines task as "*a piece of work undertaken for oneself or for others, freely or for some reward*". Breen (1987:23) comprehends task as "*a range of work plans*". According to Hung, N. Viet (2014), Ellis (2003:16) provides a composite definition in which he views the task as a work plan that requires learners to process language pragmatically in order to achieve an outcome that can be evaluated in terms of whether the correct or appropriate propositional content has been conveyed. To this end, it requires them to give primary attention to meaning and to make use of their own linguistic resources, although the design of the task may predispose them to choose particular forms. A task is intended to result in language use that bears a resemblance, direct or indirect, to the way language is used in the real world. Like other language activities, a task can engage productive or receptive, and oral or written skills, and also various cognitive processes.

Nunan (1989:10- as cited in Hismanoglu,M & Hismanoglu,S (2011) states that task is "*a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form*". Lee (2000) , as cited in Rad ,N. Fatehi & Jafari,A.Mohammad (2013)) defines task as; (1) a classroom activity or exercise that has an objective obtainable only by the interaction among participants, a mechanism for structuring and sequencing interaction, and a focus on meaning exchange; (2) a language learning endeavor that requires learners to comprehend, manipulate, and /or produce the target language as they perform some set of work plans (Van den Branden and others, 2006). Willis, J. (1996: 53-) stresses that task is "*a goal-oriented activity in which learners use language to achieve a real outcome*".

In second language education, a task is defined as an activity that focuses on meaning in which the learners engage using the target language to achieve a specific goal (Bygate, 2016). Nunan (1989:10), however, defines a task as a '*classroom activity which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form.*' Skehan (1996) defines a task as an activity in which meaning is primary, involves a problem to be solved and an outcome to be evaluated.

Despite being various by nature, Hismanoglu,M & Hismanoglu,S (2011) think that these definitions of task have some common points. A classroom task is an activity having a particular

goal and it contains communicative language use in the process. Because task has a certain relationship with the extralinguistic world, it goes beyond the common classroom exercise. The type of discourse emerging from task is aimed to be similar to the one that emerges naturally in the real world (Ellis, 2000).

Characteristics of Tasks:

Richards and Rodgers (2001) state that tasks are said to improve learners' motivation and therefore promote learning. This is because they require the learners to use authentic language, they have well-defined dimensions and closure, they are varied in format and operation, and they involve partnership and collaboration.

For Willis & Willis (2009), as cited in Hung, N. Veit (2014), a task has a number of defining characteristics, among them: Does it engage the learners' interest? Is there a primary focus on meaning? Is success measured in terms of non-linguistic outcome rather than accurate use of language forms? And does it relate to real world activities? The more confidently we can answer yes to each of these questions the more task-like the activity (p.4).

Ellis (2009: 223), as cited in LISTN 2015, suggests that for "a language-teaching activity to be a 'task' it must satisfy the following criteria:

1. The primary focus should be on 'meaning' (by which is meant that learners should be mainly concerned with processing the semantic and pragmatic meaning of utterances).
2. There should be some kind of 'gap' (i.e. a need to convey information, to express an opinion or to infer meaning). Prabhu identified these as information gap, reasoning gap, and opinion gap.
3. Learners should largely have to rely on their own resources (linguistic and non-linguistic) in order to complete the activity.
4. A task has a clearly defined, non-linguistic outcome. That is to say, there is a clearly defined outcome other than the use of language (i.e. the language serves as the means for achieving the outcome, not as an end in its own right).

According to Hung, N.Viet (2014), Skehan (1996), puts forward four key characteristics of a task in a pedagogical aspect:

- (1) Meaning is primary,
- (2) There is some sort of relationship to comparable real-world activities,
- (3) Task completion has some priority, and
- (4) The assessment of the task is in terms of outcome.

Types of Tasks

N. S. Prabhu (1987) classifies tasks into three main categories as follows: information-gap, reasoning-gap, and opinion-gap.

1. Information-gap activity:

This involves a transfer of given information from one person to another – or from one form to another, or from one place to another – generally calling for the decoding or encoding of information from or into language. One example is pair work in which each member of the pair has a part of the total information (for example an incomplete picture) and attempts to convey it verbally to the other. Another example is completing a tabular representation with information available in a given piece of text.

2. Reasoning-gap activity:

This involves deriving some new information from given information through processes of inference, deduction, practical reasoning, or a perception of relationships or patterns. One example is working out a teacher's timetable on the basis of given class timetables. Another is deciding what course of action is best (for example cheapest or quickest) for a given purpose and within given constraints.

3-Opinion-gap activity,

This involves identifying and articulating a personal preference, feeling, or attitude in response to a given situation. One example is story completion; another is taking part in the discussion of a social issue.

Willis (1996), as cited in Gizem Korkmaz (2014), proposes six task types built on more or less traditional knowledge hierarchies. She labels her task examples as follows:

1. Listing: It may seem unimaginative, but in reality, it promotes a lot of talk among learners. The processes involved are: brainstorming and fact finding. The outcome is a completed task or just a mind map.
2. Ordering and sorting: These tasks involve four main processes: sequencing items, actions and events, ranking items, categorizing items, and classifying items.
3. Comparing: These tasks involve comparing information from different resources or versions. The purpose here is to identify common points or differences. The processes involved are: matching, finding similarities and finding differences.
4. Problem solving: These kinds of tasks are demanding and challenging as they require intellectual and reasoning power.
5. Sharing personal experiences: these tasks encourage learners to talk more freely about themselves and share their experiences with others.
6. Creative tasks: These are often called projects and involve pairs or groups of learners in some kind of creative work. They also have more stages than other tasks have.

They involve the combination of other task types. Here, cooperation skills and team-work are important to achieve the tasks given. (Willis, 1996). Murcia (2001:62) classifies the tasks used in the classroom into: reproductive and creative. A reproductive task is one in which the learner is reproducing the language following a model provided by a teacher, textbook, tape etc. Creative tasks, on the other hand, are less predictable. Learners are expected to assemble the words and structures they have already learned in new and unpredictable ways, yet based on the opportunities

provided to the learners to practise various features of the target language . According to Gizem Korkmaz (2014), Pica, Kanagy, and Falodun (1993:19) classify tasks according to the type of interaction that occurs in task accomplishment and give the following classification:

1. Jigsaw tasks: These involve learners combining different pieces of information to form a whole.
2. Information-gap tasks: One student or group of students has one set of information and another student or group has a complementary set of information. They must negotiate and find out what the other party's information is in order to complete an activity.
3. Problem-solving tasks: Students are given a problem and a set of information. They must arrive at a solution to the problem. There is generally a single resolution of the outcome.
4. Decision-making tasks: Students are given a problem for which there are a number of possible outcomes and they must choose one through negotiation and discussion.
5. Opinion exchange tasks: Learners engage in discussion and exchange of ideas. They do not need to reach agreement.

6.

Ellis (2003:12) distinguishes two main task types: focused and unfocused . A focused task is an activity that is particularly designed to let learners' attention unconsciously go to some specific linguistic forms when processing either input or output; while an unfocused task is designed to encourage comprehension and production of the target language for the purpose of communication. Rather than manipulation of specific forms, unfocused tasks involve topics drawn from real life situations or from the academic curricula that the learners are studying.

Frameworks for TBLT

In task-based learning, the tasks are central to the learning activity. Originally developed by N. Prabhu in Bangalore, southern India, it is based on the belief that students may learn more effectively when their minds are focused on the task, rather than on the language they are using. There have been many task-based TBL models for class lessons. For example, Prabhu who is considered the first language educator launching task-based approach proposes a model of three stages in his work published in 1987. These three stages include (a) pre-task (preparatory), (b) task (meaning-focused, interactive process), (c) post-task (discussion - attending to form). This original proposal was then inherited by Willis (1996); she made a rigorous work that have affected very much to this field in literature. Jane Willis (1996a, 1996b, 1998, 2001, 2007, 2009) designed precisely and approved the framework for TBLT, which was then advocated by many other writers (Richards Frost, 2006;) .However, in her book "*A Framework for Task-Based Learning*", Jane Willis (1996), suggests a model for the use of TBLT in the classroom. As can be seen from Table 2, as cited in Bonces,R. Mónica & Bonces,R. Jeisson (2010), this model is typically based on the following three stages:

The pre-task (introduction to topic and task)

During this stage the teacher introduces and defines the topic and the learners engage in activities that either helps them to recall words and phrases that will be useful during the performance of the main task or to learn new words and phrases that are essential to the task.

Task cycle (includes actual task, planning, and report)

Here the learners perform the task (typically a reading or listening exercise or a problem-solving exercise) in pairs or small groups. They then prepare a report for the whole class on how they did the task and what conclusions they reached

Language Focus and Feedback (final analysis and additional practice). Finally, the learners present their findings to the class in spoken or written form. The final stage is the language focus stage, during which specific language features from the task are highlighted and worked on. Feedback on the learners' performance at the reporting stage may also be appropriate at this point.

Table 2. Task-based lesson plan model (Willis, 1996, p. 38)

Pre-task		
Introduction to topic and tasks		
Teacher explores the topic with the class, highlights useful words and phrases. Learners may be exposed to examples.		
Task cycle		
Task	Planning	Report
Students do the task in pairs or small groups. Teacher monitors; mistakes do not matter.	Students prepare to report. Accuracy is important, so the teacher stands by and gives advice.	Students exchange or present report. Teacher listens and then comments.
Language focus		
Analysis		Practice
Students examine then discuss.		Teacher conducts practice of new words.

Yildiz, M & Senel, M (2017) think that in a course planned according to the standards of the TBLT, there should be at least three stages. These stages help the teacher to plan the teaching process more effectively and give the teacher a chance to control the progress of the course.

The pre-task phase introduces the class to the topic and the task, activating topic-related words and phrases. This phase is usually the shortest stage in the framework. Pre-task activities should actively involve all learners, give them relevant exposure, and, above all, create interesting doing a task on this topic (Willis, 1996:43). In the pre task stage learners remember their old knowledge

which helps them to perform the task cycle stage successfully “*The purpose of the pre-task phase is to prepare students to perform the task in ways that will promote acquisition*” (Ellis, 2003:244). For Willis (1996:43-44) pre-task stage can include the following language activities:

- Classifying words and phrases
- Odd one out
- Memory challenge
- Brainstorming and mind-maps
- Thinking of questions to ask
- Teacher recounting a similar experience

Gizem Korkmaz (2014) believes that the task cycle offers learners the chance to use whatever language they already know in order to carry out the task, and then to improve the language, under teacher guidance, while planning their reports of the task. In the task stage the students complete the task in pairs and the teacher listens to the dialogues. Then the teacher helps to correct the completed tasks in oral or written form. One of the pairs performs their dialogue in front of the class and once the task has been completed the students will hear the native speaking teachers repeat the same dialogue so they can compare it with their own.

Concerning the post task stage, Willis & Willis (2001:178), as cited in Yildiz ,M & Senel,M (2017) call this stage as language focus. They analyze the post task phase under two different titles as language focus and language practice. On language focus stage, students try to understand the usage of the language and the rules of the target language. At this stage, students have the knowledge about some special usage and the exact use of language functions. On language practice stage, a wide variety of different exercises can be studied to strengthen the understanding of the learners. That is, teacher conducts practice activities as needed, based on the language analysis work already on the board, or using examples from the text or transcript. Practice activities can include: choral repetition, memory challenge games, sentence completion, matching the past tense verbs, dictionary reference. (Willis & Willis, 1996:57-58).

Skehan (1996:54) , in Arthur Huber (2019)), outlines four methodological stages for implementing tasks in a slightly different pattern. Each of his stages consists of a goal and typical technique. These four stages can be explained as follows:

- 1- Pre-emptive work: This involves planning and providing a language foundation from which to advance to actual tasks that do not overwhelm a learner’s cognitive load.
- 2-The execution of that task: Here he also underscores the importance of managing the level of difficulty to properly suit the students’ levels. Again, this harkens back to his idea that a learner’s cognitive load should not be burdened in the process of language learning.
- 3-Post 1: there is a public performance, initial analysis and encouragement/direction to promote accuracy.

4-Post 2: This concerns itself with linking back to original task goals as well as to other previous tasks, a task repetition, a further analysis, and a final synthesis of everything presented.

Differences between task-based lessons and traditional lessons

This part sheds light on the differences between task based language teaching (TBLT) and traditional teacher-led presentation-practice-production lessons (PPP). Widodo, 2006) as cited in Hellström, R. (2016) states that one important difference between TBLT and a PPP is that, TBLT is inductive and the PPP method is deductive. The main features of a deductive approach are that it is teacher centered and consequently straightforward in the sense that there is limited room for interpretation for the learner. An inductive approach values student interaction and activates the learners. It is more time consuming and there is a risk (with inductive teaching) that the student does not acquire the grammar implicitly; hence the student may fall behind in development.

Gramley, S. and Mehrtens, H. (2017) compare a traditional grammar lesson and a TBLT lesson by indicating that in a traditional grammar lesson, the teacher introduces a structure by explaining rules and providing examples; students practice the rules through guided exercises; they are then expected to produce the structure in writing and speech whereas, in TBLT lesson the students must use the target language to collaborate and complete tasks with specific outcomes.

Ducker, N. (2012) compares the phases of the most common approach to a synthetic style of teaching –PPP – as described by Samuda and Bygate (2008), – with those of a popular TBI framework (Willis, 1996). The former, traditional approach as embodied in grammar-translation and audiolingualism as noted by Littlewood (2007). In these traditional style classrooms, a cycle of Presentation, Practice, and Production (PPP) is used where learning usually follows these steps:

- The teacher presents (P1) the grammar to be learned
- P1 is followed by controlled, and gradually less controlled, practice (P2) of the grammar
- The cycle is completed by students producing (P3) the teacher-selected target language (Samuda and Bygate, 2008, p. 51)

In such a cycle the centre of focus is necessarily the teacher and will, by nature, encourage a focus on the form of language (e.g., grammar).

Ducker, N. (2012) identifies the major differences between TBI and traditional learning in the following table :

Table 3: Comparison of methodology

Aspect	TBLT	Traditional Learning
Focus of learning	Meaning	Form (grammar etc...)
Language input	Students generate language	Teacher generate language and rules of language
Learning content	Driven by student needs	Pre-determined by teacher
Learning action	Implicit learning by student deduction	Explicit learning by teacher instruction
Description of language	Holistic “chunks” of natural language	Discreet segments of synthesized language
Learning activity	Tasks to practice whole integrated skills	Exercises to practice segments of language

Rozati ,S.Mahdi(2014) also shows the major differences between task based and traditional approaches in the following table:

Table 4: Differences between task -based approach and traditional approach

Task based Approach	Traditional approaches
Focus on form is unintentional	Focus on form is deliberate
Communicative tasks are centred.	Communicative tasks are not mainly considered
New language is confronted unintentional during tasks.	New language is intentionally taught.
There is little or no focus on specific language forms	There is remarkable focus on specific language forms.
Lessons are mainly learner-centred.	Lessons are mainly teacher-led.

Strengths of TBET

The benefits and advantages of TBLT have been viewed and described in the literature by many linguists and practitioners. For example, For Nunan (2004, as cited in Douglas, S. Roy & Kim, M. (2011), TBLT is beneficial because students learn language by communicating interactively while engaging in meaningful tasks. Nunan further feels that TBLT is relevant to students’ needs and interests, as it stimulates language learning and skills development necessary for completing tasks that students may encounter outside the classroom. Ritchie (2003), cited in Hosseini, H. Shams and Rahbar,M. (2012) , sees that TBET is better than more traditional approaches because learners are exposed to richer language, namely the comprehensible input. It is believed that “language acquisition is more creative and dynamic than simple imprinting of target language utterances” (p. 117). The Task-based lesson, with its richer input and opportunities for analysis of texts, allows learners to notice what they want, need, or are ready to learn – features of discourse and lexis as well as aspects of grammar. It is also pointed out that such rich input enhances incidental learning. Moreover, Ellis (2003a) further emphasizes that TBLT is flexible enough to fit into different curricula and different teaching contexts. It can also be used to different degrees. Individual tasks can support a course, or tasks can build an entire program. In addition to that, Bhandari, L. Prasad (2020) states that TBLT compels even the shy students to work and learn from each other in

pairs and groups without any hesitation so that they can improve their independence in learning. Ganta (2012), as cited in Bhandari, L. Prasad (2020), believes that TBLT offers opportunities to students to interact spontaneously with peers in the target language and helps them help them remove hesitation and fear. Also, the students learn to take responsibility for their tasks since the teacher is not available all the time, however, s/he will be helping them if they do not find the way. This helps them take the risk as well in learning. For Hosseini, H. Shams and Rahbar, M. (2012), the strength of TBET is that it provides learners the opportunities to make use of lexical resources they have either from previous knowledge or the pre-task input. Through interactions or negotiation of meanings, students can eventually develop greater fluency; however, such approaches can lead to the use of “prefabricated chunks” (Skehan, 1996b, p. 22) in communication. Despite having some disadvantages which may include some students’ negligence towards active participation, and dominance of the fast learners over slow learners during the task completion, as Bhandari, L. Prasad (2020) sees, TBLT offers various advantages. For instance, Lambert (2019) states that TBLT is a process that takes place in line with learners’ internal syllabuses, resources, and experience. Language tasks offer students opportunities to active interaction in the subject matter in pairs or groups to discuss an authentic agenda, negotiate and come up with the best possible solutions to the problems. This helps them develop communicative skills along with enhancing understanding content knowledge.

Besides being adaptable, task-based language teaching is a student-centred approach to teaching (Van den Branden, 2012). Douglas, S. Roy & Kim, M. (2011) believe that students communicate naturally in situations they may experience outside of the classroom with the language that is closely connected to them. In more traditional approaches, the contexts may seem artificial to the students because they were created for language practice and not for the students’ needs. In TBLT, the language explored arises from the students’ needs, and the students’ attention is drawn to form as the task unfolds (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). These needs, and not the teacher or textbook, direct the lesson (Hyland, 2006). Students can feel satisfied that their individual needs are being met and that their opinions or ideas are being heard. TBLT encourages input from students to the teacher about how the learning environment should evolve. Accordingly, it is an active approach to language learning (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011) that is highly motivating and improves student confidence (Van den Branden, 2012).

Another important advantage mentioned by Bhandari, L. Prasad (2020) is that TBLT approach enhances collaborative learning in students in that they learn to accomplish tasks helping each other, correcting each other’s errors, and improving their communication skills along with the completion of the task accomplishment

According to Gizem Korkmaz (2014), Willis (1996) states that from the learner’s position, doing a task in pairs or a group has a number of advantages as follows:

- It gives learners confidence to try out whatever language they know, or think they know, in the relative privacy of a pair or small group, without fear of being corrected in front of the class.

- It gives learners experience of spontaneous interaction, which involves composing what they want to say in real time, formulating phrases and units of meaning, while listening to what is being said.
- It gives learners a chance to benefit from noticing how others express similar meanings. Research shows they are more likely to provide corrective feedback to each other (when encouraged to do so) than adopt each other's errors.
- It gives all learners chances to practice negotiating turns to speak, initiating as well as responding to questions, and reacting to other's contributions (whereas in teacher-led interaction, they only have a responding role).
- It engages learners in using language purposefully and cooperatively, concentrating on building meaning, and not just using language for display purposes.
- It makes learners participate in a completed interaction, not just one-off sentences. Negotiating openings and closings, new stages or changes of direction are their responsibility. It is likely that discourse skills such as these can only be acquired through interaction.

Weaknesses and Critique of TBLT

TBLT has been critiqued in the literature. For example, Seedhouse (1999), as cited in Douglas, S. Roy & Kim, M. (2011) has shown in studies that there is "a general tendency in TBLT for students to minimize the volume of language used and to produce only that which is necessary to accomplish the task" (p. 152). In other words, depending on the task and how it has been set up, verbal interactions can be short and simple. It has also been postulated that TBLT develops fluency at the expense of accuracy and relies on lexis (Skehan, 1996).

Furthermore, Carless (2004), as cited in Douglas, S. Roy & Kim, M. (2011), found that students developed strategies to complete tasks quickly, taking shortcuts in their language use and not fully engaging in the learning process. He points out that this problem is related to the design of the tasks which, from the students' perspective, may not require interaction or use of the target language to complete (Carless, 2004).

Another drawback associated with TBLT is that it may be difficult to implement in differing teaching contexts (Ellis, 2009). TBLT appears to be an approach that works well with students who are willing to take risks in their learning (Hyland, K 2006), but may not be preferred by students who are familiar with more traditional approaches that involve direct grammar teaching and a structured curriculum (Mann, 2006).

Misunderstandings and misconceptions surrounding TBLT have also been reported in the literature (Ellis, 2009). For Douglas, S. Roy & Kim, M. (2011), the variety of definitions of task—that is, what is or is not a task, and what activities it does or does not include—creates a feeling of uncertainty in teachers. This may be another reason why teachers are skeptical about TBLT and whether or not their students are actually progressing in their language abilities.

One of the most remarkable shortcomings according to Hosseini, H Shams and Rahbar, M. (2012) is that this approach may lead to the use of non-linguistic strategies in student interactions. They may not pay attention to form or vocabulary as long as they can express their meanings using chunks of words or body language or relying on background knowledge

For Douglas, S. Roy & Kim, M. (2011), assessment is another concern in TBLT. Pica (2008) says *“the label ‘task’ is applied to measures of L2 proficiency that are essentially communicative activities rather than tasks, which have a goal outside of language”* (p. 78). The doing of the task puts the students in an environment where linguistic and communicative demands are put on them, but these may not be part of the task. This is confusing for the teacher who does not know what or how to assess students. Norris, Brown, Hudson, and Yoshioka (1998) argue that *“success or failure in the outcome of the task, because they are performances, must usually be rated by qualified judges”* (as cited in Nunan, 2004, p. 145).

Although it has produced very positive results in certain contexts (e.g. small class sizes of immigrant children), like every method that has preceded it, Olenka S.E. Bilash sees that TBLT is also revealing its weaknesses. For example, Broady (2006) notes that TBLT may not provide sufficient "Interaction Opportunities." Bruton (2005) identifies other concerns:

- There is no acquisition of new grammar or vocabulary features
- Everything is left to the teacher
- Not all students are or will be motivated by TBLT
- Some students need more guidance and will not or cannot ‘notice’ language forms (grammar) or other elements of accuracy
- Students typically translate and use a lot of their L1 rather than the target language in completing the tasks.

Teacher's Roles in a TBLT Lesson

For Bonces,R. Mónica & Bonces,R. Jeisson (2010), teacher and students' roles change within a task-based approach. TBL presents learning and teaching as collaborative work. Classes are student-centered. Teachers address students' needs and interests by becoming facilitators. According to Willis and Willis (2007),as cited in Bonces,R. Mónica & Bonces, R. Jeisson (2010), teachers who engage in Task-Based Learning promote real language use; when doing so, they become leaders and organizers of discussion, managers of group or pair work, motivators to engage students in performing a task and language experts to provide language feedback when needed. The main issues here are the degrees to which the teacher is responsible for content. The role of the students is far from being one of the passive recipients of comprehensible input; students are now seen to take the leading role in their own learning.

The role of the language teacher in a TBLT lesson is to facilitate the learners' learning by getting them to engage them with a variety of meaningful tasks. The teacher first analyzes his or her students' needs, abilities, and interests, and then chooses the tasks. Richards & Rodgers (2002), cited in Bhandari, L. Prasad (2020) , suggest three additional roles of a teacher- "*selecting and sequencing of tasks, preparing learners for tasks, and consciousness-raising*". He or she selects appropriate tasks that best fit the learners' needs and sequence them according to their difficulty level. Then s/he engages them in some pre-tasks which include the introduction of the topic, useful vocabulary, and instructions. The tasks are meaningful and relevant so that the students see the reason for doing it and can see how the task relates to possible situations in their lives outside the classroom (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Finally, the teacher engages the students with the task that they exploit the text to come up with the desired outcomes. In the meantime, he or she monitors their performance and intervenes when necessary.

For Gizem Korkmaz (2014) , the part the teacher plays during each component of the task framework also varies according to its aim. At the end of the framework, where the focus turns to language form, the teacher acts as 'language guide'

In a broader sense, the teacher is also the course guide, explaining to learners the overall objectives of the course and how the components of the task framework can achieve these. A summing up of what they have achieved during a lesson, or after a series of lessons, can help learners' motivation. (Willis, 1996:40-41).

Learner's Roles in a TBLT Lesson

Bhandari, L. Prasad (2020) states that since TBLT employs a learner-centred teaching approach, the role of learners in the planning and implementation of the curriculum and its evaluation is crucial. The central role of the learners in task-based language teaching is to complete the task appropriately. Other roles include group participation, monitoring, and risk-taker and innovator (Richards & Rodgers, 2002). The students either complete the task alone or actively participate in pairs, groups or the whole class activity to learn language through meaningful communication. In addition to active participation, the students help and monitor each other's work during task completion.

Van den Branden (2006), as cited in Bonces,R. Mónica & Bonces,R. Jeisson (2010), agrees with the fact that task-based lessons are student-centered, which means students take the main part in the learning process. Learners are autonomous to negotiate course content or to choose linguistic forms when performing a task. Negotiation is done by providing options for the learners; for example, the teacher may suggest a series of topics and students decide which one to begin with. Learners are also group participants. Many of the tasks are done in pairs or groups which will require adaptation for those students used to working individually or those used to whole class instruction. Another role for learners is the one of risk takers. Students constantly face challenges that involve the use of the target language. Students need to make the most of every opportunity to develop language while performing the task. Richards and Rodgers (2004) say that both teachers and learners in Task-Based Learning are responsible for the development of classroom interaction.

A Review of Some Previous Studies

This part sheds light on some previous studies that have investigated task-based language teaching approach from different aspects .For example, Abubaker, S. (2017) investigates the effect of the communicative task-based instruction on developing students' oral communication skills among the Sudanese university EFL first year-students in College of Languages, Sudan University for Science and Technology. The researcher employs three tools for collecting data: a questionnaire which is administered to the teachers, pre-test and post-test which is administered to students, and observation checklist which is administered to both teachers and students. The study applies descriptive and analytical methods qualitative and quantitative information. The sample size of the study consists of (33) teachers who are selected randomly from Sudan university teaching staff, and (30) students who are selected randomly from students of the first year, College of Languages, Sudan University for Science and Technology. The results of this study reveal that using communicative task-based instruction has come out with good quality learning outcomes and highly developed students' oral communication skills because it includes different tasks, techniques and activities. The study ends with some recommendation and suggestions for further studies.

Le, V. Tuyen (2014) explores the factors that affect English as a foreign language teachers' implementation of task-based language teaching at the tertiary level through the use of two instruments: "focus-groups" with five experienced EFL teachers and interviews with ten individual teachers at five universities in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. The findings reveal that factors affecting teachers' implementation of TBLT include external factors such as time allocation, testing, students' motivation and English proficiency and textbooks, and internal factors such as teachers' experience, knowledge about TBLT, English proficiency, and ability to use technology. The findings of the study provide EFL curriculum designers and teachers with both theoretical and practical implications in the implementation of TBLT at the tertiary level in Vietnam.

Elmahdi, Omer E. Hago (2016) investigates the extent to which task-based instruction affecting EFL learners' performance. This study reflects on implementing task-based instruction and the principles for implementation by drawing a framework for implementation, and factors affecting implementation of TBI. The study recommends that teaching instruction should be given more attention in EFL classes in

the light of using task-based approach. The researcher suggests that further research is needed to explore more in the effectiveness of task-based programs on EFL learner's performance as well as its fluency. Hasan , Ali, A. A. (2014) investigates the effect of a task – based learning program in teaching English on the secondary school students' oral English performance. To achieve this objective, a task based program is constructed to teach two units from the second year secondary school textbook. An oral performance test accompanied by an assessment rubric is administered. Two groups of the second year secondary students are selected for experimentation. Twenty three students representing the experimental group studied two units utilizing the task based program while twenty one students representing the control group studied the same units following the Teacher's Guide. Data are analyzed. Results reveal that there are statistically significant differences between mean scores of the experimental and the control group subjects in both one way monologue and two way dialogue tests favoring the experimental group. Results also show statistically significant differences between mean scores of the experimental group subjects in one way monologue and two way dialogue tests favoring the one way monologue test. These results support the effectiveness of utilizing task based learning in teaching English as a foreign language.

Al-Tamimi, Nasser ,O et.al (2020) explore Yemeni EFL students' perceived problems of speaking and enhancing their speaking performance using task-based instruction strategy. The sample consists of 20 first-year college students at Socotra Faculty of Education, Hadhramout University, Yemen, in the academic year of 2018-2019. The findings reveal that students face many speaking problems pertaining to knowledge of phonology, vocabulary, grammar and problems of sustaining the oral interaction, as well as psychology -related problems. The analysis of data collected, using paired sample t-test, indicates a significant improvement has taken place in students' speaking skill compared to the pre-test and the post-test performance with t-value of 5.349 and p. value =.000,<. 0.005, with effect size of (ES = .53). Based on the findings, the study recommends that EFL teachers should focus on the problems reported by students whenever they want to develop their students' communicative competence.

In their study entitled ‘*The Impact of Task-based Language Teaching on ESP Learners' Productive Skills*’, Khatib, M & Dehghankar, A (2018) investigate the impact of task-based teaching on ESP learners' speaking and writing. Furthermore, this study explores the ESP learners' and instructors' attitudes toward the nature of program and their perceived needs of tasks to be accomplished in the course. To fulfill this aim, 60 ESP students majoring in Law in two different classes at Allameh Tabataba'i University, Iran, and ten ESP instructors are selected as the participants of the study. Accordingly, the students in one of the two classes received a one-semester long instruction based on the principles of TBLT as the experimental group, while the students in the other class are taught according to the content of the textbook developed for such courses. After the instruction is over, the students are given a set of standardized and teacher-made tests. The results of the data analysis indicate that the experimental group showed a significant difference in terms of improvement in acquiring productive skills. It is also revealed that there are significant differences between the participants' attitudes regarding the nature of the course and their perceived needs of tasks.

The present study places itself as an extension of and in line with some of the previously reviewed studies conducted in the domain of task-based language teaching. The big difference between these previously -reviewed studies and the present study is that the present study attempts to investigate Sudanese EFL university instructors' perspectives about using task-based language teaching in enhancing EFL learners' communicative competence ,what difficulties do Sudanese EFL university instructors experience in using task-based language teaching and to what extent, do these difficulties impact the developing and enhancing of communicative competence of Sudanese EFL university learners. Another difference is that this present study depends on the structured interview as a primary tool for collecting data.

METHODOLOGY

Method of Study

The study adopts the analytical descriptive approach.

Population of Study:

Population of this study targets all EFL university instructors at West Kordufan University, Faculty of Education in Ennhud City in the second semester of the academic year 2020/2021.

Sample of Study:

15 EFL university instructors, at West Kordufan University, Faculty of Education, are randomly chosen as a sample for this study.

Tool of Data Collection

The study employs a structured interview as a tool for data collection. This interview is conducted on the EFL university instructors at West Kordufan University. The interview seeks to reveal EFL university instructors' perspectives towards using task-based language teaching , how often do they use task-based teaching approach inside the classroom ,to what extent does task-based language teaching enhance Sudanese EFL university learners' communicative competence , what difficulties do they experience in using task-based language teaching, to what extent do these difficulties impact the developing and enhancing of communicative competence of Sudanese EFL university learners and what solutions would be recommended by the Sudanese EFL university instructors to overcome the potential difficulties in using task-based language teaching?

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of EFL University Instructors' Interviews:

This part sums up the findings of the EFL university instructors' interviews. This interview consists of two sections as follows:

Section One: Demographical Information

This section of the interview focuses on demographical information about the participants in terms of gender, qualification, colleges of graduation, designation and years of experience. The following tables and charts show the characteristics of the sample:

Table (4.1) Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	11	73.33 %
Female	4	26.67 %
Total	15	100 %

Chart (4.1) Gender

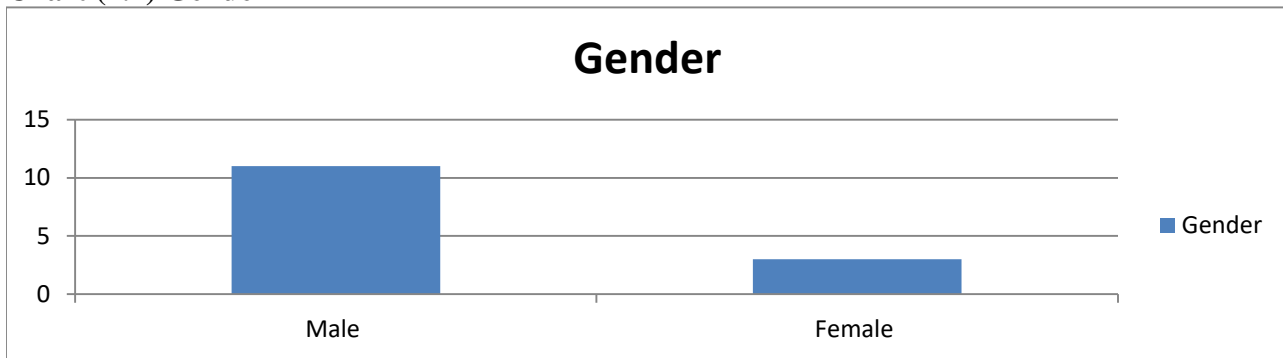
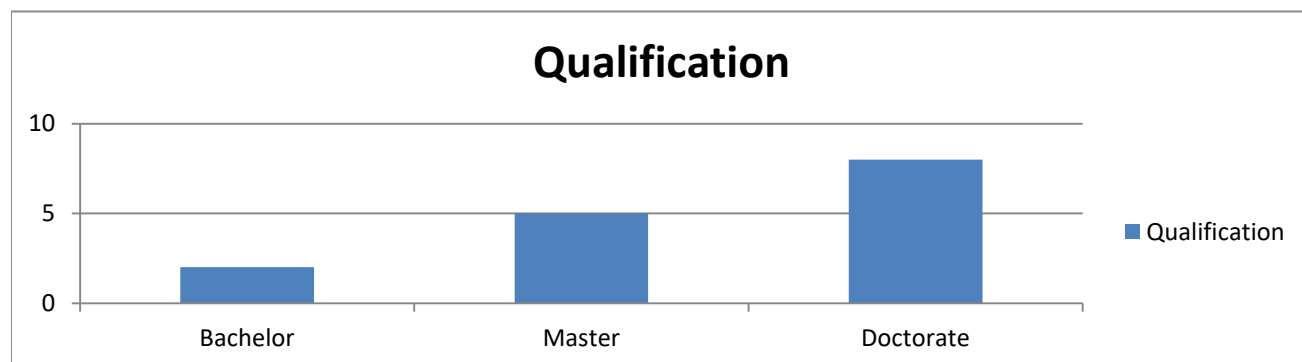
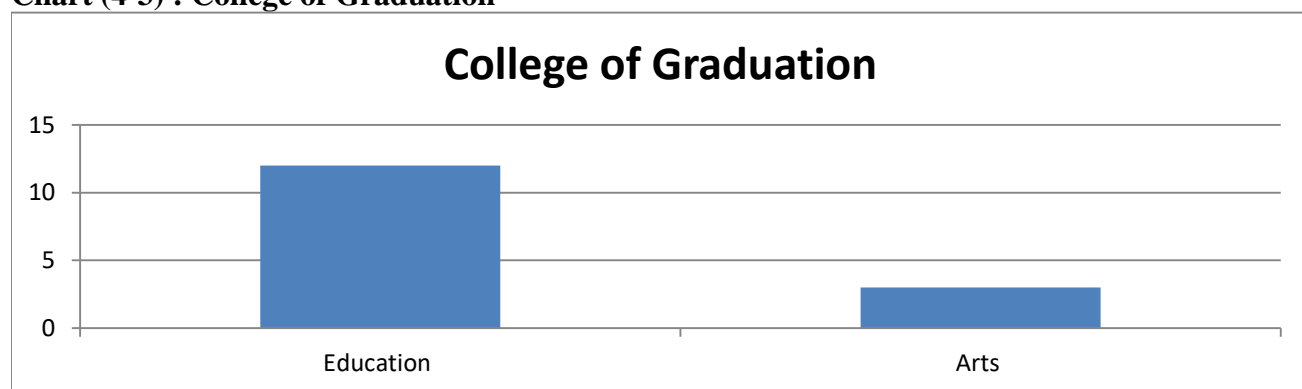


Table (4-2) Qualification

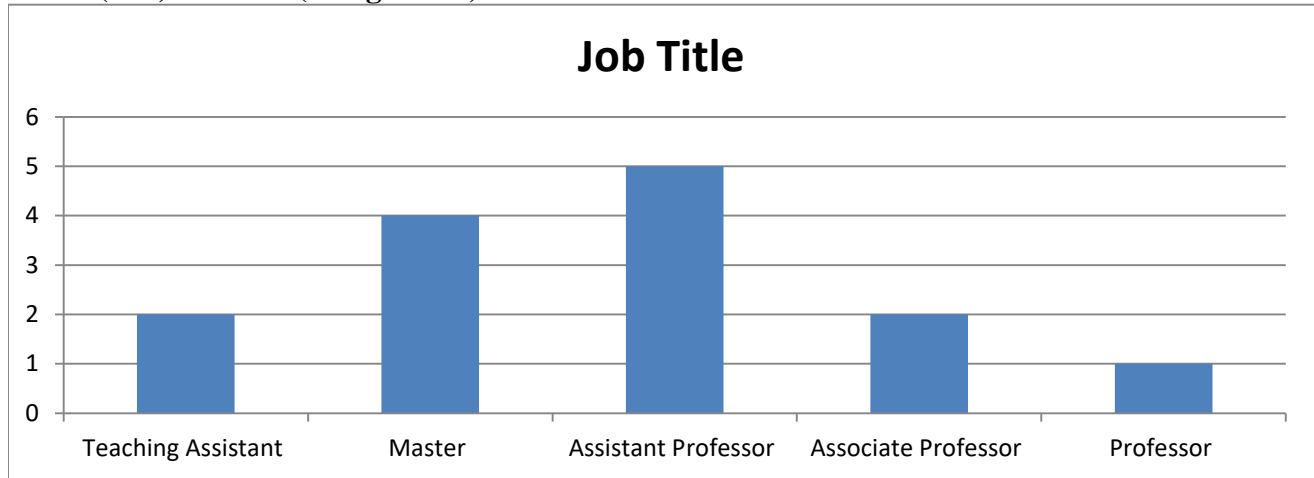
Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Bachelor	2	13.33 %
Master	5	33.33 %
Doctorate	8	53.34 %
Total	15	100%

Chart (4-2) Qualification**Table (4-3) : College of Graduation**

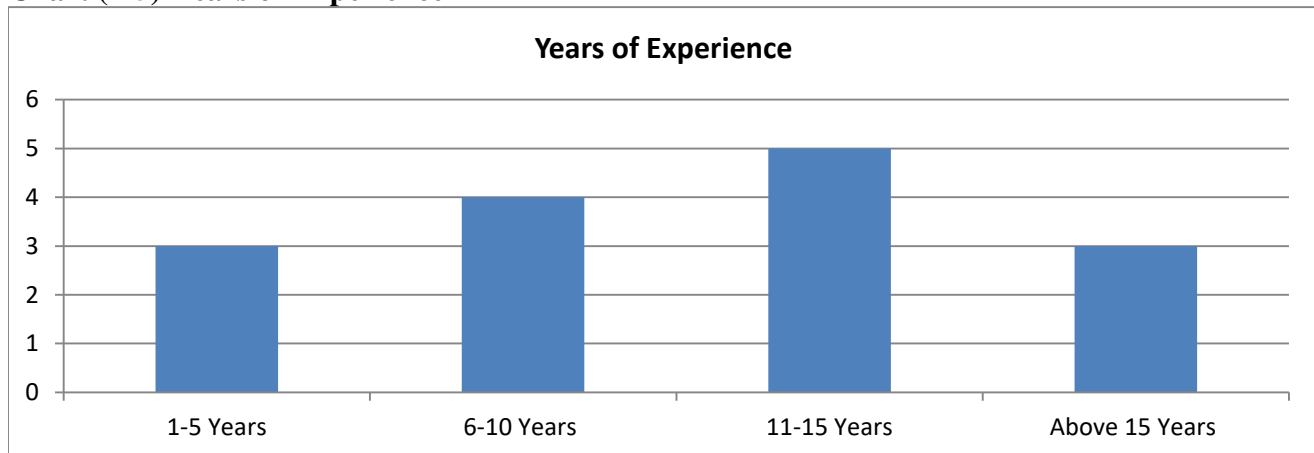
College of Graduation	Frequency	Percentage
Education	12	80%
Arts	3	20%
Total	15	100%

Chart (4-3) : College of Graduation**Table (4-4) Job title (Designation)**

Job title (Designation)	Frequency	Percentage
Teaching assistant	2	13.33%
Lecturer	5	33.33 %
Assistant professor	5	33.33 %
Associate professor	2	13.33%
Professor	1	06.67%
Total	15	100%

Chart (4-4) Job title (Designation)**Table (4-5) : Years of Experience**

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 years	3	20 %
6-10 years	4	26.67 %
11-15 years	5	33.33 %
Above 15 years	3	20%
Total	15	100%

Chart (4-5) Years of Experience

Section Two: Analysis & discussion of the interview questions

In this section of the interview, the participants are requested to answer the following questions briefly:

Question (1)

How often do you use task-based teaching approach inside the classroom?

The answer of this question reveals that 60 % of EFL university instructors at University of West Kordufan always and usually use task-based teaching approach inside the classroom while 26.67 % of the instructors sometimes use task-based teaching approach inside the classroom. Moreover, 13.13% of the respondents rarely use task-based teaching approach inside the classroom. These answers indicate that most EFL university instructors at University of West Kordufan prefer to use task-based teaching approach inside the classroom.

Question (2)

To what extent does task-based language teaching enhance Sudanese EFL university learners' communicative competence?

Majority of the interviewed instructors believe that task-based language teaching enhances Sudanese EFL university learners' communicative competence to large extent because it enables students to work with their peers in pairs or groups and this enables them to feel more comfortable in using language more naturally than with their teachers. Furthermore, by enhancing the interactions among students in class, task –based language teaching improves students' communicative competence and provides them with more opportunities to use English. Moreover, task –based language teaching helps students utilize their ideas and practice their language to develop confidence as a result the students can promote higher levels of English proficiency. In addition to that, it gives the students the opportunity to experiment spontaneously, individually and originally with the foreign language tasks and this helps the students develop communicative competence.

Question (3)

Have you experienced any difficulties in using task-based language teaching approach? If your answer is yes what difficulties have you experienced?

Majority of the interviewed participants believe that they have experienced difficulties in using task-based language teaching approach. These difficulties can be summarized as follows:

- 1- Because of their low English language proficiency, some students find the tasks assigned to them difficult .
- 2- Large classes are not appropriate for TBLT.
- 3- The time allotted to implement the learning task is sometimes insufficient for students. As a result, they cannot achieve the task assigned to them in an effective way.
- 4- Slow and low-proficient students do not get more opportunities to enhance better communicative competence because group working ,discussions and presentations are dominated and overshadowed by proficient students
- 5- Some students lack motivation; they are unwilling to participate in doing tasks, to interact with their classmates and to develop their English oral communication skill.
- 6- Students' lack of necessary vocabulary, sentence formation skills and background knowledge does not enable them to develop their English oral communication skill and to communicate in English and to perform the task.
- 7- Some students lack the sufficient lexical competence and the topical knowledge in English.

Question (4)

To what extent, do these difficulties impact the developing and enhancing of communicative competence of Sudanese EFL university learners?

Most participants believe that these difficulties impact the developing and enhancing of communicative competence of Sudanese EFL university learners to large extent .The impact of these difficulties can be summed up as follows:

- a. These difficulties have huge impact on EFL learners' communicative competence.
- b. These difficulties affect the learning outcomes and the students' speaking performance quality.

Question (5)

What would you like to recommend for overcoming the potential difficulties in using task-based language teaching?

In order to overcome the potential difficulties in using task-based language teaching, the participants recommend the following suggestions:

- 1- Since TBLT is sometimes impractical in some teaching methods particularly for low-level students, it is very important to integrate it with traditional teaching approaches.
- 2- Teachers must simplify the language required to undertake the task and make it easier for the students.
- 3- The learning tasks should address students' language needs and interests and the students should be grouped according to their levels of proficiency.
- 4- Sufficient time should be allotted to the students so as to enable them to carry out learning tasks effectively and successfully.
- 5- Encouraging EFL university learners to read more and more to expand their vocabulary.
- 6- Assigning more reading activities to the students on different topics so as to increase their stock of vocabulary
- 7- EFL learners should be motivated to develop their English oral communication skill.
- 8- Teachers should create friendly environment to encourage low proficient students to speak English and to feel comfortable
- 9- Designing simple, clear, flexible and short tasks that focus on practicing particular familiar linguistic features is more fruitful and suitable to lower language proficient students
- 10- Task design should pay a particular attention and consideration to the specific needs, abilities and levels of proficiency of the students.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The central aim of this paper has been to investigate the perspectives of Sudanese EFL university instructors at University of West Kordufan during the second semester of the academic year 2020/2021 about using task-based language teaching and to shed light on its impact on developing and enhancing the communicative competence of Sudanese EFL university learners. Moreover, the study attempts to identify the difficulties facing Sudanese EFL university instructors in using task-based language teaching. The findings of the study reveal that most EFL university instructors at University of West

Kordufan use task-based teaching approach inside the classroom. Furthermore, the findings of the study indicate that majority of the interviewed instructors believe that task-based language teaching enhances Sudanese EFL university learners' communicative competence to large extent because it enables students to work with their peers in pairs or groups and this enables them to feel more comfortable in using language more naturally than with their teachers. However, the findings of the study show that the interviewed instructors at University of West Kordufan have experienced many difficulties in using task-based language teaching approach which have huge impact on EFL learners' communicative competence.

Generally, the findings of the current study support the findings of some previous studies such as Le, V. Tuyen (2014) ,Abubaker, S. (2017), , Yi Ji (2017) and Abdussalam, M. et al (2019) which indicated that there are many challenges experienced by EFL teachers when using task-based language teaching. Although the present study gives fruitful insights about the perspectives of Sudanese EFL university instructors about using TBLT, the findings seem limited and narrow and there are still many aspects of TBLT in developing EFL learners' communicative competence that can still be researched .First, the study depends on the interview as a primary tool for collecting data. Another point that limits the generalization of the data is the small number of the participants. Moreover, the study covers only one university which is West Kordufan University. However, it would be productive if the study depends on other tools such as questionnaires or testing along with the interview and covers a large number of participants in various universities.

Suggestions for Further Studies

A similar study can be conducted to investigate the perspectives of EFL secondary school teachers about using task-based language teaching approach in the classroom. Another thorough study with a bigger sample of teachers and students can be conducted to investigate the impact of the difficulties encountered by EFL university instructors when implementing TBLT on developing communicative competence. In addition to that, further studies should be conducted to investigate the impact of TBLT on writing skill or other skills.

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