

The Effectiveness of Globalized Task-Centered Language Instruction on EFL Learners' Sustainable Motivation and Syntactic Proficiency

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Abstract

This study investigated how task-based language instruction affected Saudi EFL students' sustainable motivation and grammatical proficiency. 60 participants were ultimately chosen after a homogeneity exam (OQPT) was given to 100 EFL learners in order to achieve the study's goals. They were then split into two groups: the control group and the experimental group. As a pre-test, they were given a validated researcher-designed syntactic proficiency test that covered the topics that were planned to be covered in both groups before the treatment began. Furthermore, both groups received a motivation survey before and after the therapy sessions. The treatment group (i.e., experimental group or Exp. G.) was given a treatment that involved teaching grammar through the employment of task-centered language instruction, while the control group (Cont. G) received conventional instruction, involving teaching grammatical structures through instruction on drills suggested by the instructor. The same researcher-designed grammar exam was given to both groups as a post-test following the completion of 12 therapy sessions. The Paired and Independent Samples t-test was employed to assess the data collected. The results demonstrated that the experimental group greatly outperformed the control group in terms of performance. The experimental group typically performed much better than the control group. The results of the motivation questionnaire also indicated a substantial difference between the two groups' motivation after the post-test. The results suggested that motivation in the experimental group (Exp. G) greatly increased. The findings implied that task-centered language instruction could be applied in EFL classes to strengthen learners' grammatical skills.

Keywords: globalized task-centered language instruction (TCLD); communicative teaching strategy (CTS); sustainable motivation; syntactic proficiency; grammatical skills

1. Introduction

Global challenges speed up the movements and exchanges of human beings, goods, and educational practices. One of the effects of globalization is that it promotes and increases interactions between different regions and populations around the globe. The development of grammar skills in a foreign language, namely English, is highly prevalent in Saudi Arabia, as it is in many other nations with globalized educational systems (Dekeyser, 1993). Therefore, in order to comprehend and use the language correctly, a learner of English as a foreign language or as a second language must master the four fundamental abilities of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These abilities are interdependent; in other words, each ability depends on the others (Feng, Saricaoglu, & Chukharev-Hudilainen, 2015). As a result, students cannot learn only one skill. Moreover, there are other sub-skills within the four competencies that are relevant to teaching and learning English, such as vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. One of the key viewpoints for crafting appropriate and meaningful sentences and articulations is the process of understanding important English grammatical skills. Sentence structure is regarded as the foundation for creating and utilizing a dialect.

According to Moro, Tettamanti, Perani, Donati, Cappa, and Fazio (2001), grammar is defined as the arrangement of a set of standards reflecting the structure of sentences and words. It aims to construct an effective sentence; thus, the language's grammatical usage should be properly understood. According to Fotos and Ellis (1991), grammar is a system of rules or instructions for organizing words and other elements into proper grammar-related sentences. Any person who uses the language, whether speaking, listening, reading, or writing, receives meaning from it. Simply said, grammar is a set of guidelines and rules that people can use to speak and write. As a result, in order to learn a language, a person must fully understand and appreciate its principles. Simply put, one needs a solid understanding of English's grammar and its constituent parts in order to understand and effectively use it. This is because grammar is closely associated with the language's basic skills, used in daily life (Gao, Namaziandost, & Abdulaal, 2022).

One of the questions that has to be answered right now is: What is the best way to teach and learn grammar to EFL learners? Despite all advancements in teaching grammar in many EFL situations, Saudi universities, colleges, and schools still teach grammar to students using

the old approach, sometimes known as the *product approach* (Hashemnezhad & Hashemnezhad, 2012). In addition, these educational settings have very inadequate standards for both general and specific research on grammar instruction. The current study therefore aimed to apply Task-Centered Language Instruction (TCLI) as a relatively modern strategy in the field of grammar instruction due to the low condition of EFL grammar in Saudi Arabia as a result of the usage of traditional techniques.

One of the most significant teaching methods for English is task-centered language instruction, a branch of Communicative Language Instruction (CLI). Over the last few decades, academics and educators in many different instructional domains have paid close attention to TCLI. The concept of *task* is drawn from the communicative approach because TCLI was developed in the 1980s while being influenced by communicative language instruction. Task-centered language instruction places a strong emphasis on forcing students to complete important activities and utilize the target language in an authentic way. Zenios (2010) asserted that completion of learning activities, as opposed to mastery of language forms, should take precedence for learners in TCLI. The TCLI emphasizes that learning a language should happen organically as a result of completing numerous tasks. It is thought that pupils will be motivated to learn a language if they have to complete a task in order to do so. As a result, learners' motivation is crucial to learn a foreign language. Maintaining healthy motivation standards makes learning more effective. According to Gilakjani, Leong, and Sabouri (2012), motivation and a good outlook are also associated with learning a second language.

For English language learners, grammar is a crucial component of the language. According to McCawley (1970), there is a close network between grammar and other linguistic sub-systems. This perspective shows how important grammatical knowledge is to improving language learning. However, grammar is frequently a nuisance and a challenging procedure for many pupils in the Saudi English learning context. Finding effective strategies for learners to take part actively and effectively in classroom tasks in grammar sessions is a challenge for many teachers. For students to learn effectively in college writing programs, effective teaching strategies must be used. This study intends to present a useful and practical method for enhancing learners' grammar skills through the use of TCLI in courses.

2. Statement of the Research Problem and the Research Questions

Task-centered approaches to instruction have gained popularity in language teaching recently (Ellis, 2009); Prabhu's strategy continues to be appealing to many scholars interested in effective instructional activities. Prabhu's taxonomy of tasks, according to Littlewood (2007), is intriguing since it is based upon an explanation of the types of intellectual activities that underpin the real performance of various activities. It depends upon the untested but intuitively attractive assumption that employing language for reasoning encourages learning and acquisition. Few, if any, empirical research studies demonstrate the superiority of TCLI activities for writing tasks. Sadly, no research has examined the effectiveness of task types in Saudi high school grammar instruction. As a result, it appears that a study on task types may be a genuine attempt to evaluate how task type influences grammar acquisition (Li, 2014; Ellis, 2009; Abdulaal, Abuslema, Hal, Amer, & Altohami, 2023).

In addition, language teachers frequently look for something that could make a difference in their classroom when presented with a variety of issues. The issues are typically brought about by the learners' lack of interest in the instruction. The main goal of language teachers has always been to increase students' motivation and performance. In order to address issues like low student motivation, a novel approach called TCLI is used in a regular classroom setting (Panahi, 2012). The use of a TCLI strategy in EFL classrooms gives the students variety. Furthermore, it improves their learning because TCLI exercises promote student engagement, result in considerable gains in language proficiency, and give students many chances to express themselves (Mislevy, Steinberg, & Almond, 2002).

Therefore, the researcher suggested utilizing a method centered on the employment of activities as the primary unit of teaching to improve the grammar proficiency of Saudi EFL learners. The aim of this study was to investigate how employing TCLI affected the grammar growth and motivation of some Saudi EFL students (Abdulaal, Alenazi, Tajuddin, & Hamidi, 2022)

Saudi students find it challenging to learn English outside of the classroom and to participate in particular activities in the language. Students are not exposed to English in everyday settings because it is a foreign language. Engaging in an environment rich with language chances for the learners to acquire and attain language is the main driver behind studying English as a second language. To encourage learners' motivation, teachers should provide some activities and assignments that are analogous to real-world circumstances. The important aspect that the teacher shouldn't overlook is the students' proficiency level.

From a different angle, building on the main ideas of TCLI, which contends that learners can learn from the activities they are engaged in (Butler, 2011). This research study aims to determine whether task-centered language teaching has any impact on both the motivations and grammatical accomplishments of EFL junior high school students. In other words, the researcher aims to investigate whether there are any appreciable differences in the Saudi junior EFL learners' grammar knowledge among the experimental and control groups.

Therefore, this research attempted to find answers to the following two research queries:

Do task-centered language instruction strategies have any impact on Saudi learners' grammatical proficiency?

Do task-centered language instruction techniques have any influence on Saudi learners' motivations?

The following null hypotheses are derived from the previously mentioned research questions:

H01. The motivation of Saudi EFL learners is not significantly impacted by task-centered language instruction methods.

H02. The grammatical accomplishments of Saudi EFL students are not significantly impacted by task-centered language instruction methods.

3. Research Significance

The purpose of instruction is to help students grow in their cognitive and emotional dimensions. The results of this research study give an obvious picture of the importance of task-centered language instruction in Saudi educational settings. By communicating and comprehending each learner's attitudes and perspectives, it becomes easier to provide activities for the school curriculum. The teacher's multifaceted role is illustrated by his ability to effectively promote learning by being knowledgeable about the concepts and procedures of contemporary teaching techniques as well as acquiring fundamental and adaptable skills. Moreover, incorporating various projects into the classroom can make learning enjoyable for the kids and increase their desire. The purpose of this study is to look into how task-centered activities affect grammar acquisition. Its goal is to make language classes more engaging and motivating for students by identifying better and simpler approaches to teaching grammar in foreign languages.

4. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

Learning approaches are the ideas and behaviors learners use, consciously or unconsciously, to absorb new knowledge. In order to become effective, motivated, and independent language learners, students need to be able to actively control their learning processes (Wong, 2018). Learners who use strategic thinking and problem-solving skills are more motivated to learn and have greater self-efficacy, or faith in their own capacity to learn. In other words, compared to kids who are unable to apply tactics effectively, students who are strategic believe they are more capable of academic success. The motivation of students who anticipate succeeding in their academic endeavors improves with each successful learning experience. Since the end of the 1960s, theoretical and empirical research on foreign language processes has grown significantly, in line with developments in cognitive psychology (Reed, 2019; Pietri, 2015). There are numerous international classifications of foreign language learning methodologies.

The classifications by Zhang and Hung (2012) are the ones that are most frequently cited in the literature on foreign languages. There are five types of methods for learning a foreign language: (1) categorizations based on psychological processes (e.g., Hu & Guo, 2013; Zhang & Hung, 2012); (2) categorizations based on successful language students (e.g., Matthews, 2018); (3) classifications centered on language mapping and monitoring (e.g., Tarone, 1983); (4) categorizations relating to language abilities; and (5) categories based on the differentiation of different learning styles.

Within the framework of cognitive learning strategies, Matthews (2018) defined learning techniques and their fundamental characteristics. According to their definition, language learning techniques are the distinctive ideas and actions people employ to aid in understanding, picking up, or remembering new knowledge. However, this concept is not the same as the ones provided by Toshiyo (1996). Language acquisition strategies are described by Wenden (1987) in terms of three connected phenomena. The student's real learning strategies in the process of controlling the acquisition of the foreign language are the first thing that these techniques allude to. Wenden's example of this term suggests that learning techniques are visible and more conscious than unconscious. They also make reference to the learner's understanding of strategies. Wenden makes the assumption that a learner's decision on a strategy will likely be influenced by this knowledge.

Language learning and teaching revolve around grammar. It makes it possible for us to talk about language and explains the lexical constituents that compose sentences in all languages. Actually, grammar governs how sentences are put together and how language is constructed, so even if focusing on using the proper punctuation can be a little taxing, it is worth the time and effort. Grammar is often associated with inaccuracies and accuracy. Sentences can become nonsensical, and their messages might become muddled when incorrect language structure is used (Ellis, 2006). Therefore, considering grammar helps the learners understand what makes phrases precise and clear. When the instructors and the students read poetic verses, language structure should be taken into consideration. Besides, considering sentence structure leads to the realization that grammatical patterns are shared by all languages and dialects (Abdulaal, Sadek, Ageli, Al-Hawamdeh, & Hal, 2022).

Being able to finish sentences when transmitting data and information is regarded as a requirement. Nazari and Allahyar (2012) asserted that grammar is the rule that outlines how words are combined, arranged, or altered to illustrate particular types of meaning. A grammatical system is the process by which lexical items alter and combine to form sentences. It is suggested that the capacity to use the language and express meaning is predicated on a fundamental understanding of grammar. The use of the appropriate vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure increases errors. Moreover, grammar is a philosophy of language, explaining how it is put together and works. Grammar, in more specific terms, is the study of language. In addition to other relevant benefits, mastering grammatical rules helps learners avoid language fossilization and improves their execution. Furthermore, understanding the fundamentals of language structure helps learners become independent thinkers who can manage their learning process even when they are not in school or when there is a time limit on the use of classroom knowledge (Abdulaal & Abuslema, 2020).

Task-centered language instruction (TCLI) has drawn a lot of interest from SLA scholars, teachers, and curriculum designers. Due to SL classroom activities that were focused on standards, SLA researchers and language teachers developed the terminology of TCLI. Tomlinson (2008) advocated for a framework in which students engage in practical tasks that allow them to concentrate on important tasks and language use. The goal of the TCLI guideline is to make learning easier.

This project-based system connects language tasks to educational units and consists of three elements and a few sub-segments (Panahi, 2012). Teachers, according to the project-based system, use activities to accomplish a variety of ends, depending on the requirements and supports of the students, rather than explicitly planning out the structures to be instructed and the terminologies to be covered. Furthermore,

it may go beyond Ritchie's (2003) three Ps of presentation, practice, and production, which are the conventional methods for determining dialect direction (Tomlinson, 2008). This structure has a few interesting features. This system goes beyond the notion of evaluation from a conventional standpoint. The TCLI format can make it easier for teachers and students to communicate.

The three following elements—language minding, intercultural competence, and the content-centered methodology—must be combined with this methodology. The task-based approach has drawn some attention recently as a method of teaching languages. Assignments and importance are the points of convergence for classroom activities in task-based instruction. One of the finest TCLI models is developed by Harden, Crosby, Davis, Howie, and Struthers (2000), where learners start by performing an unstructured errand. After completing the task, they go into more detail on how they achieved it. The benefit of the task-based method is that learners are free to use any language they like while working on the assignment, allowing them to completely concentrate on the significance of their expressions. This creates a situation that is similarly authentic and transparent. One of the drawbacks of TCLI is that learners get to know one another, yet their talks are frequently poorly stated. Nevertheless, they employ tactics to finish their duties fast and develop a different style of language and grammar.

According to Burrows (2008) and Abdolreza and Saeideh (2012), selecting task-based language teaching as a method of transferring sentence structures is advantageous for both learning and acquisition. Further, Abdolreza and Saeideh (2012) found that using TCLI to informatively display language structure improved Japanese EFL students' understanding of challenging syntactic structures. Shabani and Ghasemi (2014) looked into the impact of TCLI on elementary children in a semi-experimental study. The results demonstrated that TCLI significantly affected students. The traditional method had no discernible impact on pupils' learning and did not ensure their success.

Kumaravivelu (2006) made an effort to offer fresh proof of the value of task-based methods for the improvement of EFL students' speaking abilities. Investigating the impacts of task-centered strategies on the growth of speaking competency is the study's main goal. In the second place, it attempted to examine how gender affected the growth of speaking skills in accordance with task-based language teaching concepts. Accordingly, sixty Saudi EFL learners from the upper intermediate level, both male and female, were chosen and divided into two groups (experimental and control), based on how well they performed during the pre-test interviews. In addition, there were two groups of males and females within each category. The subjects in the treatment and control groups were interviewed as a post-test after the treatment. Two independent sample t-tests were carried out. The final speaking post-test showed that the experimental group's students, who had been exposed to activity-centered concepts of teaching speaking, outperformed noticeably better than the subjects in the control group. The task-based approach also led to the conclusion that gender did not influence the development of speaking.

In addition, Van (2006) examined the efficacy of activity-based education in large courses on the academic performance, motivation, and attitudes of Chinese college students. Two groups were used: one was the experimental group that received task-centered training, and the other was the control group that received the same material using the conventional approach. The researcher discovered that, when comparing the experimental to the control group, the former had probably demonstrated much-improved learning achievement and oral English ability. Using information gathered from one-on-one interviews, it may be concluded that the treatment group tended to be much more motivated than the other group. Finally, task-centered training offers a greater potential for practicality and efficiency when applied to English language participants than the conventional technique.

Zheng and Borg (2014) carried out a study to find out how language instructors felt about implementing task-centered learning in their classes. Beijing public schools across all grade levels hired thirty English teachers. The researchers aimed to know how Chinese English teachers at various levels of instruction reacted to employing task-centered learning through participant interviews and classroom observations. The findings showed that teachers had embraced task-centered learning in their classes. Additionally, individuals who enthusiastically engaged in task-centered learning displayed various instructional focuses in terms of activity choice.

Abdolreza and Ahangari (2012), in a quasi-experiment, set out to look at the effects of activity-centered language instruction on the performance of EFL female students. The study's sample included (48) female students at a High School who were between the ages of 14 and 15. A convenience sampling technique was used to divide the sample into a treatment (26 subjects) and a control (25 learners) group. Two tests—one pre- and one post-assessment—both created by the Ministry of Education were used to gather the data. The paired samples and independent samples t-tests were used to assess the test administration data. The findings of the data analysis showed that task-centered education can have a big impact on students' academic performance in high school.

The effect of task-centered learning was studied by McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007) with Thai EFL learners at Stamford University. This study set out to monitor and evaluate the impacts of task-centered learning on learners' motivation to complete their language learning assignments. The findings demonstrated that task-centered learning fosters learners' creativity in addition to helping them learn and retain linguistic abilities. Additionally, the degree of involvement was thought to be a useful strategy for boosting students' desire and interest in learning and using a foreign language while still producing significant educational effects.

5. Method

5.1 Participants

In Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, a high school was the site of this research study. Depending on the scores of an Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT), a sample of 60 female pre-intermediate learners who were enrolled in English as a course at their school was chosen from a group of 110. All of them were female pupils between the ages of 16 and 17. Regarding their educational background, age, and gender, all of the students were the same. None of them had ever visited or lived abroad in an English-speaking nation. All of the participants, who were

deemed to be pre-intermediate students, underwent a homogeneity test to determine their standard of homogeneity and to meet the study's objectives. Naturally, their English proficiency was the same, but the researcher administered the Oxford Quick Placement Test to confirm this. Although there were some very subtle individual differences among them all, the researcher made every effort to reduce any potentially conflicting factors as much as possible and concentrate on the study. Randomly dividing the two classes into control and experimental groups, two classes were chosen. The therapy, which involved teaching grammar via task-centered teaching, was given to the treatment group. Subjects in the control group were given just a placebo. Each session of the classes lasted roughly 90 minutes. The instructor, the sourcebook, and the permitted time for the two groups were the same in the two groups.

5.2 Instruments

1. The Oxford Quick Placement Test was the initial tool employed in the current investigation to uniformize the subjects. It was used to gauge the language ability of the participants. Its purpose is to assess a person's overall language proficiency and is anticipated to be norm-referenced. As a norm-referenced test, a proficiency test has the property that its results should follow a normal distribution, allowing for the relative interpretation of test results with regard to how each learner's overall performance compares to the achievements of all other learners. The other feature of the test is that it must produce scores that constitute a vast distribution in order to make it possible to interpret student differences as fairly as possible. To put it another way, a proficiency test typically evaluates a person's general language skills. The test comprises 60 items with various question types divided into two parts. The 60 learners, who were selected for the study, passed it with a score between 29 and 37. The test validity and reliability were thought to be adequate, which is why the study's researcher chose to use it as a measure of the student's competency.

2. The subjects completed a pretest, which was a grammar test created by a teacher before the research began. This test contained two sections: a true-false section with 22 things that students had to check the proper answers to and cross out the incorrect ones, and a multiple-choice section with 43 items that students had to select the best answer. A pilot test was used to determine the test's reliability, and the result was a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.768. Three English teachers with more than ten years of experience each read the tests to ensure the Content Validity Index (CVI) of the test items, and they made some revisions to the tests' clarity, simplicity, and representativeness.

The exam was subsequently adjusted and piloted on a comparable group in a different high school. The exam was altered and modified as needed to accomplish item characteristics (item facility, item discrimination, and choice distribution) after conducting piloting and validation; 5 items were deemed inappropriate and eliminated. In the end, 60 items were chosen to make up the test. Each accurate response earned one point, and there were 80 minutes given for the test. False responses were not subject to punishment.

3. The subjects filled in an English learner survey centered on the model of motivation at the beginning and at the end of the experiment. Respondents could choose one of five replies ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each of the five closed-ended issues on the questionnaire. The Likert scale is a frequently used technique that doesn't require responders to provide any writing. The aim of the survey was to get pertinent data regarding the subjects' perceptions of educational motivation. Before instruction, a survey was given to determine the student's standard of motivation. Twelve experts provided their opinions on the modified questionnaire. Moreover, Cronbach's Alpha test results showed a reliability of 0.793 for the sample.

4. A post-test was given to the study subjects at the end of the semester. Applying this kind of test was done to determine the effect task-centered language education had on the students' acquisition of grammar. To draw a comparison between the treatment and control groups' understanding of grammar, a researcher-designed grammar exam was once more employed to gather the data. In terms of duration and item count, there was no difference between the pre-test and post-test. This was crucial to determine whether the participants could select the right response after receiving the treatment. Cronbach's Alpha test results showed a reliability of 0.783 for the sample.

6. Procedures of Data Collection

Two homogenous groups from an intermediate school in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, were initially chosen and given OQPT. They were then split into two groups. The researcher then designed a grammar test depending on the content of the textbook and had it validated and reliability-checked before administering it to both groups as a pretest. However, the outcomes of the grammar pre-test were used to statistically compare the two groups. Regarding the grammatical concepts that would be covered in the classroom's 12 sessions, the pretest assessed the subjects' understanding of grammar in the two groups. In order to gauge the students' motivation for learning English, questionnaires were given to them at the start and end of the experiment. The study looked into how the task-centered strategy affected the students' motivation. The treatment given to the experimental group involved task-centered language teaching that was based on the regular school curriculum. The subjects in the control group were just given a placebo. The grammar test was repeated as a posttest to check that the instructions were effective and to evaluate students' mastery of the TL's grammar. This test was designed to evaluate the participants' grammatical proficiency as well as the efficacy of task-centered language instruction in the acquisition of grammar. It was time to perform the analysis once all the data had been collected through the pretest-posttest and questionnaire.

One portion of the data was gathered through a grammar examination because one of the goals of the current research study was to examine the potential impact of activity-centered language education on EFL learners' motivation and grammatical development. The study's dependent variables were the results of the grammar test, and its independent factors were the two alternative teaching circumstances. All groups took a pretest before the intervention. To draw a comparison between the means of the experimental group and those of the control group, a t-test was performed. The two groups then took a posttest after the treatment was put into effect. Here again, the exact same statistical process was used. Additionally, the responses given by the students to a motivation survey administered both before and after the

treatment were examined and discussed.

6. Results and Discussion

The SPSS program was used to examine the scores collected by the research instruments: (1) the pretest, (2) the posttest, and (3) the questionnaire. It is significant to note that the level of significance for all the formulas used by the researcher was set at 0.05. First, the normality of the distribution was examined in data analysis. In fact, the selected sample is very representative due to the normalcy of the distribution. The (K-S) test was carried out to verify this normality assumption. If the significance for this test is greater than 0.05, the data will be normally distributed.

Table 1. Test of Normality

Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a	Statistic	Experimental				Control			
		Pretest	Posttest	Ques. Pretest	Ques. Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Ques. Pretest	Ques. Posttest
		.135	.120	.197	.208	.137	.115	.201	.170
	Sig.	.069	.165	.006	.001	.060	.201*	.006	.007

Note. Ques. = Questionnaire

The findings of the K-S test demonstrate that the distribution of all the data collected is normal in light of the information provided in Table 1 ($p > 0.05$). In terms of motivation and syntactic proficiency, Table 2 provides descriptive data on the pre-posttest and questionnaire results for the experimental and control groups.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Exp. Group	Pretest	30	14.00	17.00	15.7000	1.56410
	Posttest	30	31.00	37.00	33.9000	2.55158
	Q-Pre	30	3.05	4.15	2.9808	.25669
	Q-Post	30	5.28	6.53	3.9897	.37677
Cont. Group	Pretest	30	13.00	20.00	14.3000	1.3249
	Posttest	30	24.00	33.00	29.6000	3.2280
	Q-Pre	30	2.33	5.00	3.8138	0.4115
	Q-Post	30	2.60	5.53	5.4251	2.6120

According to the statistics shown in Table 2, the experimental group's 30 pretest items had a minimum score of 14, a maximum score of 17, and an average score of 15.70. The minimum and maximum scores on the posttest are 31 and 37, respectively, with an average of 33.90. Furthermore, the control group's 30-item pretest had a minimum score of 13, a maximum score of 20, and an average of 14.30; the posttest had a minimum score of 24, a maximum score of 33, and an average of 29.60. The findings of descriptive statistics demonstrate that the student's scores are similar to one another, and it appears that there is not a particularly large difference between them, as shown in Table 2.

There was no discernible difference between the two groups' pre-test mean scores, but a sample t-test has been conducted in order to confirm the tight homogeneity of the experimental and control groups. An independent samples t-test was employed (Table 3) to check the means of the pretest scores in the two groups. The results showed the scores were normally distributed in the two groups. The test's findings indicate that the mean pretest scores of both the treatment and control groups are equal.

Table 3. Independent samples t-test results of the pre-test

	Levene's Test		Equality of Means			
	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Assumed Equal Variances	.548	.642	.891	57	.598	.3000

Table 3 points out that the P-value > 0.05 . It indicates that the homogeneity of the two variance assumptions will not be rejected. This demonstrated that there was no discernible distinction between the treatment and control groups' respective mean pretest scores. Thus, the performances of the two groups were comparable and their proficiency levels were similar. Moreover, Table 4 below presents the findings of the independent t-test on the post-test. In this test, the H0 hypothesis indicates that the mean of the post-test scores in the experimental and control groups are equal, whereas the alternative hypothesis communicates that they are not.

Table 4. Results of the post-test

	Levene's Test		Equality of Means			
	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Equal variances assumed	.644	.455	8.938	58	.00	6.30

The t-test findings indicate a p-value of 0.000 when comparing the post-test results of the experimental and control groups, which is < P-value set for the study (0.05), indicating a meaningful difference. It may be inferred that task-centered language training in the treatment group had a positive impact on the experimental group's knowledge because the posttest mean for the treatment group was 6.30 points higher than the post-test mean for the placebo group (i.e., the control group). A paired t-test was employed to further investigate the intra-group variances. The mean examination of the experimental group's pretest and post-test scores indicated a normal distribution, necessitating the use of the Paired Samples t-test (See Table 4).

Table 5. Participants' performances in the pretest and posttest

	M	T	df	Sig.
Pre- and post-tests	19.21	38.81	40	.000

According to Table 5, the statistic t has a value of 38.81 (df = 40) and a p-value of 0.000, which is > 0.05. It demonstrated that there was a substantial distinction between the experimental group's pre- and post-test means. The post-test's mean is 19.21 points greater than the pre-test's mean. These findings could mean that task-based language training had an efficient influence on the experimental group's grammatical knowledge. The performance on the pre-test and post-test for the control group is then compared (Table 6), following the comparison of the experimental group's pre-and post-test results.

Table 6. Paired Samples t-test results

	Mean	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
pretest-posttest	14.40	29.48	39	0.000

According to Table 6, there was a statistically significant difference between the control group's mean pre-test and post-test scores, with a statistic t of 29.48 and a significance level of 0.000. The difference between the mean post-test scores and the mean pre-test scores is 14.40 points. Therefore, teaching was successful in the placebo group (control group) as well. The subjects were given the questionnaire twice: once as a pre-test, and once as a post-test, or following the treatment. The pre-test of the questionnaire looked into the motivation of the students in both groups (See Table 7).

Table 7. Mann-Whitney Test for the questionnaire's pre-test scores

	N	Mean	Sum
Experimental	30	43.05	1781.60
Control	30	37.95	1458.40
Total	60		
Mann-Whitney		748.600	
Z		-.586	
Sig.		.541	

The mean rank of individuals in the treatment group is 43.05 and in the control group 37.95, as shown in Table 7. The mean questionnaire ratings in the experimental and control groups are similar because the p-value is 0.541. This suggests that there was no discernible change in the pre-test motivation of the questionnaire between the experimental and control groups. Second, the researchers used the Mann-Whitney Test to compare the results from the posttest of the questionnaire between the two groups. Table 8 lists the outcomes of this test.

Table 8. Mann-Whitney Test for the questionnaire's post-test scores

	N	Mean	Sum
Exp. G	30	48.37	1954.00
Control	30	32.64	1286.00
Total	60		
Mann-Whitney		576.0	
Z		-2.371	
Sig.		0.023	

According to Table 8, the mean rank of the subjects in the treatment and control groups is 48.37 and 32.64. Since the p-value is 0.023, there are differences between the experimental and control groups' mean questionnaire ratings. The rank demonstrated that the mean rank of the questionnaire results for the treatment group was greater than the mean rank of the questionnaire results for the control group. Because there was a significant distinction between the experimental group's motivation and that of the control group in the post-test of the questionnaire, this shows that the treatment group's motivation has increased. The following Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test was carried out to further examine the intra-group motivational modifications. It was chosen to strike a comparison between the participant's motivation scores from the pre-test and post-test of the questionnaire to learn more about the treatment group's growth in motivation following the therapy.

Table 9. Wilcoxon Test for the experimental group ranks in the questionnaire.

Pretest – Posttest of Ques*	N	Mean	Sum
Negative Ranks	0 ^a	.00	.00
Positive Ranks	30 ^b	21.50	830.00
Ties	0 ^c		
Total	30		
Z		-5.553	
Sig.		.000	

Note. * Ques = questionnaire

According to Table 9, with a significance level of $0.00 < 0.05$, there is a statistically significant difference between the mean questionnaire scores from the pretest and those from the posttest in the treatment group. Because the pre-test questionnaire scores of all 30 students were lower than those on the post-test and because the experimental group's motivation significantly increased, the mean questionnaire score for the experimental group's post-test is higher than that of the pre-test. The success of task-centered language training can be acknowledged. Finally, a Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test was used to study and analyze the performance of the control group in the questionnaire's pre-posttest. Table 10 lists the outcomes of this test.

Table 10. Wilcoxon Test for the control group ranks in the questionnaire.

Pretest – Posttest of Ques*	N	M	Sum
Negative	0 ^a	.00	.00
Positive	38 ^b	18.00	803.00
Ties	4 ^c		
Total	30		
Z		-5.403	
Sig.		0.000	

Note. * Ques = questionnaire

Table 10 shows that, while the scores of 4 subjects stayed constant, the pre-test motivation scores of 38 people were lower than their post-test scores. Besides, Table 9 indicates that there was a statistically significant difference between the mean questionnaire scores for the control group on the pretest and post-test with a significance level of 0.05. Since the subjects' pre-test scores were lower than their post-test scores and the mean rank of motivation scores in the control group's post-test was higher than their pre-test, it indicates that motivation in the control group likewise increased significantly.

7. Discussion

Finding answers to the research questions is the main focus of the discussion of the results. The following are two research questions and their responses:

RQ1: Do task-centered language instruction strategies have any impact on Saudi learners' grammatical proficiency?

The researcher compared the results of the pre-and post-tests for the two participant groups in order to find an answer to the first research question. To identify any differences between the subjects' performance in improving grammatical knowledge related to task-centered language instruction, the pre-test and post-test were compared. The analysis of the data revealed that while there was no significant difference in the students' pre-test performance, there was a crucial distinction between the two groups' post-test scores. As long as the treatment group excels over the control groups, teaching employing TCLI is intended to help students' grammatical skills.

Furthermore, the experimental group excelled over the control group in terms of performance and scores after receiving grammatical points through task-centered education. It is important to note that, despite the fact that both the experimental and control groups witnessed an increase in their scores from the pretest to the posttest, TCLI-based instruction was more successful than traditional one-on-one instruction. The results also demonstrate the value of TCLI as a method for learning grammar and other language-related skills. There were some tasks used in the current study. It shows that individuals who learned through tasks outperformed those who did not.

The results of this study are in agreement with Tabrizi (2011), who discovered that task-centered strategies had a beneficial impact on the growth of EFL learners' speaking competency. TCLI is an appropriate method for language learning. Additionally, the results of this research study and those of Zhang and Hung (2012), Reed (2019), Abdulaal, Ramadan, Heji, and Robso (2022) are in agreement. They found that task-centered instruction used for students' motivation supports the beneficial effects of TCLI on grammar improvement.

The findings of this research study are likewise consistent with Rezaeyan's (2014) investigation into the effects of task-centered language instruction on EFL female learners' academic progress at Yasuj High School. The results of the data analysis showed that task-centered education can have a big impact on how well students perform academically in school.

RQ2. Do task-centered language instruction techniques have any influence on Saudi learners' motivations?

The data collected were examined using independent and paired samples t-tests to answer the second research question. According to the research findings in section 6, there was a significant difference between the motivation of the treatment group using TCLI and the control group, who got grammar instruction from the teacher directly and traditionally. The means of the treatment and control groups varied based

on the findings obtained.

The mean score of the treatment group improved in the post-test compared to the second group, according to the results of descriptive statistics of the two groups in the pre-and post-tests of the motivation questionnaire. When the two groups were compared after the Mann-Whitney test was completed, a significance level of $0.023 > 0.05$ was obtained. The substantial difference between the two groups' motivation in the post-test of the questionnaire indicates that the experimental group's motivation significantly increased.

The findings corroborated Pietri's (2015) study, which demonstrated task-centered learning's positive impact on Thai learners at Stamford University. This study set out to monitor and evaluate the impacts of task-centered acquisition on Thai learners' motivation to complete their language learning assignments. The findings demonstrated that task-centered learning fosters students' creativity in addition to helping them learn and retain linguistic abilities. Furthermore, it was thought that increasing student enthusiasm and readiness to learn a foreign language by increasing interactivity was a good strategy to accomplish significant educational benefits.

8. Conclusion

The outcomes of the studies on the impact of task-based language instruction on students' motivation and grammatical understanding have been overwhelmingly positive. In order to evaluate the students in scenarios where they might actually need to utilize English on a daily basis, the researcher created exercises and assignments. The goal of this study, despite its limitations, was to determine how TBI affected Saudi junior high school EFL students' grammatical skill and their motivation following the implementation of TCLI. The survey found that TCLI had a significant impact on EFL students' grammatical competence. The results showed that task completion increased motivation more than task avoidance, proving that TCLI had a positive impact on EFL students' motivation, who learned grammar using this mode of teaching.

The treatment group acquired the grammatical structures through the use of TCLI in the classroom since it was assumed at the beginning of this study that employing TCLI may improve the Saudi pre-intermediate EFL learners' capacity to learn grammar. The control group received traditional teaching, including drills and teacher-led explanations. The teacher investigated if the use of various assignment types had any impact on the Saudi EFL students' motivation and grammatical development. Following the administration of the pretest, the posttest, the questionnaire, and the statistical analysis of the data using Independent and paired samples t-tests, the findings showed that the use of TCLI in the instruction did affect the learners' motivation as well as their ability to learn and improve their grammar.

Although some students disagree with TCLI, it is clear from all of these perspectives and points of view that most students affirm its benefits and acknowledge that it increases their desire to learn and aids them greatly in their academic pursuits in a variety of areas, including reading, writing, and speaking.

This research study can suggest the following conclusions and some notations to EFL students and instructors results on the research findings. The conclusions of this study's ramifications may be carefully considered by other keen researchers, authors, and specialists in the fields of grammar teaching and learning methodologies. The results imply that some time should be set aside in grammar lessons for the utilization of various task-based activities. In reality, the task-centered approach's pre-task, task circle, and language focus phases should all be followed by the participants in sufficient amounts during class time.

Similar to this, as some scholars have noted, some task-centered activities may be beneficial to learners to get them motivated enough to facilitate the learning processes and raise the level of their general language proficiency.

This study may prompt the creation of specific task-based exercise sections for grammar materials, it is hoped. The process of learning grammar may be accelerated by giving students more chances to complete various task-based activities in the books, as well as by encouraging them to participate in interactions and become more accurate learners. Moreover, assigning language-based assignments to students might provide a lot of information. The study's findings offer important information regarding how to improve kids' grammar learning. Teachers and task designers may find the findings useful in better comprehending the TCLI.

Additionally, in TCLI, students get along well with their group members and frequently go above and beyond to complete and deliver their assignments to the class as well as offer quick assistance to others. Their capacity to communicate improves as a result. Social connection is essential for one's cognitive growth, according to Vygotsky (1978). Through frequent contact and conversation, TCLI helps learners build both language and nonlinguistic abilities.

Many questions have come up during the course of this research; some of them are listed here in the hopes that they may be followed up on and looked into. It is strongly advised that additional individuals be included in research with the same features as this research study in order to provide more generalization in the event that comparable results are found. Male students were not included in this study. Future research on syntax learning should concentrate on EFL students for male learners due to gender differences in performance.

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