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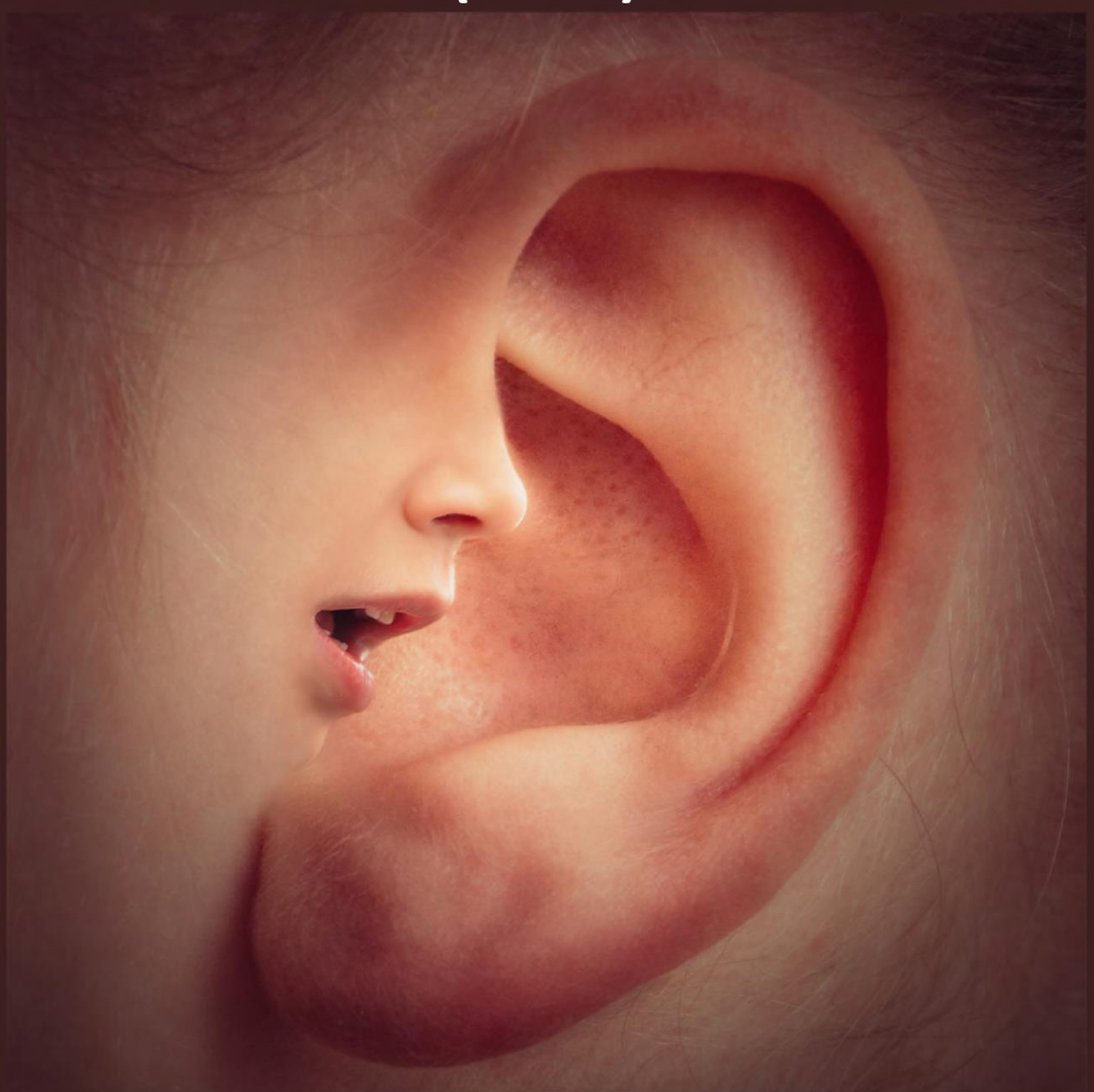

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# Impact of Incorporating Input-based Tasks in IELTS Speaking Courses: Task Response, Accuracy, and Fluency in Focus

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***Keywords:***

IELTS Speaking Courses, Input-based Tasks, Task Response, Accuracy, Fluency

## Abstract

The main objective of this research was to explore the effect of input-based tasks in the IELTS speaking test. For this purpose, 40 subjects who were advanced EFL learners in Danesh Pajouhan, Isfahan, Iran were randomly selected as the sample of study 20 of whom were assigned as the experimental group and the rest as the control group. While the control group received the traditional input, the experimental group received input in the form of task-based activities, referred to as input-based tasks in problem-solving tasks and jigsaw tasks. As the finding of the data analysis show, after the treatment, there was a statistically significant difference between the experimental group and control group in terms of task response, accuracy and fluency. The findings of this study can be useful for second langue learners, second-language teachers and curriculum designers.

**بررسی تأثیر گنجاندن وظایف مبتنی بر ورودی در دوره‌های مکالمه آیلتس: پاسخگویی به وظایف، دقت و تسلط در تمرکز**

هدف اصلی این تحقیق بررسی تأثیر وظایف مبتنی بر ورودی در آزمون اسپیکینگ آیلتس بود. بدین منظور ۴۰ نفر از زبان آموزان پیشرفته زبان انگلیسی در دانش پژوهان اصفهان به طور تصادفی به عنوان نمونه پژوهش انتخاب شدند که ۲۰ نفر از آنها به عنوان گروه آزمایش و بقیه به عنوان گروه گواه قرار گرفتند. در حالی که گروه کنترل ورودی سنتی را دریافت می کرد، گروه آزمایش ورودی را در قالب فعالیت های وظیفه محور دریافت می کرد که به عنوان وظایف مبتنی بر ورودی در وظایف حل مسئله و وظایف اره منبت کاری اره مویی نامیده می شود. همانطور که یافته های تجزیه و تحلیل داده ها نشان می دهد، پس از درمان، بین گروه آزمایش و گروه کنترل از نظر پاسخ به کار، دقت و روان بودن تفاوت آماری معنی داری وجود داشت. یافته های این مطالعه می تواند برای زبان آموزان زبان دوم، معلمان زبان دوم و طراحان برنامه درسی مفید باشد.

**واژه های کلیدی:** دوره های مکالمه آیلتس، وظایف مبتنی بر ورودی، پاسخ به وظایف، دقت، تسلط در کانون توجه

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## Introduction

Many think Task-based instruction (TBI) can be considered an alternative method to traditional/conventional language teaching methods due to the fact that it favors a methodology in which functional communicative language use is aimed at and strived for (Brumfit, 1984; Willis, 1996; Ellis, 2003). Moreover, TBI is considered to be an effective approach in language teaching as it creates a learning environment in which learners have free to choose and use the target language forms in such a way that they think they can better achieve the aim of accomplishing defined communicative goals (Willis, 1996, Ellis, 2003).

In pedagogy, the impact of tasks and their definitions has been a very long tradition especially when it comes to communication and speaking in teaching a language. In fact, the beginning of what we call communicative activities goes back to the 1970s and 1980s (Crookes, 1986). The "communicative activities" gradually have been replaced by the word "tasks" (Bygate et al., 2001). Why they are considered significant goes back to when they were used in learning and teaching settings (Bygate, 2000, p. 186).

Models in language that form TBI are (structural, functional and interactional). What it is said is that TBI is not connected to every model but covers all three models in a language completely. It is noteworthy to say that vocabularies are central to the use of language and learning. Vocabularies are needed especially those which are considered to be linked to the tasks and can be used again after completing tasks (Vasheghani Farahani & Pahlevansadegh, 2018). Conversation and speaking modules are the central parts of one language and the key to the acquisition of language. There is a belief that, in TBLT, tasks play a vital and central role in learning a language.

Richards and Rodgers (2001, pp. 228-289) put its key theory of learning as follows:

1) providing input and output which are necessary for processing of language acquisition.

2) accomplishment in one task and its activity motivates learning and speaking in pupils.

TBLT is said to have the main role for a student who seeks to accomplish the task. Actually, as a result of this, one individual may obtain some roles such as participating in a group, monitoring, risk-taking and being innovative (Oxford, 2006; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). The instructor also plays several roles as to be a selector and sequencer of tasks, preparing them for

doing tasks, guide, strategy instructor and assistance provider (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992; Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

TBL has an advantage in the use of language in order to have meaningful communication. In this respect, TBL has highly to do with Content-Based Instruction combining learning of a language and subject content itself. Both methodologies pave the way for integrating skills in language like reading, writing, speaking and listening, as well as subskills like the development of fluency and accuracy. Ellis (2003, p. 65), considered TBL the most effective element in interaction in society and establishing established among individuals as a means for input for acquiring also using negotiation skills and communicative skills in the best way.

It is said, in the literature, that two programs applied TBI in second-language teaching and learning. One of them was the Malaysian Communicational Syllabus (1975) and the other was Bangalore Project. They both used a communicative framework for the programs (Richards & Rodgers, 2001& Prabhu 1987 &). These programs were designed for a short period of time; however, they attracted the attention of scholars in the domain of language teaching and learning and caused hot debates about their efficiency and creation of similar programs (Beretta & Davies, 1985; Prabhu 1987; Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

The most important term in TBI is the word task, which has been defined in a number of ways. In our everyday life, a task is defined as our ordinary goal-directed activities, which are common in our lives like writing a letter to a friend, doing homework, preparing the, and driving to work (Ellis, 2003). However, as far as second language teaching and learning are concerned, it is defined as a special kind of activity that is mostly on the meaning that the learners use in the target language with the aim of accomplishing a specific kind of task (Nunan, 1989; Skehan, 1996, Bygate, Skehan & Swain, 2001).

It was in the 1950s that tasks were considered part of vocational programs and their application was extended to education 1970s (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). After that in the 1980s, a wide range of proposals came into being for the purpose of TBI in second language teaching. This widespread use of TBI in language teaching and learning has caused many to believe that tasks are very important research tools in second language teaching and learning (Ellis, 2000).

Nunan (1989) suggests that tasks should be created in such a way that they can encourage learners to feel the need and to make an effort to complete them. In other words, it is through the

tasks that students are given a ‘‘purpose to use the target language” (Lee, 2000, p. 30). Indeed, in such purposeful activity, learners are not supposed to apply a certain number of language forms; rather, they are expected and encouraged to construct and apply the forms and functions of target language use in their own way with the help of the teacher which is not immediate correction. In this regard, the role that the teacher plays is to observe and facilitate this process (Lee, 2000).

For accomplishing the meaning-focused and communicative nature of the designed tasks, Skehan (1996) proposes the tasks should be designed in such a way that they have a relationship to the real world. The logic behind this idea is that such a relationship with the real world will create more meaningful and authentic language focuses. According to Ellis (2003) and Nunan (1989), authentic tasks are the ones that have similar patterns in the real world. As the tasks have dual aspects of being pedagogical and authentic, TBI is seen as an approach to prepare the ground for learning the language in such a way that it is appropriate for all skills (Willis, 1996).

Literature shows that tasks have useful applications in the oral performance of second language learners (see for example Bygate, Skehan & Swain, Crooks & Gass, Day, Klippel, Ur, cited in Willis, 2003). As an example, Skehan (1996), believes that tasks should be evaluated in terms of fluency, accuracy and complexity of language and that these skills are taught in balance of all these three aspects.

Tasks created for speaking are constructive in that they will fulfill the requirements to practice the target language in a communicative language. In this way, fluency and accuracy can be achieved and promoted through these pedagogic tasks (Brumfit, 1984). As a result, in the process of designing the tasks, the important factor is to assess the difficulty level of the designed tasks (Skehan, 1996). As Skehan puts it, students will not practice the tasks diligently if they are given tasks that are lower than their level of language; therefore, they will not achieve their goals in terms of fluency, accuracy and complexity.

Accordingly, many L2 learners are required to have good command of accuracy f, fluency and task response while performing speaking tasks. One of the situations in which L2 learners must demonstrate their speaking ability is when they sit for high-stakes tests like IELTS or TOEFL. In any standardized test one of the skills to be measured is speaking whose scoring depends largely on accuracy, fluency, and task response. To provide candidates with an appropriate level of preparation for the speaking task of exams at least one-fourth of any IELTS or TOEFL preparation courses are devoted to the skill of speaking.

The study addresses the paucity of research on the employment of task-based instruction in IELTS preparation-speaking classrooms. Although task-based instruction has been investigated in EFL classrooms, little research has been conducted in IELTS-speaking classrooms. Thus, it may provide general information for IELTS preparation program planners by providing an additional tool for the improvement of students' speaking skills.

At the local level, the study may contribute to the re-thinking and re-design of IELTS speaking courses in the curriculum renewal process in Iran and, in turn, encourage a more thorough examination of task-based instruction in other areas. In addition, the results of this TBI research can help teachers to create and design more focused-based tasks with the aim of fulfilling specific goals and needs.

## Review Literature

Task-based instruction has been investigated in second language teaching and learning. However, for a better understanding of the crux of the matter and in order to gain an understanding of the theoretical and applied aspects of the study, some of the related studies are reported. Finding that a task-based approach is the best way to be used in EFL speaking classes, Khomeijani Farahani and Khaghani Nejad (2009) investigated the diverse effects of task-based techniques with respect to gender and their impact on speaking level development. The results showed: 1) the effects of task-based activities on different genders; 2) understanding development as well as differences between male and female speaking levels.

Erten and Altay (2009) conducted research on the impacts of task-based group activities on individuals' collaborative behaviors in EFL-speaking settings. The purpose of that was to investigate: 1) the various effects of these activities as well as topic-based activities; and 2) the potentiality of developing collaborative effects on pupils.

To see if the effects of playing a role in learners' oral performance are successful, Aliakbari and Jamalvandi (2010) carried out research to see the effect of role-playing on EFL learners' speaking. The aim was to discover whether the task-based approach model in terms of role-playing could cause any significant changes in speaking in both the experimental group and the control group.

All the research above showed that all experimental groups performed better in comparison to the control group in the post-test period. Task-based activities involved more collaboration, leading to a better learning experience. These tasks helped them overcome obstacles in their

speaking and difficulties like asking for help in various conditions as well as being able to produce and talk about ideas. To put it in a nutshell, they became more like an interrogator rather than being interrogated. For teaching English in two classes, Lopez (2004) did research on task-based instruction instead of the presentation-practice-production (PPP) approach. The results of his experimental research showed that students who received TBI outperformed the other students, which can be due to the fact that students with TBI used language to do things like solve problems, do drills, and have access to information. He concluded that students who experienced real language could deal effectively with real-life situations. He found out that teachers, regardless of their background, should be trained before they go for the course.

In another study, Muller (2005) applied TBI to a small number of weak students at a private English school in Japan. For his teaching, he used a vocabulary-focused lesson from the presentation practice production (PPP)-based textbook. He also used Willis's (1996) task structure, which was as follows: Performing a communicative task, planning a report of the performance, and reporting the task results to the class For relating tasks to the units of the textbook, he first made a list of vocabulary from each textbook and assigned the topics to the vocabulary list. The results of the research showed that the task and the subsequent planning and reporting stages did not fulfill the criteria or features of task-based lessons; however, his approach did not prove that TBL can be used with low-level learners who may not be ready for the full version.

In another study, Al Nashash (2006) did research in order to explore the effect of a task-based program for teaching productive English language skills on the development of first-year secondary female students' oral and written skills at a secondary school in Amman. What he found as the results of this research was that, in comparison to conventional methods of teaching, the students' speaking and writing skills improved due to task-language teachings designed for them.

Furthermore, Lochana and Deb (2006) did research to investigate the impacts of TBI on language teaching and learning. They wanted to see if task-based teaching can increase language proficiency and if tasks can encourage learners to participate in the learning process. For this research, they designed an experiment in which non-task-based activities in textbooks were converted into task-based ones. The findings showed that TBI can enhance the proficiency and motivation of learners. In another study, the possible effects of task repetition and task type on fluency, accuracy, and complexity were investigated by Birjandi and Ahangari (2008). They assigned 120 subjects to six groups. The results indicated that the oral discourse, in line with the

fluency, accuracy, and complexity of the subjects, improved significantly as a result of task repetition and task type.

Such reports all indicate that TBL can have positive impacts on second language teaching, encouraging teachers to feel comfortable applying TBL in their classrooms. TBL also prepares the ground for learning the second language through such factors as exposure, meaningful use, motivation, and language analyses, as indicated by Willis (1996). This short review showed that although TBI has been investigated and many of the reports indicate the positive impacts of TBI in second language teaching and learning, there is still a need for further research with a focus on the IELTS speaking test as it has not been well researched.

**Research Questions**

This study aimed at investigating the impact of task-based learning, including problem-solving and jigsaw tasks, in IELTS speaking preparation classes on the speaking ability of Iranian IELTS candidates. In other words, this study tried to measure the effect of using task-based language teaching versus traditional teaching of speaking in IELTS classes on Iranian candidates' accuracy, fluency, and task response. For this purpose, the following questions were proposed:

Q1. Does implementing tasks in IELTS speaking preparation classes have any significant effect on Iranian IELTS candidates' speaking accuracy?

Q2. Does implementing tasks in IELTS speaking preparation classes have any significant effect on Iranian IELTS candidates' speaking fluency?

Q3. Does implementing tasks in IELTS speaking preparation classes have any significant effect on Iranian IELTS candidates' speaking task response?

## Method

**Design**

This study was true-experimental study in nature owing to the fact that it involved an experimental group, a control group and a post test.

**Participants**

The population of this study consisted of IELTS candidates studying at two IELTS preparation centers in Isfahan, Iran, which consisted of both females and males. 40 candidates who were

intermediate EFL learners in Danesh Pajouhan, Isfahan, Iran, and who scored 5–6 on a retired IELTS test were selected as the participants of this study. They were male and female, assigned to two groups each with 20 candidates.

**Procedures**

One of the groups received task-based language teaching in the class, called the experimental group, in 10 sessions, each lasting 90 minutes. The treatment included assigning participants in the experimental group to four-member groups and presenting problem-solving and jigsaw tasks to them. In order to enable students to carry out the tasks effectively, grammatical structures and new words they needed were pre-taught to them, which served as linguistic input.

The other group, the control group, received the center's instruction procedures, which are elaborated in the following: First, students introduced themselves and exchanged personal information in order to warm up, then the teacher or researcher conducted the first process of asking questions in accordance with the form in IELTS, from personalization to the most general types (parts 1, 2, and 3 in IELTS).

As well as that, to boost their vocabulary knowledge, students are required to read some texts to become familiar with advanced academic word lists, which might be useful in any skill in IELTS, especially in the context of speaking. After 20 minutes of reading texts, word building and family words are mentioned by instructors to make them know about the structures of words as well as understand them.

**Data Collection**

**Retired IELTS test**

To ensure the homogeneity of all participants, they were asked to sit for a retired IELTS test. This test was adapted from the Cambridge IELTS Series, which published past papers. By so doing, there was no need to estimate the reliability of the test because it was already reliable. This test included four sections testing all four language skills: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. The reading section consisted of three reading passages that included 40 questions and lasted for 60 minutes. Listening also took 45 minutes.

**IELTS Speaking**

To assess the candidate's speaking ability prior to the beginning of the experiment and after the experiment, a speaking test from IELTS was adopted. The two tests were selected from past papers in 2017 and were reliable and valid. The tests were scored by an expert who had 7 years of experience in teaching IELTS courses and was an IELTS examiner cooperating with the British Council.

**Interrater- reliability**

To ensure that the scores were reliable, two IELTS raters were invited to join the research. One of the raters was male, and the other was female. They were master's holders in TESOL and were former IELTS examiners. In addition, they had years of experience teaching IELTS courses at different institutions in Iran.

**Rubric for rating IELTS speaking**

For assessing the speaking performance of the subjects, there needs to be a valid and reliable rubric. For this reason, the rubric designed and produced by the British Council was used, as it was already valid and reliable.

**Figure 1**

*IELTS Speaking band descriptors (public version)*

| **IELTS Speaking band descriptors (public version)** | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Band | Fluency and Coherence | Lexical Resource | Lexical Resource | Pronunciation |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | speaks fluently with only rare repetition or self-correction; any hesitation is content related rather than to find words or grammar. Speaks coherently with fully appropriate cohesive features develops topics fully and appropriately. | uses vocabulary with full flexibility and precision in all topics. uses idiomatic. language naturally and accurately. | uses a full range of structures naturally and appropriately. produces consistently accurate structures apart from 'slips' characteristic of native speaker speech. | uses a full range of pronunciation features with precision and subtlety. sustains flexible use of features throughout is effortless to understand |
| 8 | speaks fluently with only occasional repetition or self-correction; hesitation is usually content-related and only rarely to search for language. develops topics coherently and appropriately. | uses a wide vocabulary resource readily and flexibly to convey precise meaning. uses less common and idiomatic vocabulary skillfully, with occasional inaccuracies. uses paraphrase effectively as required. | uses a wide range of structures flexibly. produces a majority of error-free sentences with only very occasional inappropriacies or basic/non-systematic errors | uses a wide range of pronunciation features. sustains flexible use of features, with only occasional lapses. is easy to understand throughout; L1 accent has minimal effect on intelligibility. |
| 7 | speaks at length without noticeable effort or loss of coherence. may demonstrate language related hesitation at times, or some repetition and/or self-correction. uses a range of connectives and discourse markers with some flexibility. | uses vocabulary resource flexibly to discuss a variety of topics. uses some less common and idiomatic vocabulary and shows some awareness of style and collocation, with some inappropriate choices. uses paraphrase effectively. | uses a range of complex structures with some flexibility. frequently produces error-free sentences, though some grammatical mistakes persist. | shows all the positive features of Band 6 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 8. |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | is willing to speak at length, though may lose coherence at times due to occasional repetition, self-correction or hesitation.<br>uses a range of connectives and discourse markers but not always appropriately. | has a wide enough vocabulary to discuss topics at length and make meaning clear in spite of inappropriacies.<br>generally paraphrases successfully. | uses a mix of simple and complex structures, but with limited flexibility.<br>may make frequent mistakes with complex structures, though these rarely cause comprehension problems. | uses a range of pronunciation features with mixed control.<br>shows some effective use of features but this is not sustained<br>can generally be understood throughout, though mispronunciation of individual words or sounds reduces clarity at times. |
| 5 | usually maintains flow of speech but uses repetition, self-correction and/or slow speech to keep going.<br>may over-use certain connectives and discourse markers.<br>produces simple speech fluently, but more complex communication causes fluency problems. | manages to talk about familiar and unfamiliar topics but uses vocabulary with limited flexibility.<br>attempts to use paraphrase but with mixed success. | produces basic sentence forms with reasonable accuracy.<br>uses a limited range of more complex structures, but these usually contain errors and may cause some comprehension problems. | shows all the positive features of Band 4 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 6. |
| 4 | cannot respond without noticeable pauses and may speak slowly, with frequent repetition and self-correction.<br>links basic sentences but with repetitious use of simple connectives and some breakdowns in coherence. | is able to talk about familiar topics but can only convey basic meaning on unfamiliar topics and makes frequent errors in word choice.<br>rarely attempts paraphrase | produces basic sentence forms and some correct simple sentences but subordinate structures are rare.<br>errors are frequent and may lead to misunderstanding. | uses a limited range of pronunciation features. attempts to control features but lapses are frequent.<br>mispronunciations are frequent and cause some difficulty for the listener. |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | speaks with long pauses.<br>has limited ability to link simple sentences.<br>gives only simple responses and is frequently unable to convey basic message. | uses simple vocabulary to convey personal information.<br>has insufficient vocabulary for less familiar topics. | attempts basic sentence forms but with limited success, or relies on apparently memorized utterances.<br>makes numerous errors except in memorized expressions. | shows some of the features of Band 2 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 4 |
| 2 | pauses lengthily before most words.<br>little communication possible. | only produces isolated words or memorized utterances. | cannot produce basic sentence forms. | speech is often unintelligible. |
| 1 | no communication possible.<br>no rateable language. | | | |
| 0 | does not attend. | | | |

**Materials for the Treatment Group**

Material for the experimental group was adopted from a variety of English textbooks including Topnotch series, Interchange series, and Touchstone series. The selected tasks provided students with a list of necessary vocabulary items and grammatical structures to equip students to fulfill the requirements of the tasks. Therefore, the selected tasks served both as input and language practice for learners.

**Data Analysis**

To assess the level of the subjects, a one-sample IELTS test was adopted. The results are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*One-Sample Statistics*

| | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Retired IELTS test | 41 | 5.5366 | 1.07465 | .16783 |

As the data in Table 1 reveal, the mean of the subjects was 5.53. As a result, the level of the subject who participated in this research was intermediate.

For assessing the accuracy of the subjects before the treatment, a pretest was conducted. Two raters scored the subjects. Their interrater reliability is shown in Table 2.

**First Research Question**

**Accuracy**

Does implementing tasks in IELTS speaking preparation classes have any significant effect on Iranian IELTS candidates' speaking fluency?

**Table 2**

*Pre-test of Control Group*

**Correlations**

| | | Rater1 | Rater2 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rater1 | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .619** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .004 |
| | N | 20 | 20 |
| Rater2 | Pearson Correlation | .619** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .004 | |
| | N | 20 | 20 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As the data can show, the Pearson correlation for rater 1 and 2 is 61. As a result, accuracy pretest has an acceptable index of inter-rater reliability.

For assessing the accuracy of the subjects after the treatment, a posttest was conducted. Two raters scored the subjects. Their interrater reliability is shown in table 3.

**Table 3**

*Posttest of Control Group*

**Correlations**

| | | Rater1 | Rater2 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rater1 | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .690** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .001 |
| | N | 20 | 20 |
| Rater2 | Pearson Correlation | .690** | 1 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .001 | |
| | N | 20 | 20 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As Table 3 shows, the correlation between rater 1 and 2 is 69. As a result, there is an acceptable index of correlation between the two raters.

For assessing the accuracy of the subjects before the treatment, a pretest was conducted. Two raters scored the subjects. Their interrater reliability is shown in Table 4.

**Table 4**

*Correlations of the Pretest of Experimental Group*

| | | Rater1 | Rater2 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rater1 | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .656** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .002 |
| | N | 20 | 20 |
| Rater2 | Pearson Correlation | .656** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .002 | |
| | N | 20 | 20 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As Table 4 shows, the correlation between rater 1 and 2 is 65. As a result, there is an acceptable index of correlation between the two raters.

For assessing the accuracy of the subjects after the treatment, a posttest was conducted. Two raters scored the subjects. Their interrater reliability is shown in Table 5.

**Table 5**

*Correlations of the Posttest of Experimental Group*

**Correlations**

| | | Rater1 | Rater2 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rater1 | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .730** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| | N | 20 | 20 |
| Rater2 | Pearson Correlation | .730** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| N | 20 | 20 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As Table 5 shows, the correlation between rater 1 and 2 is 73. As a result, there is an acceptable index of correlation between the two raters.

**Table 6**

*Paired Samples Statistics for the pre-test and post-test of the control group*

| | | Mean | N | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pair 1 | Pre-test of Control Group | 3.950 | 20 | .8721 | .1950 |
| | Post-test of Control Group | 4.375 | 20 | .9442 | .2111 |

For analyzing the pretest of the control group the and post-test of the control group, a paired sample correlation was conducted. The results are shown inTablee 7.

**Table 7**

*Paired Samples Correlations*

| | | N | Correlation | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pair 1 | Pre-test of Control Group & Post-test of Control Group | 20 | .631 | .003 |

**Table 8**

*Paired Samples Test*

| | | Paired Differences | | | | | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower | Upper | | | |
| Pair 1 | Pre-test of Control Group - Post-test of control Group | -.4250 | .7826 | .1750 | -.7913 | -.0587 | -2.429 | 19 | .025 |

As the data in Table 8 shows, the sig. (2-tailed) was.25, which is bigger than 0.05. As a result, there were no statistically significant differences between the two controls in the pretest and posttest.

A paired sample t-test for the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group was also conducted. The results are shown in Table 9.

**Table 9**

*Paired Samples Statistics*

| | | Mean | N | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pair 1 | Pre-test of experimental Group | 4.225 | 20 | .9662 | .2161 |
| | Post-test of Experimental Group | 6.550 | 20 | .7931 | .1773 |

As can be seen in table 9 the mean of the pretest in experimental group was 4.22 and the mean of the posttest in experimental group was 6.55. As a result, there was a statistically significant difference between two groups.

For better understanding the differences between pretest and posttest in experimental groups, a paired sample test was conducted and the results are shown in table 10.

**Table10**

*Paired Samples Test*

| | | Paired Differences | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | | | | |
| | | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | Lower | Upper | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| Pair 1 | Pre-test of experimental Group - Post-test of Experimental Group | -2.3250 | 1.1502 | .2572 | -2.8633 | -1.7867 | -9.040 | 19 | .000 |

As the data in data in table 8 show, the Sig. (2-tailed) was .000 which is smaller than 0.0. As a result, there was statistically significant differences between pretest and posttest in experimental groups.

For analyzing the differences between control group and experimental group in pretest, group statistics was conducted. The results are shown in table 11.

**Table 11**

*Group Statistics*

| | Group | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pretest | Control | 20 | 3.950 | .8721 | .1950 |
| | Experimental | 20 | 4.225 | .9662 | .2161 |

As the data in table 11 shows, the mean of the control group and experimental group was 3.95 and 4.22. As a result, there was no statistically significant difference between control and experimental groups in pretest.

For better tabulating the differences between control and experimental group, an independent sample test was run. Table 11 shows the results.

As can be seen in table 11, the Sig. (2-tailed) of the groups is .35 which is bigger than 0.05. As a result, there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups in pretest.

For showing the differences between control group and experimental group in posttest, a statistics group was run and the results are presented in table 12.

**Table 12**

*Statistics Group*

| | Group | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Posttest | Control | 20 | 4.375 | .9442 | .2111 |
| | Experimental | 20 | 6.550 | .7931 | .1773 |

As the data in table 12 demonstrates, the mean of the control group and experimental group were 4.37 and 6.55; respectively. As a result, it can be said that there is a significant difference between the two groups after the treatment on experimental group.

For better understanding the differences between control group and experimental group, an independent sample test was conducted. Table 13 below shows the results.

**Table 13**

*Independent Samples Test*

| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | F | Sig. | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | Lower | Upper |
| Post-test | Equal variances assumed | .121 | .730 | -7.889 | 38 | .000 | -2.1750 | .2757 | -2.7332 | -1.6168 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | | -7.889 | 36.900 | .000 | -2.1750 | .2757 | -2.7337 | -1.6163 |

As can be seen in table 13, the Sig. (2-tailed) of two groups is .000. As a result, there is a statistically significant difference between two groups in posttest.

**Second research Question**

**Fluency**

Does implementing tasks in IELTS speaking preparation classes have any significant effect on Iranian IELTS candidates' speaking fluency?

For assessing the accuracy of the subjects before the treatment, a pretest was conducted in the control group. Two raters scored the subjects. Their interrater reliability is shown in table 14.

**Table 14**

*Inter-rater reliability for Pre-test of Control Group*

**Correlations**

| | | Rater1CPreF | Rater2CpreF |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rater1 | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .628** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .003 |
| | N | 20 | 20 |
| Rater2 | Pearson Correlation | .628** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .003 | |
| | N | 20 | 20 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As table 14 shows, the correlation between rater 1 and 2 is 62. As a result, there is an acceptable index of correlation between the two raters.

For assessing the accuracy of the subjects before the treatment, a pretest was conducted in the control group. Two raters scored the subjects. Their interrater reliability is shown in table 15.

**Table 15**

*Correlation for posttest of Control group*

| | | Rater1CpostF | Rater2postF |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rater1CpostF | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .802** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| | N | 20 | 20 |
| Rater2postF | Pearson Correlation | .802** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |
| | N | 20 | 20 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As table 15 shows, the correlation between rater 1 and 2 is 802. As a result, there is an acceptable index of correlation between the two raters.

For assessing the accuracy of the subjects before the treatment, a pretest was conducted in the experimental group. Two raters scored the subjects. Their interrater reliability is shown in table 16.

**Table 16**

*Correlations For pre-test of Experimental Group*

| | | Rater1EpreF | Rater2EpreF |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rater1EpreF | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .715** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| | N | 20 | 20 |
| Rater2EpreF | Pearson Correlation | .715** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |
| | N | 20 | 20 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As table 16 shows, the correlation between rater 1 and 2 is 71. As a result, there is an acceptable index of correlation between the two raters.

For assessing the accuracy of the subjects after the treatment, a posttest was conducted in the experimental group. Two raters scored the subjects. Their interrater reliability is shown in table 17.

**Table 17**

*Correlations for Post-test of experimental Group*

| | | Rater1EpostF | Rater2EpostF |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rater1EpostF | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .756** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | N | 20 | 20 |
| Rater2EpostF | Pearson Correlation | .756** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |
| | N | 20 | 20 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As the data in table 17 show, the correlation is .756. In this regard, there is a good index of interrater reliability between two raters.

For showing the differences between control group in pretest and posttest, a paired sample test was conducted and the results are shown in table 18.

**Table 18**

*Paired sample t-test for pretest and posttest of control group paired Samples Statistics*

| | | Mean | N | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pair 1 | Pre-test of Control Group | 3.7625 | 20 | .80080 | .17906 |
| | Post-test of control Group | 4.2375 | 20 | .68573 | .15333 |

As the data in table 18 show, the mean of the pretest control group is 3.76; whereas the mean of the posttest is 4.23. As a result, there was statistically no significant differences between two groups.

For better understanding the differences between control group in pretest and posttest, a paired sample test was conducted and the results are shown in table 19.

**Table 19**

*Paired Samples Test*

| | Paired Differences | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |

| | | | | | Lower | Upper | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pair 1 | Pre-test of Control Group - Post-test of control Group | -.47500 | 1.24314 | .27797 | -1.05681 | .10681 | -1.709 | 19 | .104 |

As can be seen in table 19, the Sig. (2-tailed) of the pretest and posttest in the control group was .104 which is bigger than 0.05 and it can be said that there were no statically significant differences between two groups in there and posttest in control group.

For showing the differences between pretest and posttest of the experimental group, a paired sample test was conducted and the results are shown in table 20.

**Table 20**

*Paired samples t-test for pretest and posttest of experimental Group*

| | | Mean | N | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pair 1 | Pre-test of experimental Group | 3.7500 | 20 | .55012 | .12301 |
| | Post-test of Experimental Group | 5.6500 | 20 | .81273 | .18173 |

As can be seen in table 21, the Sig. (2-tailed) of the pretest in experimental and posttest of the experimental group in independent samples t-test is .000. As a result, there is a statistically significant difference between both groups.

For comparing the control group and experimental group in pretest, a groups statistic was employed. The results are shown in table 22.

**Table 22**

*Group Statistics*

| | Group | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pretest | Control | 20 | 3.7625 | .80080 | .17906 |
| | Experimental | 20 | 3.7500 | .55012 | .12301 |

As can be seen in table 22, the mean of the control group was 3.76 and the mean of the experimental group was 3.75. As a result, there was no statistically significant difference between them.

For better understanding the differences between control group in pretest and posttest, a paired sample test was conducted and the results are shown in table 23.

**Table 23**

*Independent Samples Test*

| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | F | Sig. | t | Df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | Lower | Upper |
| Pre-test | Equal variances assumed | 3.866 | .057 | .058 | 38 | .954 | .01250 | .21725 | -.42729 | .45229 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | | .058 | 33.667 | .954 | .01250 | .21725 | -.42916 | .45416 |

As the independent sample t-test for posttest of both groups shows, the Sig. (2-tailed) of the groups was .954 which is bigger than 0.05. Therefore, there is not statistically significant difference between the two groups. For comparing the control group and experimental group in pretest, a groups statistic was employed. The results are shown in table 24.

**Table 24**

*Group Statistics*

| | Group | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Posttest | Control | 20 | 4.2375 | .68573 | .15333 |
| | Experimental | 20 | 5.6500 | .81273 | .18173 |

As the data in table 24 shows, the mean of the control group in posttest was 4.23 and the mean of the experimental group in posttest was 5.650. As a result, there is statistically significant difference between two groups in posttest.

For reaching better results of the differences between two groups in posttest, an independent sample test was conducted. The results are shown in table 25.

**Table 25**

*Independent Samples Test*

| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | F | Sig. | T | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | Lower | Upper |
| Post-test | Equal variances assumed | .299 | .588 | -5.940 | 38 | .000 | -1.41250 | .23778 | -1.89385 | -.93115 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | | -5.940 | 36.953 | .000 | -1.41250 | .23778 | -1.89430 | -.93070 |

As can be seen, the sig. (2-tailed) between two groups in posttest is.000 which is smaller than 0.05. As a result, there was statistically significant difference between two groups in the posttest.

**Third research Question**

**Task Response**

Does implementing tasks in IELTS speaking preparation classes have any significant effect on Iranian IELTS candidates' speaking task response?

**Pre-test of Speaking**

For assessing the differences between control group and experimental group, a group statistic was conducted. The table 26 below shows the results.

**Table 26**

*Group Statistics*

| | Group | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pretest | Control | 20 | 3.8563 | .58105 | .12993 |
| | Experimental | 20 | 3.9875 | .55887 | .12497 |

As can be seen, the mean of the control group and experimental group was 3.85 and 3.98; respectively. In this way, there was no significantly any difference between control and experimental groups in speaking.

In order to reach a better understanding of the differences between control and experimental groups in pretest, an independent test was conducted. The results are shown in table 27.

**Table 27**

| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | F | Sig. | t | *Independent Samples Test* Df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower | Upper |
| Pre-test | Equal variances assumed | .017 | .898 | -.728 | 38 | .471 | -.13125 | .18027 | -.49619 | .23369 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | | -.728 | 37.943 | .471 | -.13125 | .18027 | -.49621 | .23371 |

As can be seen in table 27, the Sig. (2-tailed) was 471. As a result, there was no statistically significant differences between control and experimental groups in pretest.

For showing the results of the differences between control and experimental groups in posttest, a group statistic was conducted. The results are shown in table 28.

**Table 28**

*Group Statistics*

| | Group | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Posttest | Control | 20 | 4.3063 | .72828 | .16285 |
| | Experimental | 20 | 6.1000 | .52815 | .11810 |

As the results in table 28 shows, the mean of the control group was 4.30; whereas the result of the experimental group was 6.10. As a result, there was statistically significant difference between two groups in the posttest.

In order to reach a better understanding of the differences between control and experimental groups in posters, an independent test was conducted. The results are shown in table 29.

**Table 29**

*Independent Samples Test*

| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | F | Sig. | t | Df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | Lower | Upper |
| Post-test | Equal variances assumed | 2.675 | .110 | -8.917 | 38 | .000 | -1.79375 | .20116 | -2.20098 | -1.38652 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | | -8.917 | 34.655 | .000 | -1.79375 | .20116 | -2.20228 | -1.38522 |

As the data in table 29 shows, the Sig. (2-tailed) of the groups was .000. As a result, there was statistically significant difference between two groups in posttest.

## Discussion

### Response to the First Research Question

The implementation of activities in IELTS speaking practice courses and their potential impacts on the speaking accuracy of Iranian IELTS applicants were the first research questions addressed in this study. It was important to confirm the interrater reliability before starting the treatment process. The results in Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5 demonstrate that the index of correlation between the two raters was satisfactory for both the pretest and the posttest. The data in Tables 6, 7, and 8 further demonstrate that there was no statistically significant difference between the control groups prior to and following the therapy (.025).

Tables 9, 10, and 12's post-test results for the experimental groups, however, demonstrate that there was a substantial difference between the experimental groups' pretest and post-test scores (.000).

### Response to the Second Research Question

Investigating the potential effects of implementing assignments in IELTS speaking preparation classes on Iranian IELTS candidates' speaking fluency was the second research topic of this study. The interrater dependability of the raters was examined, just like the first study question. There was a favorable connection between raters 1 and 2, as seen by the data in Tables 14, 15, 16, and 17. As a result, the index of correlation between the two raters was satisfactory. Pair sample and independent sample tests were used to compare the groups. There was no statistically significant association between the control group before and after the treatment, as shown by the results in Tables 18 and 19 (104).

However, as evidenced by the information in Tables 20 and 21, there was a statistically significant distinction between Responses to the Third Research Question:

Does implementing tasks in IELTS speaking preparation classes have any significant effect on Iranian IELTS candidates' speaking task response?

The third research question of this research was to see if implementing tasks in IELTS speaking preparation classes have any significant effect on Iranian IELTS candidates' speaking task response. For this purpose, like the first and second research questions, paired and dependent

sample tests were calculated. As the data in Tables 26 and 27 reveal, there was no statistically significant difference between the experimental and control group in the pre-test (.471).

However, differences between the control group and the experimental group were discovered following the therapy. Tables 28 and 29 (.000) display this. In this regard, it is concluded that there is a statistically significant difference between the speaking task responses of the Iranian respondents in the experimental group and control group. As a result, it can be said that the third research question's null hypothesis is rejected.

## Conclusion and Implications

This study looked into how a technique called TBI affects how well Iranian students learning English are able to speak. Specifically, the study examined how TBI impacts how quickly and correctly the students speak and how well they complete tasks. Two sets of students were picked at random, one to be the control and another to be the experimental group. The treatment given to a group of learners who were learning English showed that TBI can help improve their speaking skills.

This research agrees with other studies in this field. These studies were done by different people in different years. The names of the people who did the studies are: Lopez, Al Nashash, Lochana and Deb, and Birjandi and Ahangari. The studies show that using TBLI helps people become better at speaking. But this study found something different than Muller's study in 2005. Muller didn't find any evidence that teaching TBLI improves speaking skills.

This research has important ideas. This could affect the people who teach IELTS. They can use assignments that require you to give information to improve how well you speak on the IELTS test. Also, the participants can learn how to do specific exercises to improve their IELTS scores, which can help them get better results. Furthermore, those who create the IELTS course and materials can use the information. They can use the findings to create new materials.

This research had some problems that might make the results less reliable. One problem was that there weren't enough people in the study because some didn't want to take part or had to leave for personal reasons. This study only looked at the speaking part of the IELTS test and didn't look at the writing, listening or reading parts.

There are some ideas for finding out more. It is a good idea to check if giving tasks based on what someone reads can improve how well they write in the IELTS test. This could be a helpful

part of the IELTS test. It's a good idea to learn about Input-based Tasks in tests like TOEFL or GRE because those tests are known all around the world.

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