

## The Efficacy of DreamBuilder-Mediated TBLT in Enhancing English Proficiency: An Experimental Study on Women Entrepreneurs

Aqzhariady Khartha<sup>1\*</sup>, Muthmainnah Bahri A. Bohang<sup>2</sup>, Marhamah<sup>3</sup>, Heri Alfian<sup>4</sup>

Universitas Sembilanbelas November Kolaka, Indonesia <sup>1)2)3)4)</sup>

aqzhariadykhartha@gmail.com <sup>1)</sup>, muti.bahri@gmail.com <sup>2)</sup>, marhamahudri@gmail.com <sup>3)</sup>,

herialfian7@gmail.com <sup>4)</sup>

\*Corresponding author

### ABSTRACT

English proficiency has become a critical determinant of business competitiveness for women entrepreneurs in Indonesia, yet existing programs rarely address their professional communication needs. This study investigated the effects of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) through the *DreamBuilder* platform on the English proficiency of Indonesian women entrepreneurs in the Academy for Women Entrepreneurs (AWE) program, Makassar. A quasi-experimental mixed-methods design involved 40 participants in a TBLT group (n = 20) or Traditional instruction group (n = 20), with pre- and post-test scores, questionnaire, and interview data collected concurrently. The TBLT group demonstrated significantly greater proficiency gains (mean gain: 25.8 vs. 9.8 points;  $t(38) = 18.43$ ,  $p < .001$ , Cohen's  $d = 5.27$ ). Participants rated task-profession relevance highly ( $M = 4.6$ ) and reported increased daily professional English use post-intervention. Thematic analysis identified four facilitating factors such as task-profession alignment, platform flexibility, resource variety, and peer interaction, and four inhibiting factors such as technological barriers, delayed feedback, limited cultural relevance, and self-regulation challenges. Extending TBLT evidence to adult women entrepreneur learners through a purpose-built digital entrepreneurship platform constitutes the study's primary novelty. Platform developers and policymakers are recommended to prioritize task localization, integrated feedback, and digital infrastructure investment to maximize TBLT effectiveness in comparable emerging economy contexts.

**Keywords** : Dreambuilder, English proficiency, EFL Indonesia, Task-Based Language Teaching; women entrepreneurs

**How to Cite** : Khartha, A., Bohang, M. B. A., Marhamah, & Alfian, H. (2026). The Efficacy of DreamBuilder-Mediated TBLT in Enhancing English Proficiency: An Experimental Study on Women Entrepreneurs. *Seltics Journal: Scope of English Language Teaching Literature and Linguistics*, 9(1), 108–122. <https://doi.org/10.46918/seltics.v9i1.3434>

**Article History** : Received: 03-06-2026 | Revised: 21-06-2026 | Accepted: 22-06-2026

### INTRODUCTION

English has become the main language for global business and online trade. It serves as the key communication tool for international negotiations, networking across borders, and accessing markets (Hanafi et al., 2023). In Indonesia, the need for English skills among women entrepreneurs has grown as the country further integrates into global value chains and digital business platforms expand rapidly. National data shows that women make up about 64% of micro and small business owners in Indonesia. However, their involvement in export markets and international business networks is still noticeably low. This difference is partly due to a lack of English language skills (Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, 2022). For these women, speaking English is not just a helpful skill; it is a key factor for gaining access

to foreign investment, global customers, and knowledge that is vital for sustainable business growth (Ouanhlee, 2023; Liao & Zhang, 2024).

Even with this growing demand, women entrepreneurs in Indonesia still run into major obstacles when it comes to learning English. Structural issues like limited access to quality training, family and business obligations, poor digital infrastructure, and limited professional networks greatly hinder participation in language education programs (Goodman et al., 2022; Muradás-Taylor, 2023). An initial observation before this study showed that the English skills of women participating in the target program were generally low. Most participants had difficulty completing basic business tasks in English, such as writing professional emails or handling simple negotiations. This observation matches broader findings that suggest current English language teaching for this group often uses methods focused on forms rather than real-life relevance. This approach leads to low motivation and high dropout rates in online learning settings (Abe & Kogo, 2021; Sofi-Karim et al., 2023).

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) has demonstrated effective in enhancing communication skills, learner motivation, and language development in a variety of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings. Bryfonski & McKay (2019) confirmed that TBLT has positive effects on second language learning in many teaching environments. Harris & Leeming (2024) specifically pointed out the effectiveness of focusing on language after tasks in EFL settings. Zhou & Deocampo (2023) also found that TBLT improved motivation and communication skills among EFL learners. However, most research on TBLT has focused on school-age students or general EFL groups in traditional classrooms. Its use in specialized digital entrepreneurship platforms targeting adult women learners in developing countries has not been studied. Also, the contextual factors, such as technical, motivational, and socio-professional that impact TBLT implementation in these online settings are not well understood. This gap is significant because practitioners and curriculum designers need specific evidence to effectively adapt TBLT for women entrepreneurs in Indonesia.

To add to the current knowledge about TBLT's effectiveness, this study explores the use of TBLT within the DreamBuilder online entrepreneurship platform and looks at its impact on the English language skills of Indonesian women entrepreneurs. DreamBuilder serves as the platform where TBLT task sequences were delivered, including writing professional emails, preparing product pitches, and simulating business negotiations. This study supports the idea that TBLT helps in language development while applying it to a context with three unique aspects that past research has not addressed: adult women learners, a digital platform for entrepreneurship, and an Indonesian EFL environment. The study is guided by three research questions: (1) How much does TBLT through DreamBuilder improve participants' English language skills? (2) What do participants think about TBLT in this online entrepreneurship setting? (3) What factors help or hinder the successful use of TBLT in this context?

The findings of this study aim to create useful evidence for designing English language programs tailored for women entrepreneurs in Indonesia and similar emerging economies. By identifying the conditions where TBLT works effectively in digital entrepreneurship education, the study offers guidance for platform developers, language curriculum designers, and policymakers who wish to enhance women's English language skills as a way to boost economic involvement and competitiveness.

## **METHODS**

This study employed a mixed-methods research methodology, combining a quasi-experimental quantitative method with qualitative data collection, to investigate the effects of Task-Based Language

---

Teaching (TBLT) on the English ability of Indonesian women entrepreneurs. The researcher chose a quasi-experimental design because random assignment to groups was not possible due to the program-based structure of the participant pool. Instead, participants were assigned to groups based on their enrollment cohort. The mixed-methods design aimed to capture both measurable proficiency gains and participants' experiences with the intervention, in line with Creswell & Plano Clark's (2023) convergent parallel model, where quantitative and qualitative data are collected at the same time and combined during interpretation.

The target population included Indonesian women entrepreneurs enrolled in the Academy for Women Entrepreneurs (AWE) program in the Makassar region. A purposeful sample of 40 participants was chosen based on active program enrollment and their consent to participate. These participants were set into two groups: the experimental group ( $n = 20$ ), which received TBLT-based instruction through the DreamBuilder platform, and the control group ( $n = 20$ ), which got traditional, form-focused instruction. Both groups were matched based on pre-test English proficiency scores to ensure they were similar at the start (experimental group  $M = 57.8$ ,  $SD = 2.6$ ; control group  $M = 58.0$ ,  $SD = 2.6$ ).

Three data collection tools were used. To get started, participants were given an English proficiency test as a pre-test and post-test to track changes in their language skills. This test assessed productive and receptive skills needed for business communication, including reading comprehension, writing, and oral tasks. Second, a structured questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale was distributed to participants in the experimental group at the end of the intervention to assess their views on TBLT's effectiveness, relevance, and engagement. Third, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a purposefully selected subsample of 10 participants from the experimental group to gather detailed qualitative insights about their learning experiences, challenges, and attitudes toward the TBLT method.

The intervention occurred in four stages. In the preparation stage, TBLT task sequences were designed and connected to real-world entrepreneurial communication activities on the DreamBuilder platform. These included writing professional emails, preparing product pitches, and simulating virtual business negotiations. In the implementation stage, the experimental group worked on these tasks during the designated teaching period, while the control group received teacher-led, grammar-focused lessons on similar content. In the data collection stage, pre- and post-tests were given to both groups, and questionnaires and interviews were conducted with participants in the experimental group after completing the intervention. In the data analysis stage, quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed using the methods outlined below.

Quantitative data were analyzed with an independent samples t-test to see if the difference in proficiency gains between the TBLT group and the control group was statistically significant. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations for pre-test and post-test scores, were calculated for both groups to show the level of improvement. Questionnaire data were analyzed using frequency distributions and percentage calculations. Prior to the independent samples t-test, normality of gain scores was assessed using the Shapiro-Wilk test (TBLT group:  $W = 0.94$ ,  $p = .32$ ; Traditional group:  $W = 0.91$ ,  $p = .08$ ; Shapiro & Wilk, 1965), and homogeneity of variance was examined using Levene's test ( $F = 1.24$ ,  $p = .27$ ; Levene, 1960). Both assumptions were satisfied, justifying the use of the independent samples t-test with pooled variance. Qualitative data from interviews were evaluated through thematic analysis based on Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework, where data were coded inductively and organized into key themes representing factors that helped or hindered TBLT implementation.

---

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Results

This section presents the findings organized around the three research questions guiding this study. The first sub-section addresses changes in English proficiency scores through quantitative pre-test and post-test comparisons. The second sub-section examines participants' perceptions of TBLT as reported through questionnaire and behavioral data. The third sub-section presents the facilitating and inhibiting factors identified through thematic analysis of interview data.

#### 1. Research Question 1: Effects of TBLT on English Proficiency

Pre-test and post-test scores were collected from both groups before and after the eight-week intervention in order to determine to what extent TBLT enhanced the participants' English proficiency. Descriptive statistics for the TBLT and Traditional groups are given in Table 1. It includes group means, standard deviations, and mean gains.

**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics: Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores by Group

Group	n	Pre-Test M (SD)	Post-Test M (SD)	Mean Gain	Post-Pre Diff.
TBLT (Experimental)	20	57.8 (2.6)	83.6 (3.1)	+25.8	25.8
Traditional (Control)	20	58.0 (2.6)	67.8 (2.9)	+9.8	9.8

Note: M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation.

As presented in Table 1, both groups entered the study with comparable pre-test means of TBLT: M = 57.8 (SD = 2.6); Traditional: M = 58.0 (SD = 2.6), confirming baseline equivalence between the two groups prior to the intervention. Following the eight-week program, the TBLT group recorded a post-test mean of M = 83.6 (SD = 3.1), representing a gain of 25.8 points. The Traditional group achieved a post-test mean of M = 67.8 (SD = 2.9), a gain of 9.8 points. The low standard deviations in both groups at post-test indicate consistent within-group performance, while the 16-point difference in mean gains between groups suggests a meaningful differential effect of instructional approach.

While Table 1 establishes the descriptive picture of score changes, it does not confirm whether the observed difference between groups is statistically significant. To determine this, an independent samples t-test was conducted on the gain scores of both groups. The results are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Independent Samples t-Test: Comparison of Proficiency Gain Score

Comparison	Mean Difference	t	df	p	Cohen's d
TBLT gain vs. Traditional gain	15.8	18.43	38	< .001	5.27

Note: Analysis based on gain scores (post-test minus pre-test). Shapiro-Wilk normality: TBLT  $W = 0.94$ ,  $p = .32$ ; Traditional  $W = 0.91$ ,  $p = .08$ . Levene's test for equality of variances:  $F = 1.24$ ,  $p = .27$ . Cohen's  $d \geq 0.8 =$  large effect.  $p < .001$ .

As shown in Table 2, the independent samples t-test confirms that the improvement in the TBLT group was statistically significantly greater than that in the Traditional group,  $t(38) = 18.43$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . The difference in the mean improvement scores between the two groups was 15.8 points. Cohen's  $d = 5.27$  indicates a very large effect size, suggesting that the TBLT's advantage is not only statistically significant but also practically substantial. These results provide strong quantitative evidence in response to RQ 1: The implementation of TBLT via the DreamBuilder platform resulted in a significantly

greater improvement in English proficiency compared to conventional instruction over the same period.

To provide a visual representation of the changes in scores at the group level, Figure 1 presents the mean pre-test and post-test scores for both groups in a comparative bar chart format.

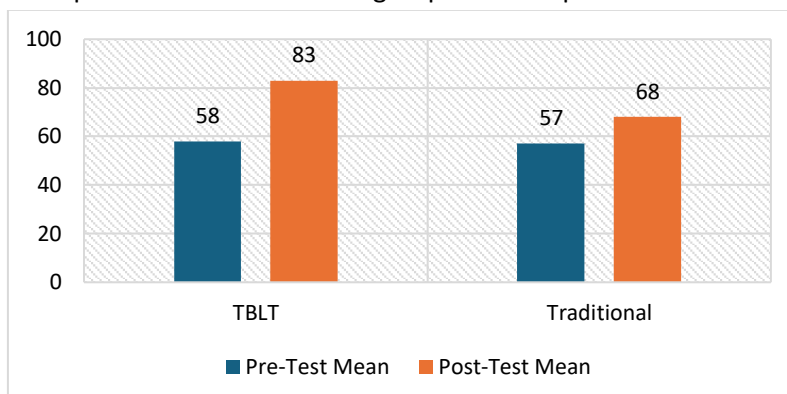


Figure 1. Pre-Test and Post-Test Mean Scores: TBLT Group vs. Traditional Group

The aggregate and individual proficiency data together provide quantitative evidence of the effectiveness of TBLT in this context. After addressing the first research question, the following subsection will examine participants' self-assessments of their TBLT experience, including their perceptions of improvements in language proficiency, the relevance of the tasks, and changes in their use of professional English in response to Research Question 2.

## 2. Research Question 2: Participants' Perceptions of TBLT on the DreamBuilder Platform

To complement the quantitative proficiency data, a questionnaire was administered to all 20 experimental group participants at the conclusion of the intervention. Seven items were included to capture perceptions of language improvement, task relevance, motivation, platform usability, professional English use, feedback quality, and cultural relevance of tasks. Table 3 presents the full response distribution and mean scores for each item.

Table 3. Questionnaire Results: Participants' Perceptions of TBLT (n = 20)

Item	Agree / Strongly Agree n (%)	Disagree / Strongly Disagree n (%)	M (SD)
TBLT tasks improved my vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.	19 (95%)	1 (5%)	4.7 (0.5)
Tasks were relevant to my real business communication needs.	18 (90%)	2 (10%)	4.6 (0.6)
TBLT increased my motivation to learn English.	17 (85%)	3 (15%)	4.4 (0.7)
The DreamBuilder platform was easy to navigate.	16 (80%)	4 (20%)	4.2 (0.8)
I now use English more often in professional activities.	16 (80%)	4 (20%)	4.1 (0.9)
Feedback was timely and sufficient for my learning.	11 (55%)	9 (45%)	3.4 (1.1)
Tasks reflected my cultural background and context.	10 (50%)	10 (50%)	3.2 (1.2)

Note: Five-point Likert scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation.

As shown in Table 3, participants' perceptions were very positive regarding the first five items, with average scores ranging from 4.1 to 4.7. Ninety-five percent of participants (n = 19) agreed or

strongly agreed that TBLT tasks contributed to improvements in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation ( $M = 4.7, SD = 0.5$ ), while 90% ( $n = 18$ ) affirmed the professional relevance of these tasks to their business communication context ( $M = 4.6, SD = 0.6$ ). An increase in motivation was reported by 85% of participants ( $M = 4.4, SD = 0.7$ ). However, two items elicited significantly lower and more divided responses: timeliness and adequacy of feedback ( $M = 3.4, SD = 1.1$ ; 55% agreed) as well as the cultural relevance of the tasks ( $M = 3.2, SD = 1.2$ ; 50% agreed). The higher standard deviation on the cultural relevance item reflects greater variability in participants' views, indicating that while some considered the tasks contextually appropriate, a significant proportion disagreed.

In addition to their assessments of the TBLT experience itself, participants also reported observable changes in how frequently they used English in their professional lives following the intervention. This behavioral dimension provides additional evidence of the program's real-world impact, which goes beyond what can be captured by proficiency test scores alone.

Before the program began, 70% of participants ( $n = 14$ ) reported that they used English only once or twice a week, typically through interactions aided by translation tools and basic written messaging. By the end of the program, 60% ( $n = 12$ ) reported using English daily in professional contexts, particularly in product presentations and virtual business negotiations. This shift from passive, tool-dependent engagement to active, daily professional use represents a meaningful behavioral transfer that directly addresses RQ 2 and aligns with the demonstrated improvement in language proficiency evidenced in the proficiency test data.

The questionnaire data not only reveals what participants gained from TBLT but also where the experience fell short, particularly regarding feedback and cultural fit. To understand the broader range of factors shaping participants' engagement with the program, the following subsection presents findings from interview data, which analyzes both the conditions that support TBLT implementation and those that hinder it.

### 3. Research Question 3: Facilitating and Inhibiting Factors in TBLT Implementation

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a purposively selected subsample consisting of 10 participants from the experimental group to examine in depth the factors influencing their learning experiences in TBLT. A thematic analysis of the interview transcripts yielded eight themes into four supportive themes and four inhibiting themes, which are summarized in Table 4, along with representative quotes from the participants.

**Table 4.** Thematic Analysis Results: Facilitating and Inhibiting Factors ( $n = 10$ )

Factor Type	Theme	Description	Representative Quote
Facilitating	Task-profession alignment	TBLT tasks mapped onto real entrepreneurial activities (email writing, pitch preparation, negotiation), enabling immediate language application.	<i>"The tasks were exactly what I do in my business. Practicing emails to suppliers felt real." (P3)</i>
Facilitating	Platform flexibility	Online delivery allowed participants to schedule learning around business and family demands.	<i>"I could study at 10 PM after my children slept. No other course gave me that." (P7)</i>
Facilitating	Resource variety	Access to instructional videos, articles, and forums diversified learning input and reinforced vocabulary comprehension.	<i>"The videos helped me understand things I could not get from reading alone." (P1)</i>

Factor Type	Theme	Description	Representative Quote
Facilitating	Peer interaction	Group tasks and breakout rooms promoted collaborative practice, peer feedback, and reduced speaking anxiety.	<i>"Practicing with other women made me less scared to speak in English." (P9)</i>
Inhibiting	Technological barriers	Unstable internet connectivity disrupted task completion and reduced continuity of engagement.	<i>"My internet often cut off in the middle of a task. It was very frustrating." (P5)</i>
Inhibiting	Delayed feedback	Asynchronous delivery reduced immediacy of corrections, occasionally reinforcing errors across sessions.	<i>"I made the same mistake for two weeks because no one corrected me right away." (P2)</i>
Inhibiting	Limited cultural relevance	Some task scenarios used culturally unfamiliar references, reducing perceived task authenticity and engagement.	<i>"The negotiation scripts felt like they were written for American companies, not for my market." (P8)</i>
Inhibiting	Self-regulation challenges	Absence of classroom accountability created difficulties in maintaining motivation and study habits.	<i>"Without a teacher watching, I sometimes skipped sessions when work got busy." (P6)</i>

Note. Participant codes (P1–P10) are pseudonymous. Quotes translated from Indonesian and lightly edited for clarity.

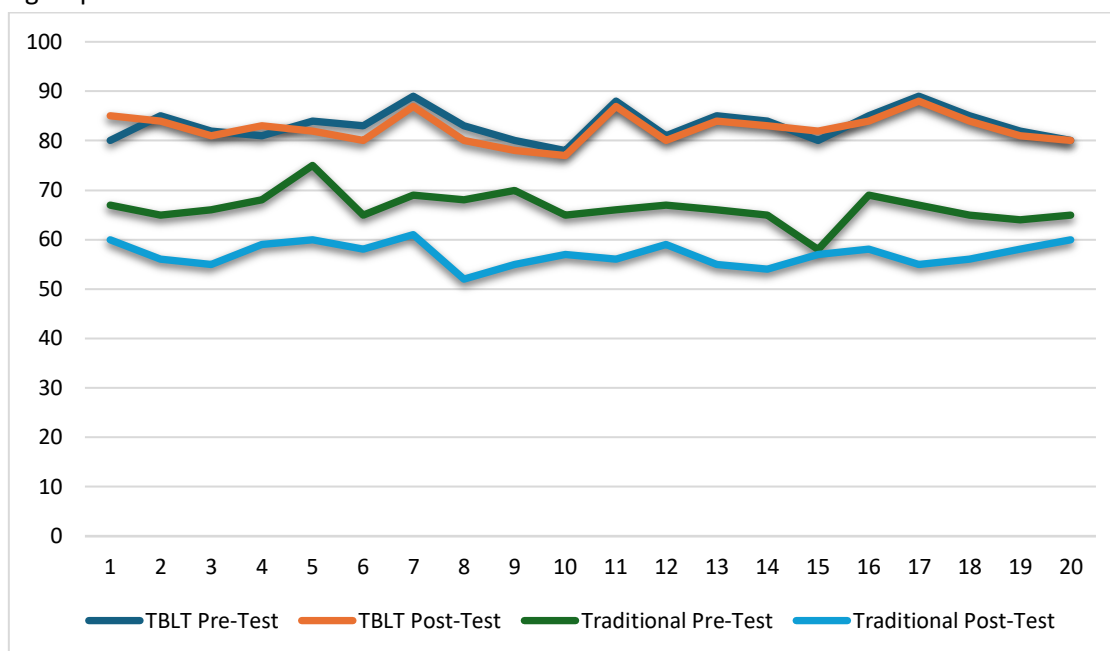
As shown in Table 4, these four supporting themes indicate a consistent pattern: TBLT is successful when the method makes language learning feel immediately useful. The alignment between tasks and one’s profession is the most frequently cited supporting factor; participants in various interviews emphasized that the alignment between TBLT tasks and their daily business activities is a key driver of engagement and perceived value. Platform flexibility is crucial for participants who must balance business and household responsibilities, as they find conventional learning formats with fixed schedules difficult to access. The diversity of resources and peer interactions serve as complementary supporting factors—the former expands vocabulary exposure, while the latter reduces the speaking anxiety reported by many participants prior to the intervention.

While these enabling factors reflect the conditions in which TBLT thrives, four barriers identify limitations to its effectiveness in this context and point to specific areas requiring intervention at the structural and instructional design levels.

Technological barriers and self-regulatory challenges are structural obstacles in online learning environments: the former reflects the limitations of digital infrastructure in participants’ operational environments, while the latter reflects the absence of external accountability mechanisms that are naturally present in face-to-face classrooms. In contrast, delayed feedback and limited cultural relevance are internal instructional design issues inherent in the implementation of TBLT itself. Participants who experienced delayed corrections reported that errors were reinforced over several sessions before being addressed, while those who encountered culturally misaligned tasks reported disengagement from activities they perceived as disconnected from their real-world business contexts. These two design-level barriers are particularly significant because they directly undermine TBLT’s core premises—timely interactive feedback and task authenticity—and, unlike structural barriers, are entirely within the program designer’s control to address.

Overall, these quantitative and qualitative findings present a coherent picture of TBLT’s effectiveness and the conditions for its success in this context. Figure 2 complements the aggregate

data in Table 1 by visualizing how skill gains are distributed at the individual participant level across both groups.



**Figure 2.** Individual Pre-Test to Post-Test Proficiency Score Trajectories by Group

As illustrated in Figure 2, the distribution of individual gains reinforces the aggregate findings. In the TBLT group, 17 of 20 participants (85%) recorded gains exceeding 20 points, with several participants improving by more than 30 points. In the Traditional group, 16 of 20 participants (80%) improved by fewer than 12 points. The consistency of large gains within the TBLT group indicates that the treatment effects were broadly distributed across participants rather than driven by a small subset of high performers, strengthening confidence in the robustness of the group-level results reported in Tables 1 and 2.

The findings across all three research questions are taken up in the following Discussion section, where they are interpreted in relation to existing TBLT literature and the broader theoretical and practical implications of the study are drawn out.

## Discussion

This study set out to examine whether TBLT, implemented through the DreamBuilder platform, could improve the English proficiency of Indonesian women entrepreneurs, and to identify the perceptual and contextual factors shaping its effectiveness. The findings across all three research questions converge on a coherent interpretation: TBLT produced measurable, large-magnitude proficiency gains that significantly exceeded those of conventional instruction; was broadly well-received by participants whose primary motivation was professional utility; and succeeded or faltered in direct proportion to the alignment between task design and participants lived entrepreneurial and sociocultural realities. Each of these dimensions is discussed below in relation to existing literature.

### 1. RQ 1: TBLT and English Proficiency Gains

The TBLT group's mean gain of 25.8 points, compared to 9.8 points in the Traditional group, and the large effect size (Cohen's  $d = 5.27$ ) provide strong evidence that TBLT surpassed conventional instruction in this context. This finding aligns with Bryfonski and McKay's (2019) meta-analysis, which confirmed positive effects of TBLT on second language learning across various instructional settings. The present study offers context-specific support by focusing on adult women entrepreneurs in

Indonesia, a group and setting not previously included in the meta-analysis. This corresponds with Harris and Leeming's (2024) exploratory study at a Japanese university, where TBLT students showed significant improvement and outperformed those taught through Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) methods. This supports the idea that authentic communicative tasks create more effective and natural pathways to language proficiency than formulaic methods.

The effect size observed here is substantially larger than what is typically reported in TBLT research and requires multi-factor interpretation rather than a single-cause explanation. For reference, Bryfonski and McKay's (2019) meta-analysis of 52 TBLT implementation studies reported an overall effect of  $d = 0.93$ ; the  $d = 5.27$  reported here exceeds that benchmark by a considerable margin, and several interacting factors, beyond the instructional treatment itself, likely account for this magnitude. The most direct statistical explanation is that the low post-test standard deviations in both groups (TBLT: 3.1; Traditional: 2.9) reflect unusually consistent within-group performance, which minimizes distributional overlap and mathematically elevates Cohen's  $d$ . However, this explanation is incomplete on its own. Sample homogeneity is also a structural feature of this design: participants were purposively selected from a single AWE program cohort, matched on pre-test scores, and shared closely similar occupational and sociolinguistic profiles as women entrepreneurs in the same regional program. This degree of within-group similarity constrains variance independently of any treatment effect. The proficiency instrument was additionally researcher-designed rather than a validated standard measure. As acknowledged in this paper's limitations, researcher-designed instruments may not be calibrated to capture fine-grained within-group differences, which compresses variance and elevates the observed  $d$  accordingly. The quasi-experimental design introduces a further boundary: without random assignment, unmeasured between-group differences beyond those recorded at pre-test, such as variation in digital access outside program hours or prior online learning experience, cannot be fully excluded as contributing factors.

These qualifications do not undermine the finding that TBLT produced meaningfully greater gains. The consistent individual-level trajectories in Figure 2 and the 16-point gap in mean improvement between groups both support that conclusion. The effect size is best read as the product of a genuine instructional advantage compounded by the study's sampling, design, and measurement characteristics. The substantive explanation for TBLT's advantage centers on task-profession alignment. Fang et al. (2021) showed in a large Chinese EFL classroom that TBLT with purpose-specific task support greatly improved vocabulary acquisition and language production compared to generic instruction, confirming that task specificity amplifies TBLT's effects. In the present context, DreamBuilder's task sequences were built around the precise communication scenarios participants engage in daily, making language learning immediately purposeful rather than abstractly academic. This aligns with Bygate's (1999) view of tasks as the framing contexts that shape how deeply learners engage with language: the closer a task mirrors real-world communicative demands, the more consistently and thoroughly learners process the target language.

The study also aligns with Harris and Leeming (2024), who found that focusing on language after tasks in TBLT accelerates proficiency development in EFL contexts. The DreamBuilder platform included language reflection activities after task completion, which may have helped the observed gains. However, since the current design does not isolate individual task elements, the exact reasons for TBLT's effectiveness such as task authenticity, post-task focus, peer interaction, or their interaction still need to be clarified in future controlled research. Research on Technology-mediated TBLT (TM-TBLT) by González-Lloret & Ortega (2014) and further explored by Chong & Reinders (2020)

---

consistently shows that digital delivery of TBLT maintains core interaction processes while increasing accessibility, placing current results within the broader TM-TBLT literature.

## 2. RQ 2: Participants' Perceptions of TBLT

Participants reported broadly positive perceptions, especially about task relevance ( $M = 4.6$ ) and language improvement ( $M = 4.7$ ). This aligns with Willis (2021) three-stage TBLT cycle, where the pre-task, task, and language focus phases aim to engage learners through meaningful activities. For participants motivated by professional needs, the entrepreneurship-focused tasks of DreamBuilder met this authenticity requirement. Chen & Wang (2019) support this, arguing that TBLT's focus on meaningful tasks gives learners chances for active participation and interaction that motivate them intrinsically. The finding that 85% of participants felt more motivated ( $M = 4.4$ ) supports this idea and aligns with Díaz et al. (2023) research, which found TBLT boosts motivation and communication confidence in EFL classrooms.

Additionally, 60% of participants reported using professional English daily after the intervention, up from 30% at the start. This reflects a shift from passive engagement to active daily use that goes beyond mere score improvements. This change connects with Zhang (2022) study on task engagement, which notes that learner involvement in task performance, such as social, cognitive, and behavioral engagement is crucial for language development. The data suggests this engagement continued beyond the program, indicating a lasting impact in real-world situations. Borg (2010) emphasizes that fostering high levels of engagement should be a priority for language teachers, and these results show that TBLT in DreamBuilder succeeded for most participants.

Two items had much lower ratings: feedback timeliness ( $M = 3.4$ ) and cultural relevance ( $M = 3.2$ ). The feedback finding aligns with Chong and Reinders (2020), who noted that delayed feedback in technology-mediated TBLT can weaken essential meaning negotiation processes, according to Ziegler (2016). Cao et al. (2022) found in a systematic review on online peer feedback in EFL writing that the quality and timing of feedback are critical for learning gains, with slow or inadequate feedback linked to reduced revision and persistent errors. Chen et al. (2023) further showed that collaborative peer feedback engages learners cognitively and emotionally in asynchronous contexts, where timely feedback cannot be guaranteed. These findings suggest that the feedback timing issue in this study is not incidental but reflects a fundamental challenge of asynchronous online TBLT that needs attention.

The finding on cultural relevance, 50% agreement,  $M = 3.2$ , with the highest standard deviation of any item needs particular focus. Liu & Ren (2024) found that task authenticity depends on whether learners find the topics engaging and relevant to their own situations. Bygate (2020) noted that effective TBLT requires adapting tasks to culturally relevant scenarios reflecting real-world language needs. The current participants felt tasks were focused on Western business contexts, as indicated by interview responses, which goes against this principle. Hanifa et al. (2024) reported similar adaptation challenges in Indonesian EFL settings, noting that learners need more exposure to tasks relevant to their everyday communication situations. These findings collectively suggest that the cultural relevance shortfall is a systematic design issue rather than a minor concern.

## 3. RQ 3: Facilitating and Inhibiting Factors

The four facilitating factors—task-profession alignment, platform flexibility, resource variety, and peer interaction help explain why TBLT succeeded in this context. Task-profession alignment is the most significant, highlighting Long's (2000) difference between target tasks and pedagogic tasks: tasks that closely match real-world communication needs lead to better language transfer. Participants

noted this alignment as the key factor in their engagement, confirming that DreamBuilder's entrepreneurship-centered design was a real benefit. Huang (2022) found that TBLT in adult and continuing education consistently outperforms traditional teaching when task relevance is high, echoing the current findings.

Platform flexibility was important for participants balancing business, household, and caregiving duties. This reflects a reality recognized in online language learning literature: adult women learners in emerging economies often face competing demands that make fixed schedules for in-person classes difficult (Kayi, 2024). As González-Lloret and Ortega (2014) stated, technology-mediated TBLT fits this group well because it maintains authentic interaction while removing spatial and time constraints of classroom learning. Resource variety corresponds with established ideas in second language acquisition; diverse input—video, text, and collaborative discussions—enhances vocabulary retention and understanding through multiple pathways (Fang et al., 2021).

Peer interaction is another facilitating factor, aligning with East (2021) view of TBLT as inherently experiential and collaborative. Peer feedback and joint task performance are key ways learners negotiate meaning. Cao et al. (2022) found that effective online peer feedback led to significant gains in EFL writing, and Chen et al. (2023) demonstrated that peer feedback enhances cognitive and emotional engagement that individual feedback lacks. For participants, many of whom reported speaking anxiety before the program. Low-stakes peer interaction in breakout rooms reduced the hesitation often felt in EFL settings. This supports Bygate's (2020) idea that task context influences both learner feelings and language output.

These four barriers can be grouped into two analytically distinct categories. Technological barriers and self-regulation challenges are structural constraints that lie outside the program's design. Technological barriers reflect the limitations of digital infrastructure that have been documented in various contexts of online learning in Indonesia (Rahmi et al., 2024), where unstable connectivity remains an ongoing challenge in areas outside major urban centers. Self-regulation challenges reflect the absence of external accountability mechanisms typically provided by conventional classroom settings. Hunutlu's (2023) systematic review of self-regulation strategies in online EFL/ESL learning, which synthesized studies from ERIC, Scopus, and Web of Science, found that digital competence and self-regulation capacity are the most consistent predictors of sustained engagement in online language learning and the absence of both is the most consistent source of dropout. Current participant reports regarding missed sessions and decreased motivation align with this evidence.

Conversely, delayed feedback and limited cultural relevance are inherent instructional design issues within the implementation of TBLT itself. As discussed in relation to Research Question 2 above, these two factors directly undermine the foundational principles of TBLT namely interactive feedback and task authenticity. Unlike structural barriers, are entirely within the program designer's control to address. The simultaneous occurrence of barriers at both the structural and design levels indicate that optimizing TBLT in this context requires a dual response: investment in digital infrastructure alongside the redesign of tasks that are culturally responsive and context-specific. The distinction between what can be improved through better design versus what requires systemic changes beyond the program has direct implications for how developers and policymakers should prioritize resources.

#### **4. Research Stance: Extending the TBLT Evidence Base**

As mentioned in the introduction, this study adopts an approach that broadens the scope of the existing TBLT literature. The current findings reinforce and expand upon those of Bryfonski and McKay (2019), Harris and Leeming (2024), Zhou and Deocampo (2023), as well as the broader TM-TBLT literature (González-Lloret & Ortega, 2014; Chong & Reinders, 2020) by affirming the effectiveness of

---

TBLT in a context distinguished by three characteristics absent in previous research: adult female learners with primarily instrumental motivation, a specialized entrepreneurship digital platform as the delivery medium, and the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning in Indonesia, characterized by specific infrastructural and sociocultural constraints. The magnitude of the effects obtained and the consistency of positive perceptions support this claim of generalizability. At the same time, the identified barriers, particularly delayed feedback and cultural irrelevance serve as evidence that TBLT's effectiveness in this context is conditional, not automatic. This qualification sharpens, rather than contradicts, the meta-analytic consensus: TBLT works, but context determines how well and for whom.

## 5. Limitations

Several limitations of this study should be noted. First, the quasi-experimental design does not allow for causal inferences with the same level of confidence as a true randomized controlled trial, as unmeasured between-group differences beyond those recorded in the pre-test cannot be fully ruled out. Second, the sample size ( $n = 40$ ) limits the generalizability of the study's findings beyond AWE program participants in the Makassar region. Third, the proficiency test was designed by the research team rather than using a validated standard instrument; future research should employ validated assessments such as those based on the Bachman & Palmer (2010) assessment framework to enhance comparability. Fourth, the qualitative subsample consisted only of participants from the experimental group, meaning that the reported barriers may not fully represent the experiences of the control group or non-participants. Fifth, this study did not measure skill retention on a delayed post-test; whether these gains can be sustained over time in this context remains unknown.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study examined the impact of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), implemented through the DreamBuilder online platform, on the English proficiency of Indonesian women entrepreneurs enrolled in the Academy for Women Entrepreneurs (AWE) program in Makassar. The findings indicated that TBLT yields a significantly greater improvement in proficiency compared to conventional instruction. An average increase of 25.8 points versus 9.8 points in the Traditional group, as confirmed by an independent samples t-test ( $p < 0.001$ , Cohen's  $d = 5.27$ ). Participants generally rated TBLT as relevant, motivating, and effective, and 60% reported using professional English daily by the end of the program. Thematic analysis of interview data identified four enabling factors such as alignment of tasks and profession, platform flexibility, resource diversity, and peer interaction, as well as four inhibiting factors such as technological barriers, delayed feedback, limitations in cultural relevance, and self-regulation challenges. Overall, these findings expand the evidence base regarding the effectiveness of TBLT to a previously unexplored context: adult women entrepreneurs in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning environment in Indonesia delivered through a specially designed digital entrepreneurship platform.

The contribution of this study lies not only in demonstrating the effectiveness of TBLT for this population, but also in identifying the conditions under which that effectiveness is realized. TBLT is effective when its tasks are contextually authentic and professionally grounded; however, its effectiveness is hindered when feedback is delayed, tasks are culturally misaligned, and structural barriers limit student engagement. Future research should address the gaps left by this study: longitudinal studies to examine whether skill gains can be sustained over time, replication with larger and more geographically diverse samples, and studies that isolate specific TBLT task components to

---

identify the precise mechanisms driving language development in an entrepreneurship-oriented digital learning environment.

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed, addressed respectively to platform developers and curriculum designers, English language educators, and policymakers. Platform developers are encouraged to prioritize two design revisions as a matter of urgency: localizing task scenarios to reflect the Indonesian business context, market norms, and professional communication genres; and integrating structured feedback mechanisms, whether through scheduled synchronous checks, guided peer-review protocols, or embedded automated feedback that ensure corrective input reaches learners within a sufficiently short timeframe to prevent the crystallization of errors. The low support for the timeliness of feedback ( $M = 3.4$ ) and cultural relevance ( $M = 3.2$ ) is not a trivial matter; it directly undermines the fundamental principles of TBLT and represents the most easily implementable design improvements for platform developers.

For English language educators working with groups of women entrepreneurs, this study recommends conducting a needs analysis prior to the learning process to identify the specific types of communication participants encounter in their professional lives, product presentations, correspondence with suppliers, online negotiations, and social media marketing in English, and using these types of communication as the primary foundation for designing tasks. Grammar exercises detached from context should be minimized and replaced with a series of tasks that participants can directly connect to their business realities. Given the self-regulation challenges noted in the interview data, educators are also advised to incorporate structured accountability mechanisms such as peer study partners or weekly check-in routines to replace the motivational support typically provided by conventional classroom settings.

For policymakers and program administrators, the finding that a freely accessible digital platform delivered very large proficiency gains within a single program cycle suggests that technology-mediated TBLT represents a scalable and cost-effective mechanism for building English language capacity among Indonesian women entrepreneurs at the national level. However, the technological barrier data make clear that digital delivery is only effective where participants have reliable connectivity and appropriate devices. Investment in English language programs of this type must therefore be accompanied by parallel investment in digital infrastructure, particularly in regions outside major urban centers. Cultural localization should additionally be written into platform procurement and content development contracts from the outset, ensuring that tasks are contextually appropriate for Indonesian women entrepreneurs rather than being adapted retrospectively.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The authors express their sincere gratitude to the English Education Department of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education at Universitas Sembilanbelas November (USN) Kolaka and Universitas Tomakaka for their institutional support throughout the conduct of this research. The authors also wish to thank the Academy for Women Entrepreneurs (AWE) program in Makassar for facilitating access to participants and for the cooperation extended during the data collection process. We would like to express our deepest gratitude to all the women entrepreneurs who participated in this study and generously shared their time, insights, and experiences. Their willingness to engage openly in this research process was essential to the quality and authenticity of the findings presented here.

## REFERENCES

- Abe, M., & Kogo, C. (2021). Effects of instruction of English learning design focusing on individual learners' needs. *Information and Technology in Education and Learning*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.12937/itel.1.1.Trans.p007>
- Bachman, L. F., & Palmer, A. S. (2010). *Language assessment in practice: Developing language assessments and justifying their use in the real world*. Oxford University Press.
- Borg, S. (2010). Language teacher research engagement. *Language Teaching*, 43(4), 391–429.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Bryfonski, L., & McKay, T. H. (2019). TBLT implementation and evaluation: A meta-analysis. *Language Teaching Research*, 23(5), 603–632. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168817744389>
- Bygate, M. (1999). Task as context for the framing, reframing and unframing of language. *System*, 27(1), 33–48.
- Bygate, M. (2020). Some directions for the possible survival of TBLT as a real world project. *Language Teaching*, 53(3), 275–288.
- Cao, S., Zhou, S., Luo, Y., Wang, T., Zhou, T., & Xu, Y. (2022). A review of the ESL/EFL learners' gains from online peer feedback on English writing. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 1035803.
- Chen, S., & Wang, J. (2019). Effects of task-based language teaching (TBLT) approach and language assessment on students' competences in intensive reading course. *English Language Teaching*, 12(3), 119–138.
- Chen, W., Liu, D., & Lin, C. (2023). Collaborative peer feedback in L2 writing: Affective, behavioral, cognitive, and social engagement. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, 1078141. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1078141>
- Chong, S. W., & Reinders, H. (2020). Technology-mediated task-based language teaching: A qualitative research synthesis. *Language Learning & Technology*, 24(3), 70–86.
- Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2023). Revisiting mixed methods research designs twenty years later. In S. N. Hesse-Biber & R. B. Johnson (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of multimethod and mixed methods research inquiry* (2nd ed., pp. 21–36). Oxford University Press.
- Díaz, D. G., Parra, J. A., Leyva, N. L., Herrera, E. M., & Zambrano, L. D. (2023). The impact of task-based language teaching on EFL learners' speaking proficiency and motivation. *Ciencia Latina Revista Científica Multidisciplinar*, 7(3), 3796–3810.
- East, M. (2021). *Foundational principles of task-based language teaching*. Routledge.
- Fang, W.-C., Yeh, H.-C., Luo, B.-R., & Chen, N.-S. (2021). Effects of mobile-supported task-based language teaching on EFL students' linguistic achievement and conversational interaction. *ReCALL*, 33(1), 71–87.
- González-Lloret, M., & Ortega, L. (2014). Towards technology-mediated TBLT: An introduction. In M. González-Lloret & L. Ortega (Eds.), *Technology-mediated TBLT* (pp. 1–22). John Benjamins.
- Goodman, B., Kambatyrova, A., Aitzhanova, K., Kerimkulova, S., & Chsherbakov, A. (2022). Institutional supports for language development through English-medium instruction: A factor analysis. *TESOL Quarterly*, 56(2), 713–749. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.3090>
- Hanafi, M. D., Lali, K., Kably, H., & Chakor, A. (2023). The English proficiency and the inevitable resort to digitalization: A direction to follow and adopt to guarantee the success of women entrepreneurs in the world of business and enterprises. *Data and Metadata*, 2, 42. <https://doi.org/10.56294/dm202342>
- Hanifa, R., Yusuf, F. N., Yusra, S. R., & Suherdi, D. (2024). Adapting EFL materials and its influences on Indonesian secondary school students' language learning. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education*, 9(1), 69.

- Harris, J., & Leeming, P. (2024). Speaking proficiency development in EFL classrooms: Measuring the differential effect of TBLT and PPP teaching approaches. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 62(2), 509–537. <https://doi.org/10.1515/iral-2022-0082>
- Huang, J. (2022). Task-based language teaching and rigorous instruction in beginning English as a second language classrooms. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 2022(175–176), 59–70. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ace.20468>
- Hunutlu, S. (2023). Self-regulation strategies in online EFL/ESL learning: A systematic review. *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, 14(2), 136–166. <https://doi.org/10.37237/140203>
- Kayi, E. A. (2024). Transitioning to blended learning during COVID-19: Exploring instructors and adult learners' experiences in three Ghanaian universities. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 55(6), 2760–2786.
- Levene, H. (1960). Robust tests for equality of variances. In I. Olkin, S. Ghurye, W. Hoeffding, W. Madow, & H. Mann (Eds.), *Contributions to probability and statistics: Essays in honor of Harold Hotelling* (pp. 278–292). Stanford University Press.
- Liao, C., & Zhang, W. (2024). The role of English as a lingua franca in FDI: Evidence from China. *The Journal of International Trade & Economic Development*, 33(2), 294–315. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09638199.2023.2175307>
- Liu, Y., & Ren, W. (2024). Task-based language teaching in a local EFL context: Chinese university teachers' beliefs and practices. *Language Teaching Research*, 28(6), 2234–2250. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13621688211044247>
- Long, M. H. (2000). Focus on form in task-based language teaching. In R. D. Lambert & E. Shohamy (Eds.), *Language policy and pedagogy: Essays in honor of A. Ronald Walton* (pp. 179–192). John Benjamins.
- Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs. (2022). *Perkembangan data usaha mikro, kecil, menengah (UMKM) dan usaha besar (UB) tahun 2021–2022*. Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs of the Republic of Indonesia.
- Muradás-Taylor, B. (2023). Undergraduate language programmes in England: A widening participation crisis. *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, 22(3), 322–342. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14740222231156812>
- Ouanhlee, T. (2023). Effect on non-native English speakers of utilizing English for business. *International Business Research*, 16(9), 16–35.
- Rahmi, W., Azis, H., Nasar, I., & Setiawi, A. P. (2024). Challenges and solutions in the development of educational technology in Indonesia. In *Proceedings of the 4th International Conference on Education, Humanities, Health and Agriculture (ICEHHA)* (pp. 13–14).
- Shapiro, S. S., & Wilk, M. B. (1965). An analysis of variance test for normality (complete samples). *Biometrika*, 52(3–4), 591–611. <https://doi.org/10.1093/biomet/52.3-4.591>
- Sofi-Karim, M., Bali, A. O., & Rached, K. (2023). Online education via media platforms and applications as an innovative teaching method. *Education and Information Technologies*, 28(1), 507–523. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-022-11188-0>
- Willis, J. (2021). *A framework for task-based learning*. Intrinsic Books Ltd.
- Zhang, Z. (2022). Learner engagement and language learning: A narrative inquiry of a successful language learner. *The Language Learning Journal*, 50(3), 378–392.
- Zhou, Y., & Deocampo, M. F. (2023). A study of Kunming No. 3 Middle School students' perceptions on task-based language teaching (TBLT) approach in the English classroom. *The EURASEANS: Journal on Global Socio-Economic Dynamics*, 6(43), 370–379.
- Ziegler, N. (2016). Taking technology to task: Technology-mediated TBLT, performance, and production. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 36, 136–163.
-