

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TASK-BASED LEARNING AND PROJECT-BASED LEARNING FOR DEVELOPING SPEAKING FLUENCY IN KARAKALPAK EFL CLASSROOMS

Lepesbaeva Aysuliu

Faculty of Foreign languages

Abstract: *This study examines the comparative effectiveness of Task-Based Learning (TBL) and Project-Based Learning (PBL) in developing speaking fluency among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in Karakalpak classrooms. Both approaches emphasize communicative competence but differ in structure and duration. Through a quasi-experimental design, the study evaluates improvements in fluency, accuracy, and student engagement. Results indicate that TBL yields faster improvements in spontaneous speech, while PBL fosters deeper communicative skills and sustained collaboration. The findings suggest integrating both methods may provide optimal outcomes for Karakalpak EFL learners.*

Keywords: *Task-Based Learning, Project-Based Learning, Speaking Fluency, Karakalpak, EFL Classrooms, Communicative Competence, Language Acquisition*

In the evolving landscape of English language teaching, developing speaking fluency remains a persistent challenge, particularly in contexts where English functions as a foreign language. Karakalpakstan, a region in Uzbekistan with a rich linguistic heritage, faces specific educational challenges in improving the oral proficiency of EFL learners. Traditional grammar-focused approaches often limit students' opportunities to practice spontaneous speech, resulting in limited fluency and confidence. Consequently, communicative approaches that prioritize meaningful language use have gained attention. Among these, Task-Based Learning (TBL) and Project-Based Learning (PBL) are widely regarded as effective strategies to foster speaking fluency.

Task-Based Learning centers on the completion of specific communicative tasks that simulate real-life situations, such as ordering food, giving directions, or problem-solving in pairs or groups. This approach encourages learners to produce language naturally while focusing on the meaning of their communication rather than grammatical perfection. TBL is praised for its potential to boost fluency rapidly because it involves repeated practice of discrete, manageable speaking activities. Conversely, Project-Based Learning engages students in longer-term, collaborative projects requiring investigation, planning, and presentation. PBL promotes not only linguistic skills but also cognitive and social skills such as critical thinking, teamwork, and self-regulation. Because PBL demands sustained use of language over a variety of contexts and tasks, it fosters a deeper integration of speaking abilities but often requires more instructional time and resources.[1]

In Karakalpak EFL classrooms, where resources and teacher training may be limited, understanding the comparative benefits and challenges of TBL and PBL is crucial for

optimizing instructional practices. This study aims to explore which approach better facilitates speaking fluency development among Karakalpak EFL students, considering both linguistic outcomes and student engagement. By providing empirical evidence and practical insights, this research hopes to inform educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers on the most effective strategies to enhance oral proficiency in this unique educational setting.

Both TBL and PBL stem from communicative and constructivist learning theories, emphasizing active learner participation and real-world language use. TBL is grounded in the idea that language is best acquired through meaningful tasks requiring communication to achieve specific outcomes (Ellis, 2003). PBL extends this by incorporating inquiry-based learning and collaborative problem-solving over an extended period (Thomas, 2000), fostering not only language skills but also critical thinking and social interaction.[2]

The study was conducted in two Karakalpak secondary schools with comparable student populations. Two groups of intermediate-level EFL learners were selected: one engaged in TBL activities over eight weeks, the other in PBL projects for the same duration. Pre- and post-tests measuring speaking fluency were administered, focusing on criteria such as speech rate, hesitation frequency, coherence, and lexical variety. Additionally, student questionnaires and teacher interviews collected qualitative data on motivation and classroom dynamics.

Post-test results showed significant improvements in both groups. The TBL group demonstrated rapid gains in fluency, characterized by faster speech rates and fewer hesitations during short, focused tasks. However, their lexical range and coherence in longer discourse were moderate. The PBL group exhibited gradual but consistent improvement, with enhanced ability to organize ideas coherently and employ a broader vocabulary. Their fluency during extended presentations and group discussions surpassed that of the TBL group, suggesting more sustained communicative competence.[3]

Qualitative data revealed high motivation levels in both groups. TBL participants appreciated the clarity and immediacy of tasks, finding them less intimidating and more manageable. Conversely, PBL participants valued collaboration and the opportunity to explore topics in depth, which increased their investment in language learning despite occasional challenges. Implementing TBL in Karakalpak classrooms was relatively straightforward due to its structured nature and limited resource requirements. However, some teachers noted the potential for repetitive tasks to reduce long-term engagement. PBL, while promoting deeper learning, demanded greater teacher preparation, student autonomy, and material resources, which were sometimes lacking. Additionally, assessing oral skills within a project framework required comprehensive rubrics and ongoing feedback.

This study highlights the complementary strengths of Task-Based Learning and Project-Based Learning in developing speaking fluency among Karakalpak EFL learners. TBL excels in providing immediate opportunities for students to practice spontaneous speech through manageable, goal-oriented tasks. Its structured framework and focus on

fluency make it an effective approach for beginners and contexts where rapid oral improvement is needed.

In contrast, PBL supports the development of more advanced communicative skills by immersing students in extended, meaningful projects that require sustained language use, collaboration, and higher-order thinking. This approach fosters coherence, lexical richness, and confidence in longer, more complex speech acts. However, PBL's success depends heavily on adequate resources, teacher training, and student readiness for autonomous learning, which can pose challenges in resource-limited settings like Karakalpakstan. For Karakalpak EFL classrooms, the integration of both approaches could offer a balanced solution. Teachers might implement TBL activities to build foundational fluency and confidence while incorporating PBL projects to deepen communicative competence and learner autonomy. This hybrid model would allow educators to address immediate language needs and cultivate long-term skills critical for academic and professional success.

Moreover, policymakers and educational stakeholders should prioritize professional development programs to equip teachers with the skills needed to design and facilitate both TBL and PBL effectively. Investment in materials and assessment tools tailored to these approaches will further enhance their implementation. In conclusion, both Task-Based Learning and Project-Based Learning contribute significantly to the development of speaking fluency in Karakalpak EFL learners. The choice between them should consider the specific educational context, learner proficiency, and resource availability. By leveraging the strengths of each method, Karakalpak educators can create dynamic, communicative classrooms that empower students to become confident and competent English speakers.

References

1. Azizov, A. (2019). *The Communicative Approach in Teaching English*. Tashkent: National University Publishing.
2. Mamatkulov, D., & Saidov, N. (2021). Project-Based Learning Methodology in Teaching English as a Second Language. *Language and Literature Journal*, 5(2), 45-53.
3. Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan. (2020). *New Approaches to Teaching English in Schools: Task-Based and Project-Based Learning*. Tashkent: Ministry of Public Education Publishing.
4. Tursunov, J. (2018). *Communicative Methods and Innovations in Teaching English*. Tashkent: Uzbek Educational Press.
5. Karimova, M. (2020). Modern Methods in Teaching English in Uzbekistan Schools: An Analysis of Task-Based and Project-Based Learning. *Linguistics in Uzbekistan*, 12(3), 78-85.