

The Impact of Vlog-Driven Task Based Language Teaching on English Speaking Proficiency: A Case Study in a Chinese High School

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Abstract

Vlog-mediated task-based language teaching (TBLT) is a promising and mobile-assisted approach to developing speaking proficiency, but empirical evidence from secondary EFL contexts remains limited. This qualitative case study investigates the application of vlog task-based language teaching (TBLT) to enhance English-speaking skills among Chinese high school students. A six-week program was implemented, during which students engaged in bi-weekly tasks with themes of objects, animals, and sports vlog TBLT assignments. Each week included a 60-minute class discussion, scaffolded through celebrity speaking on related topics, and students subsequently produced and shared their vlogs using video-editing applications and platforms. Two data sources were collected from the initial and final task scores of the student participants, and reflective writing was structured using Gibbs' Reflective Model. The descriptive pre-post findings demonstrated that students improved aspects related to fluency, language, pronunciation and grammar with the largest improvements in fluency and pronunciation. Reflections traced an affective course from initial anxiety to growing confidence and identified mechanisms of change including regular practice, targeted feedback, and clearer organisation of ideas. The findings underscore the value of aligning vlog topics with students' interests and highlight the emotional journey from nervousness to confidence to fostered autonomy, relatedness, and competence in a collaborative, low-anxiety environment. Furthermore, the vlog-driven TBLT, grounded in Social Constructivism and Self-Determination Theory, can effectively enhance English language speaking skills by fostering a supportive, student-centred learning environment that emphasises interaction, collaboration, and personalised learning.

Keywords: Task-based language learning, vlog, interaction, collaboration, speaking skills

1. Introduction

The Ministry of Education in China has developed a curriculum aiming at cultivating students with the ability to communicate in English on a global scale. This shift also marks a significant change in the teaching methods expected of English teachers. Rather than relying on rote learning and memorisation, the curriculum emphasised learning as a process of exploration. The focus has shifted from a traditional emphasis on grammar and vocabulary to enhancing communication skills (Qingfen, 2023). A key element of this curriculum is the suggestion that task-based teaching methods are used to develop students' communicative abilities (Nghia & Quang, 2021). TBLT focuses on using language for genuine communication in real-life situations, allowing learners to practice and apply their language skills in everyday contexts. In this approach, language learners are seen as active language users who engage in real-life communication (Subrahmanyam et al., 2021). Willis (2022) suggests that when students are exposed to the target language and are required to utilise it fully, their motivation increases, leading them to put in more effort.

In this research, the specific task involves creating vlogs, which align well with task-based teaching (TBLT) for IELTS students in China. Task-based teaching, which emphasises realistic activities, boosts student participation in speaking exercises (Kunvariya, 2023). TBLT enables students to comprehend the language's function and communication, thereby improving their overall language ability (Chen,

2021). It has proven effective in raising students' interest and focuses on task completion rather than language accuracy. When students produce vlogs in class, they engage in a task that requires them to use language for a real-world purpose. This involves planning, scripting, recording, and presenting their vlogs, engaging various language skills such as speaking, listening, writing, and reading. Such tasks can be designed to reflect authentic communication scenarios, like sharing opinions, giving instructions, or presenting information. English-speaking assessments, such as IELTS, evaluate fluency, coherence, lexical resources, grammatical range, accuracy, and pronunciation (Aridasarie & Tabiati, 2022; Souzandehfar, 2024).

According to IELTS statistics, the average speaking score in China is 5.2, indicating that most students struggle with fluency and accuracy (Huang & Sun, 2022). These students often maintain the flow of speech but rely on repetition, a limited vocabulary, and simple grammatical structures, with occasional mispronunciations. Traditional English classrooms may not sufficiently address these issues, resulting in lower IELTS scores.

A preliminary survey of this study's participants revealed that students showed limited engagement in developing speaking abilities (Gurbuz & Cabaroglu, 2021). Interviews with high school students indicated that the most used teaching method was PPP (Presentation-Practice-Production). This approach emphasised grammar and reading, with few oral activities each semester. The preliminary data suggested that speaking activities, such as role-play and simple dialogues, were limited, leading to a lack of interest and negative attitudes toward class activities, which in turn resulted in lower participation. Moreover, students found it difficult to speak clearly and fluently in the IELTS speaking test, mainly due to a lack of practice, which hindered their ability to generate and express ideas effectively. Therefore, a new approach to English learning is necessary to motivate learners and enhance their fluency and accuracy.

This study applied TBLT to enhance students' English-speaking skills. By incorporating lifelike situations into speaking exercises, TBLT enables students to apply their speaking knowledge in practical contexts. The use of authentic materials and contexts increases students' interest in participating in speaking activities. Furthermore, providing more opportunities to practice speaking helps improve their speaking abilities. While the Chinese high school English curriculum primarily focuses on vocabulary and grammar, the IELTS curriculum emphasises comprehensive skills including reading, speaking, writing, and listening. Although TBLT may not be ideal for exams focused on language knowledge, it remains uncertain whether TBLT can improve students' speaking performance concerning IELTS scores. This study, therefore, aims to explore how task-based activities can enhance students' English-speaking abilities. The research question for this study is: What are students' reflections on using vlog TBLT to enhance their English-speaking skills?

2. Literature Review

The upcoming section will delve into foundational theoretical perspectives that inform this study. It will begin by discussing the previous studies about the previous studies on task-based learning. Social Constructivism, which emphasises the importance of social interaction and collaborative learning in the construction of knowledge. Next, Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory will be explored, highlighting the role of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in fostering intrinsic motivation. Finally, Gibbs' Reflective Cycle will be examined, offering a structured approach to reflective practice that supports deeper learning and personal development. Together, these frameworks provide a comprehensive foundation for understanding the learning processes in this research.

2.1 Previous Studies on Task-based Learning

Research suggests that introducing task-based language teaching (TBLT) in foreign language classrooms can enhance both learners' achievement and motivation (Chua & Lin, 2020). By emphasising meaningful tasks, TBLT is reported to foster a supportive classroom atmosphere that helps lower anxiety and build learners' confidence (Chen & Wang, 2019). For lower-secondary students in particular, TBLT has been found to increase classroom participation and spark greater interest in language learning (Chua & Lin, 2020).

Chua and Lin (2020) conducted a study on the influence of TBLT on Mandarin learners' motivation and found a more complex pattern. At the initial stage of implementation, students' motivation actually declined: they reacted negatively to the unfamiliar pedagogy and questioned whether it was practical. As learners gradually became accustomed to TBLT and received sufficient language input, however, their motivation rose markedly. Similar positive views were reported by Chinese undergraduates in Huang's (2016) study, where questionnaire and interview data indicated perceived gains in learning motivation, interest, enjoyment, and autonomy. The students described themselves as more willing to engage in classroom tasks and more responsible for their own learning.

At the same time, several demotivating factors have been identified. Chua and Lin (2020) observed that successful TBLT requires ample exposure to the target language and time for learners to consolidate what they have learned. In practice, busy schedules and long vocabulary lists limited students' opportunities to review, which reduced their motivation. Confusing task procedures, infrequent use of the target language, and anxiety about speaking in front of classmates also discouraged learners. Although some studies have documented improvements in students' language proficiency through TBLT activities (Motallebzadeh & Defaei, 2013; Omar et al., 2020), and reported that listening self-efficacy can be strengthened among intermediate EFL learners, the researchers also noted that, despite higher motivation, the overall learning outcomes remained open to question.

2.2 Social Constructivism

Sociocultural constructivism theory posits that learning is inherently a social and cultural process that unfolds through interactions with others and within specific cultural contexts (Marginson & Dang, 2017). It highlights the role of social interactions, language, and cultural artefacts in shaping knowledge and cognitive development (Alkhubiry, 2022). Key principles of this theory include the Zone of Proximal

Development (ZPD), which refers to the gap between a learner's current knowledge and their potential growth, achievable with the help of a more knowledgeable individual, such as a teacher, peer, or expert (Chaiklin, 2003; Zaretsky, 2021). According to Vygotsky (1978), learning is most effective within this zone when appropriate support and scaffolding are provided.

Vygotsky also emphasised that both children and adults actively participate in the developmental process (Marginson & Dang, 2017). He suggested that learners with diverse skills and backgrounds should collaborate on tasks to uncover truths in a specific area (Gardner, 2021; Wells, 2002). This idea aligns with the ZPD, where learners can enhance their problem-solving abilities and achieve developmental progress through interaction with more capable peers (Lasmawan & Budiarta, 2020). In "scaffolding", learners' abilities can extend beyond their current limitations, enabling their development to outpace their learning (Marginson & Dang, 2017). This teaching approach ensures that students do not merely absorb information passively but instead actively shape their learning experience.

This study examines interactive dialogues between teachers and small groups of students, in which teachers initially model the activities. Subsequently, the roles of teacher and student are interchanged, allowing peers to collaborate on tasks, which is particularly important in language learning. In this study, students are grouped, and teachers first demonstrate how to create vlogs and use target language structures. In the next phase, students discuss their ideas on the vlogging process and assigned topics, facilitating mutual learning and immersion in the task and learning environment.

However, Vygotsky's theory (1978) primarily addresses the "how" of learning—how knowledge is acquired through social interaction and cultural tools—without placing a heavy emphasis on the "why", or the motivational factors underlying learning. For learners to fully benefit from their ZPD, they must be motivated to engage in challenging tasks, take calculated risks, and seek help when needed. Without motivation, learners may not push themselves to reach their full potential, thus underutilising the ZPD.

2.3 Self-Determination Theory

Self-Determination Theory (SDT), developed by Edward Deci and Richard Ryan (1985), is a psychological framework that emphasises the role of human motivation and personality in fostering well-being and growth. According to SDT, individuals thrive when three fundamental psychological needs are met: competence, relatedness, and autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2020). These elements are crucial for enhancing motivation and fostering a sense of well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2012). Competence refers to the need to feel effective and capable in one's activities, especially in mastering tasks and achieving desired goals. When individuals experience competence, they gain confidence in their ability to tackle challenges and complete tasks successfully. This sense of mastery motivates them to engage more deeply in their activities and persist through difficulties. Vlog task-based learning requires students to acquire a range of skills, including video production, editing, content creation, and effective communication. Mastering these skills nurtures their speaking skills.

Relatedness is the need to feel connected to others, to belong, and to build meaningful relationships. A sense of relatedness is vital for maintaining motivation, as individuals are more likely to participate in activities that involve social interaction and connection (Chiu et al., 2023). When people feel they belong to a group or community, they are more motivated to contribute and participate actively. In the context of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), relatedness refers to the need to feel connected to others, to belong, and to be part of a community. Vlog tasks often involve collaboration, whether in producing content or sharing and discussing vlogs with peers, which fosters a sense of community and belonging among students. Autonomy refers to the need to feel in control of one's actions and decisions and to act in ways that align with personal values and interests (Alamri et al., 2020). Autonomy is key to motivation. When individuals perceive that they have a choice and that their actions are self-directed, they are more likely to be engaged and committed to their tasks. Autonomy fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility, which fuels motivation from within (ibid). By allowing students to choose their vlog topics, format, and tools, they develop a sense of ownership and control over their learning, which is crucial for maintaining their motivation.

This study integrated Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by Deci and Ryan (1985) with Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory (1978) to explain both the social and personal dynamics that contribute to learning. By integrating SDT, the study can better explore how motivational factors influence the collaborative learning process, leading to a deeper understanding of how students' intrinsic motivation impacts their participation and learning outcomes in a social context. This study intends to integrate competence, relatedness, and autonomy in vlog task-based learning, thereby creating a well-rounded learning environment where students feel motivated, connected, and capable.

2.4 Gibbs Reflective Cycle

This study considered Gibbs' Reflective Cycle for their reflective writing. Graham Gibbs' Reflective Cycle, introduced in his influential work "Learning by Doing" (Gibbs, 1988), offers a systematic and iterative approach to reflective practice. Widely used in educational and professional contexts, this model facilitates deeper learning through structured reflection on experiences. The cycle consists of six stages: Description, Feelings, Evaluation, Analysis, Conclusion, and Action Plan, each playing a distinct role in promoting comprehensive reflection and continuous improvement.

2.4.1 Six Stages of Gibbs Reflective Cycle

The Description stage involves a straightforward recounting of the experience without judgment or interpretation. This stage focuses on the "what" of the experience, ensuring all relevant details are documented to set the foundation for further reflection (Gibbs, 1988). For instance, in the context of Vlog Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), students might describe the specific vlog task they undertook,

the setting, the participants, and the sequence of events.

The Feelings stage encourages individuals to reflect on their emotional responses to the experience, recognising and articulating the emotions felt before, during, and after the event. According to Gibbs (1988), acknowledging these feelings is crucial as they can significantly influence perceptions and actions. For example, students might reflect on feelings of anxiety, excitement, or frustration during the vlog task, which can offer insights into their engagement and motivation.

In the Evaluation stage, individuals assess the experience by identifying what went well and what did not. This stage requires a balanced approach, considering both positive and negative aspects. Evaluative reflection helps to recognise strengths and areas for improvement (Gibbs, 1988). In a TBLT context, students might evaluate the effectiveness of their preparation, the clarity of their spoken English, and the audience’s response.

The Analysis stage involves a deeper examination to understand why certain aspects of the experience occurred as they did. This includes identifying patterns, making connections, and considering underlying reasons (Gibbs, 1988). Analytical reflection is crucial for uncovering insights and gaining a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing the experience. For instance, students might analyse why they felt more confident in some parts of their vlog and less so in others, considering factors such as familiarity with the topic or prior practice.

The Conclusion stage focuses on summarising key learnings and identifying what could have been done differently. This stage synthesises insights to form actionable takeaways (Gibbs, 1988). For TBLT students, conclusions might involve recognising the importance of thorough preparation or the need to manage time better during the task.

The final stage, the Action Plan, involves creating a concrete plan to apply the lessons learned from the reflection. This includes setting specific goals and identifying steps to improve future performance (Gibbs, 1988). For students, an action plan might involve scheduling regular practice sessions, seeking peer feedback, or focusing on specific language skills that need improvement.

2.4.2 Application of Gibbs’ Reflective Cycle in TBLT

Gibbs’ Reflective Cycle is highly regarded in educational settings for its ability to enhance learning through critical reflection. It supports the development of self-awareness, critical thinking, and a deeper understanding of the learning process (Gibbs, 1988). By systematically reflecting on experiences such as classroom activities, assignments, and peer interactions, students can gain a deeper understanding of their learning journeys and make informed improvements.

In the context of Vlog Task-Based Language Teaching, Gibbs’ Reflective Cycle can effectively help Chinese high school students reflect on their experiences with vlog-based tasks to improve their English-speaking skills. The cycle encourages students to critically evaluate their performance, identify areas for improvement, and develop strategies for future tasks (Gibbs, 1988). By guiding students through the six stages of reflection, educators can facilitate deeper learning and foster a reflective mindset.

Integrating Gibbs’ Reflective Cycle into vlog TBLT involves incorporating reflective activities before, during, and after vlog tasks. Educators can use reflective journals, guided discussions, and feedback sessions to help students articulate their experiences, emotions, and insights. This reflective practice aligns with the goals of TBLT, which emphasises active learning and the development of practical language skills through meaningful tasks (Gibbs, 1988). Figure 1 illustrates the theoretical framework for this study.

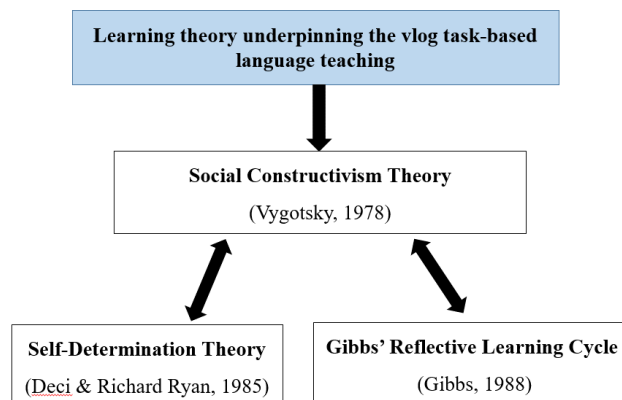


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework of the Study

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study utilised a qualitative case study approach, as outlined by Creswell and Clark (2017). A case study involves conducting a thorough examination of a specific individual, group, event, or situation. This research method focuses on an in-depth exploration of the subject within its actual, real-world context.

The research was carried out at the Chinese International School in Guangzhou City, Guangdong Province, China. The school places a strong emphasis on English education, as the majority of students aim to pursue higher education in English-speaking countries, making the IELTS exam a key focus. The study included six Chinese high school students, all of whom were purposefully chosen and aged between 15 and 16 years. These students had been studying English and computer skills for a minimum of six years during their previous educational stages. The participants, comprising six intermediate EFL learners (two males and four females) enrolled in an IELTS training course, were selected through purposive sampling.

The students participated in six weeks of vlog-based Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) as part of their English coursework. Every two weeks, they produced and shared vlogs on various topics of personal interest, such as objects, animals, and sports, with each vlog lasting about 3-5 minutes. Before starting these vlog activities, the students received instructions on how to create effective vlogs, covering aspects such as content, structure, language use, and presentation. They were encouraged to be creative and genuine, freely sharing their thoughts and ideas. Additionally, they received feedback and guidance from both their instructor and peers to enhance their speaking skills, pronunciation, and language accuracy. The students also watched examples of model speakers discussing topics related to their assigned tasks.

In the eighth week, students were asked to reflect on their experiences with vlog TBLT, focusing on how these activities impacted their speaking skills. The reflections were written offline to ensure that all participants had easy access and convenience. Students were required to describe their experiences in the vlog-TBLT process and provide supporting examples. Gibbs' Reflective Model (1988) was employed to structure the reflective writing, incorporating elements such as description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion, and action plan. This model provided a framework for teachers to examine and learn from these experiences, enabling them to identify strengths and weaknesses and plan future actions accordingly. The reflective writings were submitted via email to the researcher and underwent qualitative analysis two weeks after the vlog tasks were completed. The reflective writing questions are:

I. Description

- What happened during the vlog task-based language teaching (TBLT) activity?

II. Feelings

- How did you feel while creating and participating in the vlog tasks?
- What do you think your peers felt about the vlog tasks?
- What were your reflections on the vlog tasks after the activity was completed?

III. Evaluation

- What aspects of the vlog TBLT experience were positive and which were negative?
- Were your contributions and interactions with peers positive or negative?
- If any challenges arose during the vlog tasks, were they resolved effectively?

IV. Analysis

- Why did certain aspects of the vlog tasks go well or poorly?
- How can relevant theories or models explain the outcomes of the vlog TBLT activity?
- How does your experience with vlog TBLT compare to existing literature on task-based language teaching and motivation?

V. Conclusion

- What have you learned from participating in vlog TBLT activities, both generally and specifically?
- How can you improve your approach to future vlog tasks?

VI. Action Plan

- How and where can you apply the knowledge and experience gained from the vlog TBLT activity?
- How will you adapt your actions or improve your skills for future vlog tasks?

This study used thematic analysis to identify patterns, themes, and categories of the qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Clarke & Braun, 2017). Two independent coders were responsible for analyzing the data, with a third coder functioning as a tie-breaker who solves any disagreements. In order to arrive at significant conclusions, themes were developed, condensed, analyzed, and discussed. Their reflections were found, examined, interpreted, and reported using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis. There are six steps in thematic analysis: 1) Get acquainted with the data and transcribe all of it; 2) Create codes; 3) Group codes into themes; 4) Examine and improve themes; 5) Clearly identify and label themes; and 6) Write an analytical and descriptive report on developing topics.

Validity and reliability can be realized with careful implementation of how the study is conducted and how the data is collected and analyzed (Coleman, 2022). The researcher intends to achieve its validity and reliability by analyzing its credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. In this study, credibility was enhanced by utilizing multiple data sources including students' writing scores and reflective writing and by allowing sufficient time for participants and teachers to become familiar with

the research setting and procedures. Transferability was supported by providing a thick description of the research context, participants, teaching procedures and writing tasks, so that other researchers can judge whether the findings are applicable to their own settings. Dependability was enhanced by keeping a detailed record of how the data were collected, analysed and interpreted, enabling other researchers to review and follow the same procedures. Confirmability was addressed by preserving raw data such as students' writing scripts and reflective writing notes and engaging in reflexive writing to minimize researcher bias and ensure that the findings are grounded in the data rather than in the researcher's personal assumptions.

3.2 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations in qualitative research are particularly crucial due to the close interaction between researchers and participants (Taquette & Borges da Matta Souza, 2022). This is especially pertinent to this study, which involves students' online vlog TBLT activities with a focus on reflections. To ensure ethical compliance, consent was obtained from both participants and their parents. The primary focus is on protecting participants (Taquette & Borges da Matta Souza, 2022), and as such, the data were not shared with unauthorised individuals. Pseudonyms were used to maintain participants' anonymity.

4. Data Analysis and Results

4.1 Reflective Writing

The following section provides a detailed discussion of the data analysis process employed in this study. First, the data from reflective writings is presented below.

I. Experience

The students shared their experiences of participating in enhancing their English-speaking skills through vlog creation. Granger mentioned, "I participated in an oral training course where we interacted in groups and created vlogs to improve our English-speaking skills." Johnny added, "We created vlogs on various topics, which involved discussion, researching, scripting, recording, and editing with a friend." Rebecca described the process, saying, "The group work of creating vlogs included brainstorming ideas, writing scripts, and practising our speaking skills." Rachel noted the variety of their work, stating, "We worked on different vlog projects, discussing topics ranging from objects to sports and animals."

II. Feelings

The reflective writings revealed the students' emotions and thoughts during the activities. Initially, many felt nervous and anxious, but over time, they experienced increased confidence and satisfaction. The students' reflections illustrate a journey from anxiety to confidence. Rebecca expressed, "I felt nervous before the first vlog, but as I practised and received feedback, my confidence grew." Similarly, Johnny shared, "At first, I was anxious about speaking English, but gradually, I became more comfortable and confident." Granger also described a similar experience, saying, "I was excited but also nervous about making mistakes in my vlogs. However, I felt more confident with each video."

III. Evaluation

The students' reflections highlight the progress they made and the insights they gained throughout the vlog projects. Johnny noted, "The differences in the smoother flow of language and the increasingly complex sentences were clear indicators of progress." Granger observed, "I noticed significant improvements in my pronunciation and fluency over the course of the vlog projects." Rebecca shared, "While I struggled initially with finding the right words, my vocabulary improved significantly through the vlogs." Rachel emphasised, "The feedback helped me identify my strengths and areas for improvement, making the learning process more effective." Tina recognised, "The improvements in my fluency and confidence were clear, but I also recognised areas that needed more practice." Barry summed up his experience, stating, "The overall experience was positive, with clear improvements in my speaking skills and areas identified for further development."

IV. Analysis

Students examined the reasons behind the successes and challenges they encountered. Barry noted, "Researching the cultural significance of animals in China taught me how to convey abstract concepts in English." Johnny shared a similar learning experience, stating, "Analysing my vlogs helped me understand the importance of structuring my thoughts clearly and coherently". Rebecca emphasised the impact of the entire process, saying, "The process of creating vlogs and reflecting on them made me realise the value of consistent practice and feedback."

V. Conclusion

The reflective writings captured students' conclusions about their learning experiences, highlighting key insights and lessons gained. They acknowledged the specific skills they had developed and identified areas where further improvement was needed. The students' reflections highlight the key lessons they learned throughout their experiences. Rachel shared, "I learned to use simple words to express my ideas and ensure clarity in communication." Granger emphasised the value of continuous practice, stating, "The experience taught me the importance of practising regularly and seeking feedback to improve my skills." Johnny reflected on the broader impact, noting, "I realised that consistent effort and reflection are crucial for language learning and personal growth." Barry concluded, "The conclusions

drawn from the reflective process highlighted my progress and provided a clear path for future improvement”

VI. Action Plan

In conclusion, students developed action plans to apply their newly acquired knowledge and skills to future tasks. They discussed strategies for adapting their approaches to continue improving their language abilities. The students’ reflections outline their future plans for continuing their language-learning journey. Tina shared, *“I plan to use vlogs to continue practising my English-speaking skills and apply the feedback I received to improve.”* Rachel expressed a similar intention, stating, *“I will keep creating vlogs on different topics to enhance my fluency and confidence in speaking English”*. Johnny highlighted his goal of applying what he learned, saying, *“I intend to use the techniques I learned from the vlog projects to improve my performance in future English exams.”* Granger summed up his strategy by noting, *“My action plan includes seeking more opportunities to practice speaking English and receiving constructive feedback.”* The Figures 2 demonstrates a summary table of the key qualitative themes from students’ reflective writing.

Reflective Stage	Core Theme	Description of Theme	Representative Evidence (Students’ Reflections)
Experience	Collaborative vlog-based speaking practice	Students engaged in group-based vlog creation involving topic discussion, research, scripting, recording, and editing to practice English speaking.	“We interacted in groups and created vlogs to improve our English-speaking skills.” (Granger)
Feelings	From anxiety to confidence	Students initially experienced nervousness and anxiety about speaking English, which gradually transformed into confidence and satisfaction through practice and feedback.	“At first, I was anxious about speaking English, but gradually, I became more comfortable and confident.” (Johnny)
Evaluation	Perceived improvement in speaking performance	Students recognized noticeable progress in fluency, pronunciation, sentence complexity, vocabulary use, and overall confidence.	“The smoother flow of language and increasingly complex sentences were clear indicators of progress.” (Johnny)
Analysis	Importance of reflection, structure, and feedback	Students analyzed the reasons for their progress and challenges, highlighting structured thinking, cultural awareness, consistent practice, and feedback as key factors.	“Reflecting on my vlogs helped me understand the importance of structuring my thoughts clearly.” (Johnny)
Conclusion	Awareness of learning gains and limitations	Students summarized their learning outcomes, identifying both strengths developed and areas requiring further improvement.	“I learned to use simple words to express my ideas clearly.” (Rachel)
Action Plan	Continued self-directed speaking practice	Students planned to continue using vlogs and other speaking opportunities to further enhance fluency, confidence, and exam performance.	“I plan to keep creating vlogs to improve my fluency and confidence.” (Rachel)

Figure 2. A Summary of the Key Qualitative Themes from Students’ Reflective Writing

4.2 The Writing Scores

The writing assignment scores and data analysis are displayed in the next section. The provided figures (Figures 3-5) present the average English-speaking scores for students on two tasks: an initial vlog task and a final vlog task. The scores are broken down into four criteria: Fluency (F), Language (L), Grammar (G), and Pronunciation (P), with an overall average score calculated for each task. All six students (S1–S6) obtained higher final scores than initial scores on each criterion (fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation) as well as on their overall average speaking score. For task two, students also demonstrated clear gains in speaking performance as shown in Figure 4. As illustrated in Figure 5, students continued to show improvement in speaking performance for task three.

All students showed improvement in their overall average scores from the initial to the final vlog task. The average increase in scores suggests that the students improved their English-speaking abilities as they progressed from the initial to the final task. For example, student S1 improved from an average score of 4.1 in the initial task to 4.9 in the final task, which represents a significant improvement of 0.8 points. This pattern is consistent across all students.

Most students demonstrated an increase in fluency, with improvements of about 0.5 points. For example, Student S4 increased from 4.5 to 5.5, and Student S5 from 4.0 to 5.0. Students consistently improved in this criterion, with scores rising to a minimum of 5.0 for all students by the final task. Improvements in grammar were also noted across the board. For instance, S5 improved from 4.0 to 5.0. Pronunciation saw consistent improvement, with several students reaching 5.0 or higher by the final task. While all students improved, the degree of improvement varied. Some students, like S4 and S5, showed more significant jumps (0.8 and 0.7 points, respectively), whereas others had more modest gains. S4 had the highest final average score (5.3), indicating a notable improvement from 4.3, especially in Fluency and Pronunciation.

The consistent improvement across all categories indicates that the activities or training provided between the initial and final tasks were effective in enhancing the students’ English-speaking skills. The fact that all students reached an average score of at least 4.9 or higher in the final task demonstrates a solid understanding and application of English-speaking components. The data reflect a positive trend in the students’ English-speaking performance, with marked improvements in all evaluated criteria. This suggests that the methods used to teach or improve English-speaking skills between the initial and final tasks were successful, leading to an overall enhancement in the students’ abilities.

Each student’s average score is calculated for both an initial and a final vlog task. All students showed a noticeable improvement in their final task scores compared to their initial scores. The average score increased consistently for each student, indicating a positive impact of practice or training between the initial and final tasks. Scores were generally in the range of 5.0 to 5.5 for most students across all four criteria. The average score ranged from 5.0 (S1) to 5.5 (S3). The final task saw an increase, with scores generally between 5.5 and 6.0. The average score for most students was near 6.0, indicating a solid improvement across all four areas. Fluency and coherence (F) and Pronunciation (P) showed the most improvement across the board. For instance, S1 and S4 saw their scores increase from 5.0 to 6.0 in these areas. Grammatical Range & Accuracy (G) and Lexical Resource (L) also showed consistent progress, particularly for students like S2 and S6, who achieved perfect scores (6.0) in the final task. The data suggests a relatively consistent improvement across all students, with none showing a significant decline in any category. The improvement margin, though slight (usually around 0.5 to 1.0 points), was uniform across the group.

The analysis indicates that the students demonstrated steady progress in their English-speaking skills, with a particular boost in fluency and pronunciation. The structured practice or instruction given between the initial and final tasks has contributed to these gains, leading to better average performance in the final evaluations. Overall, this suggests an effective intervention or learning process. Figures 3-5 illustrate the scores for speaking skills.

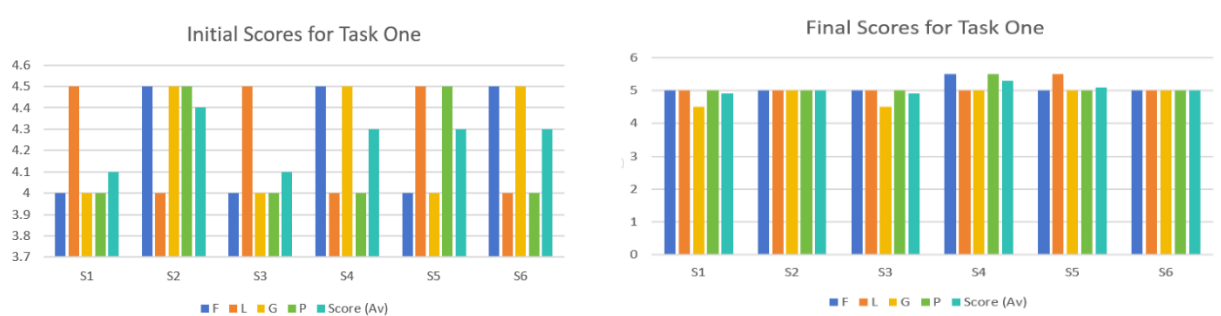


Figure 3. Initial and Final Scores for Speaking Skills in Task One

Note. F = fluency; L = lexis; G = grammar; P = pronunciation; Score (Av) = average score.

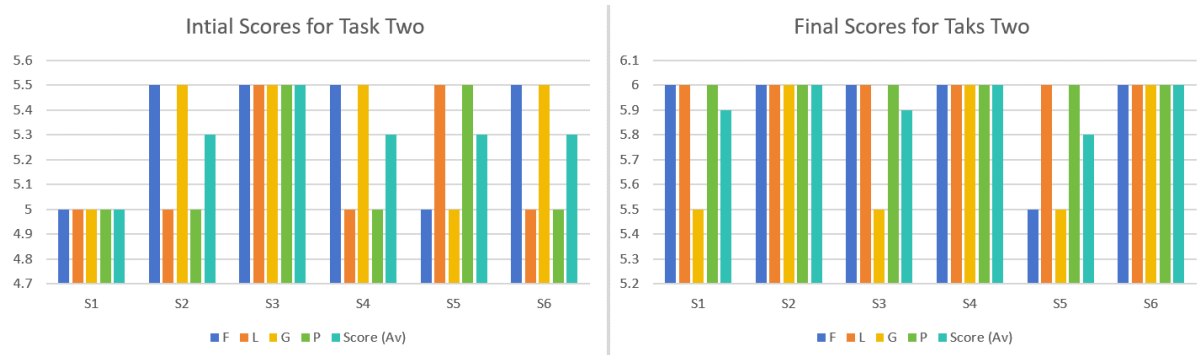


Figure 4. Initial and Final Scores for Speaking Skills in Task Two

Note. F = fluency; L = lexis; G = grammar; P = pronunciation; Score (Av) = average score.

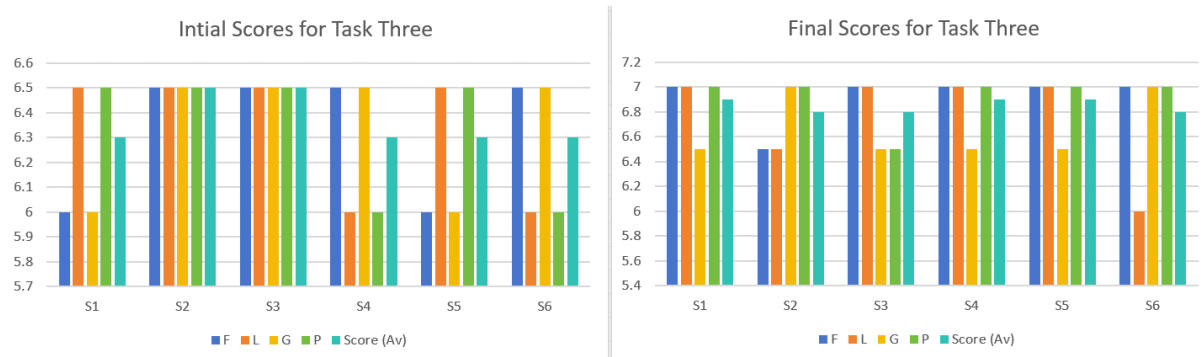


Figure 5. Initial and Final Scores for Speaking Skills in Task Three

Note. F = fluency; L = lexis; G = grammar; P = pronunciation; Score (Av) = average score

5. Discussion

Interpreting the present study through the lens of Social Constructivist Theory, it has been demonstrated that Vlog task-based learning has the potential to enhance students’ English language speaking skills. Interaction and collaboration have cultivated a supportive learning environment. Students frequently brainstormed ideas, critiqued each other’s drafts and offered mutual support throughout the vlog creation process. The camaraderie and teamwork among students made the learning experience more enjoyable and motivating, underscoring the importance of group cohesion and collaborative learning in language education (Ben Maad & Saadi, 2020; Zheng et al., 2023). Also, the teacher’s feedback and constructive criticism helped students recognise their strengths and identify areas for improvement, which in turn boosted their motivation. The importance of interactions noted in this study is consistent with research that underscores interaction as a critical component of language learning, helping students refine their English language speaking skills (Chua & Lin, 2020; Zhang & Shao, 2021). Studies have highlighted the crucial role of teachers in providing guidance in keeping students engaged and motivated (Annamalai et al., 2023; Csaba, 2018; Mauludin, 2021).

The journey from nervousness to the confidence that students described is a common theme in language learning research. Studies frequently document that learners experience initial anxiety when faced with new language tasks, particularly those involving speaking in a foreign language. However, over time and with repeated practice, learners typically report a decrease in anxiety and a corresponding increase in confidence. This progression is consistent with the notion of “affective filtering” (Krashen, 1992), where students’ emotional responses to language learning challenges decrease as their competence increases, allowing for more effective learning. This stage helped them contextualise their learning experiences and identify emotional responses essential for effective reflection (Chen & Kent, 2020; Taqwa & Sandi, 2019).

Additionally, the reflective writings illustrate a process of self-evaluation and metacognition, where students not only recognised their improvements but also identified areas needing further development. This self-awareness and the ability to critically and independently analyse one’s learning process are well-documented as key factors in effective language acquisition. This stage of evaluation enabled students to also acquire a sense of ownership and control over their learning, pinpoint specific areas for improvement, and understand the underlying reasons for their achievements (Chien et al., 2020; Orakci, 2021). This reflective cycle stage ensured that students learned from their experiences and planned for future improvements, reinforcing the iterative nature of learning and growth, as highlighted by God fiez Mart fiez (2022).

6. Pedagogical Implications

The integration of vlog task-based learning into language education has shown significant potential to enhance motivation and students’ speaking skills. Drawing on the principles of Social Constructivism and Self-Determination Theory, this pedagogical model is designed to create an engaging, student-centred learning environment.

Educators should prioritise interaction and collaboration to cultivate a supportive learning environment. During the vlog development process, students interacted and offered mutual support, fostering a sense of camaraderie and teamwork. This collaborative atmosphere made the learning experience more enjoyable and motivating. The model emphasises group cohesion and collaborative learning as crucial elements in language education, essential for enhancing speaking skills.

The teacher’s role is pivotal in offering insights, feedback, and constructive criticism, helping students identify their strengths and areas for improvement. This guidance is crucial for maintaining student engagement and motivation, as it helps students set realistic goals and track their progress. The findings highlight the teacher’s role as a facilitator who supports students throughout their language learning journey.

The findings also integrate the alignment of vlog topics with students’ interests, making the learning experience more meaningful and enjoyable. When students engage with content that aligns with their interests, they are more likely to be motivated, which improves their learning outcomes. This personalised learning allows students to construct knowledge in a way that is meaningful to them. The findings also recognise the emotional journey students undergo, from initial anxiety to increasing confidence. This progression is aided by repeated practice and supportive feedback, which help reduce anxiety and build competence. The study underscores the importance of

considering affective factors in language learning, emphasising the need for a low-anxiety environment that fosters confidence. Figure 6 illustrates the pedagogical model from the findings.

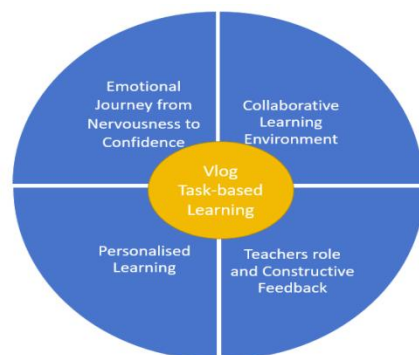


Figure 6. Pedagogical Model for This Students

7. Limitation and Conclusion

A potential limitation of the study is its small sample size, consisting of Chinese high school students, which could limit the applicability of the findings to a broader range of students in different regions or educational settings. Focusing on a specific group within a particular context may restrict the ability to generalise the results to other educational environments or cultural settings. Despite these limitations, the study offers valuable insights into the motivation and experiences of Chinese high school students participating in vlog TBLT.

The study also identifies several avenues for further research. Longitudinal studies could provide a deeper understanding of the long-term effects of vlog TBLT on language skills and motivation. Future research should investigate how continuous use of vlogs influences language proficiency over time. Scholars emphasise the significance of longitudinal research in understanding the evolving role of technology in language learning (Aubrey et al., 2022; Hanzawa, 2024). Additionally, future studies should assess the effectiveness of vlog TBLT across diverse learner contexts, including different age groups, proficiency levels, and cultural backgrounds. This approach will help determine the generalizability of the findings and facilitate the adaptation of vlog TBLT to various educational settings.

This pedagogical model combines key aspects of Social Constructivism with the practical application of vlog task-based learning to improve English speaking skills. By promoting collaboration, providing teacher support, aligning with student interests, and addressing emotional challenges, the model fosters a comprehensive learning environment that supports the development of language competence. This approach not only motivates students to learn but also equips them with the tools they need to succeed in their language-learning journey.

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Author contributions

Dr. AN and ZM were responsible for study design. ZM and HR were responsible for data collection. NC, NA,GI and H, addressed the comments, edited revised it. All authors read and approved of the final manuscript.

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The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

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