The Implementation of Task-Based Learning in Enhancing Students' Communication Competences

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Abstract. As a medium of communications in global industries, English has been required for career development. One approach that can be employed to enhance English communication competence is the implementation of Task-Based Learning (TBL). This study aims to examine the implementation of TBL in improving students' English communication competence. This research adopted a qualitative approach with a case study research design. The case investigated was the teaching and learning process in the English for Tour Operations course by using podcast as its task. Data were collected through three classroom observations and interviews with one course lecturer and 65 students. The collected data were analyzed qualitatively through three stages, including data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. As the result, the implementation of TBL using online podcasts in the English for Tour Operations class consisted of four stages, including preparation, pre-task, task cycle, and language focus. During the preparation stage, the lecturer selected the learning topic that would serve as the focus of the TBL activities. In the pre-task stage, the lecturer delivered instructional materials and introduced various language expressions used in describing tour packages. During the task-cycle stage, the lecturer provided instructions regarding the assigned task and allowed students one week to complete it. In the language focus stage, the lecturer invited students to watch their podcasts and engaged them in discussions concerning the language features and expressions used in the podcasts. The implementation of TBL through online podcasts provided students with opportunities to engage in authentic communication.

Keywords: Communication Skill, English for Tour Operations, Online Podcast, Task-based Learning

1 Introduction

English has become one of the most widely used international languages in global industrial and professional environments. Across various sectors, particularly tourism, English serves as the primary medium of communication among professionals from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Nova, 2022). As globalization continues to shape the modern workplace, the ability to communicate effectively in English is increasingly regarded as an essential professional competency within the tourism industry (Nova & Lastari, 2024). Consequently, vocational higher education institutions are expected to prepare graduates who possess not only disciplinary

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knowledge but also strong English communication skills to support their career development in an increasingly competitive global labor market.

In the context of the twenty-first century, English communication skills have become a fundamental component of professional competence (Dugošija, 2021). Such skills extend beyond grammatical accuracy and encompass the ability to interact effectively with others (Faisal, 2025), adapt language use to different contexts (Qizzi, 2025), express ideas clearly (Coidno & Magday, 2026), and engage in meaningful communication (Sagnayeva et al., 2025). In response to these demands, English language instruction should provide learning experiences that enable students to use English authentically and interactively while reflecting professional practices within industry settings.

One pedagogical approach that can support the development of communication skills is Task-Based Learning (TBL). Task-Based Learning emphasizes the use of meaningful tasks that encourage learners to use language as a tool for communication (Yolanda et al., 2025). Through task-based activities, students are provided with opportunities to practice language in authentic contexts (Asso et al., 2025) and collaborate with their peers (Ayuni et al., 2025). As a result, learners may experience increased motivation to learn English (Arifin, 2025), reduced anxiety when using a foreign language (Xiaoqian, 2024), and enhanced confidence in communication (Iqbal & Mushtaq, 2025). By focusing on meaningful learning outcomes, Task-Based Learning aligns with educational objectives that seek to provide students with authentic opportunities to engage in active communication.

One form of Task-Based Learning that demonstrates considerable potential for enhancing students' communication skills is the use of online podcasts. In addition to supporting the development of listening skills (Erniwati et al., 2025; Isnaeni, 2026; Macasandag et al., 2025; Salainti et al., 2023; Taha, 2025), online podcasts provide a platform for students to practice public speaking and share their ideas with a broader audience (Nova, 2022). The processes involved in podcast production, including script writing, recording, and editing, have been shown to contribute to the improvement of students' speaking abilities (Safitri & Silawati, 2025). Furthermore, podcast-based tasks integrate digital literacy with communicative practice (Phuwayanon et al., 2025), making them highly relevant to learners in the digital era.

Given the potential benefits of Task-Based Learning through online podcasts, this study aims to investigate the implementation of Task-Based Learning in the form of online podcast projects to enhance students' English communication competence. The study focuses on English for Specific Purposes (ESP) instruction, particularly *English for Tour Operations*, which is designed to meet the communicative needs of students in the tourism and travel sector.

2 Methodology

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design to explore the implementation of Task-Based Learning through online podcast projects. The research was conducted at Politeknik Negeri Bali and involved 65 second-year students from the Tour and Travel Operation Study Program, along with one course lecturer.

Data were collected through classroom observations, document analysis, and semi-structured interviews. Observations were carried out throughout the implementation of the Task-Based Learning activities involving online podcast projects. An observation sheet was utilized to record key findings related to the stages and procedures of implementing Task-Based Learning for the enhancement of students' communication competence. To strengthen the credibility of the findings through data triangulation, an interview was conducted with the course lecturer. The interview was carried out in Bahasa Indonesia to facilitate more accurate and comprehensive responses. Its purpose was to obtain detailed information regarding the implementation process, including the pedagogical considerations underlying each stage of the learning activities. An interview protocol was developed and used as a guide during the interview session. Moreover, students' reflection was also conducted to identify the communication competence enhancements.

The collected data were analyzed qualitatively. Following the interactive model of qualitative data analysis proposed by Miles et al. (2014), the analysis involved four interconnected stages: data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. To facilitate a deeper understanding of the findings, the data were presented through descriptive narratives accompanied by interpretive analysis.

3 Result and Discussion

3.1 Result

The implementation of Task-Based Learning (TBL) through the use of online podcasts in the *English for Tour Operations* course consisted of four stages: preparation, pre-task, task cycle, and language focus.

Preparation Stage. During the preparation stage, the lecturer selected the learning topic that would serve as the focus of the TBL activities. This process began with a review of the course syllabus to ensure alignment between the learning activities and the intended task-based learning outcomes. From the lecturer's perspective, topic selection represented a crucial stage in task design because the chosen topic determined the scope and boundaries of the assignment, including the type of task to be completed, the mode of task completion, the duration allocated for task completion, and the manner in which the task would be presented. Following the syllabus review, the lecturer selected *tour package promotion* as the learning topic due to its relevance to industry needs.

According to the lecturer:

> "Tour package promotion is one of the marketing strategies required in the tourism and travel industry. This strategy demands effective communication skills; therefore, students can develop their communication competence through tasks involving the promotion of tour packages."

The lecturer subsequently designed a group-based assignment in which students were required to produce an online podcast promoting a tour package. The lecturer

explained that the selection of online podcasts as the task format was influenced by current digital trends, as younger generations tend to consume podcast content more frequently than printed promotional materials. Furthermore, the interactive nature of podcasts was considered a factor that could foster students' communication skills.

Regarding the tour packages featured in the podcasts, the lecturer noted that students had previously designed tour packages in groups as part of an earlier learning topic. The online podcast project therefore functioned as a practical application of their previous work.

As stated by the lecturer:

> "This online podcast serves as the application of their previous work. Earlier, they developed tour packages only in the form of brochures. Now, we ask them to explain those tour packages to viewers while simultaneously promoting them."

Pre-Task Stage. The implementation then proceeded to the pre-task stage, in which the lecturer delivered instructional materials and introduced various language expressions commonly used in tour package promotion. The lecturer presented expressions related to describing destinations, explaining tour itineraries, providing pricing information, and describing tourism facilities and services. During this stage, students were given opportunities to practice English through drilling activities. They read the language expressions displayed on presentation slides and repeated them several times to improve familiarity and fluency. In addition, selected students were asked to apply the expressions to the tour packages they had previously designed, thereby contextualizing their language use within authentic tourism promotion scenarios.

Task Cycle Stage. Following the completion of the instructional session, the implementation entered the task-cycle stage. During this stage, the lecturer provided detailed instructions regarding the assignment. Students received information about the planning and production processes, including the required format, the content to be included in the podcast, and the submission deadline. With regard to the task format, students were required to create a video-based online podcast in which they were recorded while engaging in a question-and-answer interaction. Within each group, students assumed two speaking roles. One student acted as the podcast host responsible for managing the flow of the discussion, while the remaining members served as representatives of a travel agency responsible for providing information and promoting the tour package. The lecturer also specified four key aspects that had to be discussed in the podcast: the package name, travel itinerary, tour activities, and package pricing. Students were given one week to complete the production of their online podcasts. Upon completion, the podcasts were submitted online through Google Drive. The total of 16 podcast videos received during this stage.

Language Focus Stage. The final stage of the TBL implementation was the language focus stage. After all groups had submitted their podcasts, the lecturer invited students

to watch the completed videos in class. The podcasts were played in front of the class, and students were encouraged to observe the interaction patterns and communication strategies employed by the speakers. During the viewing session, the lecturer periodically paused the videos and asked students to identify specific language expressions used by the speakers. In addition, the lecturer facilitated discussions concerning linguistic features and communicative expressions found in the podcasts. These discussions were intended to reinforce students' understanding of English language use in the context of tour package promotion and to provide opportunities for reflection on their language performance.

Communication Competence Enhancements. Regarding the communication competence enhancements, a students' reflection session was conducted. During the session, the lecturer invited the students to share their experience during the podcast production. Several students admitted that they have a lot of coordination in the group, especially in deciding the recording time and part of podcast distribution. Some students also mentioned that some member of the group was also less active in the group discussion and they need to use different approach to communicate with them. The discussion and internal communication in the group among the students become a proof that these students got an opportunity to practice their communication competence in discussing the recording schedule and podcast speaker's part distribution.

Overall, the implementation of Task-Based Learning through online podcast projects provided students with opportunities to engage in authentic and meaningful communication practices. By completing tasks that closely resembled professional tourism promotion activities, students were able to apply English in realistic contexts while simultaneously developing their communication competence and digital literacy skills.

3.2 Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the implementation of Task-Based Learning (TBL) through online podcast projects provided students with meaningful opportunities to develop their English communication competence within an authentic tourism context. The four stages of implementation—preparation, pre-task, task cycle, and language focus—reflect the fundamental principles of TBL, which emphasize the use of meaningful tasks as the central component of language learning. Rather than focusing exclusively on grammatical knowledge, students were required to use English as a tool for achieving a communicative purpose, namely promoting a tour package to potential customers. This finding supports previous studies that highlight the effectiveness of TBL in creating communicative learning environments that encourage active language use and learner engagement (Arifin, 2025; Iqbal & Mushtaq, 2025).

The preparation stage played a crucial role in ensuring the relevance of the learning activities to industry needs. The lecturer's decision to select *tour package promotion* as the focus of the task reflects the importance of aligning classroom instruction with professional practices in the tourism industry. Such alignment is particularly important

in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses, where learning activities should mirror the communicative demands of the target workplace. By engaging students in tasks that simulate real-world tourism promotion activities, the learning process became more authentic and meaningful. This finding is consistent with the view that contextualized learning experiences can enhance learners' awareness of the practical value of language skills (Xiaoqian et al., 2024) and thus, it could increase their readiness for future professional roles.

The pre-task stage contributed to students' language preparation by introducing relevant expressions and providing opportunities for guided practice. Through drilling activities and contextualized language exercises, students were exposed to vocabulary and expressions (Mustafa & Ahmed, 2023), especially used in tour package promotion. This stage served as linguistic scaffolding that supported students before they engaged in the more complex communicative task. The findings of this study indicate that structured language preparation remains an important component of successful TBL implementation, particularly in ESP contexts where specialized terminology and expressions are frequently required.

The task-cycle stage represented the core of the learning process. During this stage, students collaboratively planned, produced, and recorded their online podcasts. The podcast project required students to negotiate ideas, organize information, and communicate effectively with group members throughout the production process. These activities promoted not only language development but also collaboration, problem-solving, and digital communication skills. Furthermore, the requirement to present tourism products through podcasts encouraged students to use English for a genuine communicative purpose rather than merely completing language exercises. This finding supports the argument that task-based activities facilitate language acquisition (Mei et al., 2025), by providing learners with opportunities to focus on meaning while simultaneously developing communicative competence.

The selection of online podcasts as the task format also appears to have contributed positively to student engagement. Unlike traditional oral presentations conducted in classroom settings, podcasts allow students to rehearse, revise, and refine their language production before publication. This flexibility may help reduce communication anxiety and encourage greater participation among learners who are less confident in speaking English. In addition, podcast production integrates language learning with digital literacy skills, which are increasingly important in contemporary educational and professional environments (Nurwahidah et al., 2023). As a result, the task not only supported language development but also fostered competencies that are relevant to the digital tourism industry.

The language focus stage further enhanced the learning process by encouraging reflection on language use. Through classroom discussions and analysis of the completed podcasts, students were able to identify language expressions, evaluate communication strategies, and receive feedback on their performance. This reflective component is essential in TBL because it enables learners to connect communicative experiences with language awareness (Sholeh et al., 2020). The lecturer's practice of pausing the videos and discussing specific expressions allowed students to examine how language functions were used in authentic communication contexts. Consequently,

students were able to consolidate their understanding of English expressions related to tourism promotion and apply them more effectively in future communication tasks.

Overall, the implementation of Task-Based Learning through online podcast projects successfully integrated authentic communication, collaborative learning, and digital technology. The findings suggest that online podcast projects can serve as an effective instructional strategy for ESP courses, particularly those related to tourism and travel operations. By engaging students in realistic communication tasks that mirror industry practices, TBL not only enhances language competence but also promotes learner motivation, confidence, digital literacy, and professional preparedness. These outcomes reinforce the value of incorporating task-based and technology-enhanced learning approaches into vocational English education.

4 Conclusion

This study found that the implementation of Task-Based Learning (TBL) through online podcast projects in the *English for Tour Operations* course provided students with meaningful opportunities to practice English in authentic tourism-related contexts. The four stages of implementation—preparation, pre-task, task cycle, and language focus—supported the development of students' communication competence by integrating contextualized language practice, collaborative learning, and digital technology. The online podcast project enabled students to actively use English for a real communicative purpose while enhancing their engagement and participation in the learning process.

Future research is recommended to investigate the effectiveness of online podcast-based TBL on specific learning outcomes, such as speaking proficiency, communication confidence, motivation, and digital literacy, using larger participant groups and diverse educational settings. Additionally, comparative studies examining different types of task-based digital projects may provide further insights into the most effective approaches for enhancing English communication competence in vocational and ESP contexts.

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