The Effectiveness of Task-Based Language Learning Approach in Teaching English as a Second Language to the Students at the Vocational Education Development Centre in Abu Dhabi, UAE

فاعلية منهج تعلم اللغة المبني على المهام في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة ثانية للطلاب في مركز التطوير و التعليم المهني في أبو ظبي، الإمارات العربية المتحدة

By
Mahes Ali Al-Olaimat
Student ID number: 100077

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Dissertation Supervisor:
Dr. Amanda Howard

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the soul of my father who passed away before he has seen the ripe of his son. To the great source of compassion my mother who I owed all my life that would not be very successful without her prayers. To my source of love and sincere support my wife for her patience and tolerance all the days of my work and for taking upon her shoulders all the family responsibilities as a mother and as a father as well.

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of the recently introduced task-based learning approach for language learning at the VEDC in Abu Dhabi, a centre for male students who have previously disengaged from formal learning. Questionnaires were delivered to 337 students, and 264 were completed. Twenty three teachers were provided with questionnaires and 19 were returned. In addition, two interviews with the teaching staff were conducted. The outcomes were evaluated against current thinking in the field of task-based learning and motivating disengaged learners.

The introduction of the task-based learning approach was perceived as a good thing by a large majority of both students and teachers. Motivations considered to have improved by teachers and the students' outcomes in this regard confirmed this perception. With regard to test scores, 90% of students showed an improvement in test scores of between one and thirteen marks, with a median improvement of four marks. The findings suggest that the VEDC is pursuing an appropriate teaching method to engage their students and that it is having a positive effect on the academic achievements.

It has been recommended that additional evaluations are undertaken when the system has been in place for further few months. Finally, a number of future research pathways have been identified for both the VEDC in particular and for task-based learning in general. Specifically how perceptions of task-based learning are impacted by student's learning styles and how best to deliver grammar instruction within the approach.

ABSTRACT IN ARABIC

ملخص

تهدف الدراسة إلى استكشاف مدى فاعلية طريقة التعلم المبني على المهام التي طبقت حديثاً على تعلم اللغة في مركز التعليم والتطوير المهني في أبو ظبي، وهو مركز للطلاب الذين لم يستمروا في التعلم الرسمي. وُزّعت الاستبانات على 337 طالباً، وتم إكمال 264 منها. كما وُزعت استبانات على 23 مدرساً استعيد منها 19 استبانة. بالإضافة لذلك، أُجريت مقابلتان مع عضوين في هيئة التدريس. تم تقييم المخرجات بناءً على التفكير المعاصر في مجال التعلم المبني على المهام وتحفيز الطلاب غير الملتحقين بالدراسة الرسمية.

استقبل الغالبية العظمى من المدرسين والطلاب طريقة التعلم المبني على المهام على أنها طرح جيد. وما يؤكد هذا الموقف آراء المعلمين والطلاب في أن التحفيز قد تحسن فعلاً بالإضافة إلى نتائج الطلاب على حد سوى. فيما يتعلق بنتائج الاختبارات، أظهر 90% من الطلاب تحسناً في درجات الامتحان ضمن نطاق درجة واحدة و ثلاث عشرة درجة، بمتوسط تحسن بلغ أربع درجات. تظهر النتائج أن مركز التعليم والتطوير المهني يتبع طريقة تدريس ملائمة لإشراك طلاب المركز، وأن هذه الطريقة تركت أثراً إيجابياً على مخرجات التعلم.

تم التوصية بإجراء المزيد من التقييمات عندما يتم تطبيق هذا النظام على مدى فترة زمنية أطول . أخيراً، تم تحديد عدد من المسارات البحثية المستقبلية لكل من مركز التطوير والتأهيل المهني بشكل خاص وطريقة التعلم المبني على المهام بشكل عام. وتحديداً، كيف تؤثر أساليب التعلم لدى الطلاب على استقبالهم لطريقة التعلم المبني على المهام، وكيف يمكن تدريس القواعد بأفضل شكل ضمن هذه الطريقة.

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ACRONYMS

VEDC: Vocational Education Development Center.

PPP: Presentation Practice and Production.

TTT: Test Teach Test.

TBLT: Task-Based Language Teaching.

TBLL: Task-Based Language Learning.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

Task-based language learning (TBLL) focuses on the use of authentic language and on asking students to do meaningful tasks using the target language. It is considered to be of great benefit in achieving communicative competence and increasing the motivation of second language learners. Not least because it can be tailored to individual groups of students to increase their interest and attention to the language learning process (Robinson 2011, p.126). Task-based learning is much more beneficial to the student because it is more learner-centered, allows for more meaningful communication, and often offers a practical extra-linguistic skill building. As the tasks are likely to be familiar to the students, they are more likely to be engaged, which may further motivate them in their language learning. In addition, tasks endorse language acquisition through the kinds of language interaction they necessitate.

TBL has progressively achieved its popularity in recent years. It has been recommended by various experts in the field of teaching methodologies as a way forward in ELT. Prabhu stands as the first significant person in the development of TBL. His main contributions have been raising the ELT world awareness to TBL. Prabhu (1987) defines a task as "an activity which required learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought, and which allowed teachers to control and regulate that process" (p.24).

The aim of this research is to investigate how effective task-based learning TBLL has been at the Vocational Education Development Centre (VEDC) in Abu Dhabi. The VEDC unit (subsequently referred to in this work as "the unit") works with 14-24 year old Emirati male students who have disengaged from formal learning and have very low motivations for second language learning, or any learning according to (VEDC 2012).Specifically the aim of the unit was to cater for students with vocational programme of learning that could meet future employment needs in terms of operators and technicians. The vocational programme is combined with basic literacy skills. However, there was a requirement from industry partners for graduates with an aural and oral skill level

in English. In 2011, the centre began trials of task-based language learning in an attempt to increase the motivation of these students and improve their language learning skills.

The role of motivation in second language learning is recognised as the key to developing communicative competence (Alqurashi 2011&Engin 2009) and task-based learning has been viewed as one way in which to develop and hold student interest (Ushioda & Dornyei 2009, pp.1-8). This is because it is based on real world contexts that can be developed into hands-on activities that can stimulate students' interest. Therefore, the focus of this work is to examine whether the trials have been successful in terms of students' motivation and attitude towards TBLL and also teachers' acceptance and understanding of the processes involved. This is to be combined with evaluation of students' results since the switch to the TBLL approach at the institution. The inclusion of the students' results is important because ultimately the unit's success is dependent on outcomes and results and thus if increased motivation and commitment do not result in improved test outcomes then the success of the TBLL approach will be limited from commercial perspective.

It is felt that there is a major benefit to this work as not only will it give the VEDC a full assessment of how effective the TBLL approach has been, but academically it can also provide insights into how the approach can be applied to meet the needs of disengaged and de-motivated language students in any other educational institutions.

1.2. Background of the Study

As a boarding institute, the VEDC is a very special environment where 640 students, all Emirati male aged between 14 and 24 years live. The criteria for acceptance at the unit are that the students have shown a lack of interest in and motivation for formal learning. The purpose of their attendance at the VEDC is to instill motivation and encourage them to learn the English language and vocational skills to make them employable in the future. In terms of student environment, the aim is to provide an atmosphere of belonging, and an

environment where they can specialise in an area such as welding or electronics and at the same time develop second language skills (VEDC 2012).

In the context of the second language learning areas of the unit, the VEDC has deployed the "Ventures Series" from Cambridge University Press, along with traditional teacher led formal language teaching strategies such as repetition and drilling. The choice of the "Venture Series" was based on recognition from the teaching staff that their particular students are disengaged from formal education, so they needed to have a sense of fun in their learning to instill co-operation and motivation. Furthermore, the "Venture Series" was seen as a rich resource with books, CDs, teacher's guides and workbooks to aid in the delivery of the course. This rationale was underscored by the recognition that the unit's students fared better with a hands-on approach which was offered by the project based nature of some of the "Ventures" syllabus. These, along with the training packages and resources offered, made the "Venture Series" a good replacement for the previous syllabus, taken from "Skills for Life". The "Skills for Life" was considered not to offer the necessary opportunities for the VEDC students to acquire the communicative levels of competence required by their industry partners and thus needed replacing.

However, prior to 2011 it was felt that it might be beneficial to explore the idea of the TBLA. The emphasis for this language teaching approach is on communicative competence, real-world language usage and contextually relevant curriculum resources. Given the low motivational levels of the students at the VEDC, it was felt that this might achieve better results for both students and teachers. The programme was implemented at the beginning of 2011 and thus now it is a pertinent and relevant time to examine its effectiveness at the unit.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

In the VEDC, the students suffer from a lack of motivation and engagement with formal learning. The TBLL approach was introduced to see if it would be more effective in encouraging learning and thus improvement of language skills. TBLL has been recognised as being more integrative than other language teaching

methods, due to the fact that the tasks used for language learn come from a real world, contextualised setting (Willis 1996). The approach has now been running at the VEDC for just under 12 months and it is felt that there is a need to evaluate whether improvements have been made to both the students motivation and their overall language achievements. Whilst there is a great deal of work on the effectiveness of TBLL in second language learning and how it potentially increases student motivation(Gardner2001), there is a lack of information regarding how to motivate disengaged students, such as those at the VEDC. This is an area which the present study aims to consider.

1.4. Research Questions

The prime objective is to evaluate the effectiveness of the TBLL approach at the VEDC in Abu Dhabi. In order to achieve this objective, a number of research questions have been developed. The main question of this research paper is: how effective has the move to a task-based language teaching programme been in teaching of second language (English) skills to disengaged males at the VEDC in Abu Dhabi?. In addition, the primary research question is subdivided into a number of secondary research questions which were designed to provide all the data necessary to answer the primary question above:

1. Has the move to a task-based approach in second language teaching been effective in terms of student outcomes?

2. Is the move to a task-based approach achieving a more positive and receptive response from students?

3. Is the move to a task-based approach receiving a positive and receptive response from the teaching staff at the VEDC?

The research questions indicated above were based on a number of hypotheses that were to be tested through the conduct of the study

a) The TBLL approach at VEDC has encouraged student motivation and participation in language learning lessons.

b) Teachers at VEDC believe in the effectiveness of the TBLL approach and its efficacy for disengaged students.

c) The TBLL has improved language scores at the VEDC since its inception.

These hypotheses were evaluated through the rigorous data collection and analysis and verification or nullification identified in the data analysis and discussion chapters of this work.

1.5. Scope of the Study

The study is focused on teachers and students at the VEDC. It is grounded in reviewing the perceptions of these two groups to TBLL. In particular, whether teachers found the introduction of the new approach easy to introduce and deliver to students and how effective they have found the change in classroom dynamics both for themselves as teachers and for their students as well. From the students' perspective, the intent was to evaluate how they saw the TBLL programme, their levels of engagement and motivation with the approach and their perceptions of teacher opinions on the new methods. This will be combined with data relating to language performance before and after the introduction of the approach.

1.6. Rationale for the Study

The rationale behind undertaking this study is to critically examine the introduction of the TBLL approach at the VEDC and place this in the context of improving motivation of students who were previously disengaged with language and other learning. Whilst this has a commercial benefit in assessing how effective the programme is for the VEDC specifically, it also considered that the work has value from an academic perspective. By evaluating whether attitudes towards language learning in disengaged males in Abu Dhabi have been altered through the introduction of TBLL, it was anticipated that insights into how the approach can be beneficial in other educational settings globally to motivate disengaged language users. From a personal perspective, as a teacher at the VEDC, who is committed to the TBLL approach and has a belief in its ability to motivate students and increase their skills, undertaking this work has a personal resonance.

1.8. The significance of the Study

It is anticipated, when undertaking any study, new insights may emerge for both commercial and academic sectors which will increase overall knowledge in the particular subject area. For this work, it was felt that the study had significance for the following reasons:

a) It would generate information on how TBLL motivates disengaged students in a language learning context.

b) It would generate data that would be useful to future teachers and academic institutions regarding how to motivate disengaged students.

c) It would generate data that would be useful for researchers and students into the effectiveness of the TBLL approach.

d) It would generate outcomes that the VEDC can use to demonstrate its effectiveness in taking disengaged males in Abu Dhabi and encouraging them to re-engage with learning and thus become more employable in the future.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

In order to provide a basis for the conducted research which is the effectiveness of TBLL in teaching English at the VEDC, and a foundation for the development of the primary data collection, a review of current literature in the field has been conducted. This chapter incorporates definitions of task-based learning and its development and how it can be applied to encourage student motivation in the language classroom.

2.2. How individuals learn language

When acquiring a language, whether it is the innate native tongue, or the acquisition of additional languages, a number of conditions need to be present (Pang 2008, p.55). Given the disengaged nature of the VEDC students and the desire from the industry partners for achievement of communicative competence, it is relevant for this work to understand what these conditions are. This is so that all of these aspects can be incorporated into the delivery of the TBLL approach at the unit. These conditions include:

a) Exposure: input that is written or spoken of the language that is to be learnt, initially an incomprehensible stream to the new student (Derwing 2008, p.351).

b) Use: utilization of the language to achieve objectives (i.e. an exchange of meaning between two or more individuals).

c) Motivation: the desire of the student to listen and read the target language and to be able to process and then use the words to which they are exposed in a meaningful way (Gardner 2010).

d) Instruction: this may be formal or informal but provides a means for understanding and comprehension of specific language forms (Mackay & Gass 2005).

Whilst all the models of language acquisition accept that these factors need to exist, there is no definitive, universally accepted model of how language is learned. Chomsky (2006, p.70) suggests that people are born with an innate device which enables them to firstly organize the language that is their native

tongue. However, others have indicated that even without all this stimulus, a level of language is achieved, based on the individuals own motivation and cognitive development for language (Gleason & Ratner 2009, p.248).Whilst these theories relate to first language acquisition rather than second language learning, there has been some coherence in theories as to how best to stimulate second language learners. It would appear that a combination of the four elements indicated above is clear and as a language teacher these factors have been observed in practice.

2.3. Models of Language Instruction

To understand the effectiveness of TBLL and further explore why it has been selected for the VEDC, it is viable to consider alternative forms of language teaching to provide a level of comparison in terms of the approach. This is particularly pertinent given the choice of the TBLL approach to engage de-motivated and disenchanted students who prefer to operate in a hands-on way. Traditionally, the approach has been the Presentation, Practice and Production (PPP) method (Hinkel 2011, p.517). In this model, the teacher presents the correct and accepted model of the target language, and the students practice it through exercises, both written and spoken in a drill pattern (Richards & Rodgers 2001, p.249). However, this approach has been criticized in recent years for its inability to meet the communication and linguistic development of the learners and there is often a focus on grammar, rather than meaning or comprehension (Widdowson 2003, p.130). This is combined with often abstract non-contextual sentences which can be difficult for the learners to engage with. For the VEDC students, who are quick to dismiss and disengage any academic work that they do not feel comfortable, this suggests that the PPP approach would have a detrimental effect on their levels of engagement, motivation and thus success in achieving communicative competence in English.

The first alternative to PPP was the Test-Teach-Test (TTT)approach (Coelho 1998, p.67). In this instance, the student is asked to produce the target language in either role plays or other tasks and then their grammatical, semantic and lexical errors are corrected by the teacher before the student undertakes the exercise again. Nevertheless, there is a strong element of random language in this approach

and as with PPP often utilizes non-contextual or abstract situations which do not engage the learner (Ogilvie & Dunn 2010). This then presents the same problem for the VEDC students and teachers of engagement, interest and motivation and highlights why this would potentially not be an appropriate approach to take.

Whilst these two approaches achieve language learning success, there has been a growing movement for greater emphasis on communicative competence, contextual language usage situations and relevance to the learner's own need linguistic needs in second language learning. This has been combined with recognition of the importance of engagement and motivation of the language learners in achieving success with a target language. It is from these viewpoints that task-based learning first emerged (Wei & Cook 2009, p.75).

2.4. Task-Based Language Learning

Understanding the evolution of the TBLL approach is appropriate as it provides a foundation for why it was considered an effective method for the VEDC unit to adopt. In addition, it will serve to illustrate why the other forms of language learning identified above were rejected for the VEDC unit and its students.

TBLL as first outlined by Willis (1996) who saw the approach as an extension of the TTT format but with a more coherent logical basis that recognises the need for students to have authentic communication. A task in this context is defined as an activity "where the target language is used by the learner for a communicative purposes (goal) in order to achieve a pre-determined outcome" (Willis 1996).

As such, TBLL is a learner-centered approach to language instruction. The focus is on allowing and encouraging the student to share their knowledge, and focus on their needs, motivations and interests so that language based tasks stimulate them to participate (Tuan 2011). In the context of the VEDC this is a vital point, given the disengaged nature of the students in the VEDC who prefer to learn in a practical way and do not respond well to formal academic instructions and rules. It means that when delivering the TBLL approach, the needs of the learners and

what will stimulate them to learn and engage with the learning environment will be a vital part of the success of the approach.

In TBLL, learning is achieved through a series of activities which work as building blocks to successful task completion. The focus of the approach is not on learning in uncontextualised formal setting, but rather on encouraging the students to see that language usage is a way of achieving communicative intent and needs gratification in a real world context. Thus, the learning is seen as authentic and useful, not sterile and classroom bound. The language used in a TBLL setting comes from discussion with the learners and the development of relevant, contextual tasks that stimulate the learners' participation in the lesson (Tomlinson 2011, p.188).

As a result, the whole approach has a strong reliance on the experimentation with learners own knowledge, as well as their own independent analysis of language to make the task achievement more effective. This encourages motivation to communicate, and the emphasis is on fluency rather than grammatical or syntactic adherence to rules (Cullen 2001, p.22). As the language is being delivered in a context that is occurring naturally, the use of language is more fluid and that materials can be brought in that are not necessarily specifically related to language classrooms, but can come from a wide range of sources, provided they motivate the students. The process has a number of stages as Figure 1 below indicates.

Pre-task
Introduction to topic and task
Teacher explores the topic with class, highlights useful words and phrases, helps students understand task instructions and prepare. Students may hear a recording of others doing a similar task.

Task Cycle

Task	**Planning**	**Report**
Students do the task, in pairs or small groups. Teacher monitors from a distance.	Students prepare to report to the whole class (orally or in writing) how they did the task, what they decided or discovered.	Some groups present their reports to the class, or exchange written reports, and compare results.

Language Focus

Analysis	**Practice**
Students examine and discuss specific features of the text or transcript of the recording.	Teacher conducts practice of new words, phrases and patterns occurring in the data, either during or after the analysis.

Figure 1: Stages of the task-based language learning approach(Willis1996, p. 38)

In the context of this format, the "task" can be any of the following:

a) Listing: which requires the students to brain-storm and fact find to achieve the outcome or goal of a completed list of mind map of their findings in the target language. For example, as Van den Branden (2009) suggests creating a list of all the jobs a zookeeper might have.

b) Ordering and sorting: this can be sequencing, ranking, classifying, or categorizing target words in the second language. The outcome in this case is a set of ordered information sorted according to predefined criteria such as importance, value or other pre-set guidelines (Leaver & Willis 2004, p.245).

c) Comparing: this involves matching words and phrases, finding similarities or differences with the outcome of either identification of the similarities and differences or matching groups or pairs of words and phrases (Ellis 2003, p.212).

d) Problem solving: this involves analysis of real situations to reach hypothetical outcome and requires the students to reason with one another and make decisions so that the outcome (solution to the problem) is achieved. For the VEDC students this has been noted to encourage not only communication in the target language, but also increases their overall interaction with one another.

e) Sharing of personal experiences: this can involve narration from one student or a group of students, and requires describing events, as well as exploring and explaining situations, attitudes, opinions and reactions. This task is largely social and creates interaction and collaboration between students and teachers. Like the problem solving, this offers opportunities for students to bring in other knowledge and information for use in the language classroom (Tomlinson & Matsuhara 2010, p.356).

f) Creative tasks: these can involve brainstorming, fact finding, ordering/sorting and comparison but the ultimate aim is to deliver something that can be shown to a wider audience and not just retained within the student group(Willis 1996& Lee 2005).

As the list of tasks demonstrates, the tasks that can be deployed using a TBLL framework can be wide and varied and open to interpretation by the teacher, based on their knowledge of what might motivate a particular group of students. As such, TBLL is based on the philosophy of centering learning on the learner's needs and learning styles(Ellis 2003, Nunan2005, Richards & Rodgers2001) and it is focused on content based activities that are meaningful as opposed to linguistic and grammatical forms (Carless 2002&Littlewood 2004). In essence, TBLL offers learners the chance to develop second language skills using materials that have meaning for them, and an environment of supportive feedback to provide improved opportunities for language development. However, there are still concerns about its effectiveness in a foreign language classroom, such as that at the VEDC (In-Jae-Jeon 2005). Specifically this relates to relevance of chosen tasks to students, teacher familiarity with the process and the potential for informality that could disrupt the discipline in class. These areas are covered in more detail in subsequent sections of this chapter.

The approach developed from the constructivist theory of language learning and teaching(Erray & Schollaert 2003, p.14) and comes from the perspective that it is a process of development of language skills that is grounded in communication and interaction at a social level(Thomas & Reinders 2010, p.44), rather than drill practice as in the traditional PPP practices indicated above. One of the difficulties with the process however, is the redevelopment of effective curricula that still incorporate authentic contextually relevant task materials for students (Jeon & Hahn2006). This has been a particular concern at the VEDC in terms of trying to find tasks that will interest the students at the unit and encourage their full and active participation in the language lessons. An initial difficulty was in defining what could be utilised or defined as "a task".

In this context, Willis (1996) set out clear definitions of what could be regards as "a task" for the activities previously indicated. Skehan (1998) further elaborated on this by indicating four criteria for a task:

a) There should be a goal that is being worked towards.
b) There is an evaluation of the outcomes.

c) The meaning of the task is primary.

d) There is a real-world relationship to the materials.

In this way, there are specific roles for both students and teachers in ensuring the successful delivery of the outcomes and feedback in terms of the evaluation. However, there are components that should be considered if the implementation of the approach is to be effective. For the VEDC, these components are not only goals, input data, classroom settings, activity types and assessment, but also consideration for the engagement of the students. The final component in this list is considered in greater detail towards the end of the literature review, whilst the others are given an overview here.

Firstly, a goal is not only a guideline or signpost in the overall process, but also provides a connection to the wider educational and curriculum aims of the second language course, according to (Nunan1989) and should involve a wide range of perspectives that come from the social environment of the students, their cognitive awareness and naturally communicative ability. This can be simple tasks such as booking hotels or restaurants, or cinema tickets in the target language. In the case of the VEDC students, the goal setting needs to be based on what motivates them and developed in an atmosphere of collaboration so that the students become invested in the process.

The input data may be verbal material or written or visual. It is the materials that the groups will use when performing the task. This can be maps, CDs, videos, brochures, magazines, newspapers and even restaurant menus, provided it comes from a real world context and has something which stimulates the groups' interest (Brosnan et al. 1984). An effective way of achieving this is to encourage students to bring in materials that can be used for task development. For the VEDC students, this also has the added input of encouraging greater integration and connections between the groups that can increase their own interpersonal skills, something valued by future employers.

Classroom setting refers to the environment in which the task is conducted. This may be in pairs, small groups or as a whole class exercise and will be dependent on both the size of the learner group and the teachers' recognition of how best their students learn and interact with one another and with the teacher. Pica and Doughty (1985) indicated that peer and collaborative group working was highly conducive to second language learning. Nevertheless, as Tomlinson (2011, p.148) notes, since the advent of the internet, web-based input data can mean that students can work together in a virtual world. This further reinforces the real world context of the task materials. Ultimately, the teacher will understand and then apply the method most appropriate for their individual students. For example, at the VEDC this has meant whole class work, team work to stimulate competition and some pair work, depending on the level of engagement of particular students. With regard to activity types, (Shrum&Glisan2009) found that Pica and Doughty's (1985) view that two-way information gap games were more likely to encourage modified (i.e. greater target language use) interaction than a one-way approach where only one individual holds the primary information. Furthermore, as (Crookall & Oxford 1990) suggest role plays can enhance the levels of interest. This view is confirmed by (Leaver & Willis 2004) who indicate that role play not only increases whole class involvement and collaboration but it also stimulates the process of learning for the second language. However, the best activity to adopt is based on the recognition of the learners own needs and the same is true of the materials provided to the students for the tasks.

Assessment, the final components is more complex for teachers than standard language assessment as it requires observation in a real world context of the students language and communicative ability or evaluating their ability in a simulated classroom setting (Bachman 2002 & Weigle 2002). One effective method is that of peer assessment according to (Johnson & Johnson 1994). However, one aspect of peer assessment is that students focus on the language use and meaning conveyance, rather than ability to remain on topic as (Gan et al. 2009) note. Therefore, peer assessments, whilst a viable and effective means for assessing how well the overall group is performing, it should be used as a complement to teacher evaluation of the overall aims of the task and the ability of

the individual and/ or group to remain focused on the task and thus demonstrate communicative competence in the second language.

Whilst the concept of task-based language learning appears to offer a real world, ideal situation for students to develop communicative competence in a second language, the teaching approach is very different to that of traditional language teaching strategies. As such it can sometimes be difficult for teachers to adapt to this new approach. Therefore, consideration should be given to how teachers perceive the implementation of this approach as this is highly pertinent to the current study. Without full co-operation, understanding and commitment to the approach, there is a higher percentage of failure as (McDonagh & Chaikmongko l2007) note. The same is true of student perceptions of the approach.

2.5. Teacher and Student Perceptions of the TBLL Approach and Their Concerns

The literature suggests that the TBLL approach, being based on psycholinguistics and socio-cultural theories, offers the potential to create meaningful classroom interactions that foster the development of ability and understanding in the second language (Langtolf 2000, Swain 2000). In addition, it offers the opportunity for users to develop their own cognitive strategies for acquiring the language through the use of appropriate materials that stimulate their interest (Robinson 2001, Gass 2003). However, a number of studies have indicated that teachers have indicated concerns over their own levels of language proficiency, oral communication ability and sociolinguistic competencies to effectively deliver a task-based language learning programme (Karavas-Doukas 1995;Hui 1997&Butler 2004). There have also been concerns raised about how discipline is maintained in classrooms during group works with some teachers indicating that learners became unruly during the discussions, creating tensions in neighbouring classrooms (Hui 1997). In addition, there have been concerns regarding how effective assessment of oral language is in what is perceived as an informal assessment setting. However, as (Bachman 2000) notes, provided there are clear guidelines about anticipated outcomes, such as being able to communicate a message or request effectively then the oral assessment in the informal setting is

fully viable. For the students at the VEDC, this means being able to answer questions competently and effectively in English to demonstrate to future employers their aural and oral skills in the language.

With regard to students, whilst they have indicated that they appreciate a more learner-centered and contextually relevant syllabus and curriculum (Wiriya Karun 2001), this is somewhat balanced by a reticence about sharing personal opinions and viewpoints (Hui 1997), and concerns about peer assessment of their language abilities. In addition, (Tsui1996) found that for some students they were less inclined to participate as they were concerned at potential peer ridicule if they did not have the same levels of proficiency in the second language as their peers.

Consequently, it would appear that task-based language is recognised by students and teachers as having some positives, but there remain some concerns about its efficacy in the longer term along with some concerns about levels of interaction for the whole group. These are areas that will require evaluation alongside language assessment scores for the VEDC participants. Given the already disengaged nature of the students, it is prudent to recognise that some of the student concerns over TBLL may be present in this cohort.

Thus, whilst task -based learning appears to offer an opportunity to integrate with the target second language, it is also important, when considering the effectiveness of this approach at the VEDC, to understand some of the other factors that will impact on second language learning. These include the students' motivations and reasons for learning, along with the types of strategies that they may employ to aid their learning. These are considered as they form part of the overall students' experience and will thus influence them and their teachers' views of the task-based learning approach.

2.6. Motivation in Second Language Learning

According to Richards et al. (1985) a foreign language is something that is taught at school but not with the aim of communicative competence outside of the classroom or formal educational environment. This is because it is a language not

commonly used out of this environment. However, a second language is one that is commonly used in the native country, so that those learning it are able to communicate with larger numbers of individuals in wider society. As (Oxford 1990, p.6) points out that the learning takes place when "people need more than one language for social, economic and professional reasons". Thus in the context of the VEDC, the aim is to make the students more employable in the wider industries by offering them the chance to develop communicative competence in English which is a widely used language in the area and around the world (Oxford & Shearin 1994). As such, the process being undertaken is that of second language, rather than foreign language learning. This distinction is important as it is related to the level of exposure to the target language and this is one of the potential benefits of the TBLL approach as it increases communicative intent and competence and encourages motivation to engage in the target language. The issue of communicative competence is central to the TBLL approach and thus is worth greater exploration in the context of student motivation.

2.7. Communicative Competence

One of the key requirements of the VEDC industry partners is that any student offered work following graduation should have communicative competence in English. As such, understanding what this is and how it feeds into the teaching approaches and choices of the task-based learning approach has a strong relevance for the work.

Chomsky indicated that there is a distinction between performance and grammatical ability or competence according to (Cook & Newson 2007, p.15). Grammatical ability or competence, according to Chomsky is the linguistic ability of an ideal native speaker, whilst language performance was the ability to effectively use the language in a particular situation. Hymes (1972) suggested that this was too narrow a difference, and that contextual appropriateness was a major ability in language that Chomsky had not incorporated. This contextual appropriateness again refers back to the task-based contextual nature of the TBLL approach. According to Hymes (ibid) therefore, there are four levels of

communicative competence, all of which can be measured and evaluated in a TBLL context:

a) what is formally possible

b) what is feasible

c) what is the social meaning, and

d) what actually occurs.

What Hymes (ibid) intended was that learners of a target language needed to know how to use the language effectively to achieve their purposes, not necessarily to use the target language in the way that a native speaker does. For the TBLL approach moreover, this demonstrates the effectiveness of the task-based approach in delivering communication teaching through a reality based contextual framework. This work was extended by (Canale & Swain 1980) who defined communicative competence as "underlying systems of knowledge and skill required for communication" (Canale 1983, p.5) and divided it into four separate elements:

a) grammatical competence (the learner's knowledge of the vocabulary, phonology and rules of the language),

b) sociolinguistic competence (learner's ability to use the target language appropriately),

c) discourse competence (learner's ability to connect their utterances into a meaningful whole) and

d) strategic competence (learner's ability to employ strategies to compensate for imperfect or incomplete knowledge).

So if communicative competence is the ability to convey and interpret meaning in a target language, along with the ability to appropriately and correctly use language to achieve task completion and communication goals orally and in written form as (Oxford1990) states, then TBLL offers an effective way to develop these skills in a classroom environment. This is because it allows for developments of individual strategies of language learners through discourse and social interaction with their peers. The importance of this interactive, communicative and contextual element of language learning was recognised by

(Majhanovich & Hu 1995, p.69) and used by Willis (1996) in developing the task-based learning approach to second language learning.

However, given the unique nature of the VEDC and its previously disengaged learners, it is important to understand what motivates the students in terms of the task development in the language classroom as well as the strategies employed by the students for learning.

O'Malley and Chamot defined language learning strategies as "the special thoughts or behaviours that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn or retain new information" (1990, p. 1).Oxford (1993, p.18), however indicates that they are "specific actions, behaviours, steps, or techniques students use, often consciously, to improve their progress in apprehending, internalizing, and using the L2".

These strategies initially come from the learners, their own motivations to learn, and may be visible in terms of behaviours or techniques or unseen such as thoughts and mental processes involving information and memory. These strategies, according to (Graham 1997, p.37) are however highly dependent on the learner's own learning style and ability and motivation to process information and engage with the target language learning process and environment. Learning styles, according to (Eherman 1990) are individual characteristics which have a physiological and psychological basis but a learning strategy can be developed through instruction and involvement, such as with the TBLL approach.

2.8. Language Learning Strategies
Students all have an individual learning style which they will apply to any subject or learning experience, including that of second language learning. From their earliest educational experiences, students develop strategies which suit their own learning style (Pritchard 2009, pp. 42 – 43) and thus understanding these can be an integral factor in ensuring that the student is benefiting from the TBLL approach. In the context of this work, given the reluctant nature of the students at the VEDC unit, this need to understand strategies becomes even more important.

Hedge (2000) indicates that different strategies can be identified by teachers through recognizing a) what a learner does to learn i.e. a cognitive strategies and b) what a learner does to regulate their learning (a meta-cognitive strategy).

For example, cognitive strategies, the mental process used directly in the learning context allows the learner to process the information shown in tasks, but individuals will work on this in different ways, to manipulate it in a way that enhances their individual learning (O'Malley&Chamot1990, p.44). Specifically, (Cook1993) identified that in second language learning, imitation, contextualization, real-life referents and clarification seeking are all strategies that can be deployed. In the case of VEDC students therefore, all of these strategies may be present. The difference with meta-cognitive strategies however, according to (Victori & Lockhart1995) is that these require the individual to think about how to make their own learning effective, which could be problematic for disengaged, demotivated students such as those at the VEDC.

Learning strategies are not deployed in isolation. Wenden and Rubin (1987) note that many students also adopt a "social" or "socio-affective" strategy which requires direct involvement and exposure to the language. This can be illustrated by some of the tasks utilised in the TBLL approach and is an opportunity to practice in an indirect way.

The importance of strategies for individual learner development and for teachers was noted by (Horwitz1987, p.126). It was found that demotivated students could change their approaches when teachers uncovered which strategies worked best for them. The collaborative nature of TBLL offers this opportunity but it needs to be tied in with the motivation levels of the student to learn. For this reason, it is important for this study to understand what lies beneath the motivation to learn a second language.

2.9. Motivations for second language learning

There are numerous concepts around the area of motivation, and in-depth discussion of these is outside the scope and size of this work. However, the most

salient are (Gardner 2001) and his concept of integration. He suggested that the learning of the second language was instigated by a desire to understand the culture and the lifestyle of the second language country based on respect and a desire to emulate the culture. Whilst this may be relevant for the VEDC students, there are alternative frameworks that may be more applicable.

For example, (Deci1985& Ryan 2002) promoted a self-determination theory for second language learning motivator. This is grounded in the student's autonomous desire to learn the language. Further theories that may have relevance included (McClelland 2000) and (Kruidenier1983) who suggest that the desire to learn a second language is motivated by goal acquisition.

Given the disassociated nature of the students at the VEDC, it is therefore, important to discover their strongest motivators, whether it is the achievement of a goal (such as lucrative employment on graduating) as McCelland and Kruidenier indicate, or integration as Gardner suggests, such as being able to fully participate in society. As indicated, whilst the overall motivation of the students is not within the scope of this work, as it is based on evaluating the effectiveness of the TBLL approach, it is important to highlight that this may be a factor in any outcomes and thus may be an area for potential future investigation.

Within the TBLL context, (Willis 2001) notes that there should be a focus on learning opportunities that develop through student, peer and teachers interaction. This means, as Johnson, (1995) indicates, that teachers need to be aware of how important their interactions with students, and the building of rapport is for success. However, whilst a focus on teacher led interaction and development of learning opportunities is one facet of the TBL approach as (Swain &Lapkin2000) indicate, time for student self-reflection is equally valuable. This allows them to evaluate their performance in the second language and establish connections and comparisons with their native tongue, which aids in overall understanding and competence within the second language.

2.10. Socio-Political Factors

Abu Dhabi is in an Arab country which in cultural terms is extremely hierarchical and rule bound (Hofstede 2001). This is relevant because TBLL approach is a highly collaborative process between students and teachers and as such it should be highlighted that there were some socio-political issues in the implementation of the process at the VEDC. In many Arab countries, the traditional view of the teacher is a holder of wisdom that is being imparted, not a means of support and participation (Hafernik et al. 2008, p.130). In addition, group and participatory work is not a standard feature of the Arab Education system (Deady 2005), and thus there is a likelihood that adjustments on both student and teacher sides will have been made following the implementation of the much more participative, discursive style that is the hallmark of the TBLL approach.

This is particularly pertinent given the profile of the male students at the VEDC who have been enrolled at the unit due to their disengagement with formal learning. As such, their motivation for learning a second language is likely to be out of step with those students of a second language who have a desire to either integrate with the target culture or achieve particular goals. Therefore, highlighting the psychology of the disengaged learner is important in the context of this study.

2.11. Encouraging the Demotivated Learners

The reasons why learners disengage from formal education are many and varied. McCall (2003) suggests that many were those who had high levels of absenteeism, were dysfunctional in terms of skill, family problems or other conflicts. Schussler (2009) also noted that these individuals frequently felt that success was not something that they were entitled to, deserved or could achieve. Frequently, these individuals are also emotionally disengaged from society and were easily distracted by anything that did not represent authority or formal learning (Black 2004). In addition, they have no fear of punishment for being late for classes, and according to (Olson2006) and (Christenson 2001) these behaviours can begin as early as 12 or 13 years of age, sometimes based on negative experiences in their early school years. Olson (2006) specifically

indicated that this can be as the result of teacher attitude for those who struggled with learning that led to the individual choosing to disengage rather than deal with negative comments about poor performance.

Margolis and McCabe (2006) suggested that disengaged learners and low levels of respect for teachers were not self-motivated in their academic studies and thus gave up rather than face failure. Furthermore, this is relevant to the work of the VEDC. Merwin (2002) found that disengaged students often indicated in research that they wished that teachers did care about them and understood their needs better. Given that the VEDC is focused on encouraging disengaged males to re-engage with education, the fact that as (Montalvo et al. 2007) indicate, the perception that a teacher is interested in them, and wants to help them succeed can frequently bring about re-engagement, is an important element in re-engaging the residents at the unit in both their vocational and language work. One way in which this can be achieved is through the activities deployed during the task-based language learning. As (Armstrong 2008) notes, interpersonal intelligence, the ability to perceive the intentions and moods of others is often strong in disengaged individuals. As a result disengaged students recognise when a teacher is genuinely trying to engage their interest through showing recognition of what is important in their world, through contextual engagement and lesson content.

Halligan (2009) thus notes that the creation of learning opportunities for disengaged students where they can achieve success is key to re-engaging them in education. Furthermore, as (Wilhelm & Wilhelm 2010) and (Karakas et al.2008) found, traditional approaches such as worksheets, tests and repetitions did not engage, and thus hold the interest of these students whereas, the discursive nature and contextually real setting to TBLL would. It is surmised encourage greater participation and thus engagement from the students at the VEDC than these more traditional teaching strategies and would lead to simultaneous improvements in test scores. This view is held by (Platt & Brooks 2002) who found that the sociological and the cultural basis of TBLL tasks lead to greater interest from some groups. In addition, Lopez (2010) indicates that where a lack of relevance

and validity is perceived, there is a correlation to reduced motivation which is exacerbated in individuals who are disengaged.

Therefore in this context, offering TBLL appears to provide a way of delivering coherence and meaning to the language learning that could increase involvement and desire to learn.

2.12. Summary

The literature review has identified that task-based learning is seen as a socio-cultural and meaningful approach to teaching second languages. It offers an opportunity to bring real world materials into the classroom that can stimulate interest and motivation in learners and offers the chance for them to use the target language in a way that offers an outcome, or a goal for them to achieve. It has also been highlighted that the ways in which learners acquire second language is dependent on motivation, personal characteristics and development of appropriate strategies. Incorporating perspectives of teachers and students on the implementation of a TBLL approach, it is felt that a clear foundation for the conduction of the primary data element of the work has been achieved. The following chapter sets out the detailed methodology.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The review of the development of TBLL, its application in second language teaching and the connections to student motivation provided a foundation for the development of the primary quantitative data element of this work. A quantitative approach has been taken so that clear statistical comparisons could be made with current thinking and allows for comparisons to be made. Kumar (2011) states that quantitative designs are more appropriate than qualitative ones when the focus of research is to measure the extent of a certain discrepancy.

The primary objective, which is evaluating the effectiveness of the TBLL approach at the VEDC, was felt to be best achieved using an exploratory approach that was underscored by an interpretivist philosophy (Dörnyei 2003). This is because whilst it was felt that quantitative data would provide the best outcomes, they would be based on student and teachers' perceptions, where the views would be indicative and subjective at best. Therefore, it is felt that using the previous and current language scores would provide some definitive statistical data. Thus, there is a cross over to descriptive approaches. Taking all of these factors into account, an exploratory approach was selected to deliver new insights into TBLL and its role in engaging demotivated students as opposed to definitive outcomes. It should also be noted that as the hypotheses under investigation have already been outlined, this chapter has a focus on study design and rationale for their selection.

3.2. Research Purpose

The main and secondary research questions reinforce the aim of examining the effectiveness of TBLL at VEDC since its introduction in early 2011. Whilst it was considered that a clear outcome would emerge in terms of whether language skills had improved or not, justifying the descriptive approach, the researcher development of the study was designed with a view that new research avenues would also develop in terms of how TBLL affects motivation in teachers and disengaged students. This then was the rationale for the exploratory approach as the primary focus of the work (Webb 2002, p.17). Furthermore, whilst the work was centred on a specific group of disengaged male students, it was felt that it still

had value as social research. This is because they would be a representative sample of disengaged students, not just those at the VEDC. This is why the philosophy of interpretivism has been applied as the answers given by the participants would be their own personal, subjective, responses to the questions posed (Crotty 2005, p.67). The positivist philosophy was rejected as its focus is on testing the hypothesis of an existing theory (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008). Given the unique nature of the VEDC and its students in terms of language learning, this was not seen as an appropriate philosophy to follow. The realist approach was also rejected as it was felt that whilst the test scores would provide some definitive measures, the subjective views of the teachers and students took the work away from the concrete grounding of behaviour required by this philosophy (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006).

3.4. Research Strategy and Data Collection

The primary data collection was achieved through three strands. Questionnaires to students and teachers, interviews with teachers and compilation of language test data. The interviews and questionnaires were then analysed for patterns. As statistical outcomes were achieved due to the ratings nature of the questionnaires and the language test results, the main focus of the work was quantitative (Chisnall, 1997). However, some qualitative data was achieved through the interviews, offering a level of triangulation to the work (Flick 2009, p.444).

The chosen strategy was to conduct interviews with teachers and distribute questionnaires to teachers and students through January 2012. The choice of this strategy was made due to the case study focus of the work, as it focused on only one educational establishment, the VEDC in Abu Dhabi (Yin, 2003, p.4). A case study focus was selected as it provides the opportunity to study unique areas within a particular field and potentially challenge current thinking with new phenomena (George & Bennett2005, p.6). Whilst the questionnaires would provide quantitative data, the interviews were deployed to add some depth in terms of exploratory and descriptive answers, rather than "absolute truths" (Ary et al .2009).

The data was collected through questionnaires and interviews. As previously indicated the questionnaire was selected as a survey instrument to provide statistical quantitative data that could be evaluated in future studies. Questionnaires are used to have reliable data so researcher can derive conclusions from such data. Munn and Drever (1990) indicate that when the participants respond to the same questions in the same way, the answers become more reliable. Nunan (1989) states that through using questionnaires, one can inquire into any aspect within teaching/learning process. Also teachers find the chance to learn about classroom practices they use in class by analyzing these questionnaires

Interviews were incorporated to provide a deeper level of qualitative data against which to evaluate the core quantitative findings. This mixed method provides not only a level of reliability and validity but also extends the depth of a study such as this (Denscombe2007, p.107).The main focus was therefore quantitative (Chisnall, 1997) based on the design of the survey instruments. Respondents were students and teachers currently at the VEDC. However, no identifying information was taken from any of the participants to ensure anonymity of responses.

3.5. Survey Instrument Design

There were three survey elements, students' questionnaire, teachers' questionnaire and a teachers' interview. This is because both students and teacher perspectives on the overall success of the VEDC were felt to be necessary to provide a full overview of the implementation of the TBLL approach. All of these can be found in the (Appendix A and C). The two questionnaires were split into sections with section presenting a series of statements using a Likert scale from 1-5, and the respondents were asked to rate the statement with 1 being "disagree completely", 2 disagree slightly, 3 neither agree nor disagree, 4 agree slightly and 5 agree strongly.

The students' questionnaire was split into three sections: a) general views on TBLL learning, b) individual learning and TBLL activities and c)perceptions of teachers and TBLL. This was done for two reasons. Firstly to separate out

specific and general views so that both teacher and student objective points about the TBLL approach per se could be gathered, along with their own individual experiences of the approach. For the students it was felt relevant, given the socio-cultural issues highlighted in the literature review to examine how they felt the teachers viewed the approach. The second reason was to provide clarity in analytical terms of specific aspects of the TBLL approach, in particular how the overall approach was seen, how it had affected the students learning and whether it had changed their relationships with their teachers.

The teachers' questionnaire was also split into three similar sections for the same aforementioned reasons as the students' questionnaire. However, the final section was about their own individual views, as a teacher of the implementation and delivery of the approach. This was aimed at eliciting a personal, rather than professional, perspective on how well they believed the implementation had been achieved.

The teacher interview was a semi-structured interview with ten questions based on how the respondents saw task- based learning, its place within the VEDC and how it had impacted on student learning since its introduction see appendices (E & F).

The three survey instruments were developed from three previous studies (Jeon & Hahn, 2006; McDonough & Chakitmongkol, 2007 and Sulaiha et al. 2009) into the efficacy of TBLL and adapted for relevance to the VEDC. These studies were selected as they had all highlighted aspects of TBLL that had been raised as concerns, as noted in the literature review. It was felt therefore, that using these tools as a basis for the survey instruments for this study would deliver a level of comparison and thus evaluation based on existing thoughts in the field.

3.6. Data Analysis

For study results to be effective and viable, collected data should undergo rigorous analysis that is transparent and visible (Chisnall, 1997). In this work, Gordon and Langmaid's (1998) approach, which has three stages, was applied as per the figure below. The rationale for this approach is that it is a clear cut process

that ensures clarity and objectivity during the process and ensures that the delivery of the analysis and formation of recommendations is verifiable for readers. For the statistical analysis of the quantitative data, SPSS was applied.

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│           Data Reduction                     │
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│  Removal of any data this superfluous to     │
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│           Data Display                       │
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│     Statistical presentation of data         │
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│    Conclusion Drawing and Verification       │
│                                              │
│  Measurement of outcomes against objectives  │
│        and discussion of implications        │
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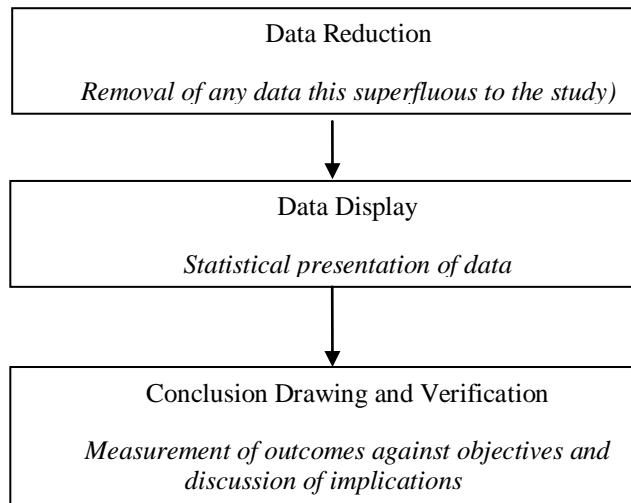
Figure 2: Gordon and Langmaid's data analysis (1998, p. 46)

3.7. Ethical Issues

Mauthner et al. (2005, p.17) advise that when a study involves human subjects, as in this case with teachers and students, confidentiality of identity should be maintained at all times. As the students and teachers are all known at the VEDC, this was particularly pertinent in this case and anonymity had to be assured to ensure that honest opinions were given in both questionnaire and interview data collection. To ensure that participants understood why their views were being sought they were given clear indication prior to participation and no personal data was requested during the completion of the interviews or questionnaires see (Appendix D).

3.8. Validity and Reliability

Understanding that there would be personal viewpoints and opinions being recorded it was important for this work to ensure maintenance of reliability and validity (Chisnall 1997). Samples data tables can be found in the (Appendix G). Furthermore, using interviews and questionnaires as well as data relating to test scores delivers a triangulation (Flick 2009, p.444) indicates that this reaffirms reliability due to the comparisons that can be made between the different data sets. Specifically, statistical outcomes from the questionnaires could be evaluated

against the qualitative data achieved through the interviews to demonstrate the validity of the outcomes.

3.9. Methodology Rationale and Summary

Given that the overriding aim was to evaluate the effectiveness of the TBLL approach at VEDC, it was felt that simply measuring language scores would be insufficient. Therefore, using interviews and questionnaires a multi-methods survey could be conducted. This makes the work and thus the philosophy and methodology approach more robust and the outcomes more viable. By encompassing the views and perceptions of students and teachers, the validity of the hypotheses could be more effectively evaluated. Using survey instruments that had been adapted from previous studies showed coherence with previous works in the study area and lends further credence to the work and the outcomes as well as a means of comparison. The combination of statistical analysis from a Likert scale for the questionnaires and the qualitative responses achieved through the interviews provided a greater level of depth for the work than could have been achieved through a single methodological approach. This is because as noted above, the use of both quantitative and qualitative data provides a level of comparison that cannot be achieved with only one form of data. The quantitative data provides a statistical basis that can then be further explored by examining the responses achieved in the qualitative interview data.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS OF OUTCOMES

4.1. Introduction

To evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of TBLL approach at the VEDC in Abu Dhabi, 23 questionnaires were distributed to teachers and a total of 19 were returned and completed. Three hundred and thirty-seven students were provided with the questionnaire and 264 of these were returned. Two interviews were also conducted and the transcripts for these can be found in (Appendix E). This chapter considers the results of the questionnaires in terms of student and teacher perceptions of TBLL and its implementation at the VEDC. In addition, it examines the language test scores of 337 students before and after the implementation. The raw scores for the language tests that were analysed can be found in (Appendix H).

4.2. Students' and Teachers 'Views on TBLL

The second element of the primary data collection was the questionnaire to teachers and students regarding their views on TBLL and how they believed it had impacted on student ability. The first section focused on the general view of task-based language learning.

It was identified in the literature review that if students are motivated by a teaching approach, they will achieve better outcomes (Alqurashi 2011). Given the disengaged nature of the students at the VEDC, it was hoped that TBLL would provide higher levels of motivation and thus engagement in the language studies. The individual responses to the questionnaire are provided below. The first section was designed to gauge how the students and teachers viewed TBLL in a general way.

4.2.1 TBLL boosts students' confidence

Eighty-four percent (16 teachers out of 19 who responded) indicated that they believed using TBLL had increased the confidence of their students. Only one teacher (5.2%) disagreed as shown in figure 3 below. This suggests that overall the teachers had seen a surge in confidence for using the language target since

introducing TBLL. This is also noted in the student outcomes, with 66% indicating increased confidence.
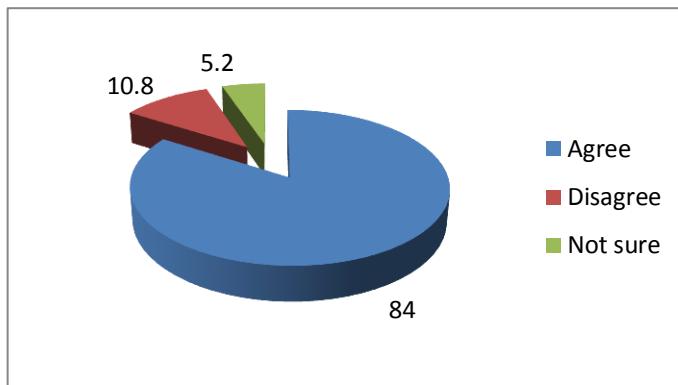
Figure 3: Teachers' perceptions of their students' confidence

Whereas from students' perspectives, sixty-six percent (176) of the students indicated that they had felt an increase in confidence about communication since the introduction of the TBLL programme, this is shown in figure 4 below. Only 13% indicated that they did not feel a change in their confidence levels and the remaining 21% were unsure. This appears to indicate that there is an effect on confidence from TBLL, which was indicated by (Burrows2008) who noted that the participation element of the process appeared to provide a boost in this area. It is particularly important in the context of the students at the VEDC as they have previously shown low levels of both confidence and motivation. Schussler (2009) noted that disengaged individuals often feel that they are not entitled to success and thus increasing their confidence is one way to minimize this view and encourage their academic achievement. Therefore, the fact that 66% felt there had been an increase in their confidence is an encouraging sign for the VEDC and its adoption of the learner-centered, task- based approach to language learning.
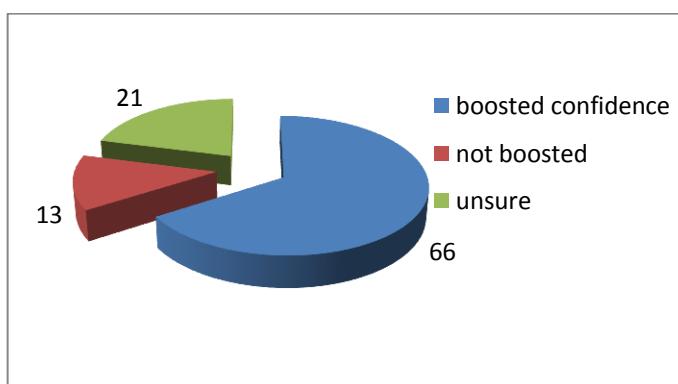
Figure 4: Increased confidence

4.2.2. TBLL Language Difficulty and Classroom Atmosphere.

Again 94% of the teachers indicated that they believed this statement to be true. This suggests that they recognise that a non-coercive, participatory classroom atmosphere, which is integral to the TBLL approach, has been achieved at the VEDC. Again, no teacher disagreed with this statement.

One of the issues identified in the literature review was that for some students active participation was not achieved due to the speed of the classroom discussions and their ability to follow this in the target language. The issue of participation was particularly pertinent for the students at the VEDC who had shown prior disinclination for engagement. This was borne out by this group of students with 81% indicating their agreement with this statement. This suggests that there may need to be a review of the pace of classroom discussion so that those students who may be struggling are not excluded, and thus demotivated for further learning and development. Given the nature of the students ensuring that there is overall participation will be important.

Despite the findings above regarding difficulty, it was heartening to find that 84% of the 264 respondents felt that they actively participated in group discussion. This suggests that even when the students are struggling to follow the discussion, they are still motivated to engage and participate in an active way. As Wilhelm and Wilhelm (2010) and Karakas et al (2008) have both indicated, individuals who are educationally disengaged will involve themselves when they are confronted with traditional teaching and testing methods. Therefore, it had been anticipated that the more inclusive, integrative approach of TBLL would stimulate greater participation. This appears to be the case for this group of students.

Given that finding, it appeared to be a personal recognition of active participation, when asked about whether all the groups were involved; a slightly lower percentage (79%) indicated, as in figure 5 below, that they felt that all members participated. Eight percent (21 individuals) indicated disagreement with this statement, suggesting that there is a variance in how actively all the members engage with the group work.
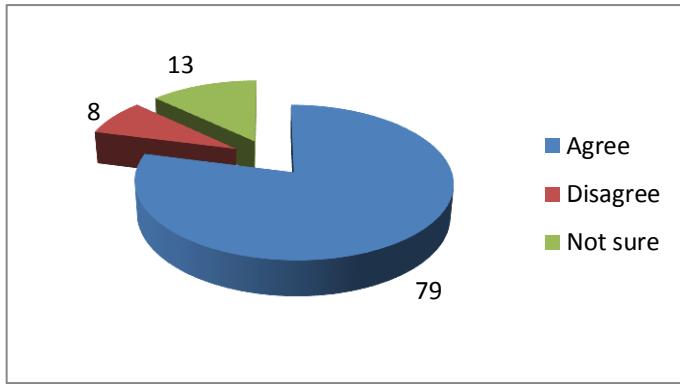
Figure 5: TBLT and class participation

4.2.3. TBLL lessons are suitable integrated skills for students' learning styles

Only 57% (150) of students felt that TBLL was suitable for their learning style, whilst 15% did not feel that it suited their learning style as indicated in figure 6 below. Ellis, (2003), Nunan, (2005) and Richards & Rodgers, (2001) all suggest that a benefit of TBLL is the way it can be adapted to individual learning styles. In this context therefore it is interesting to note that 12% of students had either a reduction in their language scores or no change at all. This suggests that while TBLL may be efficacious for some students, the individual learning style of the students also needs to be considered. As Ellis (2003, p.265) notes however, one of the benefits of the approach is that it allows flexibility and adaptation to individual learner styles.
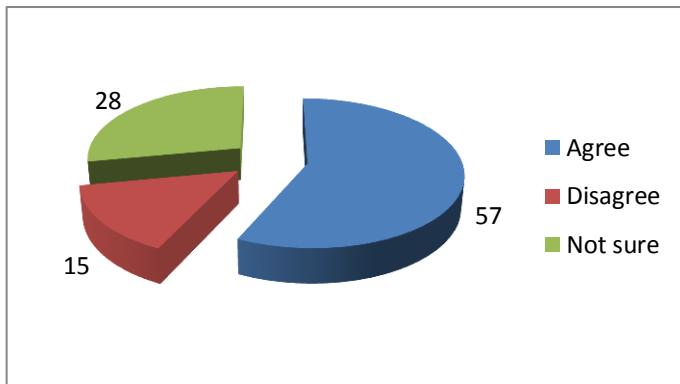
Figure 6: TBLT and students' learning styles

As per teachers, this statement referred to the integrated skills of debate, discussion, confidence in group work and ability in the target language that are all factors of a successful TBLL approach. 94% were again in agreement with this statement, suggesting that the teachers recognised how the TBLL had also had an effect on participation and integration for the students who had previously been disengaged from both interaction and academic learning.

The first section, general views about TBLL, suggests that both teachers and students had an overall positive view about the process and would therefore, be motivated to ensure both implementation and student engagement. The second section of the questionnaires was focused on teachers' as well as students' views on the activities of TBLL within the teaching context.

4.2.4. TBLL and Students' English language interaction

Eighty percent of the student respondents believed that their English had improved since learning through TBLL. When considering the overall grades for the whole student population of 337 individuals, not just the individuals who returned questionnaires, 90% showed an improvement in their language scores following TBLL instructions. This would appear to indicate that the students' perceptions of their abilities are accurate and may even be below what they are actually achieving. This lower perception of their abilities and improvement indicates that Schlusser's (2009) view that disengaged students are reticent about achievement and their right and ability to reach academic excellence is accurate for the VEDC students.

Sixty-one point seven percent indicated that since the implementation of TBLL there had been an increase in the interactions with students both inside and outside of the classroom. This suggests that the TBLL has not only aided in language studies but also increased connections between group members. Given the disengaged nature of the students at VEDC this is again a positive outcome and demonstrates the effect that discussions in the classroom which are relevant and meaningful can have on improving overall student relations in the VEDC unit. Black (2004) indicated that low achieving individuals were easily distracted and this reinforced their disengagement from society. Therefore, the fact that the TBLL discussions in the classroom had led to increased interaction outside the formal learning environment is a major positive step for the students at the VEDC.

According to the teachers, no teacher disagreed with this statement, although one respondent indicated that they were not sure leaving 94% of the teachers who

responded happy with having introduced the approach at the VEDC. This is a highly positive outcome as teacher commitment is recognised as being one of the key factors in the successful implementation of this approach. Indeed, as one of the interviews indicated, as shown by the extract below.

Extract 4.1

"I do believe that TBLL would be a good model to follow for VEDC students and for VEDC teachers as well actually after a few weeks of implementation I consider I realize that both students and teachers were a...a satisfied with this approach and both of them were happy about it ,".

This comment and the high levels of agreement with the statement suggest that there is a positive attitude at the VEDC in the teaching arm towards the implementation of TBLL.

4.2.5. Motivation in TBLL

Slightly lower outcomes where achieved for increased motivation with 56% of respondents indicating that their motivation had increased, against 19.6% who disagreed as figure 7 shows below. The impact of this is however hard to define as levels of motivation prior to TBLL were not available. The fact that just over 50% indicated an increase and 25% were unsure suggests however that there is an improvement in motivation through using this approach. It further confirms the connections between motivation and second language learning ability identified by Pang (2008), Graham (1997) and Gardner (2001).
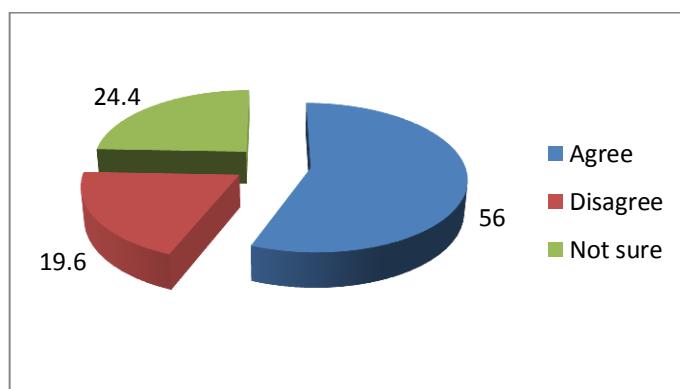
Figure 7:TBLT increases students motivation

As 56% of the students had indicated that their motivation levels for language learning had increased since the implementation of the TBLL approach, it was

anticipated that this would be recognised by teachers. Forty-seven percent of the teachers believed that learners' intrinsic motivation had increased, showing a close proximity to the responses from students. Overall, it indicates that TBLL does have an effect on motivation for around 50% of those involved in the process as learners.

4.2.6. TBLL promotes teaching and learning environment

Eighty-two percent of respondents indicated that they felt that the subject matter in language class was more relevant with TBLL. Given the importance of finding context and meaning to the desire to learning a second language, this is an encouraging outcome in relation to the effectiveness of the approach at the VEDC. As Tomlinson (2011, p.188) notes, encouraging students to see how the target language can be used for effective communication in their wider world is a major focus for the TBLL approach.

An important element of TBLL is the collaboration between teacher and students. For the process to be fully effective, the students have to give information to the teacher within the context of the lesson subject matter. This creates the collaboration. Eighty-nine percent of the VEDC teachers indicated that they believed that TBLL did promote this kind of learning environment which suggests that the management of the process has been effective in terms of encouraging collaboration between student groups and teachers.

Eighty-nine percent indicated that they were confident in using TBLL and only one respondent disagreed. This reinforces the high levels achieved for being happy to have the process that was achieved in the first section of the questionnaire and underlined by the following comment from one of the teachers interviewed.

Extract4.6

"for myself I think I was doing it already may be incorporating it already in what I was doing in classroom …em ….em I am sure every teacher at some stages depending on how you look at it…a.. exercise or …em an activity how it is done. One could argue that's that's TBLT em …but how they want….. formally present …em TBLL as a grade scale … I think it's good thing we have the presentation we

have the discussion and follow up ….em ..some material to look up than research … I think that will benefit all the teachers."

This comment and the high levels of confidence indicated suggested that some elements of the TBLL approach were already part of VEDC teacher's methods and that the formal introduction has simply allowed them to expand their knowledge and experience with the approach.

The teachers' questionnaire did not investigate whether there had been any increase in work load in terms of preparation for lessons although the literature review had indicated that this was one of the concerns of teachers, along with being able to find appropriate materials to use for their students (Karavas-Doukas 1995). However, the interviews did raise this question and whilst only two individuals were interviewed, there did not appear to be a concern regarding planning lessons. Rather, it appeared that the teachers were discussing and collaborating prior to the lessons to achieve the most effective set of materials for their students as the comment below indicates:

Extract 4.7

"well it is the same preparation time is the same just more assuring that all teachers are doing sort of similar thing and everybody in the same page so if you have any difficulties or you want to discuss an idea or ... em ... you have some queries or you can ask somebody in the team or the department to share the knowledge and the information which benefits everybody so overall it would .. it helps reduce the work load because we working on the same thing"

Seventy-three percent of the teachers felt that TBLL promoted learners' academic progress. This was surprising, but should be balanced against the fact that only one disagreed and the remainder were not sure, as indicated in figure 8 below. It may be that the teachers had not seen the full range of different scores achieved pre- and post TBLL or this level of response may have been based on not wishing to make definitive statements at such an early stage of the implementation. As one of the interviewees indicated
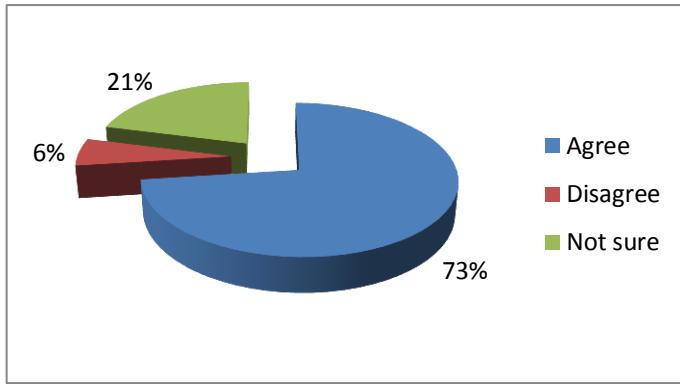
Figure 8: TBLL promoted learners' academic progress

Extract 4.4

"Well, it will be hasty to say that it is successful actually we have to wait and see. We have implemented it now for three months more or less and we need to wait a little bit before we judge whether it is a...a .. successful or the successful approach for VEDC students, but personally I do believe that it will yield good result".

What this suggests and is confirmed by the levels of agreement to the statement regarding academic progress is that there is a tentative belief from the teaching staff that TBLL has had a positive effect, but still they believe that larger data and evaluation is necessary before making this view concrete.

However, one of the criticisms of the TBLL approach is that it does not teach grammar explicitly (Littlewood 2004), rather it works from the perspective that the understanding of the rules evolves as the communicative competence of the learner increases. This appears to be borne out by the questionnaire results as only 33% indicated that the approach had increased their grammatical understanding. With 29% disagreeing, the views on grammar understanding appeared to be evenly spread between those that felt a benefit, those that did not and those who were not sure as figure 9 below indicates. As both Cullen (2001, p.22) and Pang (2008) note, this aspect of TBLL is one area that students struggle with, particularly if they have been used to a more systematic grammar teaching style.
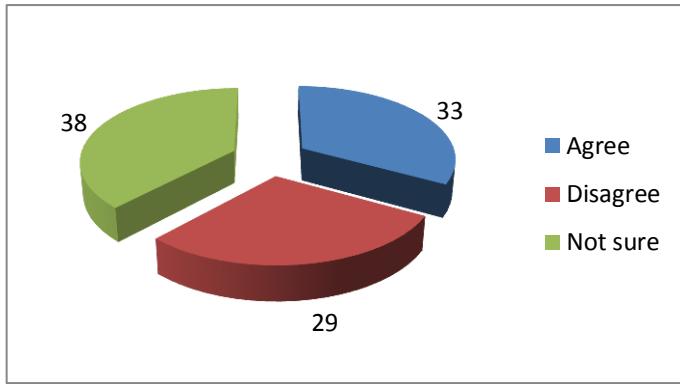
Figure 9: TBLT increased grammatical understanding

Moreover, the principle behind TBLL is that it offers students the chance to use a target language in a realistic, contextual and meaningful way, rather than in the more abstract, drill based non-contextual way of traditional language teaching methods (Shrum & Glisan 2009, p. 77). However, one of the criticisms of TBLL is that the textbooks are not always contextual or meaningful to different groups of students (Littlewood 2004). It was interesting therefore that only 36.8% of teachers believed that the information in textbooks was meaningful and purposeful. This was at odds with the student views, with 82% indicating that they found the materials meaningful. The reason for these different perspectives can only be surmised but an indication is given in the following comments:

Extract 4.5A

> "Ventures Series a...a..we agreed with the teachers to keep on track with this to keep using Ventures , but to adapt it to adapt this content into task-based lessons which was done by many teachers"

Extract 4.5B

> "I think formally we are still deciding on what materials we are going to use for the TBLL I am interested to see what are they agree on."

These two comments suggest that there is some variation in teacher views about the materials and that there is potentially still some evaluation necessary regarding what are the most appropriate material to use in the future at the VEDC.

This section on teachers' perceptions of the learner activities for TBLL at the VEDC is less clear cut and suggests there is still some adaptation and learning to be undertaken regarding materials and how they are utilised to the greatest effect. These areas will be considered further in the discussion section of this study. The final section of the teacher questionnaire was designed to investigate how the

teachers felt on a personal level about the introduction of TBLL and how it had affected in other words their teaching practices.

Overall the section on learning with TBLL appeared to indicate a majority perspective view in regards to approach, relevance and overall learning approaches and motivation. The final section was focused on how the students believed the teachers felt about the new TBLL approach.

4.2.7. TBLL classroom dynamics and teaching styles

As figure 10 below indicates, 68% of the students considered that the teaching style in TBLL classrooms was more relaxed, against only15% who disagreed. The remaining 17% who indicated they were not sure may have chosen not to define this either way, given the teaching environment in the Arab world and the issues this could cause for students (Hafernik et al. 2008). However, this is conjecture only and cannot be confirmed within the scope of the work. Overall, it would appear that for the majority of students, there was a perception of a more relaxed teaching environment when TBLL was being used.
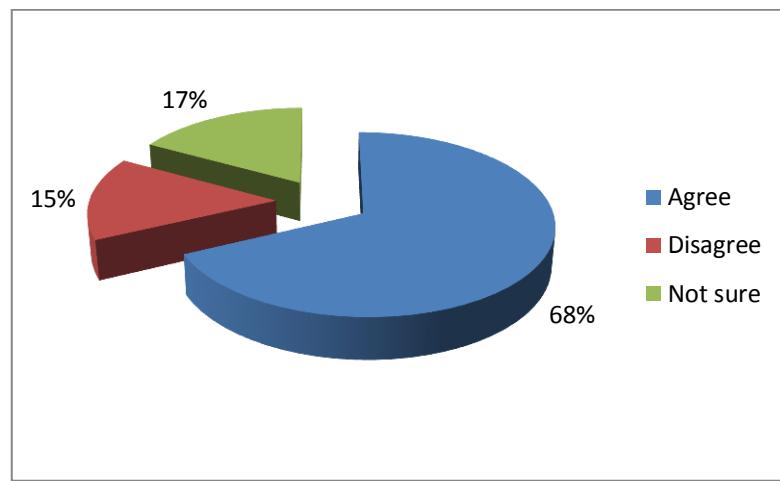
Figure 10: Teaching style in TBLL classroom

Given that one of the elements of TBLL is to encourage small groups of students to take the subject matter and discuss it between themselves prior presenting it to larger groups, it was felt important to understand how the VEDC teachers and students viewed this aspect of the approach. 84% indicated their agreement, 5% (1

respondent) disagreed, and 21% (4 respondents) were not sure whether this statement was true for their classes as indicated in figure 11 below.
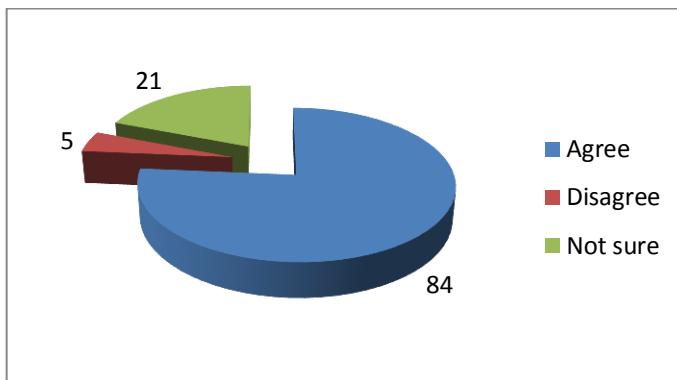
Figure 11: TBLT and group work

According to the students 45% of the students indicated that they thought that teachers felt TBLL group work provided an easier working environment, against 17 who did not as shown in figure 12 below. 38% were unsure suggesting that perhaps this was an area they had not considered. Again, this can only be surmised and thus should be taken in the context of the recognised teaching environments in Abu Dhabi that the students would be used to (Deady 2005).Overall there is an indication that small group work is effective in a TBLL context
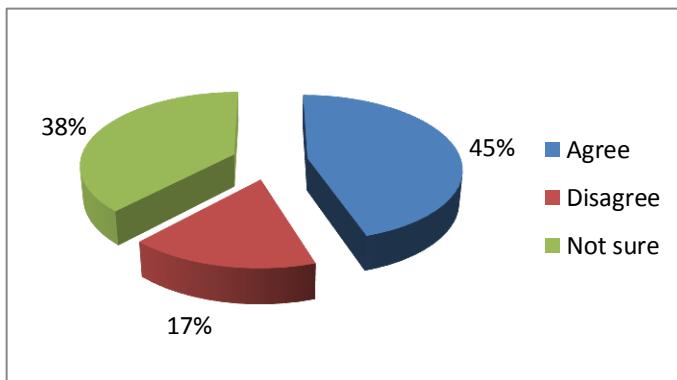
Figure 12: Teachers' perceptions on TBLL group work

According to the classroom sizes, 63% of the teachers disagreed with this statement that classroom sizes are too big to make TBLL effective, and 31% agreed as shown in figure 13 below. This suggests that there may need to be a re-examination of groups' sizes as clearly some teachers find this to be a potential problem in managing the discussion and task development aspects of their classes.
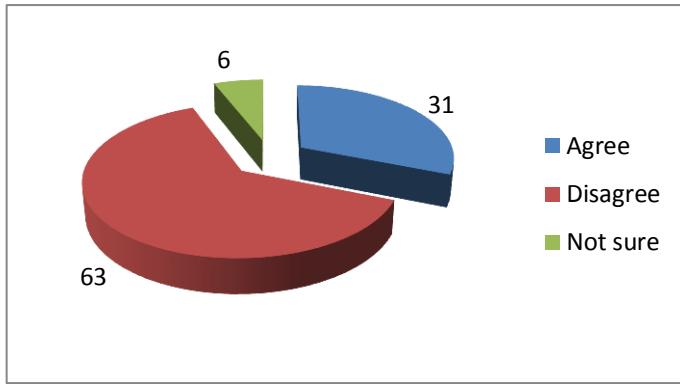
Figure 13: TBLT and classroom size

Given that the VEDC is split into ability groups it may be that these responses are based on different groups. In addition, it may also be a reflection on the abilities of the student groups and how much teacher support is necessary during the discussion of the tasks. This is a tentative suggestion and would need further exploration. However, given the fact that the teacher questionnaires were delivered anonymously to ensure confidentiality this cannot be confirmed from the available data. It may therefore, be something for the VEDC to consider when undertaking future evaluations of the TBLL approach.

4.2.8. TBLL and Assessment

It is difficult to assess learners' task-based performance. This statement elicited major disagreement with 68% of teachers indicating that this was not an area of concern for them. Only 21% (4 respondents) indicated a concern in this area, and this was not a strong concern, being "agree" rather than "strongly agree". It suggests that perhaps there is simply a need for increased experience in the task-based performance assessment, rather than a major issue in relation to the concept. This is however, only a suggestion and was not investigated within the scope of this work.

Students appeared reluctant to commit themselves to a view point on how the teachers' viewed an aspect of TBLL. Fifty point seven percent indicated that they were not sure whether teacher's approved of peer based assessment, with the remainder equally split between those who agreed that teachers liked this aspect of TBLL and those who felt that they did not.

As for TBLL is based on real world communicative competence rather than strict adherence to grammatical rules, the question was included to understand whether English language teachers, who may have been using the PPP approach previously, appreciated the contextual, real world approach offered by TBLL. The fact that 94.7% indicated agreement with this statement suggests that it is a popular approach with teachers as it gives them wider scope to work with subject areas that will motivate and interest their students. In the context of the VEDC and its student population this will be crucial in achieving educational success.

The section on teachers' personal views shows a strongly positive attitude towards both the TBLL approach and its effect on students. The overall outcomes for the students and teachers questionnaires suggest a broadly positive impact from the implementation of the approach. The full scores, including means for each answer are provided in (Appendix G). In order to investigate this further, the language scores for 337 students were analysed both pre and post implementation of TBLL.

This question on teacher perceptions by students achieved the highest positive response in the section on how students saw teacher views of TBLL with 89.7% indicating that they felt the teachers liked this approach and only 6% disagreed as figure 14 indicates below.
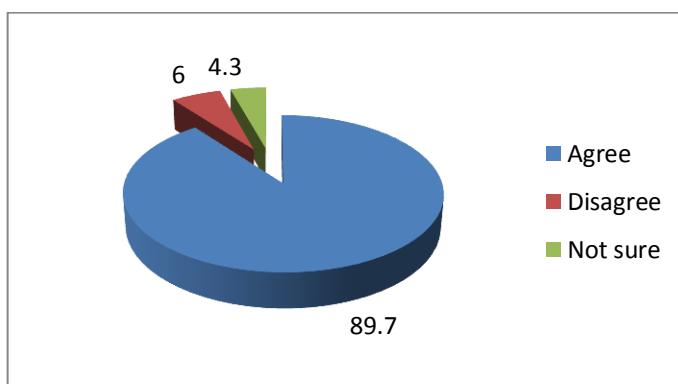
Figure 14: How students saw teacher views of TBLL

Generally the students who responded to the questionnaire indicated a positive view of the TBLL approach. In particular their own motivations and recognition of improvement of language skills showed a preference for TBLL. The student views on teacher perceptions of the approach were a little less clear cut, which has

been surmised as a potential reticence on the part of students to clearly state how they saw their teachers. However it is recognised that this is supposition only and therefore cannot be taken as a definite outcome.

4.4. Students 'Language Test Scores Before and After TBLL Implementation

A full breakdown of student test scores before and after TBLL implementation can be found in (Appendix H) and an overall summary is provided here. The chart below indicates the spread of scores achieved by the students both before and after TBLL. As the chart illustrates there has been an overall increase in language test scores.
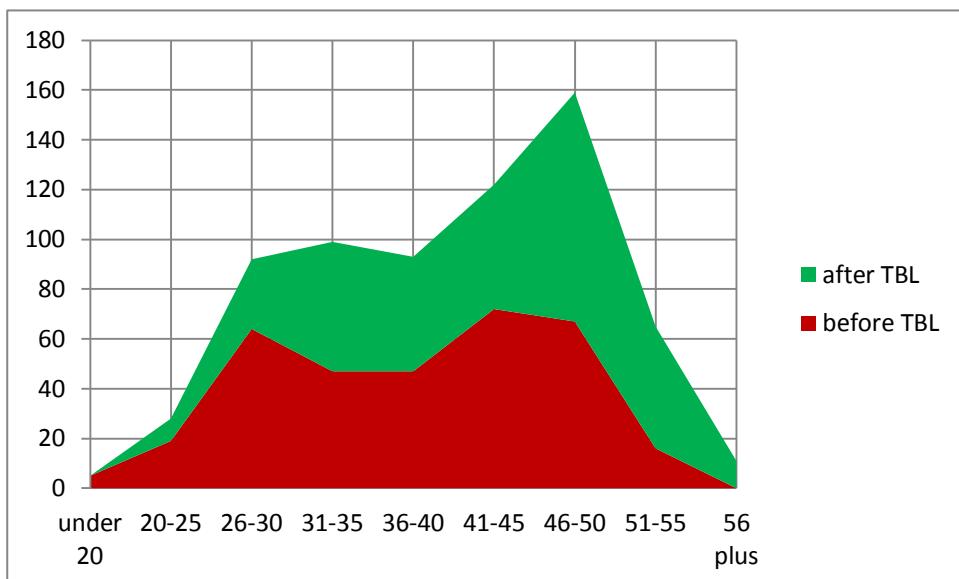
Figure 15: Pre-and Post TBLL language test scores for all students

The spread of ability has remained broadly the same, but each of the students has shown improvement. The largest difference has been that pre-TBLL 9 students were achieving less than 20 in language tests, but post-TBLL no student achieved less than 20. In addition, no students achieved more than 55 in the pre-TBLL but 11 students scored between 56 and 58 in post-TBLL. Whilst this appears to indicate that across the board there has been an improvement in success rates in language tests, it should also be taken into account that 16 students (4.7%) had reduced scores and 16 (4.7%) had no change. The changes in each scoring band are indicated in the table below.

	before TBLL	after TBLL
under 20	5	0
20-25	19	9
26-30	64	28
31-35	47	52
36-40	47	46
41-45	72	50
46-50	67	92
51-55	16	49
56 plus	0	11

Table 1: Pre and Post TBLL scores for all students

The biggest change is in the number students who have achieved 40 or over in language scores, 155 pre- TBLL (45%) and 202 (59%) post TBLL. This indicates that 14% of the students have increased their marks considerably. As the table indicates prior to the TBLL implementation 18.9% of students were achieving from 26-30. Following implementation, this reduced to only 8%. The overall spread of marks increase is indicated in the chart below.
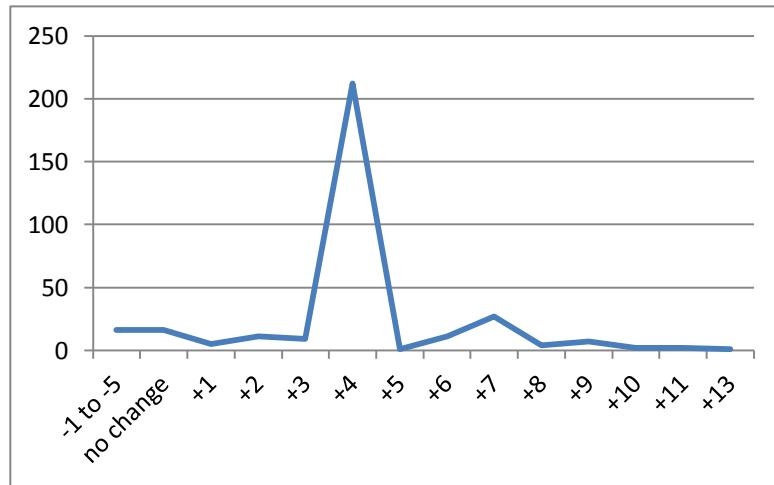
Figure 16: Overall points change in language scores for all students

As the chart indicates the median improvement was by four points, with a mean overall of 4.01 points increase, within a range of one to thirteen points difference. With regard to those whose scores reduced, their average pre-TBLL score was 39.9 and 38.3 afterwards. Given that the overall class average scores were 37.8

before TBLL and 41.88 afterwards, it suggests that those whose scores reduced since the implementation of TBLL were in the mid-range of class ability.

These figures appear to indicate that the implementation of TBLL has significantly increased language scores at the VEDC for the majority of students. To examine the impact of the approach on the different groups the pre-and post TBLL scores were evaluated for each group separately in addition to the overall outcomes indicated above.

4.5. Regression Analysis

In order to determine the significance of the change in language scores, a regression analysis was conducted using the post TBLL input with a variable of three months worth of input from the process. This analysis was applied as it was understood that there could be other variables at play over the period. Undertaking a regression analysis allows for comprehension of how the typical value of a dependent variable (the students' scores) can be affected by the independent one (the TBLL input over a period of time) (Sen & Srivastasa 1990). Essentially it provides a level of statistical certainty about the improvements seen and suggests that the improvement is not due to other external variables that were not considered, for example length of time at the VEDC, age of students and so forth. The following outcomes were achieved.

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	.128	1	.128	.002	.968
Residual	26409.124	335	78.833		
Total	26409.252	336			

Table 2: ANOVA

The significance level of .968 suggests that the increased language scores are due to the TBLL input and verifies the hypothesis in this regard. The coefficient was also analysed which resulted in the following outcomes.

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Case Sequence	.000	.005	.002	.040	.968
(Constant)	41.847	.969		43.165	.000

Table 3: Coefficients

52

Again a significance level .968 resulted which further confirms that the TBLL input has had the major impact seen on language scores. However, it should also be recognised that there are potentially other variables that could impact on the improved motivation and attention of the students and these are identified in the following chapter.

4.6. Summary

The results have indicated a predominantly positive view of the TBLL implementation from both students and teachers. It is considered by the majority of both groups to increase motivation, enhance interaction and collaboration and improve overall scores. These perceptions achieved by the questionnaires have also been borne out by the comparison of pre- and post-TBLL language scores, which showed improvement overall. These outcomes will be reviewed and evaluated in the final chapter and the implications for the VEDC, along with recommendations will be discussed.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1. Introduction

The study aim was an investigation into the outcomes of the implementation of a task-based language learning approach at the VEDC unit in Abu Dhabi. The results have indicated a generally positive reception from both students and teachers and an improvement in overall language scores appears to have been achieved for the majority of students.

5.2. Key Findings

Sixty-six percent of the students felt that their confidence had increased since the introduction of TBLL at the VEDC. This was confirmed by 84% of teachers indicating that they believed student confidence was increased by the approach. However, 81% of student indicated participation could be difficult sometimes due to pace of discussions, although 84% felt they were active in the discussion. This may be due to what (Tsui 1996) noted, a reluctance to appear less competent than their peers, although this would require further investigation. This was echoed by the 84% of teachers stating that they believed TBLL was effective for group work, a surprising find given the social factors identified in the Arab education system by (Deady 2005). At the same time, 61% of students felt there had been increased interaction both inside and outside the classroom, lower than the teacher perception of 89% for this factor.

Eighty percent of the student felt that they had seen an improvement in their abilities which is confirmed by the 73% of teachers believing there had been academic improvement and the overall increased levels of the pre- and post-TBLL scores. This may partly be due to the 56% of students who indicated there had been increased motivation since the implementation which was slightly higher than the teacher perception that levels of motivation had increased (47%). As Wei and Cook (2009, p.75) indicate, the motivation in TBLL is that it uses materials that engage the student in a meaningful way and it appears this begins to occur at the VEDC unit. This is further illustrated by the fact that in terms of materials 82% of both teachers and students felt they were contextual, with 94% of teachers liking the fact that the materials had a real world basis. In terms of grammar 68%

of teachers believed there had been improvement against only 33% of students. However, 90% of students had improved scores suggesting that the teachers' perception is more accurate.

Given the concerns highlighted in the literature review about teacher adoption (Butler 2004, Doukas 1995, Hui 1997) it was positive to note that 68% of students felt that teachers preferred the method and 89% that they liked it better than the old syllabus, although 15% indicated that they had seen deficiencies in teacher language proficiency and 45% of students felt teachers struggled with peer assessment. This is broadly in line with the 94% of teachers who were happy with the approach and 89% that they were confident in its delivery.

These findings from the two groups, that are teachers and students, suggest a generally positive approach to TBLL, borne out by indications of increased motivation, interaction and confidence in English language. They are further underscored by the increases in language scores achieved by 90% of the students and suggests that the move to a TBLL approach has been of major benefit in the VEDC. The fact that many of the perceptions of students and teachers were close to each other's views regarding the effects on motivation, interaction and increased language ability, offers a further level of validity to the findings. However, there are some areas that potentially need re-evaluation. These include the fact that only 57% of students saw the approach as being relevant to their individual learning style and only 33% considered that they had a better understanding of grammar. From a teacher perspective the fact that over 30% raised a potential concern over classroom sizes and the manageability of group work is an area that would need further investigation as it is not clear from these findings exactly how these concerns manifest at the VEDC. The implications of these findings and some recommendations for the VEDC have therefore been developed in line with these findings.
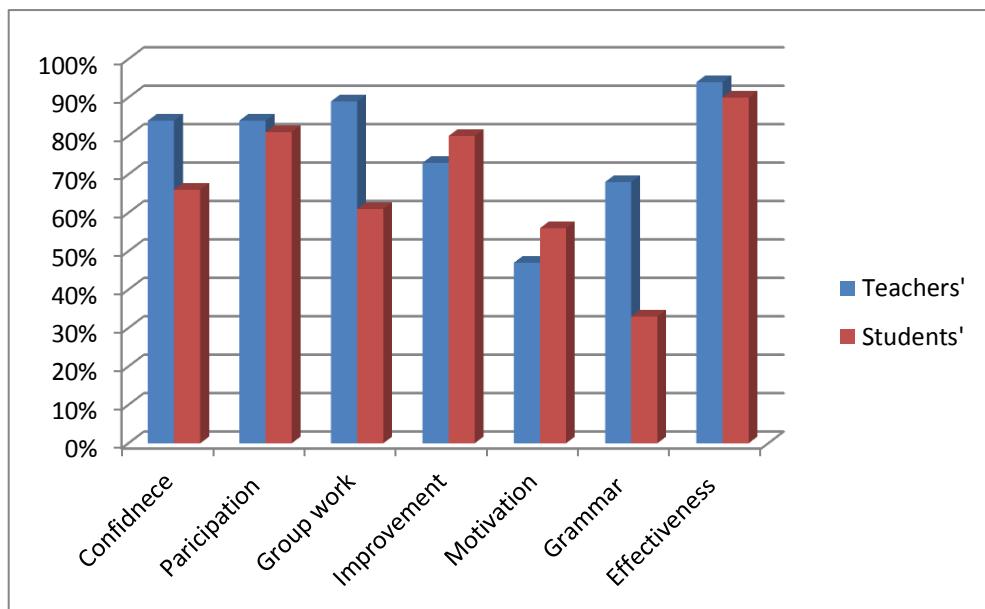
Figure 17: Findings of Teachers' & Students' general perceptions

5.3. Implications and Recommendations for the VEDC

The first implication for the VEDC is that there is a strong indication from this work that the TBLL approach has a positive effect on students' outcomes. This appears to be not only the case for overall test scores but also in terms of motivation, confidence and interaction/engagements (McClelland 2000) indicated previously. Not only have 90% of students increased their language scores by one mark or more, but also with an overall average increase of four marks. The students have also indicated a level of increased motivation overall in terms of interaction and engagement in the classroom. This is particularly important given the nature of the students at the unit. As one of the teachers indicated, the ability to communicate effectively is a primary requirement from their industry partners and thus encouraging active group participation in the language classroom demonstrates that it is possible to re-engage the males in the VEDC so that they achieve overall success during their time there(Halligan 2009). In addition, there is a clear indication of positive feeling from the teaching staff.

The literature review indicated the existence of certain concerns for some teachers using TBLL about how to accumulate the materials, how to use them and how to introduce a new way of learning to students who had been used to the PPP approach. This does not appear to be the case for the VEDC where teachers

indicated that they were generally happy with the materials, the classroom interaction and the students' responses.

Although currently the unit is still using the "Ventures Series", it would also appear from the interviews that they are accessing additional materials online and also through peer discussion of suitable and relevant materials that meet the student needs. This suggests an increased level of collaboration between students and teachers regarding what motivates the students' interest. With the nature of the VEDC unit students, this is a positive sign of increasing integration into the programme through the use of the TBLL approach. Therefore, one area which potentially needs review is the final decision on the materials so that a standardised approach is used throughout the VEDC unit. As the interviews indicated teachers are still predominantly using the "Ventures Series" which had been in place previously and augmented this with more focused and contextual TBL learning materials. Generally, the view was that this was a good approach. However, it was also indicated that this was under review and as such it may be worth re-evaluating the findings of this study when the approach has been in place for a little longer. In addition to this, the question of class size may need to be addressed. It was intimated by around 33% of the teachers that they had concerns regarding the class sizes in terms of managing group work. As indicated in the results it may be that this is the result of variable levels of student ability and thus their need for greater teacher support. However, as this was outside the scope of the work it is recommended that the VEDC investigates this more specifically.

The fact that only 33% of students indicated that they felt their understanding of grammar had improved with the approach suggests that there needs to be an increased focus on this aspect of the tasks. However, given the short space of time that the TBLL approach has been in place at the VEDC, there is a potential that future evaluations will achieve a higher level of grammatical understanding as the students language skills progress. This view was put forward by (Purpura 2004, p. 40) who suggested that a task-based approach that focused on meaning but with an explicit explanation of grammatical form led to longer term understanding of grammar overall. Therefore, for the VEDC it is worth considering a re-evaluation

of this element over a longer time frame to define whether the TBLL is impacting on the grammatical understanding of students.

From the student perspective, there is a clear indication that this approach, which focuses on integration, collaboration and provision of meaning to the lessons, has been effective both academically and psychologically in terms of engagement. Therefore, it may be viable to consider extending the TBLL approach beyond the language classroom and into other areas of the vocational work conducted at the VEDC. Given that the students appear to welcome the relaxed, collaborative approach to learning that is provided by TBLL in the language classroom, it suggests the potential for using this approach elsewhere in the unit to engage the residents who had previously been disenchanted with formal education. The encouraging finding that students felt the TBLL approach not only increased their skills but also their motivation and interaction further strengthens this view.

Given the disengaged nature of the VEDC students, exposure is not enough if it is apart from TBLL. Therefore, using this approach along with hands-on activities and taking in consideration the VEDC's students' learning styles, it is the implementation of the TBLL approach which cause the direct increase in students' language test scores. Wenden and Rubin (1987) indicate that many students adopt a "social" or "socio-affective" strategy, hands-on activities and collaborative learning, which requires direct involvement and exposure to the language.

5.4. Implications for Disengaged Students at VEDC and in General

One of the rationales for the introduction of the TBLL was the indication from previous studies that the process encouraged integration, motivation and thus improved academic results. For the VEDC, whose aim is to take students who have previously been disenchanted and resistant to formal education, the process represented an opportunity to find a way to meet the needs of the students, encourage their participation and motivate a desire in them to learn English to a proficient level in that it would aid their employment prospects. The questionnaires from both students and teachers have indicated that there is a

definite increase in not only confidence but also motivation and potentially personal satisfaction in academic outcomes. As such, as indicated above it may be that the approach can be utilised elsewhere in the unit.

In more general terms however, the study has indicated that there is the feasibility that task-based learning is an appropriate method to use when dealing with hard to reach students. Both (Lopez 2010) and (Platt & Brooks 2002) have indicated that for these types of students, finding an area of personal interest and relevance to their lives can be efficacious in creating interest in education and academic achievement. This study appears to have confirmed that finding. Whilst only just over half of the students indicated an improvement in their confidence, the nature of the students at the VEDC suggests that this is a highly positive outcome for the unit and for the teachers who have introduced the task-based learning approach.

5.5. Evaluation against Hypotheses

The hypotheses that this work set out to confirm or nullify were as follows:

a) The TBLL approach at VEDC has encouraged student motivation and participation in language learning lessons.
b) Teachers at VEDC believe in the effectiveness of the TBLL approach and its efficacy for disengaged students.
c) The TBLL has improved language scores at the VEDC since its inception.

The first hypothesis is not fully confirmed and thus needs further exploration in future studies given that 47% of the teachers who had seen increased motivation and 56% of students who felt more motivated. However, these are positives for the VEDC but would need further investigation. The aspect of participation however, can be fully confirmed given the finding that 84% of the students felt that they participated actively in the lessons.

The second hypothesis can also be confirmed given that 94% of the teachers who indicated that they were happy to have implemented TBLL at the VEDC. This is further confirmed by the fact that the 89% of the teachers believed the approach

had increased interaction by students and 68% had no concerns about students struggling with a new approach.

The final hypothesis, that language scores had improved since the inception of the TBL approach, can also be confirmed, given that 90% of the students had shown some improvement. Whilst some had only shown a one or two mark increase, others showed an increase of over ten and the average grade point increase was four marks. Given that the approach has only been fully implemented for a few months, it is anticipated that these grades could continue to improve as the students gain in confidence and motivation. The 0.985 significance level suggests that a major factor in their improved scores is the TBLL input that they have received. Nevertheless, this should be registered with caution as no other variables were included in this study. Factors such as length of time in the unit, age of students and their overall motivation to learn would also need to be considered to be certain of these findings.

5.6. Future Research Pathways

Whilst the study was focused on only one educational establishment, a number of potential research pathways have emerged during its conduct. These include options for the VEDC and for task-based language learning in general. The first recommendation is that the study is replicated at the VEDC in a further three months and again after the TBLL approach has been in place for a full twelve months. This is to verify the outcomes of this work and ensure that the increased motivation and confidence is not simply down to a new approach that suits the students. Once they have become accustomed to the process, there is a small potential that they could become disengaged and demotivated again, seeing it as a formal educational approach that they do not enjoy long term. This should be combined again with assessment of test scores over a period of time. At this juncture, other variables should be considered such as length of time in the unit, and overall approach to lessons at the unit. This is because it is possible that after some time in the unit, the student scores could improve through improved dedication and desire to achieve across all aspects of their learning, not just in the language classroom. As such, a separate study should be conducted that

incorporates other variables such as the students' performance in other lessons, their attitude towards language skills learning and their motivation for this. This should also incorporate an investigation into student / teacher rapports and evaluate whether it is individual teaching styles that have had a contribution to the increased scores, or whether it can be shown that it is simply the TBLL approach that has generated the academic improvement.

By conducting additional research at the VEDC, the efficacy and benefits of the TBLL implementation can be fully verified and confirmed. In addition, a number of future research pathways in the context of TBLL have also been highlighted. The first is to investigate specific materials and classroom activities to see which of these have a greater motivation. This is because only 56% of students indicated increased motivation. Whilst given the nature of the VEDC students, this is an encouraging find. It would be helpful for the VEDC and language schools in general to understand better which particular contextual materials aid in the development of confidence and motivation for acquisition of language skills. In addition to this work it is also recommended that an evaluation of learning styles and perceptions of TBLL is undertaken. This is because only 57% of students indicated that TBLL was aligned to their learning style. Given this, it may be that the approach is not effective for all students and this could have implications on its overall usage within a language classroom setting. By evaluating different student learning styles and correlating this to views on TBLL clearer understanding of how the two variables, interact can be achieved. As Ellis (2009) notes, there is a viable future where traditional methods of language learning are operated alongside the TBLL approach and work around learning styles would underscore this view. This was not within the scope of the work but has emerged as a potential area for future work.

5.7. Limitations of the Study

The first limitation of this study is that TBLL has only been fully implemented for three months at the VEDC and therefore, there is only one set of post implementation scores against which to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach. Whilst there is a clear indication of improvement to be fully validated, it would

require additional evaluations over subsequent months. Moreover, no other variables were controlled for in terms of the students learning outcomes and motivations to learn. This was outside the scope of the work but would potentially be a viable future study to incorporate variables such as student maturity and general academic ability, overall scores and attitude in other subjects and teacher rapport with students. This is because all of these variables could affect a student's language learning ability as (Brophy 2010, p. 302) notes.

5.8. Conclusion

The overall conclusion that can be drawn from the outcomes of the study is that TBLL has definitely shown an improvement in student language scores and motivation. However, this should be read with caution as only 47% of teachers and 56% of students indicated increased motivation against 66% of students indicating increased confidence. Despite this, it can be considered that the decision to move to this approach has been beneficial for many students and the VEDC unit as a whole. Furthermore, the positive response from the teaching staff further allows for the conclusion that it is a teaching method that can be effectively implemented in a short space of time in any setting. This is also based upon the fact that the students at the VEDC are recognised as being disengaged, as such their generally positive responses to the TBLL approach delivers a conclusion that the teaching method is potentially highly effective for even hard to reach students.

Overall, the aim of this study was to consider the introduction of a task-based learning approach at the VEDC and whether the decision had been positively received by both teachers and students. It was also intended to evaluate whether the change in approach had impacted on student motivation, interaction and overall language scores. It has been found that not only has the approach been welcomed by the majority of students and teachers but that there has also been a concurrent increase in motivation to learn English from the students. This was reflected in the overall increase in scores for language tests. As such, the study has indicated that TBLL is an effective approach to apply in a language learning setting when working with disengaged learners. It is surmised that this is because

of its contextual and realistic settings using subject matters that engage the students and have a relevance for them. However, alongside this a number of future research pathways have also been identified in relation to both the VEDC and task-based learning in the context of disengaged learners.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Students' questionnaire

This questionnaire will form part of a research project into the effectiveness of the switch to task-based learning at the VEDC. It is designed to understand how you, as a student feel about task-based learning activities in the language classroom. Your co-operation in participating in this questionnaire is greatly appreciated, and I would ask you to be as honest as possible in responding, and please be assured that all responses will be treated in strict confidentiality.

SECTION ONE – General Views on Task-Based Language Learning

For each of the following statements please indicate whether you agree or disagree with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree.

1. TBL helps to boost my confidence in communication.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

2. I have difficulty with participating as the discussion is conducted in a very fast way.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

3. I usually participate actively in my group's discussion during class.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

4. All of my group members participate actively in the discussion.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

SECTION TWO: Individual learning and TBL Activities

5. I find the TBL based lessons more suitable for how I learn.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

6. My English has improved since the introduction of a TBL approach.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

7. I am more motivated to learn and study English since using a TBL approach.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

8. The subjects we use in language class are much more relevant and meaningful to me now.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

9. Our class interacts more in the classroom and outside since we started using TBL.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

10. I understand how the grammar works better learning this way than learning lots of rules.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

SECTION THREE – Student Perceptions of Teachers and TBL

11. The teachers in the language class that use TBL are much more relaxed.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

12. The teachers seem to like it when we do group work, I think it may be easier for them.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

13. The task-based learning has shown up some deficiencies in the teachers' own English ability.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

14. The teachers like it when we do peer based assessment of each other's communication ability.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

15. The teachers appear to like this method of teaching better.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

If there are any other comments you wish to make about learning English through task-based activities please indicate them below.

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Thank you for your time in completing this questionnaire.

Appendix B: Students' translated questionnaire

استبيان :التعلم المبني على المهام

يشكل هذا الاستبيان جزء من مشروع دراسة حول مدى فاعلية التعليم المبني على المهام في مركز

التطوير و التدريب المهني. تتم إعداد هذا الاستبيان للتعرف على و جة نظر الطلاب في النشاطات الصفية

من خلال مهام يتم تكليف الطلاب بها في مادة اللغة الانجليزية.

أقدر لكم حسن تعاونكم في تعبئة هذا الاستبيان. و أوأكد لكم ان المعلومات الواردة في هذا الاستبيان سوف

تعامل بغاية السرية و الخصوصية و أنها سوف تستخدم لغاية البحث فقط لذا ارجو تحري الدقة و

المصداقية في اختيار الاجابة التي تعبر عن و جة نظرك.

الجزء الاول: معلومات عامة حول التعلم القائم على المهام

أرجو وضع إشارة تحت الاجابة التي تعبر عن وجة نظرك لكل عبارة من العبارات التالية

1. التعليم من خلال المهام يعزز ثقتي بقدرتي على التواصل باللغة الانجليزية.

لا اوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	غير متاكد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة

2. اجد صعوبة في المشاركة الصفية لأن الحوار يدور بشكل سريع جدا

لا اوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	غير متاكد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة

3. غالبا اشارك بفاعلية في مجموعتي اثناء حصة اللغة الانجليزية.

لا اوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	غير متاكد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة

4. جميع اعضاء مجموعتي يشاركون بفاعلية في النقاش أثناء حصة اللغة الانجليزية.

لا اوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	غير متاكد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة

الجزء الثاني التعلم الفردي و النشاطات الصفية من خلال المهام

5. أجد ان الدروس المتعلقة بالمهام اكثر تناسبا مع طريقتي بالتعلم.

لا اوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	غير متاكد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة

6. لقد تطورت لغتي الانجليزية بعد إدخال التعليم المبني على المهام في تدريس اللغة الانجليزية.

لا اوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	غير متاكد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة

7. اجد انني اكثر تحفزا و استعدادا في تعلم اللغة الانجليزية بعد استخدام التعلم المبين على المهام.

لا اوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	غير متاكد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة

8. إن المواضيع اللغوية المطروحة من خلال التعلم المبني على المهام اكثر وضوحا و اتصلا بالمنهج من ذي قبل.

أوافق بشدة	أوافق	غير متاكد	لا أوافق	لا اوافق بشدة

9. اصبح التفاعل الصفي اكثر بعد إدخال التعليم المبني على المهام في طرق التعلم.

أوافق بشدة	أوافق	غير متاكد	لا أوافق	لا اوافق بشدة

10. تعلم القواعد اصبح اسهل من خلل التعليم المبني على المهام.

أوافق بشدة	أوافق	غير متاكد	لا أوافق	لا اوافق بشدة

الجزء الثالث رأي الطلاب بالتعلم المبني على المهام

11. أصبح المدرسون الذين يستخدمون التعليم المبني على المهام أكثر ارتياحا.

أوافق بشدة	أوافق	غير متاكد	لا أوافق	لا اوافق بشدة

12. يبدو ان المدرسين يحبذون العمل الجماعي للطلاب اعتقد انه اسهل لهم.

أوافق بشدة	أوافق	غير متاكد	لا أوافق	لا اوافق بشدة

13. اظهر التعليم القائم على المهام بعض النقص في قدرات المعلمين اللغوية.

أوافق بشدة	أوافق	غير متاكد	لا أوافق	لا اوافق بشدة

14. المدرسون يحبذون فكرة تقييم النظير لبعض المهارات التواصلية.

أوافق بشدة	أوافق	غير متاكد	لا أوافق	لا اوافق بشدة

15. يظهر بان المعلمين يحبذون هذه الطريقة في التدريس.

أوافق بشدة	أوافق	غير متاكد	لا أوافق	لا اوافق بشدة

ارجو إضافة اي تعليقات او اقتراحات تود التعليق من خلالها على طريقة التدريس المبني على المهام .

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أشكر لكم حسن تعاونكم في تعبئة الاستبيان

Appendix C: Teachers 'questionnaire

This questionnaire will form part of a research project into the effectiveness of the switch to task-based learning at the VEDC. It is designed to understand how you, as a teacher feel about task-based learning activities in the language classroom. Your co-operation in participating in this questionnaire is greatly appreciated, and I would ask you to be as honest as possible in responding, and please be assured that all responses will be treated in strict confidentiality.

SECTION ONE – General Views on Task-Based Language Learning

For each of the following statements please indicate whether you agree or disagree with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree.

1. TBL boots the confidence of the students in my class.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

2. I am very happy to have implemented TBL in the classroom.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

3. TBL promotes a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom which promotes language use.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

4. TBL aids the development of integrated skills in the classroom.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

SECTION TWO: Teaching and TBL Activities

5. TBL is appropriate for small group work.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

6. TBL improves learners' interaction skills.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

7. TBL encourages learners' intrinsic motivation.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

8. TBL creates a collaborative learning environment.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

9. TBL promotes learner academic progress.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

10. TBL materials in textbooks are meaningful and purposeful because they are based on a real world context.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

SECTION THREE – Personal Views on TBL

11. I am confident with the TBL approach and how to use it effectively.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

12. I find it difficult to assess learners' task-based performance.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

13. Students find it difficult to work with TBL because it is a new way of learning for them.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

14. Our class sizes are too big to make TBL effective.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

15. I like the fact that TBL is based on real world communicative competence rather than strict adherence to grammatical rules.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree

16. If there are any other comments you wish to make about teaching English through task-based activities please indicate them below.

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Thank you for your time in completing this questionnaire.

Appendix D: Informed Consent

Student Researcher: **Mahes Ali Al-Mahes**

Title of Research: **The Effectiveness of TBLT in Teaching English as a Second Language in VEDC.**

I am asking for your voluntary participation in the research which I am conducting to test the switch into using TBLT approach in teaching English as a second language in the VEDC Abu Dhabi. If you would like to participate, please sign in the appropriate space below.

This study contains no risks for the participants. If you have any information, feel free to contact the student researcher at

Mobile phone: 0505968221e-mail: Mahes.AlOlaimat@buid.ac.ae

All the names and the personal information will be maintained strictly confidential. The raw data after the questionnaire and the interview will be kept in a secure place.

Voluntary Participation: Participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you decide not to participate there will not be any negative consequences. Please be aware that if you decide to participate, you may stop participating at any time and you may decide not to answer any specific question. You will be consulted after the interview has been transcribed.

By signing this form I am attesting that I have read and understand the information above and I freely give my consent/assent to participate or permission for my child to participate.

Adult Informed Consent   Date Reviewed & Signed:

Parental Name of research participant   Signature: _____

Appendix E: Teachers' Interview Questions

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me in connection with my research study into the effectiveness of the switch to Task-Based Learning at the VEDC. I have a few short questions about how you feel about the process, how you believe the students feel and the overall views that you have about the approach. I would greatly appreciate if you could be as honest as possible in responding so that a clear picture can emerge.

1. Firstly, can you explain to me what you understand to be the main focus of the task-based learning approach?

2. Can you tell me how you feel about the introduction and implementation of the approach at the VEDC and whether you feel you were given sufficient instruction in how to deliver this new teaching approach?

3. Following your own training in the process were you motivated to implement TBLL in the classroom, and why?

4. What sort of atmosphere do you think TBLL generates in the classroom, and do you think it is conducive to effective language learning?

5. Do you feel comfortable that all students in the classroom integrate and actively participate in the tasks and discussions?

6. How do you feel about the materials that are provided for the TBLL approach, do they seem relevant, contextual and meaningful to you, and your students?

7. How has the introduction of the TBLL approach changed how you prepare for lessons? Do you spend more time, or less and what is different about how you prepare your materials?

8. What is your view on levels of student motivation since the implementation of the TBLL approach? Do you think it has improved?

9. What is your view of student outcomes since the implementation of the TBLL approach? Have you noticed a difference and how has this manifested (specifically in regard to grades, attitude, confidence and involvement in classroom activities).

10. My last question is how do you view the implementation of the TBLL approach at the VEDC? Do you think it has been successful and do you think it is the right approach for the organisation in its language teaching?

Thank you for your co-operation in participating in this interview.

Appendix F: Interview Transcripts

Two interviews were undertaken; names have been removed from the transcripts. Otherwise, samples of their transcribed interviews are attached below. English Lead Teacher who has an MA in translation and is pursuing an Ed.D in TESOL. The second one is a certified native English language teacher at the VEDC.

Researcher: Firstly, can you explain to me what you understand to be the main focus of the task-based learning approach?

Lead Teacher: Ya the task-based learning approach usually is a well-structured approach, which is why basically it was chosen for VEDC a...a it consists basically of a pre-task a...a task and a...a post task. There are different models for this approach but for VEDC I realize that probably the ost well-structured model would be Willis 1996 a...a which constitutes of pre-task task and language focus.

Researcher: Following your own training in the process were you motivated to implement TBLL in the classroom, and why?

Lead Teacher: Actually it as only intrinsic motivation a...a you can say I do believe that TBLL would be a good model to follow for VEDC students and for VEDC teachers as well actually after a few weeks of implementation I consider I realize that both students and teachers were a...a satisfied with this approach and both of them were happy about it , ya.

Researcher: What sort of atmosphere do you think TBLL generates in the classroom? Do you think it is conducive to effective language learning?

Lead Teacher: Ya, I do believe that TBLL is conducive to effective language learning a...a ...em as you know in VEDC we care a lot about our industrial partners what they want from our students because this is our product and most of them say that communication skills is of of paramount important for working in the industry TBLT provides this chance to students it provides this chance of communication

Researcher: How has the introduction of the TBLL approach changed how you prepare for lessons? Do you spend more time, or less and what is different about how you prepare your materials?

Lead Teacher: Ya , actually preparing for task-based lesson is a " hard nut to crack" by many teachers it is not an easy job ya.. in the past we have fixed format of lesson plans, but now we have to adapt so the lesson plan another document will be a next to the lesson plan this document will be divided into pre-task ,task and post task and teachers have to work more on their planning .. ya ,, of course.

Researcher: My last question is how do you view the implementation of the TBLL approach at the VEDC? Do you think it has been successful for teaching English? Do you think it is the right approach for the organisation in its language teaching?

Lead Teacher: Well, it will be hasty to say that it is successful actually we have to wait and see. We have implemented it now for three months more or less and we need to wait a little bit before we judge whether it is a...a .. successful or the successful approach for VEDC students, but personally I do believe that it will yield good result

Researcher: Following your own training in the process were you motivated to implement TBLL in the classroom, and why?

Teacher: ya like I said I was already using it and to see that all the teacher are getting on board a... em and upper management are also interested and everybody seems interested in this topic. It is more motivated cause you can share your ideas everybody is doing the same page, everybody is going towards the same goal so it makes works a little bit easier.

Researcher: How do you feel about the materials that are provided for the TBLL approach? Do they seem relevant, contextual and meaningful to you, and your students?

Teacher: em... ya it depends because what we were doing in the class..em.. you know the students if they're in TOTAL ot ETIHAD they go somewhere else ...em...we are using Ventures or provide supplementary materials so it's ... I think at the moment there is a lot ... it is up to the teacher ... to ... may be enhance the materials and ..em .... but there is also online there is a lot of materials... I think formally we are still deciding on what materials we are going to use for the TBLL I am interested to see what are they agree on.

Researcher: How has the introduction of the TBLL approach changed how you prepare for lessons? Do you spend more time, or less? What is different about how you prepare your materials?

Teacher: well it is the same preparation time is the same just more assuring that all teachers are doing sort of similar thing and everybody in the same page so if you have any difficulties or you want to discuss an idea or ... em ... you have some queries or you can ask somebody in the team or the department to share the knowledge and the information which benefits everybody so overall it would .. it helps reduce the work load because we working on the same thing .

Appendix G: Questionnaire Outcomes

The table below sets out the numerical data that resulted from the questionnaires to students and teachers which were used for the analysis in the results and findings section. The Mean columns indicate the average of the questionnaires outcomes whereas the Standard Deviation ones indicate the variability or diversity exists from the average.

	Student Questionnaire outcomes								Teacher Questionnaire Outcomes						
Item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Standard deviation	Item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Standard deviation
1	8	27	53	120	56	52.8	42.42287	1	1	0	2	11	5	3.8	4.43847
2	6	9	34	142	73	52.8	56.62773	2	0	0	1	11	7	3.8	4.96991
3	7	8	26	171	52	52.8	68.54706	3	0	0	1	14	4	3.8	5.93296
4	10	12	31	98	113	52.8	49.0887	4	0	0	1	8	10	3.8	4.81664
5	5	35	71	117	36	52.8	42.82756	5	0	1	4	12	2	3.8	4.81664
6	3	7	43	134	77	52.8	54.43528	6	0	0	2	12	5	3.8	5.01996
7	7	45	64	92	56	52.8	30.94673	7	0	1	9	5	4	3.8	3.56371
8	8	7	32	150	67	52.8	59.55418	8	0	0	2	10	7	3.8	4.49444
9	2	43	56	112	51	52.8	39.35353	9	0	1	4	11	3	3.8	4.32435
10	23	56	97	67	21	52.8	31.87789	10	1	3	8	5	2	3.8	2.77489
11	7	34	43	123	57	52.8	43.28048	11	0	1	1	11	6	3.8	4.65833
12	8	38	97	86	35	52.8	37.41256	12	7	6	2	4	0	3.8	2.86356
13	54	124	45	34	7	52.8	43.53964	13	3	10	3	3	0	3.8	3.70135
14	31	31	134	53	15	52.8	47.36243	14	3	9	1	5	1	3.8	3.34664
15	7	9	11	189	48	52.8	78.00128	15	0	1	0	11	7	3.8	4.96991

Appendix H: Language Test Scores

The table below indicates the language test scores achieved by 337 students before and after implementation of TBLL. Identifying information, other than group has been removed.

No	Group	Before TBLL	After TBLL	points change
1	VF3/1	28	32	4.00
2	VF3/1	46	53	7.00
3	VF3/1	38	42	4.00
4	VF3/1	43	50	7.00
5	VF3/1	45	47	2.00
6	VF3/1	28	32	4.00
7	VF3/1	45	53	8.00
8	VF3/1	32	42	10.00
9	VF3/1	46	50	4.00
10	VF3/1	25	32	7.00
11	VF3/1	50	53	3.00
12	VF3/1	36	42	6.00
13	VF3/1	50	50	0.00
14	VF3/1	43	47	4.00
15	VF3/1	28	32	4.00
16	VF3/1	32	36	4.00
17	VF3/1	23	30	7.00
18	VF3/1	51	50	-1.00
19	VF3/1	32	36	4.00
20	VF3/1	48	52	4.00
21	VF3/1	28	32	4.00
22	VF3/2	53	53	0.00
23	VF3/2	38	42	4.00
24	VF3/2	52	50	-2.00
25	VF3/2	45	47	2.00
26	VF3/2	28	32	4.00
27	VF3/2	36	36	0.00
28	VF3/2	16	20	4.00
29	VF3/2	42	51	9.00
30	VF3/2	44	48	4.00
31	VF3/2	26	30	4.00
32	VF3/2	32	36	4.00
33	VF3/2	42	41	-1.00
34	VF3/2	45	49	4.00
35	VF3/2	54	58	4.00
36	VF3/2	25	32	7.00
37	VF3/2	49	53	4.00
38	VF3/2	35	42	7.00
39	VF3/2	45	50	5.00
40	VF3/2	38	47	9.00
41	VF3/2	25	32	7.00
42	VF3/3	29	36	7.00

No	Group	Before TBLL	After TBLL	points change
43	VF3/3	40	45	5.00
44	VF3/3	42	46	4.00
45	VF3/3	30	30	0.00
46	VF3/3	50	50	0.00
47	VF3/3	32	36	4.00
48	VF3/3	48	52	4.00
49	VF3/3	32	32	0.00
50	VF3/3	49	53	4.00
51	VF3/3	46	42	-4.00
52	VF3/3	49	50	1.00
53	VF3/3	40	47	7.00
54	VF3/3	25	32	7.00
55	VF3/3	25	36	11.00
56	VF3/3	16	20	4.00
57	VF3/3	47	51	4.00
58	VF3/3	40	48	8.00
59	VF3/3	32	30	-2.00
60	VF3/3	32	36	4.00
61	VF3/3	37	41	4.00
62	VF3/3	45	49	4.00
63	VF3/3	54	58	4.00
64	VF3/3	40	47	7.00
65	VF3/3	39	43	4.00
66	VF3/3	28	32	4.00
67	VF3/4	50	53	3.00
68	VF3/4	38	42	4.00
69	VF3/4	50	50	0.00
70	VF3/4	43	47	4.00
71	VF3/4	26	32	6.00
72	VF3/4	32	36	4.00
73	VF3/4	47	51	4.00
74	VF3/4	32	45	13.00
75	VF3/4	42	46	4.00
76	VF3/4	26	30	4.00
77	VF3/4	41	50	9.00
78	VF3/4	32	36	4.00
79	VF3/4	48	52	4.00
80	VF3/4	30	32	2.00
81	VF3/4	44	53	9.00
82	VF3/4	43	42	-1.00
83	VF3/4	46	50	4.00
84	VF3/4	43	47	4.00
85	VF3/4	28	32	4.00
86	VF3/4	36	36	0.00
87	VF3/4	20	20	0.00
88	VF3/5	47	51	4.00
89	VF3/5	44	48	4.00
90	VF3/5	31	30	-1.00
91	VF3/5	30	36	6.00
92	VF3/5	37	41	4.00

No	Group	Before TBLL	After TBLL	points change
93	VF3/5	50	49	-1.00
94	VF3/5	54	58	4.00
95	VF3/5	41	47	6.00
96	VF3/5	40	43	3.00
97	VF3/5	28	37	9.00
98	VF3/5	28	32	4.00
99	VF3/5	50	53	3.00
100	VF3/5	32	32	0.00
101	VF3/5	25	32	7.00
102	VF3/5	45	53	8.00
103	VF3/5	38	42	4.00
104	VF3/5	25	32	7.00
105	VF3/5	48	53	5.00
106	VF3/5	38	42	4.00
107	VF3/5	45	50	5.00
108	VF3/5	40	47	7.00
109	VF3/5	28	32	4.00
110	VF3/5	30	36	6.00
111	VF3/5	43	42	-1.00
112	VF3/5	46	50	4.00
113	VF3/6	43	47	4.00
114	VF3/6	33	32	-1.00
115	VF3/6	25	32	7.00
116	VF3/6	47	53	6.00
117	VF3/6	38	42	4.00
118	VF3/6	46	50	4.00
119	VF3/6	40	47	7.00
120	VF3/6	26	32	6.00
121	VF3/6	32	36	4.00
122	VF3/6	40	45	5.00
123	VF3/6	42	46	4.00
124	VF3/6	26	30	4.00
125	VF3/6	41	50	9.00
126	VF3/6	32	36	4.00
127	VF3/6	48	52	4.00
128	VF3/6	28	32	4.00
129	VF3/6	49	53	4.00
130	VF3/6	38	42	4.00
131	VF3/6	46	50	4.00
132	VF3/6	43	47	4.00
133	VF3/6	28	32	4.00
134	VF3/6	32	36	4.00
135	VF3/6	16	20	4.00
136	VF3/6	42	51	9.00
137	VF3/7	44	48	4.00
138	VF3/7	26	30	4.00
139	VF3/7	36	36	0.00
140	VF3/7	41	41	0.00
141	VF3/7	45	49	4.00
142	VF3/7	54	58	4.00

No	Group	Before TBLL	After TBLL	points change
143	VF3/7	43	47	4.00
144	VF3/7	46	43	-3.00
145	VF3/7	33	37	4.00
146	VF3/7	28	32	4.00
147	VF3/7	49	53	4.00
148	VF3/7	37	42	5.00
149	VF3/7	46	50	4.00
150	VF3/7	28	32	4.00
151	VF3/7	53	53	0.00
152	VF3/7	38	42	4.00
153	VF3/7	46	50	4.00
154	VF3/7	43	47	4.00
155	VF3/7	28	32	4.00
156	VF3/7	30	36	6.00
157	VF3/7	41	45	4.00
158	VF3/7	42	46	4.00
159	VF3/7	26	30	4.00
160	VF3/8	46	50	4.00
161	VF3/8	32	36	4.00
162	VF3/8	48	52	4.00
163	VF3/8	28	32	4.00
164	VF3/8	49	53	4.00
165	VF3/8	38	42	4.00
166	VF3/8	46	50	4.00
167	VF3/8	43	47	4.00
168	VF3/8	28	32	4.00
169	VF3/8	32	36	4.00
170	VF3/8	21	20	-1.00
171	VF3/8	47	51	4.00
172	VF3/8	44	48	4.00
173	VF3/8	26	30	4.00
174	VF3/8	32	36	4.00
175	VF3/8	37	41	4.00
176	VF3/8	45	49	4.00
177	VF3/8	55	58	3.00
178	VF3/8	43	47	4.00
179	VF3/8	39	43	4.00
180	VF3/8	33	37	4.00
181	VF3/8	40	41	1.00
182	VF3/9	42	46	4.00
183	VF3/9	30	34	4.00
184	VF3/9	47	51	4.00
185	VF3/9	47	52	5.00
186	VF3/9	44	48	4.00
187	VF3/9	27	31	4.00
188	VF3/9	26	30	4.00
189	VF3/9	25	32	7.00
190	VF3/9	26	30	4.00
191	VF3/9	33	37	4.00
192	VF3/9	30	34	4.00

No	Group	Before TBLL	After TBLL	points change
193	VF3/9	24	31	7.00
194	VF3/9	21	25	4.00
195	VF3/9	34	38	4.00
196	VF3/9	26	30	4.00
197	VF3/9	36	43	7.00
198	VF3/9	26	30	4.00
199	VF3/9	31	35	4.00
200	VF3/9	39	43	4.00
201	VF3/9	42	48	6.00
202	VF3/9	26	30	4.00
203	VF3/9	30	34	4.00
204	VF3/10	47	51	4.00
205	VF3/10	37	45	8.00
206	VF3/10	42	46	4.00
207	VF3/10	26	30	4.00
208	VF3/10	46	50	4.00
209	VF3/10	32	36	4.00
210	VF3/10	48	52	4.00
211	VF3/10	25	32	7.00
212	VF3/10	49	53	4.00
213	VF3/10	38	42	4.00
214	VF3/10	46	50	4.00
215	VF3/10	40	47	7.00
216	VF3/10	28	32	4.00
217	VF3/10	32	36	4.00
218	VF3/10	16	20	4.00
219	VF3/10	47	51	4.00
220	VF3/10	44	48	4.00
221	VF3/10	26	30	4.00
222	VF3/10	32	36	4.00
223	VF3/10	42	41	-1.00
224	VF3/10	45	49	4.00
225	VF3/10	54	58	4.00
226	VF3/10	45	47	2.00
227	VF3/10	39	43	4.00
228	VF3/10	33	37	4.00
229	VF3/10	42	46	4.00
230	VF3/10	30	34	4.00
231	VF3/11	47	51	4.00
232	VF3/11	50	52	2.00
233	VF3/11	44	48	4.00
234	VF3/11	24	31	7.00
235	VF3/11	26	30	4.00
236	VF3/11	26	32	6.00
237	VF3/11	26	30	4.00
238	VF3/11	32	37	5.00
239	VF3/11	47	51	4.00
240	VF3/11	44	48	4.00
241	VF3/11	26	30	4.00
242	VF3/11	29	36	7.00

No	Group	Before TBLL	After TBLL	points change
243	VF3/11	37	41	4.00
244	VF3/11	46	49	3.00
245	VF3/11	55	58	3.00
246	VF3/11	43	47	4.00
247	VF3/11	39	43	4.00
248	VF3/11	32	37	5.00
249	VF3/11	42	46	4.00
250	VF3/11	32	34	2.00
251	VF3/11	47	51	4.00
252	VF3/11	48	52	4.00
253	VF3/11	41	48	7.00
254	VF3/11	27	31	4.00
255	VF3/11	26	30	4.00
256	VF3/11	30	32	2.00
257	VF3/11	26	30	4.00
258	VF3/12	33	37	4.00
259	VF3/12	42	42	0.00
260	VF3/12	46	50	4.00
261	VF3/12	43	47	4.00
262	VF3/12	32	32	0.00
263	VF3/12	32	36	4.00
264	VF3/12	24	20	-4.00
265	VF3/12	47	51	4.00
266	VF3/12	47	48	1.00
267	VF3/12	23	30	7.00
268	VF3/12	32	36	4.00
269	VF3/12	37	41	4.00
270	VF3/12	45	49	4.00
271	VF3/12	54	58	4.00
272	VF3/12	43	47	4.00
273	VF3/12	38	43	5.00
274	VF3/12	33	37	4.00
275	VF3/12	46	51	5.00
276	VF3/12	44	48	4.00
277	VF3/12	26	30	4.00
278	VF3/12	32	36	4.00
279	VF3/12	40	41	1.00
280	VF3/12	45	49	4.00
281	VF3/12	51	58	7.00
282	VF3/12	43	47	4.00
283	VF3/12	39	43	4.00
284	VF3/12	32	37	5.00
285	VF3/12	42	46	4.00
286	VF3/13	30	34	4.00
287	VF3/13	46	51	5.00
288	VF3/13	48	52	4.00
289	VF3/13	44	48	4.00
290	VF3/13	32	31	-1.00
291	VF3/13	26	30	4.00
292	VF3/13	21	32	11.00

No	Group	Before TBLL	After TBLL	points change
293	VF3/13	26	30	4.00
294	VF3/13	33	37	4.00
295	VF3/13	46	50	0.66
296	VF3/13	26	36	10.00
297	VF3/13	48	52	4.00
298	VF3/13	28	32	4.00
299	VF3/13	48	53	5.00
300	VF3/13	38	42	4.00
301	VF3/13	46	50	4.00
302	VF3/13	41	47	6.00
303	VF3/13	41	45	4.00
304	VF3/13	42	46	4.00
305	VF3/13	30	30	0.00
306	VF3/13	46	50	4.00
307	VF3/13	34	36	2.00
308	VF3/13	48	52	4.00
309	VF3/13	28	32	4.00
310	VF3/13	49	53	4.00
311	VF3/13	38	42	4.00
312	VF3/13	51	50	-1.00
313	VF3/14	43	47	4.00
314	VF3/14	28	32	4.00
315	VF3/14	34	36	2.00
316	VF3/14	16	20	4.00
317	VF3/14	49	51	2.00
318	VF3/14	44	48	4.00
319	VF3/14	26	30	4.00
320	VF3/14	32	36	4.00
321	VF3/14	37	41	4.00
322	VF3/14	45	49	4.00
323	VF3/14	55	58	3.00
324	VF3/14	43	47	4.00
325	VF3/14	39	43	4.00
326	VF3/14	34	37	3.00
327	VF3/14	46	50	4.00
328	VF3/14	32	36	4.00
329	VF3/14	45	52	7.00
330	VF3/14	28	32	4.00
331	VF3/14	49	53	4.00
332	VF3/14	40	42	2.00
333	VF3/14	46	50	4.00
334	VF3/14	43	47	4.00
335	VF3/14	40	41	1.00
336	VF3/14	45	49	4.00
337	VF3/14	54	58	4.00