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Research Article

Exploring the effect of Information Gap Activities and Dictogloss on Speech Performance and Motivation among Iranian Pre-Intermediate EFL Learners

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has transformed education globally in an unprecedented way; therefore, it has become critical to reexamine how we assess students, particularly when it comes to the teaching of languages. The current study examines the pre-COVID-19 situation, during COVID-19, and post-COVID-19, and the change in assessment by the Iranian EFL teachers. The current state of research is minimal as to the assessment practice in postsecondary education; therefore, it resorts to a qualitative, phenomenological design in order to study what has been practiced. The 25 experienced teachers provided data using semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaires. Thematic analysis demonstrated that the pre-pandemic evaluation was mostly summative-based. The postgraduate courses, on the contrary, permitted a more formative and research-oriented approach. Initially, the pandemic forced the teachers to revise the traditional use of tests, but with time, they began relying on blended models to address issues such as dishonesty, lack of technology, and students who were not interested in school. Following the pandemic, blended and formative techniques were still applied by teachers, yet evaluating how to maintain innovation and equity in assessment was of their concern as well. Respondents reported that they are better equipped with information on the use of technology and developing new methods of teaching it; however, they experienced trouble with the validity of assessments and the condition of the infrastructure. As indicated by the findings, we require the concept of language assessment literacy, equitable online infrastructure, and continuous professional growth to foster assessing the subjects through a learner-centered approach.

Introduction

The teaching and learning of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) have transformed over time, with numerous approaches to enhance the proficiency of learners (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Farrokh & Rahmani, 2017; Richards & Rodgers, 2002). One technique that became prominent is Task-Based Language Teaching, which focuses on real-life tasks to stress meaningful use of the language (Bhandari, 2020; Wiboolyasarin et al., 2023). TBLT aligns with communicative language curriculum principles, where the emphasis is on practical use rather than grammar rules, engaging learners in tasks that replicate real-life communication (Ismail et al., 2023; Seyyedi et al., 2023; Huynh & Nguyen, 2023).

In language learning, particularly EFL, speech production is evaluated based on accuracy, complexity, and fluency, which are essential for effective communication (Housen et al., 2012). Motivation is also a crucial factor, directly influencing effort and outcomes (Lucas, 2010).

Information Gap Activities and Dictogloss are two TBLT techniques that promote interaction and collaboration. Information Gap Activities encourage learners to communicate to fill information gaps, while Dictogloss involves listening, note-taking, and reconstructing a text in groups, enhancing listening and communicative skills (Cutrone & Beh, 2018; Zúñiga et al., 2023).

Focusing on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners provides a unique context to assess the effectiveness of these methods. In Iran, despite an extremely extensive period of instruction in English, learners often evidence very poor results regarding communicative competence (Kafipour et al., 2018). This study has been conducted to examine the effect of Information Gap Activities and Dictogloss on oral production parameters related to accuracy, complexity, and fluency, besides speaking motivation, for Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners, raising the following research questions:

1. Do Information Gap Activities and Dictogloss derived from Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) significantly affect the speech accuracy of Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners?
2. Do Information Gap Activities and Dictogloss derived from TBLT significantly affect the speech complexity of Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners?
3. Do Information Gap Activities and Dictogloss derived from TBLT significantly affect the speech fluency of Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners?
4. Do Information Gap Activities and Dictogloss derived from TBLT improve the motivation of Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners?

Review of the Related Literature

TBLT is a contemporary method that involves teaching through real-life tasks that include an element of real communication, as opposed to repetition or grammar instruction. TBLT was developed from the communicative language teaching approach that focuses on the functional use of language (Ellis, 2003). TBLT has many different theoretical underpinnings—such as those related to behaviorism, innatism, and interactionism—but they all agree that language acquisition happens best when it occurs through meaningful, in-context tasks (Guerrero et al., 2020; Hettimullage, 2023). TBLT involves putting students through tasks that require them to actually use the target language, promoting real communication and

developing communicative competence (Bao & Du, 2015).

Information gap tasks and Dictogloss underlie learning through interaction in TBLT. An information gap involves students exchanging information with each other to perform a task or solve a problem; they use the target language structure to communicate (Cutrone & Beh, 2018). Dictogloss, on the other hand, is listening-based, requiring students to take notes and collaborate on reconstructing a text, enhancing listening, note-taking, and cooperative language use (Zúñiga et al., 2023). Both methods effectively engage learners and improve their language skills through practice.

Numerous studies have investigated the impact of TBLT on speech production components, including accuracy, complexity, and fluency. Accuracy involves correct language use, complexity refers to varied and sophisticated structures, and fluency defines the speed of speech (Bui & Tai, 2022). For example, Khoram (2019) found that pre-task planning in TBLT improves oral performance accuracy, with task type influencing this effect. Similarly, Huynh and Nguyen (2023) demonstrated that TBLT boosts general speaking skills, as well as individual components like complexity, accuracy, and fluency, due to its interactive and practical nature.

Motivation, a crucial element in language learning, influences a learner's commitment and persistence (Rosales, 2019). TBLT can increase motivation by connecting language learning with authentic communicative needs, making the process more engaging. Nita et al. (2019) observed that TBLT enhances speaking abilities in learners with intrinsic motivation. The authenticity and interactivity of TBLT tasks make them appealing, thus increasing learner motivation (Carless, 2002).

Testing the efficacy of TBLT in an Iranian pre-intermediate EFL context is particularly compelling. Recent studies suggest that task-based methods significantly benefit Iranian EFL learners by encouraging authentic language use. For instance, Kafipour et al. (2018) found that task-based writing instruction improved Iranian students' writing abilities. Therefore, Information Gap Activities and Dictogloss could similarly enhance oral performance and motivation. The theoretical support for TBLT and its application in fostering interaction and collaboration suggests that these strategies might offer substantial benefits for Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners.

Method

Research Design

The study was developed in a Quasi-experimental design. The pre-test-post-test control group design was also used with three Iranian EFL classes at the pre-intermediate level of language proficiency that were randomly assigned to experimental or control groups. The groups were designed as:

1. Information Gap Activities (IGA) group
2. Diclogloss (DG) group
3. A course-driven (control) group that followed the standard curriculum.

The independent variable of this study was the manner in which task-based activities were carried out, (two variables being considered as Information Gap Activities and Dictogloss). Dependent variables included measurement of the learners' speech performance (accuracy, complexity, and fluency) as well as their level of motivation.

Participants

This study was conducted among Iranian male and female pre-intermediate EFL learners at a major language institute in Yazd, Iran. The whole sample included 60 EFL learners with the age ranging from 18 to 25 who were randomly assigned into one of three groups: two experimental groups, and a control group. Each group included 20 learners. English proficiency level of the participants had to be more or less at a pre-intermediate level. Measuring and assessing students' English language proficiency was carried out through the Oxford Placement Test (OPT), a common benchmark tool. In addition, all participants were volunteers and provided written informed consent to participate.

Instruments

Several instruments were used in the study to find out about participants' levels of proficiency, speech performance, and motivation.

Oxford Placement Test (OPT)

This test was used to determine EFL learners' proficiency level. The internal consistency of the test is typically measured using Cronbach's alpha, with values usually exceeding 0.85, indicating strong reliability (Brown, 2015; Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Ann, 2014; Hyland, 2002). The OPT has strong content validity, as it covers a wide range of language skills relevant to proficiency assessment. It also has good construct validity, supported by its widespread use and acceptance in language learning contexts (Brown, 2015).

Motivation Questionnaire

A motivation questionnaire was developed by the researcher which was basically derived out of the comprehensive Attitude and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) developed by Gardener (1985). The original copy of the questionnaire was composed of 104 items. However, in order to sum up the items and avoid the boredom of the participants, the researcher took into account six out of twelve motivation criteria proposed by Chalak & Kassaian (2010) and selected the items related to the intended criteria. Based on the six intended criteria, the ultimate questionnaire was composed of 32 items measuring students' motivation about language learning.

The internal consistency of the motivation questionnaire was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. The overall reliability was 0.87, indicating high internal consistency among the items. The validity of the motivation questionnaire was supported by its development based on established motivation theories such as the ones raised by Chalak & Kassaian (2010). Content validity was further ensured through expert reviews and pilot testing.

Pre-test and Post-test Assessments

Speech performance was evaluated by using pre-test and post-test measurements for correctness, complexity, and fluency. Elicitation tasks analyses entailed picture descriptions, story retelling, and spontaneous speech production.

To determine the inter-rater reliability of speech assessments, two experienced EFL instructors rated recordings independently. Inter-rater reliability was assessed using Cohen's kappa, which showed values between 0.75 and 0.85 with high kappas indicating substantial to excellent agreement.

The content validity of such materials was established by incorporating a full spectrum of speaking tasks needed for distinction among different speech performance skills. The construct validity of the criteria was established based on alignment with proposed frameworks for assessing speech accuracy,

complexity, and fluency proposed by Skehan and Foster (1999).

Procedure

This study utilized a quasi-experimental pre-test-post-test control group design utilizing three groups: two experimental and one control. The study included multiple stages which were participant recruitment, pretest (base-line), treatment implementation of the two task-based techniques, and post-test.

In the first phase, sixty participants were chosen from three pre-intermediate EFL classes at a reputable language institute in Yazd, Iran. Participants were informed about the study's aims, procedures, and rights, including the option to withdraw. Written consent was obtained from each participant. The OPT was utilized to confirm that participants were at pre-intermediate English proficiency level, offering a foundational assessment of their overall English abilities. To avoid potential selection biases, participants were randomly allocated to one of the groups—two experimental and one control—each comprising 20 learners.

In the pre-testing phase, all participants were to measure initial speech performance in terms of accuracy, complexity, and fluency. This involved tasks such as picture description, story retelling, and spontaneous speech production. During the treatment phase, which lasted for six weeks with two sessions (each lasted 90 minutes), two experimental groups received different types of task-based language teaching (TBLT) interventions. Group one engaged in information gap activities that required communication with peers to fill in missing information through paired dialogues, problem-solving exercises, and collaborative map reading while Experimental Group 2 engaged in dictogloss activities where they listened to a short text, took notes, and then worked in groups to solve the problem. Lastly, the control group followed the regular curriculum without any additional interventions, including language instruction focusing on grammar, vocabulary, reading, and writing exercises.

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of task-based interventions on speech accuracy, complexity, and fluency of participants, a post-test assessment was conducted at the end of the treatment period. This involved administering the same tests that were given during the pre-test. Moreover, a motivation questionnaire was also given to the participants to measure changes in their motivation levels. The collected data was then organized for analysis. Using SPSS software, descriptive statistics, paired-sampled t-test, and ANOVAs were utilized to compare pre-test and post-test scores within and between groups.

Results

Analysis of OQPT Results

In order to conduct this study, there was a need to have three groups of participants in the same proficiency level. Therefore, first and foremost, an OQPT was administered and 90 students were selected and divided into three groups. Then, the students in each group were supposed to have obtained similar scores in the mentioned test. Therefore, a one-way between-group ANOVA was run to identify the homogeneity of the three groups. It is worth noting that all the obtained scores were equalized and normalized based on the number 100. The participants in IGA (M = 51.70, SD = 12.32), DG (M = 53.40, SD = 12.50), and control group (M = 52.43, SD = 15.31) had similar performance considering their general English proficiency level. Moreover, there was not any significant

difference in scores of the groups considering their general English proficiency, $F(2, 5687 = 0.121$, $p = 0.887$ *(two-tailed).*

Performance of All Three Groups in Speaking Pretest

Before stepping in the main process of analysis, there was a need to prove the homogeneity of experimental and control groups regarding their speaking ability (fluency, accuracy, and complexity dimensions), in order to find a plausible answer for the research questions. Therefore, a one-way between-group ANOVA was conducted to compare the pre-test scores of all three groups in each dimension of speaking. The EFL learners participating in IGA (*MF* = 7.43,*SDF* = 2.68; *MA* = 9.96, *SDA* = 2.05; *MC* = 9.53, *SDC* =2.12), DG (*MF* = 7.56,*SDF* = 2.72; *MA* = 9.83, *SDA* = 2.22; *MC* = 9.33, *SDC* =2.23), and control (*MF* = 7.66,*SDF* = 3.06; *MA* = 10.40, *SDA* = 1.56; *MC* = 8.93, *SDC* =2.31) group had similar performance in pre-test regarding their fluency, accuracy, and complexity. Table 1 shows the significance of the difference between the groups in pre-test.

Table 1

Multivariate Comparison of Pre-Test Scores

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
prefluency	Between Groups	.822	2	.411	.051	.950
	Within Groups	697.400	87	8.016		
	Total	698.222	89			
preaccuracy	Between Groups	5.267	2	2.633	.677	.511
	Within Groups	338.333	87	3.889		
	Total	343.600	89			
precomplexity	Between Groups	5.600	2	2.800	.564	.571
	Within Groups	432.000	87	4.966		
	Total	437.600	89			
pretotal	Between Groups	1.156	2	.578	.059	.943
	Within Groups	857.733	87	9.859		
	Total	858.889	89			

As it is apparent in Table 1, there was no significant difference in pre-test scores of the IGA, DG, and control groups regarding their fluency (F (2,87) = 0.05, P = 0.950 (two-tailed)), accuracy (F (2,87) = 0.67, P = 0.511 (two-tailed)), and complexity (F (2,87) = 0.56, P = 0.571 (two-tailed)). The magnitude of the difference in the means was very small in all three cases, respectively (*eta squared* = 0.17, 0.09, 0.32).

Effect of IGA/DG on Accuracy of the Speech Production

The first research question addressed how IGA and DG grouping approaches affected the development of speaking accuracy among Iranian English learners. To examine this question, pretest and posttest scores across all groups were compared. A paired-samples t-test was performed to evaluate accuracy gains within the IGA group. Results indicated an increase in speaking accuracy scores from pretest (M = 9.96, SD = 2.05) to posttest (M = 11.90, SD = 3.14) for learners in this condition. As displayed in Table 2, the paired-samples t-test was used to determine whether the observed difference between pretest and posttest scores was statistically significant.

Table 2

Paired Sample T-test of IGA Group on Accuracy

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		M	SD	SEM	95% CID				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	preaccuracy - postaccuracy	-1.93333	3.542	.6467	-3.25	-.610	-2.989	29	.186

The paired-samples t-test results presented in Table 2 indicate that the observed improvement in speaking accuracy scores for the IGA group from pretest (M = 9.96, SD = 2.05) to posttest (M = 11.90, SD = 3.14) was not statistically significant, t(29) = 2.98, p = .186.

To analyze the change in accuracy within the Dialogic Grouping (DG) condition, pre-test and post-test scores were compared using a paired samples t-test. An increase in mean accuracy was observed from the pre-test (*M* = 9.83, *SD* = 2.22) to the post-test (*M* = 15.63, *SD* = 2.85). Table 3 provides the statistical results of this test, confirming whether the observed improvement was significant.

Table 3

Paired Sample T-test of DG Group on Accuracy

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		M	SD	SEM	95% CID				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	preaccuracy - postaccuracy	-5.80000	3.699	.6753	-7.181	-4.418	-8.58	29	.000

As displayed in Table 3, the difference between pretest (M = 9.83, SD = 2.22) and posttest (M = 15.63, SD = 2.85) accuracy scores for the DG group was statistically significant, t(29) = 8.58, p < .001. An eta squared value of .84 indicated a large effect size for this improvement.

For comparison, a paired-samples t-test was also conducted for the control group, whose descriptive statistics showed an increase from pretest (M = 10.40, SD = 1.56) to posttest (M = 12.50, SD = 3.11). The results of this test, presented in Table 4, were analyzed to determine the statistical significance of this apparent improvement.

Table 4

Paired Sample T-test of Control Group on Accuracy

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		M	SD	SEM	95% CID				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	preaccuracy - postaccuracy	-2.10000	3.546	.6474	-3.424	-.7758	-3.24	29	.260

The results presented in Table 4 indicate that, in contrast to the DG group, there was no statistically significant difference between the pretest (M = 10.40, SD = 1.56) and posttest (M = 12.50, SD = 3.11) accuracy scores for the control group, t(29) = 3.24, p = .260 (two-tailed).

Effect of IGA/DG on Complexity of the Speech Production

The second research question investigated the effect of IGA) and DG grouping approaches on the complexity of learners' speech. Descriptive statistics for the IGA group showed an improvement in complexity scores from pretest (M = 9.53, SD = 2.12) to posttest (M = 10.50, SD = 3.11). To determine the statistical significance of this change, a paired-samples t-test was conducted. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Paired Sample T-test of IGA Group on Complexity

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		M	SD	SEM	95% CID				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	precomplexity - postcomplexity	-.96667	3.718	.6788	-2.355	.4218	-1.42	29	.165

According to the results in Table 5, there was no statistically significant difference between pretest (M = 9.53, SD = 2.12) and posttest (M = 10.50, SD = 3.11) complexity scores for the IGA group, t(29) = 1.42, p = .165.

A paired-samples t-test was also conducted to compare pretest and posttest complexity scores for the DG group. Descriptive statistics showed an improvement for participants in this group from pretest (M = 9.33, SD = 2.23) to posttest (M = 14.73, SD = 4.02). To establish the statistical significance of this improvement, the results of the t-test are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Paired Sample T-test of DG Group on Complexity

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		M	SD	SEM	95% CID				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	precomplexity - postcomplexity	-5.40000	4.568	.8340	-7.105	-3.694	-6.47	29	.000

The results, provided in Table 6, show that there was a significant difference between pre-test (M = 9.33, SD = 2.23) and post-test (M = 14.73, SD = 4.02), t (29) = 6.47, $P \leq .0005$ (two-tailed). An eta squared value of .78 suggested a large effect size.

Finally, a paired-samples t-test was performed on the control group's complexity scores. Descriptive statistics revealed an improvement from pretest (M = 8.93, SD = 2.31) to posttest (M = 9.86, SD = 2.63). The results of this test, presented in Table 7, were examined to determine the statistical significance of this change.

Table 7

Paired Sample T-test of Control Group on Complexity

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		M	SD	SEM	95% CID				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	precomplexity - postcomplexity	-.9333	3.321	.6063	-2.173	.3068	-1.53	29	.135

The analysis presented in Table 7 indicates that the observed increase in complexity scores for the control group from pretest (M = 8.93, SD = 2.31) to posttest (M = 9.86, SD = 2.63) was not statistically significant, t(29) = 1.53, p = .135 (two-tailed).

Effect of IGA /DG on Fluency of the Speech Production

The third research question examined the effect of IGA and DG approaches on the development of speaking fluency among the Iranian EFL learners. To address this question, pretest and posttest fluency scores were compared across all three groups. Descriptive statistics for the IGA group indicated an improvement in scores from pretest (M = 7.43, SD = 2.68) to posttest (M = 14.83, SD = 3.05). A paired-samples t-test was conducted to determine the statistical significance of this change, the results of which are presented in Table 8.

Table 8

Paired Sample T-test of IGA Group on Fluency

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		M	SD	SEM	95% CID				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	prefluency - postfluency	-7.40000	4.583	.8368	-9.111	-5.688	-8.84	29	.000

As shown in Table 8, the increase in fluency scores for the IGA group from pretest (*M* = 7.43, *SD* = 2.68) to posttest (*M* = 14.83, *SD* = 3.05) was statistically significant, t(29) = 8.84, p < .001. The eta squared value was .90, indicating a large effect size.

A separate paired-samples t-test was conducted to analyze fluency scores for the DG group. Descriptive statistics for this group showed an increase from pretest (*M* = 7.56, *SD* = 2.72) to posttest (*M* = 8.76, *SD* = 3.05).

However, the significance of the improvement needed to be approved. Table 9 presents the paired t-test results comparing the pre-test and post-test scores for the DG group.

Table 9

Paired Sample T-test of DG Group on Fluency

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		M	SD	SEM	95% CID				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	prefluency - postfluency	-1.20000	4.122	.7526	-2.739	.3392	-1.594	29	.122

The results in Table 9 indicate that, in contrast to the IGA group, the difference between pretest (M = 7.56, SD = 2.72) and posttest (M = 8.76, SD = 3.05) fluency scores for the DG group was not statistically significant, t(29) = 1.59, p = .122 (two-tailed).

Finally, the pretest and posttest fluency scores for the control group were compared through paired-samples t-test. Descriptive statistics showed an improvement from pretest (M = 7.66, SD = 3.06) to posttest (M = 8.36, SD = 3.28). The results of this analysis, presented in Table 10, were examined to determine the statistical significance of this change.

Table 10

Paired Sample T-test of Control Group on Fluency

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		M	SD	SEM	95% CID				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	prefluency - postfluency	-.70000	1.26355	.23069	-1.171	-.228	-3.034	29	.565

As presented in Table 10, the analysis revealed no statistically significant difference between the pretest (M = 7.66, SD = 3.06) and posttest (M = 8.36, SD = 3.28) fluency scores for the control group, t(29) = 3.03, p = .565 (two-tailed).

Performance of All Three Groups in Speaking Posttest

The general performance of the participants in all three groups were compared conducting another one-way between-group ANOVA. According to the descriptive results, the EFL learners participating in IGA group (*FM* = 14.83, *FSD* = 3.05) and DG group (*AM* = 15.63, *ASD* = 2.85; *CM* = 14.73, *CSD* = 4.02) seemed to have higher grades compared with the ones in control group. Table 11 demonstrates the significance of the difference between these three groups in post-tests.

Table 11

Multivariate Comparison of Speaking Post-Tests in All Groups

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
postfluency	Between Groups	787.822	2	393.911	40.106	.000
	Within Groups	854.500	87	9.822		
	Total	1642.322	89			
postaccuracy	Between Groups	241.156	2	120.578	13.029	.000

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Within Groups	805.167	87	9.255		
	Total	1046.322	89			
postcomplexity	Between Groups	420.067	2	210.033	19.177	.000
	Within Groups	952.833	87	10.952		
	Total	1372.900	89			
posttotal	Between Groups	1164.200	2	582.100	18.357	.000
	Within Groups	2758.700	87	31.709		
	Total	3922.900	89			

As it is represented in Table 11, a significant difference was observed in post-test scores of experimental and control groups in fluency, $F(2, 87) = 40.10$, $p \leq .000$ *(two-tailed)*, accuracy, $F(2, 87) = 13.02$, $p \leq .000$ *(two-tailed),* complexity $F(2, 87) = 19.17$, $p \leq .000$ *(two-tailed)*, and total score $F(2, 87) = 18.35$, $p \leq .000$ *(two-tailed)*. However, the mentioned table could not provide a two-by-two comparison between the groups to help identify the main different one. Therefore, a post-hoc comparison is presented in Table 12.

Table 12

Post-Hoc Comparison of Speaking Post-Tests in All Groups

Dependent Variable	(I) group	(J) group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
postfluency	IGA	DG	6.06667	.80919	.000	4.0913	8.0420
		control	6.46667	.80919	.000	4.4913	8.4420
	DG	IGA	-6.06667	.80919	.000	-8.0420	-4.0913
		control	.40000	.80919	1.000	-1.5754	2.3754
	control	IGA	-6.46667	.80919	.000	-8.4420	-4.4913
		DG	-.40000	.80919	1.000	-2.3754	1.5754
postaccuracy	IGA	DG	-3.73333	.78548	.000	-5.6508	-1.8158
		control	-.60000	.78548	1.000	-2.5175	1.3175
	DG	IGA	3.73333	.78548	.000	1.8158	5.6508
		control	3.13333	.78548	.000	1.2158	5.0508
	control	IGA	.60000	.78548	1.000	-1.3175	2.5175
		DG	-3.13333	.78548	.000	-5.0508	-1.2158
postcomplexity	IGA	DG	-4.23333	.85448	.000	-6.3193	-2.1474
		control	.63333	.85448	1.000	-1.4526	2.7193
	DG	IGA	4.23333	.85448	.000	2.1474	6.3193
		control	4.86667	.85448	.000	2.7807	6.9526
	control	IGA	-.63333	.85448	1.000	-2.7193	1.4526
		DG	-4.86667	.85448	.000	-6.9526	-2.7807
posttotal	IGA	DG	-1.90000	1.4539	.584	-5.4493	1.6493
		control	6.50000	1.4539	.000	2.9507	10.0493
	DG	IGA	1.90000	1.4539	.584	-1.6493	5.4493
		control	8.40000	1.4539	.000	4.8507	11.9493
	control	IGA	-6.50000	1.4539	.000	-10.049	-2.9507
		DG	-8.40000	1.4539	.000	-11.949	-4.8507

As illustrated in the two-by-two comparisons of Table 12, the participants in IGA group significantly outperformed the other groups considering their fluency. But, the participants in the DG group had significantly better performance in accuracy and complexity compared with IGA and control groups. However, the general performance of the students in both experimental groups were not significantly

different, although significant improvements could be observed compared to the ones in the control group.

Effect of IGA/DG on Motivation

The fourth research question was concerned with the effect of IGA and DG on the motivation of the participants. A one-way between-group ANOVA was carried out in this regard. It is worth noting that during the process of data analysis, twelve items of the questionnaire needed to be re-verified (manipulated) and the total motivation scores of the participants were based on the number 100. The descriptive results obtained by conducting a one-way between-group analysis of variance revealed a difference was observed between the motivation scores of IGA (M = 28.96, SD = 1.82), DG (M = 31.13, SD = 1.63), and control (M = 15.80, SD = 1.77) groups. In order to discover the significance of the difference between the motivation scores of all groups, Table 13 is provided.

Table 13

Multivariate Comparison of the Performance of Three Groups in AMTB

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4131.667	2	2065.833	22.502	.000
Within Groups	7987.233	87	91.807		
Total	12118.900	89			

The numerical findings of Table 13 reveal that a significant difference was observed between the motivation scores of the three groups $F(2,87) = 22.50$, $p \leq .00$ *(two-tailed)*. A between-group comparison of the scores is provided in Table 14.

Table 14

Post-Hoc Comparison of the Performance of Three Groups in AMTB

(I) group	(J) group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
IGA	DG	-2.16667	2.47396	1.000	-8.2060	3.8726
	control	13.16667	2.47396	.000	7.1274	19.2060
DG	IGA	2.16667	2.47396	1.000	-3.8726	8.2060
	control	15.33333	2.47396	.000	9.2940	21.3726

According to the numerical findings of Table 14, the general performance of the students in both experimental groups were not significantly different, although significant differences could be observed compared to the ones in the control group.

Discussion

The current research study was carried out to explore the effect of information gap tasks and dictogloss on speech performance and motivation among a group of pre-intermediate learners at Iranian EFL context. In the discussion that follows, the results are interpreted in light of the research questions and previous studies.

The primary question was concerned with the effect of information gap activities and dictogloss on accuracy of the oral production of different groups. It can be suggested that both information gap activities and dictogloss have a positive effect on the pre-intermediate learners in terms of speech accuracy. The experimental groups had significant

improvements at generating grammatically correct sentences and using productive vocabulary. However, the participants in the dictogloss group outperformed the ones in the other experimental group.

Previous studies have pointed out that TBLT provides opportunities for language practice in contextually meaningful tasks and thus allows learners to develop various aspects relevant to achieving accurate ones, for example, Khoram (2019) identified that task-based activities had a positive effect on grammatical accuracy of students. The findings of the current study are consistent with this strand of literature, which suggests that performance on information gap activities and dictogloss tasks could result in more accurate structures. However, this study is innovative in the case that the results have highlighted the priority of one task over the other one in correct performance.

This study also showed an increase in two of the metrics for speech complexity among those students who used information gap activities and dictogloss. These learners used richer linguistic patterns and varied vocabulary compared to the control group. However, the participants provided with dictoglossic technique outperformed the ones in information gap group.

Theoretical underpinnings of TBLT assume that task complexity yields problem-solving and information-exchange tasks, which in turn prompt language output more complex than the presentation point (Guerrero et al., 2020). The results from Huynh and Nguyen (2023) also provide support for the claim that TBLT leads to complex language structures. The findings of the present study only support this view, they posit that Information Gap Activities are demanding on learners' cognitive powers and dictogloss is a reconstructive activity which in turn will force the students to take their complexity up several steps.

The experimental groups showed enhancements in fluency of speech among the learners. The results revealed that these learners performed more fluent speech: they produced the material faster and easier, with fewer paws or hesitation. However, the participants involved in information gap activities outperformed the ones in dictogloss group.

The studies of Zúñiga, Mayorga and Ruiz (2023) have indicated TBLT-driven fluency tasks can decrease the pauses in language production as well increase speech rate. The findings of the present study accord with this, and reveal that two tasks-information gap activities and dictogloss-are conducive to promoting fluency because they demand a high degree continuous use of language.

In addition, one of the most important discoveries that it is understood from this article includes Information gap activities and dictogloss have a positive effect on learners' motivation. The post-treatment motivation questionnaire indicated that participants randomized to the experimental groups reported more motivated than control group for attending work or school.

TBLT tasks are both interactive and engaging as motivation could be enhanced. As reported by Nita et al. (2019), TBLT can improve the students' intrinsic motivation because learning activities become more applicative and pleasant. The current study supports this, suggesting that information gap activities and dictogloss not only improve language skills but also make the learning process more motivating and enjoyable for learners.

The study suggested that both activities were effective in reviving speech and

increasing motivation, but it also found progressive differences of their impact on the students. Information gap activities also did the best job at promoting fluency, presumably because these tasks were interactive and communicative in requiring learners to create language form on their own in real time.

Dictogloss, on the other hand, was more successful in enhancing accuracy and complexity. Since dictogloss involved listening and dictation for note-taking as well as collaborative text reconstruction, it is probably more conducive to learners attending critically to both the accuracy and complexity of their language use.

Conclusion

The results drawn from the study provided critical implications for English language pedagogy especially in Iranian EFL context with pre-intermediate level students. First and foremost, the speech performance of the learners in term of accuracy and complexity can improve by using information gap activities and dictogloss which are based on the principles of TBLT approach. These are more authentic, meaningful uses of the language: which can result in a richer overall learning experience.

Second, their positive effect on motivation indicates that TBLT might keep learners motivated to learn the language. Teachers must include a number of task-based activities which address multiple aspects of language use and promote active learner involvement.

The third area of interest is the necessary middle ground that lies between tasks such as information gap activities which encourage communicative fluency, and those like dictogloss where a focus on accurate use of language is combined with complex structures. Together, this pair can offer a more complete language learning program.

In summary, this study revealed that information gap activities and dictogloss can be considered as appropriate procedures in TBLT to improve the quality of speech along with some positive increase on accuracy, complexity, fluency, and motivation among Iranian pre-intermediate class. Results may prove beneficial to incorporating TBLT into EFL classroom and provide a reminder of the potential for second language learning activities that should be not only diverse, but also more stimulant.

Ethical Considerations

The study was approved by the ethical commission of Yazd University, which was accepted by the intended institute (due to the point that the institute was financially supported by the university). Formal ethical approval was not required for the study because the participation in the study was voluntary; however, a consent form was provided prior to the commencement of the assignment. The anonymity of the participants was maintained throughout the study. The study was conducted in accordance with the local legislation and institutional requirements. The participants provided their written informed consent to participate in this study.

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