

20 - 22 February 2026

Barcelona , Spain

Task-Based Language Teaching in Saudi EFL Classrooms: Speaking Psychological Barriers, Generation Z and Teacher Readiness

Yasmin Fawaz Alshihri , Dr. Hayam Eissa

University of Tabuk, Saudi Arabia

Abstract

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) has been a topic of much discussion in the field of EFL pedagogy; however, little is known about its application in Saudi EFL classrooms. This paper explored the implementation of TBLT in a Saudi EFL setting by considering its relationship with Psychological Speaking Barriers (PSB), its suitability to the preferences of Generation Z (Gen Z) students, and the teachers' preparedness in applying this approach. A mixed-methods design was conducted on 48 female undergraduate and postgraduate English language major students and their educators at Tabuk University, utilizing a combination of student surveys, as well as semi-structured interviews with both the students and teachers, and two classroom observations. The results revealed that task-based speaking activities often resulted in increased levels of engagement and decreased levels of speaking anxiety when they included collaborative and technology-enhanced interaction to appeal to Generation Z. Simultaneously, institutional constraints and varying teacher readiness constrained full TBLT implementation, with practices aligning more closely to a task-supported approach. These results emphasize the significance of context-sensitive task design and targeted teacher support to improve the effectiveness of TBLT in similar EFL settings.

Keywords: Gen Z; PSB; Saudi EFL learners; Teacher preparedness; TBLT