



# The Effects of Task-Based Learning and Graphic Organizer Techniques on the Developing Student Teacher Professional Competency in Listening and Speaking Skills

**Suneeta Kositchaivat**

sxuneeta@hotmail.com, Department of International Language Teaching, Sanam Chandra Palace Campus, Silpakorn University, Thailand

<b>APA Citation:</b> Kositchaivat, S. (2025). The effects of task-based learning and graphic organizer techniques on developing student teacher professional competency in listening and speaking skills. <i>LEARN Journal: Language Education and Acquisition Research Network</i> , 18(1), 859-882. <a href="https://doi.org/10.70730/NESC6564">https://doi.org/10.70730/NESC6564</a>	
Received 01/09/2024	<b>ABSTRACT</b>  This study aims to evaluate the impact of task-based learning and graphic organizer techniques on enhancing student teacher professional competency in English listening and speaking skills. The study used a One-Group Pre-Test Post-Test Design, which involved 30 undergraduate math-major students in a Thai public university. Over eight weeks, the study group was instructed using teacher-prepared materials delivered through task-based learning and graphic organizer techniques. Pre- and post-tests were conducted to measure listening and speaking proficiency progression. In addition, the participants completed a self-evaluation form with professional competencies relating to listening and speaking before and after the study to measure the extent to which they have progressed. The results showed a significant improvement ( $p < 0.05$ ) in listening and speaking proficiency, with learners advancing from beginner to independent user levels on the CEFR Global Scale. While most learners demonstrated substantial improvement, some showed moderate progress.
Received in revised form 10/12/2024	
Accepted 22/12/2024	

	<p>This research emphasizes the potential of task-based learning and graphic organizer techniques as an effective method for tertiary-level undergraduate EFL student teachers. The findings offer valuable insights for designing and implementing language learning programs, emphasizing the importance of learner commitment and motivation. This study can serve as a practical guide for similar learner populations and provide implications for future language learning initiatives.</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Task-Based Learning, graphic organizer technique, listening and speaking skills, student teachers</p>
--	---

## Introduction

In recent years, the field of language education has witnessed a significant shift towards innovative methodologies, each with the potential to enhance students' proficiency across various language skills, particularly in listening and speaking (Chen, 2024; Zainuddin, 2023). Among these, task-based learning (TBL) and the use of graphic organizers (GOs) have emerged as frontrunners, capturing attention for their ability to foster active engagement and deep comprehension among learners (Wenas et al., 2023). The fusion of task-based learning with graphic organizers holds great promise, as it combines firsthand, experiential learning with visual representation, potentially amplifying the effectiveness of language learning activities (Jackson, 2022). Moreover, it is worth discussing how task-based learning and graphic organizer theories complement each other, referencing the works of Ellis (2003) and Hyerle (2009). Task-Based Learning and graphic organizer theories are two effective approaches to language teaching. TBL focuses on real-world tasks that promote communication, encouraging active learning and the practical application of language skills. On the other hand, graphic organizers—such as concept maps and Venn diagrams—help students understand and apply new concepts more effectively.

These two approaches complement each other well. Educators can enhance comprehension, improve planning, and foster student collaboration by integrating TBL with graphic organizers. Graphic organizers simplify complex concepts, break down tasks into manageable steps, and aid in memory retention. Additionally, they cater to various learning styles, which can enhance language proficiency while promoting critical thinking and collaborative skills. By combining TBL with graphic organizer techniques, educators can create a comprehensive and effective learning experience for their students.

This research not only aims to explore the impact of this powerful combination on student teachers' English listening and speaking skills but also to inspire a new wave of effective language education filled with hope and optimism.

Student teachers constitute a unique population in educational research, as they are learners and future educators who will employ these methodologies in their teaching practices (Ryan et al., 2022). Thus, understanding how task-based learning and graphic organizers influence language skills can provide valuable insights into pedagogical preparation and professional development.

This study will delve into various impact dimensions, including improvements in fluency, accuracy, confidence in speaking, comprehension of spoken English, and overall engagement with learning tasks by Thai student teachers. The research contributes to theoretical knowledge and provides tangible applications in language education. The findings, with the potential to shape curriculum design, instructional strategies, and teacher training programs, can empower and motivate language educators and curriculum designers, significantly impacting the lives of students and teachers.

The significance of effective language teaching methodologies cannot be overstated in our increasingly interconnected world, where English has become the universal language for communication and career advancement (Aimen & Khadim, 2024; Hossain, 2024). By filling a significant gap in the existing literature and exploring how task-based learning and graphic organizers can be harnessed to enhance student teachers' English listening and speaking skills, this research aims to make a substantial and hopeful contribution to the field of language education. The primary objective is to equip Thai student teachers with the necessary tools to create immersive and impactful language learning experiences in their future classrooms, fostering a new generation of proficient English speakers.

## **Research Problem**

Teachers play crucial roles in education by facilitating subject matter instruction and student development. Effective teaching significantly impacts student achievement and educational outcomes (Zajechowski, 2024). In Thailand, where English proficiency is increasingly essential, educators are expected to use English whenever and wherever possible to help students enhance their language skills. However, many Thai teachers face challenges in providing instructions in English due to various societal and educational factors, potentially hindering students' ability to effectively use English in

academic and real-world settings. This situation is emphasized by Chanoroke and Niemprapan (2020, p. 35), who state, “It cannot be denied that Thai students spend twelve years studying English in primary and secondary schools, but the results are somewhat unsatisfactory.” Given these challenges, there is a critical need to enhance Thai student teachers' English listening and speaking skills. Effective communication skills are pivotal in teacher-student interactions and instructional delivery, highlighting the importance of preparing student teachers to teach their respective subjects in English in the classroom context.

Therefore, this study investigates the impact of task-based learning and the graphic organizer technique on improving student teachers' English listening and speaking skills. By enhancing these competencies, student teachers can deliver more effective lessons, ultimately fostering their students' proficiency in English communication.

## **Literature Review**

### **Task-Based Learning (TBL)**

Learning English as a foreign or a second language has undergone several changes in local and global contexts over the past few years. TBL has gained prominence among several language teaching approaches due to its focus on meaningful communication and authentic language use. Ellis (2003) provides a comprehensive discussion of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), specifically focusing on enhancing language proficiency, particularly in listening and speaking skills. Ellis's perspectives align with, but also extend, the ideas of Nunan (2004) and Willis (1996), offering further insights into the effectiveness of TBL in fostering communicative competence. Ellis (2003) provides a theoretical framework for TBL and its role in language learning, including how it addresses listening and speaking skills. His ideas underscore the importance of tasks in promoting meaning-focused communication, which he sees as key to language acquisition. He further emphasizes that TBLT is a teaching approach that prioritizes meaningful input and real-world communication, in contrast to traditional methods focusing on specific language forms or grammatical structures. TBL encourages learners to engage with authentic listening tasks, such as podcasts, interviews, and conversations that reflect natural speech. This exposure helps learners encounter natural discourse and language features often missing in controlled exercises. TBL tasks focus on listening for overall comprehension rather than isolating individual words or grammatical structures. Collaborative and interactive

activities, such as discussing audio recordings with peers, enhance learners' ability to negotiate meaning and understanding.

Ellis (2003) highlights that TBL excels in speaking skills by emphasizing meaningful communication, real-world tasks, and fluency over accuracy. It encourages interactive, real-time communication, collaboration, and negotiation of meaning, enhancing fluency and confidence without overthinking form. Moreover, Ellis argues that TBL's authentic tasks enhance language skills transferability and interactional skills which encourage learners to practice listening and speaking in real-world contexts, developing practical skills for everyday communication. TBL also encourages learner autonomy, fostering independent language use, which is crucial for listening comprehension and speaking fluency.

According to Nunan (2004), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) effectively promotes language proficiency due to its real-world approach. TBL enables learners to engage in meaningful, meaning-focused communication, improving their listening and speaking skills. It encourages interaction and the use of language in context, promoting fluency and spontaneity, essential for effective speaking. Meanwhile, Willis (1996) highlights the importance of TBL in developing communicative competence, particularly in speaking and listening skills. TBL lessons consist of a pre-task, task, and post-task phase, each contributing to skill development. During the task phase, learners are exposed to authentic listening materials, improving listening comprehension and speaking fluency.

## **Graphic Organizer Technique**

Graphic organizers are visual tools that help students organize and represent systematic knowledge and ideas. They can facilitate comprehension, encourage critical thinking, and assist in synthesizing information (Hyerle, 2009). In language learning contexts, graphic organizers can aid in understanding spoken discourse, organizing thoughts for speaking tasks, and improving overall language production. The graphic organizers could support language learners in structuring information and developing coherent oral presentations. According to Parrish (2018), using the grid graphic organizer and jigsaw approach with short listening passages offers numerous benefits and promotes valuable 21st-century skills among learners. They are encouraged to categorize information and employ selective listening, skills crucial for effective note-taking in both academic and professional settings. Moreover, graphic organizers foster critical thinking by prompting learners to compare and contrast information, synthesize ideas, and question beliefs. Students improve their comprehension by engaging with authentic, non-

scripted language and practicing communication strategies such as exchanging information and clarifying understanding. The study of Darussalam and Ningrum (2023) showed that graphic organizers encouraged students to speak confidently and created a fun environment in the English classroom. In addition, this integrated method thus not only enhances listening proficiency but also cultivates broader cognitive and communicative competencies essential for contemporary educational and professional contexts.

### **Combined Impact on Student Teachers' English Listening and Speaking Skills**

Several studies provide valuable insight into the combined impact of TBL and graphic organizer techniques on student teachers' English listening and speaking skills. For instance, Li (2012) explored how integrating TBL with graphic organizers improved students' speaking abilities by promoting task engagement and linguistic accuracy. Similarly, Karimi et al. (2020) investigated the use of graphic organizers within TBL frameworks and found that they enhanced students' listening comprehension through systematic information processing and visualization. Chou (2016) investigated the effectiveness of a task-based teaching framework in developing intermediate Chinese learners' metacognitive awareness of listening comprehension. The study showed that the experimental group displayed improved metacognitive awareness of listening strategies and performed better in listening tests than the control group.

### **Synthesis of Nunan, Willis, and Ellis's views on TBL**

Nunan (2004) and Willis (1996) argue that TBL effectively improves listening and speaking skills by immersing learners in real-world tasks requiring genuine communication. By using language in context—whether through listening to authentic audio recordings or participating in meaningful interactions—learners acquire the skills necessary to use the language more effectively. Ellis supports this view, highlighting that TBL enhances fluency and real-world listening comprehension through meaning-focused communication and interactive learning. All three scholars agree that TBL's emphasis on communication is highly effective for fostering proficiency in listening and speaking, as it helps learners develop practical, usable language skills in both spoken and auditory formats.

### **Conclusion**

Overall, the literature supports the notion that both TBL and graphic organizer techniques individually contribute to improving English listening and speaking skills among language learners. TBL and graphic organizer techniques integration offers a synergistic approach by promoting active engagement, meaningful interaction, and effective language use. However, the specific impact on student teachers warrants further investigation, particularly within the context of their professional development and language proficiency requirements.

In conclusion, combining task-based learning and graphic organizer techniques appears promising for enhancing student teachers' English listening and speaking skills. By conducting this study, the researcher hopes to achieve the following objectives.

By conducting this study, the researcher hopes to achieve the following objectives:

1. 'To assess the effects of task-based learning and graphic organizer techniques on student teachers' English listening and speaking skills.
2. 'To investigate student teachers' professional competencies in English listening and speaking skills using a self-evaluation form before and after the study.

As to the research objectives mentioned above, the research questions (RQ) of the current study are as follows:

- RQ1: How do task-based learning and graphic organizer techniques affect student teachers' listening and speaking skills?
- RQ2: To what extent have the student teachers' professional English listening and speaking competencies improved?

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

Due to several practical and logistical constraints, this study used a One-Group Pre-Test and Post-Test design. One of the primary reasons for selecting this design was the limited availability of participants, making it challenging to form a control group. Conducting research within a specific educational context also posed restrictions on randomly assigning participants to different groups. Additionally, time constraints and the necessity to complete the study within an academic semester further influenced the design choice.

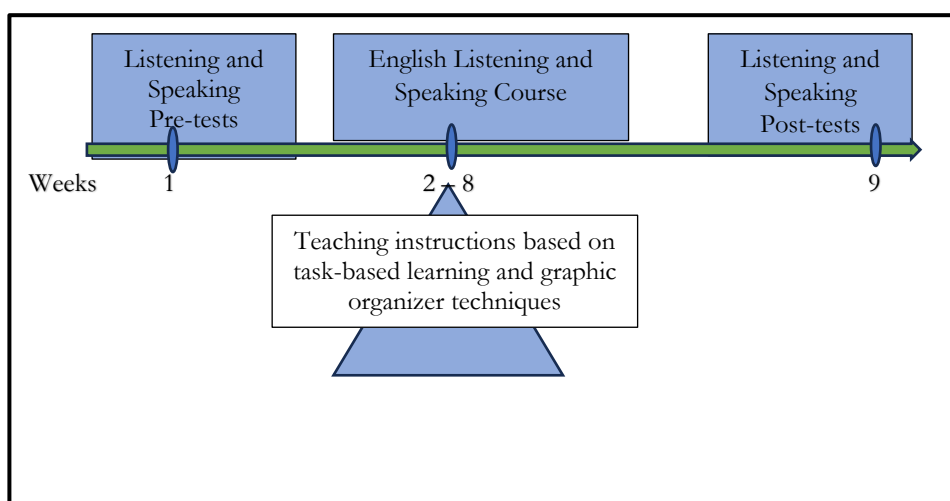
The one-group pre-test post-test design offers valuable insights into intervention effectiveness but faces limitations like confounding variables and

generalizability issues. However, the design provides valuable insights into the intervention's effectiveness, which can inform future research and practical applications. More comprehensive studies are needed to confirm and extend these findings.

During the pre-test and post-test, participants followed an eight-week English listening and speaking course, with 50-minute periods of three hours each week. The study included 30 student teachers enrolled in the Development of English Proficiency course during the second semester of 2023. The dependent variables were the student teachers' English listening and speaking skills, while the independent variables were task-based learning and graphic organizer techniques. The conceptual framework of this study is shown in Figure 1 below.

**Figure 1**

*The Conceptual Framework of the Study*



## Participants

This study involved thirty math-major students who enrolled in the Development of English Proficiency course conducted during the second semester of 2023 at a Thai public university. The students were selected using a convenient sampling technique. These 19 to 21-year-old students were Thai student teachers studying at a Thai public university. All students had completed their formal schooling for 13 years before being selected to study at the university. Given the participants' similarity in age, English

competency, and educational and social backgrounds, they were considered homogeneous in the current study. After graduation, the students from the study group will be eligible to join a government or a private school if they pass the teacher trainee exam conducted by the government. In most cases, new teachers are assigned to remote schools where they will be required to teach the subject they majored in. In addition to teaching their major subjects, they must be prepared to provide instruction in basic interpersonal communicative skills in the foreign language, as many rural schools lack English teachers.

## **Research Instruments**

This study collected data from three research instruments (a speaking test, a listening test, and a self-evaluation form). The speaking and listening tests were designed and developed by the researcher. Each test included 30 questions, and both were piloted with a similar group of undergraduate students who were not included in the study. The listening test included conversations and monologues, while the speaking test carried multiple-choice questions because the Teacher Council test conducted for issuing teacher licenses uses multiple-choice questions test. At first, the researcher developed 36 questions, and after the pilot study, an item analysis was carried out; due to difficulty level, six questions were removed, and 30 questions were selected for listening and speaking pre-tests and post-tests. Moreover, both tests were subject to validation by three experts. In addition, the reliability coefficient of speaking and listening test items was calculated. The listening test reliability was 0.920, while the speaking test showed 0.908, indicating perfect reliability. At the beginning of the study, the study group was pre-tested for listening and speaking skills, and then both tests were scored objectively, where each correct answer received one mark, totaling 30 marks for each test. The listening test was 30 minutes, and the speaking test was 45 minutes.

At both the beginning and the end of the study, participants received a self-evaluation form consisting of 20 items—10 items focused on listening skills and 10 items on speaking skills. They were asked to rate their competencies using “Yes/No” style questions (see Table 3). Participants completed the form before the intervention started and again after the study concluded. At the end of the study, the researcher collected the completed forms and entered the self-evaluation data into an Excel spreadsheet for later analysis.

## The Procedure of Classroom Teaching

The success of most instructional intervention programs partly depends on the teaching and learning materials used during the instructional procedure (Perry et al., 2021). Using a survey questionnaire, the researcher conducted a needs analysis during the first semester of 2023 with a group of non-English major students. Most students selected three topics (food, health, and education) from their list of topics. The researcher designed and developed three lessons into three units based on the student's preferences. Unit 1: Visiting a fast-food restaurant, Unit 2: Simple ways to stay healthy, and Unit 3: Online learning or learning in a traditional classroom.

Each unit included listening and speaking activities based on the principles of task-based learning activities and graphic organizer techniques, and they were delivered in the classroom, as shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1**

### *Process of Learning*

<b>Step 1. Pre-task activities</b>
i. To activate learners' background knowledge of the topic, the instructor shows a video clip, asks the class several questions about what they see in the video, and then conducts a discussion with the class.
ii. Learners discuss some lexical items related to the topic.
<b>Step 2. Task Cycle</b>
i. Learners do the assigned task in pairs/small groups. For example, if the assigned task is listening, they first listen to the audio clip, make graphic organizers, and then do a speaking task.
ii. At this stage, learners must plan to report to the class about what they learned from listening to the audio clip/whether they agreed with the narrator/ or not.
iii. Each group reports to the class (What they report to the class is open to further discussion by each group).
<b>Step 3. Language Focus</b>
i. At this stage, learners are given other exercises based on monologues, dialogues, or conversations with linguistic errors to correct them.
ii. Learners engage in speaking practice to improve their fluency and accuracy.
<b>Step 4. Lesson Wrapping Up</b>
i. The instructor wraps up the lesson and asks the class if they have any questions related to the lesson they have already learned. If they have, the instructor answers them and dismisses the class.

Data Analysis

The researcher used descriptive and inferential statistical tests to analyze the data in this study and determine whether there were any observed differences between the pre-and post-tests within the study group. An independent samples t-test was performed to compare the mean difference from the pre-test to the post-test. In addition, the self-evaluation data was analyzed quantitatively (Descriptive analysis).

Results

Findings Related to the Impacts of TBL and Graphic Organizers

Table 2

*Descriptive Statistics of the Pre-tests and Post-tests*

	Listening (N = 30)		Speaking (N = 30)	
	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
Min score	10	16	12	18
Max score	26	30	25	28
Mean	16.53	24.10	18.26	24.66
S.D.	3.38	3.47	3.70	2.90
SEM	.691	.634	.676	.530

Table 2 provides descriptive statistics for pre-test and post-test scores in listening and speaking for 30 participants. Pre-test Scores indicate the initial levels of proficiency in listening and speaking before the intervention. Post-test Scores indicate the proficiency levels after the intervention. The mean scores show increased listening and speaking competencies from the pre-test to the post-test, suggesting improvement due to the instructional procedure. Moreover, the range of both tests (difference between minimum and maximum scores) widens from pre-test to post-test, indicating variability in participants' improvement levels. Measures of variability (S.D. and SEM) suggest how much the scores varied around the mean. Generally, lower S.D. and SEM in post-tests than pre-tests indicate consistent improvement across participants after instruction. The effectiveness of instruction is associated with a significant increase in mean scores and a reduction in variability (lower S.D. and SEM), indicating that the instructional approach (listening and speaking activities) effectively improved participants' listening and speaking proficiency.

In conclusion, the descriptive statistics in Table 2 show that the instructional approach improved the study group's listening and speaking proficiency in the target language.

**Table 3**

*Paired Samples Pre-tests and Post-tests of the Study Group*

Paired Differences		Mean	S.D.	SEM	95% Confidence Interval of Differences		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Lis/Pre	-7.56	1.90	.348	-8.278	-6.854	-21.74	29	.000
	Lis/Post								
Pair 2	Sp/Pre	-6.40	2.63	.480	-7.383	-5.416	-13.30	29	.000
	Sp/Post								

Table 3 above shows the paired samples' t-test results for listening and speaking skills. The mean difference of -7.56 suggests that, on average, participants scored 7.56 points higher on the post-test in listening skills than on the pre-test. Moreover, the t-value of -21.74 is highly significant ( $p < .0001$ ), indicating that the observed improvement in listening scores from the pre-test to the post-test is unlikely due to random chance. Meanwhile, the mean difference of -6.40 indicates that, on average, participants scored 6.40 points higher on the post-test than on the pre-test in speaking skills. The t-value of -13.30 is highly significant ( $p < .0001$ ), suggesting that the improvement in speaking scores from the pre-test to the post-test is statistically significant.

Overall, the results of both paired samples' t-tests indicate significant improvements in listening and speaking skills after the instructional intervention, during which listening and speaking activities were used. The mean differences are substantial, and the p-values are extremely low, indicating strong evidence against the null hypothesis (no improvement). The confidence intervals further support these findings, showing narrow ranges that do not include zero, reinforcing the statistical significance of the results.

Therefore, based on these findings, the instructional approach focusing on listening and speaking activities effectively enhanced the participants' listening and speaking skills over the semester.

## Findings Related to the Self-evaluation Questionnaire

**Table 4**

*Self-evaluation Questionnaire on Listening and Speaking Competencies before and after Intervention*

Self-evaluation	Before intervention		After intervention			t	p	
	Mean	S.D.	Meaning	Mean	S.D.			Meaning
Listening								
1. Can find the main idea in a spoken discourse.	2.40	0.89	Need improvement	3.63	0.89	Good	15.70	.00
2. Can find details in a spoken discourse.	2.97	0.76	Fair	4.17	0.79	Good	16.16	.00
3. Can perceive individual sounds.	2.77	0.97	Fair	3.77	1.07	Good	14.75	.00
4. Can make an order of what is being heard.	3.60	0.93	Good	4.60	0.50	Very good	7.88	.00
5. Can find a purpose for the talk.	2.23	1.01	Need improvement	3.80	0.81	Good	17.03	.00
6. Can guess meanings from context.	2.07	0.87	Need improvement	4.10	0.88	Good	26.91	.00
7. Can find inferential meanings.	2.27	0.83	Need improvement	3.23	1.07	Fair	10.80	.00
8. Can make conclusions.	2.17	0.83	Need improvement	3.80	0.92	Good	18.25	.00
9. Can make a graphic organizer from the listening clip.	2.40	0.81	Need improvement	4.63	0.61	Very good	21.52	.00
10. Can guess the ending of the talk.	1.90	0.61	Need improvement	3.50	1.01	Good	12.99	.00
Speaking								
11. Use correct pronunciation.	2.80	1.03	Fair	4.10	0.76	Good	11.95	.00

Self-evaluation	Before intervention			After intervention			t	p
	Mean	S.D.	Meaning	Mean	S.D.	Meaning		
12. Use correct stresses and intonation.	3.27	1.20	Fair	4.07	0.83	Good	7.95	.00
13. Use grammar correctly.	3.03	1.03	Fair	3.53	0.86	Good	5.39	.00
14. Use appropriate vocabulary.	2.57	1.04	Fair	3.13	1.14	Fair	6.16	.00
15. Demonstrate fluency.	1.93	1.08	Need improvement	2.63	1.38	Fair	7.17	.00
16. Display turn-taking Skills.	2.50	0.97	Fair	4.57	0.68	Very good	16.37	.00
17. Can respond to and initiate a conversation.	2.67	1.03	Fair	3.87	0.86	Good	13.57	.00
18. Can repair and repeat.	3.27	0.74	Fair	4.23	0.73	Good	29.00	.00
19. Use discourse Markers.	2.33	0.99	Need improvement	3.97	0.85	Good	18.25	.00
20. Can use language expressions / functions.	2.63	0.85	Fair	4.53	0.73	Very good	17.13	.00
<b>All items</b>	<b>2.59</b>	<b>0.47</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>3.89</b>	<b>0.52</b>	<b>Good</b>		

Table 4 presents a quantitative analysis of the self-evaluation questionnaire data concerning speaking and listening competencies before and after the intervention. It includes the mean and standard deviation (S.D.) values for listening and speaking competencies, illustrating the competency levels rated according to the criteria: Needs Improvement, Fair, Good, and Very Good, based on the mean values.

**Table 5**

*Paired Samples T-test Results Related to Self-evaluation Questionnaire Items*

Paired Differences									
		Mean	Std. De	SEM	95% Confidence Interval of Differences				
					Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Q/Pre	1.30	.51	.114	1.064	1.543	11.401	29	.000

According to the paired samples t-test results in Table 5, the mean difference between pre and post self-evaluation is 1.30. This positive value indicates that, on average, participants rated their professional English listening and speaking competencies higher after the intervention. In addition, the standard deviation of .51 suggests that the differences in pre- and post-test scores varied somewhat among participants but not excessively.

Moreover, the 95% confidence interval ranges from 1.064 to 1.543. This interval does not include zero, which suggests that the score improvement is statistically significant. Meanwhile, the t-value of 11.401 with 29 degrees of freedom indicates a very high t-value, suggesting a considerable difference between the pre- and post-test scores. The high t-value corresponds to a significant difference in the means. The p-value is .000, less than the standard alpha level of .05. This indicates that the improvement in scores is statistically significant and unlikely to have occurred by chance.

The data suggest a statistically significant improvement in the participants' professional English listening and speaking competencies after the intervention involving task-based learning and graphic organizer techniques. The mean difference of 1.30 points, combined with a highly significant t-value (11.401) and a p-value of .000, indicates that the intervention substantially affected the participants' self-evaluated English listening and speaking competencies.

## Discussion

### Discussion of the Findings Related to the First Research Question

The first research question focused on how task-based learning and graphic organizer techniques affect student math teachers' listening and speaking skills through intervention within a specific timeframe. To answer this question, the researcher conducted an intervention to help learners improve their listening and speaking skills. The descriptive and paired samples t-test results (Tables 2 and 3) indicate strong evidence of a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores. The mean difference of -7.56 suggests that, on average, participants scored 7.56 points higher on the post-test in listening skills than on the pre-test. Meanwhile, the mean difference of -6.40 indicates that, on average, participants scored 6.40 points higher on the post-test than on the pre-test in speaking skills. Based on these statistics, it can be concluded that the learner's progress in speaking and

listening proficiency from the pre-test to the post-test is a statistically significant improvement.

Even though the learners demonstrated low proficiency in listening and speaking at the beginning of the study, they acquired satisfactory proficiency in oral English equivalent to B1 as described in Qualitative Aspects of Spoken Language Use. Concerning the five qualitative aspects of the spoken language of CEFR (Range, Accuracy, Fluency, Interaction, and Coherence), the learners could acquire the following competencies relating to food, health, and education in that they could order food and drinks at a restaurant, express agreement, and disagreements politely, give or seek personal views and opinions in an informal discussion with friends, describe how to stay healthy, describe an illness to a doctor, ask for advice from doctors, give presentations on healthy food, or online learning tips, conduct group discussions on familiar topics, and initiate and end simple conversations with foreigners. Regarding listening, the learners could follow directions on how to do something, understand the main points of a speech, understand a short narrative, follow a straightforward short talk on academic topics, understand the information content of the majority of recorded or broadcast audio materials on topics of personal interests, and understand simple technical information.

The following section describes the factors that led the learners to foster listening and speaking proficiency to a satisfactory level. The intervention significantly helped learners improve their listening and speaking proficiency during the semester. The learners were exposed to real-life scenarios and received feedback on their pronunciation, vocabulary, sentence construction, and conversational patterns using audio and video clips from social media and other internet sources. Additionally, they engaged in group discussions, pair work, and daily presentations, all aligned with task-based learning and graphic organizer techniques. The learners were highly motivated to improve their aural and oral English proficiency, believing it would benefit their personal and professional growth. Their dedication to attending regular sessions without absence provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of the researcher's instruction. The study emphasized the importance of interaction among students and teachers, with each group receiving verbal feedback from the instructor or peers on their speaking and listening task performance. This study supports the idea that interaction among EFL learners plays a crucial role in fostering their oral fluency and accuracy in the target language (McDonough & Sato, 2019; Soraya, 2023).

In addition, the progress in English language proficiency of non-English major undergraduate learners over a semester suggests that most learners can achieve proficiency in basic listening and speaking skills with

proper guidance and instruction from a competent teacher who incorporates task-based teaching and graphic organizer techniques. The amount and quality of input received significantly influence learners' acquisition of a foreign or second language. The opportunity to use the language in real-life situations has also helped learners enhance their oral fluency (Al-Tamimi et al., 2020; Bula-Villalobos & Murillo-Miranda, 2019). Some situations, like ordering food at a restaurant, doctor visits, and giving instructions on how to do something, were created in the classroom and allowed the participants to role-play real-world situations. Allowing the study group to engage in classroom activities as above could be one of the reasons why they performed better on the post-test than on the pre-test. The current study's findings are consistent with Mali et al.'s (2023) study, which observed that tertiary-level learners can achieve satisfactory oral fluency by learning over time with skilled instructors.

### **Discussion of the Findings Related to the Second Research Question**

As stated above, the second research question examined the extent to which the participants' professional English listening and speaking competencies improved. As can be seen from the paired samples test results (Table 5), the study group instructed using task-based learning and graphic organizer techniques significantly improved the participants' professional English listening and speaking competencies after the intervention. Although there are many graphic organizer techniques, this study employed a concept map and a mind map. The concept map technique assists learners in organizing information about a topic, motivates them to study it, and facilitates discussion of the topic (Malone & Dekkers, 1984). On the other hand, a mind map helps learners with notetaking, organizing their thinking, and developing a concept or idea (Buzan & Buzan, 1996). These two techniques were instrumental when students did presentations about different topics because these maps prompted individuals to be active, focused, and think. Also, graphic organizer techniques provide a specific link and structure for organizing the information sensibly and meaningfully (Krasnic, 2011; Darussalam & Ningrum (2023). This improvement can be linked to Ausubel's (1963) meaningful learning theory, which emphasizes that rote learning allows the retention of information in memory for a short time. However, it fails to integrate new information with existing concepts. Rote learning has been one of the central issues that most English instructors face in teaching English speaking skills to Thai students in school/university contexts (Chanaroke & Niemprapan, 2020). To avoid this behavior, graphic organizer techniques in the current study allowed learners to create meaningful mind maps or concept

maps to relate new information to existing cognitive structures, adhering to the assumption that new learning can occur and meaningful learning can only be produced when the new information is related to existing knowledge and becomes a part of a robust cognitive structure (Ausubel, 1963).

Before the intervention, most students could only perform a few listening and speaking competencies at a satisfactory level, as shown in Table 4. However, 24 out of 30 students could perform all the competencies satisfactorily after the intervention. It is worth noting that approximately six students could moderately perform the competencies stated above. The reasons why some participants showed only moderate improvement are briefly discussed below.

### **Discussion on Moderate Improvement**

Despite the intervention's overall success, it is noteworthy that approximately six students showed only moderate improvement in their professional English listening and speaking competencies. Several factors, such as individual differences, motivation and engagement, external factors, previous language exposure, teaching methods, and assessment conditions, may contribute to this varied outcome. As is often the case with individual differences, each student has unique learning styles, cognitive abilities, and prior knowledge, which can significantly impact their rate of progress. Some students might require more time and practice to integrate new skills fully. Motivation and engagement are crucial in language acquisition. Less motivated or engaged students might not benefit as much from the same instructional methods as their more motivated peers. Moreover, personal circumstances, such as family responsibilities, work commitments, or health issues, can affect a student's ability to participate fully in the course and practice outside class. In addition, students with varying levels of prior exposure to English may start the course with different baselines. Those with less exposure might find it more challenging to achieve significant improvement quickly. Teaching methods can also contribute to moderate improvement, as some students might respond better to different teaching methods or additional support, such as one-on-one tutoring or supplementary materials. Finally, stress and anxiety associated with testing can affect performance, leading to underrepresentation of students' actual abilities during the post-test.

The factors discussed above highlight the complexity of language learning and the necessity for tailored instructional approaches to meet the diverse needs of all students. Future interventions could consider

incorporating differentiated instruction and additional support mechanisms to help all learners achieve their full potential.

The findings of the studies cited below support the view that tertiary-level learners can satisfactorily achieve listening and speaking proficiency by applying task-based learning and graphic organizer techniques. A study by Abad and Ghanizadeh (2019) focused on the impact of visualization and graphic organizers on EFL Learners' listening skills. The study found that visualization and graphic organizer techniques enhanced university learners' listening proficiency.

### **Implications of the Study**

Based on the research, effective language learning programs for non-native undergraduate students majoring in fields other than English must include engaging and interactive resources such as videos, games, and discussions. Language learning programs should also tailor the learning experience to each student's strengths and weaknesses, provide feedback and support, and establish a supportive learning community for practicing listening and speaking skills. EFL undergraduate learners can effectively reach their language learning objectives using task-based learning and graphic organizer techniques.

Educators can significantly enhance language learning by incorporating multimedia resources like interactive training modules, videos, and audio clips. Platforms like Duolingo or FluentU can provide dynamic, engaging content, while YouTube channels, TED Talks, and educational games like Kahoot offer diverse practice opportunities. Additionally, customized learning plans can be developed using diagnostic tools to identify students' strengths and weaknesses, allowing personalized feedback through voice recordings or annotated videos to improve pronunciation and conversational skills. Interactive learning activities, including group discussions, debates, and role-playing, can simulate real-world scenarios and enhance task-based learning.

Policymakers should prioritize supporting teacher training by investing in professional development programs that equip educators with innovative teaching methods, such as task-based learning and graphic organizers. Certification programs, alongside incentives, could encourage educators to adopt these techniques. Curriculum design should integrate these methods into national or regional standards, and resources should be allocated for developing high-quality teaching materials. Furthermore, ongoing research and evaluation are crucial for assessing the effectiveness of language programs while fostering collaborative networks among educators,

researchers, and policymakers that can help share best practices and drive continuous improvement in language education.

By following these recommendations, educators and policymakers can improve language learning programs, ensuring non-native undergraduate students achieve proficiency in English listening and speaking skills, thus supporting their personal and professional development.

### **Ethical Consideration**

The researcher obtained permission to carry out this research from the university's Ethics committee. During the first session, the students were requested to participate in the study and informed about the purpose of the research and the types of data that would be collected from them. Moreover, the researcher discussed the materials and activities used during the study. In addition, the participants were notified that they were required to do the pre-tests before attending their English class. Lastly, the researcher had the consent letters signed by students.

### **Limitations**

The study has several limitations. The first concerns the small sample size, limited to 30 undergraduate learners. The findings may not be generalized to other learners from different social backgrounds, education levels, or age groups. The university rules limit the maximum number of students to 30 to sit in a class. The second is the research duration, which lasts only eight weeks and may need revision to capture long-term effects and potential improvement in listening and speaking proficiency. Another limitation can be the lack of a control group that limits comparing the effectiveness of task-based learning and graphic organizer techniques with other methods. The last can be the potential language transfer effects, which could have impacted the results. By addressing these limitations, future research can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of task-based learning and graphic organizer techniques on enhancing teacher professional competency in student teachers' English listening and speaking skills.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study aimed to determine whether undergraduate student teachers could achieve listening and speaking proficiency through formal interaction during eight weeks. The study results demonstrated that learners

had progressed from beginner to independent users (B-intermediate) according to the CEFR Global Scale. The findings suggest that tertiary-level EFL learners can achieve satisfactory proficiency by combining task-based learning and graphic organizer techniques led by a competent instructor who can adapt to their educational backgrounds and engage them in interactive listening and speaking tasks. These results illustrate practical implications for designing language learning programs for similar student demographics. Furthermore, the study recommends incorporating task-based learning and graphic organizer techniques into language education initiatives. While implementing various techniques in diverse cultural contexts, cultural relevance and educational norms must be considered to ensure learning effectiveness. Moreover, integrating TBL and graphic organizer techniques into other contexts requires access to appropriate resources, class size, structure consideration, institutional support, and contextual adaptation.

According to data collected during the study, non-English major student teachers still need to acquire communication skills to be successful in their respective fields. The study's findings also suggest using TBL and graphic organizer techniques, as improving communication skills in English is highly demanded educationally, professionally, and socially in the 21st century. The study suggests that listening and speaking skills are necessary for effective communication. Real situations help student teachers develop their listening and speaking skills in English within Thai contexts rather than creating situations that only provoke the desired language. In addition, integrating TBL and graphic organizer techniques with Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology will likely further promote innovation in EFL instruction models. Utilizing high technology to develop English language programs for tertiary-level adult learners with limited English proficiency should be considered. Importantly, policymakers should prioritize supporting teacher training by investing in professional development programs that equip educators with innovative teaching methods, such as task-based learning and graphic organizers. Finally, ongoing research and evaluation are crucial for assessing the effectiveness of language programs while fostering collaborative networks among educators, researchers, and policymakers that facilitate sharing the best practices and driving continuous improvement in language education.

### About the Author

**Suneeta Kositchaivat:** An Assistant Professor at the Department of International Language Teaching, Faculty of Education, Silpakorn University,

Thailand. Her primary interests include communicative language teaching, English camp activities, and English project works.

## References

- Abad, L., G., B., & Ghanizadeh, A. (2019). The impact of visualization and graphic organizers on EFL learners' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement and listening. *Journal of Language and Translation*, 9(3), 1–15.
- Aimen, A., & Khadim, U. (2024). Significance of proficiency in English language within the realm of education in Pakistan. *English Education Journal*, 15(1), 1– 8. <https://doi.org/10.24815/eej.v15i1.34863>.
- Al-Tamimi, N. O., Abudllah, N., & Bin-Hady, W. R. A. (2020). Teaching speaking skill to EFL college students through task-based approach: problems and improvement. *British Journal of English Linguistics*, 8(2), 113-130.
- Ausubel, D. (1963). *The psychology of meaningful verbal learning*. Grune & Stratton.
- Bula-Villalobos, O., & Murillo-Miranda, C. (2019). Task-based language teaching: Definition, characteristics, purpose and scope. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, 4(6), 1869–1878.
- Buzan, T., & Buzan, B. (1996). *The mind map book: How to use radiant thinking to maximize your brain's untapped potential*. Plume.
- Chanaroke, U., & Niemprapan, L. (2020). The current issues of teaching English in Thai context. *EAU Heritage Journal Social Science and Humanity*, 10(2), 34– 45.
- Chen, H. (2024). Innovative approaches in English language teaching: Integrating communicative methods and technology for enhanced proficiency. *Communications in Humanities Research*, 32. None-None. <https://dio.org/10.54254/2753-7064/32/20240075>
- Chou, M. H. (2016). A task-based language teaching approach to developing metacognitive strategies for listening comprehension. *International Journal of Listening*, 31(1), 51–70. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10904018.2015.1098542>
- Darussalam, G. M., & Ningrum, A. S. (2023). Improving students' speaking skill in descriptive text using mind mapping method at seventh grade junior high school. *IREELL: Indonesian Review of English Education, Linguistics, and Literature*, 1(1), 34-44.
- Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language teaching and learning*. Oxford University Press.
- Hossain, K. I. (2024). Reviewing the role of culture in English language

- learning: Challenges and opportunities for educators. *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, 9, 1–10.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2023.100781>
- Hyerle, D. (2009). *Visual tools for transforming information into knowledge*. Corwin Press.
- Jackson, D. O. (2022). *Cambridge elements – task-based language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Karimi, M., Ghorbanchian, E., Chalak, A., & Tabrizi, H. H. (2020). Instructional scaffolding with graphic organizers to improve EFL learners' listening comprehension and incidental vocabulary acquisition. *Elixir Social Science*, 149(1), 50-60.
- Krasnic, T. (2011). *How to study with mind maps: The concise learning method*. Concise Books Publishing.
- Li, C. H. (2012). Are they listening better? Supporting EFL college students DVD video comprehension with advanced organizers in a multimedia English course. *Journal of College Teaching & Learning (Online)*, 9(4), 277.
- Mali, S., Yunus, K., Alshaikhi, T., Abugohar, M. A., Mohana, T., & Mustafa, T. (2023). The effects of blended learning on first-year Arab university students' oral production. *World Journal of English Language*, 13(8), 146–157. <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v13n8p146>
- Malone, J., & Dekkers, J. (1984). The concept map is an aid for instruction in science and mathematics. *School Science and Mathematics*, 84(3), 220–231.
- McDonough, K., & Sato, M. (2019). Promoting EFL students' accuracy and fluency through interactive practice activities. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 9(2), 379–395.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2019.9.2.6>
- Nunan, D. (2004). *Task-based language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Parrish, B. (2018). *Using graphic organizers as scaffolds in listening classes*. <https://www.cambridge.org/elt/blog/2018/10/21/graphic-organizers-scaffolds-while-listening/>
- Perry, T., Lea, R., Jørgensen, C. R., Cordingley, P., Shapiro, K., & Youdell, D. (2021). *Cognitive science in the classroom*. London: Education Endowment Foundation (EEF).  
<https://researchers.mq.edu.au/en/publications/cognitive-science-in-the-classroom-evidence-and-practice-review>
- Ryan, M., Rowan, L., Lunn Brownlee, J., Bourke, T., L' Estrange, L., Walker, S., & Churchward, P. (2022). Teacher education and teaching for diversity: A call to action. *Teaching Education*, 33(2), 194-213.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10476210.2020.1844178>

- Soraya, C. (2023). Fluency and accuracy in the EFL oral expression and comprehension classroom. *Journal of Language Education*, 1(3), 127–132.
- Wenas, I., Liando, N., & Rorimpandey, R. (2023). Task-based learning as an active retrieval approach in the perception of EFL students: A case study at Bridge Education Manado. *Journal of English Culture, Language, Literature and Education*. 11, 189–209.  
<https://doi.org/10.53682/eclue.v11i2.6417>
- Willis, J. (1996). *A framework for task-based learning*. Longman.
- Zainuddin, N. (2023). Technology enhanced language learning research trends and practices: A systematic review (2020-2022). *Electronic Journal of e-Learning*, 21, 69–79.  
<https://doi.org/10.34190/ejel.21.2.2835>
- Zajechowski, M. (2024). *The study explores the characteristics of influential teachers*.  
<https://preply.com/en/blog/study-of-favorite-teachers/>