BIRZEIT UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Graduate Studies

An Investigation Study of Implementing the 21st Century Skills Through Task-Based Language Teaching to Improve Vocabulary Acquisition in Palestinian Public schools

دراسة استقصائية لأثر تطبيق مهمات تعليمية منبثقة من مهارات القرن 21 على تطور تعلم الطلبة لمفردات اللغة الانجليزية في المدارس الفلسطينية الحكومية

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Birzeit University – Palestine

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This thesis was submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Master's Degree in English Education from the Faculty of Graduate Studies at Birzeit University
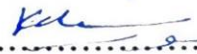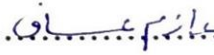Birzeit University – Palestine
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Supervisory Committee

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Dedication

A special feeling of gratitude to my mother; my long sought haven, who inspired me and pushed

me toward success; without whom, I would not have been who I am today.

To my wonderful, supporting and kind husband Yasir and my angles 'Hiba, Hamza, Raya and

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I love you all.

To Jerusalem, the forever capital of Palestine

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List of Abbreviations

TBLT	Task-Based Language Teaching
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TESOL	Teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages
P21	Partnership of the Twenty-First Century
ACTFEL	American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
CC	Communicative Competence
4Cs	Learning skills (Creativity, Communication, Collaboration and Critical thinking).
Std.	Standard
SCL	Student-Centered Learning

Abstract

An Investigation of Implementing the 21st Century Skills Through Task-Based Language Teaching to Improve Vocabulary Acquisition in Palestinian Public Schools

The present study aimed at investigating the impact of implementing 21st century s kills through Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) on students' vocabulary achievement and their attitudes towards learning vocabulary via 21st century incorporated tasks. A quasi-experimental design was adopted for the study. 62 eighth-grade female students from a public high school in Ramallah district were selected as the sample of the study over an academic school semester; 31 students represented the experimental group, who studied vocabulary via 21st century implemented tasks, while 31 represented the control group, who studied the vocabulary items in a traditional approach. Data collection instruments consisted of five vocabulary tasks from three different units of the 'English for Palestine' textbook, an achievement test, which was applied as a pre and a post-test by both groups, a closed questionnaire about students' attitudes; which was filled by the experimental group, and semi-structured interviews that were conducted with five students who filled the questionnaire. Independent samples t-test, paired-samples t-test, means and standard deviations were carried out using SPSS to analyze the research quantitative data. Whereas supportive qualitative data were analyzed by a thematic analysis method. Results showed that there was a significant difference (at $\alpha \leq 0.05$) in students' achievement in vocabulary due to using 21st century skills tasks, which means that students' achievement in the experimental group was better than that in the control group. Moreover, the findings of the study revealed that the use of tasks in English vocabulary classes has a positive impact on learners' attitudes. Triangulated data resulted from the questionnaire and interviews indicated that students got positive attitudes towards the use

of tasks in learning English vocabulary and towards implementing 21st century skills through tasks; students were motivated, engaged and interested while communicating, collaborating, thinking creatively and critically among other skills while applying the tasks. In light of its results, the study ended up with a set of recommendations for further future research.

الملخص باللغة العربية

دراسة استقصائية لأثر تطبيق مهمات تعليمية منبثقة من مهارات القرن 21 على تطوير تعلم الطلبة لمفردات اللغة الانجليزية في المدارس الفلسطينية الحكومية

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف أثر تطبيق مهمات تعليمية منبثقة من مهارات القرن 21 على تطوير تعلم الطلبة لمفردات اللغة الانجليزية وتوجهاتهم نحو دراستها. اعتمدت الدراسة على المنهج شبه التجريبي الذي تم تطبيقه على مدى فصل دراسي. اشتملت عينة الدراسة على 62 طالبة من الصف الثامن في احدى مدارس رام الله والبيرة الحكومية، بحيث مثلت31 طالبة المجموعة التجريبية اللواتي درسن المفردات اللغوية عن طريق المهمات المتضمنة لمهارات القرن 21، في حين مثلت 31 طالبة منهن المجموعة الضابطة واللاتي درسن المفردات بالطريقة التقليدية. اشتملت أدوات جمع البيانات على اختبار تحصيلي قبلي وبعدي تم تطبيقه على كلتا المجموعتين، بالاضافة إلى خمس مهمات تعليمية خاصة بمفردات اللغة الانجليزية مستوحاة من ثلاث وحدات تعليمية من كتاب اللغة الانجليزية 'English For Palestine' تم تطبيقها على المجموعة التجريبية, كما طلب منهن الاجابة على استبانة مغلقة خاصة بقياس توجهاتهن نحو التعلم ب هذه المهمات، كما تم عقد مقابلات شبه منظمة مع عينة عشوائية من خمسة منهن للتعمق في قياس توجهاتهن نحو الموضوع. تم تحليل البيانات الكمية باستخدام برنامج ال SPSS باحتساب اختبار–ت للعينات المستقلة والعينات المترابطة، كما تم احتساب المتوسطات والانحرافات المعيارية لبنود الاستبانة. في حين استخدمت الية التحليل الموضوعي لتحليل البيانات النوعية الداعمة والمستنبطة من مقابلات الطالبات. أشارت النتائج إلى وجود فرق ذو دلالة احصائية بين تحصيل المجموعتين لصالح المجموعة التي درست باستخدام المهمات التعليمية المتضمنة لمهارات القرن ال 21. كما أظهرت النتائج الكيفية نتائج إيجابية تتعلق باتجاهات الطالبات في المجموعة التجريبية نحو تطبيق المهمات والتي كانت إيجابية ومشجعة، فقد عبرت الطالبات عن اهتمام ودافعية أثناء التطبيق والتواصل معا بشكل تعاوني و محاولة التفكير النقدي والابداعي إلى جانب مهارات اخرى متعددة. في النهاية خرجت الدراسة بمجموعة من التوصيات لإجراء دراسات مستقبلية في سياقات ذات علاقة.

Chapter One :Introduction and Research Background

Introduction

We usually use language to express our experiences of the world, to explicate the worlds within ourselves, and to describe events and entities involved in them. Similarly, we use language to communicate with others, to initiate social relations and human interactions, to express, elicit or change viewpoints, and to influence behaviors; according to Ohmaye (1998) "*The primary function of language is communication and interaction*" (p.15). Additionally, in using language, we organize our messages in ways that indicate how they fit within the wider context in which we are engaged (Thompson, 1996).

Nowadays, language education contributes to learners' profession and academic willingness; it benefits their development to take on new motivating views of the world in this 21st century milieu. Language learners would understand the world much better because of their understanding of speakers of other languages; perspectives may differ among them, however, more similarities might exist than one could imagine. Accordingly, it is only through knowing the language of others, that we can truly understand how they view the world, and this could help the language learner become a 21st century skilled learner (P21, 2011).

For the past few decades, the English language has become a global language due to its geographical-historical status and socio-cultural prominence (Crystal, 2003). The English language has become more widespread around the world, and has also become the main language in the field of education in universities and academic institutes as a tool for learning and conducting research (Akbulut, 2007). In addition, according to Kitao (1996), English has come to be the language of international business, diplomacy and different professions, and it has become the

language of modern everyday life interactions; it is used in communication between countries around the world predominantly in tourism, travel, science and technology (David, 2009).

Evans (1978) argued that the significant role of the English language contributed greatly to the movement of teaching English as a foreign language. Therefore, learning and teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) has occupied a central stage in many countries. Learning and teaching English as a foreign language would help students build bridges within different communities and cultures. It would also help them build connections in this modern globalization era as a key to take advantage of worldwide multi-facets technological, commercial, cultural and industrial development (ibid). Therefore, teaching and learning English as a foreign language is of great value.

In the same context, the Office of Basic Education Commission (2009) affirmed that learning a foreign language is vital to everyday life; foreign languages function as a significant means for education, where recently, TEFL is considered one of the chief academic subjects. As mentioned before, English has become a global language in the new era of internationalism and universalization; not only is English used in conversations between speakers of English as a first or second language, but it is also used as a common language among speakers of other languages from diverse countries and backgrounds (Abu Armana, 2011).

However, learners of English as a foreign language could face difficulty communicating with the English language due to the limited number of their vocabulary. According to Lewis (1997) "*The single most important task facing language learners is acquiring a sufficient language vocabulary*" (p. 8). Similarly, Wilkin (1972) states that "*without grammar, very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed*" (p. 111). Therefore, teaching and learning vocabulary is vital to language learning. Subsequently, vocabulary has become a high priority

concern of language education, for its consideration as central for students' language-learning journey, and for the improvement of their four English language macro-skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Nation, 2011).

According to Thornbury (2002), words in the human mind "are organized in what is called the mental lexicon", which means that vocabulary is stored "in a very organized and interconnected manner". He believes that knowing the word requires knowing its form and meaning, comparing it and its connotations, including its record and cultural accumulations. Moreover, without vocabulary building, it is difficult to speak, listen, write, study grammar etc. Studies have indicated that without sufficient knowledge of related vocabulary, learners would struggle accomplishing the tasks required in their schools (Harley, 1996).

Although vocabulary acquisition is central to developing the English language competency, and many academics and teachers acknowledge the prominence of vocabulary acquisition in language aptitude and educational success, their thoughts about how to teach and learn vocabulary had varied widely, because it is such a challenging mission. In teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL), teachers feel daunted by vocabulary's rule-free manner and the fact that vocabulary is not governed by specific structures. Moreover, some teachers devote little class time to vocabulary instruction (Nagy & Scott, 2000).

Additionally, learning vocabulary -as an essential component of learning a foreign language- had always caused difficulties for students (Siskova, 2008). Tozcui and Coady (2004) argued that it is relatively difficult to learn new words and to remember them when needed, also, there are too many words to learn, which makes word learning an overwhelming process to students. Students would mostly find it difficult to memorize most of the words, or even use them in real-life situations (Zimmerman, 2014).

To conquer these barriers, teachers are required to employ vigorous educational approaches that would improve vocabulary acquisition and retention (Al-Zahrani, 2011). Furthermore, Milton (2009) argued that vocabulary could be effectively learned with decent materials among interested students. He also assumed that learning new vocabulary needs to be pleasant for the students without consuming a lot of time or effort from the teacher (ibid). Similarly, teaching methods have changed in response to the needs of the learners and the changing curriculum; using the appropriate method in teaching and learning English can be more effective when targeting the most effective components of the language (Al-Mutawa and Kailani, 1990).

Despite the fact that there is no ideal strategy for learning and teaching English vocabulary, teachers are constantly looking for dynamic means to aid in the improvement of students' language learning for decades. It is essential for them to understand the needs and abilities of their learners, and based on contextual circumstances, they have to decide which method or approach is more applicable to them (Long, 2014).

Further, this new century brings a type of education that is more about learning from doing and applying knowledge and skills, and less about memorizing or doing worksheets. It is not about banking education anymore; it is about providing our students with the skills and knowledge to keep up with this rapidly changing world. This calls for an approach of integrating learning strategies, digital competencies and career abilities (Fandiño, 2013), especially when the EFL learners' role in the classroom has radically shifted from "passive" under the incomprehensible control of textbooks and teachers to "active" and communicative-driven participant.

Such change in the EFL context would, most likely, reject traditional instruction based on memorization, repetition and drills, as those are no longer a fit for the learners' required 21st century skills. 21st century skills are defined as main abilities that today's students need to acquire

in order to succeed in their social lives and future careers during this new digital modern era (Partnership for 21st Century skills, 2006). Among these skills, as outlined by the Partnership for the 21st Century Skills, are the need for creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, and information literacy (ibid).

Correspondingly, Suto (2013) cited in his study some practical approaches on how to develop 21st century skills, including the continuation of long-term approaches to teaching these skills, the development of curricula that explicitly cover them, and the adoption of pedagogical ideologies that focus on attaining skills among students. Likewise, Farhady and Motallebzadeh (2014) in their study showed that 21st century skills have an optimistic impact on foreign language learning, as it aids in the development of different English language skills.

Additionally, Parra (2013) asserts that little has been done in order to pervade the EFL classrooms with practices that concentrate on obtaining and developing students' 21st century skills. In this regard, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2007) advocated for the explicit integration of learning and innovation skills, information and digital literacy skills, and life and career skills along with foreign language teaching.

In a similar context, Samuda and Bygate (2008) presumed that foreign language teaching aims at developing the ability to use the target language. By "use" Samuda and Bygate mean that the language is used beyond practicing or showing mastery, to a level of being able to provide personal and professional information for multiple purposes (social, political, and artistic purposes, as well as for creativity preferences). Therefore, Nunan (2004) emphasized the importance of employing task-based language teaching (TBLT) in teaching varied English language skills, especially vocabulary.

TBLT, which is considered one prosperous and flourishing method and a great step in the history of EFL teaching and learning, may aid in the improvement of different language competencies as well as obtaining several 21st century skills. Therefore, teachers should look for such effective ways to teach vocabulary; since TBLT focuses on promoting learners' communicative capability, boosting their ability to use the language for real communication and addressing daily tasks away from rote learning and memorization- similar to the skills needed for the 21st century learner (Partnership for 21st Century skills, 2006).

Consequently, the effectiveness of task-based English language teaching has been extensively explored in the field of language acquisition. Over the last few decades, there has been an increase in interest in task-based language education, which is evidenced by the numerous published articles, journals and special issues in English language teaching (Yildiz and Senel, 2017). The increased interest in TBLT has been attributed to the qualities inherent in the tasks it involves, such as a heavy emphasis on meaning, motivating students to draw on their linguistic and cognitive resources, and concepts of target adaptation; these conditions require learners to use language to accomplish real-world tasks (Setayesh and Marzban, 2017).

Moreover, task-based language teaching approaches enhance students' motivation to complete tasks related to learning English. Martínez (2018) hypothesized that task-based education encourages students to learn, as well as retain language skills and creativity. In addition to the acquisition and use of an enhanced vocabulary, TBLT plays a key role in enhancing the degree of interaction, and is an effective way to achieve important educational outcomes by enhancing students' motivation to learn and use a foreign language (Bava & Gheitanchian, 2017).

In our local Palestinian context, the status of English as a global language has encouraged the Palestinian government to place a remarkable weight on English teaching and learning. It has

successively made substantial efforts to implement vital changes in the English curriculum. Hence, a new Palestinian curriculum was introduced in the year 2000, and English became a core language taught at Palestinian schools using new English textbooks "English for Palestine", which became mandatory in the public schools' sector from grade 1 to grade 12 (Dajani & McLaughlin, 2009).

English language teaching methodologies in Palestine has also undergone a shift in the teaching-learning process when the Palestinian Authority adopted the communicative approach as a base for the new English curriculum (Fattash, 2010). They replaced the old English textbook, which was based on old methods of teaching, with the (English for Palestine) textbook, which is based on the most recent approaches of language learning and teaching - the Communicative Approach- (ibid). Literature shows that when comparing the traditional methods with novel and innovative approaches, the new ones could be more expedient and superior.

Accordingly, this study aims at investigating the impact of implementing 21st century skills through TBLT on learners' achievement in vocabulary acquisition as well as their attitudes towards applying tasks in their English vocabulary classes. In addition, it aims at inspiring Palestinian EFL teachers to integrate meaningful vocabulary tasks that allow students not only to learn English, but also to gain important life skills, to understand multifaceted life perceptions, to use various technologies and media, and to work ingeniously, innovatively and cooperatively with others. Hence, the researcher has constructed communicative and collaborative tasks that would most likely provide students with opportunities to improve their vocabulary through authentic-like situations.

The researcher believes that tasks would engage learners –away from memorizing meanings and repetition- in a world of creativity, and critical thinking milieu, in order to accomplish set tasks. TBLT would be a great example of how 21st century skills can be integrated

into language instruction, where the goals of a language program are to develop students' language proficiency around modes of communicative competence and reflecting real-life communication skills (Partnership for 21st Century skills, 2006).

Research Problem

The researcher believes that one of the most important English skills that our students should acquire intelligibly is vocabulary. However, the researcher disputes that even though the Palestinian curriculum is designed to be taught communicatively, some teachers might be unable to apply this approach effectively and successfully in their real classroom settings. The researcher observed that they usually use traditional methods in language teaching especially in teaching vocabulary, and that is mainly through a list of words along with one or two meanings/translations into the first language. Although this might work occasionally; nonetheless, vocabulary must be experienced in authentic contexts and about real life situations, so words would become fully comprehensible by the learners (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2014).

Additionally, the fundamentals of the 21st century skills are widely discussed recently due to the globalization, global economy, and the advancement of communication and technology. Due to these developments, learners nowadays are expected to display different forms of knowledge and skills, which are compatible with the new century needs and provisions. As a result, teachers need to assist their learners to be productive in learning and to apply the 21st century skills in their classrooms.

Consequently, there is a need to employ 21st century skills in the process of teaching vocabulary; many studies indicated the effectiveness of employing the 21st century skills in developing academic performance and achievement levels in the English language. For example, the study of Bogale's (2018) indicated that employing the skills of the 21st century in teaching the

English language led to an increase in achievement among students who were taught according to a program based on these skills.

Furthermore, task-based English language teaching contributes to raising students' language skills acquisition. Alshenqeeti's (2019) study indicated that the use of tasks in the classroom to learn the English language enhances students' learning, develops their reading and writing skills, improves their social interaction, and motivates them to use the English language in real-life situations. In a similar study, Fan Jiang's (2008) showed that TBLT could enhance student's motivation and attitudes toward learning English. This showed the great positive impact of TBLT in learning the English language and acquiring its various skills, and in increasing learners' orientation towards learning English and using it in their daily lives.

In our local context, the situation of learning in our Palestinian classrooms in general and English classrooms in particular, calls for a new vision of education. One that would maximize the potential of our students to better qualify them with valuable learning skills that would help them create meaning out of knowledge, to face real life challenges outside the classroom in order to help them become successful, responsible and productive individuals. Khaldi and Kishek (2020) presented in their paper a general conceptual and cognitive framework with relevant models and examples for reshaping and enriching the Palestinian science and math curricula. Their paper presented significant authentic tasks that emerged from the Palestinian socio-cultural context, to enable the students to acclimate the 21st century skills. They further provided schoolteachers with concrete and robust mechanisms and models to enhance students' skills for the 21st century (ibid).

Therefore, the researcher argues that implementing 21st century skills through tasks – TBLT being one of the applications of the communicative approach- would aid in the improvement

of student's vocabulary learning, and by conducting our study, we are also in line with the Ministry of education's recommendations and with recent related literature.

Therefore, in an attempt to select a better way to teach vocabulary in this new communication driven classroom environment, and while keeping in mind the necessity to balance equipping learners with concrete and beneficial vocabulary knowledge and empowering them with 21st century skills at the same time, the researcher suggested incorporating 21st century skills within tasks in the vocabulary English classrooms. As such, this study comes to investigate the impact of implementing 21st century skills through TBLT on learners' achievement in vocabulary acquisition, and to explore learners' attitudes towards it in their English vocabulary classes.

Research Questions

The study attempts to answer the following key research questions:

1. What is the impact of implementing 21st century skills through Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) on learners' achievement in vocabulary learning in Palestinian public schools?

2. What are the learners' attitudes and perceptions towards using language tasks that are implemented by the 21st century skills in their English vocabulary classes?

Research Hypothesis

This study aims to test the following null hypothesis:

"There is no significant difference (at $\alpha \leq 0.05$) in EFL students' achievement in vocabulary due to the method of teaching (using TBLT via 21st century skills tasks vs. the traditional method)".

Definitions of Terms

21st Century Skills: Kay (2010) defined the 21st century skills as the skills that students need to participate effectively and successfully in the 21stcentury, which provide the keys to the knowledge they need, help them gain communication skills, and deal with obtained information effectively and efficiently. Additionally, these skills teach students how to innovate and be creative, and how to keep up with the development of their surroundings, it also prepare them to be able to build a better future for themselves.

Operational Definition of the 21st Century Skills: The skills that eighth-grade students need to obtain in order to succeed in school, life and work, which provide the keys to the knowledge they need to learn English in general and vocabulary in particular.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT): TBLT is primarily a student-centered approach that originated from the Communicative Approach, but has since developed its own distinct principles (Kyriacou, 2018).

Operational Definition of (TBLT): An approach in which communicative and meaningful tasks play a central role in language and vocabulary learning and in which the process of using vocabulary appropriately carries more importance than simply producing grammatically correct language forms.

Task: An activity or action, which is carried out as the result of processing or understanding language, where the use of a variety of different kinds of tasks in language teaching is said to make language teaching more communicative. A task provides a purpose for a classroom activity, which goes beyond the practice of language for its own sake (Richards, Platt, & Weber, 1986).

Operational definition of a task: in this study, the term task is used as defined by Richards, Platt, & Weber (1986).

Vocabulary: It is the knowledge of words and their meanings (Nash and Snowling, 2006, p. 336). In addition, Sheehan (2002) clarified it as "the capability of understanding and using words to obtain and convey meaning".

Operational Definition of Vocabulary: in this study, vocabulary is used as defined by Sheehan (2002).

Research Objectives

This research aims at:

1. Investigating the impact of implementing 21st century skills through Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) on learners' achievement in vocabulary learning.

2. Recognizing the learners' attitudes and perceptions towards using language tasks that are implemented by the 21st century skills in their English vocabulary classes.

Research Significance

The research significance stems from the following:

1. The current study will be amongst the few local studies that emphasize the relationship between main focal dimensions in TEFL in our Palestinian classrooms: vocabulary acquisition, TBLT, and 21st century skills.

2. The study sheds light on the importance of adopting new methods in the English classrooms, to change the educational context to a student-centered learning environment (constructivist view); such methods are prosperous, efficacious and suitable for the new learning context.

3. This study would add beneficial concepts to language researchers, teachers, and students concerning how the implementation of TBLT in English classrooms could aid in the improvement of vocabulary learning and the development of various life skills.

4. The study could guide our Palestinian teachers -as they continue to explore methods and instruction in both task-based approaches and traditional approaches- to a vocabulary learning method that would enable students to develop both their vocabulary learning and their life skills in the classroom.

5. Helping curriculum designers and textbook-authors become aware of the idea of implementing new innovative methods when designing the English curriculum to integrate important skills needed beyond the classroom to fit the new century.

6. This study is expected to pave the way for further future research derived from its results.

Research Assumptions

This research is based on the assumption that despite the variety in the available teaching and learning methods in the Palestinian English classrooms, the researcher assumes that TBLT is a suitable method to teach vocabulary, and to equip students with key 21st century skills at the same time.

Research Limitations

- The study was limited to researching the effect of implementing the 21st century skills through task-based language teaching on students' English vocabulary learning.

Summary

In this chapter the researcher, discussed TBLT as a suitable method to teach vocabulary, and to equip students with significant 21st century skills at the same time. In addition, it comprised the research problem, questions, hypothesis, objectives, significance, limitations, and definition of terms.

The following chapter depicts the theoretical framework and literature review. It aims to shed light on the main theoretical background of the study (the Constructivism theory) and to elaborate associated literature review of emerging themes: Vocabulary, TBLT (task-based language teaching methodology), and 21st century skills.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

Introduction

In order to elucidate the theoretical framework and literature review related to this study, which was designed to investigate the impact of implementing 21st century skills through Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) on learners' achievement in vocabulary learning in Palestinian public schools, and their attitudes towards it, this chapter is divided into two main parts. The first part is the theoretical framework, in which the researcher elaborated on (Constructivism Theory). The second part deals with the literature related to the study, which is divided into three emerging themes (Vocabulary, TBLT, and 21st Century Skills). This is followed by related previous studies for each theme.

Theoretical Framework

To understand how teaching and learning vocabulary through TBLT with the implementation of the 21st century skills, could improve among our Palestinian students, numerous socio-cognitive theories have been examined. These theories provided a structure for acquiring a profounder understanding of the significance of life skills' development through task-based vocabulary teaching. Therefore, in this chapter, the researcher attempted to show a clear correlation and a distinct connection between the core theoretical background adopted for this research: constructivism, and focal research themes: 21st century skills, TBLT, and vocabulary learning.

In the next section, the researcher traces the roots of the constructivism theory, views definitions and specifications, and traces constructivist philosophies of great educational scholars as Dewey, Piaget, and Vygotsky.

Constructivism

"Constructivist theory views learning not as sequential and linear, but integrated and complex"

(Foote, Vermette, & Battaglia, 2001)

Constructivism is a school of thought that highlights the learner's role in "constructing meaning out of available linguistic input" and the prominence of social interaction in "producing a new linguistic system"; it is an integration of multiple paradigms with an emphasis on social interaction and the discovery, or construction, of meaning (Brown, 2007).

There are two main traditions of constructivism: cognitive constructivism and social constructivism. The emphasis in the cognitive constructivism is on constructing reality's representations of students. Social constructivism on the other hand, highlights the significance of social interaction and cooperative learning in constructing both cognitive and emotional images of reality (Ibid).

Constructivism calls for different, non-algorithmic tasks that are not performed routinely, and are different from those practiced during instruction. From a constructivist viewpoint, learning is a process which captivates the learners in intellectual actions that are formed by prior knowledge, happen through social interface, thoroughly knotted to specific background settings and comprise the use of abundant approaches, many of which require higher-order thinking (Foote, Vermette, & Battaglia, 2001). Moreover, Confrey (1985) described constructivist activities as activities that are well structured in a way that help learners to create and control the progression of their own learning from start to finish, and to encounter problems that their present procedures cannot resolve.

Main Principles of Constructivism

Fosnot (1989) identified constructivism by four main principles as follows:

1. "Knowledge consists of past constructions".

"Philosophically, constructivists assert that we can never know the world in a "true" objective sense, separate from ourselves and our experiences. We can only know it through our logical framework, which transforms, organizes, and interprets our perceptions" (Fosnot, 1989, p.19). This means that we view the world as we are; when we interact with our surroundings, we use our prior knowledge to understand and make judgments, as well as reshaping and building new considerations.

2. "Constructions come about through assimilation and accommodation".

Knowledge keeps changing in ways that are similar or different from what we already "know", however, our old perceptions redirects our new knowledge construction.

3. "Learning is an organic process of invention, rather than a mechanical process of accumulation".

A constructivist believes that the learner must have experiences with theorizing and predicting, operating items, posing questions, researching answers, imagining, investigating, and inventing, "in order for new constructions to be developed" (Fosnot, 1989, p.20).

4. "Meaningful learning occurs through reflection and resolution of cognitive conflict and, thus, serves to negate earlier, incomplete levels of understanding".

Cognitive dissention is an important part of the learning process, and it is not considered a negative component, since it provides enough equilibrium to initiate thinking, which helps learners to assess and reflect upon preceding knowledge.

The succeeding part will focus on constructivism in the eyes of three chief constructivist theorists.

John Dewey challenged traditional education practice and called for the continuous reconstruction of education (Fosnot, 1989). As a main promoter for Progressive education[1], Dewey called for the redefining of the classroom as a learning laboratory where experience is closely linked to the students. Furthermore, Dewey promoted creative activities in classrooms, putting a great emphasis upon real-life needs of learners in encouraging experimentation with new procedures (Brown & Finn, 1988).

For Dewey, as Foote, Vermette, and Battaglia (2001) explained, "active problem solving was the pivot around which learning should revolve", and experience was the means by which students come to know and make sense of the world around them. Dewey believed that school is not the preparation for life, it was life itself, and thus, education has an inseparable connection with personal experience.

Many ideas that call for a better learning such as authentic assessment, hands-on-learning, and learner-centered education, are of the same ideas that Dewey and his colleagues demanded more than a century ago, which are vital to the current reconstruction of education.

In a similar context, Dewey believed that knowledge production resides within the learner, and that the main objective of education should be to offer the learners means for connecting learning with personal experiences. In Dewey's (1983) words, "*It is then the business of the educator to see in what direction an experience is heading*". (p.38)

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[1] Organized in the 1919, an organization of parents, teachers, and school administrators committed to the democratic ideal. This organization objective was to protest against the prevailing formalism of American schools (Brown & Finn, 1988)

Dewey detailed that meaning could not be handed to a person; it must be incited by tasks and activities that revolve around problems that relates to students' lives. Thus, he stressed the important role of the teacher as an authoritarian in order to empower the students to become autonomous, creative and empowered learners (Foote, Vermette, & Battaglia, 2001), because "experience does not go on simply inside a person" (Dewey, 1983, p.39).

Like Dewey, Piaget theorized that past knowledge and experience is vital to the occurrence of learning (Foote, Vermette, & Battaglia, 2001). Piaget accredited high importance to learning a language through the development of conceptual and logical understanding. Moreover, for Piaget, learning "involves change, self-generation and construction", which builds on "prior experiences" in a cognitive developmental process (Kaufman 2004).

Piaget indicated that the brain organizes information into schemata[2]. He also explained that learning occurs through an information-processing structure. This structure includes assimilation; "the process of integrating new experiences in terms of existing schemes", accommodation; "the process of modifying schemes to fit new experiences", and equilibration, "the process of restoring balance between present understanding and new information or experiences"; these three structures are Piaget's operations for learning (Foote, Vermette, & Battaglia, 2001).

For Piaget, learning is a continuous process of expurgation and reviewing, creating and reformulating theories about how the world functions. Moreover, a good constructivist classroom is the one that ignites the process of editing, revising, reshaping and refining of content; a good classroom is the one that softly "jolts" learners to examine their prior knowledge and previously held beliefs (Foote, Vermette, & Battaglia, 2001).

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[2] A schema is a mental network of related concepts that influences the understanding of new information. Changing schemata is a way to define learning.

On the other hand, Vygotsky was more concerned with the relationship between the development of thought and the development of language (Brown, 2007). Still, one might say that Vygotsky had the benefit of building on Piaget's notions, and further suggested two new theories: the zone of proximal development[3] and scaffolding[4]. Vygotsky's concepts provided another aspect of human learning, since he explained the relationship between prior knowledge, and what is attempted to learn (Foote, Vermette, & Battaglia, 2001).

In conclusion, constructivism adopts the theory that learning is a developmental process that is built mostly on prior knowledge where learners build on that knowledge. Additionally, cooperative learning and social interactions have a major impact of constructing both the cognitive and emotional states in learners (Brown, 2007), a core principle of the social constructivism, where Vygotsky is the star advocate and the champion of social interaction with the environment "social constructivism" (Brown, 2007).

Constructivism and Task-Based Language Teaching

Vygotsky's social constructivism focuses on the role of society in building knowledge in the individual, and emphasizes in particular on conflict, negotiation and interaction in individual and social development, where the individual's cognitive structure grows and develops continuously. Intellectual development is considered to be of a "social nature" and not only biological, as Piaget sees it, and learning can be an element of intellectual development, where knowledge has a social character, and the intellectual activity of the individual cannot be parted from the intellectual activity of the group to which he belongs (Scott, 1998).

One prosperous language teaching method that aligns with the principles of constructivism and advocates for a student-centered learning, in an authentic and meaningful context is TBLT.

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[3] *"Zone of proximal development"* is the level immediately above a learner's present level of development.
[4] Scaffolding is the support for learning offered by one who is more competent.

Decades ago, since the early 1970's the relationship between theory and practice has continued to be manifested. In this context, Brown (2007) argued that constructvism, has witnessed a growing interest among many disiplines, with its focus on social interactions, the value of group work, and the use of various cooperative strategies for achieving learning aims. Moreover, linguists at the same time were searching profoundly for explanations for the nature of communiction and communicative competence and for the collaborative, sociocultural process of language acquisition.

Thus, language teaching mehods mirrored theoritical trends with approaches and strategies that stressed the importance of self-esteem, intrinsic motivation, learners' cooperative learning, developing individual strategies to construct meaning, and mostly focusing on the communicative process in language learning. Subsequently, Brown (2007) indicated that many of the pedogogical strategies of the last decades are captured in the Communicative Language Teaching method (CLT). This method provided, as Brown (2009) described it, "an eclectic blend of contributions of previous methods into the best of what a teacher can provide in authentic uses of the second language in the classrooms". (p.18)

The communicative approach serving as an umbrella for different designs and approaches "including TBLT", is a significant step in the language profession, beyond the teaching of rules, patterns, defenitions and other knowledge about language, to a new argument where we teach our students morally, naturally and profoundly in the language classroom.

In addition, the role of the learner's motivation, cognitive abilities and autonomy enjoys a central place in constructivism, which are also fundamental assumptions in TBLT (Bygate et al., 2001; Ellis, 2009). Moreover, Slavin (2003), expounded cognitive constructivism through the

active role of students in their own learning, in order to realize and transform intricate information to make their own.

Furthermore, according to Wang (2011), constructivism stresses learners' autonomy, reflectivity, personal participation and dynamic engagement in the process of learning; virtually related to the case with TBLT principles. When a learner takes on a communicative task, he is motivated to make use of his prevailing linguistic resources in order to attain an outcome (Willis & Willis, 2007).

Similarly, Ellis (2003) demonstrated a concurrence both in TBLT and in the learning principles of constructivism. He argued that TBLT proclaims that language is best learned when emphasis is on meaning not on form -grammatical structures- of the target language (ibid). In this learner-centered approach, based on the constructivist school of learning, the role of the teacher is a facilitator of the communicative interaction (Ellis, 2009). Consequently, the language learners play a vigorous role in the entire process of language learning, as they take dynamic roles in cooperative and communicative activities during the task performance phases to achieve an outcome (Bygate et al., 2001; Ellis, 2003; Skehan, 1998).

In conclusion, this research adopts a constructivist theory approach, which assumes that individuals are responsible for their own learning. Therefore, they construct their own understanding and knowledge from their experiences, and they reflect on their own meanings (Brown, 2007), which match the researcher's argument for the relationship between constructivism theory and TBLT methodology.

Constructivism and the 21ˢᵗ Century Skills

Globalization has imposed many cultural, social and economic challenges in the context of fast-flowing and highly influential era of technological innovation. It further imposed facts on the ground, which changed the requirements of the labor market, moved jobs to faraway places of the world, and created social, financial and value needs in a world open to cultures and developments.

Moreover, knowledge in all its dimensions and its economic, cultural, social, and educational complexities, and the skills of the industrial age are no longer sufficient for economic competition and the knowledge economy, and it has become imperative to provide learners with skills to face this new and complex milieu (Partnership for 21ˢᵗ Century Skills, 2008; 2015a; 2015b). This demanded the necessity for learners to possess skills that enable them to live and work in this new knowledge-age era, where the need for individuals to own life skills in communication, negotiation and problem solving has increased. In addition, nowadays learners must po ssess the abilities to use digital technology, communication tools and networks to access information to manage and evaluate production. In addition, they are decisively required to possess social skills, and to understand multiple cultures (Partnership for 21ˢᵗ Century Skills, 2015).

At the beginning of this century, education has faced several challenges that required providing new elements for the educational process with the necessary skills to face these "global" innovations. Skills and abilities such as dealing with different cultures, extracting knowledge from computational thinking, evaluating and criticizing media literacy, using and employing technology literacy, negotiating, problem solving, and decision-making. It has become necessary to integrate these skills into school syllabuses and to be adopted by educational systems (ibid).

In addition, recently, the role of educational systems has shifted towards preparing students to live and interact with the new knowledge-based economy, which requires developing learners'

abilities to research, discover, innovate, and to have deep understanding and critical thinking abilities. Moreover, modern educational systems demand learners to respect others' opinions, and enable them to make right choices in order to achieve their well-being in the light of a cohesive society in which the possibilities and opportunities are accessible (Khaldi, 2004).

Similarly, constructivism brought us new understanding about how knowledge is utilized, and about how people learn and think, which appears to be expanding (Bruer, 1993); new definitions of knowledge and learning divergence abruptly with behaviorism, in an attempt to organize student's learning around sets of authentic, collaborative, encouraging and problem-solving experiences (ibid), in order to create students who possess, as Costa (1981) expounded, skills, dispositions, and intelligent behaviors.

In the same way, Foote and colleagues (2001) described some skills that constructivism theory calls for adapting, such as "tolerance for ambiguity, willingness to take initiative and perform independently, and the ability to cooperate and work collegially". Further skills encompassed the ability to plan one's own work in conjunction with others, open mindedness, and the ability to restrain impulsivity. These skills, according to constructivism, aim to produce learners who are active experimenters and problem solvers, productive citizens, theorizers, self-evaluators, and officious learners (Foote, Vermette, & Battaglia, 2001); skills that -the researcher argues- align with the 21st century skills.

Besides, constructivism emphasizes education for social transformation, and it is a reflection of the theory of human development that is based on individualism within the social-cultural context, meaning that the progress of the individual is derived from social interactions within a framework of cultural meanings derived from the group and its interaction with the individual (Henriques, 1998). Hence, the theorists of social constructivism see themselves as

mediators between the student in the case of tribal knowledge and their social life world, and they try to build an appropriate study environment that works to increase the understanding and development of the student's life skills. Social constructivism confirms that knowledge is an activity in the world of life, and that learning serves adaptation to life, where meaningful learning is beneficial and builds on the individual's previous knowledge and the process of social negotiation (ibid).

Similarly, Siemens (2005) argued that learning occurs in light of the foundations of social constructivism theory to provide the individual with the life skills necessary for life and work in the knowledge society "correspondingly with the 21st century skills", such as skills for personal and social decision-making, solving life problems, negotiating skills, dealing with crises, participation and cooperation skills ... etc. He explained that it is no longer useful to direct learning to provide the individual with abstract theoretical knowledge devoid of meaning, nor to fill it with huge abstract knowledge with little connection to life and reality. Abstract knowledge, Siemens explained, does not have a significant impact on developing learners' intellectual energies, mental skills, critical judgments, and their abilities to solve personal and social problems (Siemens, 2005).

To conclude, the previous section has focused on presenting related theories basing this study on constructivism; the researcher argued that one could clearly distinguish the relationship between TBLT, 21st century skills and constructivism. The next section will highlight literature review that targets vocabulary learning, TBLT and 21st century skills, along with previous studies with their main findings.

Literature Review

Vocabulary

Vocabulary plays a key role in foreign language learning; it has begun to occupy a "center-stage" position within language education, Harmer (2004) claimed that "Language structures make up the skeleton of language; however, it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and the flesh".

Over the few last decades, we have noticed a great upturn in the arrival of numerous influential books on vocabulary aimed at language teachers (e.g. Nation 1990, Nunan 1989, and Schmitt 2008). In addition to a massive recent increase in the second language vocabulary research (e.g. Khnomari & Roostaee 2013, Maghsodi et al 2014, Alqahtani 2015, Alshaiji 2015 and Ahmadi 2017); which indicates that vocabulary teaching has become a high priority concern of language education.

Despite the fact that literature reveals no worldwide agreed-upon definition for vocabulary, we could define vocabulary depending on the aspect we are approaching. Zimmerman (2014) states two main aspects for vocabulary knowledge, vocabulary breadth, which refers to "how many words one knows", and vocabulary depth, which refers to "knowledge about the aspects of each word". In his book, Teaching and Learning Vocabulary, Nation (1990) suggested that "word knowledge includes the mastery of the word's meaning(s), written form, spoken form, grammatical behavior, collocations, register, associations and frequency". Word knowledge is further described by "distinguishing receptive knowledge (in listening and reading), and productive knowledge (in writing and speaking)" (Zimmerman, 2014).

In addition, teaching and learning English as a foreign language has changed significantly over the past few decades. Vocabulary's role in EFL learning has changed according to the dominant teaching approach present at a specific period. Hence, teachers of English used different

models of learning, methods and approaches in their educational programs, in order to develop and improve their student's vocabulary knowledge, and to support their learners in different English skills. Accordingly, in order to adapt to a student-centered Learning (SCL) environment— some teaching methods, which used to focus primarily on form and structure[5], have diminished, and an emphasis on students' communicative competence (CC) and classroom engagement has emerged as the new focus in language instruction. This constant modifying of vocabulary methods of instruction came as a perpetual response to the imminent necessity of providing meaningful learning environment, to encourage the students to participate and interact in the EFL classroom, and to promote their vocabulary language awareness.

Furthermore, different approaches presented vocabulary in different ways. Some of these methods still resonate with and influence the practice of language teaching to some degree (Celce-Murcia, 2014). Further, acquiring different aspects of word knowledge in learning vocabulary is very important, it is not sufficient to teach only the first language (L1) meaning and translation of a word. For example, the Grammar-translation method, which focuses on the translation from the target language into the mother tongue, analyzing structures and conjugating verbs, focuses -- vocabulary wise-- only on providing definitions and word origins. Thus, this method was challenged on many fronts, and as a result, some new approaches came in reaction to it, such as the reform approach and the direct method. In the reform approach, vocabulary words were chosen according to their simplicity and usefulness, but focus was on phonetic training and not on vocabulary learning. Same as the direct method, words were chosen for their familiarity and use in classroom interactions (ibid).

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[5]Some earlier popular teaching methods: the grammar translation method, the direct instruction method, the reform approach and the audio-lingual method (see: Celce-Murcia, 2014 & Zimmerman, 2014 for a more thorough discussion on the history of approaches to language teaching.

Additionally, many teachers have utilized traditional teaching styles in their classrooms for years. They taught lectures, assigned written homework tasks, allotted pen and paper examinations and used printed schoolbooks as the main learning source (Heck, Poindexter, & Garcia, 2000). One of the vast popular traditional techniques is the definitional approach; where students look up words from a dictionary, write them down and memorize them, which leads to the rote learning of words' definitions and synonyms (Nagy, 1988). Nevertheless, Adams (1990) argued that the implication of drills and practices in this method does not yield a reliable outcome on full comprehension of vocabulary words (Stahl & Fairbanks, 1986).

Some other traditional techniques are the sentence-writing approach and the conceptual approach. Tactlessly, it is difficult for students –especially young learners- to write sentences in the first method using only word definition, besides, in the latter approach, it is ineffective to use the context alone as an instructional method (Nagy, 1988).

Therefore, some researchers (Adams, 1990; Nagy, 2000; Stahl & Fairbanks, 1986) have argued that vocabulary traditional techniques using definitions, sentences, patterns and drills may not be the best suitable ways for students to learn vocabulary. The researcher thinks that this situation is even worse for employing the 21st century learning skills among our Palestinian students. Thus, it is important for our teachers to employ modern vocabulary teaching methods in order to meet their students' needs and to help our Palestinian students to grasp the well-needed 21st century skills while learning vocabulary.

Definition of Vocabulary

Tamzel (2012, p.7) stated that vocabulary "is all the words and phrases that have been arranged and defined alphabetically". Similarly, vocabulary is also defined as "words that we should know that help us communicate effectively" (Newman and Dwyer, 2009, p.285), while it was simply defined by Corrales (2011, p.10) as "a synonym for lexis".

Moreover, Sheehan (2002) stated that vocabulary learning refers to "the capability of recognizing and using words to obtain and convey meaning", while was defined by Beck et al. (2008, p.1) as "understanding the meanings of new words".

Importance of Vocabulary

Vygotsky (1962) described words as the microcosm of human awareness. Besides, vocabulary is an important aspect in learning English, and is a fundamental element to master other English language aspects, such as the four English macro skills; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Richards & Renandya (2002, P.255) expressed that "vocabulary is an essential element of mastering a language which delivers much of the basis for how well a learner speaks, listens, reads and writes". Thus, students should start learning vocabulary when they start learning the English language; Mashayuni & Agusni (2014) argued that if students do not have enough words, they would face difficulties in communicating effectively in English.

Likewise, Roux (2012), noted that words have an actual power; a passive power when words are still in the dictionary; however, words become energetic and active, either positively or negatively, depending on the learners' ability of how and when they choose to produce and use them.

The researcher believes that vocabulary could facilitate the process of learning the English language. The greater vocabulary the students know, the more they may well master various

language skills; without adequate vocabulary, students will make no improvement in any of the English language features. Similarly, vocabulary empowers learners to express themselves, communicate with one another, and comprehend utterances and written texts. Without vocabulary, students will not be able to understand, read, write, nor convey a message. In addition, the researcher indicates that vocabulary works as a tool for paving students' way towards mastering productive and receptive skills more effectively.

To summarize, the researcher believes that vocabulary abridges the communication process for its central position in most communication contexts. In addition, vocabulary makes reading and writing texts simpler, aids learners understanding, eases the comprehending of texts and makes it easier to listen and familiarize the pronunciation of words.

The Nature of Vocabulary Acquisition

Though there is no agreement on how students learn such a large amount of vocabulary, there is a general picture of vocabulary acquisition in the literature (Schmitt, 2002). Some important features of vocabulary acquisition have been revealed through vocabulary acquisition research. One of these features is that learning vocabulary has a progressive nature; knowledge about a word cannot be gathered simultaneously, but must be accumulated gradually over time, and this includes the progression of vocabulary breadth, vocabulary depth, vocabulary produced, and vocabulary received during the vocabulary learning process (Zimmerman, 2014). Besides, a lot of researchers such as Gu (2003), Laufer and Nation (2011), Marion (2008), Maximo (2000), Nation (1999), and Read (2000) believe that the process of obtaining vocabulary has two dimensions. The first is related to the well-organized practice of a second language, and the second is related to the completion of producing written and spoken language.

Likewise, an important conceptual aspect in teaching and learning vocabulary is that word learning includes both incidental and intentional learning (Zimmerman, 2014). Words are captured in incidental learning - also referred to as implicit learning - without focusing one's attention on models, structures, or language use. While intentional learning refers to the focused study of words and language, which is also known as explicit learning (ibid). Additionally, Nation (2001) argued that some aspects of word knowledge are better acquired casually, such as form, coherence and word class, while other aspects such as recording and meaning are learned explicitly. Similarly, there is an important role for clear instruction, as some younger learners lose focus on word features when their full attention is on the message (Schmitt, 2008).

Correspondingly, distinguishing between receptive and productive vocabulary is another aspect of vocabulary acquisition. The term receptive vocabulary refers to "the type of vocabulary knowledge that allows learners to recognize and understand a word when encountered in a written or phonemic part of the language", while productive vocabulary refers to "the type of vocabulary knowledge that enables learners to produce a word" (Melka, 2001).

Additionally, one central characteristic related to vocabulary acquisition is retention. Craik (2002) declares that vocabulary is more easily forgotten than grammatical terms. According to Schmitt (2002), the delicateness of vocabulary knowledge is due to the fact that "vocabulary is made up of individual units rather than a series of rules" (p.130). Forgetting a learned vocabulary could mean losing all efforts in learning it. Hence, "once the vocabulary is learned partially or entirely, it must be systematically reprocessed to promote effective retention" (ibid). Moreover, words must be reviewed systematically so that they are not forgotten (Craik, 2002).

In a connected context, recent researches on vocabulary attainment have exposed that knowing a word includes more than knowing its meaning (Nation, 2001; Read, 2000). Knowing a

word means being able to pronounce it and spell it, to know its relationship to other words, and to recognize its uses. Once these types of knowledge are got, more efforts should be made to activate this knowledge and make it more effective. Additionally, mastery of all of these features cannot be improved at once because there are various types of knowledge about a word (Schmitt 2002).

Strategies and Techniques for Teaching Vocabulary

To enhance vocabulary acquisition -while addressing the increasing nature of the process- teachers can benefit from integrating strategies to help students achieve linguistic goals. Such strategies may include repetition, i.e. repeated exposure to the vocabulary item multiple times and in different contexts (Webb, 2007). Another strategy is participation, whereby learners are more likely to benefit from the vocabulary-learning task if they are involved, have an interest in words, and manipulate tasks (Schmitt, 2008). The final strategy is interaction and negotiation, Newton (1995) indicates that the more words are used in interactive and negotiable contexts, the more learners will be able to acquire and use them later to improve their vocabulary knowledge.

Moreover, using different techniques in teaching vocabulary brings diversity and helps retain new learned words. Gairn and Redman (1986) divided vocabulary teaching techniques in the class into several techniques, visual techniques, which include flashcards, blackboard drawings, pictures, wall and photorealistic charts, mimes and Gestures, which are often used to complement other methods of conveying meaning. In addition, some techniques include the use of synonyms and antonyms, while others include the use of translation. Gairn and Redman (1986, p.76) have argued that "translation may be legitimate for items containing an explicit native language equivalent, but should be avoided otherwise."

Similarly, one technique that is used to teach vocabulary is definition, however, according to Nagy (1988), definitions are not efficient in teaching vocabulary. First, definitions tell little

about words which leads to facing difficulties while writing meaningful sentences. Second, definitions do not convey new concepts well, which may lead to an insufficient understanding of text containing specific words.

Given all these perceptions, learners need to devote a considerably long time to broadening, standardizing and retaining their vocabulary knowledge (Schmitt 2002; Wesche & Paribakht, 2000).

Many studies have focused on the great importance of vocabulary in learning English as a foreign language (Abdal Rahim, 2015; Al-Lahham, 2016; Bader, 2017; Bakheet, 2016; Bahadori & Gorjian, 2016; El Kurd, 2014; Imliyana, Suhartono, and Husin, 2015, Kuhail, 2017; Nemati, 2013; Othman, 2018; Subaşı, 2014; Zeller, 2011). They have confirmed the important role that vocabulary plays in enhancing various English skills and in students' overall academic success and further indicated that retention of vocabulary is very important. Additionally, the above-mentioned studies demonstrated different methods and techniques applied to instruct vocabulary effectively. They also demonstrated factors and difficulties that affect vocabulary acquisition.

However, the researcher believes that some of the previous vocabulary teaching techniques are older techniques that may need development and modification, besides, they might not be suitable for all academic levels, especially in light of this age and its features that require preparing the student to be able to learn according to the skills of this 21st century. Therefore, the researcher argues that English language teachers should adopt teaching methods and techniques based on employing the skills of the 21st century in teaching vocabulary. Such a state in EFL vocabulary attentiveness makes room for Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT).

Task-Based Language Teaching- TBLT

The idea of using the learning "task" as a basic planning tool is not new in the general educational realm; however, it is somewhat a new inception in the language teaching field, and is considered innovative in foreign language teaching (Nunan, 1989).

The Communicative Approach

Everything we do in the classroom is underpinned by beliefs about the nature of language and language learning (Nunan, 1989). Language is more than a system of rules; it is seen as a dynamic resource for the creation of meaning (ibid).

The field of second language (L2) teaching has experienced many fluxes and shifts over the past few decades (Celce-Murcia, 2014). One discernible approach to foreign language teaching that was developed and widely used during the final quarter of the 20th century is the communicative approach. This approach is a product of the work of major linguists in the US (e.g., Hymes, 1971; Halliday, 1976, 1978), who viewed language as a meaning-based system of communication where the purpose of language and thus the goal of language teaching and learning is communication (Celce-Murcia, 2014).

The communicative approach serving as an umbrella for different designs and approaches "including TBLT", has some significant structures and manifestations. For instance, it provides the main objective of language teaching as the learner's capability to communicate in the language. It further emphasizes the fact that the content of a language course should include semantic concepts and social functions as important linguistic structures (Celce-Murcia, 2014). Furthermore, it stresses that students ought to work in groups or pairs to allocate and convey meaning in different situations, and they need to participate in role-play or dramatization to adjust their use of the language in numerous social settings. Additionally, in regards to the classroom

materials, they have to consist of authentic tasks and projects presented and practiced using segments of pre-existing meaningful discourses. Moreover, skills are integrated from the beginning where a given activity might involve any of the four English skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. Finally, the teacher's role in this communicative approach is to facilitate communication and correct errors (Celce-Murcia, 2014).

Roles in the Communicative Language Classroom

The role of the learner in the communicative language classroom has changed dramatically as an active contributor to the language setting. This is actually evident in the verbal interaction tasks (Nunan, 1989); Nunan asserts that in the small-group interaction tasks, learners are asked to put language in use in a range of milieus -even with imperfect language skills-, and they are required to negotiate meaning rather than repeating, memorizing or absorbing utterances.

In addition, while both roles of the learners and teachers are synchronized in many ways, a change in the learner's role in the communicative classroom had definitely affected the role of the teacher in the same setting. The roles performed by the language learners in are labeled as participants, risk takers, listeners/speakers, storytellers, innovators and sequencers; they participate in-group works or in pairs during a task cycle for successful language development. Whereas, Breen and Candlin (1980) promoted three main roles for the teacher in the communicative process, a facilitator, a participant, and an observer and learner.

TBLT Theoretical Foundations and Backgrounds

With regards to the philosophical backgrounds of TBLT, Nunan (2014) points out that TBLT has many empirical traditions in education, applied linguistics and psychology, such as humanistic education, learner-centered instruction, and process- oriented approaches to syllabus design. In addition, Wilkins (1976) argued, "TBLT belongs to a family of approaches to language pedagogy that are based on what is known as analytical approach to language pedagogy".

In fact, TBLT reflects a rehearsal of real-life contexts in the language teaching classrooms (Ellis, 2009), and mainly follows on the ideologies and values of experiential learning presented by Dewey, which perceives education as a process of constructing passages between learner's existing knowledge and new expected learning objectives and outcomes (Willis & Willis, 2007).

Experiential learning theory[6] has diverse origins; it demonstrates Dewey's progressive philosophy of education and Piaget's developmental psychology, and reflects Maslow and Rogers's work (1969) on humanistic psychology (Nunan, 2014). Nevertheless, Kohenen's (1992) application of experiential learning in teaching offered the theoretical outline for TBLT. Kohenen's (1992) paper has set main principles as the theoretical blueprint that explained the transformation of knowledge within the learner rather than the transmission of knowledge from the teacher to the learner. In addition, Kohenen showed how learners are encouraged to contribute enthusiastically in collaborative groups while embracing a holistic attitude toward subject matter instead of a static, atomistic, and hierarchical attitude.

Furthermore, Kohenen (1992) explained that TBLT emphasizes processes -rather than products-, learning how to learn, self-inquiry, and social and communication skills, he further

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[6] As one important conceptual underpinning for TBLT, which considers learner's own experiences are central to the learning process.

described how TBLT encourages self-directed rather than teacher-directed learning, likewise, Nunan (2014) explained how TBLT promotes intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivation.

These principles perceive learning as collaborative and transformative rather than transmissive and derived. In TBLT settings, the teacher creates an environment within which the learners take control of their learning processes through doing and performing, where the language is acquired mainly through using it in prudently designed situations. Furthermore, in his paper, Kohenen encouraged knowledge transfer within the learners themselves, where they actively and collaboratively participate in groups, rather than traditionally seeking knowledge from the teacher. Kohenen also focused on self-directed learning, where the emphasis is on the learning process -- through social and communication skills, intrinsic motivation and self-inquiry-- rather than on the final product.

Furthermore, Nunan (2014) explained that TBLT draws strength from six main principles. First, the starting point for constructing courses and materials through TBLT is the improvement of an inventory of learner needs rather than an inventory of lexical, grammatical and phonological, items. Second, learners improve the competence to communicate in a language through using the language rather than learning and memorizing bits of the linguistic system. Third, learners own individual understandings are crucial to the learning process. Fourth, there is an emphasis on learning processes and strategies as well as on the language content. Fifth, classroom language learning is thoroughly linked to learning outside the classroom (authenticity). Finally, learners are exposed to authentic listening and reading texts.

Furthermore, Nunan distinguished two important aspects of authenticity in TBLT: task and text authenticity. In task authenticity, the pedagogical tasks are in close relation to the real-life tasks, and are linked to learners' needs and expectations. Conversely, text authenticity refers to the

use of written and spoken texts that are designed for the purpose of communication, and not for language teaching. Providing both sides of authenticity in task and text would scaffold the learners to comprehend real-life contexts outside the classroom.

TBLT Main Features and Characteristics

Main TBLT features described by Skehan (1998) include the learners' engagement in the learning process, away from rote learning, memorization and repeation. According to Nunan (2014), one of the strong explanations that TBLT advocates stand by, is the fact that communicative engagement in tasks would provide an abundant and crucial condition for second language acquisition (Krashen & Terrell, 1983).

There is also a clear connection between the instructive tasks done inside the classroom, and between similar outside-classroom authentic situations. Besides, the main goal in the assessment of the learning experience should be the accomplishment of the communicative goal, not the manipulation of linguistic structures or forms.

TBLT Settings

According to Nunan (1989), settings refer to the classroom arrangements specified or implied in a task, it also considers if the task will be conducted entirely or partially in the classroom. In some cases, settings and roles are dealt with distinctly, however Nunan (1989) chooses to deal with them together, as the social context influencing relationships and roles.

Furthermore, Skehan (1998) suggested that pedagogical tasks must demonstrate five main characteristics. He proposed that in a task (a) meaning is crucial, and (b) students are not given other people's meanings to simply repeat. He further stressed (c) the importance of creating some sort of relationship to comparable real-world activities, and he recommended that (d) task

completion must hold some priority and that (e) task assessment ought to be in terms of task outcomes.

Defining a Task

In common education, and other fields, there are too many different definitions of a task (Nunan, 1989). Nunan (1989, p.10) defined a task as "a piece of classroom work, where students manipulate, interact and produce in the target language while their focus in on the meaning and not on the form". Correspondingly, Ellis (2003) offers a comprehensive definition of a "task":

> A task is a work plan that requires learners to process language pragmatically in order to achieve an outcome that can be evaluated in terms of whether the correct or appropriate propositional content has been conveyed. To this end, it requires them to give primary attention to meaning and to make use of their own linguistic resources, although the design of the task may predispose them to choose particular forms. A task is intended to result in language use that bears a resemblance, direct or indirect, to the way language is used in the real world. Like other language activities, a task can engage productive or receptive, and oral or written skills and various cognitive processes. (p.16)

Furthermore, tasks have been defined in several ways depending on the task type. For instance, Nunan (2014) drew a basic distinction between two main types of tasks, pedagogical tasks (things that learners do in the classroom to acquire language), and real-life tasks (using language to do things outside the classroom). Nunan further expounded the importance of creating a list of real-life tasks and turning them into pedagogical tasks in order to motivate learners to interact in the target language to achieve a particular outcome.

The definitions we previously mentioned imply that the basic unit of a lesson in the TBLT classroom is the task, and that various tasks are designed to facilitate the learners with real-life communicative situations enabling them as real communicators of the target language.

Task Features and Key Components

In order to select, adapt, modify, and create tasks, it is very important to identify the main components of a task. Candlin (1987) opined that a task should contain input, roles, settings, actions, monitoring and feedback, while Shavelson and Stern (1981) suggested that, a task should have important elements like content, materials, activities, goals, students, and a social community.

Moreover, Samuda and Bygate (2008) illustrated some general features for second language tasks, these elements are summarized as follows:

1. A task involves holistic language use; this means that a learner is required to produce meaningful language while using vocabulary, grammar, phonology and discourse structures to carry out the language task.

2. A task requires meaningful outcomes.

3. A task includes pair and group work.

4. A task requires input material.

5. A task is made of various phases.

6. A task must have clear language learning purposes and targets that are clear to the teacher and learners.

7. The task implementing conditions may affect the process, and therefore the outcomes; however, it could be exploited and manipulated.

8. A task could be used for different instructive goals and at different phases of learning.

In a similar context, Wright (1987) suggested that tasks need minimally just two elements; one is "input" that could be provided by materials, teachers or learners, the other is "a question" that provides instructions for learners to conduct the task.

Evaluating and Creating Tasks

Candlin (1987) offered three main considerations to evaluate a task: "problematicity", "implementability", and combinability. The term "problematicity" serves as an indicator to learner's ability and knowledge, tasks' diagnostic or explanatory nature, and tasks' ability to provide monitoring or feedback. "Implementability" deals with the required resources, the complexity of the management and organization, and the adaptability of the task. Finally, "compatibility" means the tasks' ability to be incorporated and sequenced among other tasks (Candlin, 1987).

For creating tasks, Nunan (1989) asserts on the importance of starting the task developing process by setting the goals and objectives, which can be directly translated into communicative tasks. Next is selecting input for the learners to work with. Here, Nunan asserts the importance of authentic input as a fundamental feature of communicative tasks. Furthermore, when designing activities for communicative tasks, one should decide on the settings of the tasks that are in congruent with those activities with specific appropriate roles for both the learner and the teacher to adopt in carrying out the task. In addition, when monitoring the task implementation, one should pay close attention to the actual language use and the language generated throughout the process.

Furthermore, Nunan (1989) proposed a comprehensive checklist for evaluating communicative tasks; the checklist includes sets of evaluative questions under main pillars. Main criteria included goals and rationale, activities, input, implementation, roles and settings, integration and grading, and assessment and evaluation.

Related Previous Studies

Recently, educators have begun to show interest in educational activities and tasks, as they have a major role in the educational process. Task-based language teaching has become an important learning method, not only for learners' formation of the knowledge outcome through their participation in educational tasks, but also it's being considered a means of learning that showed positive effects on teaching the English language. For example, Alshenqeeti (2019) examined the impact of task-based English language teaching on Saudi students' language competencies, such as reading comprehension and writing proficiency. Alshenqeeti adopted a mixed-methods approach, involving an experimental component and a qualitative component based on interviews with the participants. The study results indicated that the use of tasks in language learning classrooms promotes students' learning, the development of skills in reading and writing, social interaction, and the motivation to use English in real-life situations. Accordingly, these findings can be used to promote language learning in students studying English as a foreign language.

Similarly, Aliasin (2019) attempted to explore the possible relationship between EFL teachers' perception (understanding and view) of task-based language teaching (TBLT) and their main teaching style. To collect data, a questionnaire was distributed to 180 Iranian EFL teachers who took part in this study regarding their perceptions of TBLT and Teaching Styles Inventory. The results revealed a statistically positive correlation between the participants' perception (both understanding and view) of TBLT and dominant teaching styles.

In addition, Amer (2019) investigated the effect of TBLT on EFL writing skills of 62 students 2nd year students at Sedoud Secondary School for boys and girls, in Al Menofya governorate. An experimental design was adopted for this research, where 32 students represented

the experimental group, and 30 represented the control group. T-test results revealed that the experimental group students outperformed the control group on the EFL writing skills as a result of the TBLT method. Findings also indicated that students of the experimental group in the post-test of EFL writing skills outperformed those in the pre-test.

Additionally, Kafipour et. al (2018) investigated the effects of employing task-based writing instruction on Iranian EFL learners' writing competence. The participants included 69 Iranian EFL learners at the intermediate level, who were placed randomly into a control and an experimental group. The results showed significant improvements in the writing ability of the Iranian EFL learners who practiced writing skills using TBLT techniques. Besides, using task-based writing techniques improved the learners' ability significantly in terms of different aspects of the writing competence, including sentence mechanics, language use, vocabulary, content, and organization.

In a similar study, Kamalian, Soleimani & Safari (2017) investigated the effect of task-based reading activities such as text completion and pupil generated questions on vocabulary learning and retention of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. The findings indicated that using task-based reading activities has significant and meaningful impacts on learners' vocabulary learning and retention.

Moreover, Jurcenko (2015) examined how task-based language teaching methods aid in enhancing students' use of vocabulary in communicative situations. The study instruments consisted of classroom observation and questionnaires. The results showed that teaching vocabulary through applying TBLT was effective; learners memorized the provided terms, and were able to use them communicatively. Moreover, the study indicated that learners' reading and

writing skills had developed too, since the tasks were captivating and related to real-life situations, which makes tasks an effective method in teaching the English language.

Furthermore, Salman (2015) investigated the effect of an instructional program based on learning tasks in teaching the English language on tenth-grade students' achievement and acquisition of social skills and their attitudes towards English language learning. Fifty-five 10th grade students from Al- Shoneh Secondary School for girls were divided into two groups, 28 represented the experimental group and 27 represented the control group. Study results revealed that there was a statistically significant effect of the instructional program based on learning tasks on tenth-grade students' achievement in English language learning, and positive effects on their acquisition of social skills on students' attitudes towards English language learning.

The next part explores the 21st century skills.

21st Century Skills

This century brings new arguments to the "educational table". It seems like the usual debates over structures and forms are no more valid, alternatively, an argument about how students could effectively learn in the 21st century and how we can transfer schools into facilitators for lively engagement is what really matters. We could probably do that by considering how those young students choose to learn, and by observing what motivates them, and considering which school contexts serve as catalysts for their love of learning. As well as giving more emphasis to their engagement and voice in the learning process, we should keep a clear and sharp emphasis upon "what goes on in and out of the classroom" (Paul Hamlyn Foundation, 2008, p.3).

Successively, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21) along with the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), have developed 21st Century Skills Maps that illustrate the integration of World Languages and 21st Century Skills, and reflects the

collective effort of hundreds of world language teachers. These maps aimed at providing instructors, supervisors and officials with concrete examples of how the 21st century skills can be integrated into language instruction; where the goals of a language program are to advance learners' language abilities around modes of communicative competence "CC" to reflect real-life communication. This is reflected in the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century in the opening statement, "Language and communication are at the heart of the human experience."

Moreover, P21 created the Framework for 21st Century Learning (P21, 2006), which states that:

Every 21st century skills implementation requires the development of core academic subject knowledge and an understanding among all students. Within the context of core knowledge instruction, students must also learn the essential skills for success in today's world, such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication and collaboration. Those who can think critically and communicate effectively must build on a base of core academic subject knowledge. (p.1)

Moreover, Trilling and Fadel (2009) provided definitions for students who are equipped with the 21st century skills. The authors described students who are effective communicators as language users who "involve in meaningful discussions, apprehend and infer spoken language and written text, and state concepts and ideas effectively". They also identified collaborating students as learners who "use their native and acquired languages to learn from and work cooperatively across cultures with global team members". Similarly, they defined critical-thinking and problem-solving students as those "who frame, analyze, and synthesize information as well as negotiate meaning across language and culture in order to explore problems and issues from their own and

different perspectives". Finally, they clarified creative and innovative students as students "who respond to new and diverse perspectives and use language in imaginative and original ways to make useful contributions" (Trilling & Fadel, 2009).

Therefore, we could conclude that when providing opportunities for learners to enhance the actual skills needed in life and the workplace, learners will acquire abilities that would prepare them for the job markets in the 21st century.

Definition and Classifications of 21st Century Skills

Many educational specialists, especially in recent times, have dealt with the concept of the 21st century skills in light of the emergence of many educational and technological developments; therefore, it is necessary to be acquainted with the definitions that many studies indicate.

Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21, 2015, p.66) defined the 21st century skills as "A broad body of knowledge, skills, work habits, and personality traits; to succeed in the present and future days, especially in contemporary occupations".

Moreover, Scott (2015) stated that they are the basic skills needed for success in work and life, and are presented in critical thinking, innovation, communication and cooperation, which can be developed through teaching to individuals.

Furthermore, Kay (2010) defined them as "Those skills that students need to participate effectively and successfully during the 21st century". Kay (2010) added that "the 21st century skills provide the keys to the knowledge learners need to acquire the skills of communication, obtain information and deal with it effectively and efficiently, and teach them how to innovate to keep pace with the developments of their times and prepare to build a better future". (P.33)

Additionally, Trilling and Fadel (2009) defined each skill as the following:

A. Learning and innovation skills: Learners who are prepared for increasingly complex life and work environments in today's world are distinguished from those who are not. They include Creativity and Innovation, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, Communication and Collaboration.

B. Information Literacy: Students as informed global citizens' access, manage, and effectively use culturally authentic sources in ethical and legal ways.

C. Flexibility and Adaptability: Students as flexible and adaptable language learners are open-minded, willing to take risks, and accept the ambiguity of language while balancing diverse global perspectives

D. Initiative and Self-Direction: Students as life-long learners are motivated to set their own goals and reflect on their progress as they grow and improve their linguistic and cultural competence.

E. Social and Cross-Cultural Skills: Students as adept language learners understand diverse cultural perspectives and use appropriate socio-linguistic skills in order to function in diverse cultural and linguistic contexts.

F. Productivity and Accountability: Students as productive and accountable learners take responsibility for their own learning by actively working to increase their language proficiency and cultural knowledge.

G. Leadership and Responsibility: Students as responsible leaders leverage their linguistic and cross-cultural skills to inspire others to be fair, accepting, open, and understanding within and beyond the local community.

H. Technology Literacy: Students should work independently and with others, to responsibly, appropriately and effectively use technology tools to access, manage, integrate, evaluate, create and communicate information.

Likewise, learning other languages and understanding the culture of the people who speak them is a 21st Century skill that is vital to success in the global environment in which our students will live and work. Therefore, P21 in association with ACTFL proposed interdisciplinary themes that connect foreign language learning with 21st century skills, these are defined as (ACTFL, 2013):

A. Global Awareness: Language education and cultural understanding are at the heart of developing global awareness for students. In order to understand and address global issues, it is important to understand the perspectives on the world that speakers of other languages bring to the table. By learning other languages, students develop respect and openness to those who's culture, religion, and views on the world may be different. Language students are able to interact with students from the target language in order to discuss issues and reach solutions.

B. Financial, Economic, Business and Entrepreneurial Literacy: Students in language classes learn about financial and economic issues in the target language culture(s) and are able to compare and contrast with those of their own country. In addition, the changing demographics in the world make language capability a requisite for interacting with English speaking communities domestically as well as internationally. Those who are able to communicate with others in their native language will naturally feel more empowered to negotiate with those around the world as they engage in entrepreneurial activities.

C. Civic Literacy: Language learners can communicate in the target language, which make them able to engage in discussions with other students and participate in activities in which they discuss civic life in their respective countries.

D. Health Literacy: Language learners have access to information because they can understand the language and can thus engage in global discussions on health, environmental, and public safety issues, and can prepare for careers in these fields.

In a similar context, there are many classifications of twenty-first century skills according to educators' opinions. Metz (2011) identified twenty-first century learning skills in light of the National Research Council and the Science Teachers' Association reports into nine skills: (flexibility, adaptation, invention, critical thinking, and problem solving, Innovation, social responsibility, systems thinking, and complex communication capabilities). Correspondingly, Barell (2010) classified them into four skills: critical thinking, metacognitive skills, collective intelligence, and experimental reasoning. Moreover, Rotheerham & Willing (2009) classified them into nine skills that fall into three main areas: communication skills, digital information, thinking and problem-solving skills, interpersonal skills and self-direction.

Further, the difference in the objectives of studying twenty-first century skills has made educational specialists and researchers seek to develop frameworks for classifying twenty-first century skills. Among the most famous classifications of twenty-first century skills are the following:

A. Classification of the Partnership for 21st Century Skills:

1) Learning and innovation skills: These include the main skills called (4C):

- Critical thinking: Students should be able to use different types of deduction, analyze and interpret different situations, reflect on their experiences to access information on their own, and solve problems in unfamiliar ways.

- Communication: Students must be able to express their ideas effectively, by using verbal, written and non-verbal communication skills in different situations

- Collaboration: Students must be able to carry out required tasks cooperatively.

- Creativity and innovation: Students must be able to create ideas, understand different points of view, demonstrate creativity at work, and trying to transform innovative ideas into tangible contributions.

2) Information, media and technology skills: These include three main skills:

- Information literacy: Students must be able to access information efficiently and effectively, and to access and use information ethically.

- Media culture: Students should understand and use the most appropriate tools for media production, and access media channels morally.

- Information and communication culture: Students should be able to use technology as a tool for research and organization, to access information efficiently and effectively, and to use technology justly.

3) Professional and work skills: The main skills include the following:

- Flexibility and Adaptation: Students must be able to adapt to different variables, invest feedback, and deal positively with obstacles.

- Initiative and Self-Direction: Students must be able to manage time and goals effectively, and to attempt self-learning.

- Social skills and an understanding of cultures: Students must be able to respect different cultures, and take advantage of their experience to create new ideas.

- Productivity and Accountability: Students should be able to set goals and accomplish tasks under various pressures, be able to set priorities, act positively and ethically with colleagues, and participate effectively with others.

- Leadership and Responsibility: Students must be able to use interpersonal communication skills and problem-solving skills to influence others, invest points of view to achieve a common goal, and assume responsibility towards others (P21, 2015).

B. Classification of the International Society of Technology in Education- ISTE:

The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE, 2013) has identified a set of skills that it deems necessary to be included in educational curricula, to build the learner intellectually, socially and culturally while taking full advantage of the available digital tools, and these skills are:

1) Creativity and innovation skills: This is to develop creative thinking skills to ensure knowledge building and production, and developing products and processes using technology.

2) Communication and cooperation skills: including using various means of communication, and digital media for communication and collaborative work.

3) Research skills and information flow: including applying and using technology tools to collect and evaluate the use of information.

4) Skills of critical thinking, problem solving and decision-making: including using critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, project management, problem-solving, and successful decision-making using digital tools and materials.

5) Digital citizenship skills: include understanding human, cultural and societal issues related to technology, and practicing legal and ethical behavior related to them.

6) Process and technological concepts skills: include understanding of technology, its systems, and its processes (Suto, 2013).

C. Classification of the Arab League Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization-ALECSO:

1) Advanced thinking skills: individual and analytical thinking, problem-solving, creative thinking, and linguistic intelligence.

2) Personal skills: communication, cooperation, decision-making, adaptation, self-management, self-confidence, work ethics, and positive motivation.

3) Information technology: technological literacy, typing, using the Internet, using Microsoft Office, information literacy, and media literacy (ALECSO, 2014).

The Necessity and Importance of Developing 21st Century Skills

The educational curriculum is the general framework and basic reference in the educational process in which learners are trained with knowledge, concepts, facts, values, behavioral patterns, and skills necessary for life and to be citizens with effective personalities (Sternberg, 2006). The curriculum is considered an effective tool that is used to achieve societal and international goals, as well as comprehensive development (Miller and Meece, 1997).

Successively, the requirements of the twenty-first century entail individuals to master a set of skills that are based on a set of pillars. The term twenty-first century skills is usually used to define what students are supposed to know and what they can do (Lubart and Grignard, 2004). Therefore, they can engage in the labor market and make decisions in the modern world; supporters of this idea argue that curricula should be more concerned with what students can do with

knowledge, and not merely acquiring knowledge for the sake of the requirements of the twenty-first century education (Shiekh Eid, 2019, p.26).

In addition, the integration of twenty-first century skills into the curricula leads to the achievement of many important goals that experts aspire to accomplish among students. As it enables them to contribute to the world of work and civic life, participate in society, solve problems scientifically, and help in understanding academic subjects, developing thinking and building new ideas; it helps in using knowledge and technology tools to continue lifelong learning (Al-Harbi and Jaber, 2016, p.26).

Furthermore, the researcher summarized some of the facts mentioned by scholars that highlight the need for twenty-first century skills:

1) The need for individuals who are able to practice different creative thinking styles and cooperate with their colleagues in the work environment (Prins et al., 2006).

2) Global assessments have shown the low level of education in Arab countries, compared to global indicators, as the report issued by the World Economic Forum (2015) pointed to the importance of preparing generations of leaders for the labor market, and the need to fully outline the twenty-first century skills that students must possess.

3) In a comparative study by UNESCO to which compares the integration of information and communication technology in the curricula in several Arab countries, including Palestine, it was found that basic education curricula in Palestine lack specific objectives and courses that cover basic computer skills (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012).

The researcher believes that twenty-first century skills have a great role in preparing individuals to face the rapid changes, preparing them for a future full of inventions, discoveries,

and unfamiliar technologies, enabling them to continue learning and to create access to knowledge, use it optimally, and solve problems and issues. Facing them with others effectively and positively.

Moreover, scientific and technological development is one of the basic elements of the twenty-first century, which demanded an urgent need for students -in the information age- to obtain new skills, to develop their personal capabilities and to elevate them from mere students who possess some knowledge and skills to creative and innovative learners. Such learners would generate more useful creative value in the information age, as indicated in many educational literature and studies; (Al-Ghamdi, 2015), and (Jad, 2014) argued that the learner's possession of some of these skills brings many benefits such as:

1. It increases their motivation to learn, and enables them to act in times of crisis.

2. It helps them to interact and deal positively with society and gain self-confidence.

3. It empowers them with the ability to make decisions and take responsibility.

4. It develops their capabilities to face life problems and find innovative solutions to various obstacles.

5. It provides them with opportunities to interact successfully with communication and information technology.

6. It helps them develop the competencies they need to succeed in life and work.

   Therefore, the researcher concludes that the development and acquisition of 21st century skills has become one of the most important priorities for education at several levels.

Basics for Integrating 21ˢᵗ Century Skills into the Curriculum

Shalaby (2014, p.15) identified the foundations for integrating twenty-first century skills into the curriculum, as follows:

1) Linking the cognitive aspect of the content with applications from the real world through situations that present real problems that enable learners to see how their learning relates to their lives and the world around them. The task that they are required to do must be authentic, relates to real-life, and reflect it.

2) Emphasizing a deep understanding of the content, by focusing on projects and problems that require students to use their information in new and innovative ways and to broaden their understanding through the collaboration with others.

3) Helping learners understand their thinking processes and control them within cognitive activities that reflect the thinking strategies they use, and explain their effectiveness in achieving their goal.

4) Using technology to help learners access, analyze, organize and share information with others, and allow them to select the technological tools appropriate to the tasks they perform independently.

5) Providing opportunities for learners to become knowledge producers, instead of knowledge consumers, by providing opportunities to build and spread their knowledge on sites that allow others to evaluate and contribute.

6) Involving learners in solving complex problems that require higher order thinking skills, in which they apply what they have learned to reach new perspectives and solutions to problems.

7) Providing opportunities for learners to work in gathering information, solving problems, sharing ideas, and creating new ideas.

8) Providing opportunities for learners to become self-taught learners, taking responsibility for their own learning and learning how to work effectively with others to develop life and work skills.

9) Helping learners to make connections between different school subjects, and links between their ideas and others' ideas inside and outside the classroom.

In addition, Siemens (2008) and Darrow (2009) cited a set of characteristics and capabilities that the learner in the digital age must possess in line with 21st century skills, which can be summarized as follows:

1. The learner deals with a huge amount of data and information, which makes it important for him to be able to assess the reliability of data, to classify, analyze and synthesize it to produce useful and meaningful knowledge.

2. The learner deals with changing environments that are not under control, as it is vital to possess flexibility and adaptability skills.

3. In this digital age, no one is able to independently handle all the knowledge he needs and create meaning for this knowledge on his own, and for this, he must be able to cooperate with other individuals and rely on non-human tools such as databases that perform another part of the information processing tasks.

4. Part of the knowledge passes through very complex networks, and therefore the learner must have the ability to deal with these networks.

The researcher believes that the technology of the 21st century and its outcomes have imposed a challenge to the role of the teacher and his methods of teaching; it has gone beyond the one-way

educational discourse and imposed interactive learning programs based on the learner needs in a collaborative, communicative and integrative context. Such context invokes the potential of technology as tools, resources and media that open the learning process to the hyperactive tutorial, and critical thinking. It also provides a real opportunity to employ different teaching directions such as TBLT, which change roles and reformulate the relationships between the elements of the educational process and further help acquire skills needed for life and work in this fast-track new century.

Related Previous Studies

There is no doubt that the inclusion of twenty-first century skills in the educational process has received a lot of attention in recent years due to its effective role in preparing students to be able to keep up with this rapidly changing world, in addition to the role of these skills in developing students' academic level and achievement. This interest is evident in the tendency of researchers to study their impact on teaching various fields of study and skills. For instance, Khaldi and Kishek (2020) analyzed the new 8th grade Palestinian science and math curricula in light of the skills for the 21st Century. They investigated the extent to which these curricula are able to create citizens who enjoy a sufficient and balanced degree of these skills that they need to live properly and effectively in the 21st Century. To do so, they created an analytical rubric, which they used as a general framework for content analysis of the curricula; the rubric consists of twelve focal themes for identifying the skills for the 21st Century. Findings of data content analysis indicated that these curricula presented the 21st century skills very poorly, and in an unbalanced manner with very little focus and inadequate attention on most skills that had been analyzed; moreover they weren't in line with the recommendations of science and math education experts in this field, or related international standards. Additionally, in their paper, Khaldi and Kishek (2020) presented a general

conceptual and cognitive framework with relevant examples for restructuring and enriching the curricula with related authentic tasks. Those tasks transpire from the Palestinian socio-cultural context, in order to enable them to accommodate the 21st century skills, and provide schoolteachers with concrete and robust models to enhance students' skills for the 21st century. Finally, their paper presented concrete policy recommendations, and recommendations for more studies about the relevance and effectiveness of this enrichment models and conceptual framework in Palestinian new established curricula that suits the Palestinian context and its cultural heritage.

Furthermore, Motallebzadeh et al (2018)'s study: Teaching and learning in the 21st century, was conducted to investigate the relationship between 21st century skills and EFL learners' speaking and writing skills. The participants comprised 122 EFL learners from three private language institutes of Mashhad. Study instruments consisted of 21st century skills questionnaire, an independent samples t-test, and a Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Results indicated that 21st century skills had a significant effect on students' writing and speaking skills. Additionally, the interrelationship among five sub-constructs of 21st century skills questionnaire (critical thinking and problem solving, communication and collaboration, interpersonal skills, leadership, and technology literacy) were analyzed on speaking and writing scores; communication and collaboration had the highest correlation with foreign language speaking score and technology literacy had the highest correlation with foreign language writing score.

In addition, Bedir (2019) investigated ELT pre-service teachers' beliefs and perceptions on 21st century learning skills: the (4Cs), critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication skills. Data were collected using a semi-structured questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Results revealed that pre-service teachers mainly perceived 21st century learning as the integration of technology into classroom teaching. Their involvement and

awareness of the 4Cs was moderate, however, they had high positive perceptions towards them. Moreover, results showed negative beliefs held by the participants regarding the emphasis of 4Cs in the national curriculum and assessment, nonetheless they showed positive attitudes toward professional development for 4Cs.

Additionally, Khalil and Alamri (2019) investigated the effect, of developing an educational chapter based on the 21st century skills on students' academic achievement in Math and their self-esteem accordingly. 32 sixth grade students participated in a quasi-experimental design study; 17 students represented the control group and 15 students represented the experimental group. Results revealed that there were statistically significant differences at ($\alpha \leq$ 0.05) between the scores of the experimental and control groups in the post-test of both the achievement test and the self-esteem scale in favor of the experimental group, which confirms a positive effect for implementing 21st century skills in the development of the math unit.

Moreover, Paulsen (2017) conducted a study to investigate the effect of the inclusion of subject content and 21st century skills in pedagogical practice looking into claims of an educational-games platform that argue its possibility to facilitate such a combination . The researcher adopted the descriptive analytical approach on (14) upper secondary English learners. Results revealed that learners not only enjoyed the games but also that the activity promoted successful learning outcomes relevant both to subject content and 21st century skills.

Furthermore, Tuan Soh (2010) investigated the effect of the 21st century skills on students' attitudes and perceptions towards Physics. The researcher adopted the descriptive-analytical approach, where 760 students from four secondary schools in Selangor participated in the study. Instruments included a questionnaire to check for students' attitudes and perceptions towards learning physics and concerning the 21st century skills. Results showed that students' attitude

towards Physics were at a high level but students' perceptions of teaching and learning of Physics were at a moderate level. Pearson coefficient correlation analysis showed that there was a significant positive and strong relationship of 21st century skills on students' attitude towards Physics.

Summary

This chapter dealt with the theoretical framework, relevant literature and previous studies regarding the three main themes of the study (Vocabulary, Task-Based Language Teaching, and the 21st century skills). In the next chapter, research design and method will be discussed along with the tools used for this research and data analysis.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology and Design

Introduction

The main aim of this study was to construct learning tasks that would provide the students with opportunities to improve their vocabulary learning through authentic like situations. In order to create suitable language tasks, the researcher integrated 21st century skills into language instruction, to develop students' language proficiency around modes of learning abilities and life skills to reflect real-life language competencies. Hence, learners were engaged –away from traditional teaching methods- in a world of creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration.

To conduct the study, the researcher adopted a two group pre-test post-test quasi-experimental design. She constructed task-based vocabulary activities, which were created on the basis on the vocabulary items listed in three units (units 9, 10, 11) in the 8th grade "English for Palestine" textbook 8b[7]; these tasks included 21st century skills as crucial indicators to successfully accomplishing the tasks. Two 8th grade groups of students from the same school served as participants; "8A", was the control group who studied the vocabulary items in a traditional method, while "8B" was the experimental group and studied the vocabulary items via task-based language teaching (TBLT).

Subsequently, to complete the tasks, the researcher investigated the effects of applying them on students' vocabulary attainment, and explored students' attitudes towards the effectiveness of using tasks in the English vocabulary classroom. An achievement test, questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect the data.

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[7]A link to the English for Palestine textbook "8b": http://www.englishforpalestine.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/English-for-Palestine-8b-Pupils-Book.pdf

Lastly, the collected data were analyzed quantitatively using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and qualitatively using the thematic content analysis method.

In this chapter, the research approach and design are presented and justified. The participants' selection and the research instruments used in the study are also explained in more detail. Moreover, data collection, data analysis and actions taken to fortify the validity and reliability of the research findings are also presented.

Approach and Design

This study was conducted using a quantitative methodology with a quasi-experimental design. Such approach is constructed from real-world situations and is representative to educational-contexts conditions (Creswell, 2013). This indicates that the research is conducted under circumstances that consist of difficult-to-control variables, and that the research subjects cannot be assigned to special groups for the purpose of the research.

According to Seliger & Shohamy (1997), all experimental designs involve the control or manipulation of three basic constituents of the experiment, the "types and numbers of groups", "the treatment" and "measurement or observation". In this study, the researcher adopted the natural group setting as in the quasi-experimental design, and the number of groups in the study was two: one control and one experimental. Additionally, the treatment was the introduction of TBLT as a method to teach vocabulary, and this represented the independent variable of the study. Besides, in regards to the measurement, it refers to the evaluation of data collected to measure the effects of the treatment, which can be accomplished through research instruments. In this study, measurements took the form of tests, questionnaires and interviews.

Research Community and Population

The population of the current study is composed of all the 8th grade students in Ramallah school district in the 2019-2020 academic year. The sample of the study, which was selected purposefully from the whole population, consisted of 62 students from two 8th grade classes from Beit Liqya high school for girls. Each class consisted of 31 students. Class 8A represented the control group; students were taught the vocabulary items traditionally, while class 8B represented the experimental group; students were taught the vocabulary items through 21st century tasks. Furthermore, the sample was chosen based on important considerations in mind:

 1. The chosen school (Beit Liqya high school for girls) has two sections of the 8th grade class, each class has 31 students, which is suitable to consider as the sample of the study in quasi-experimental designs.

 2. The students have been learning English for 8 years, (since grade one), which the researcher finds suitable enough to consider them for the TBLT strategy in learning vocabulary.

3. Literature shows that 8th grade students are fit for the implementation of the 21st century skills; 13-year-olds are an age group where those skills prosper and show evidently.

4. The students and the teachers in the proposed school are very cooperative and helpful.

The following section elaborates on the research instruments that were used for data collection for research purposes.

Research Instruments

Vocabulary Tasks

Prabhu (1987) defined a task as "An activity which required learners to arrive at an outcome through some process of thought, and which allowed teachers to control and regulate the process" (p.24). Moreover, in an attempt to design appropriate tasks that would aid in the learning of

vocabulary items, the researcher considered implementing those tasks with 21st century skills to help further improve the learning process (English learning and the acquiring of important skills within the learners).

An example of task based teaching to the experimental group

The 8th grade Palestinian English textbook "English for Palestine" presents the new vocabulary items for each unit in period 1 and period 4 (Macmillan Education, 2013). Accordingly, teachers usually present new vocabulary items to their students using different strategies; some teachers would probably introduce vocabulary items using traditional techniques, which are classified into categories like visual, verbal, and translation (Garins & Redman, 1986). However, this study aims at teaching the vocabulary items proposed by different English units through TBLT method with the implementation of 21st century skills.

Therefore, the English teacher presented the tasks that the researcher had created to teach the new vocabulary by following three stages adapted from the task-based learning framework (Willis, 1996, 2012) as shown in (figure 3.1):

1. A pre-task stage
2. A task cycle stage.
3. A language focus stage that serves as the post-task stage.

Figure 3.1

The task-based learning framework (modified from Willis, 1996, 2012).
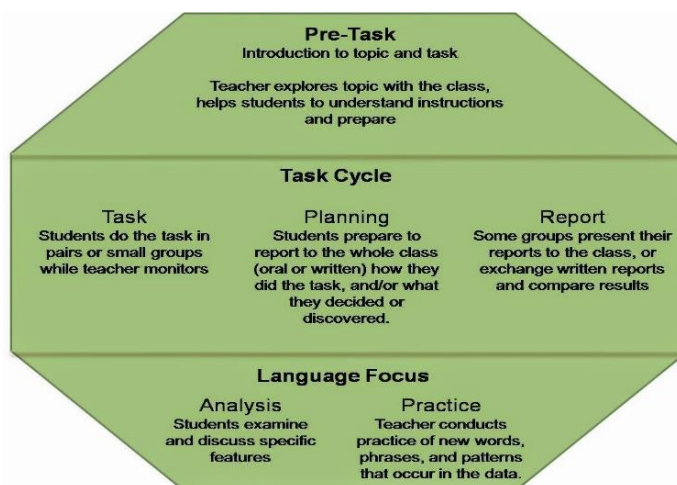
Consequently, in the pre-task stage, the teacher provided an introduction for the new vocabulary through activities like prior knowledge activation, brainstorming, visual aids, games, discussions, vocabulary activities, or reading.

Then, in the task cycle stage, the teacher gave clear instructions about the task that was especially designed for each unit. These instructions served as indicators for the students to accomplish the tasks while implementing the 21st century skills. For example, the teacher requested that students work in pairs or groups, in order to achieve skills like collaboration, communication, responsibility and leadership. Similarly, the teacher asked the students to look up information and check accuracy from multiple resources, to search for facts and details using the internet, to provide a soft-copy design and to send via e-mail in order to acquire skills such as information literacy, technology literacy, and productivity and accountability. In addition, in order to implement critical thinking and multi- cultural skills, the teacher asked the students to relate to our local Palestinian culture in order to compare and contrast similarities and differences with other world countries. Finally, upon task completion, the teacher required the students to present their work in front of their classmates, and to make room for classroom discussions; this would achieve important 21st century skills like leadership, classroom interaction, communication and significant social skills.

The post-task stage provided an opportunity for the learners to present vocabulary keywords on their final product, written or designed innovatively, to show creativity and productivity. Additionally, the teacher asked the students to compare their products with others to receive feedback from the teacher and fellow students. Finally, based on the analysis of the learners' products, more work on specific language points may follow. (Refer to Appendix four that addresses the five tasks in more detail).

Vocabulary Achievement Test

To measure the impact of implementing the 21st century skills through TBLT on learners' achievement in vocabulary learning, the researcher developed a vocabulary test that served as both a pre-test and a post-test. The vocabulary test that was carried out by the students of both groups (the experimental and the control groups) at the beginning of the study before they started learning any vocabulary items, served as the pre-test of the study. Similarly, the students of both groups carried out the same test, after they learned the vocabulary items of the three units; the test here functioned as the post-test of the study.

This test, which was designed to evaluate the learners' knowledge of vocabulary at the end of the semester, and aimed at providing an indication about the effectiveness of using TBLT on vocabulary learning, consisted of six main questions and tested around forty-five vocabulary items. The first question, "Match vocabulary items"; comprised a list of ten items to be matched with their meanings from an opposing list. The second question, "Odd one out"; a multiple-choice question, where one of the four choices did not belong to the rest of the items. The third question, "Translation"; students had to translate ten vocabulary words into Arabic. The forth question, "Word association"; students were asked to write a word that is associated with the vocabulary items. The fifth question "Put words in sentences of your own"; students had to come up with meaningful sentences of the vocabulary items. Finally, the sixth question, "Fill in the blanks with the appropriate word from the box"; students were asked to choose words from the box to fill in the right blank in different sentences. (Refer to Appendix one that elaborates the achievement test in more detail).

Students' Questionnaire

With the aim to investigate students' attitudes towards the effectiveness of using tasks - with the implementation of 21st century skills- in English vocabulary learning, the researcher developed a questionnaire to fulfill that purpose. The five point Likert scale questionnaire consisted of 40 statements, where students specified their level of agreement to statements according to the following scale:

1- Strongly disagree   2- Disagree   3-Undecided   4. Agree   5-Strongly agree

Questionnaire items were designed to investigate student's attitudes toward twelve main themes; these themes represented twelve 21st century skills as classified by the partnership of the 21st century (P21, 2006), and each skill was represented by a number of items. Themes are: creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, problem solving, productivity and accountability, responsibility and leadership, initiative and self-direction, information literacy, technology literacy, flexibility and adaptability and social and cross-cultural skills.

(Refer to Appendix two that demonstrates the questionnaire in more detail).

Students' Interview

In order to obtain supportive qualitative data, and to investigate students' attitudes and perceptions towards the effectiveness of using tasks -with the implementation of 21st century skills- in English vocabulary classes, the researcher designed a semi-structured interview that consisted of (26) questions. The interview was conducted with five students after completing the tasks. Interview questions extracted in-depth data from the students regarding the questionnaire items that they had filled. Similar to the questionnaire items, the interview questions also signified the same twelve 21st century skills that represented the same twelve themes.

(Refer to Appendix three that shows the semi-structured interview in detail).

Procedure of the Study

1) The study was conducted at the beginning of the second semester of the academic year 2019-2020.

2) Two 8th grade classes 8a and 8b were chosen to conduct the study at Beit Liqya Secondary School for girls to act as the control and an experimental group respectively.

3) Permissions were granted to conduct the study at the selected school from the ministry of education (Appendix 5).

4) A pre-test was conducted for both classes, and an independent samples t-test was conducted to check the homogeneity of both groups.

5) After that, "Miss Mariam", taught the vocabulary items for three units for both classes. The participants in the control group "8A" were required to study the vocabulary items using traditional techniques, whereas, for the experimental group "8B", they were required to study the same vocabulary items through 21st century implemented tasks, where the class time was divided into three phases: pre-task, task cycle and post-task as explained earlier (see figure 3.1).

6) In the "pre-task" phase, the teacher tried to motivate the learners and introduce them to the new vocabulary items. In the "during task" phase, the students were engaged in completing different vocabulary tasks that required the use of 21st century skills, and in the "post-task" phase, students delivered a presentation to show their work.

7) After eight weeks of instruction, the post-test was conducted to find out the probable differences between the performances of the two groups.

8) A questionnaire was distributed to the participants in the experimental group to investigate their attitudes.

9) Furthermore, an in-depth interview was conducted with five students who were chosen randomly from the experimental group to collect supportive qualitative data.

Validity and Reliability

Regardless of the research type, most research is concerned with producing "valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical manner"; validity and reliability that can be approached when "great attention is given to research's notions and concepts", and to "the way data are collected, analyzed, interrupted and to the way findings and results are presented"(Merriam, 2009).

Leung (2015) explains that validity refers to the accuracy of the findings of a research due to the appropriate use of research instruments, processes and data. Thus, to ensure validity and accuracy of the data and to assist in answering the research questions in this quasi-experimental design study; many methods like triangulation, internal and external validation were adopted. Triangulation, which refers to the combination and gathering of data from many sources (Creswell, 2013) was coined to ensure validity. In this research study, data of the achievement and attitudes of the 8th grade vocabulary learners towards 21st century implemented tasks were collected using different tools; for instance, an achievement test that was utilized as a pre and post-test, a questionnaire and an interview.

Additionally, in regards to ensuring a valid test, the researcher made sure that it measures what was supposed to measure, therefore, content validity was achieved by making sure that the test items focused on students' vocabulary achievement. In addition, to ensure that the test items were relevant and valid, five experts in teaching English as a foreign language revised the test. Based on the comments of the reviewers, modifications to the test items were made in terms of wording or the adding or removal of items.

As for the validity of the interview questions, all the questions used in the semi-structured interview were cross validated against the research study questions and the purpose of the study. This confirmed that all the interview questions were relevant. In addition, five colleagues at the TEFL Master program of Education at Birzeit University, who are also English teachers, reviewed the interview questions for more validation, hence, some items were added and some were eliminated upon their suggestions. Further, taking the findings collected through the interviews back to the participants for verification (respondent validation) confirmed the validity of the data collected through the interview instrument.

Furthermore, to confirm the validity of data collected through questionnaires, it was also submitted to five experts, who are colleagues at the TEFL Master program of education at Birzeit University and are also teachers of English at public schools. Thus, the questionnaire was modified in line with the experts' remarks and suggestions.

In brief, the content validity of the achievement test, the semi-structured interview and the questionnaire was insured since all questions were reviewed by experts who certified that instruments pertain to the vocabulary achievement and the learners' attitudes towards 21st century skills implemented tasks.

On the other hand, reliability refers to the precision and stability of the research responses in acquiring the same results if the test is repeated in the same way (Creswell, 2013). In order to establish consistency and steadiness to ensure interrater reliability in the data obtained through interviews, a second researcher performed the thematic analysis to check the degree of agreement between both analyses, and to make sure that the results are consistent and triangulated.

After agreeing on the process and the coding system, analysis was compared and contrasted with the other researcher's results. The agreement between both analyses was calculated using the following equation:

Agreement rate = number of similar codes / total number of codes *100%. The agreement rate was 0.9.

Pertaining to the reliability of the achievement test that was implemented as a pre-test and a post-test, the researcher took important measures. The researcher made sure that all test items were very clear, and that the number of test items was appropriate, so as not to cause tiredness among students, which would cause quick incorrect responses. In addition, most questions in the test were set as fixed responses to minimize and avoid any subjectivity from the teacher.

Additionally, to ensure reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach alpha was calculated; the value of alpha was equal to 0.78, which indicated a good level of reliability and high correlation between questionnaire items.

The process of analyzing the data will be addressed in the following section.

Data Analysis

After conducting the study, quantitative data collected through the achievement tests and questionnaire items, in addition to the supportive qualitative data collected through interviews were analyzed, reported, and investigated.

An independent samples t-test was used to statically compare experimental and control groups' test-results; to calculate the difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups in the pre and post-test.

In addition, in order to determine the improvement in the vocabulary learning of each group because of the teaching method, a paired samples t-test was used to identify the differences between the mean of the pre and post-test scores.

Likewise, the data collected through questionnaires were analyzed statistically by calculating means and standard deviations using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

Moreover, qualitative data gathered were described, interpreted, synthesized, and triangulated with the quantitative results. The transcribed data collected through interviews were analyzed using the thematic analysis content as qualitative process, which consisted of six phases (Braun &Clarke, 2006). First, the researcher read the transcribed data of interviews to become more familiar with the content. Then, data were read furthermore to find uniformities or dissimilarities to initiate codes; the researcher highlighted related paragraphs and sentences that appeared to a certain pattern. After that, the researcher assigned extensive portions of data together into related codes, and then congregated the codes into themes. Refinement and seeking coherence was after revising themes in relation to the skills of the 21st century and excluding ones that did not contribute to the research question. Next, themes were supported with text-evidence from the transcribed data. Last, final themes were presented to display twelve 21st century skills, supported by evident emblems and examples.

Summary

This chapter covered the methods used for implementing this study; it covered the methodology and the study research design, sample selection, instrument development, and data collection processes. Three types of instruments were used to collect data: an achievement test that functioned as a pre-test and a post-test, a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Moreover, the chapter presented the validity and reliability of the study tools and displayed data analysis techniques. Furthermore, results and data analysis findings will be presented in the following chapter.

Chapter Four: Research Findings

Introduction

This study aimed at investigating the effect of implementing the 21st century skills through Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) on learners' achievement in vocabulary learning. It also aimed at exploring learners' attitudes towards using language tasks, which are implemented by the 21st century skills, in their English vocabulary classes.

In this chapter, the research findings will be presented in light of the research questions. Furthermore, the research null hypothesis, which is related to the first question, will be examined.

Main Findings

Results Related to the First Research Question: "What is the impact of implementing 21st century skills through task-based language teaching (TBLT) on learners' achievement in vocabulary learning?"

To answer this question, the researcher formulated the following null hypothesis:

"There is no significant difference (at $\alpha \leq 0.05$) in EFL students' achievement in vocabulary, due to the method of teaching (using 21st century skills tasks vs. the traditional method)."

In order to answer this question, the researcher designed five vocabulary tasks using TBLT methodology (Appendix 4), based on main vocabulary items drawn from three different units from the 8th grade "English for Palestine" textbook "8B". These tasks incorporated the 21st century skills and were designed to be learned by students in the experimental group, whereas students in the control group learned the vocabulary items using traditional methods.

Successively, in order to check student's vocabulary attainment at the end of the three units, and to check for differences in students' vocabulary achievement due to the method of teaching (21st century integrated tasks), the researcher created a vocabulary achievement test (appendix 1).

Both groups applied the achievement test as a pre-test at the beginning of the semester before the research took place; the same test was applied as a post-test at the end of the intervention period when all the vocabulary items were studied.

Consequently, in order to check students' results of the pre- and post-tests for the experimental and control groups, independent and paired samples t-tests were used. This allowed the researcher to find differences between both groups before and after conducting the study by comparing means and standard deviations for both groups. In the following part, findings of the statistical tests' analyses are presented.

First, in order to check the equality of both groups, an independent samples t-test was conducted on students' pre-test marks; results are shown in the following table.

Table 4.1

Results of the Independent-Samples T-Test of the Experimental and Control Groups in the Pre-Test

Independent-Samples T-test				
Test	Group	Mean	Std. deviation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pre-test	Control	14.24	7.69	.53
	Experimental	13.42	6.38	

Table 4.1shows that the level of significance for the pre-test was 0.53, which is greater than 0.05, which means that there were no significant differences between both groups in the pre-test, thus we started with homogeneous control and experimental groups.

Next, in order to investigate the impact of using 21st century skills implemented tasks on students' achievement in English vocabulary, and to see if there was any significant difference

between the control group and the experimental group, an independent samples t-test was carried out on the post-test scores on both groups; results are shown below in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2

Results of the Independent-Samples T-test of the Experimental and Control Groups in the Post-test

Independent-Samples T-test				
Test	Group	Mean	Std. deviation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Post-test	Control	19.38	11.57	.005
	Experimental	26.94	9.24	

Table 4.2 above, shows the difference between both groups after conducting the tasks. We can see that the level of significance for the post-test was .005, which is less than 0.05. A level of significance that is less than or equal to .05 indicates that there is significant difference between both groups in the post-test scores. As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted as: There is a significant difference (at $\alpha \leq 0.05$) in EFL students' achievement in vocabulary due to using 21st century skills implemented tasks.

Another level of testing was done to examine the mean differences between both groups' pre-test and post-test scores, using paired samples T-test, and paired samples statistics as shown in table 4.3, 4.4 successively.

Table 4.3

Results of the Paired- Samples T-test of the Experimental and Control Groups in the Pre-test and

Post-test

Paired- Samples T-test				
Group	Test	Mean difference	Std. Deviation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Control	Pre-test	5.14	9.47	.007
	Post-test			
Experimental	Pre-test	13.51	4.89	.000
	Post-test			

As shown in table (4.3), the level of significance of the test was less than 0.05 for both

sections, which indicated a difference in means before and after the intervention for both groups.

However, when looking at table (4.4) below, more statistical differences are shown between the

control group and the experimental group.

Table 4.4

Results of the Paired- Samples statistics of the Experimental and Control Groups in the Pre-test

and Post-test

Paired- Samples statistics			
Group	Test	Mean	Std. Deviation
Control	Pre-test	14.24	7.69
	Post-test	19.38	11.57
Experimental	Pre-test	13.42	6.38
	Post-test	26.94	9.24

To elaborate, one can look at chart 4.1 that reflects table (4.4).

	pretest	posttest
control	14.24	19.38
experemintal	13.42	26.94

Chart 4.1: The mean of the pretest and post-test of the control and experimental groups.
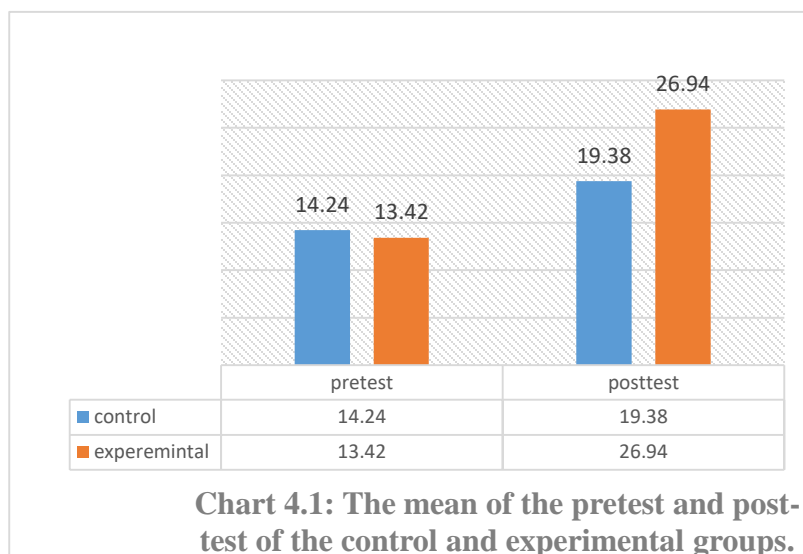
The paired samples statistics show an increase of 5.14 in the mean of the pre-test and post-test in the control group. Whereas, when comparing the mean of the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group, there was an increase of 13.52 in the post-test. That means that the students in the experimental group scored higher on the post-test after learning vocabulary through 21st century implemented tasks than students in the pre-test after learning vocabulary traditionally.

To conclude, Table 4.2 above, showed a significant difference (at $\alpha \leq 0.05$) in EFL students' achievement in vocabulary due to the method of teaching (using 21st Century skills tasks). Additionally, Tables 4.3, 4.4 showed a clear difference between the mean mark of both groups in the pre-test and post-test, which indicated a difference between both sections before and after applying the tasks. It is worth mentioning that the difference in marks means was five for the control group "section A", and thirteen for the experimental group "section B", which means that section B has a higher level of improvement in vocabulary than section A due to the method of teaching.

More findings concerning students' attitudes in relation to the second question will be presented next.

Results Related to the Second Research Question: "What are the learners' attitudes toward using language tasks implemented by the 21st century skills in their English vocabulary classes?"

In order to investigate the learners' attitudes towards 21st century skills implemented through tasks in the improvement of their vocabulary learning, the researcher utilized two further instruments: a closed 5-points Likert scale questionnaire (appendix 2) and a semi-structured interview (appendix 3). At the end of the intervention period, the students in the experimental group filled the questionnaire. Moreover, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with five students who filled the questionnaire. In this section, the questionnaire answers and interview responses are analyzed and reported.

Data collected through questionnaires was analyzed statistically by calculating the means and standard deviations using the SPSS. Moreover, interview responses based on the research questions have been transcribed, assigned into codes, grouped into categories and themes and finally generated based on twelve 21st century skills: creativity, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, information literacy, technology literacy, social and cross-cultural skills, problem solving, leadership and responsibility, flexibility and adaptability, initiative and self-direction and productivity and accountability.

In this section, findings of students' overall attitudes towards 21st century skills implemented through tasks will be presented, followed by interview findings related to attitudes towards each skill in particular. As such, data collected were triangulated for validity purposes of the instruments.

First, to investigate students' attitudes in general, the average mean of students' questionnaire responses towards all the items was calculated to generate a whole picture of their attitudes, results showed that the mean of all the items was 4.31, which indicated an overall positive attitude towards implementing 21st century skills through tasks in vocabulary learning. Moreover, means and standard deviations of items related to students' attitudes toward vocabulary learning through 21st century implemented tasks were calculated as seen in Table (4.5).

Table 4.5

Descriptive Statistics for Vocabulary Learning through 21st Century Skills Implemented Tasks

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
21st century skills tasks helped in learning vocabulary faster than memorizing them.	4.56	0.50
21st century skills tasks helped in learning new words	4.72	0.45
I could recall the meaning of a word more easily after conducting tasks	4.50	0.50
Tasks were interesting, and I liked them.	4.72	0.45
Tasks were a good way to learn English.	4.50	0.50
Mean of Vocabulary Learning & tasks	4.59	0.29

As shown in Table (4.5), the mean value for all the items related to students' attitudes toward learning vocabulary by applying tasks was around 4.6, which reflects a high level of agreement, since code five stands for "strongly agree" and code four stands for "agree". This means that students had strong positive attitudes, and that the majority of students agreed that 21st century skills implemented tasks aid in vocabulary learning. One more thing that needs to be taken

into consideration is that the standard deviation was less than one, so there was not much variance in the individual answers from the mean, which further indicates positive results.

In line with these quantitative results, findings from the interview responses revealed that there was an overall positive attitude towards using 21st century skills implemented tasks in vocabulary learning. According to the interview responses, which the researcher conducted with five participants, most students confirmed that they found tasks very interesting, exciting, and motivating, especially when compared to their "*boring traditional English classes*". For instance, student 2 (S2) added, "*We were very motivated to learn English this way*". S3 also stated, "*Tasks were such fun; we waited keenly for the vocabulary lesson to conduct new tasks.*" In addition, students confirmed that tasks allowed them to learn vocabulary faster than memorizing them, especially when they searched for a word or presented it. Similarly, all students confirmed that they could recall the meaning of a word easier after conducting a task. As well, they responded that tasks were a good way to learn English. S3 affirmed, "*I think applying tasks is a good way to learn English because it doesn't focus on memorizing; on the contrary, it gives us a chance to do things, like arts and crafts, and we love doing those, at the same time we are learning new words incidentally.*"

Moreover, when students were asked which way would help better in learning a new word or recall a meaning of a word, most students asserted that tasks would definitely help in learning vocabulary items faster than memorizing them, and that tasks could be a better way to recall a word than any other traditional way. For example, S1 shared her opinion,

This way, I mean applying tasks; I memorized many words quickly because I used them multiple times during the whole thing. For example, the word: "ground meat", it was very easy to recall its meaning because I encountered it many times while applying the first

task; when we searched the web for recipes, designed the menu, drew some pictures and when we presented the task.

Therefore, we could conclude that the majority of attitudes towards applying 21st century implemented tasks in Vocabulary English classes were positive and encouraging. The next part will present findings related to each 21st century skills.

1. Creativity

In order to investigate students' attitudes regarding creativity as one of the 21st century skills, means and standard deviations were calculated as seen in table (4.6). Furthermore, the researcher presented the most important findings extracted from the questionnaire items, and then linked them with students' responses from the interview as follows:

Table 4.6

Descriptive Statistics for Creativity

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
Tasks helped me create new and worthwhile ideas.	4.16	0.76
Tasks helped me evaluate my ideas to improve creative efforts.	4.12	0.70
Tasks allowed me to be creative.	4.53	0.50
Tasks helped me develop new ideas and communicate them to others effectively.	4.62	0.55
Tasks helped me be more creative in many ways.	4.09	0.81
Mean of Creativity	4.30	0.34

Concerning creativity, the above table (4.6) indicated that findings of the questionnaire had presented positive attitudes, where the values of the mean for different items ranged from (4.09 to

4.62). That indicates a tendency of the students to develop some kind of creativity. Depending on their feedback, the item that had been indorsed most was "*Tasks helped me develop new ideas and communicate them to others effectively.*" with a mean of (4.62), and the item that had been indorsed least was "Tasks helped me be more creative in many ways." with an average of (4.01). A close look at the standard deviation could tell that the whole class had acted similarly with their responses to items related to creativity, as the standard deviation was less than one, a further indication that students' attitudes were highly acceptable.

In addition, regarding interview questions associated with creativity, most students believed that tasks were stimulating, inspiring and encouraging, which helped them become more creative. For example, according to most responses, students confirmed that working on a task allowed them to think creatively and provide creative ideas in learning English.

In the same context, (S2) when asked if she thinks that tasks helped her become more creative and how, she answered that: *"It did a big deal, especially since most of the tasks involved being creative in designing and planning different aspects of a task"*. She added, *"When involved with tasks we had to think in a new creative way to produce new, unique and unusual ideas which I believe were creative, especially when we designed the wedding invitation and the food menu."* Thus, the findings regarding the attitudes of the students toward creativity were positive and satisfying.

2. Critical thinking

In order to investigate students' attitudes regarding critical thinking, means and standard deviations were calculated as seen in table (4.7).

Table 4.7

Descriptive Statistics for Critical Thinking

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
More thinking was required to accomplish a task.	4.34	0.86
Tasks improved my critical thinking skills.	4.28	0.88
Tasks helped me evaluate my ideas to improve creative efforts.	4.12	0.70
Working on a task required more thinking skills.	4.09	0.85
Working on a task improved my critical thinking skills.	3.84	0.84
Mean of Critical Thinking	4.13	0.44

Table 4.7 shows the descriptive statistics for critical thinking; analyzing the questionnaire items that presented critical thinking showed positive attitudes towards it. One can see that the students had positive attitudes regarding this competence, which is similar to what they had about creativity. It is noteworthy that the item that had the most level of agreement was "More thinking was required to accomplish a task." With a mean of 4.33 and the least agreed upon was "Working on a task improved my critical thinking skills" with a mean of 3.83.

Regarding interview questions related to critical thinking, most students believed that tasks would improve critical thinking skills. For example, S3 said, *"tasks helped us to think more, especially when discussing and planning for the task, and when presenting and showing our final task product to the whole class."* In addition, most students agreed that tasks could help them create new ideas, as well as help them find solutions when they face complex problems. Accordingly, findings regarding the attitudes of the students towards critical thinking skills were positive and affirmative.

3. Communication

Table 4.8 that follows summarizes students' responses of this aspect.

Table 4.8

Descriptive Statistics for Communication

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
Tasks helped me develop new ideas and communicate them to others effectively.	4.62	0.55
Tasks improved communication among my classmates.	3.84	1.05
Some tasks required communications outside the classroom to be completed.	3.97	1.03
Tasks allowed me to be more communicative with others.	3.97	0.96
Tasks helped me develop new ideas and communicate them to others effectively.	4.62	0.55
Mean of communication related items	4.10	0.65

As shown by the above table, the mean of the items related to this skill was ranging from 4.62 for "Tasks helped me develop new ideas and communicate them to others effectively." to 3.84 for "Tasks improved communication among my classmates." with a mean of means equal to 4.1. This means that most of the students have a tendency to agree to these items but not strongly agree.

Concerning interview questions regarding communication, students' responses varied. For instance, when they were asked if tasks would raise communication inside the classroom, students expressed that through tasks they acknowledged the importance of communication inside the

classroom; they also added that tasks helped raise communication among students in the classroom to a noticeable point, especially when planning for tasks, preparing for presentations, or when asking and answering questions. Yet, it was not the same case outside the classroom. S1 explained: *"I tried to communicate with my group members more often outside the classroom to follow up with them; however, they rarely called me back or responded to my messages".* She added, "*I wanted to check if they got their parts ready, especially the day before our task presentation".* Thus, findings regarding communication varied among students, however, results showed positive attitudes in the most part.

4. Collaboration

Table (4.9) bellow, shows findings extracted from the questionnaire in relation to collaboration, followed by students' interview responses regarding the same skill.

Table 4.9

Descriptive Statistics for Collaboration

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
I liked working in pairs or groups when conducting a task.	4.28	0.82
Tasks made me responsible for my individual and collaborative work.	4.19	0.45
Tasks encouraged me to value the individual contributions made by my team members.	4.25	0.80
Tasks allowed me to be more collaborative with others.	4.16	1.01
Mean of Collaboration	4.219	0.41

Table 4.9 investigates collaboration between classmates when conducting the vocabulary tasks. The table shows that average responses were close; they ranged from 4.16 for "Tasks

allowed me to be more collaborative with others," to 4.28 for "I liked working in pairs or groups when conducting a task." As all the item's means were close to four, we concluded that the students tended to agree to all of the items related to collaboration and that their attitudes were positive and optimistic.

In the same context, regarding interview questions related to collaboration, most students believed that working in groups or pairs was interesting and motivating. Most students responded that tasks helped them to set goals and to create plans for their team. In addition, some students stated that through contributions from each student, it paved the way for them to present their group work to the class in much better ways than if they have done it individually. Additionally, they said that they liked the sharing of different ideas and suggestions, which is also related to other skills like communication, critical thinking and creativity. However, some students expressed different attitudes; for example, student 3 thinks that collaborating in a group is stressful in a good way, which made the student more responsible. Therefore, the findings regarding the attitudes of the students towards collaboration were mostly positive and hopeful.

5. Technology Literacy

Next, findings regarding technology literacy will be shown.

Table 4.10

Descriptive Statistics for Technology Literacy

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
I liked using technology while accomplishing tasks.	4.6	0.47
I liked looking up information using the internet to complete tasks.	4.5	0.50
Tasks helped me be more involved in technology.	4.47	0.71

Working on a Task helped me use multiple recourses of information and data.	4.22	0.83
Mean of Technology Literacy	4.44	0.39

As shown in Table (4.10), technology was also one of the skills that have been highlighted during the application of tasks that were given to the students. Four questionnaire items were considered to test students' attitudes towards the effect of technology literacy on vocabulary learning. In addition, to measure the overall effect, an indicator for technology variable was created; the mean of this indicator was 4.44, which lies between the "totally agree" point (5), and the "agree" point (4). Besides, the means of most items for this skill were high, which indicated an overall positive attitude. Similarly, regarding interview questions related to the technology literacy skill, most students liked the use of technology in their English classrooms; students believed that tasks that required them become more involved in technology, helped more in vocabulary learning. For example, "S1" noticed that tasks that depended on using the internet for instance, helped her become more motivated to learn new words, she also stated that using technology is very interesting and exciting. Additionally, "S3" said,

> Although we did not have great access for technological tools and resources, we liked using technology while accomplishing tasks; we kept asking the teacher to allow us to complete our tasks in the computer room in school, to use google, the internet, word programs and others. That made us delighted; it made us motivated to learn I guess.

Students' interview responses confirms their positive attitudes toward technology literacy skills.

6. Information Literacy

Subsequently, in order to investigate the students' attitudes regarding Information literacy, means and standard deviations were calculated as seen in table (4.11). Further, questionnaire findings will be triangulated to students' interview responses.

Table 4.11

Descriptive Statistics for Information Literacy

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
I looked up information using the internet to complete tasks.	4.50	0.50
Through tasks, I learned how to make simple economic choices.	3.97	0.89
Tasks helped in using available information to make appropriate health-related decisions.	4.06	0.87
Working on a Task helped me use multiple recourses of information and data.	4.22	0.83
Working on a task helped me check the accuracy of news in social media.	4.25	0.76
Mean of Information Literacy	4.20	0.43

As shown in table 4.11, a little bit lower level of agreement was noticed toward information literacy, as the mean level of agreement of the indicator was equal to 4.2, which is closer to four. However, the overall behavior tends to "agree", which indicates positive attitudes towards information literacy skills.

Correspondingly, regarding interview questions related to the information literacy skills, all students believed that working on a task required using multiple recourses of information and data. For example, S2 said,

While working on a task, we searched multiple sites and resources; we did that to make sure that we have accurate information, like the task about what countries exports and imports, we liked the process of making sure we got the right answers.

Accordingly, the findings regarding the attitudes of the students towards information literacy were positive and pleasing.

7. Leadership and Responsibility

In the following table (4.12), the researcher presents the most important findings extracted from the questionnaire, and then interrelates them with students' answers from the interview regarding leadership and responsibility.

Table 4.12

Descriptive Statistics for Leadership and Responsibility

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
Tasks made me responsible for my individual and collaborative work.	4.28	0.45
Tasks encouraged me to become more of a responsible leader.	4.00	1.16
Tasks helped me become more responsible.	4.53	0.67
Working on a task required me to accomplish my job in the best way possible.	4.59	0.61
Mean of Leadership and Responsibility	4.35	0.49

As for Leadership and Responsibility, table 4.12 described the values of different statistics for the questions and the indicator. As shown in the above table, the mean values for all items were around 4.35, which reflects a high level of agreement to the effects of the tasks on Leadership and

Responsibility, since code five stood for "strongly agree" while code four stood for "agree"; this means that the average behavior of the class tended to agree.

The above table showed that the findings of the questionnaire presented positive attitudes among students. Likewise, regarding interview questions related to the leadership and responsibility, most students believed that working on a task would help in promoting responsibility among classmates. For example, S1 responded, *"As a group member, I felt very responsible in many ways; making sure the information we collected were accurate and making sure that everybody is ready for the presentation, and if we can help each other's in any way."* In a similar context, students believed that working on vocabulary tasks helped them gain leadership skills. For instance, "S4" answered,

Working on a task as a leader had many aspects; it required delegating roles and responsibilities within group members, it also required making sure that the task is being turned in and presented in the best way possible, by making sure that everyone did their assigned part. Additionally, if for any reason someone wasn't able to do their part; I as a leader, felt that I should find other ways to accomplish it, like sometimes they didn't have access to the internet or a printer, other times a student had no electricity, so we had to exchange roles; we had to cover that and find a solution.

Accordingly, we can excerpt that the findings related to the attitudes of the students toward leadership and responsibility were positive and inspiring.

8. Productivity and Accountability

In table (4.13) bellow, the researcher presents the most important findings regarding productivity and accountability.

Table 4.13

Descriptive Statistics for Productivity and Accountability

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
Tasks helped me become more productive.	4.44	0.5
Working on a task required me to accomplish my job in the best way possible.	4.59	0.61
Working on a task required me to follow ethical guidelines in all steps.	4.09	0.77
Mean of Productivity and Accountability	4.28	0.35

Regarding Productivity and Accountability, table 4.13 above showed that the mean for the productivity and accountability related indicator equals to 4.28, which means that students agreed that tasks were a good way to develop such a skill, therefore, we can conclude that the findings of the questionnaire had presented positive attitudes.

In the same way, regarding interview questions related to productivity and accountability, students believed that working on a task would require them to accomplish their job in the best way possible in order to achieve great results. Moreover, most students confirmed that working on a task encouraged them to excel and shine while at the same time, they felt accountable and responsible. They added that working on a task allowed them to achieve more than before, it made them feel distinguished and appreciated, moreover, and it increased their motivation and competition in the classroom.

Hence, the findings regarding the attitudes of the students towards productivity and accountability were positive and pleasant.

9. Initiative and Self-direction

In order to investigate students' attitudes regarding Initiative and self-direction as one of the 21st century skills, it was measured in one questionnaire item that is: Tasks helped me take initiative and become more organized and self-directed. Means and standard deviations were calculated; the mean agreement level for this item was 4.34, with a standard deviation score of 0.82, which means that most of the students have a great level of agreement, and that indicates positive attitudes.

Additionally, regarding interview questions related to initiative and self-direction, most students believe that working on a task could help them become more initiative and self-oriented. For example, S5 said, *"Tasks helped me become more initiative, I mean to do things without being asked to do good things of course; if someone for example needed some help, I would without hesitation, offer my help . . ."* In the same context, most students believed that tasks would help them become more self-oriented by many ways. For instance, it would help students set learning goals, balance time and explore opportunities.

10. Flexibility and Adaptability

Flexibility and Adaptability skill was measured in one questionnaire item that was "Working on a task helped me become more flexible and adaptive." The mean agreement level to this item was 4.0 with a std. deviation of .98, which indicated that this skill was positively indorsed as reported by the students.

Similar to the questionnaire findings, interview responses that were related to the skill of flexibility and adaptability, also presented positive attitudes. Most of the students believed that tasks would allow them to become more flexible and adaptive with different events. For example, S1 said, *"Working on a task helped us become more flexible and adaptive. We dealt with problems*

that we faced much easier; we tried to be flexible because circumstances would not be always like we wish." Accordingly, the findings regarding students' attitudes towards flexibility and adaptability were positive and inspiring.

11. Social and Cross-cultural Skills

Social and cross-cultural skills were measured in one questionnaire item that was "Tasks introduced me to different cultures and customs." For this item, the mean agreement level was 4.63 with a std. deviation of .50, which indicated that the students strongly indorsed this skill.

Concerning interview responses related to the social and cross-cultural skill, findings indicated positive attitudes, where most of the students believed that tasks would introduce them to different cultures and customs. For example, when asked if vocabulary tasks helped in promoting social and cross-cultural skills, S4 answered,

> Actually, I believe that I enjoyed that part a lot, I loved learning new information about other cultures; it was a great and informative experience. I liked the part when we compared new cultures to our Palestinian culture, and we evaluated similarities and differences between different cultures; plenty of information were new to us. Likewise, it was the part of the presentation that I liked the most, especially when presenting information about flags, food, clothes of other nations, that was exciting.

Given that, the findings regarding the attitudes of the students towards social and cross-cultural were positive and promising.

12. Problem Solving

Problem-solving skills were also measured using one item that was "Working on a task improved my problem-solving skills." The mean value of this item was 4.44 with a std. deviation of .70. This indicated a strong agreement level with a low level of deviation.

Concerning the findings of the interview responses related to the problem-solving skills, most of the students believed that tasks would help solve problems that students may encounter. For example, S3 added, "*while applying tasks, we faced some minor problems, and we tried to find answers and solutions, we tried to be creative and flexible.*" Accordingly, the findings regarding the attitudes of the students towards problem solving were positive and satisfying.

Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that most of the students strongly agreed to the fact that they would do more tasks to improve other English skills, Grammar, writing, speaking, etc., and that they would like more tasks that would improve 21st century skills. The means to these items were 4.51 and 4.63 respectively.

Overall, findings from the questionnaires and the interviews showed that students' attitudes were positive and motivating. Students demonstrated high levels of satisfaction, and most of the means for survey items were relatively high. In addition, most of the students expressed their answers during the interviews with high approval as well as positive attitudes towards using twenty-first century skills through task-based language teaching in vocabulary classes.

Summary

This chapter presented the findings of the data collected from students' pre and post-tests, interviews and questionnaires. The findings demonstrated important statistical and analytical implications, as they have shown a clear presence of statistically significant differences in student's achievement between the control and experimental groups due to the method of teaching for the benefit of students who studied vocabulary items by applying 21st century skills implemented tasks.

Moreover, triangulated data indicated that students have positive attitudes towards the use of tasks in teaching English vocabulary and towards implementing 21st century skills through tasks, the findings of the study revealed that the use of tasks in English vocabulary classes has a positive impact on learners' attitudes.

The following chapter presents the discussion of the findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter Five: Discussion and Conclusion

Introduction

Teaching English as a foreign language is challenging; to be a competent English learner, four language skills must be mastered on the macro skill level (listening, reading, writing and speaking). Nonetheless, the researcher argues that vocabulary learning is at the base of these four language skills; without having sufficient vocabulary, one would face serious struggles in learning English and in communicating with others.

However, this 21st century is not all about acquiring only macro skills. On the contrary, it stresses the demand to incorporate meaningful activities that allow students to procure a different set of skills; skills that would help them express ideas effectively, make decisions, communicate, collaborate, use multiple media and technologies, apprehend different perceptions and work creatively with others. Thus, schools are responsible to arrange teaching methods and practices that would help students acquire such skills; skills that would help them succeed, not only inside classroom walls but also in their life and work in the future. Successively, EFL classrooms need to be filled with such activities, to enrich their learning experiences and to provide them with opportunities to develop the literacies needed in today's world.

A great example of such skills, are the 21st century skills outlined by the partnership for the 21st century (P21, 2006); Partnership for the 21st Century Skills (P21, 2015) defined them as "A broad body of knowledge, skills, work habits, and personality traits; to succeed in the present and future days, especially in contemporary occupations" (p.66). These skills focus on acquiring abilities that include "but are not limited to" creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, technology literacy, initiative and self-direction, and social and cross-cultural skills.

Accordingly, the researcher has constructed creative, communicative and collaborative learning tasks that would most likely provide students with opportunities to improve their vocabulary through authentic-like situations. The researcher believes that implementing tasks with the 21st century skills would engage learners –away from memorizing meanings and repetition- in a world of ingenuity, and critical thinking contexts that would result in an increase in their achievement, along with affecting their attitudes towards the experience positively.

Consequently, a task-based language teaching approach (TBLT) was adopted for this research. The researcher believes that TBLT is a great example of how 21st century skills can be integrated into language instruction, where the goals of a language program are to develop students' language proficiency around modes of communicative competence and reflecting real-life skills (Partnership for 21st Century skills, 2006).

Discussion of the Main Findings

The purpose underpinning this study was to explore the effect of implementing 21st century skills through (TBLT) on eighth graders' English vocabulary achievement, and their attitudes towards it. Hence, to examine the effect of 21st century incorporated tasks on students' achievement and attitudes, the researcher adopted a quasi-experimental study design, formed two research questions and a null hypothesis, created and applied study instruments and gathered data; data were collected by an achievement test, a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews.

Consequently, this chapter discusses the results of the study according to the research questions and their findings. Additionally, this chapter ends up with a set of recommendations for future studies.

Discussion of the Findings Related to the First Research Question: What is the Impact of Implementing 21st Century Skills Through Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) on Learners' Achievement in Vocabulary Learning?

Quantitative data obtained through post-test results were analyzed using T-Tests. The main findings of the first research question demonstrated a significant difference at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in EFL students' achievement in English vocabulary due to the method of teaching (using 21st Century implemented tasks) in favor of the experimental group. Moreover, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted, i.e., "There is a significant difference (at $\alpha \leq 0.05$) in EFL students' achievement in vocabulary due to using 21st century skills tasks". Additionally, findings showed a crucial significant difference between the mean mark of both groups in the pre-test and the post-test, which indicated a difference between both sections before and after applying the tasks. It is worth mentioning that the difference in marks means was five for the control group "section A", and thirteen for the experimental group "section B", which means that section B has a higher level of improvement in vocabulary than section A due to the method of teaching.

Certainly, the incorporation of 21st century skills in instructive methods has received a lot of consideration in recent years due to its effective role in preparing students to be able to keep up with this rapidly changing world, in addition to the role of these skills in developing students' academic level and achievement.

Moreover, the researcher strongly supports the claim that adopting TBLT methodology, with the incorporation of 21st century skills, in English classes promotes students' learning, enhances the development of vocabulary retention, social interaction, and motivation to use English in real-life situations. Accordingly, the researcher argues that that is one important reason, which can be referred to, for the outperformance of the experimental group -when compared to the

traditional group- in vocabulary learning. The collaborative and interactive nature of the learning context provided by the research, affected vocabulary learning, and skills development.

In the same context, Nunan (2014) explained that TBLT draws strength from main principles, one that claims that learners develop the ability to communicate in a language through using the language rather than studying and memorizing bits of the linguistic system. In the same context, TBLT being a meaning-centered methodology (Ellis, 2003), provides an authentic, purposeful, and intentional background for comprehending and using language. Such meaningfulness is encouraging for the EFL learners to outstand and achieve better than those learning via traditional methods, where the focus is mostly on translation and memorization of new vocabulary. Such traditional contexts could disconnect students from situations in which vocabulary is used.

Likewise, the implementation of 21st century skills through learning tasks has been shown to motivate learners; main TBLT features described by Skehan (1998) include the learners' engagement in the learning process, away from rote learning, memorizing and repeating. According to Nunan (2014), one of the strong explanations that TBLT advocates stand by, is the fact that communicative engagement in tasks would provide an abundant and crucial condition for second language acquisition (Krashen & Terrell, 1983).

Similarly, 21st century implemented tasks could provide learners with more meaningful real-life situations; tasks are authentic materials that impose learner-centered communication and negotiation of meaning, integration of new and existing knowledge, where a meaningful non-linguistic outcome can foster vocabulary acquisition. Likewise, research has shown that interactive teaching involving task-based learning is effective for language learning, and has the potential to bring vocabulary gains due to the characteristics of tasks (Sarani & Sahebi, 2012).

In addition, in similar experimental design studies, which revealed similar results concerning the use and effectiveness of task-based language teaching in English classes, most findings showed that TBLT could be used to promote language learning in students who learn English as a foreign language. Alshenqeeti (2019), (Amer, 2019), (Kafipour et al., 2018) and (Kamalian, Soleimani & Safari, 2017) investigated the effect of task-based language teaching (TBLT) on various English language skills. Results revealed that the experimental group students outperformed the control group students on the EFL skills as a result of employing TBLT. Moreover, Findings showed that TBLT improved EFL learners' abilities significantly in terms of different aspects of language competencies, including sentence mechanics, language use, vocabulary, content, and organization. Likewise, results revealed that TBLT has significant and meaningful impacts on EFL learners' vocabulary learning and retention.

Furthermore, regarding learning vocabulary through tasks, most students admitted that they learned vocabulary faster than before, and they have better retention for vocabulary items than those learned traditionally. Likewise, students acknowledged that studying English this way, enhanced their ability to recall vocabulary items when compared to memorization or repetition, especially when presenting the tasks; they recalled the meanings of almost all the vocabulary words. The researcher finds these findings similar to Jurcenko's (2015), where he examined how task-based method works in practice, making the learners not only memorize new terms, but also use them in communicative situations; by the end of the study, learners memorized the provided vocabulary items, and were able to use them effectively. Similarly, the current study is in line with Martínez's (2018) who found that task-based education encourages students to learn, as well as retain language skills and creativity.

Additionally, the current study is in line with Salman's (2015), who investigated the effect of an instructional program based on learning tasks in teaching the English language on the tenth-grade students' achievement and acquisition of social skills and their attitudes towards English language learning. 55 10th grade students from Al- Shoneh Comprehensive Secondary School for girls were divided into two groups; 28 students represented the experimental group, and 27 students represented the control group. The study revealed that there was a statistically significant effect of the instructional program based on learning tasks on tenth-grade students' achievement in English language acquisition, social skills and their attitudes towards English language learning; concluding that teaching vocabulary by applying task-based language teaching method is effective and influential.

Discussion of the Findings Related to the Second Research Question: What are the Learners' Attitudes towards Using Language Tasks Implemented by the 21st Century Skills in their English Vocabulary classes?

Main findings of the second question, obtained through analyzing data from the experimental group's closed questionnaire answers and interview responses, revealed positive and satisfactory learners' attitudes towards using language tasks implemented by the 21st century skills on their English vocabulary learning. Students demonstrated high levels of agreement towards questionnaire items, where most of the means were relatively high. In addition, most of the students' interview responses showed high approval as well as affirmative attitudes.

One important reason behind students' positive attitudes, as the researcher argues, is the incorporation of 21st century skills through TBLT in learning vocabulary as indicators to accomplish language tasks. Fan- Jiang's (2008) elaborated that TBLT could enhance student's motivation and attitudes toward learning English. Similarly, 21st century skills bring many benefits

that would generate positive attitudes toward learning in the information age, such as the increase in motivation to learn, interacting and communicating positively with others, gain self-confidence, and gain the ability to make decisions and take responsibilities (Al-Ghamdi, 2015), (Jad ,2014). Al-Ghamdi (2015) added that 21st century skills aid in the developing of learners' positive attitudes since they provide capabilities to face life problems, find innovative solutions, and provide learners with opportunities to interact successfully with information technology, thus, the 21st century skills could help students develop the competencies they need to succeed in life and work. The researcher argues that obtaining such skills and competencies could definitely lead to self-confidence, which leads to positive attitudes towards language learning.

In a similar study, Salman (2015) investigated the effect of an instructional program based on learning tasks in teaching the English language on the tenth-grade students' achievement and acquisition of social skills and their attitudes towards English language learning. The study unveiled that there is a statistically significant effect of the instructional program based on learning tasks on tenth-grade students' achievement in English language, acquisition social skills and their attitudes towards English language learning.

The next section discusses the findings of students' interviews regarding their attitudes towards 21st century skills incorporated through tasks.

Throughout the interviews, all students expressed enjoyment and gratitude towards the whole experience. They stated that it was exciting, interesting and stimulating, especially when compared to previous traditional English classes. They said that through the 21st century skills incorporated tasks they practiced and gained new skills that they valued and enjoyed. Students added that tasks motivated them to learn English, actually, they started enjoying the English language and English classes, they now prepare their lessons and wait eagerly for tasks to apply

and present; they liked the fact that they have to look for words and search for information, instead of just copying them in their notebooks.

Moreover, when asked about their attitudes toward the 21st century skills as important indicators to fulfill the tasks, students expressed many positive attitudes towards each skill. In addition, tasks helped students improve these skills and develop new roles in the English classroom and other life related contexts.

Next, the researcher presents an elaboration of the findings in regards to each skill individually.

1. **Creativity**

The researcher found that the authentic life contexts provided by the study, lead students to create useful things and find creative solutions to problems. Students assessed their ideas and their colleagues' to maximize creative and innovative efforts. Besides, Students as creators reacted to new perspectives and used language in new ways to make worthwhile contributions. According to Fosnot (1989), learning in a constructivist context yields an organic process of invention, rather than a mechanical process of accumulation. The researcher argues that creativity involves processes like assuming and predicting, posing questions, researching, imagining, investigating, and inventing, which pave the way for learning, or as constructivism defines it "new constructions to be developed" (ibid).

2. **Critical Thinking**

Regarding this skill, students responded that this was a new term that they were introduced to. Students started thinking critically especially when solving problems, making decisions, and evaluating ideas. In addition, students replied that through tasks, critical thinking helped them analyze, and synthesize information as well as negotiate meaning in order to explore problems and issues. Meaningful learning according to Fosnot (1989) occurs through reflection and resolution

of intellectual conflict, which provides enough balance to initiate thinking, which helps learners to assess and reflect upon preceding knowledge (thinks critically).

3. **Communication**

While working on tasks, students were engaged in meaningful conversation, understood and interpreted spoken and written language, and negotiated information and ideas. Vygotsky's social constructivism focuses on the role of society in building knowledge in the individual, and emphasizes in particular on negotiation and interaction in individual and social development. Besides, social constructivism considers learning a factor of intellectual growth, where the intellectual activity of the individual cannot be separated from the intellectual activity of the group to which he belongs (Scott, 1998).

4. **Collaboration**

Cooperative learning and social interactions have a major impact on constructing both the cognitive and emotional states in learners (Brown, 2007). When students worked collaboratively in pairs and groups, they expressed a level of engagement and enjoyment; despite the fact that group work is considered relatively new to them and they used to work individually. Furthermore, they added that through collaboration, they discussed their opinions, and negotiated issues; collaboration also divided the workload between them, which helped in accomplishing the tasks and solve problems better and faster. They also collaborated to present ideas and made efforts to make group work successful.

Interestingly, one student indicated that when collaborated with other students, as a group leader, she held most responsibilities and made necessary compromises while working towards a common goal; in fact, she didn't state that negatively, on the contrary, she felt that she developed new skills that she didn't know existed before, which are leadership and responsibility. Fosnot

(1989) asserts that when we interact with our surroundings, we use our prior knowledge to understand and make judgments, as well as reshaping and building new considerations, which is one important characteristic of social constructivism.

5. **Information Literacy**

Students mentioned that when working on tasks, they made sure to assess the accuracy, consistency, and usefulness of information available in various sources, such as journals, books, and websites. They identified appropriate sources of information and chose what is useful and necessary to accomplish the tasks. Siemens (2008) and Darrow (2009) cited -among a set of characteristics and capabilities- that the learner in the digital age must possess the need for information literacy skills. The learner deals with a huge amount of data and information, which makes it important for him to be able to assess the reliability of this data and to classify, analyze and synthesize it to produce useful and meaningful knowledge.

6. **Problem Solving**

When conducting and applying the vocabulary tasks, students admitted that they encountered many problems and they tried to find appropriate solutions to accomplish them and present them to the class for discussion. Foote, Vermette, and Battaglia (2001) explained that active problem solving is the center around which learning should revolve, and how students make sense of the world around them.

7. **Technology Literacy**

When working on tasks, Student liked using technological tools as networks, websites, and software applications to obtain information, store or publish reports. Although students' access to technological tools were limited, they asked their teacher to take them to the computer lab at school to employ technology as tools for communication and exchanging information and experiences.

They added that using technology when employing tasks motivated them towards learning English in general and vocabulary in particular. Cowie and Jones (2009) enlightened the significant role of information and communication technology in improving education and its impact on learners' motivation and classroom integration, they elaborated that using technological tools in the classroom, enhances communication and the stimulation of thinking, additionally it supports interaction in presenting, analyzing and modeling data.

8. **Flexibility and Adaptation**

Students responded that through conducting tasks, they faced obstacles that affected them to become flexible and adaptive language learners. They became open-minded and willing to take risks, they also adapted to complications and difficulties they might face in their lives. Social constructivism confirms that knowledge is an activity in the world of life, and that learning serves adaptation to life (Henriques, 1998).

9. **Initiative and Self-direction**

When Students were asked about initiative and self-direction skills, they responded that they sat goals, managed their time, and worked hard to complete projects, and achieve goals. Students were motivated to set their own goals and reflect on their progress as they grew and improved their linguistic and cultural competence. According to Wang (2011), constructivism emphasizes learners' autonomy, reflectivity, personal involvement and active engagement in the process of learning; virtually related to the case with TBLT principles. Additionally, Kohenen (1992) focuses on self-directed learning, where the emphasis is on the learning process --through social and communication skills, intrinsic motivation and self-inquiry-- rather than on the final product.

10. **Cross-cultural Social Skills**

Students revealed that they were very pleased to learn and understand issues and problems of other cultures when they applied tasks and were required to research and look up information about different countries. Students understood diverse cultural perspectives and compared them to other international and local Palestinian contexts. In this regard, Henriques (1998) explained that constructivism emphasizes education for social transformation as a reflection of the theory of human development, which is based on "individualism within the social-cultural context"; he added that the development of the individual is derived from social interactions within a framework of cultural meanings derived from the group and its interaction with the individual.

11. **Productivity and Accountability**

In this regard, the students disclosed that through implementing tasks, they set goals, prioritized needs, managed times and collaborated with others to accomplish and produce tasks in the best way possible. In addition, students felt accountable, and were willing to take duties, and be responsible for their own work.

12. **Leadership and Responsibility**

Students as responsible leaders influenced their different skills to inspire others to be fair, accepting, open, and understanding within and beyond their classroom. In regards to responsibility, students took responsibility for their work; especially leader students, who kept checking on other team members, to help them and find solutions for any encountered problems.

Degree of Generalization of the Research Results

Although this study was conducted on 62 students of Grade Eight in a rural Palestinian classroom, the researcher would argue that the results of the study could be generalized to the whole educational system in the Palestinian main stream schools for the following main considerations:

A. The nature of the topic (Vocabulary Acquisition)

Since many people all over the world use English language for communication purposes, many Palestinian students have started learning it as a foreign language from Grade One. Therefore, one might assume that these students are able to master vocabulary when they are older. However, literature demonstrates that some students may have good vocabulary knowledge, and some won't. Accordingly, most students may have many difficulties learning vocabulary at different learning stages. This may be mainly because of the way vocabulary is taught using traditional methods, in which teachers provide students with an Arabic translation of different words, or they might ask the students to use them in meaningful sentences. As a result, most students at different grades would benefit from practicing new teaching methods in their EFL classes, such as TBLT.

In this context, many studies had investigated vocabulary acquisition through different classes and grades; for example, Othman (2018) aimed at investigating the 3rd graders' vocabulary learning and the improvement of their visual thinking at one UNRWA school, similarly, El Kurd (2014) investigated 3rd graders' achievement in English vocabulary and the improvement of their motivation towards learning English. Moreover, Bader (2017) investigated the effectiveness of using PAVE strategy on learning English vocabulary and its retention among eleventh graders in the North of Gaza. Likewise, Kuhail (2017) investigated the development of sixth graders' English reading skills and vocabulary learning and its retention. Additionally, Al-Lahham (2016) aimed at

investigating the effectiveness of using keyword-based instruction on developing eighth graders' English vocabulary and its retention. Whereas Bakheet (2016) aimed at investigating 10th graders' English vocabulary, retention and reading skills, as well, Abdal Rahim (2015) investigated eleventh graders' vocabulary learning and its retention and attitudes towards English.

B. The nature of the teaching strategy TBLT

TBLT has been defined and perceived by different experts and teachers in different contexts (Nunan, 2004), yet it generally "*refers to an approach based on the use of tasks as the core units of planning and instruction in language teaching*" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 223). Accordingly, different designs have been proposed to implement a task-based lesson in language teaching classes (Prabhu 1987; Willis 1996). Therefore, TBLT have been thoroughly investigated in many learning contexts and settings.   For example, Albino (2017) attempted to assess how ninth-grade learners of EFL improved their speaking fluency in a task-based language teaching (TBLT) approach, where Khoshsima & Saed (2016) investigated 60 intermediate (their age range was between 16-17 years old) EFL learners' vocabulary learning within the paradigm of Task Based Language Teaching. Similarly, Salman (2015) aimed to investigate the effect of an instructional program based on learning tasks in teaching English language on the tenth-grade students' achievement and acquisition of social skills and their attitudes towards English language learning.

C. The nature of the intervention with life skills that people need in all levels and can be incorporated for all classrooms

Many Educators and experts claim that it is very essential for our students to gain and improve vital 21st century skills. Without these skills, they may not be able to successfully participate in the

global economy, therefore, they might not be effectively prepared for college and work (Khaldi & Kishek, 2020).

Most of these skills could be (and should be) developed in the classroom. Where among traditional academic subjects students usually learn, such as mathematics, science and social studies, students at all ages should learn how to gain important life skills such as collaboration, problem solving and creativity, and career skills such as innovation, technology and information literacy. While some of these 21st century skills 'may not seem' relevant for young learners, the researcher argues that it's very important to provide a good foundation of skills at an early age. Experts worldwide acknowledge that today's students need more than the traditional reading, writing and arithmetic to prepare for 21st century careers, for example, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (PS21) is working with educational leaders to create improved classroom curriculum that adds the 21st century skills.

In the same context, many studies investigated the effect of incorporating the 21st century skills into learning instruction, (different learning subjects and different learning grades), they investigated the effects of incorporating those skills on students' achievement and/or attitudes. For example, Khaldi and Kishek (2020) offered a general framework that would enable the 8th grade science and math students to acclimate the 21st century skills, they provided schoolteachers with concrete and robust mechanisms and models to enhance students' skills for the 21st century. Khalil and Alamri (2019) aimed to investigate the effect, of developing educational unit based on 21st century skills in the development of academic achievement and math self-esteem among sixth grade's students. Where Khamies (2017) investigated the impact of applying Substitution, Augmentation, Modification and Redefinition 'SAMR' model in developing 21st century skills of (94) 10th grade students on their academic achievement in chemistry.

Further, Paulsen (2017) explored including subject content and 21st century skills in the pedagogical practice. The study had been applied on 14 upper secondary students in one of the school's English classes. Additionally, Melhem (2017) explored the degree of the availability of the 21st century skills in the technological decision of the higher elementary stage students, and the degree to which they possess these skills from their point of view. Also, Heinrichs (2016) aimed in his study to Prepare students as 21st century learners as a key reform in education, whereas Vebrianto et al., (2016) investigated the effectiveness of BIOMIND portal in enhancing 118 high school students' 21st century skills and overcoming their misconceptions in Biology subject.

Conclusion

English as a global language helps people express their own characteristics and communicate clearly with the world (Crystal, 2006). Consequently, many researchers argue that today's EFL classrooms should no longer focus on grammar, memorization and learning from repetition (Eaton, 2010). Rather, it should focus on learner centered, collaborative and technologically driven contexts, to use language and cultural knowledge as a means to connect to others around the globe (IBID).

Furthermore, the EFL context today in the 21st century witnesses a massive content of activities in language teaching methods and approaches. Rogers (2000) argued that one of the most prominent used approaches in EFL classrooms is the communicative approach, which emphasizes communicative competence, learner-centeredness and interaction; it paved the way for new methodologies such as task-based language teaching TBLT (Richards, 2006).

Accordingly, the researcher would argue that task-based language teaching (TBLT) is very convenient to incorporate the 21st century skills, since TBLT requires learners to apply meaningful tasks by using language in an authentic environment (Ellis, 2009). Hence, by learning English vocabulary via 21st century skills implemented tasks, students are facilitated to acquire multiple linguistic and life skills, and to develop these skills much further.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study investigated the effect of incorporating 21st century skills through TBLT, on 8th grade Palestinian students' achievement and attitudes. Further research needs to be conducted to examine other English language skills; writing, reading, speaking, listening and/or grammar. More studies can examine different grades and stages, and can examine the private school sector . It also can investigate male student, to check if gender has an effect as a variable on the study results.

Besides, research can be more comprehensive and on a larger scale if more schools are investigated.

In addition, the research data were collected using achievement tests, questionnaires and semi-structured interviews as research instruments; other instruments could be used in future research such as teachers' observations and reflections to collect qualitative data to get more in-depth results and to enrich the knowledge of the Palestinian educators and learners about the effectiveness of integrating 21st century skills in the instructional field.

Finally, it is hoped that in light of this study results, schoolteachers and learners will be encouraged to adopt more communicative approaches with the incorporation of 21st century skills in the language learning process, to develop their linguistic skills and help them acquire essential abilities that are crucial to live and work successfully in this innovative 21st century.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

<div align="center">

<u>English Vocabulary Achievement Test</u>

<u>Students Name……………………   8th grade: A -- B</u>

</div>

Please follow these general instructions, and pay attention to each questions' directions:

1. The test consists of six questions.

2. All questions are obligatory; you should try to answer all of them.

3. Answer all questions on the same paper in the specified spaces.

4. Time of the test: 40 minutes.

5. Total Marks: 50 marks.

<div align="center">

Thank You & Good Luck

</div>

First Question (10 marks)

Kindly match each vocabulary word in the left column with its appropriate English meaning from the right column, write the appropriate number next to the correct answer:

word		Meaning	
1	Celebrate		Aim to do something
2	DVD		An Italian dish, made of flour and water
3	Curly		Build
4	Import		Lucky
5	Pasta		Enjoying a happy day/ event
6	Tub		Lenses used to correct eyesight
7	List		Device for storing data
8	Purpose		To bring into the country from abroad
9	Glasses		A number of items written one bellow the others.
10	Construct		A container
			Arranged in curls or curves

****

Second Question (10 marks)

Odd one word out from each group of words, in each line, there is one word that does not belong to the rest:

a) bag   juice   tray   box
b) import   buy   ice-cream   export
c) Gaza   Canada   Brazil   America
d) rice   tea   juice   coffee
e) bride   teacher   groom   couple
f) CD   DVD   toy   video
g) guests   visitors   people   rooms
h) wedding   birthday   party   club
i) Beard   hair   moustache   eye
j) Various   similar   different   several

****

Third Question (10 marks)

Provide the Arabic translation for the next *ten* English vocabulary words:

1. groom: _____   6. wheat: _____

2. guest: _____   7. tub: _____

3. dough _____   8. moustache _____

4. tower _____   9. ground meat _____

5. deep _____   10. wife _____

****

Forth Question (5 marks)

Write a word that is in association with the following vocabulary items (this means a word that is more properly comes in the same context):

Ex: **Blue**:

 Association words are **blue sea**, **blue sky**.

1. Carton: _____

2. Full: _____

3. Hotel: _____

4. Groom: _____

5. Tower: _____

****

Fifth Question (5 marks):

Use the following vocabulary words in sentences of your own:

1) **Climate:_____**

2) **Tomato paste: _____**

3) **Beard:_____**

4) **Bride:_____**

5) **Ring:_____**

****

Sixth Question (10 marks):

Fill in the blanks with appropriate word from the boxes:

groom	human beings	ground meat	each	deep	jars
stick	curly	imports	pasta	list	centre
side	wife	exports	Palestine	straight	tomato paste
bride	dough	climate	celebrate		

1. Swimming in the Dead Sea is not dangerous because it isn't ………………..

2. All ………………….. need peace and love to live happily .

3. Let's swim to the other …………. of the lake.

4. Palestine Street is the ………………….. of Gaza city .

5. Hazem's ……………….. is Russian, but she could speak Arabic well.

6. The ………………………. of Palestine is good for growing olives.

7. Bread is made from …………………………..

8. ……………………….. is an Italian food.

9. We usually make a shopping ……………….. When we go to the market.

10. Could you get me a kilo of………………….……….to make kebabs.

11. The …………………… is riding a horse and his friends are around him.

12. Nadia's wedding is tomorrow. She will be a wonderful ………………

13. Muslims …………………….. Eid Al-Fitr after Ramadan.

14. We usually ………………. posters all over the walls of our class.

15. Rula used to have long ………………… hair but now she made it …………..!

16. We have many tomatoes, but we do not have much ………….. ……………….

17. Our country …………………. olive oil and ……………………. machines and cars.

18. We need two ………… of black and green olives. We need one of …………… kind.

****

End of Test

Thank you and Good Luck

Appendix 2

Students' Attitudes Questionnaire

The Questionnaire of 'eighth-grade students' views, attitudes and perceptions towards the effectiveness of using tasks -with the implementation of 21st century skills- in English vocabulary classes, in the development of their vocabulary learning.

Dear students,

 This questionnaire was designed to examine students' views and attitudes towards the effectiveness of using 21st century skills implemented tasks in the vocabulary English language classes.

Please note that data obtained through this questionnaire will remain <u>confidential</u> and will be used only for the purpose of academic research. Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire.

I truly appreciate your efforts.

Please read each statement below and note whether you agree or disagree with it:

1- Strongly disagree 2- Disagree 3-Undecided 4- Agree 5-Strongly agree

#	Statements	1 Strongly disagree	2 disagree	3 Undecided	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree
1.	Tasks were interesting, and I liked them.					
2.	Tasks were a good way to learn English.					
3.	Tasks helped in learning vocabulary faster than memorizing them.					
4.	Tasks helped me learn new words.					
5.	I could recall the meaning of a word more easily after conducting a task.					
6.	I liked working in pairs or groups when conducting a task.					
7.	More thinking was required to accomplish a task.					
8.	Tasks improved my critical thinking skills.					
9.	Tasks helped me create new and worthwhile ideas.					
10.	Tasks helped me evaluate my ideas in order to improve creative efforts.					
11.	Tasks allowed me to be creative.					
12.	Tasks helped me develop new ideas and communicate them to others effectively.					
13.	I liked using technology while accomplishing tasks.					
14.	I looked up new information using the internet to complete tasks.					
15.	Tasks improved communication among my classmates.					
16.	Some tasks required communication outside the classroom to be completed.					
17.	Tasks introduced me to different cultures and customs.					

18.	*Through tasks, I learned how to make simple economic choices.*				
19.	*Tasks helped in using available information to make appropriate health-related decisions.*				
20.	*Tasks made me responsible for my individual and collaborative work.*				
21.	*Tasks encouraged me to value the individual contributions made by my team members.*				
22.	*Tasks allowed me to be more communicative with others.*				
23.	*Tasks allowed me to be more collaborative with others.*				
24.	*Tasks encouraged me to become more of a responsible leader.*				
25.	*Tasks helped me be more creative in many ways.*				
26.	*Tasks helped me become more productive.*				
27.	*Tasks helped me be more involved in the technology.*				
28.	*Tasks helped me take initiative and become more organized and self-directed.*				
29.	*Tasks helped me become more responsible.*				
30.	*Working on a task required more thinking skills.*				
31.	*Working on a task improved my critical thinking skills.*				
32.	*Working on a task improved my problem solving skills.*				
33.	*Working on a Task helped me use multiple recourses of information and data.*				
34.	*Working on a task helped me check accuracy of news in social media.*				

35.	*Working on a task helped me become more flexible and adaptive.*					
36.	*Working on a task helped me take initiative.*					
37.	*Working on a task required me to accomplish my job in the best way possible.*					
38.	*Working on a task required me to follow ethical guidelines in all steps.*					
39.	*I would like more tasks to improve other English language skills. (Grammar, writing, speaking, etc…)*					
40.	*I would like more tasks that would improve 21st century skills.*					

Appendix 3

Students' Interview

Dear student, please answer the following questions, and provide explanations where applicable.

Researcher Questions:

1. *Did you find tasks interesting in the English vocabulary classes? In what way?*

2. *In your opinion, why could tasks be a good way to learn English?*

3. *In your opinion, would tasks aid in learning vocabulary faster than memorizing them?*

4. *Which methodology would better help students learn new words? TBLT or the traditional way?*

5. *From your standpoint, which way would help better recall a meaning of a word?*

6. *What do you think about pair/ group work while working on a task?*

7. *Do you consider that more thinking is required to accomplish a task? Is it a good thing or a bad thing?*

8. *Would tasks improve critical thinking skills? Explain?*

9. *Would Tasks help solve problems that you may encounter? Give examples.*

10. *Do you think tasks would help you become more creative? How?*

11. *How would tasks raise communication inside the classroom?*

12. *Did tasks improve communication with others outside the classroom, how?*

13. *Do you like using technology while accomplishing tasks? What part did you/ didn't you like?*

14. Did you look up information using the internet to complete tasks? How was the experience?

15. Did tasks introduce you to different cultures and customs? Explain.

16. Through tasks, did you learn to make simple economic choices, how was that?

17. Would tasks help in promoting responsibility within classmates? Illustrate if applicable.

18. Did tasks allow you to be more flexible and adaptable with different events? How?

19. In what ways did tasks help you to be more initiative and self-oriented?

20. In what ways did tasks help you to be more involved in the technology?

21. Do you think that working on a Task helps using multiple recourses of information and data? Elaborate.

22. How would working on a task help check accuracy of news in social media?

23. Would working on a task help you gain leadership skills, how?

24. Did working on a task require accomplishing your job in the best way possible, did it required achieving great results? To what extent?

25. Would you like more tasks to improve other English skills? Specify. (Grammar, writing, speaking, etc…)

26. Would you like more tasks that would improve 21st century skills?

Thank you.

Appendix 4 / Vocabulary tasks

Tasks 1/5

I.   Task 1/ Unit 9 period 1

The second unit, 'unit nine' in the 8th grade 'English for Palestine' book (8B), is titled (The world of food).

Some of the vocabulary items proposed by this particular unit are:

Can, carton, ground meat, jar, list, liter, regular, tomato paste, tub, wheat, pasta, japan, India, Brazil, Russia, Kuwait, American.

A proposed class for a task consists of three phases, a pre-task phase, a during-task phase, and a post-task phase.

The **pre-task** phase is introduced through activities like prior knowledge activation, brainstorming, visual aids, games, discussions, vocabulary activities, or reading.

Then, the teacher gives clear instructions about the task; students could choose one of the following tasks:

Task one (prepare an international dish and calculate the cost):

1. Each group chooses a country: Japan, India, Brazil, Russia, Kuwait, America, and Palestine.

2. Look for an international traditional dish from one of these countries that contain (tomato paste/ pasta /ground meat) as main ingredients.

3. Then search for the rest of the ingredients.

4. After that, plan a supermarket list in order to prepare this dish.

5. Finally, calculate the cost to prepare this dish for your family members or your classmates.

Task two (promote for an international dish via brochure):

 1. Each group chooses a country: Japan, India, Brazil, Russia, Kuwait, America, and Palestine.

2. Look for an international traditional dish in one of the countries, that has (tomato paste / pasta/ ground meat) as main ingredients.

3. Look for all the ingredients in the dish.

4. Promote for the dish in a restaurant in Palestine via brochure.

5. The advertisement should provide details for the dish's ingredients, health benefits and pricing.

Task three (prepare an international menu):

1. Each group chooses a country: Japan, India, Brazil, Russia, Kuwait, America, and Palestine.

2. Look for an international traditional dish in one of the countries, that has (tomato paste / pasta/ ground meat) as main ingredients.

3. Prepare a menu that displays the chosen dish.

4. The menu should include details of ingredients and prices.

During task phase instructions**:**

1. Work in pairs/ groups: to promote leadership, responsibility, communication and collaboration skills.

2. Choose a group leader: leadership, productivity and accountability.

3. Agree on a task to be conducted, discuss points of strengths and weaknesses: critical thinking, productivity and accountability.

4. Look for information and check accuracy from multiple resources: technology and information literacy.

5. Provide a soft-copy design (for the supermarket list/ brochure/ menu), and send via e-mail: technology literacy, productivity, creativity.

6. <u>Make the design the way you like</u> (in regards to colors, shapes, materials): creativity, initiative and self-direction.

7. <u>Relate to our local culture</u> (similarities or differences): critical thinking, social, and cross-cultural skills.

8. <u>A design could include information more than food</u>, for example, flags, traditional customs or landmarks: initiative, creativity and cross-cultural skills.

Post-task phase:

This stage provides an opportunity for learners to compare their products with others, and receive feedback from the teacher and fellow students. In addition, based on the analysis of the learners' products, more work on specific language points may follow.

Teacher's instructions:

1. Present keywords on your piece of work (written or designed creatively): vocabulary presentation, creativity, flexibility and adaptability.

2. Present your work in front of the class; make room for class discussion: Leadership, Responsibility, collaboration and classroom interaction.

....

II.   *Task 2/ Unit 9 period 4*

1. Choose one of these countries:

America/ Brazil/ China/ India/ Italy/ Japan/ Kuwait/ Russia

2. Fill in the boxes with pictures or drawings of your own; you can also fill it using your smart phone or computer.

Name of the country:

Country Flag

Country climate

Country main produce of fruits and vegetables

Country main traditional dish

Country traditional custom

This Country produces _____ In good quality/ quantity.

Country mainly imports:

Country mainly exports:

III.   *Task 3/ Unit 10 period 1*

A <u>pre-task</u> is introduced through activities like:

- Prior knowledge activation, Brainstorming, Visual Aids, Games, Discussions, vocabulary

  activities, or Reading.

Then, the teacher gives clear instructions about the task,

(Choose a country that you like, Palestine, Japan, India, Brazil, Russia, Kuwait, America,

Italy……….)

Find out who is the president of that country.

Now look for the vice president and describe both of them.

Attach a picture for both of them.

Then, describe them by answering the following questions:

What do they look like?

Describe their face, hair, and body.

Do they wear glasses?

Do they have a moustache?

What are they wearing?

Describe the color of their clothes.

Mention something that distinguish them among others.

You should pay attention to the following instructions:

1. Work in pairs/ groups

2. Look for information and check accuracy from multiple resources

3. Provide a soft-copy design

4. Make the design the way you like (in regards to colors, shapes, materials)

5. Relate to our local culture (similarities or differences)

Post-task

Present your work in front of the class; make room for class discussion.

This stage provides an opportunity for learners to compare their products with others, and receive feedback from the teachers and fellow students. In addition, based on the analysis of the learners' products, more work on specific language points may follow.

A design could include information more than about destinations, for example, flags, traditional customs or landmarks, moreover, students could present keywords on their completed task (written or designed artistically).

IV.   *Task 4/ Unit 10 period 4*

A **pre-task** is introduced through activities like:

- Prior knowledge activation, Brainstorming, Visual Aids, Games, Discussions, vocabulary activities, or Reading.

Then, the teacher gives clear instructions about the task, Task:

(The great pyramids of Egypt, Great Wall of China, Eiffel Tower, Acropolis of Athens, Stonehenge, Machu Picchu, The blue Lagoon, Christ the Redeemer, Colosseum, Taj Mahal, Grand Palace)

Choose two of the previous tourists' attraction-destinations, provide some photos, and compare between them by filling the following table:

	Tourists' attraction 1	**Tourists' attraction 2**
Where is it located?		
Who constructed it?		
How deep is it below/ above sea level?		
How long have human being lived there for?		
What are some of the main crops in the area?		

Are there any famous towers in the area?		
What are the annual tourists' number for the attraction?		
Are there any hotels in the area for tourists to stay in? Name some.		
Are there other tourists' attractions in the same area? Give examples if applicable.		

You should pay attention to the following instructions:

1. Work in pairs/ groups.

2. Look for information and check accuracy from multiple resources.

3. Provide a soft-copy design.

4. Make the design the way you like (in regards to colors, shapes, materials).

5. Relate to our local culture (similarities or differences).

Post-task

Present your work in front of the class; make room for class discussion.

This stage provides an opportunity for learners to compare their products with others, and receive feedback from the teacher and fellow students. In addition, based on the analysis of the learners' products, more work on specific language points may follow.

A design could include information more than about destinations, for example, flags, traditional customs or landmarks, moreover, students could present keywords on their completed task (written or designed artistically).

****

V. _Task 5/ Unit 11_

Unit 11 in the 8th grade English for Palestine 8B book is titled (A Palestinian wedding).

The vocabulary items proposed by this particular unit are:

(All right, bride, congratulations, DVD, follow, full, groom, guest, as, celebrate, custom, dough, hold, propose, ring, spirit, stick).

A pre-task is introduced through activities like:

- Prior knowledge activation, Brainstorming, Visual Aids, Games, Discussions, vocabulary activities, or Reading.

Task instructions:

You are a wedding planner: you have to plan a wedding for a couple: a bride and a groom.

1. Each group chooses a country of their choice: Scotland, Spain, The Philippines, Japan, India Brazil, Russia, Kuwait, America, and Palestine.

2. Then search for the country's traditions and customs in the following areas:

How the groom proposes to the bride/ Do they wear engagement rings/ what food do they serve in the wedding party/ where does the ceremony take place/ what kind of music do they listen to at the wedding.

3. Design a wedding invitation that covers of the information that you gathered.

4. Include at least three traditional wedding customs that are special for that country.

You should pay attention to the following instructions:

     1. Work in pairs/ groups.

     2. Look for information and check accuracy from multiple resources.

     3. Provide a soft-copy design.

4. Make the design the way you like (in regards to colors, shapes, materials).

5. Relate to our local culture (similarities or differences).

Post-task

This stage provides an opportunity for learners to compare their products with others, and receive feedback from the teachers and fellow students. In addition, based on the analysis of the learners' products, more work on specific language points may follow.

1. Present your work in front of the class; make room for class discussion.

2. A design could include information more than about destinations, for example, flags, traditional customs or landmarks, moreover, students could present keywords on their completed task (written or designed artistically).

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Appendix 5

Permission from the Ministry of Education to Conduct the Study at Beit Liqya High School for Girls.

BIRZEIT UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Education كلية التربية

Department of Curriculum & Instruction دائرة المناهج والتعليم

4 شباط 2020

حضرة مدير مديرية التربية والتعليم
الأستاذ باسم عريقات المحترم
محافظة رام الله والبيرة – فلسطين

الموضوع: استكمال دراسة

تحية طيبة وبعد،

يرجى التفضل بالموافقة على قيام الطلبة (هناء هشام إبراهيم صلاح) من جامعة بيرزيت, للقيام بتطبيق دراستها بعنوان: اثر تطوير مهمات صفية تحمل خصائص مهارات القرن الواحد والعشرين على تعلم المفردات في اللغة الإنجليزية في الصف الثامن في المدارس الفلسطينية.

An Investigation of implementing the 21ˢᵗ century skills through task-based language teaching to improve vocabulary learning in Palestinian classrooms

علما بان الطالبة منتظمة في كلية التربية في برنامج الدراسات العليا في جامعة بيرزيت, وهي بحاجة إلى جمع معلومات تتعلق بدراستها وذلك يشمل تطبيق اختبار قبلي وبعدي وتطبيق مهمات صفية خاصة بالمفردات بمادة اللغة الانجليزية, بالإضافة إلى مقابلات مع بعض الطلاب حول مدى استفادتهم من التجربة، وذلك في مدرسة إناث بيت لقيا الثانوية. وقد تواصلت الطالبة مع معلمة اللغة الانجليزية في المدرسة ، والتي ابدت استعدادها لاستقبال الطالبة والتعاون معها بعد موافقة حضرتكم.

وتفضلوا بقبول فائق الاحترام والتقدير

د. احمد الجنازرة / عميد كلية التربية

BIRZEIT UNIVERSITY
برنامج الدراسات العليا - التربية
GRADUATE PROGRAM - EDUCATION

STATE OF PALESTINE

Ministry of Education

Directorate of Education/ Ramallah & Albireh

دولة فلســـــطين

وزارة التربية والتعليـــــم

مديرية التربية والتعليـم / رام الله والبيرة

2020/01/11 م .

مديرة مدرسة بيت لقيا الثانوية المحترمة..

تحية طيبة وبعد ،،،

الموضوع : تسهيل مهمة

نهديكم أطيب التحيات، وبالاشارة للموضوع اعلاه ، لا مانع من تنفيذ الطالبة (هناء هشام ابراهيم صلاح) من جامعة بيرزيت – كلية الدراسات العليا / برنامج ماجستير التربية دراستها بعنوان (أثر تطوير مهمات صفية تحمل خصائص مهارات القرن الواحد والعشرين على تعلم المفردات في اللغة الإنجليزية من الصف الثامن في المدارس الفلسطينية) كمتطلب لانهاء مساق الرسالة (860) في مدرستكم ، بما لا يؤثر على سير العملية التعليمية.

مع الاحترام،،،

أ.باسم عريقات

مدير التربية والتعليم

نسخة / مدير التربية المحترم

نسخة / مدير الدائرة الفنية المحترم

نسخة / مدير الدائرة الادارية والمالية المحترم

قسم التعليم العام / ف.ر