

THE PERCEPTION OF TANZANIAN EFL TEACHERS REGARDING THE USE OF  
PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENTS TO PROMOTE SPOKEN ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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## **ABSTRACT**

I examined Tanzanian secondary EFL teachers' attitudes toward language performance-based assessments (PBA). I asked Tanzanian EFL teachers about PBA's benefits, challenges, and potential solutions to the identified challenges after two rounds of webinars introducing PBA as an alternative assessment approach that promotes classroom interaction, participation, and critical thinking. Together with teachers, we evaluated textbook activities and practiced using PBA tools such as group discussions and rubrics. I collected data through surveys and semi-structured interviews. I utilized group and interpretative coding per Kostere and Kostere's (2021) theoretical coding guide to analyze the data thematically. The findings revealed that teachers perceived PBA as a beneficial assessment practice that can help students improve their English proficiency. The benefits identified included: PBA facilitates feedback, increased exposure to the language, increased confidence to speak the language and to participate in the classroom, and promotes students' motivation.

However, PBA implementation was equally challenging for some teachers. The challenges included teachers' lack of time and skills to design materials, a wide competency gap between students, pressure from administrators to teach for tests, and a lack of support from teachers of other subjects. I also suggested ways to overcome Tanzanian EFL classroom PBA challenges. Solutions included making textbook tasks performative, creating a safe and joyful learning environment, and embracing multilingualism to assist students in overcoming their fear of speaking. Overall, the study found that Tanzanian EFL teachers perceive PBA as a beneficial assessment practice that can help students improve their English proficiency. However, I also found certain challenges to PBA in Tanzanian EFL classrooms. Future studies should address these issues and help teachers implement PBA.

I dedicate this thesis to my late grandmother, Amina Bushumbilo. I am eternally grateful for all of the support and wisdom she gave me as I was growing up. She is my hero and will forever be missed.

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## INTRODUCTION

I aimed to find out how teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Tanzania feel and think about using performance-based assessments (PBA). The emphasis on speaking skills in EFL classes is necessary given the present demand for people to be able to communicate effectively in spoken form. For instance, a strong command of spoken English is necessary for many opportunities that come with the English language. Employers and educational institutions, for instance, use oral interviews to gauge candidates' qualifications and program fit.

Unfortunately, a lot of Tanzanian students struggle with speaking, and sometimes they are viewed as low-achieving students before it is realized that the school system is what prevents these students from being able to express themselves clearly in English when necessary.

Tanzania's education system places a high value on standardized tests, which have a significant effect on student performance opportunity for advancement. Teachers simply tailor their lessons to the content of the standardized test, forcing them to *teaching to the test*. Teachers frequently overlook this crucial skill because speaking is not evaluated in the final English test. However, promising evidence shows that if EFL teachers could direct their ongoing assessments in the classroom toward having students demonstrate what they have learned through speaking and continually assess their performances in order to improve against the established standards, students become effective communicators.

Tanzania has a three-tiered education system: primary, secondary, and tertiary. The languages of instruction in Tanzania are Kiswahili, the national language, and English. Kiswahili is a language of instruction at the primary level in public schools, whereas English is a language of instruction at private primary school and post-primary levels. This means when students transfer to secondary school they are required to study all subjects in English. This policy is

problematic for the majority of Tanzanian students since it does not account for students' varying levels of English ability. Children who transfer from private primary schools to secondary school already have a high proficiency level of English in grasping the materials they encounter. In contrast, children who transfer from public schools to secondary schools are taught in a language they do not understand, making it difficult for them to learn, engage in class, and perform academically (Mwakalonge 2017).

Tanzanian secondary schools have large class sizes, with 50-120 students on average. This is due to a variety of issues, including Tanzania's large population, a limited number of schools, and a lack of resources (Adamson, 2016). This challenge makes it difficult for students to participate in class and for teachers to provide personalized attention to students. As a result, the educational system creates students who are unable to converse clearly in English, limiting their access to opportunities that come with the language. Language performance-based assessments have been shown to be helpful in ensuring interactions in large foreign language classrooms around the world (Koné, 2021). PBAs are a type of assessment in which students are required to demonstrate their knowledge and skills through performance (Mackey & Gass 2012). I introduced PBA strategies, such as group discussion activities, to Tanzania English teachers and having them try the strategies in their classrooms would ensure students interact as they learn English. Interaction is important in a foreign language classroom because it not only helps students develop fluency in the language, they are learning but it also helps them learn about themselves. I focused on working with EFL teachers because they are the change agents in their classrooms (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2019). Teachers may have an enormous impact on their students' learning experiences when they are provided with the correct resources.

In Tanzania schools, the common formative assessment practices, such as multiple-choice questions, true or false questions, or matching, often do not give learners the chance to use the language for communicative purposes (Koné, 2021). As a result, the education system sometimes produces shy, fearful graduates who lack confidence in using English for communication. Hasanah (2019) attributes these problems to different reasons, such as limited opportunities for students to perform English in front of the public and a lack of speaking abilities, such as issues with grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and accents. This shyness often comes when learners are not genuinely confident in their own potential; they can speak and have knowledge about the language, but they are reluctant to speak up. Performance based assessments that allow students to practice and demonstrate their learning based on clear determined standards play a huge role in developing foreign language learners' oral skills. Teachers can utilize performance-based assessments, which are types of formative assessments, to observe how students apply what they have learned in a real-world setting. Furthermore, performance-based assessments are frequently used to evaluate higher-order thinking skills such as problem-solving and critical thinking. Teachers can benefit greatly from performance-based assessments in identifying students' strengths and weaknesses. Several studies have found that PBA strategies (e.g., pair work) work well in eliciting spoken language by secondary school learners. This is because older students are more accustomed to using conversation strategies to develop a topic and take a partner's perspective during the task, such as in Butler and Zeng (2014), who emphasize the role of formative assessment in promoting language development. Another study by Albino (2017) attempted to assess how learners of English as a foreign language improved their speaking fluency in a task-based language teaching (TBLT) approach used with ninth-grade learners at PUNIV-Cazenga, a high school in Luanda. The researcher used



picture descriptions to elicit learners' speech and used recast and prompts to provide feedback for eight weeks. Students had a positive attitude toward the TBLT assessment as they felt encouraged to speak and believed in their potential to use the target language.

However, despite the previous work which has examined PBA within EFL contexts, there is a very limited amount of research which has been done in the Tanzanian context, which partially drives the need for the current study. Tanzanian English teaching methods emphasize grammar and discipline students for grammatical mistakes, making the language challenging to use (Mtallo, 2015). Without adequate teaching, language abilities deteriorate, which hampers student learning (Alrubail, 2016). PBA, on the other hand, pushes students to take chances, collaborate, interact, and work in groups (Nakatsuhara et al., 2021). In Tanzania, students learning course content while simultaneously processing knowledge in a second language have exhibited significant obstacle to students' academic success (Adamson, 2016). The language of instruction is a massive challenge because it is hard to expect students to compete effectively in a global space where English is the dominant language, if the Tanzanian education system does not offer enough opportunities for students to gain sufficient skills in English (Swilla, 2009). Many secondary school students lack the analytical and critical thinking abilities necessary for success in literature courses and other content areas. Researchers have noted how Tanzania's existing English language pedagogy procedures, which frequently employ rote memory techniques and are characterized by a lack of student motivation to study, is unlikely to result in the production of proficient English language communicators (Mtallo, 2015). Due to the limited opportunities for students to use the English language outside of the classroom, communication in the EFL classroom is essential. Because of the irregularity and disparity of inadequate English

instruction, the majority of students may perform badly academically and display low self-confidence after graduating from schools.

This research investigated the application of Performance-Based Assessments (PBAs) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings, with a focus on Tanzania. The study aims were to examine the effectiveness of PBAs in facilitating students' linguistic transition to secondary school, where English serves as the primary medium of instruction. This research worked to expand upon previous studies and ascertain the efficacy of PBAs in aiding educators in managing large EFL classrooms. This study investigated the experiences of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers with Performance-Based Assessments (PBAs). The rationale for this approach is based on the premise that educators have the potential to impact the learning outcomes of their students (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2019). The Tanzanian educational system is faced with the challenge of enabling students to compete effectively on a global scale, which is impeded by inadequate English language training, particularly in the area of oral communication. Consequently, a considerable number of graduates exhibit deficient self-assurance in delivering speeches in public, which may result in suboptimal academic outcomes and diminished self-worth. Based on this information, my curiosity was piqued regarding the instructors' perceptions of the efficacy of PBA strategies in fostering oral language development within their classrooms.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **PERFORMANCE BASED ASSESSMENT (PBA) IN EFL CLASSROOM**

The introduction section discussed the challenges facing Tanzanian students in developing their English-speaking skills, which are essential for communication and access to opportunities. The current education system in Tanzania focuses on standardized tests and overlooks oral proficiency in English. I argued for the EFL teachers' use of performance-based assessments (PBAs) to evaluate students' oral language skills continually in Tanzania secondary classrooms. This section defines PBA and provide an overview of the contexts it has been studied and how it can be implemented in Tanzania context.

Nitko (2001) defines PBA as presenting a hands-on task to a student and using clearly stated standards to assess how well the student applied the learning goal. Nitko argues that there are two components of a student's performance that can be assessed: the product and the process. The product in a foreign language classroom could be the task that the students perform in the classroom, whether it is a presentation or dramatization, and the teacher can assess the student based on the agreed-upon standards, such as ability to speak English fluently, use correct grammar, and organize their thoughts. The process could include students participating in a group assignment, taking turns speaking, and coming up with creative ideas. PBA "require students to develop an answer or product that displays their knowledge and skills," (Thurlow,1995, p. 36). Pierce and O'Malley (1992) define PBA as "an exercise in which a student displays certain skills and competences in accordance to agreed upon standards of proficiency" (p. 2). PBA provides all students with the opportunity to do their best in language learning and creates an environment for learners to use the language while completing tasks. This approach is also referred to as authentic assessment and task-based assessment (Aksu, 2012;

Van Gorp, 2021). PBA combines cognitive, humanistic, and communicative ways to teach language in a practical way. It enables EFL teachers to shift their emphasis on rule memorization and habit formation to integrating rules into other language skills through meaningful exposure (Celce-Murcia et al., 2014). Under this method, students' individual differences are more respected, and the class atmosphere is often more positive and includes greater learner autonomy (Celce-Murcia et al., 2014). As such learning a language becomes a system for communicating based on meaning, with the teacher as the person in charge of the process.

Performance-based assessments are like real-life situations and require students to use their own resources to come up with answers. PBA classroom activities include oral and written skills, interactive oral activities; experiments, fieldwork, and projects done individually or in small groups (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2019). PBA speaking tasks, like answering question slips, describing, responding to visual prompts, telling a story, or giving a speech, make the learning more realistic and encourage students to use the language outside of the classroom. Aliakbari and Jamalvandi (2010), for example, found that role play, which is an example of a performance-based assessment task, helped EFL learners improve their speaking skills. Based on information from 60 students, roleplay gave these people a chance to negotiate and talk to each other. Fluency in speaking shows students that they are doing something in the real world that people who speak the target language usually do. Sinwongsuwat (2012) suggests that learners use non-scripted roleplay activities instead of scripted roleplays because non-scripted roleplays give learners a better chance to deal with problems and practice using important language features in real conversations.

Scholars have previously studied how PBA might be used to develop second language speaking capabilities. They suggest that PBA design should reflect the examinees' language

abilities and boost language learning (Butler & Zeng, 2014; Norris, 2016). PBA enables EFL students, particularly those from diverse linguistic origins, to participate in cognitively challenging tasks like negotiating solutions to issues by using reasoning abilities. For instance, when requested to speak in a small group in English actively, students will be able to demonstrate a deeper level of comprehension of certain subject matter. Contrarily, high-stakes testing systems that put an emphasis on making students responsible for their learning have driven lower-achieving kids out of the classroom (Heilig & Darling-Hammond, 2008).

Previous studies suggest that PBAs can be effective in EFL contexts. A study by Brown (2007) found that PBAs were more effective than traditional paper-and-pencil tests in assessing students' ability to use language in a real-world context. Additionally, a study by Nunan (2004) found that PBAs were more likely to motivate students than traditional paper-and-pencil tests. These studies suggest that PBAs can be used in larger classroom EFL contexts. However, it is important to make sure that the assessments are designed in a way that is fair to all students. This means that the assessments should be accessible to all students, regardless of their level of English proficiency. Additionally, the assessments should be designed in a way that allows students to show their skills in a meaningful way.

### **Performance-Based Assessment In Tanzania**

Large classes at Tanzanian public secondary schools pose a huge obstacle to teaching and learning experiences because it is difficult for teachers to move around and monitor each student's learning, and as a result, teachers are unable to meet the needs of every student (Adamson, 2016). Instead, teachers take a podium-front position and act as knowledge communicators. Before moving on to another learning component, teachers frequently ask students the following questions to assess their understanding: "Do you get me?" "Do you

understand?" "Is it understood?" "Are we together?" When students answer "yes," it's typically because they worry that if they make a mistake, the teacher or other students will make fun of them (Adamson, 2016). Given the language's importance, we expect learners to thrive academically in learning English. As a result, many secondary school students lack the analytical and critical thinking skills to succeed in literature studies. Most students also feel that literature textbooks are too complex and cannot independently seek knowledge adequately because they must operate in a foreign language they have not yet mastered (Mtallo, 2015).

Tanzanian EFL teachers can assist their students to become confident speakers by changing their attitude toward assessment and choosing to use PBA in their formative assessment as a tool to enhance language growth in students. Formative assessments in a foreign language classroom, promote language development by diagnosing students' needs and supporting their ongoing learning processes through teachers' feedback (Choi, 2017; Van den Branden & Van Gorp, 2021). In addition, formative performance-based assessments are a great tool to help English language learners because they are based on classroom instruction and authentic everyday tasks (Colorado, 2007). Thus, an urgent need for Tanzanian EFL teachers to adopt effective formative assessment practices to help learners improve their spoken language as they transition from primary to secondary school. Speaking is a skill that is necessary for daily living both in school and after graduation, despite not being one of the skills tested in standardized assessments. For instance, students will need to express themselves when applying for scholarships to further their studies abroad or while conducting job interviews, but Tanzanian EFL teachers in the classroom have not yet placed a significant emphasis on this (Adamson, 2016).

The education system generates hesitant, scared graduates who lack confidence in English communication as illustrated by Swilla, (2009) study. Hasanah (2019) relates these challenges to limited possibilities for students to perform English in public and a lack of speaking skills, including grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and accents. This shyness develops when learners are not secure in their own abilities; they can speak and know the language, but they are unwilling to speak up. Students may also laugh at peers who make speaking mistakes, encouraging them to talk less and receive fewer teacher corrections (Hasanah, 2019). The effectiveness of students' ability to apply what they have learned in real-world situations cannot always be determined by traditional assessment methods (i.e., high stakes standardized testing), and often teachers cannot provide students with constructive feedback (Abedi, 2010). Students leave high school without the necessary English proficiency to prosper.

The current study suggests implementing PBA in Tanzanian classrooms to address this risk because of the possible advantages it might have for the students and the curriculum. El-Koumy (2004), asserts that PBA is believed to have a number of advantages for both teachers and students, including tracking students' development over time, assisting teachers in improving their lesson plans, enhancing students' motivation and self-esteem, assisting students in improving their own learning processes and products, creating productive citizens, assisting in placement or certification decisions, and providing parents with information. Other studies have shown that PBA encourages student participation and active learning, boosts students' self-esteem and desire to communicate, and promotes equitable learning opportunities that make students feel comfortable (e.g., Celce-Murcia et al., 2014; East, 2015; Thornbury, 2016; Graves, 2016; Soto et al., 2017; Loewen & Sato, 2021). However, some studies have highlighted some of the practical challenges associated with adopting PBA. According to Davison (2007) and

Cevallos & F(2015), these challenges include the insufficient skills to adopt activities and procedures as models and resources, a lack of tangible support for teachers at the school level, and a lack of time due to heavy teaching loads and competing priorities. Based on the benefits of adopting PBA in other contexts, the current study attempted to investigate whether PBAs could also benefit the Tanzanian context.

### **The Current Study Objectives And Research Questions**

To address the issue of students' speaking skills, the current study uses PBA in an EFL setting to investigate its implementation in Tanzanian classrooms. By training Tanzanian secondary school EFL teachers in PBA implementation and having them pilot some strategies in their classrooms, it is possible to then assess how they felt about PBA, the benefits of using the strategies, what obstacles they would face in implementing it, and how to overcome those challenges. This study set out to provide answers to the following questions:

RQ #1: What benefits do EFL teachers perceive in PBA after attending a workshop?

RQ #2: What challenges do EFL teachers in Tanzanian high schools' face in implementing PBA?

RQ #3: How can teachers address the challenges they face in implementing PBA?



## **METHODOLOGY**

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions and experiences of Tanzanian EFL secondary school teachers regarding the use of performance-based assessments in their classrooms. To achieve this aim, I chose a generic qualitative approach, which allowed for an in-depth exploration of the teachers' views and experiences (Kostere & Kostere, 2021). It is worth noting that the use of a generic qualitative approach has been shown to be appropriate for exploring complex and multi-faceted phenomena such as teacher perceptions and experiences (Kostere & Kostere, 2021; Creswell & Poth, 2018). A combination of pre-and post-workshop surveys and a semi-structured group interview was used to collect data. The use of surveys and group interviews as data collection methods is consistent with the generic qualitative approach, which aims to collect rich, descriptive data from participants' perspectives (Kostere & Kostere, 2021). The pre-and post-workshop surveys allowed for the gathering of quantitative data on changes in the teachers' views over time, while the semi-structured group interview provided a platform for the teachers to share their experiences and opinions in their own words. This approach is consistent with best practices in qualitative research, which emphasize the importance of using multiple methods to triangulate findings and increase the validity and reliability of the results (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

### **Participants**

The participants (see Table 1) in the present research included 15 English regional coordinators and teachers from the Tanzania English Language Teachers Association (TELTA). They were all between the ages of 30 and 50, with 8 females and 7 males. They all teach the national curriculum in Tanzanian public secondary schools from 15 regions. As a conference/workshop facilitator and presenter of TELTA, I asked the TELTA chair if he could

connect me with TELTA chapter/regional leaders who could willingly participate in my study. I chose this group because most have many years of teaching experience and could help disseminate knowledge to their chapter/regional English teachers after the workshop. Also, due to the nature of my workshops and data collection being online, I wanted to recruit participants who would have no issues accessing the internet. As all the participating teachers live in the region's cities, this was not an issue. Therefore, I was added to the TELTA Chapter leaders' WhatsApp group so that I could introduce my study and invite participants to join. I prepared a poster to first share with chapter leaders and left room for discussion and clarification. After I finished recruiting participants, I set up a WhatsApp with all the participants, where I shared the workshop details. Teachers appreciated the opportunity for the workshop and immediately started to sign up for it. Table 1 gives descriptive information about the participants recruited.

**Table 1**

*Participant Information*

Participants	Gender	Age	Years of teaching	Education Level	Region
Participant 1	M	35-44	20	Bachelors	Moshi
Participant 2	M	25-34	7	Bachelors	Dar Es Salaam
Participant 3	M	25-34	7	Diploma	Kondoa
Participant 4	F	25-34	5	Bachelors	Musoma
Participant 5	M	35-44	10	Bachelors	Lindi
Participant 6	F	35-44	17	Masters	Bukoba
Participant 7	M	25-34	7	Bachelors	Kigoma

Table 1 (cont'd)

Participant 8	F	25-34	5	Bachelors	Mwanza
Participant 9	M	25-34	3	Bachelors	Kilimanjaro
Participant 10	F	35-44	16	Bachelors	Mbeya
Participant 11	M	35-44	10	Bachelors	Mtwara
Participant 12	F	45-54	10	Bachelors	Kagera
Participant 12	M	25-34	13	Diploma	Pwani
Participant 13	F	55-64	34	Masters	Arusha
Participant 14	F	35-44	16	Bachelors	Songea
Participant 15	F	25-34	9	Bachelors	Morogoro

## Procedure

I collected the data during a three-month period. The researcher held two two-hour webinars/workshops, a post pilot survey, and a focus group interview. The first webinar's goal was to raise participants' awareness of the importance of enhancing oral skills through formative assessments and to train them in various strategies they could implement in their classes. I conducted the first two webinars with only a week in between, with the second webinar focusing on evaluating textbook speaking activities and practicing using strategies (e.g., pyramid strategies) to adopt those activities. Next, teachers in breakout rooms practiced using all the tools, including rubrics, to evaluate each other's contributions to discussion activities. I gave teachers a list of discussion activities to pilot in their classrooms for four weeks. The full schedule for all webinars and workshops, and data collection the activities conducted during them, can be seen below in Table 2.

**Table 2***Procedure, Data collection & Focus Group Interview*

Timeline	Focus/Activity	Materials
1st Session: 7th of May 2022	Webinar: Intro to Assessing speaking skills in EFL Classroom and PBA as an alternative assessment practice	A pre-workshop survey, PowerPoint, zoom chat function, and breakout rooms
2nd Session: 8th of May 2022	Webinar: Evaluating activities in textbooks and practicing using PBA tools such as group discussion and rubrics	PowerPoint, PDF of discussion activities and rubrics, samples of textbook speaking activities and a post piloting survey.
3rd Session: 4th of July 2022	Focus group interview; Reflections and way forward	Voice recorder

After a month of trying the PBAs in their classroom, I sent a post-piloting survey to teachers with instructions that it was to be completed within a week. After reviewing the post-piloting survey responses, I met with teachers to further reflect on their experiences using PBA tools through a group interview. This was done as a result of the mixed feedback from the surveys, with many teachers finding the tools practical and valuable in their classrooms while others pointed out some challenges of using the tools. Since all the teachers come from the same learning context (i.e., Tanzania), the researchers wanted the teachers to come together and learn

from each other. The researchers then organized a focused group reflection session, which was critical for the interview data (Prior, 2018).

## **Materials**

This section of the paper will briefly describe the materials used in this study: list of the materials, like the activities and workshops, and surveys.

*Small group speaking activities and rubrics:* To promote interaction and speaking within the classroom and to nurture the second language development of the EFL students, a pyramid group discussion activity was utilized as the PBA speaking activity (see Appendix 1 for examples and Appendix 2 for guidelines on how to conduct these activities). I chose these activities to provide students the opportunity to practice speaking in front of smaller groups before speaking to the class as a whole (Scrivener, 2009).

The rubrics used in the current study were created to assess both instructor and student evaluations (see Appendix 3 for sample rubrics). Teachers chose between an analytical and holistic rubric depending on their class objectives (if possible, in consultation with the students).

*Surveys:* To assess teachers' awareness of and familiarity with PBA instruction, I created a pre-workshop survey (see Appendix E). The survey was designed to collect background data, such as contact information, gender, age, education level, and teaching experience. For a detailed description of the participants, see Table 1 above. Additionally, I tested the participants' knowledge of PBA (example questions; what experiences do you have with small group speaking exercises in the classroom? What has your experience been with task-based evaluation methods, such as presentations or interviews? What do you think of performance-based evaluation?). I designed a post-piloting survey (see appendix E) to gauge participants' opinions on implementing performance-based assessment in the classroom (example questions; How

practical do you find PBA? Are you interested in implementing it in your own classroom? What specifics, if any, do you wish to use it in your classroom in? The final survey was modeled after O'Malley and Valdez Pierce's (1996) Authentic Assessment Inventory for Goal Setting survey, which was intended to evaluate, in terms of PBA use, where the teachers are at that point, where they want to be, and what their objectives are regarding the use of such assessment in their classes as well as their experiences in doing so.

***Interview protocols:*** Face-to-face interviews were not conducted due to travel limitations imposed by the epidemic, which interrupted face to face data collection. However, a two-hour semi-structured focused group zoom interview (see appendix E for guiding questions) was conducted. Participants were informed that they would be reflecting as a group on their experiences implementing PBAs in their classrooms, discussing challenges and proposing solutions to the challenges they had identified. Participants were encouraged to be open and honest about how they felt about implementing PBA strategies in their classroom. The researchers monitored the conversation so that everyone could participate in it and express their views.

### **Researcher Positionality**

My positionality in this investigation was informed by multiple alignments. I discussed with my participants what it was like to teach English as a foreign language in Tanzanian classrooms because I did my study and teaching there. I knew three of the fifteen participants in this study thanks to my work with the Tanzania English Language Teaching Association-TELTA (conducting workshops and trainings). As a result, we were able to build trust with one another. This allowed me to connect with all the participants. Teachers were able to discuss their classroom experiences and their institutions' concerns about teaching English in Tanzania

because they felt comfortable and safe doing so. There was a possibility that participants would reveal more personal information with me because of our shared community and experiences than they would with a researcher who does not have that connection to them. To prevent this, all personally identifying information was removed from all data reporting (participant names were changed to participant 1, participant 2, etc.), and simple interview and survey guidelines were established prior to data collection to guarantee that our interactions have a purpose. Since my participants were in Tanzania at the time of the study and I was a researcher and graduate student studying in the US, I was also seen as an authoritative figure and an outsider.

Additionally, the choice to study EFL teachers rather than students was influenced by my own conviction that educators may influence students' learning. This was due to the fact that students in Tanzania's educational system sometimes struggle to compete in a global setting where English is the dominant language due to ineffective English training, particularly in speaking skills. Many graduates lack the confidence to speak their minds in public, implying that inconsistent English training can result in subpar academic performance and low self-esteem. With such knowledge, I became interested in this study because I was wondering about how instructors would see PBA strategies that had successfully promoted oral language in my classrooms. I was able to interact with my participants in a variety of ways thanks to this placement, which enhanced the data.

## **DATA ANALYSIS & FINDINGS**

### **Data Analysis**

In this study, I evaluated Tanzanian EFL teachers' attitudes and perceptions regarding the use of performance-based assessments (PBA). I used qualitative method following Kostere & Kostere's (2021) theoretical coding guide to analyze the data in order to address the specified research questions, assigning themes to our predetermined categories and research questions while also keeping an eye out for any potential new themes that might surface during the analysis. Because the scale of our data did not warrant the usage of software to aid in data analysis, I opted to assign and code themes to the categories using Microsoft Word and Excel (De Felice & Janesick, 2015).

After being transcribed, the interview and survey data were exported to a Microsoft Excel sheet, where each data source was examined separately using in vivo coding (pre-workshop survey, post-piloting survey, and interview). As shown in Table 3, I first created labels for each analytical stage and assigned colors to the categories. Then, I attempted to match the data meaning units to the predetermined themes (i.e., benefits of using PBAs, challenges and possible solutions to identified challenges), as indicated in steps 1-4 below, and finished the analyses, as shown in steps 5-13. Following steps 5–13 once more, I returned to the data in phase two and worked with data units and patterns that didn't seem to fit the preset categories. The themes discovered in the second phase of analysis were not present in the current study but contributed to understanding participants' teaching experiences. The following is the interpretive coding in accordance with Kostere & Kostere's (2021) theoretical coding guide.



**Table 3***Step by Step: Theoretical Analysis by Kestere & Kostere (2022)*

Steps	Description
Step 1	Review each participant's data (interviews, journals, field notes, records, documents, etc.). Reread the text with the predetermined categories (themes) and the research question in mind. Highlight any sentences, phrases, or paragraphs that seem meaningful and remain open to any new patterns and themes that have developed from the data analysis. The researcher examines each participant's data separately.
Step 2	Review the highlighted data for each participant using your research question to determine relevancy. Some of the transcript's material may be intriguing, but not relevant.
Step 3	Remove highlighted data not pertinent to your topic; establish a separate file. You may want to revisit these numbers later.
Step 4	Code or describe each data item. Descriptors or names are often data specific.
Step 5	Cluster related data and generate patterns.

Table 3 (cont'd)

Step 6	Patterns connected to a previous theme are paired among additional patterns that coincide with the subject, along with direct quotes from the data (transcribed interviews, field notes, papers, etc.) to illustrate the pattern.
Step 7	Patterns that don't fit preexisting themes should be retained in a separate file for future review. - Repeat Steps 1–7 for each participant.
Step 8	Revisit the patterns that didn't fit the preexisting categories and be open to new research-related patterns and topics.
Step 9	Each pattern should be explained with data quotes.
Step 10	Write a detailed analysis of each theme's breadth and substance.
Step 11	The facts are combined to generate a composite synthesis of the question.

**Figure 1: Coding Sample (Interview Responses)**

PBA Interviews Reflect Responses	PBA Interviews Reflections	1st Cycle Coding (in-vivo coding)	Reviews & Themes	How did this theme emerge? Categories	2nd Cycle Coding (Quote from the data)	What do categories say?
		Putting Codes in categories or how they relate to other codes?	Write about your data as you code it. Background interpretations			
					house. Yeah. So the students chose to rescue their maize instead of school	
	[00:09:45] So I find PBA practical because I tried to use those strategies to reinforce the speaking in the classroom, even their discussing the group discussion themselves. Now they are interested to use the same rubric and the same stuff. They are using the English language instead of using Swahili	Green	Due to use of rubrics students stick to speaking in English rather than using Swahili	Most benefits addressed by teachers were, the role of PBA in promoting feedback to both students and teachers, PBA facilitate increased exposure to the language, Increased confidence to speak the language, Students	Increased exposure: what I liked the most was the Socratic seminar activity. I tried that with my form four students. Wow. Yeah. And it was amazing. They talked a lot, so glad we couldn't finish it and that we did not get the time to at least	Teachers' preparedness: having a plan to continue using some strategies, and share knowledge they have acquired with other teachers in their respective chapters.

**Figure 2:** Coding Sample (Comparing Data From Surveys And Focus Group Interviews)

What do categories say?- Survey data	What do categories say? -Interview data	Themes in numbers	Quotes from the data	Analysis describing the scope and substance of each theme.
<b>PBA benefits:</b> increased students' confidence to speak, motivating students to engage in learning. PBA being an equitable assessment tool, PBA helping students to self evaluate their progress (feedback).	<b>PBA benefits:</b> facilitate feedback, increased exposure to the language, Increased confidence to speak the language and classroom participation, promotes students' motivation.	Benefit1: facilitate feedback,	....it is very good because it keeps the student focused on his performance. Thus, it brings efficiency and makes the student the center of knowledge. it is also good to use this method because it brings a lot of feedback from students which can be a source of various studies in teaching and	Language development requires constant teacher and student reflection on the language acquisition process. PBA techniques like self-evaluation and the use of rubrics for feedback enable teachers to gain more detailed information about their students' academic needs and learning progress. Six participants mentioned how PBA assisted them and their students in assessing their language learning progress, which subsequently advised them of areas that required further attention.

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Pre workshop Default Report
PBA Post workshop Report
PBA Interviews Reflections
Surveys+Interview Themes
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## **Findings**

This section presents findings from participants' data in three sections as related to the focus area of this study; PBA benefits, challenges, and possible solutions as they relate to the three research questions.

### ***Research Question 1-What benefits do EFL teachers perceive in PBA after attending a workshop?***

I investigated the benefits Tanzanian EFL teachers' perception of PBA after undergoing the training to put PBA methods into practice. This was done in light of the findings from other studies about the advantages of employing PBA in a foreign language classroom. These four themes were improved speaking confidence, increased motivation to learn a second language, PBA as an equitable assessment tool, and PBA as a tool to encourage feedback and self-reflection for both students and teachers—are presented in this section, along with the data on the advantages of PBA.

#### ***PBA increased students' confidence to speak.***

When asked if they would like to continue employing PBA strategies, nine teachers said that they were interested in doing so since they think the strategies offer students the confidence to express themselves in public. Teachers recognize that one of the goals of studying a second or foreign language was to be able to express one's thoughts clearly, and they viewed PBA as a tool to assist their students in developing this self-assurance. For instance, participant 2 talked about how difficult it was to persuade their pupils to speak in class before employing PBA techniques.

#### **Excerpt 1: Things have changed now**

..."Compared to before, things have changed now. I had this brilliant idea of campaigning on 'English speaking ' in my school. I used a lot of effort to no avail. Thanks

to PBA, I see changes. In the group discussion, everyone talks; I see them confidently try to use the English language... (Participant 2, focused group interview)

In a typical Tanzanian secondary school, there is a mixture of students from different language backgrounds. Students who transition from public primary schools, where all subjects were taught in Swahili, to secondary schools frequently have trouble communicating in English, let alone understanding the content of the subjects taught in English there. In order to make a difference in this situation, new teaching and learning techniques must be employed. Teachers felt that the problem-solving discussion-based activities used in this study were highly useful in encouraging all students to speak out, even those who might not otherwise share anything in class, because they were used as tools to foster conversation in classrooms. Even less confident speakers occasionally found that as the class activities go on, their confidence grew, and they were able to practice and repeat arguments that they have already tested on others. There were plenty of occasions for students who typically wouldn't dare voice their ideas in front of the entire class to do so, and once they've done so, they might even find the courage to do it again. Participant 11 gave an example of how much the Socratic seminar activity was cherished by the students (a sample discussion-based activity used in the study).

**Excerpt 2:** students liked the Socratic seminar activity

...what my students liked the most was the Socratic seminar activity. I tried that with my form four students. Wow. Yeah. And it was amazing. They talked a lot. So glad we couldn't finish it and that we did not get the time to at least comment because those who got the chance talked a lot... (Participant 11, focused group interview)

Participant 8 described how they encouraged their students to speak up when given a chance by telling them not to worry about anyone laughing at their mistakes or criticizing them. By

pointing out that even teachers were still learning the language, the teacher further encouraged the class to try speaking.

**Excerpt 3:** I tell my learners not to fear anyone

...also, I encourage my learners while I'm in the class that they should not fear anyone who is laughing. This is because the language we are learning is a foreign language.

None of us has ever used it before school. Yeah, even with teachers... (Participant 8, focused group interview)

Students often made fun of the verbal gaffes of their fellow classmates. Teachers that made fun of students who made mistakes may have reinforced this habit. This condition is seen even in classroom interactions, as students are reluctant to offer questions out of concern that their questions won't be seen as "correct" or "productive" by the teachers. This teacher's initiative was crucial in closing that communication gap and in creating a safe environment for students to make mistakes and grow in the classroom.

***PBA promotes students' motivation to learn/love the language***

After implementing PBA tactics in their classes, teachers saw a change in their students' willingness to learn a second language. As a result of the local culture, which teaches kids to obey to authority people without questioning their decisions, plus the fact that corporal punishment is a frequent form of punishment in most Tanzanian schools. As a result, children have learned to comply with teacher instructions blindly. This limits students' ability to participate in the learning process in the classroom. In contrast, seven teachers said that after implementing PBA tactics that encourage open communication in class, students' behaviors had changed, and their desire to learn had increased. The experiences that participant six shared are shown below.

**Excerpt 4:** students are coming to my office to ask questions

...now I receive a number of students bringing some of the questions in my office, which was not the previous behavior because of the fact that the students sometimes lack motivation, but when they tried to use your rubric and other strategies which you taught us Um, now I'm busy because of the many students who are coming to my, to my office, asking for the assistance and they need to hear from me... (Participant 5, focused group interview)

A positive sign for students' academic progress is when they ask their teachers questions. Most of the time, children view their teachers as authority figures who cannot simply be contacted for assistance. Students appear to love their teachers and the subject more as a result of PBA's ability to facilitate an easy relationship between them. The teacher was impressed by their students' improved motivation to learn the language when they used PBA tactics, as can be seen in Excerpt 5 below.

**Excerpt 5:** students are eager and willing to learn

...in my school, the use of the English language is not to a great extent. But what impresses me much is that they are eager and willing to learn the language... (Participant 9, post-workshop survey)

Many EFL teachers in Tanzania would find it easier to do their job if they could establish a welcoming environment for students to acquire a second language. Teachers believe that in order for students to access the curriculum taught in a second language, they must feel comfortable speaking it. Students who are passionate about the subject are more likely to succeed in learning a second language. These findings are positive, implying that providing a welcoming and engaging learning atmosphere can help both teachers and students.



### ***PBA is an equitable assessment tool***

The majority of Tanzanian children attend government schools with a Swahili-medium curriculum because while English is the language of instruction in private English-medium schools, few Tanzanians can afford to send their kids there. When students from Swahili medium primary public schools transition to secondary schools experience a significant gap in English proficiency with secondary school students who attended private English-medium primary schools. In the focused group interview, five participants mentioned the possibility of using PBA to maximize each student's potential in the classroom, as shown in the excerpt from participant 14 below.

#### **Excerpt 6:** You can use it with any type of learners

...The PBA is well practical because you can use it with any learners in the classroom; as you apply is easier to stage from one strategy to another... (Participant 11, post-workshop survey)

Participants mentioned how PBA enables EFL students, particularly those from diverse linguistic backgrounds, to participate in cognitively challenging tasks like negotiating solutions to issues by using reasoning abilities. For instance, when requested to speak in a small group in English actively, students were able to demonstrate a deeper level of comprehension of certain subject matter. In the extract that follows, participant 13 explains how using PBA techniques in their classroom enabled all students to display their genuine knowledge in front of the class.

#### **Excerpt 7:** they speak without fear

...And I was talking about how much my learners were interested so much. They enjoyed the class, and they practiced without shame, without fear, because in rural areas, students

have some sort of fear and also the shame of using the language. But, since I use that, that way, that method they speak without fear. (participant 13, post-workshop survey)

The participant account cited above serves as an example of how PBA enables students to participate in a learning experience and affords them the chance to show what they have learned. Students get the chance to give an in-depth account of their knowledge and skills in a foreign language, which they must acquire in order to study other subjects in that language.

### ***PBA facilitates feedback and self-reflection***

Language development requires constant teacher and student reflection on the language acquisition process. PBA techniques like self-evaluation and the use of both analytic and holistic rubrics for feedback enable teachers to gain more detailed information about their students' academic needs and learning progress. Six participants mentioned how PBA assisted them and their students in assessing their language learning progress, which subsequently advised them of areas that required further attention. Participant 4 evaluated how PBA techniques encourage feedback in the extract that follows.

#### **Excerpt 8: student focus on his performance**

....it is very good because it keeps the student focused on his performance. Thus, it brings efficiency and makes the student the center of knowledge. it is also good to use this method because it brings a lot of feedback from students, which can be a source of various studies in teaching and learning... (Participant 4, post-workshop survey)

In the participant account above, we can see the significance of feedback on students' performance in comparison to defined standards (rubrics). In addition, participants reported that PBA supported them in generating useful data for diagnostic purposes to assess what students currently know. This information helped them decide where to begin classes or which student

groups needed particular attention. Additionally, teachers noted that PBA enabled them to monitor students' problem-solving strategies, cognitive capacities, and subject-matter proficiency while they are engaged in small group activities.

***Research Question 2: What challenges do EFL teachers in Tanzanian high schools' face in implementing PBA?***

Six teachers brought up challenges with PBA use in Tanzania despite the fact that nine teachers expressed their gratitude for employing PBA strategies in their classes as described in the preceding question. The challenges that regularly surfaced in the data (i.e., lack of time and skills to create PBA materials, difficult managing large classrooms, and a huge gap students' proficiency levels) are discussed below.

***Lack of time and skills to create materials***

When asked how practical they found PBA, five of the 15 participants cited time as a barrier to implementation. Performance-based assessment entails the development of performance tasks, rubrics, the collection of materials and resources, and finally the implementation of the assessment in the classroom. So, teachers probably need sufficient time to each of these phases. Participant 3 expressed their worries,

**Excerpt 9: I do not have time and experience**

... As I stated earlier that the challenge is time and the pressure that we all get from our employers. ...And Sometimes I cannot make the good ideas, the good teaching aid, or the display of material, because we lack, this material for teaching, but the students are ready to receive it... (Participant 3, data- focused group interview)

Participant 3 claimed that they are compelled to finish the curriculum early in order to begin practicing for national exams. For the majority of teachers, this entails going through the

textbook page by page and covering all of the syllabus-required topics. This include getting students ready for national exams. Participants noted that due to time constraints, they frequently only focus on the competencies assessed at the end of the program in the hope that some of the questions will recur or have the same format in subsequent exams. They achieve this by showing students how to solve previous exam papers. Unfortunately, speaking is not a ability that is assessed at the national examination level; therefore teachers typically ignore it.

### ***Challenge to manage large classroom***

There are typically 80 to 100 students in a secondary school classroom in Tanzania. Most of the time, especially in rural areas, these large classes lack desks, forcing pupils to sit on the floor. For teachers, it becomes extremely challenging to move around the classroom or even to keep an eye on what each student is doing in class. Teachers must be able to monitor every student's activity in class and, if at all feasible, promote their engagement because PBA is an assessment strategy. Six Participant expressed their unhappiness with this challenge in the manner stated below.

### **Excerpt 10: we need to do more research**

...with exception of a challenge in assessing large classes. As intellectuals we need to do more research and come up with the answer for handling large classes. Take an example of using rubrics, assessing more than 100 students for one teacher effectively it needs ample time!! At the same time a teacher has to go with the syllabus!! Therefore, syllabuses has to be revised to reflect this." (Participant 2, post-workshop survey)

Like many Tanzanian educators, this teacher finds it difficult to teach large classes because it is clear that large classes make it challenging for teachers to prepare the teaching materials and aids that are essential for students' academic performance. Large classes also prevent teachers from

engaging with all of the students in the class. In this sense, some teachers could believe that PBA is not a choice since it is not practical for their classrooms. For example, participant 14, even though he understood the advantages of PBA, still felt unprepared due to the difficulties of the large class and the time and work needed for preparation. Here is what he believes he will do.

**Excerpt 11:** I will be using it occasionally

...PBA is very good, and I would like to use it in my classroom. However, due to the challenge of a large class, it is not possible to bank on PBA only, hence I will be using it occasionally.... (Participant 14, post-workshop survey)

***A huge gap in students' level of proficiency.***

In addition to the aforementioned problems, four teachers were worried about their level of readiness to adopt PBA in their diverse classrooms given that only a small percentage of students were confident in their English-speaking abilities. Students have no opportunities to improve their English because they only speak Kiswahili in their daily lives (except from rural areas where they speak their native tongues instead of Kiswahili). Since there are not many English-speaking students in the class, those who can speak English do not have the support of their peers. Participant 3 also offers their perspective on this subject.

**Excerpt 12:** it takes a lot of effort and devotion

...Sincerely it's not easy making students talk. it takes a lot of effort and devotion. They come from different backgrounds, with different needs. Those who came from medium schools it's easy for them but the rest ...it's a monkey sweat- gradual process...

(Participant 3, post-workshop survey)

Participants noted that English language instruction for students should be a team effort.

Participant 7 mentioned that they experience difficulties at school because not all of the teachers

are willing to help students learn English. For instance, as the head of the English language department, they would agree with instructors of other subjects to ensure that students speak English in all of the classrooms in order to support the "English only" policy at their school, but the lack of cooperation would always annoy them. Teachers frequently find that their students are reluctant to speak, so they ultimately let them do so in a language that they are comfortable with.

**Excerpt 13:** We need to help students improve confidence

...In most cases they use [Kiswahili] due to lack of fellow teachers' involvement in it.

We need to help students put effort on improving their academics confidence especially when speaking with other teachers... (Participant 7, post-workshop survey)

EFL teachers in Tanzania are facing a daunting challenge as they strive to create a supportive and flexible environment for their students to succeed in learning English. While participants acknowledge the value of communal help, teachers are struggling to manage their teaching responsibilities and find time to act as speaking buddies for their students. Without this communal effort, foreign language learning may be difficult for students to achieve success.

***Research Question 3: How can teachers address the challenges they face in implementing PBA?***

The participants who indicated a desire to keep implementing PBA in their classrooms offered helpful advice to their fellow teachers on how to handle the challenges that surfaced during the focused group interview. The solution that I identified from the data are modifying textbook activities to make them performative, creating a positive classroom climate for students, embracing multilingualism and modeling PBAs to a few students before the whole class. I will discuss these solutions in detail here.

### ***Modify activities to make them performative***

During the workshop, I discussed with teachers the advantages of modifying textbook activities to make them performative. Several teachers used this knowledge throughout the piloting phase to modify the PBA sample activities I produced for them to their class objectives and teaching environment. During the focused group interview, participant 4 talked about how they changed one of the activities to match their lesson goals.

#### **Excerpt 14:** I changed it to 20 characters

...20 items...they needed to be, I changed it to 20 characters. I was teaching literature, so I changed it to 20 characters. ... I asked students to choose which character they wanted to be and give reasons. ...they tried to dramatize that book, and then I gave them different roles to play according to characters in that book. And had them rehearsal, and then perform the novel in front of their fellow... (Participant 4, focused group interview)

With the 20 items activity, the teacher writes 20 items on the board and then divide students into groups of four to five. The teacher then tells the students that they to be stranded on an island and they can only take five of the 20 items to help them. The group therefore should discuss which items they are going to take and why. After their discussion, they report their decision to the class. If students are aware that they will need to demonstrate their learning, they are more motivated to engage in successful learning. The participant added that the dramatization concept that resulted from changing the activity was successful in inspiring kids. The method used by this teacher appears to solve the problem of material creation.

### ***Create a positive classroom environment (Building rapport with students)***

One of the issues raised by teachers from the post-workshop survey was that students are hesitant and reticent to talk, which may be resulting from having a varied class of students from

English medium schools and those from Swahili medium Schools. However, during the focused interview I asked teachers to share their experiences on how they were able to get every student in class to participate in the activities they were doing with students, paying particular attention to those who indicated they were happy with PBA strategies and would want to keep using them. One of the numerous suggestions three teachers had for getting students to speak up in class was to create a positive learning atmosphere. Teachers claimed that in order to help students feel comfortable speaking up in class and to regard the teacher as a fellow community member rather than an authoritative figure, they developed some form of relationship with the students.

Participant 9's experience is provided below.

**Excerpt 15:** I made them my friends

.... I made them my friends. The most powerful weapon I use in my teaching. They can find me whenever they need me, in fact, I always encourage them to use the English language, whenever they are communicating with me. So, on making Learners love my lesson, I make them my friends. (Participant 9, focused group interview)

Participants agreed that building strong relationships with the students is the key to creating a positive learning environment. Students are more likely to enjoy class when they think their teacher is having fun. Students typically adopt their teacher's perspective. Since teachers want their students to become more confident in their communication skills, rapport is particularly crucial in foreign language classes. I truly believe that creating a safe and nurturing learning environment in the classroom is crucial for our students. If our students feel unsafe or vulnerable to criticism for their remarks, the possibility of having an open and productive discussion in class will be greatly hindered. Therefore, it's important for us as educators to prioritize the emotional



well-being of our students so that they can feel comfortable expressing their thoughts and ideas freely without fear of judgment.

***Embrace multilingualism to help students overcome fear***

Since one of the most frequently mentioned challenges is the dread of speaking among many children who attended Swahili medium schools. I asked the other teachers who appeared to have enjoyed using PBA strategies in their classrooms about how they were able to encourage students, particularly those in lower levels like form one or grade eight, to talk. Three participants had fascinating comments, suggesting that teachers should embrace multilingualism by allowing students to express themselves in all three languages (their tribal tongue, Swahili, and English). By giving students a place to express themselves fully in their chosen language, we enable them to see themselves as multilingual and their proficiency in all languages increases. Below is an excerpt from participant 12.

**Excerpt 16:** Students love stories

... And I tried to let students speak in a language they are comfortable when I was teaching storytelling. And it is so powerful because the student loves the stories of different animals like folk tales. Why snake does not have legs and that *jongoo* [Millipede], has many legs? So, they developed their story in Chaga. Then translated them to Swahili, and tried to read them in English while mixing languages... (Participant 12, focused group interview)

Teachers argued that allowing students to mix languages while speaking enable students to develop confidence in their oral communication. It also allowed teachers to assess each student's progress and give each student the support they require through scaffolding approaches. They noted that the majority of Tanzania's English language teachers might benefit from this. They

asserted that all Tanzanian teachers must be informed about equitable classroom practices in order to ensure that English-language learners have an equal opportunity to learn and thrive in school.

***Start with a few students if possible.***

The fact that they have large classrooms—the average Tanzanian class might contain more than 80 students—seemed to be a major difficulty for most teachers. As mentioned, this makes it more difficult for teachers to successfully manage their class and provide each student the individual attention they need to learn. However, when asked how they overcame this challenge, the teachers who appeared to gain the most from using PBA strategies responded that they were able to start small by putting students in small groups and concentrating on one group at a time. When the students in this group performed better with the strategies, the other groups could copy and attempt to imitate what this first group had done.

**Excerpt 17: Start with few students**

... Start with few students when you start to implement it. I want to suggest to those who want to try it, using a small group of students, for example, they can select a few students that they want to practice with them first. Then after that, they can go to implementing the whole class... (Participant 11, focused group interview)

This method could be a good example of peer tutoring since occasionally students are motivated to study and appreciate the learning process after seeing what success looks like. For instance, students are inspired to follow suit if they observe other students having fun while learning and being able to exhibit their understanding, in this case, being able to present in front of the class and possessing that confidence to speak in front of other students. Every student in the class will

be watching the group the teacher is working with and watching this group from beginning to end, which will in turn inspire those students to strive to accomplish the same thing.

## **DISCUSSION & IMPLICATIONS**

The study's findings provide valuable insights into teachers' perceptions of the benefits and challenges of using PBA in the process of teaching English as a foreign language. However, it's worth noting that the participants' extensive years of teaching experience (ranging from 3 to 30 years) might have influenced the study's findings. Despite this, the findings still suggest that while challenges do exist, there are practical solutions to overcome them. Tanzanian EFL teachers, in particular, offered some useful strategies to address the challenges that were identified by some participants. These challenges include managing large classes, a lack of time and skills to create PBA materials, and teaching students from different educational backgrounds, including those who attended private English-medium schools and those who attended public Swahili-medium schools at the primary level.

There was a research gap about how PBA could function in large classrooms, thus, this study looked into Tanzanian teachers' experiences and perceptions of using PBA in their classes. Many participants in my study admitted that they incorporated PBA into their teaching because they believed it would be beneficial for their classes. In that the use of PBA was seen as a way to take advantage of the benefits that they thought PBA could offer to their students. The teachers' view of PBA in this respect are in line with those of previous researchers who have shown that using PBA in foreign language training has these benefits in the classroom (Sinwongsawat, 2012; Celce-Murcia et al., 2014; East, 2015; Graves, 2016; Thornbury, 2016). Among the benefits mentioned by teachers in this study were improving students' self-esteem and desire to communicate, as well as using PBA as a tool to encourage motivation and boost students' confidence to speak in front of others.

Based on the benefits, challenges, and solutions related to performance-based assessments (PBAs) that were identified by the participants in this study, I have developed four main recommendations. These recommendations are intended for teachers to apply appropriately so that students can effectively learn through PBAs. Here are the four main recommendations:

(1) CLIMATE: a safe and friendly classroom environment, as well as a positive interaction between teachers and students that encourages students to speak up.

Teachers in Tanzania may encourage students' shyness and lack of confidence by publicly correcting their mistakes and occasionally making fun of them. This makes students nervous and less likely to speak up in class. For students to feel comfortable speaking up and engaging in class, a safe and inviting classroom environment is crucial. This entails fostering an environment in which students feel appreciated, valued, and supported. Teachers can help by setting clear expectations, being kind and supportive, and giving opportunities for students to interact with one another (Weimer, 2010). The teacher-student relationship is very crucial for fostering speaking. Students are more inclined to speak up if they have a positive relationship with their teacher (Dunsmore, 2018). This entails establishing connections with students, expressing interest in their life, and demonstrating that you care about their education.

(2) TASK FORMAT (PRODUCT): modifying learning materials to make them more performative.

Modifying the materials that students use is one method to make speaking activities more performative. This could entail altering the format of the activity, such as having students give presentations or participate in role-playing exercises. It may also include the use of many forms of materials, such as movies, audio recordings, or photos. In terms of discussion-based activities, I recommend that teachers use pyramid activities (activities that require students to develop

solutions and defend their decisions) to encourage all students' participation in speaking activities, as illustrated in Appendix 1. However, as the teachers in the study advised, these activities should be adapted to fit the teachers' lesson objectives and teaching settings.

(3) PROCESS: Ideas for gradually encouraging speech through translanguaging.

Allowing students to translanguaging, or utilize many languages in the same discourse, is another technique to encourage speaking in PBAs. Students may feel more at ease speaking if they do not have to worry about finding the correct words in the target language.

(3.1), as well as using students as a model. Teachers can also use students as role models to inspire students to speak up. This could entail starting with fewer students in the classroom—say, a group of ten—and then asking the remainder of the class to observe what is going on. They can all replicate what this pelleting group has done once they understand the benefits of speaking the language in the group.

(3.2) and using rubrics to assess student performance. Teachers are urged first to enhance student awareness of general language competency so that students understand what increasing proficiency looks like for them. Before students begin any task, teachers should state the goal, clarify the task, and model it. It should also be their standard of assessment techniques to encourage neutral assessment, washback through relevant follow-up activities, and the establishment of links between tasks and self-evaluations.

Teachers also valued the use of rubrics (Appendix 3) to assess students' performance during this study. Teachers should keep in mind, however, that the rubric's application should be dependent on the objectives of the lesson, and in this way, they may aim for fluency or accuracy. When monitoring students as they work on assignments, teachers might pay attention to the elements identified by Brown and Abeywickrama (2019) as significant in verbal communication.

These factors include topic nomination, upkeep, and termination; attracting attention, interfering, keeping the floor, controlling, specifying, challenging, and paraphrasing, signals of understanding (nodding, "uh-huh," "hmm," etc.); arguing over meaning, intonation techniques for practical effect, and body language, which includes kinesthetics, proxemics, eye contact, formality, politeness, and other sociolinguistic elements.

Furthermore, designing effective rubrics that influence students' progress should include requesting their input, assisting them in visualizing what success looks like, and then incorporating their language into the rubric. After that, students should naturally compare their performances to the agreed-upon standards and strive tirelessly to ensure that they meet these goals.

(3.3) Creating a strategy for relevant feedback. Although PBAs are designed to foster independent learning, students will be unable to complete them without the supervision and direction of clear and relevant feedback. It is consequently advised that teachers plan for meaningful feedback. Furthermore, teachers must prepare their students for the assignments in order for them to succeed. Teachers are urged first to enhance student awareness of general language competency so that students understand what increasing proficiency looks like for them. Before students begin any task, teachers should state the goal, clarify the task, and model it. It also should their norm of assessment practices to encourage unbiased assessment, encourage washback through pertinent follow-up tasks, and establish links between tasks and self-evaluations.

(3.4) PBA in formative assessment. Given that PBA has demonstrated efficacy as a means of evaluating students' growth in spoken language skills within formative assessments. In order to facilitate this process, teachers are advised to engage in collaborative efforts with

students to establish goals for learning and employ PBAs to monitor and document their progress. The use of PBAs by teachers facilitates the assessment and measurement of students' abilities in authentic situations, a crucial aspect in the enhancement of their oral communication proficiencies. This methodology enables students to obtain prompt and valuable feedback of their academic performance, facilitating the identification of areas that require enhancement and the monitoring of their progress towards achieving their educational goals.

Overall, these four pedagogical principles are critical for effectively integrating PBA into language classes. To encourage students to talk, teachers could modify materials to be more performative, gradually encourage speaking by permitting translanguaging, utilize rubrics to evaluate students' performances, provide a safe and friendly classroom environment and assessment. Students can be inspired to study more, become proficient in the target language they are learning, and engage in meaningful feedback by following these strategies, resulting in a positive and productive learning environment.



## **LIMITATIONS & CONCLUSION**

### **Limitations**

The study has a number of limitations. The first drawback is caused by the researcher's absence from the participants' classes. The researchers relied on teachers' accounts of their experiences utilizing PBA strategies because they were unable to observe students' responses to them. Second, because it was beyond the scope of the study, the influence of PBA on students' proficiency was not measured. However, researchers recommend that more studies take into account examining the effect of PBA strategies on students' proficiency. Due to the fact that the researchers used only small group discussion activities and presentations, future research should also examine the efficacy of other PBA strategies such as interviews and unscripted role play in large classes context like Tanzania. The chapter leaders I collaborated with for the study may not accurately represent all Tanzanian EFL teachers. Because this group enjoy many benefits compared to other teachers. They participate in several professional development programs, which give them an advantage over their fellow teachers in terms of learning about and interacting with English teaching tools. But it was thought that these educators would disseminate the information to other educators in their respective regions.

### **Conclusion**

I examined the benefits, the challenges and potential solutions for implementing PBA in the EFL environment of Tanzania. My conclusion was that EFL teachers in Tanzania were hopeful and optimistic about implementing PBA strategies in the classroom and demonstrating some promise for PBA use going forward. They praised PBA as a tool for ensuring that students learn while being assessed, for getting them to consider aspects of their own learning and practice self- and peer-assessment, for expanding language-use opportunities, for respecting individual

differences, for integrating teaching, learning, and assessment, for fostering participation, and for giving students a chance to make mistakes and take risks.

Some of the common challenges mentioned were managing large classrooms while implementing PBA strategies, lacking the necessary skills and time to create relevant materials, and dealing with the diversity of the student body. However, the solutions offered by other teachers proved to be very helpful. For example, some teachers suggested modifying textbook tasks to make them more performative, while others recommended working with a small group of students within the classroom.

Practically most of the participants acknowledged that PBAs have a significant impact on students' oral language production. Their remarks made it evident that they appeared to comprehend PBA's enormous significance and effectiveness in developing speaking skills. Thus, it may be assumed that most teachers were aware of the many goals of PBA. In order to diversify their assessment methods, EFL teachers in large classroom settings are urged to use a variety of oral performance assessment instruments, including interviews, group discussions, presentations, and non-scripted role-plays. Given that, I relied solely on the accounts of teachers regarding their experiences in the classroom after implementing performance-based assessment (PBA) strategies since I did not have access to the students. However, in the future, I plan to conduct a study that evaluates the development of students' proficiency levels through PBAs. This study will involve direct observation of students' performance and assessments of their proficiency levels to determine the effectiveness of PBA strategies in promoting their learning outcomes.

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## APPENDIX A: SAMPLE OF PYRAMID DISCUSSION ACTIVITIES

See more examples *here*!

### **20 Items:**

Write 20 items on the board. Then divide the class into groups of four and five. Tell them they are about to be stranded on an island. They can only take five of the 20 items to help them.

The group should discuss which items they are going to take and why. After their discussion, they will report their decision to the class.

Consider *this example* from Dr. Winke

### **Make a Country:**

Set this activity up by telling your students that a new island has been found and colonized within the last week. Then tell them that the people of this island are in a big debate about how to run the country. Then tell the students that the activity they are going to do today is to make a plan for this new island/country. Students will break up into groups and discuss the following questions on developing a new society.

- What is the role of the government?
- Who should be in government?
- What kind of budget does the government have? How much should go towards education? Military? Healthcare?
- What kind of education system should they have? Private or Public?

- How many years do students have to study?
- What kind of laws should this new country have?
- How will you start the economy?

There are many questions you can place on the board. This is a good activity for your older kids.

Generally, I give them one period to discuss the questions that I put up, and then in the second period, I have them tell me about what they decided for their country and why? This usually leads to some great discussions.

The number of questions can vary, and you can make your students think of questions themselves.

**Figure 3:** Make a Country Activity Sample





## **APPENDIX B: INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO RUN A PYRAMID ACTIVITY**

1. Introduce the problem, probably using a list of the board oh handouts
2. start with individual reflection- learners each decide what they think might be a solution
3. combine individuals to make pairs, if you demand that there must be an agreed compromise solution before you move on to the stage, it will significantly help to focus the task
4. combine the pairs to make fours; again, they need to reach an agreement.
5. join each four with another four or - in a smaller class - with all others
6. when the whole class comes together, see if you can, reach one class solution.

**Figure 4:** Pyramid Activity Sample, (Scrivener, 2009) pg. 154



## APPENDIX C: SAMPLE OF RUBRICS USED IN THIS STUDY

See more samples *here*:

**Figure 5:** Analytic Rubric Sample

Group Oral Exam Score Sheet

Test Administrator: \_\_\_\_\_

	(1) Pronunciation	(2) Fluency	(3) Accuracy/Grammar	(4) Vocabulary/Content	(5) Communicative skills/Strategies
<b>5</b>	Rarely mispronounces, able to speak with near native-like pronunciation	Near-native-like fluency, effortless, smooth, natural rhythm	Uses high-level discourse with near-native-like accuracy	Wide range of vocabulary with near-native-like use, vocabulary is clearly appropriate to express ideas/opinion	Confident and natural, asks others to expand on views, shows ability to negotiate meaning, shows how own and others' ideas are related
<b>4</b>	Pronunciation is clear, occasionally mispronounces some words, but has mastered all sounds, accent may sound foreign but does not interfere with meaning	Speaks with confidence, but has some unnatural pauses, some errors in speech rhythm, rarely gropes for words	Shows ability to use full range of grammatical structures but makes some errors, errors do not impede the meaning of the utterances	Lexis sufficient for task although not always precisely used	Generally confident, responds appropriately to others' ideas/opinions, show ability to negotiate meaning
<b>3</b>	Pronunciation is not native-like, but can be understood, mispronounces unfamiliar words, may not have mastered some sounds	Speech is hesitant, some unnatural rephrasing and groping for words	Relies mostly on simple (but generally accurate) sentences, has enough grammar to express meaning, complex sentences are used but often inaccurately	Lexis generally adequate for expressing ideas/opinion but often used inaccurately	Responds to others, shows agreement or disagreement to others' opinions
<b>2</b>	Frequently mispronounces, accent often impedes meaning, difficult to understand even with concentrated listening	Slow, strained speech, constant groping for words and long, unnatural pauses (except for routine phrases)	Uses simple inaccurate sentences and fragmented phrases, doesn't have enough grammar to express ideas/opinions clearly enough	Lexis not adequate for task, cannot express ideas or opinion	Does not initiate interaction, produces monologue only, shows some turn taking, may say, "I agree with you," but does not relate ideas in explanation
<b>1</b>	Frequently mispronounces, heavy accent, may use speech which is virtually incomprehensible	Fragments of speech that are so halting that conversation is virtually impossible	Only says a few words, cannot make a reasonable judgment of student's grammatical ability	Little lexis, inadequate for simple communication	May require prompting, shows no awareness of other speakers

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

(Winke, 2018)

**Figure 6: Holistic Rubric Sample**

Group Oral Exam Score Sheet Test Administrator: \_\_\_\_\_

	(1) Helped others talk	(2) Participation/willingness to talk	(3) Was able to do this task (comprehended the task)	(4) Communicative skills/Strategies in completing the task
<b>5</b>	Asked questions, encouraged others to speak	Talked without being asked to; engaged in discussion well	Seemed like he or she understood the task and what others were saying, may have explained the task to others	Confident and natural; helped move task toward end goal
<b>4</b>	Asked at least one question, encouraged someone to speak	Hesitated a bit, but talked, engaged	Understood the task	Generally confident, moved task toward goal
<b>3</b>	Encouraged someone to speak or asked a question	Volunteered a little bit	Had to be guided heavily to understand the task	Responds to others; participates as a follower
<b>2</b>	Was encouraging in general	Had to be prompted to talk	Mostly did not understand the task	May have deviated from task a bit
<b>1</b>	Did not ask questions, did not encourage others to speak	Did not join in much at all or at all	Did not seem to understand the task	Uneasy in speaking, talked in English, or talked about other (non-task) things.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

**Overall Group Score and Feedback to Group:**

(Winke, 2018)

## **APPENDIX D: KOSTERE & KOSTERE'S (2021) CODING GUIDELINES**

### **Theoretical Analysis**

#### **Step by Step: Theoretical Analysis by Kestere & Kostere (2022)-Chapter 6, p. 59**

1. Read, review, and familiarize yourself with the data collected from each participant (interviews, journals, field notes, records, documents, etc.). Keeping the predetermined categories (themes) and the research question in mind, re-read the document and highlight intuitively any sentences, phrases, or paragraphs that appear to be meaningful as well as remaining open to any new patterns and themes that are related to the research question and have emerged from the data analysis. During this process, the researcher immerses themselves in each participant's data individually.
2. For each participant, review the highlighted data and use your research question to decide if the highlighted data are related to your question. Some information in the transcript may be interesting but may not relate to your question.
3. Eliminate all highlighted data that are not related to your question; however, start a separate file to store unrelated data. You may want to come back and reevaluate these data in the future.
4. Take each item of data and code or give a descriptor for the data. The descriptor or name will often be a characteristic word from within the data.
5. Cluster the items of data that are related or connected in some way and begin to develop patterns.
6. Patterns that are related to a preexisting theme are placed together with any other patterns that correspond with the theme, along with direct quotes taken from the data (transcribed interviews, field notes, documents, etc.) to elucidate the pattern.

7. Any patterns that do not relate to preexisting themes should be kept in a separate file for future evaluation of the meanings as they relate to the overall topic. - ***Repeat Steps 1–7 for each participant's data***
8. Now revisit the patterns that did not fit the preexisting categories and remain open to any new patterns and themes that are related to the research topic and have emerged from the data analysis.
9. Each pattern should be described and elucidated by supporting quotes from the data.
10. For each theme, the researcher needs to write a detailed analysis describing the scope and substance of each theme.
11. Finally, the data are synthesized together to form a composite synthesis of the question under inquiry.

## **APPENDIX E: DATA COLLECTION SURVEYS FOLDER**

Access the Surveys and Focus Group questions *here!*