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The comparative impact of reasoning gap tasks and opinion gap tasks on young EFL learners' classroom engagement

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Abstract

This study examined the differences between the effects of reasoning gap tasks and opinion gap tasks on young EFL learners' classroom engagement. The participants comprised 63 Iranian young EFL learners within the age range of 9 to 12 years old. These 63 learners were selected out of an initial number of 100 male and female EFL learners at the intermediate level based on their performance on a Flyers test. The 63 selected participants were divided into two intact groups consisting of 31 learners in the opinion-gap task experimental group and 32 learners in the reasoning-gap experimental group. Then, an engagement checklist was used by two raters in the two groups as pretest. After that, for ten sessions each lasting for 90 minutes, in one of the groups, the researcher carried out opinion-gap tasks while reasoning gap tasks were implemented in another experimental group. Upon finishing the treatment, the two raters used exactly the same checklist and obtained the posttest engagement scores. The analysis of the data through the parametric test of paired sample t-test indicated that both task types significantly impacted young EFL learners' classroom engagement. Besides, the results of Mann-Whitney U Test revealed that there was no significant difference between the effects of reasoning gap tasks and opinion gap tasks on young EFL learners' classroom engagement. Based on the results, EFL teachers are recommended to use both task types to enhance EFL learners' classroom engagement.

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1. Introduction

Learning engagement involves learners' increased attention, focus, and participation in learning tasks, which aim to achieve a stated goal by making both personal (e.g., cognitive, affective, behavioral factors) and interpersonal efforts (e.g., social and affective factors) (Linnenbrink-Garcia et al., 2011). Learners' engagement has proved to be an effective and important prerequisite for being able to learn English in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes (Dornyei, 2019; Oga-Baldwin, 2019). EFL instructors want learners to be as highly engaged as possible when it comes to learning activities which involve the four main language skills (i.e., speaking, writing, listening, and reading) as well as sub-skills, including grammar and vocabulary.

On the other hand, with the widespread application of task-based language teaching (TBLT) one issue which is worth investigation is how different types of tasks may affect EFL learners' learning engagement. Two of the important types of tasks are reasoning gap tasks and opinion gap tasks. The review of literature reveals that the teaching and learning of English as a Second Language (ESL) has undergone changes driven by the Task-based Learning and Teaching (TBLT) approaches (Mvundura & Svongoro, 2021). These changes have shifted the focus away from gaining mastery over linguistic forms in traditional classes (e.g., grammar and morphology) to putting more emphasis on English as a tool for communicative competence and negotiation of meaning (Baralt & Gómez, 2017).

Although several investigations have been carried out in regard to opinion-gap tasks and reasoning gap tasks (Dadras & Erfani, 2018; Namaziandost et al., 2019; Soleimani, & Vahid Dastjerdi, 2021; Zand-Moghadam & Samani, 2021) as well as engagement (Kazemi et al., 2021; Han et al., 2021; Jiang & Zhang, 2021; Nakamura et al., 2020; Sadoughi & Hejazi, 2021), the scope of the effects of different task types on learning engagement is quite under-explored to the best of the researcher's knowledge. More specifically, the effects of reasoning gap tasks and opinion gap tasks on young EFL learners' classroom engagement has not been addressed by previous research. Thus, the current study was an attempt to examine the significant difference (if any) between the effects of reasoning gap tasks and opinion gap tasks on young EFL learners' classroom engagement.

In line with the objectives stated above, the following research questions were formulated:

RQ1: Do reasoning gap tasks have any significant effect on young EFL learners' classroom engagement?

QQ2: Do opinion gap tasks have any significant effect on young EFL learners' classroom engagement?

RQ3: Is there any significant difference between the effects of reasoning gap tasks and opinion gap tasks on young EFL learners' classroom engagement?

Besides, considering the research questions, the following null hypotheses were stated:

H01: Reasoning gap tasks have no significant effect on young EFL learners' classroom engagement.

H02: Opinion gap tasks have no significant effect on young EFL learners' classroom engagement?

H03: There is no significant difference between the effect of reasoning gap tasks and opinion gap tasks on young EFL learners' classroom engagement.

2. Review of the Related Literature

Classroom engagement is of enormous importance as it serves as a multidimensional pathway, making a connection between learners' motivational states with their intended educational outcomes (Skinner, Kindermann, Connell, & Wellborn, 2009; Skinner, Kindermann, & Furrer, 2009).These outcomes include academic progress and extent of achievement (Hughes, Wu, Kwok, Villarreal, & Johnson, 2012; Jang et al., 2012; Ladd & Dinella, 2009; Reyes, Brackett, Rivers, White, & Salovey, 2012; Skinner, Zimmer-Gembeck, & Connell, 1998). Taking part in an

effortful, strategic, and proactive manner, learners have at their disposal multiple effective pathways to turn their constructive motivational states (e.g., demands, goals) into more effective and developed skills, the attainment of educational objectives, and the achievement of academic progress.

As pointed out by Christenson et al. (2012), engagement has to do with the extent to which students take part in learning process and is comprised of four dimensions: behavior, emotion, cognition, and agency (Christenson et al., 2012; Fredricks et al., 2004; Reeve, 2013; Reeve & Tseng, 2011). As for behavioral engagement, the learners are assessed on how attentive and persistent they are in pursuing a learning activity (Skinner et al., 2009). Emotional engagement is concerned with how interested and optimistic the learners are when it comes to learning activity (Skinner et al., 2009). Cognitive engagement involves using effective strategies by learners in order to take part in the activity (Walker et al., 2006). Agentic engagement has to do with how active and involved students pursue their learning activity by referring to their needs and requirements (Reeve, 2013).

Learners' engagement has proved to be an effective and important prerequisite for being able to learn English in EFL classes (Oga-Baldwin, 2019). EFL instructors want learners to be as highly engaged as possible when it comes to learning activities which involve the four main language skills (i.e., speaking, writing, listening, and reading) as well as sub-skills, including grammar and vocabulary. Due to the importance of this construct, it has been subject to very recent investigations both in the Iranian context of English language teaching (ELT) (Kazemi et al., 2021; Sadoughi & Hejazi, 2021) and the international context of ELT (Han et al., 2021; Jiang & Zhang, 2021; Nakamura et al., 2020).

A review of previous investigations shows that a number of studies have investigated engagement in ELT context. For instance, Kazemi et al. (2021) demonstrated that dynamic assessment could boost participants' performance in a practical and effective way, not only in terms of reading performance but also in terms of motivating more classroom engagement among EFL learners. Sadoughi and Hejazi's (2021) findings revealed that perceived teacher support could directly and positively affect academic engagement. Additionally, positive emotions mediated the relationship between teacher support and academic engagement. Besides, Jiang and Zhang (2021) showed that the relationship of perceived social relatedness to agentic engagement was fully mediated by both mastery-approach and performance-approach goals. Nakamura et al. (2020) found that the constraint task condition had positive effects on all the cognitive engagement measures. Han et al.'s (2021) results indicated that behavioral engagement was positively related to involvement. Emotional engagement was positively related to student cohesiveness and negatively related to teacher support. Moreover, satisfaction was not related to any of the learning environment factors.

On the other hand, Prabhu (1987) argues that reasoning-gap tasks are concerned with extracting some new information from already available information using several processes, including inferencing, deduction, practical reasoning, or a perception of relationships or patterns. Opinion-gap tasks, however, have to do with specifying and expressing a personal priority, emotion, or attitude in a specific situation (Ellis, 2003). Both reasoning-gap and information-gap tasks can potentially push learners to engage in constructive cooperation as well as individual performances (Zand-Moghadam, & Samani, 2021).

Having said that, investigating task types in the realm of ELT has been the subject of some research. Rabbanifar and Mall-Amiri (2017) studied the effects of opinion-gap and reasoning-gap tasks on complexity, fluency, and accuracy of EFL learners' speaking. The findings revealed that reasoning-gap task had a significant impact on participants' speaking complexity and accuracy, with fluency not being influenced in comparison to opinion-gap tasks. Dadras and Erfani (2018) found that applying both the reasoning gap tasks and information gap tasks significantly affected the frequency of conversational strategies through negotiation. Namaziandost et al. (2019) showed that that information-gap tasks were more effective than

opinion-gap tasks and reasoning-gap tasks on EFL learners' speaking fluency. Further, Soleimani and Vahid Dastjerdi's (2021) findings revealed that both opinion-exchange and information gap tasks had significant effects on EFL learners' willingness to communicate (WTC). Moreover, it was revealed that opinion-exchange tasks had better effects on the enhancement of the participants' WTC. Zand-Moghadam and Samani's (2021) results indicated that TBLT had a positive effect on EFL learners' pragmatic competence. Besides, the information-gap task group outperformed the reasoning-gap, and opinion-gap task groups in terms of pragmatic production and metapragmatic awareness.

3. Methodology

3.1. Design

The present study adopted a quasi-experimental, pretest-posttest comparison design. The task type with two modalities was the independent variable and learners' engagement was the dependent variable. Language proficiency and learners' age range were control variables. Participants were selected from both genders. Thus, gender was not a control variable in the present study. There were no moderating variables in this study.

3.2. Participants

The participants in the current study were 63 young male and female learners at the intermediate level of language proficiency studying in a Language School in Tehran within the age range of 9 to 12, chosen through nonrandom convenience sampling. For obtaining the two homogeneous groups, a Flyers test was administered to 100 learners and 63 students whose scores fell within the range of one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected. Moreover, two MA holders in the field of TEFL with 10 years of experience teaching English to young learners assisted the researcher in rating the engagement checklist and the writing and speaking sections of the tests used in this study.

3.3. Instruments and Materials

a) Young Learners English (The Flyers Test): The Flyers test is developed by Cambridge English Language Assessment. It was utilized to have a homogeneous group of participants. This test is suitable for those who have an English proficiency equal to A2 on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). To assure that the test was reliable for the purposes of the current study, the researcher checked the reliability index by running Cronbach's Alpha on the scores and the obtained reliability value was 0.74.

b) Engagement Checklist: To measure engagement in the present study, the checklist developed by Reeve (2013) was used. This checklist was used as an observation checklist yielding quantitative data. It is on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from Never (1), Not at all (2), Occasionally (3), Sometimes yes (4), Sometimes no (5), Frequently (6), and Always (7). Thus, the minimum number on the checklist is 11 and the maximum number is 77. Reeve (2013) established the validity of the instrument via exploratory factor analysis. Moreover, Reeve (2013) reported a reliability index of 0.82 for the whole checklist and reliability indices of 0.71, 0.73, 0.89, and 0.82 for Behavioral engagement, Emotional engagement, Cognitive engagement, and Agentic engagement components, respectively. In the current study, inter-rater reliability was used for establishing the consistency of the scores obtained using the checklist by two raters. Using Pearson correlation coefficient the raters' scores were calculated (0.81), which indicated a high level of consistency.

Project Textbook (Intermediate level): This is a five-level course book for young learners and the new edition authored by Hutchinson (Fourth Edition) combines all the aspects of the previous edition with some new aspects including new digital components, extra resources and more teacher support. In the context of the current study, two units from the fourth level, designed for the intermediate level of language proficiency, were covered.

3.4. Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

At first, 100 young EFL learners from a language school were selected. They were given a Flyers test and 63 learners were selected. The 63 selected learners were those whose scores fell within the range of one standard deviation above and below the mean. Following that, the 63 selected learners were divided into two groups consisting of 31 learners in the opinion gap experimental group and 32 learners in the reasoning-gap experimental group. In fact, the two groups stayed in their intact classes since it was not feasible for the researcher to change their class time. Then, the engagement checklist was used by two raters in the two groups as the pretest. To do so, each rater attended each class for three sessions and rated each individual student in the class subsequent to receiving training. As the focus of the present study was on learning engagement in general, during these three sessions, the learners in both groups were involved in doing regular activities based on the conventional syllabus of the language institute. For instance, during these sessions, the learners participated in pair work and group work speaking activities, did a writing task, carried out a reading activity, did some vocabulary practice, and grammar exercises. To this end, after three sessions, all the individual learners in each group attained an engagement score as pretest.

After that, for ten sessions, lasting for 90 minutes, in one of the groups, the researcher carried out opinion-gap tasks in line with Ellis (2003) while reasoning gap tasks were implemented in another experimental group in line with Prabhu (1987). The researcher was the teacher in both classes. During the implementation of the tasks, the teacher monitored learners' performance and provided guidance and help if necessary. Moreover, the teacher presented the tasks drawing on comprehension check and concept check questions to make sure that all the learners knew what they were expected to do. Additionally, the teacher encouraged learners' participation in the tasks via monitoring learners and spotting those who seemingly had problems. In case, the teacher felt that a learner was puzzled, she would ask some questions and provide guidance. With regard to opinion-gap tasks, learners were required to identify and articulate a personal preference, feeling, or attitude in response to a given situation. The main goal here was to elicit a range of opinions from the students. Besides, reasoning gap tasks were implemented in the second experimental group in line with Prabhu (1987). In these tasks, learners were required to derive some new information from given information through the processes of inferencing, deduction, practical reasoning, or a perception of relationships or patterns. As for error treatment, in both groups the teacher noted down their errors and after the learners finished the task, the teacher wrote them down on the board and the class corrected the errors collectively. If the learners failed to correct it the teacher offered direct help as the last resort.

Upon finishing the treatment, similar to the pretest, the two raters used exactly the same checklist and during three sessions obtained the posttest engagement scores. In the three post-treatment sessions in which the students' learning engagement was rated, the learners were involved in activities similar to their pretest sessions. Thus, similar to pretest the activities were performed in line with the conventional syllabus of the language institute covering all the language skills and components. It should be noted that the dependent variable of the current study was learning engagement in general and not learners' engagement with opinion-gap and reasoning gap tasks. To put it another way, it should be mentioned that since learning engagement was the dependent variable in this study and the study had a pretest, posttest design to examine the effects of treatment types on learning engagement, it was necessary to collect the data before and after the implementation of the treatment. In addition, the checklist was an engagement checklist and not an observation checklist. It is noteworthy that the language institute where the research was carried out was equipped with surveillance cameras. Thus, the researcher used the videos recorded during the class and used the recorded videos to rate the engagement of the learners. This way, the researcher and raters were able to neutralize the probable impact of observations' presence on participants' performance. To observe ethical

considerations, the researcher asked the manager of the language institute to obtain the consent of the learners' parents as they were young learners. In so doing, some of the parents were notified on the use of class videos as they came to pick up their children from classes. The rest were informed via phone. All parents gave their approval for the use of videos as they were told that the data would be used for educational purposes only. The whole treatment lasted 10 sessions with six other sessions being allocated to pretest and posttest.

To address the research questions in the present study, the researcher used both descriptive and inferential statistics. For descriptive statistics, means, standard deviations, and reliability measurement were used. As for inferential statistics, a one-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used. The prerequisites for running this parametric test were also put in place.

4. Results and Discussion

To analyze the data, initially, the descriptive statistics for the pretest and posttest learning engagement scores were obtained. Table 1 displays the descriptive statistics.

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics for the Learning Engagement Pretest and Posttest Scores*

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Pre-Opinion	31	21.00	35.00	28.0968	3.56235	12.690	.090	.421	-.894	.821
Pre-Reasoning	32	24.00	35.00	30.2500	3.20282	10.258	-.355	.414	-.755	.809
Post Opinion	31	30.00	37.00	33.5484	1.84099	3.389	-.099	.421	-1.032	.821
Post Reasoning	32	28.00	42.00	35.0938	3.43003	11.765	.381	.414	-.334	.809
Valid N (listwise)	31									

As indicated in the above table, the means for the pretest scores of the opinion gap and reasoning gap groups were 28.09 and 30.25, respectively.

To check if each one of the task types significantly affected EFL students' learning engagement, two paired samples t-tests were run. Since, the skewness and kurtosis ratios for the pretest and posttest scores lay within the range of +/- 1.96, the normality assumption was met. Table 2 portrays the results of paired samples t-test between the pretest and posttest of the reasoning-gap group as well as the results of this statistical test for the pretest and posttest of the opinion-gap group.

Table 2. *Results of Paired Samples T-test for the Pretest and Posttest Scores of the Two Groups*

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-Opinion - Post Opinion	-5.45161	2.94209	.52842	-6.53078	-4.37244	-10.31	30	.000
Pair 2	Pre-Reasoning - Post Reasoning	-4.84375	3.01726	.53338	-5.93159	-3.75591	-9.081	31	.000

As presented in the above table, the sig value for comparing the pretest and posttest scores of the reasoning-gap group equaled .00, which is lower than .001. Accordingly, it can be concluded that the reasoning-gap task has had a statistically significant impact on young EFL students' learning engagement. Hence, it can be concluded that the first null hypothesis was rejected.

Similarly, the sig value for comparing the pretest and posttest scores of the opinion-gap group equaled .00, which is lower than .001. Therefore, it can be concluded that the opinion-gap task has had a statistically significant impact on young EFL students' learning engagement. Therefore, the second null hypothesis was also rejected.

To address the third research question, the researcher decided to consider the pretest scores as a covariate and conduct an ANCOVA. Table 3 displays the descriptive statistics for the pretest (covariate) and posttest scores (dependent variable) of the two groups.

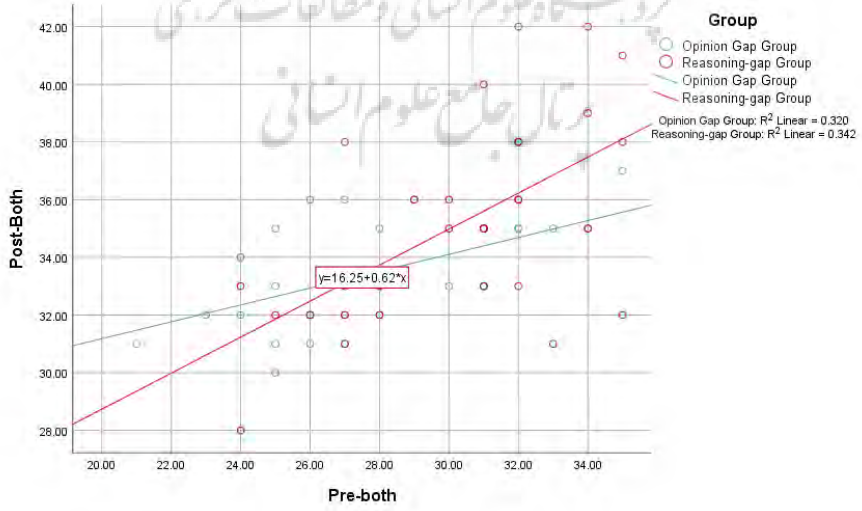
Table 3. *Descriptive Statistics for the Pretest (Covariate) and Posttest (Dependent Variable) Scores*

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Pre-both	63	21.00	35.00	29.1905	3.52803	12.447	-.177	.302	-.913	.595
Post-Both	63	28.00	42.00	34.3333	2.85115	8.129	.534	.302	.683	.595
Valid N (listwise)	63									

As presented in Table 3, the skewness and kurtosis ratios for the pretest and posttest scores lay within the range of +/- 1.96. Therefore, the first assumption of ANCOVA, that is the normality assumption, was met. The second assumption of ANCOVA i.e., reliability of covariate, was assured via selecting a well-constructed and reliable instrument i.e., the learning engagement checklist (Pallant, 2011). The multicollinearity assumption was also met because there was only one covariate (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). As for the linearity assumption, the scatterplot of the variables was inspected (Figure 1).

Figure 1. *Scatterplot of pretest and posttest scores*



As noticed in Figure 1, the relationship between the dependent variable (posttest) and covariate (pretest) was not in the form of a straight diagonal line, indicating that the relationships were not linear, hence, the linearity assumption was violated. Thus, the researcher decided to compute the gain scores which were computed for each group by subtracting the pretest scores

from the posttest scores. Table 4 shows the results of descriptive statistics for the gain scores of the two groups along with Skewness and Kurtosis values.

Table 4. *Descriptive Statistics for the Pretest and Posttest Gain Scores*

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Gain Opinion	31	1.00	10.00	5.4516	2.94209	8.656	2.329	.421	-1.250	.821
Gain Reasoning	32	-3.00	11.00	4.8437	3.01726	9.104	-.472	.414	3.122	.809
Valid N (listwise)	31									

As shown in Table 4, the skewness and kurtosis ratios lay out of the range of +/- 1.96, indicating that the data sets were not normally distributed (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Thus, the Mann-Whitney U Test, as the non-parametric equivalent of independent samples t-test, was run. Table 5 presents the respective results.

Table 5. *Results of Mann-Whitney U Test on the Gain Scores of the Two Groups*

Test Statistics[a]

	Gain Scores Both Groups
Mann-Whitney U	461.000
Wilcoxon W	957.000
Z	-.277
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.782

a. Grouping Variable: Group

As exhibited in Table 5, the significant value equaled .78, which is higher than 0.05. Thus, it can be inferred that there was not a statistically significant difference between the gain scores of the two groups. Thus, the third null hypothesis of the study was not rejected and it can be inferred that there is no significant difference between the effects of reasoning gap tasks and opinion gap tasks on young EFL learners' classroom engagement.

This study aimed to examine and compare the effects of reasoning gap tasks and opinion gap tasks on young EFL learners' classroom engagement. Data analysis through the parametric test of paired sample t-test indicated that both task types significantly impacted young EFL learners' classroom engagement. Further analysis of the data by running Mann-Whitney U Test revealed that there was no significant difference between the effects of reasoning gap tasks and opinion gap tasks on young EFL learners' classroom engagement.

The results of the present study confirm the findings of extant empirical investigations in terms of the effectiveness of opinion-gap and reasoning-gap tasks on different language skills and components. For instance, the findings substantiate the findings of Rabbanifar and Mall-Amiri (2017) as their findings revealed that both reasoning-gap and opinion gap tasks significantly impacted speaking complexity and accuracy. Similarly, Namaziandost et al. (2019) explored the impact of opinion-gap, reasoning-gap, and information-gap tasks on EFL learners' speaking fluency. The results indicated that the three experimental groups outperformed the control group on the posttest. Zand-Moghadam and Samani (2021) explored the effect of information-gap, reasoning-gap, and opinion-gap tasks on EFL learners' pragmatic production, metapragmatic awareness, and comprehension of implicature. The findings confirmed the positive effect of task-based instruction on EFL learner's pragmatic competence.

The positive effect of opinion-gap tasks on students' engagement can be attributed to several reasons. The first justification for the significant impact of opinion-gap tasks on young EFL learners' classroom engagement is that these tasks require students to think critically and express their opinions. More precisely, opinion-gap tasks encourage students to actively participate in the learning process by expressing their opinions and engaging in discussions with their peers. This active participation leads to increased motivation and engagement among

students. The second justification for the significant impact of opinion-gap tasks is that they are relevant and meaningful to young EFL learners. Young learners are more likely to be engaged in tasks that are relevant to their lives and interests. Opinion-gap tasks provide an opportunity for students to discuss topics that are relevant to their lives, such as their hobbies, interests, and experiences. This relevance makes the tasks more engaging and motivating for students, leading to increased classroom engagement. The third justification for the significant impact of opinion-gap tasks is that they promote collaboration and social interaction among young EFL learners. Collaborative learning has been shown to be an effective way to enhance student engagement and achievement. Opinion-gap tasks require students to work together in pairs or small groups, which promotes collaboration and social interaction. This collaboration not only enhances classroom engagement but also helps students develop important social skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving.

On the other hand, the positive influence of reasoning-gap tasks on students' engagement can be explained by several reasons. The first reason is that such tasks require students to use higher-order thinking skills. Reasoning-gap tasks require students to analyze and evaluate information, make connections between different concepts, and draw conclusions based on evidence. This type of cognitive engagement leads to increased motivation and engagement among students. The second justification for the significant impact of reasoning-gap tasks is that they provide students with a sense of autonomy and control over their learning. Young learners are more likely to be engaged in tasks that allow them to make decisions and take ownership of their learning. Reasoning-gap tasks provide an opportunity for students to explore topics in their own way, using their own ideas and opinions. This autonomy makes the tasks more engaging and motivating for students, leading to increased classroom engagement. The third justification for the significant impact of reasoning-gap tasks is that they promote metacognition and self-reflection among young EFL learners. Metacognition refers to the ability to think about one's own thinking, and it has been shown to be an important factor in student engagement and achievement. Reasoning-gap tasks require students to reflect on their own thought processes, identify their strengths and weaknesses, and make adjustments accordingly. This metacognitive engagement not only enhances classroom engagement but also helps students develop important learning skills such as self-regulation and self-evaluation.

5. Conclusion

The results of the study indicated that both reasoning and opinion gap tasks significantly impacted young EFL learners' classroom engagement. Further, it was revealed that there was no significant difference between the effects of reasoning gap tasks and opinion gap tasks on young EFL learners' classroom engagement.

These findings have significant implications for teacher educators, EFL teachers, policy-makers, and Syllabus Designers and Curriculum Developers. Teacher educators can use the results to train EFL teachers to design and implement reasoning-gap tasks and opinion gap tasks in their classrooms. Additionally, teacher educators can encourage EFL teachers to use a variety of task types to enhance classroom engagement and cater to the diverse learning needs of their students. EFL teachers can use reasoning-gap tasks and opinion gap tasks to promote classroom engagement among their students. Furthermore, EFL teachers can use the findings to design materials and activities that promote higher-order thinking skills, autonomy, and metacognition. This will help create a more engaging and motivating learning environment for young EFL learners.

Educational policy-makers can also use the results to design policies that promote the use of reasoning-gap tasks and opinion gap tasks in EFL classrooms. This will help create a more learner-centered approach to language education and enhance classroom engagement among young EFL learners. Materials developers can incorporate reasoning-gap tasks and opinion gap tasks into their materials to enhance classroom engagement. Furthermore, materials developers

can design materials that cater to the diverse learning needs of young EFL learners, which will help create a more engaging and motivating learning environment. Likewise, curriculum developers can use can incorporate reasoning-gap tasks and opinion gap tasks into the curriculum to enhance classroom engagement. Furthermore, they can design a curriculum that caters to the diverse learning needs of young EFL learners, which will help create a more engaging and motivating learning environment. The study's findings can help curriculum developers create a learner-centered approach to language education that focuses on promoting critical thinking, reflection, and ownership of learning.

Like any other studies, this study also had a number of limitations. The first limitation of the current study was that the researcher was not able to select the participants randomly. The second limitation was that the researcher had access to young learners within the age range of 9 to 12 and did not have access to learners lower than the age of 9. Moreover, the researcher had to deliver the treatment only for 10 sessions as the institute in which the study was carried out did not permit more sessions for treatment. Thus, the results should be generalized to other contexts and EFL learners of different age groups cautiously.

Considering these limitations, interested researchers are recommended to investigate the impact of reasoning-gap and opinion-gap tasks on the learning engagement of different age groups of EFL learners. They can also conduct a longitudinal study on the effectiveness of reasoning-gap and opinion-gap tasks in promoting engagement among young EFL learners. Further research can be designed to compare the effectiveness of reasoning-gap and opinion-gap tasks in promoting learners' engagement in online and offline language learning environments. Finally, examining the influence of EFL learners' language proficiency on their engagement by implementing reasoning-gap and opinion-gap tasks can also be examined.

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