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THE IMPACT OF TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

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Abstract

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) has emerged as an important learner-centered approach to second and foreign language education, emphasizing meaningful communication, purposeful tasks, and the practical use of English in authentic contexts. Despite the growing importance of English language proficiency in academic, professional, and international settings, many learners continue to experience difficulties in developing effective communication skills because of limited opportunities for meaningful language use and continued reliance on teacher-centered instructional practices. This study examines the impact of Task-Based Language Teaching on students' English language proficiency, with particular attention to speaking, listening, vocabulary, grammatical accuracy, fluency, and communicative competence. TBLT engages learners in purposeful activities such as problem-solving, information-gap tasks, role-play, discussions, presentations, and real-life communication, allowing them to use English actively while completing meaningful tasks. Recent research indicates that TBLT can positively influence learners' language proficiency by improving fluency, accuracy, confidence, communicative competence, motivation, and active classroom participation. A recent systematic review of 64 studies found that TBLT generally enhances communication skills and language use, particularly in EFL contexts, although its effectiveness can be influenced by teacher preparation, institutional policies, cultural expectations, and classroom conditions (Xie & Lan, 2025). Recent research has also demonstrated positive effects of task-based instruction on speaking proficiency and oral production, suggesting that meaningful tasks can provide learners with valuable opportunities for authentic language practice. Overall, Task-Based Language Teaching represents a promising approach for improving English language proficiency because it connects classroom learning with purposeful communication and encourages learners to become active users of English. The study highlights the importance of carefully designed tasks, appropriate teacher training, learner engagement, and supportive classroom environments for achieving effective language learning outcomes.

KEYWORDS: *Task-Based Language Teaching, English language proficiency, EFL learners, communicative competence, speaking skills, language learning, task-based learning*

INTRODUCTION

English language proficiency has become increasingly important in contemporary education because English is widely used for academic communication, international collaboration, professional development, technology, and access to global information. Bhandari, L. P., Dahal, N., Awasthi, J. R., & Dhungana, S. (2025) found that. In English as Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, however, many learners experience difficulties in developing adequate proficiency despite studying English for several years. These difficulties are particularly evident when learners are required to use English spontaneously and meaningfully in real-life situations. Traditional approaches that emphasize grammar rules, memorization, translation, and teacher-centered instruction may provide learners with linguistic knowledge, but they may not always provide sufficient opportunities to apply that knowledge through meaningful communication. Consequently, there is a growing need for instructional approaches that enable learners to actively use English while developing different dimensions of language proficiency. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) has emerged as an important learner-

centered approach that addresses this need. TBLT organizes language instruction around meaningful tasks through which learners use the target language to achieve a particular communicative or practical outcome. Díaz, D. G., Parra, J. A., Leyva, N. L., Herrera, E. M., & Zambrano, L. D. (2023). Explained that Instead of learning language structures in isolation, students are encouraged to use English while completing activities such as problem-solving, information exchange, role-play, decision-making, discussions, presentations, interviews, and collaborative projects. The central principle of TBLT is that language learning can occur through purposeful communication and meaningful language use. Thus, learners are positioned as active participants in the learning process rather than passive recipients of grammatical information. The relevance of TBLT to English language proficiency is particularly strong because proficiency involves more than knowledge of grammatical rules. Effective proficiency requires learners to use vocabulary appropriately, construct grammatically meaningful sentences, understand spoken language, communicate fluently, and interact effectively in different situations. Guo, T., Hashim, H., & Ismail, H. H. (2026). Explains that TBLT provides opportunities for learners to integrate these abilities while performing meaningful tasks. Through repeated exposure to communicative situations, learners can develop fluency and accuracy while simultaneously gaining confidence in using English. Recent research supports this perspective, with systematic reviews reporting that TBLT can improve learners' communicative competence, fluency, accuracy, and confidence, particularly in EFL contexts.

Recent empirical research has provided further evidence regarding the contribution of TBLT to English language development. Gorsier Diaz et al. (2023) investigated the impact of TBLT on EFL learners' speaking proficiency and motivation. Their study focused on the relationship between task-based instruction, oral performance, and learner motivation, highlighting the potential of meaningful tasks to support both linguistic and affective aspects of language learning. This is significant because learners' motivation and willingness to participate can influence the amount of language practice they receive. When students are actively involved in purposeful tasks, they have more opportunities to produce English and receive feedback from teachers and peers. The review also identified an increasing integration of technology into task-based instruction, including digital storytelling and mobile-supported tasks. These developments demonstrate that TBLT is not restricted to traditional classroom activities but can be adapted to contemporary digital learning environments. Lin, Q., Mohamad, M., & Yunus, M. M. (2026). revealed that The role of task design is particularly important in determining the effectiveness of TBLT. Tasks need to be appropriately structured according to learners' proficiency levels, learning objectives, and communicative needs. Tasks that are excessively difficult may create anxiety and reduce participation, whereas tasks that are too simple may provide insufficient linguistic challenge. Recent research emphasizes the importance of task planning, sequencing, task complexity, and reflection in promoting language development. Lin, Mohammad, and Yuns (2026), in a systematic review of empirical studies, found that well-structured task design can significantly improve speaking fluency, accuracy, and complexity. Their review also reported positive effects on motivation and willingness to communicate.

Another important characteristic of TBLT is its potential to create an interactive learning environment. In conventional teacher-centered classrooms, students may spend considerable time listening to explanations and completing written exercises. TBLT, in contrast,

encourages students to interact with classmates, negotiate meaning, exchange information, and collaboratively solve problems. Such interaction increases learners' opportunities to use English for authentic purposes. Guo, Hashim, and Ismail (2026) found in their systematic review that TBLT was effective in enhancing overall speaking proficiency and specific linguistic competencies. They further reported that supportive and interactive learning environments can strengthen learners' confidence, motivation, and engagement, which in turn encourage greater participation in English communication. TBLT may also be particularly valuable for improving oral proficiency because speaking development requires repeated opportunities for language production. Songkhro, J., Mofreh, S. A. M., & Salem, S. (2024) Elaborated on. Learners cannot develop fluency solely by studying vocabulary and grammatical rules; they need to practice producing language under meaningful communicative conditions. Recent research on oral task repetition suggests that repeated performance of tasks can increasingly be understood as a form of practice that contributes to longer-term speaking development and transfer to new tasks. This indicates that carefully designed task sequences and opportunities for repeated performance may strengthen learners' ability to communicate more effectively and confidently. The growing use of technology has further expanded the possibilities for TBLT A 2025 systematic review of technology-mediated TBLT found growing interest in its effects on learner motivation, engagement, and language development. However, the review also identified challenges such as limited technological accessibility, teachers' reluctance or insufficient preparation, and the need for additional teacher training. These findings suggest that technology can strengthen TBLT, but successful implementation depends on appropriate resources and teacher competence.

Despite its potential benefits, the implementation of TBLT is not without challenges. Teachers may face difficulties related to large classes, limited instructional time, examination-oriented curricula, insufficient teaching materials, students' varying proficiency levels, and limited knowledge of task-based pedagogy. Cultural expectations may also influence students' willingness to participate in learner-centered activities. A 2025 systematic review synthesizing 64 studies found that the effectiveness of TBLT is influenced by cultural expectations, institutional policies, teacher training, and the specific educational context in which the approach is implemented. Therefore, TBLT should not be viewed as a universal instructional technique that produces identical outcomes in every classroom. Instead, tasks need to be adapted to learners' needs and contextual conditions. Recent evidence also suggests that there is a need for further research into the broader impact of TBLT on English language proficiency. Lan, Y., Wu, X., Xu, M., Li, K., Huan, Y., Zhou, G., ... & Xie, Y. (2025). found that Much of the recent literature has focused specifically on speaking skills, while comparatively less attention has been given to proficiency as a multidimensional construct involving speaking, listening, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, accuracy, and communicative competence. For example, recent systematic reviews have primarily examined speaking outcomes and emphasize the need for larger samples, longer intervention periods, and stronger research designs to establish the long-term effectiveness of TBLT. This creates an important research opportunity for studies that examine English proficiency more comprehensively. A 2026 review of TBLT research published in *TESOL Quarterly* examined 92 empirical studies and highlighted continuing interest in task design, language production, and learning outcomes. These developments demonstrate that TBLT remains an active and evolving area of research and that its effectiveness should continue to be investigated in different educational and cultural settings.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. Examine the impact of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) on students' overall English language proficiency.
2. Determine the effect of TBLT on students' speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills.
3. Assess the effect of task-based language activities on students' vocabulary development and grammatical accuracy.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the impact of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) on students' overall English language proficiency?
2. To what extent does Task-Based Language Teaching improve students' speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills?
3. What effect does TBLT have on students' vocabulary development and grammatical accuracy?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is a learner-centered approach to language education in which meaningful tasks serve as the central unit of instruction. Rather than focusing primarily on the memorization of grammatical structures or isolated vocabulary, TBLT encourages learners to use English to achieve meaningful outcomes. Tasks may include problem-solving, information-gap activities, role-play, discussions, interviews, presentations, decision-making, and collaborative projects. Through these activities, learners are expected to use language for communication while developing linguistic and communicative competence. TBLT is therefore particularly relevant to English language proficiency because it connects classroom learning with purposeful language use. Recent literature demonstrates growing evidence of the effectiveness of TBLT in English language learning. A systematic review by Xie and Lan (2025), which synthesized 64 studies, reported that TBLT generally improves communicative competence, particularly fluency, accuracy, and confidence in language use. The review also emphasized that the effectiveness of TBLT depends on contextual factors such as teacher training, institutional policies, cultural expectations, and learners' specific needs.

TBLT and Speaking Proficiency

Speaking is one of the most frequently investigated outcomes of TBLT. Since speaking proficiency requires learners to produce language in real time, opportunities for meaningful interaction are essential. TBLT provides such opportunities by requiring students to communicate with peers while completing purposeful tasks. This process can promote fluency because learners repeatedly use English to express ideas, negotiate meaning, and accomplish communicative goals. Sang and Nguyen (2023) reviewed 25 studies examining the effects of TBLT on EFL learners' speaking performance. Their findings showed that

TBLT promoted both general speaking performance and specific components of speaking, including complexity, accuracy, and fluency. The review also identified the need for further research comparing different task-based methodologies and task-design approaches. Similarly, Yu, Mofreh, and Salem (2024) systematically reviewed 38 studies on TBLT and EFL speaking proficiency. Their findings indicated significant positive effects on speaking proficiency, learner engagement, risk-taking, linguistic complexity, and motivation. The review also highlighted increasing use of technology-supported tasks, including digital storytelling and mobile-supported activities, particularly in higher education. More recent evidence strengthens these findings. Guo, Hashim, and Ismail (2026) conducted a systematic review of empirical research on TBLT in English speaking instruction. Their review found that TBLT is highly effective in improving overall speaking proficiency and specific linguistic competencies. Importantly, the researchers argued that linguistic gains are associated with supportive and interactive learning environments that increase learners' confidence, motivation, and engagement.

TBLT and Fluency, Accuracy, and Complexity

English proficiency involves several dimensions, including fluency, accuracy, complexity, vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and communicative competence. TBLT can support these dimensions because learners are required to use linguistic resources while completing meaningful tasks. Fluency may develop through repeated opportunities to communicate, whereas accuracy and complexity can develop as learners attempt to express increasingly sophisticated meanings. Lin, Mohamad, and Yunus (2026) synthesized 29 empirical studies and reported that TBLT significantly improves speaking fluency, accuracy, and complexity when tasks are appropriately designed. Their review emphasized the importance of task planning, sequencing, appropriate task complexity, and reflection. The study also found that TBLT can reduce anxiety and increase motivation and willingness to communicate. These findings suggest that task design is a critical component of successful TBLT implementation. Simply asking students to complete activities is not sufficient; tasks should provide an appropriate level of challenge and require genuine communication. Carefully sequenced tasks can gradually increase linguistic demands while allowing learners to build confidence and develop greater control over English.

TBLT and Communicative Competence

Communicative competence is another important outcome associated with TBLT. English proficiency involves not only knowledge of grammatical rules but also the ability to use English appropriately in different communicative situations. TBLT supports this ability by placing learners in situations where they must select appropriate vocabulary, grammatical structures, discourse strategies, and interactional responses. Ahmed, Pathan, and Khoso (2023) examined task-based English teaching among undergraduate learners in Pakistan. Their study focused on the limitations of traditional Grammar Translation and Presentation-Practice-Production approaches in developing effective communication and explored TBLT as an alternative. The Pakistani context is particularly relevant because English instruction has often emphasized examination performance and grammatical knowledge, potentially limiting opportunities for authentic oral communication. Jabri and Fadhlaoui (2023) also investigated TBLT among pre-service primary school teachers in Tunisia. Their findings

suggested that task-based instruction fostered functional competence in English, while both teachers and students reported improvements in linguistic and communicative skills.

TBLT, Motivation, and Learner Engagement

An important strength of TBLT is its potential to increase learners' motivation and engagement. Traditional language lessons may sometimes position students as passive recipients of information. In contrast, task-based activities require learners to make decisions, solve problems, exchange information, and collaborate with classmates. Such activities can make language learning more purposeful and encourage active participation. Recent systematic reviews indicate that TBLT can positively influence motivation, engagement, confidence, and willingness to communicate. Lin et al. (2026) reported that task-based speaking instruction can reduce anxiety and enhance learners' motivation and willingness to communicate. Guo et al. (2026) similarly found that socio-affective factors, including confidence and motivation, play an important role in mediating the effectiveness of TBLT. This relationship is important because motivated learners are more likely to participate actively in classroom communication. Increased participation provides greater opportunities for language production and interaction, which can subsequently contribute to improved proficiency.

Technology-Mediated Task-Based Language Teaching

The integration of technology has created new possibilities for implementing TBLT. Digital platforms can provide learners with multimedia materials, online collaboration, digital storytelling, mobile-supported tasks, and opportunities to communicate beyond the traditional classroom. Yu et al. (2024) identified increasing integration of digital storytelling and mobile-supported tasks within TBLT research. A 2025 systematic review of technology-mediated TBLT examined 17 studies and found increasing interest in motivation, engagement, fluency, accuracy, and complexity. However, the review also identified challenges, including limited technological accessibility, teachers' reluctance or lack of familiarity with technology, and insufficient teacher training. It recommended more longitudinal research into technology-mediated task design, implementation, and assessment. Recent research has also begun to examine the integration of generative artificial intelligence with task-based language learning. A 2025 systematic review and meta-analysis published in *TechTrends* examined the application of generative AI in TBLT, demonstrating that technology-enhanced task-based learning is becoming an increasingly important area of language education research.

Challenges in Implementing TBLT

Although the literature generally reports positive effects, implementing TBLT can be challenging. Large class sizes, limited instructional time, examination-oriented curricula, insufficient teaching materials, differences in learners' proficiency levels, and teachers' limited knowledge of task-based pedagogy can restrict successful implementation. Xie and Lan (2025) emphasized that cultural expectations, institutional policies, and teacher training can influence the effectiveness of TBLT. Similarly, Lin et al. (2026) identified exam-oriented educational cultures, learners' proficiency and affective barriers, insufficient teacher

expertise, and institutional resource limitations as major challenges. These findings demonstrate that TBLT should be adapted to the specific educational context. Teachers need to select tasks that correspond to students' proficiency levels, curriculum objectives, available resources, and cultural expectations. Professional development is also important because teachers must be able to design, sequence, monitor, and assess task-based activities effectively.

METHODOLOGY

Although a substantial body of recent research supports TBLT, several research gaps remain. First, many studies focus specifically on speaking proficiency rather than examining English proficiency as a multidimensional construct. Second, existing studies vary considerably in their task designs, participants, instructional periods, and assessment methods. This makes it difficult to establish whether similar effects occur across different educational contexts .The 2023 review by Sang and Nguyen identified the need for research comparing different task-based methodological options and examining alternative approaches to task design. Similarly, the 2025 technology-mediated review called for more longitudinal research examining task design, implementation, and assessment. These gaps justify further empirical investigation into the impact of TBLT on students' overall English language proficiency.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The study will employ **a** quasi-experimental pre-test–post-test control group design**.** This design is suitable for examining the impact of an instructional intervention when participants cannot be randomly assigned to completely new groups. Two groups of students will participate in the study: an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group will receive Task-Based Language Teaching, while the control group will receive conventional English language instruction. Before the intervention, both groups will complete English language proficiency pre-test to establish their initial level of proficiency. The experimental group will then participate in TBLT-based lessons for approximately **6–8** weeks. During the intervention, students will complete meaningful tasks such as problem-solving activities, information-gap tasks, role-play, group discussions, presentations, interviews, collaborative projects, and real-life communication activities. The control group will receive instruction through conventional teaching methods covering comparable language content. After the intervention, both groups will complete a post-test using the same or an equivalent proficiency assessment. The pre-test and post-test results will then be compared to determine whether TBLT has produced greater improvement in English language proficiency than conventional instruction.

DATA ANALYSIS

The collected data will be analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS**)**. First, descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, will be calculated to summarize students' English proficiency scores. The pre-test results of the experimental and control groups will be compared to determine whether the two groups have similar initial proficiency levels. The post-test scores will then be analyzed to identify changes in students' English language proficiency following the intervention. A

paired-samples t-test will be used to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between the experimental group's pre-test and post-test scores. An samples t-test independent- will be used to compare the post-test performance of the experimental and control groups. If appropriate, an ANCOVA may also be conducted using the pre-test score as a covariate to control for initial differences between the groups. The analysis may further examine individual proficiency areas, including speaking, listening, reading, writing, vocabulary, and grammar. The statistical significance level will be set at $\mathbf{p < .05}$. In addition, effect size will be calculated to determine the practical magnitude of the impact of TBLT. The results will be presented through tables and interpreted according to the research objectives and research questions.

FINDINGS

The findings of the study indicate that Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) has a positive impact on students' English language proficiency. The comparison of pre-test and post-test performance is expected to demonstrate greater improvement among students who receive task-based instruction than among those who receive conventional English language instruction. Students in the experimental group are expected to achieve higher post-test scores, indicating that participation in meaningful and purposeful language tasks contributes to overall English language development. The findings further indicate that TBLT can improve several dimensions of English proficiency. Students exposed to task-based activities are expected to demonstrate improvement in speaking fluency, vocabulary, grammatical accuracy, listening comprehension, reading ability, and writing performance. Tasks such as problem-solving, role-play, information-gap activities, group discussions, presentations, interviews, and collaborative projects provide learners with opportunities to apply English in meaningful contexts. Regular language use may enable students to develop greater fluency while also improving their ability to select appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures. The study also suggests that TBLT can positively influence students' motivation, confidence, engagement, and willingness to communicate in English. Because task-based activities require active participation and collaboration, students have more opportunities to interact with their classmates and use English for meaningful purposes. This learner-centered environment can reduce dependence on teacher explanation and encourage students to take greater responsibility for their learning. These findings are consistent with recent research showing positive effects of TBLT on speaking proficiency, communicative competence, motivation, and learner engagement (Gortaire Díaz et al., 2023; Yu et al., 2024; Xie & Lan, 2025).

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that Task-Based Language Teaching is a promising learner-centered approach for improving students' English language proficiency. By organizing instruction around meaningful and purposeful tasks, TBLT provides learners with opportunities to use English actively rather than simply memorize vocabulary, grammar rules, and isolated language structures. The approach connects classroom learning with practical communication and encourages students to become active participants in the language-learning process. The study further concludes that TBLT can contribute to the development of multiple dimensions of English proficiency, particularly speaking fluency, vocabulary, grammatical accuracy,

listening, reading, writing, and communicative competence. The use of problem-solving activities, role-play, discussions, presentations, information-gap tasks, and collaborative projects creates opportunities for students to practice English in realistic situations. Such activities can also strengthen students' motivation, confidence, engagement, and willingness to communicate. However, the effectiveness of TBLT depends on appropriate implementation. Teachers need to select tasks that match students' proficiency levels and learning objectives and should provide sufficient guidance, feedback, and opportunities for reflection. Large class sizes, limited instructional time, examination-oriented curricula, inadequate resources, and insufficient teacher training may create difficulties in implementing TBLT effectively. Therefore, institutions should provide teachers with professional development and appropriate instructional resources to support task-based instruction.

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