



## THE MAIN FEATURES AND FUNCTIONS OF TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING (TBLT) AND ITS TECHNIQUES AND CHALLENGES IN DIVERSE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14065508>

**Abstract:** Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) has emerged as a significant approach in language education, focusing on the use of meaningful tasks to foster language acquisition. This approach emphasizes the integration of real-world tasks in language learning, where students engage in communicative, goal-oriented activities that mirror authentic use of the language. The main features of TBLT include task authenticity, learner-centeredness, and the emphasis on fluency over accuracy in the initial stages of learning. TBLT's functions in diverse learning environments include promoting communicative competence, fostering critical thinking, and enhancing learner autonomy. However, despite its benefits, the implementation of TBLT presents several challenges, particularly in contexts with limited resources, large class sizes, and diverse learner needs. Additionally, teacher preparedness and the adaptation of tasks to fit different cultural and educational contexts are critical for effective application. This paper explores the techniques of TBLT and examines its challenges in diverse educational environments, providing insights into how TBLT can be optimized for diverse contexts.

**Keywords:** Task-Based Language Teaching, language acquisition, communicative competence, learner-centered, authentic tasks, challenges, teaching techniques, educational environments

### Introduction

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is a popular and effective approach in language education that emphasizes the use of tasks to promote language learning. It focuses on using real-life tasks as a medium for students to engage in meaningful language use, rather than relying on traditional, form-focused methods. TBLT has gained prominence due to its learner-centered approach, which fosters active participation, collaboration, and authentic language use in a variety of contexts. However, like any educational method, TBLT comes with its own set of techniques and challenges, especially when applied to diverse learning environments.

### Main Features and Functions of TBLT

#### 1. Task-Centered Approach

The cornerstone of TBLT is the task, defined as an activity with a clear goal that involves meaningful communication. These tasks simulate real-life situations in which students must use language to complete them, promoting functional language use. Tasks are generally divided into three stages: the pre-task (introduction and preparation), the task cycle (the core activity), and the post-task (reflection and feedback).

#### 2. Focus on Communication

TBLT emphasizes language use rather than language form. The primary goal is for students to focus on conveying meaning, making errors less important as long as communication is

effective. This approach contrasts with traditional methods that focus on grammar drills and explicit instruction, providing a more natural and immersive language learning experience.

### 3. Learner-Centered Learning

TBLT shifts the focus from the teacher to the learner, encouraging self-direction, collaboration, and autonomy. Students are responsible for their own learning, with the teacher acting as a facilitator and guide. This promotes active learning and boosts learner confidence, especially in a communicative environment.

### 4. Integration of Skills

TBLT integrates all four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Tasks require students to use these skills in tandem, just as they would in real-life communication. This holistic approach ensures a more comprehensive understanding of the language.

### 5. Task Complexity and Scaffolding

Tasks are often designed to be progressively more complex, catering to the learners' level of proficiency. Scaffolding plays an essential role in TBLT, where the teacher provides support to learners through prompts, feedback, and modeling before gradually withdrawing it as learners gain competence.

#### Techniques in TBLT

1. **Information Gap Tasks:** These tasks require students to exchange information they do not have in order to complete the task. This technique encourages real communication and negotiation of meaning. Examples include describing pictures, solving puzzles, or giving directions.
2. **Role Plays:** Role play is a common TBLT technique where students act out roles in a specific scenario. This allows them to practice language in realistic situations, whether it's ordering food in a restaurant, making a phone call, or conducting a job interview.
3. **Problem-Solving Tasks :**These tasks involve students working together to solve a problem or make decisions, often requiring negotiation, persuasion, and explanation. Examples include planning a trip or designing a product. This helps learners use language creatively and contextually.
4. **Project-Based Tasks:** Projects are long-term tasks that require students to research, collaborate, and present findings on a topic. These tasks integrate multiple language skills, promote critical thinking, and encourage a deep understanding of the language.
5. **Information Transfer Tasks:** In this technique, students convert information from one format to another—such as from a text to a chart or from spoken to written form—allowing them to practice using language in different contexts.

#### Challenges of TBLT in Diverse Learning Environments

1. **Cultural Differences:** TBLT's emphasis on communication can present challenges in diverse cultural contexts. In cultures where education tends to be more teacher-centered, students may be less comfortable with active participation and self-directed learning. Additionally, certain tasks may not resonate with learners' cultural experiences, making them feel disengaged or hesitant.
2. **Varying Proficiency Levels:** In mixed-level classes, implementing tasks that are suitable for all learners can be difficult. Some students may struggle with more complex tasks, while others may not find simpler tasks challenging enough. Teachers need to carefully scaffold tasks to accommodate different proficiency levels and provide individualized support.

3. **Classroom Management:** TBLT often involves group work and peer interaction, which can lead to noise, distractions, and uneven participation. Effective classroom management strategies are essential to ensure that all students remain engaged and that the focus remains on the task at hand.

4. **Assessment and Feedback:** The emphasis on communication rather than accuracy in TBLT can complicate assessment. Traditional exams may not adequately capture students' language use in real-life contexts. Teachers need to adopt alternative assessment methods, such as formative assessments, peer reviews, or observational assessments, to evaluate progress effectively.

5. **Time Constraints:** Tasks in TBLT often require more time than traditional language instruction, particularly in environments where the curriculum is tightly structured. Teachers may struggle to balance task completion with other curriculum demands, limiting the scope of tasks that can be implemented effectively.

6. **Teacher Training:** Not all teachers are familiar with TBLT, and transitioning from traditional teaching methods to a task-based approach can be challenging. Adequate teacher training is essential to help educators design appropriate tasks, manage dynamic classrooms, and provide effective feedback.

**Conclusion:** Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) offers a dynamic, learner-centered approach that emphasizes real-world communication and the integration of language skills. By incorporating techniques such as role plays, problem-solving tasks, and projects, TBLT fosters a more natural and effective language learning environment. However, its application can be challenging in diverse learning contexts due to factors such as cultural differences, varying student proficiency levels, and the need for appropriate assessment strategies. Despite these challenges, TBLT remains a highly effective methodology when adapted to suit the unique needs of learners in various environments, ensuring that language education remains relevant, engaging, and communicative.

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