



Research on the Application of Task-Based Language Teaching in Integrated English Classroom Instruction

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Abstract

This study focuses on the application of Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) in Integrated English classroom instruction. As a “learning by doing” language teaching method that emerged in the 1980s, TBLT integrates language acquisition theory with teaching practice, providing a new paradigm for foreign language education. The research targets English major students from a university in Shanghai, employing a mixed-methods approach to collect data through questionnaires and in-depth interviews. Linear regression analysis is used to explore the correlations between TBLT and variables such as students’ English proficiency, learning strategies, classroom engagement, and learning motivation. The results indicate that when TBLT is treated as the independent variable and language proficiency, learning motivation, classroom engagement, and learning strategies as dependent variables, the regression coefficients of TBLT all reach significant levels ($p < 0.05$), confirming its significant positive predictive effects on these variables. Specifically, TBLT not only effectively enhances students’ comprehensive language skills but also optimizes their learning strategies, increases classroom participation, and significantly improves motivation. This study provides empirical evidence for the practical application of TBLT in college English teaching and offers important insights for improving English classroom instruction models.

Subject Areas

Linguistics

Keywords

TBLT, English Classroom Teaching, Learning Motivation, Classroom Engagement, Language Proficiency

1. Introduction

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) traces its origins to the pioneering Bangalore Project initiated by Prabhu in 1979. In this groundbreaking initiative implemented in southern India, Prabhu introduced a radical pedagogical hypothesis that categorized task activities into four distinct types: rule-centered, form-centered, goal-centered, and meaning-centered activities [1]. This framework was subsequently expanded by Willis, which established a three-phase model comprising pre-task, task-cycle (including task, planning, and reporting), and post-task (incorporating analysis and practice) stages [2]. The theoretical foundation of TBLT was further strengthened by Skehan's cognitive approach to language learning, which conceptualized the language acquisition process into three developmental stages: language comprehension, language skill development, and language application [3]. This cognitive perspective emphasizes the importance of strategic task design in facilitating balanced attention allocation and promoting continuous linguistic development.

In the Chinese academic context, research on TBLT has primarily focused on theoretical introduction and classroom implementation rather than comprehensive theoretical system development. Notable contributions include Lu's seminal work *Brief Introduction to Task-based English Teaching* [4] and Fang's article *A Brief Talk on Task-based Language Teaching* [5]. These works, along with Yue's comprehensive analysis of TBLT principles [6] and Wei's interpretation of teaching methodologies [7], have significantly enhanced the Chinese academic community's understanding of TBLT. The theoretical distinction of TBLT, as articulated by Ellis at the Global Education China Assembly, lies in its fundamental departure from traditional language teaching approaches [8]. TBLT prioritizes "task" over "language" as the curricular starting point, emphasizing task outcomes rather than predetermined linguistic content. This approach fosters an organic integration of language learning and communicative competence development, effectively bridging the gap between "knowing" and "using" language. Ellis further emphasizes that TBLT strategically prioritizes fluency over accuracy, aiming to cultivate students' communicative competence and confidence in English usage – a crucial objective in contemporary English language education [8].

This study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge in two significant ways. Firstly, it conducts a comprehensive investigation of TBLT implementation in junior high school English education, synthesizing existing research with original theoretical analysis to propose enhanced implementation strategies. Secondly, based on empirical findings, the study proposes practical methodologies with substantial pedagogical implications: 1) providing actionable guidance for effective TBLT implementation in junior high school English curricula and 2) optimizing TBLT's pedagogical advantages to create an engaging, effective, and developmentally appropriate learning environment that fosters both academic achievement and personal growth.

2. Literature Review

TBLT, emerging in the 1980s as a pedagogical approach emphasizing “learning by doing,” represents a significant evolution of communicative language teaching over the past two decades. It operationalizes the principles of language application into practical classroom methodologies, fostering active student engagement and authentic language use.

2.1. Research Status of Task-Based Teaching Method Abroad

The theoretical foundations of TBLT were first established through Prabhu’s pioneering work during the Bangalor Project (1979-1984). As the progenitor of TBLT, Prabhu conceptualized tasks as activities requiring learners to exercise judgment and derive conclusions from provided information, categorizing them into four types: form-centered, rule-centered, goal-centered, and meaning-centered activities, which emphasizes the role of tasks in promoting learner autonomy and self-regulated learning [1]. Willis significantly advanced TBLT theory by introducing a tripartite model comprising pre-task, task-cycle, and post-task phases [2]. This framework emphasized the importance of meaningful language use and contextualized language practice, providing educators with practical guidelines for task implementation. Skehan’s cognitive approach further enriched TBLT by delineating three crucial stages of language learning: comprehension, skill development, and application, highlighting the importance of attention management in task design [3].

Subsequent research has expanded the theoretical and practical dimensions of TBLT. Robinson investigated task complexity and its cognitive implications for language learning [9], while Nunan systematically analyzed task design, implementation, and evaluation [10]. Ellis contributed to the understanding of task planning and its impact on performance [11]. More recently, Ellis emphasized TBLT’s distinctive focus on task outcomes rather than predetermined linguistic content, advocating for a fluency-first approach that bridges the gap between linguistic knowledge and communicative competence [8].

Several studies have compared the effectiveness of TBLT with the traditional PPP (Presentation, Practice, Production) approach, highlighting the distinct advantages of task-based methods. For instance, Ellis found that TBLT fosters greater language fluency and communicative competence compared to PPP, as it emphasizes authentic language use and student interaction over rote practice [12]. Similarly, Willis and Willis argued that TBLT promotes higher levels of student engagement and motivation by focusing on meaningful tasks rather than isolated language forms [13]. These findings suggest that TBLT may be more effective in developing real-world language skills and fostering active participation in the classroom. However, further research is needed to explore the specific contexts and conditions under which TBLT outperforms traditional methods like PPP.

2.2. Research Status of Domestic Task-Based Teaching Method

The adoption and adaptation of TBLT in China have evolved through three dis-

tinct phases: theoretical introduction, localization, and practical implementation. Early contributions included Xia's comparative analysis of task-based and problem-based methods, which laid the groundwork for understanding TBLT's theoretical underpinnings [14]. Gong and Luo further elucidated TBLT principles, task definitions, and their relationship with curriculum objectives and performance assessment [15].

Wei provided a comprehensive cognitive psychological perspective on TBLT [16], while Lu developed a localized framework for implementing authentic tasks in primary and secondary education [17]. More recently, Xie and Chen investigated college English teachers' understanding and implementation of TBLT, revealing discrepancies between theoretical knowledge and practical application, particularly in maintaining meaning-focused instruction and fostering learner autonomy [18].

2.3. Research Status of Task-Based Teaching Method

Despite its relatively recent emergence, TBLT has generated substantial research output. However, several imbalances persist in the research landscape. Firstly, while international research continues to drive theoretical innovation, domestic studies predominantly focus on primary and secondary education, with limited exploration in higher education and diverse cultural contexts. Secondly, the majority of research remains theoretical, with insufficient empirical studies documenting actual classroom implementations. Thirdly, academic consensus on TBLT's efficacy remains elusive, as many theoretical propositions await rigorous empirical validation. These gaps highlight the need for more comprehensive, practice-oriented research to fully realize TBLT's potential in diverse educational contexts.

This review underscores the dynamic evolution of TBLT theory and practice while identifying critical areas for future research, particularly in bridging the gap between theoretical constructs and practical implementation across different educational levels in China.

3. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation of TBLT is rooted in three key theories: language acquisition theory, constructivism theory, and input and interaction hypothesis theory. These frameworks collectively provide a robust basis for understanding how TBLT facilitates language learning by emphasizing active engagement, meaningful interaction, and the integration of social and cognitive processes.

3.1. Language Acquisition Theory

Since the 1960s, researchers have sought to understand the mechanisms underlying language acquisition, particularly in the context of second language learning. This inquiry has led to the development of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) as an interdisciplinary field, integrating insights from linguistics, neurolinguistics,

language pedagogy, and sociology. Over the past five decades, SLA research has employed diverse methodologies, including descriptive, hypothesis-driven, and experimental approaches, contributing to a multifaceted understanding of language learning processes.

A central figure in this domain is Noam Chomsky (2010), whose concept of Universal Grammar (UG) has profoundly influenced SLA theory. Chomsky posits that humans are innately endowed with a cognitive framework that enables them to acquire language. This framework, termed Universal Grammar, consists of a set of principles and parameters that are common to all human languages. According to Chomsky, without this innate capacity, language acquisition would be unattainable, as the linguistic input available to learners is insufficient to account for the complexity and creativity of language use [19]. This theory underscores the importance of cognitive mechanisms in language learning, aligning with TBLT's emphasis on engaging learners in meaningful tasks that activate their innate linguistic capabilities.

3.2. Constructivism Theory

Constructivism, particularly as articulated by Lev Vygotsky, provides a critical theoretical lens for understanding the social and cognitive dimensions of language learning. Vygotsky's theory emphasizes that human cognitive development, including language acquisition, is deeply rooted in social interaction. He distinguishes between two developmental pathways: the natural line, governed by biological and reflexive processes, and the social line, shaped by cultural and communicative interactions [20].

Vygotsky argues that higher mental functions, such as conscious attention, logical memory, and conceptual thinking, emerge through social engagement [20]. Language, in this view, serves as a mediational tool that bridges individual cognitive development and social experience. This perspective aligns closely with TBLT, which prioritizes collaborative tasks and peer interaction as mechanisms for fostering language development. By engaging in tasks that require negotiation of meaning and problem-solving, learners internalize linguistic structures and develop communicative competence, reflecting Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)—the space between what learners can do independently and what they can achieve with guidance [20].

3.3. Input and Interaction Hypothesis Theory

The Input Hypothesis, proposed by Stephen Krashen, has been instrumental in shaping modern language teaching methodologies, including TBLT. Krashen posits that language acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to comprehensible input—linguistic material that is slightly beyond their current proficiency level (denoted as $i + 1$). He emphasizes the primacy of listening over speaking in the early stages of language learning, arguing that premature production can hinder acquisition by causing anxiety and inhibiting natural language processing [21].

Krashen's theory has been both influential and controversial, particularly in its assertion that explicit instruction and error correction play minimal roles in language acquisition. However, his emphasis on meaningful input and the importance of creating a low-anxiety learning environment resonates with TBLT's focus on authentic, task-based activities that provide learners with ample opportunities for exposure to and interaction with the target language. Furthermore, Long's Interaction Hypothesis, which builds on Krashen's ideas, highlights the role of negotiation of meaning in facilitating comprehension and acquisition [22]. This aligns with TBLT's emphasis on interactive tasks that require learners to engage in meaningful communication, thereby promoting both linguistic and cognitive development.

The integration of these three theoretical perspectives provides a comprehensive foundation for TBLT. Together, these frameworks support TBLT's core principles: that language learning is most effective when learners are actively engaged in tasks that require them to use language authentically, interact with others, and construct meaning through problem-solving and collaboration.

3.4. Alignment of Task Design with Theoretical Frameworks

The tasks used in this study were designed to align with key theoretical frameworks, including language acquisition theory, constructivism, and input and interaction hypotheses. For instance, the Information-Gap Task and Problem-Solving Task were structured to promote authentic language use and student interaction, consistent with Long's Interaction Hypothesis [22]. These tasks required students to negotiate meaning, collaborate, and solve problems, thereby creating opportunities for comprehensible input and output. Additionally, the tasks were designed to balance fluency and accuracy, as suggested by Skehan's cognitive approach [3]. The Pre-task phase provided students with the necessary language input and scaffolding, while the Task-cycle phase encouraged meaningful communication and interaction. The Post-task phase focused on reflection and language analysis, ensuring that students developed both communicative competence and linguistic accuracy. By grounding task design in these theoretical frameworks, this study ensured that the tasks were not only pedagogically sound but also practically effective in addressing the needs of language learners.

4. Methodology

This section outlines the research design and methodology employed to investigate the application of the task-based teaching method (TBLT) in English classroom teaching, specifically within the context of integrated English courses for English majors. Grounded in the theoretical frameworks of language acquisition, constructivism, and input and interaction hypotheses, this study adopts a mixed-methods approach to address the research questions, combining quantitative data from student questionnaires with qualitative insights from teacher interviews. The methodology is designed to ensure the validity, reliability, and generalizability of

the findings.

4.1. Research Questions

The study is guided by the following research questions, which align with the theoretical foundations and practical objectives of TBLT:

RQ1: Can TBLT improve English majors' language proficiency in comprehensive English courses?

RQ2: Can TBLT enhance students' learning methods and strategies in English language acquisition?

RQ3: Can TBLT increase students' participation and engagement in comprehensive English classes?

RQ4: Can TBLT stimulate students' interest and motivation in learning English?

These questions aim to explore the multifaceted impact of TBLT on language learning outcomes, addressing both cognitive and affective dimensions of learning in higher education contexts.

4.2. Research Subjects

The study was conducted with 122 English major students enrolled in comprehensive English courses at a university in Shanghai. The participants, aged 18 - 22, were randomly selected from first- to third-year students, ensuring a diverse sample in terms of academic year and language proficiency. All participants had a baseline English proficiency level of CEFR B2 (Upper-Intermediate), ensuring a relatively homogeneous sample in terms of language ability. Prior to the study, these students had been taught using traditional methods, such as the 3P (Presentation, Practice, Production) approach, with no prior exposure to TBLT. This provided a controlled baseline for evaluating the impact of TBLT. In addition to students, two experienced English instructors teaching comprehensive English courses were included in the study. Teacher A had 2 years of teaching experience, while Teacher B had 10 years of experience, providing a balanced perspective on the implementation and effectiveness of TBLT.

4.3. Research Design

A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining quantitative data from student questionnaires with qualitative insights from teacher interviews. This approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of TBLT's effectiveness from both learner and teacher perspectives.

4.3.1. Questionnaire

A closed-ended questionnaire was designed using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) to collect quantitative data on students' perceptions and experiences with TBLT. The questionnaire comprised 20 items, divided into four sections corresponding to the research questions:

- 1) English Proficiency (Questions 1-8): Assessing students' perceptions of

TBLT's impact on their language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing).

2) Learning Interest (Questions 9-11): Evaluating changes in students' motivation and engagement with English learning.

3) Classroom Participation (Questions 12-16): Measuring students' involvement and interaction during TBLT activities.

4) Learning Methods (Questions 17-20): Investigating the adoption of TBLT-inspired strategies in independent learning.

The questionnaire was administered during class breaks to minimize disruption, and 122 valid responses were collected (97.6% response rate). Data were analyzed using SPSS 26, employing descriptive statistics, reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha), validity analysis (factor analysis), and regression analysis to examine the relationships between TBLT and the dependent variables.

4.3.2. Interview

To complement the quantitative data, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the two experienced English instructors who underwent a two-week training program covering theoretical foundation, task design principles, classroom implementation strategies, and assessment methods. This training aimed to equip instructors with the knowledge and skills necessary for successful TBLT implementation. The interview protocol focused on three key areas:

1) Understanding and Application of TBLT: Teachers' familiarity with TBLT principles and their implementation strategies in comprehensive English courses.

2) Perceived Effectiveness: Teachers' observations on TBLT's impact on student learning outcomes, including language proficiency and engagement.

3) Challenges and Prospects: Practical challenges in adopting TBLT in higher education and suggestions for improvement.

The interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, and analyzed thematically to identify recurring patterns and insights.

4.4. Research Procedure

The research was conducted over three months, divided into the following phases:

1) Preparation Phase: A comprehensive literature review informed the design of the questionnaire and interview protocol. Additionally, the task-based activities were designed based on Willis's (1996) framework, which includes three stages: Pre-task, Task-cycle, and Post-task. The tasks were also aligned with Skehan's cognitive approach [3], ensuring a balance between language fluency and accuracy. To ensure alignment with the theoretical frameworks, tasks emphasized authentic language use, student interaction, and meaning negotiation, consistent with Long's Interaction Hypothesis [22]. The tasks were standardized across all classes to maintain consistency, although minor adjustments were made based on students' proficiency levels and teacher feedback.

2) Implementation Phase: The questionnaire was administered to 125 students, and 122 valid responses were collected. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the two instructors, each lasting approximately 30–45 minutes. Task-

based activities were implemented in the classroom. Below are two examples of the tasks used: **Information-Gap Task**: Students were divided into pairs, with each student receiving different information about popular tourist attractions in Shanghai. They were required to exchange information and collaboratively complete a dialogue about planning a trip. This task aimed to enhance speaking and listening skills while promoting interaction and negotiation of meaning. **Problem-Solving Task**: Students worked in small groups to design a proposal on “*How to Reduce Campus Waste*.” They conducted research, discussed solutions, and presented their proposals in English. This task focused on developing critical thinking, collaboration, and presentation skills, while also addressing writing and speaking competencies.

3) Data Analysis Phase: Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS 26, focusing on descriptive and inferential statistics. Qualitative data from interviews were coded and analyzed thematically to identify key insights.

4) Reporting Phase: Findings were synthesized to draw conclusions and provide recommendations for TBLT implementation in integrated English courses.

4.5. Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to ethical research practices, including:

- Informed Consent: Participants and their instructors were informed about the study’s purpose and procedures.
- Confidentiality: All data were anonymized to protect participants’ identities.
- Voluntary Participation: Students and teachers were free to withdraw from the study at any time.

By employing a rigorous mixed-methods approach, this study aims to provide robust empirical evidence on the effectiveness of TBLT in English classroom teaching, particularly within integrated English courses for English majors. The findings are expected to contribute to both theoretical understanding and practical application, offering valuable insights for educators and curriculum designers in higher education.

5. Results and Discussion

This section presents the findings and analysis of the data collected through student questionnaires and teacher interviews, addressing the research questions outlined in the methodology. The results are organized into two main subsections: Quantitative Analysis of Student Questionnaire Data and Qualitative Analysis of Teacher Interviews. Each subsection is further divided to provide a detailed discussion of the findings.

5.1. Quantitative Analysis of Student Questionnaire Data

The questionnaire data were analyzed using SPSS 26, employing descriptive analysis, reliability analysis, validity analysis, correlation analysis, and regression analysis. The results are presented and discussed below.

5.1.1. Descriptive Analysis

Table 1 provides the descriptive statistics for the key variables under investigation: task-based teaching method, language skills, interest in learning, classroom participation, and learning methods. The mean values and standard deviations are summarized as follows:

Table 1. Descriptive analysis of basic indicators.

Name	Sample size	Minimum value	Maximum value	Mean	Standard deviation	Median
Task-based teaching method	122	1.000	5.000	2.940	0.999	3.000
Language skills	122	1.000	4.500	3.129	0.948	3.250
Interest in Learning	122	1.333	5.000	3.178	1.030	3.333
Classroom Participation	122	1.200	4.600	3.033	0.943	3.000
Learning Method	122	1.250	4.750	3.191	0.898	3.250

The results indicate that learning methods had the highest mean score (3.191), suggesting that students perceived TBLT as particularly effective in improving their learning strategies. Conversely, task-based teaching method had the lowest mean score (2.940), indicating room for improvement in its implementation. This discrepancy may reflect students' initial unfamiliarity with TBLT or the need for teachers to design and facilitate tasks more effectively.

5.1.2. Reliability Analysis

Table 2 presents the results of the reliability analysis using **Cronbach's alpha**. The alpha values for the five dimensions were 0.815, 0.857, 0.831, 0.870, and 0.845 respectively, all exceeding the threshold of 0.7. This indicates strong internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire items, ensuring that the scales used to measure the constructs were consistent and stable.

5.1.3. Validity Analysis

The validity of the questionnaire was assessed using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test and Bartlett's test of sphericity. The KMO value of 0.808 (>0.6) and a significant Bartlett's test ($p < 0.001$) confirmed the suitability of the data for factor analysis. **Table 3** shows that five factors were extracted, cumulatively explaining 70.996% of the variance, indicating robust construct validity. This suggests that the questionnaire effectively captured the intended constructs related to TBLT and its impact on language learning.

The factor analysis results, as presented in **Table 4**, reveal the extraction of five factors with eigenvalues exceeding 1. These factors collectively account for 26.850%, 15.575%, 13.029%, 9.861%, and 5.681% of the total variance, respectively. Following rotation, the cumulative explained variance reaches 70.996%, demonstrating that the scale data are well-explained by the extracted factors. This indicates a robust factor structure, supporting the validity of the measurement model.

Table 2. Cronbach's reliability analysis.

Name	Correction Item Total Correlation (CITC)	Item deleted alpha factor	Cronbach alpha coefficient
A1	0.774	0.660	0.815
A2	0.665	0.755	
A3	0.637	0.787	
B1	0.803	0.774	0.857
B2	0.707	0.815	
B3	0.666	0.832	
B4	0.645	0.840	
C1	0.727	0.744	0.831
C2	0.685	0.774	
C3	0.689	0.776	
D1	0.841	0.804	0.870
D2	0.692	0.844	
D3	0.620	0.861	
D4	0.669	0.849	
D5	0.670	0.849	
E1	0.781	0.758	0.845
E2	0.652	0.816	
E3	0.657	0.814	
E4	0.648	0.817	

Table 3. KMO and Bartlett's test.

	KMO value	0.808
	Approximate cardinality	1118.243
Bartlett sphericity test	<i>df</i>	171
	<i>p</i> value	0.000

In this study, the maximum variance rotation method (varimax) was employed to rotate the factors and establish their correspondence with the study items. The results of this rotation, including the factor loadings and the relationship between the factors and study items, are presented in **Table 5**. As illustrated in **Table 5**, there is a strong correlation between the study items and the extracted factors, indicating that the factors effectively capture the underlying constructs. All study items exhibit factor loadings exceeding 0.4, demonstrating a satisfactory level of common variance and confirming the robustness of the factor structure. This suggests that the factors are well-suited for explaining the variability in the data.

Table 4. Variance explanation rate.

Factor number	Feature Root			Explanation of variance before rotation			Explanation of variance after rotation		
	Feature Root	Variance explained %	Cumulative %	Feature Root	Explanation of variance %	Cumulative %	Feature Root	Variance explained %	Cumulative %
1	5.101	26.850	26.850	5.101	26.850	26.850	3.391	17.847	17.847
2	2.959	15.575	42.425	2.959	15.575	42.425	2.825	14.867	32.714
3	2.475	13.029	55.454	2.475	13.029	55.454	2.801	14.741	47.455
4	1.874	9.861	65.315	1.874	9.861	65.315	2.354	12.392	59.847
5	1.079	5.681	70.996	1.079	5.681	70.996	2.118	11.149	70.996
6	0.666	3.504	74.500	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	0.564	2.971	77.471	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	0.554	2.917	80.388	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	0.523	2.750	83.138	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	0.491	2.584	85.722	-	-	-	-	-	-
11	0.446	2.345	88.067	-	-	-	-	-	-
12	0.429	2.260	90.327	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	0.380	1.997	92.325	-	-	-	-	-	-
14	0.324	1.707	94.031	-	-	-	-	-	-
15	0.273	1.437	95.468	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	0.252	1.327	96.796	-	-	-	-	-	-
17	0.224	1.178	97.974	-	-	-	-	-	-
18	0.202	1.064	99.038	-	-	-	-	-	-
19	0.183	0.962	100.000	-	-	-	-	-	-

5.1.4. Correlation Analysis

As illustrated in **Table 6**, correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between task-based teaching strategies and key variables, including students' language proficiency, learning interests, classroom participation, and learning methods. The strength of these relationships was assessed using the Pearson correlation coefficient.

A significant positive correlation was observed between the task-based teaching method and language proficiency ($r = 0.269$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that the implementation of task-based strategies is associated with improvements in students' language skills. The task-based teaching method demonstrated a significant positive correlation with students' interest in learning ($r = 0.404$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that task-based approaches effectively enhance students' motivation and engagement in the learning process. A strong positive correlation was found between the task-based teaching method and classroom engagement ($r = 0.410$, $p < 0.01$), highlighting the method's effectiveness in fostering active student involvement during lessons. The task-based teaching method also showed a significant positive correlation with students' learning methods ($r = 0.328$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that task-

based strategies encourage the adoption of more effective and autonomous learning practices.

Table 5. Factor loading coefficients after rotation.

Name	Factor loading coefficient					Commonality (common factor variance)
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	
A1	0.189	0.161	0.171	0.189	0.840	0.833
A2	0.276	0.140	0.085	0.093	0.792	0.740
A3	0.202	0.037	0.236	0.251	0.720	0.680
B1	-0.066	0.908	0.032	0.025	0.070	0.835
B2	0.038	0.833	0.048	0.094	0.074	0.713
B3	0.081	0.813	0.054	0.046	0.042	0.675
B4	0.048	0.728	0.054	0.315	0.151	0.657
C1	0.018	0.131	0.099	0.828	0.249	0.775
C2	0.065	0.109	-0.070	0.828	0.187	0.743
C3	0.042	0.132	0.055	0.866	0.026	0.773
D1	0.909	0.068	0.028	0.006	0.092	0.840
D2	0.805	-0.026	0.071	0.027	0.090	0.663
D3	0.732	0.070	0.007	0.080	0.135	0.565
D4	0.760	-0.009	0.098	0.014	0.191	0.623
D5	0.782	0.013	0.044	0.029	0.120	0.628
E1	0.079	-0.001	0.885	0.016	0.096	0.799
E2	0.013	0.065	0.777	0.070	0.164	0.640
E3	0.109	0.068	0.795	0.015	0.080	0.655
E4	0.019	0.043	0.803	-0.009	0.071	0.652

Note: If the numbers in the table are bolded, the absolute value of the load factor is greater than 0.4.

Table 6. Pearson related.

	Average value	Standard deviation	Task-based teaching method	Language skills	Interest in Learning	Classroom Participation	Learning Method
Task-based teaching method	2.940	0.999	1				
Language skills	3.129	0.948	0.269**	1			
Learning interests	3.178	1.030	0.404**	0.292**	1		
Classroom Participation	3.033	0.943	0.410**	0.078	0.117	1	
Learning Method	3.191	0.898	0.328**	0.121	0.097	0.146	1

Note: * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$.

These results collectively underscore the positive impact of task-based teaching strategies on multiple dimensions of language learning, including proficiency,

motivation, engagement, and learning strategies. The significance of these correlations at the 0.01 level further reinforces the robustness of the findings.

5.1.5. Regression Analysis

To further examine the impact of TBLT, linear regression analyses were conducted. The results are summarized in **Table 7**.

Table 7. Results of linear regression analysis (n = 122).

Dependent variables	Non-standardized coefficient		Standardized coefficient	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>F</i>
	<i>B</i>	Standard error	<i>Beta</i>				
language proficiency	0.256	0.083	0.269	3.064	0.003**	0.073	9.387
Learning interests	0.417	0.086	0.404	4.842	0.000**	0.163	23.445
classroom participation	0.387	0.079	0.410	4.924	0.000**	0.168	24.246
Adjustment <i>R</i> ²	0.295	0.078	0.328	3.809	0.000**	0.108	14.508

Note: * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$; **Independent variable:** Task-based teaching method; **Control Variables:** Previous language proficiency, age, grade level, and teacher effectiveness were considered as control variables in the regression models to account for external factors that might influence the outcomes. These variables were included to ensure that the observed effects of TBLT were not confounded by other potential influences.

The regression model ($R^2 = 0.073$, $F = 9.387$, $p = 0.003$) revealed that TBLT significantly predicts language proficiency ($\beta = 0.256$, $t = 3.064$, $p = 0.003$). Although the explained variance is relatively modest (7.3%), the statistical significance of the relationship underscores the contribution of TBLT to improving students' language skills, particularly in the area of communicative competence. This finding aligns with Skehan's (1998) cognitive approach to language learning, which posits that task-based activities facilitate the integration of language comprehension, skill development, and application. However, the inclusion of control variables such as previous language proficiency, age, grade level, and teacher effectiveness highlights that these factors also play a significant role in shaping language outcomes. The relatively low R^2 value suggests that while TBLT plays a role in enhancing language proficiency, other factors—such as individual learner differences, teacher instructional quality, and classroom dynamics—may also significantly influence language outcomes. Future research could explore these additional variables to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors driving language proficiency.

The regression model ($R^2 = 0.163$, $F = 23.445$, $p = 0.000$) demonstrated a significant positive relationship between TBLT and students' interest in learning ($\beta = 0.417$, $t = 4.842$, $p = 0.000$). This finding is consistent with constructivist theories, particularly Vygotsky's (1960) emphasis on the role of meaningful, engaging tasks in fostering intrinsic motivation. By designing tasks that are relevant to students' real-world experiences and interests, TBLT creates a learning environment that encourages curiosity and active participation. The inclusion of control variables such as age and grade level further supports the robustness of this relationship, as

these factors were accounted for in the analysis. The higher R^2 value (16.3%) compared to the language proficiency model suggests that TBLT has a more pronounced impact on students' motivation than on their immediate language skills. This highlights the potential of TBLT to address affective factors in language learning, which are critical for sustaining long-term engagement and achievement.

The regression model ($R^2 = 0.168$, $F = 24.246$, $p = 0.000$) indicated that TBLT significantly enhances classroom participation ($\beta = 0.387$, $t = 4.924$, $p = 0.000$). This result aligns with Long's (1983) Interaction Hypothesis, which emphasizes the importance of interaction and collaboration in language acquisition. Task-based activities, by their nature, require students to engage in meaningful communication, negotiate meaning, and solve problems collaboratively, thereby increasing their active involvement in the classroom. The inclusion of control variables such as teacher effectiveness and grade level ensures that the observed effects are not solely attributable to TBLT but are also influenced by these contextual factors. The relatively high R^2 value (16.8%) suggests that TBLT is particularly effective in promoting student engagement, which is a key predictor of learning success. However, the findings also imply that the design and implementation of tasks must be carefully managed to ensure that all students, regardless of their proficiency levels, can participate meaningfully.

The regression model ($R^2 = 0.108$, $F = 14.508$, $p = 0.000$) revealed that TBLT positively influences students' learning methods ($\beta = 0.295$, $t = 3.809$, $p = 0.000$). This suggests that TBLT encourages students to adopt more effective and autonomous learning strategies, such as self-regulation, critical thinking, and problem-solving. These strategies are essential for lifelong language learning, as they enable students to take ownership of their learning processes and adapt to new linguistic challenges. The inclusion of control variables such as previous language proficiency and teacher effectiveness highlights that these factors also contribute to the development of learning methods. The moderate R^2 value (10.8%) indicates that while TBLT contributes to the development of better learning methods, other factors—such as teacher guidance, peer influence, and individual learning styles—also play a significant role. This underscores the need for a holistic approach to language teaching that combines TBLT with explicit instruction on learning strategies.

5.1.6. Discussion of Regression Findings

Collectively, these regression analyses confirm that TBLT has a significant positive impact on multiple dimensions of language learning, including language proficiency, learning interests, classroom participation, and learning methods. However, the relatively low to moderate R^2 values across the models suggest that TBLT is not the sole determinant of these outcomes. Other factors, such as individual learner characteristics, teacher effectiveness, classroom environment, and institutional constraints, likely interact with TBLT to shape students' learning experiences and outcomes.

For instance, the modest R^2 value for language proficiency (7.3%) highlights the complexity of language acquisition, which is influenced by a wide range of cognitive, social, and contextual factors. Similarly, the higher R^2 values for interest in learning (16.3%) and classroom participation (16.8%) suggest that TBLT is particularly effective in addressing motivational and interactional aspects of language learning, which are critical for creating an engaging and supportive learning environment.

These findings have important implications for language teaching practice. First, the implementation of task-based activities demonstrated significant positive effects on students' language learning outcomes. For example, the Information-Gap Task not only improved students' speaking and listening skills but also increased their confidence in using English for real-world communication. Students reported that the task was engaging and relevant, as it allowed them to practice language in a meaningful context. Similarly, the Problem-Solving Task fostered critical thinking and collaboration, as students worked together to propose solutions to a real-world issue. The task also enhanced their writing and presentation skills, as they had to organize their ideas coherently and deliver them effectively in English. These findings align with Willis's framework, which emphasizes the importance of authentic tasks in promoting language use and interaction [2]. Second, they underscore the need for teacher training programs that equip educators with the skills to design and implement task-based activities effectively. Third, they highlight the importance of curriculum flexibility, allowing teachers to balance task-based activities with other instructional approaches to meet diverse learner needs. Finally, they suggest that assessment methods should be aligned with the goals of TBLT, focusing not only on linguistic accuracy but also on communicative competence, motivation, and learner autonomy.

By incorporating control variables such as previous language proficiency, age, grade level, and teacher effectiveness, this study provides a deeper understanding of the factors influencing the effectiveness of TBLT. Future research should continue to explore these interactions in greater depth, particularly in diverse educational settings, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how TBLT can be optimized to support language learners.

5.2. Qualitative Analysis of Teacher Interviews

The interview data provide valuable insights into teachers' perspectives on the implementation and effectiveness of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). The findings are organized thematically below, addressing the key questions posed during the interviews.

5.2.1. Teachers' Instructional Priorities

When asked about their teaching priorities, Teacher A (with 2 years of experience) emphasized the importance of knowledge explanation and practice in English teaching, reflecting a traditional, teacher-centered approach. In contrast, Teacher B (with 10 years of experience) highlighted the value of student-centered activi-

ties, such as dialogues, in fostering student engagement and creating a dynamic classroom atmosphere. This contrast suggests that teaching experience plays a significant role in shaping educators' familiarity with and adoption of TBLT. While Teacher A's focus on knowledge delivery aligns with conventional methods, Teacher B's emphasis on interactive tasks demonstrates a more progressive approach, consistent with the principles of TBLT.

5.2.2. Adoption and Challenges of TBLT

In response to whether they use TBLT in their teaching, Teacher A admitted to being unfamiliar with the method and lacking confidence in its application. On the other hand, Teacher B reported having experimented with TBLT but ultimately discontinued its use due to time constraints and curriculum pressures. Specifically, Teacher B noted that the extended time required for task-based activities often conflicted with the need to cover extensive syllabus content, leaving insufficient time for students to fully grasp new knowledge. This highlights a critical barrier to TBLT implementation in traditional teaching approach, where teachers face competing demands of fostering communicative competence and ensuring academic performance.

5.2.3. Perceived Effectiveness of TBLT

Both teachers acknowledged that TBLT is more effective than traditional methods in improving students' English proficiency and exam performance. However, they expressed concerns about the time-intensive nature of task-based activities, which can detract from the depth of students' understanding of key concepts. Teacher B further noted that while TBLT enhances classroom engagement, its implementation often comes at the expense of content coverage, potentially impacting students' performance in high-stakes exams. This tension between communicative teaching and exam preparation underscores the challenges of integrating TBLT into rigid curricular frameworks.

5.2.4. Evaluation Methods and Systemic Constraints

When discussing the effectiveness of current evaluation methods, both teachers agreed that schools predominantly assess teaching quality based on students' academic performance. This focus on test scores discourages teachers from prioritizing the development of students' communicative skills and autonomous learning abilities. As a result, teachers often feel compelled to prioritize rote learning and knowledge delivery over innovative, student-centered approaches like TBLT. This reflects broader systemic issues within exam-oriented education systems, where assessment practices fail to align with the goals of communicative language teaching.

5.2.5. Implications for Teaching Practice

The interviews reveal that teachers continue to prioritize knowledge transmission over student autonomy and emotional engagement. This teacher-centered approach limits opportunities for students to develop independent learning skills

and critical thinking abilities, which are essential for language acquisition. Furthermore, the findings suggest that teachers often overlook the importance of fostering students' information-processing skills and motivation, focusing instead on completing prescribed teaching tasks. This narrow focus on task completion, without considering students' emotional experiences or willingness to engage, may lead to passive learning and hinder the development of intrinsic motivation.

The interview findings highlight several key issues in the implementation of TBLT. First, there is a clear gap in teacher training, particularly for less experienced educators like Teacher A, who lack familiarity with TBLT principles and practices. Second, systemic constraints, such as time limitations and exam pressures, pose significant barriers to the effective adoption of TBLT. These constraints often force teachers to prioritize content coverage over student engagement, undermining the potential benefits of task-based approaches. Moreover, the reliance on test-based evaluation systems perpetuates a focus on academic performance at the expense of communicative competence and autonomous learning. This misalignment between teaching goals and assessment practices creates a disincentive for teachers to adopt innovative methods like TBLT, even when they recognize their pedagogical value.

To address these challenges, professional development programs should be implemented to equip teachers with the skills and confidence to integrate TBLT into their classrooms. Additionally, curricular reforms are needed to create more flexible frameworks that balance exam preparation with the development of students' communicative and autonomous learning skills. Finally, assessment practices should be revised to reflect the goals of TBLT, emphasizing not only linguistic accuracy but also motivation, engagement, and critical thinking.

In conclusion, while TBLT holds significant potential to enhance language learning outcomes, its successful implementation requires addressing systemic barriers and providing teachers with the necessary support and resources. By fostering a more student-centered and communicative approach to language teaching, educators can create more engaging and effective learning environments that prepare students for real-world language use.

5.3. Discussion of Findings

The quantitative and qualitative findings collectively highlight the positive impact of TBLT on students' language proficiency, motivation, engagement, and learning strategies. However, the interviews underscore significant challenges in implementing TBLT, particularly in exam-oriented educational systems.

The regression analyses confirm that TBLT significantly enhances language proficiency, learning interest, classroom participation, and learning methods. These findings align with the theoretical frameworks of language acquisition and constructivism, which emphasize the importance of meaningful, task-based interactions in language learning. The strong correlation between TBLT and classroom participation ($r = 0.410$) highlights the method's effectiveness in fostering active

student involvement, which is crucial for language acquisition. Similarly, the correlation with interest in learning ($r = 0.404$) underscores TBLT's potential to enhance students' intrinsic motivation, a key factor in long-term language learning success.

The interviews reveal that time constraints, curriculum pressures, and evaluation systems hinder the effective adoption of TBLT. These barriers are consistent with previous research on the challenges of implementing communicative approaches in exam-driven environments. For example, the pressure to cover extensive curriculum content often leads teachers to prioritize rote learning over communicative activities, limiting students' opportunities to engage in meaningful language use.

The findings suggest a need for professional development programs to equip teachers with the skills and confidence to implement TBLT effectively. Additionally, curriculum reforms are needed to balance exam preparation with the development of students' communicative competence and autonomous learning skills. Without adequate training and support, teachers may struggle to design and implement tasks that effectively promote language learning.

The study highlights the importance of fostering student autonomy and emotional engagement in language learning. Teachers should design tasks that not only address linguistic objectives but also encourage students to take ownership of their learning and develop critical thinking skills. This requires a shift from teacher-centered to student-centered approaches, where students are actively involved in the learning process and encouraged to explore language in meaningful contexts.

While the study provides evidence of TBLT's short-term benefits, further research is needed to explore its long-term impact on students' language development and academic performance. Longitudinal studies could provide valuable insights into how TBLT influences students' language proficiency, motivation, and learning strategies over time.

6. Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate the application and effectiveness of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in the context of comprehensive English courses at a university in Shanghai. By employing a mixed-methods approach, including questionnaire surveys, classroom observations, and teacher interviews, the research sought to explore the impact of TBLT on students' language proficiency, learning methods, classroom participation, and interest in learning. The findings provide valuable insights into the current status of TBLT implementation, its benefits, and the challenges hindering its widespread adoption.

6.1. Major Findings

The study's quantitative analysis revealed significant positive correlations between TBLT and key learning outcomes: A significant positive correlation was found

between TBLT and language proficiency ($r = 0.269$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that TBLT contributes to improving students' communicative competence. TBLT demonstrated a strong positive relationship with students' interest in learning ($r = 0.404$, $p < 0.01$), highlighting its potential to enhance motivation and engagement. The correlation between TBLT and classroom engagement ($r = 0.410$, $p < 0.01$) underscores the method's effectiveness in fostering active student involvement. TBLT positively influenced students' learning strategies ($r = 0.328$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that it encourages the adoption of more effective and autonomous learning practices. Regression analyses further confirmed these relationships, with TBLT significantly predicting improvements in language proficiency ($\beta = 0.256$), interest in learning ($\beta = 0.417$), classroom participation ($\beta = 0.387$), and learning methods ($\beta = 0.295$). These findings align with constructivist and interactionist theories, which emphasize the importance of meaningful, interactive tasks in language learning.

6.2. Current Status of TBLT Implementation

Despite its demonstrated benefits, the application of TBLT remains limited and faces several challenges: Many teachers, particularly those with less experience, continue to prioritize knowledge transmission over student-centered activities. This reflects a deep-rooted adherence to traditional teaching methods, which often neglect the development of students' autonomous learning skills and critical thinking abilities. The pressure to achieve high exam scores and cover extensive syllabus content often discourages teachers from adopting TBLT. The time-intensive nature of task-based activities conflicts with the demands of exam preparation, limiting their practical implementation. Many teachers lack systematic training in TBLT, resulting in limited understanding and confidence in its application. This highlights the need for professional development programs to equip educators with the necessary skills and knowledge.

6.3. Implications for Teaching Practice

The findings of this study have several important implications for the effective implementation of TBLT in English language teaching: firstly, teachers should shift from a teacher-centered to a student-centered approach, emphasizing the active participation and autonomy of students. This involves designing tasks that not only address linguistic objectives but also foster critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration. Secondly, educational institutions should adopt more flexible curricula that balance exam preparation with the development of communicative competence. This requires rethinking assessment methods to align with the goals of TBLT, focusing on both linguistic accuracy and practical language use. Additionally, comprehensive training programs should be implemented to familiarize teachers with TBLT principles and practices. These programs should include workshops, demonstration classes, and peer mentoring to facilitate the sharing of best practices and successful implementation strategies. Finally,

broader systemic reforms are needed to address the exam-oriented pressures that hinder the adoption of innovative teaching methods. Policymakers should consider integrating communicative competencies into assessment frameworks, encouraging teachers to prioritize student engagement and motivation.

6.4. Limitations and Future Research

While this study provides valuable insights into the application and effectiveness of TBLT, it has certain limitations that should be addressed in future research. Firstly, the study's sample was limited to a single university in Shanghai, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Future research should include a larger and more diverse sample to validate the results across different educational contexts, such as rural versus urban settings, public versus private institutions, and varying levels of language proficiency. Additionally, the study primarily examined the short-term impact of TBLT. A longitudinal study design is strongly recommended to track changes over time and better understand the sustainability of TBLT's impacts on students' language development, motivation, and academic performance. Finally, while the study included teacher interviews, a more in-depth exploration of teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and experiences with TBLT could provide further insights into the barriers and facilitators of its implementation. Future studies could also investigate the role of task design and implementation strategies in shaping the outcomes of TBLT. For example, research could explore how different types of tasks (e.g., information-gap, problem-solving, or decision-making tasks) influence students' engagement and learning outcomes.

6.5. Summary

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that TBLT has significant potential to enhance students' language proficiency, motivation, engagement, and learning strategies. However, its successful implementation requires addressing systemic barriers, providing adequate teacher training, and fostering a shift toward student-centered and communicative approaches to language teaching. By integrating TBLT into university integrated English courses, educators can create more engaging and effective learning environments that prepare students for real-world language use and lifelong learning.

Future research should adopt a longitudinal design to track the long-term impacts of TBLT and explore its sustainability over time. Moreover, studies should continue to investigate the contextual factors that influence TBLT's effectiveness, such as institutional support, teacher training, and task design. By addressing these areas, researchers can pave the way for the broader adoption and optimization of TBLT in diverse educational settings, ultimately enhancing the quality of language education and student outcomes.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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