

The Influence of Task-Based Language Instruction on Learner Involvement and Motivation: A Quasi- Experimental Study *

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.59136/lv.2025.25.1.43b>

Abstract

The study aims to examine how Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT), a new language pedagogical method, influences students' interest and enthusiasm in learning the language at DAV Centenary College, Faridabad, India, a region of an emerging global economy. Given the increasing demand for strong English communication skills, this research investigates the relative efficacy of Task-Based Language Teaching and conventional instructional strategies using a 12- week quasi-experimental framework. Quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews were used to collect data to assess the movement in levels of student motivation and engagement. The results indicate significant improvement of engagement and motivation by adopters of TBLT, with enhanced enhancement for language related tasks and a greater sense of achievement for global readiness. The study adds valuable insight to the expanding body of work on effective language instruction, offering practical relevance for educators aiming to enhance student outcomes in English learning, especially within the context of increasing global interconnectedness.

Keywords: Engagement, English language learning, Globalization, Motivation, Quasi-Experimental design, Student Outcomes

Introduction

In this highly interconnected and globalized world, in which clear communication is of high consequence, it is not only a good thing to have a well-rounded grasp of the English language, but also a requirement – essentially for your academic endeavors for career progression and to not just interact, but converse in international forums. The increasingly globalization of education requisitions from educational institutions increasingly the urgent need to identify and implement authentic strategies which draw and involve students and in turn enormously improve their language abilities. The global demand is therefore there for such systems to fulfil. Typically, traditional language teaching approaches lack the power to instill real interest and motivation as well as the practical communication skills necessary for the global pill, requiring a change. Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is one such way in which meaningful tasks are one of the fundamental factors of language education.

Background of DAV Centenary College

DAV Centenary College, Faridabad founded in 1985, has an origin traceable to a Charitable International Society known as DAV College Managing Committee, New Delhi, and offers a wide variety of undergraduate and postgraduate courses available in different disciplines at this College. This prime location highlights the institution's dedication to delivering a well-rounded educational experience that emphasizes both academic success and personal growth, while also preparing students

with the essential skills to excel in a global job market and play a role in India's expanding international influence.

Significance of Task-Based Language Instruction

Task-Based Language Instruction is important for its unique appeal in engaging students in their learning journey in active ways by having them take on tasks which are similar to real interpersonal communication situations in international business, collaboration in academia and global social interaction. This approach helps learn the language in real ways as it promotes the use of language independently for a purpose which makes one gain communicative fluency and also intercultural competence, two vital factors in day life in a global era. Task design, task execution and task evaluation (Ellis, 2003, 9-10) constitute TBLT. By emphasizing tasks that necessitate collaboration, problem-solving, and cross-cultural communication, TBLT not only enhances critical thinking skills but also develops essential competencies such as adaptability, teamwork, and intercultural understanding, all of which are highly valued in today's global workforce.

Task Based Language Instruction has been shown through research that it tends to be helping students engage and become motivated (Chua and Lin 2020, 45) through opportunities for real communication and teamwork. Knowing that their language studies are relevant to global, real-world, real-time applications and also (but not in that order) knowing that there are tangible opportunities for them in a global cultural setting makes learners more likely to want to learn a language and feel invested in the process. Secondly, students are trained to be independent in learning since they are responsible for their learning in group activities (Jin and Zhang, 2018, 400-404). Empowerment in this sense is absolutely essential for perpetuating enthusiasm and a lifelong interest in continued study of a language.

Until now, TBLI has its benefits, but educators have challenges in its use. In addition, the skill of the teacher in classroom management during task activities also demands to strike a balance between leading students while permitting them to carry out tasks independently. Therefore, understanding how Task-Based Language Instruction (TBLI) influences student engagement and motivation is essential for educators, as these factors play a pivotal role in achieving effective outcomes in language learning.

Research Objectives

This study aims to examine the impact of Task Based Language Instruction (TBLI) on student motivation and participation in English language classroom at DAV Centenary College. Specifically, it focuses on the following aspects:

1. **Examine Changes in Engagement Levels:** To evaluate the changes in student engagement levels with tasks that simulate real-world global interactions.
2. **Assess Variations in Motivation:** To investigate alterations in student motivation to improve their English language skills for global communication and professional opportunities.
3. **Gather Qualitative Insights:** To investigate alterations in student motivation to improve their English language skills for global communication and professional opportunities.
4. **Evaluate Task Effectiveness:** To analyze the efficacy of various types of tasks employed in TBLT regarding student learning outcomes.
5. **Identify Challenges and Recommendations:** To pinpoint challenges encountered by students and instructors during the TBLT implementation process and offer suggestions for enhancement.

By examining these objectives, this study aims to offer important perspectives on how effective TBLT is as a teaching approach for enhancing English language learning results at DAV Centenary College.

Literature Review

Overview of Task-Based Language Instruction

Task as a pedagogical component is a significant and innovative linguo-culturological 'component' in modern language didactics and it deserves special attention that can be observed during the active

research work in the sphere of Language Education, especially in equipping learners with the skills and knowledge necessary for successful communication and teamwork in today's interconnected world. This method of teaching swaps the focus from standardized grammar-based instruction to more interactive learning experiences that motivate student use of language skills as demanded in the international interactions and global workplaces. Communicative principles which require communication as a central aspect of language learning inform TBLT (Rod Ellis, 2009, 225-235).

Theoretical Frameworks Supporting TBLT

The following theoretical frameworks support TBLT such as constructivism and social constructivism. From constructivist theories (Piaget, 1976, 21) we gather that learners obtain knowledge past their activities and interaction with their environmental surroundings. Students engaged in TBLT participate in activities that require them to actively use the target language, which helps them develop a deeper understanding and better retention of its linguistic structures. According to social constructivism defined by Vygotsky (1978, 57), it is important for one to be socially engaged in learning. This theory is supported by TBLT as tasks include active collaboration among students, utilizing this to promote not only communicative competence but important skills to participate in global projects and international collaborations such as teamwork, negotiation and cross-cultural understanding.

Impact of TBLT on Student Engagement and Motivation

There has been much research conducted on the positive effect that TBLT has on student involvement and motivation. Research by (Chua and Lin 2020, 45) showed that engaging in task-based activities significantly heightened students' participation and interest in learning languages. Their findings showed that in learners' involvement in authentic tasks, they are more likely to talk for fluency in the target language.

In agreement with broader studies of TBLT environments generally promoting increased learner commitment and self-direction (Mudinillah et al. 2024, 107), learner motivation in second language learning is seen as critical. Maintaining long term engagement in studies of a language is based on a feeling of autonomy.

Challenges in Implementing TBLT

From multiple perspectives, TBLT offers many advantages as a means of preparing students for future global communication, but these advantages are matched by the unique challenges facing TBLT implementation in any context, but especially in the 'messy' context of culture and education. [(Rod Ellis, 2009, 221] shows how creating tasks that correspond to curriculum goals and accommodate the differing needs of learners may be difficult. He (Carless, 2007, 64) also adds any task requiring designing is in itself intricate and that it is indeed sensitive to learners' linguistic level, cultural contexts and educational goals. Additionally, teachers may find that when they pursue task-based initiatives that classroom management can present challenges; finding the proper balance of support and independence for the students. These difficulties point to some of the most important professional development programs for preparing teachers with the skills required to successfully apply TBLT in globally connected classrooms such as designing tasks that foster cross-cultural understanding, promoting appropriate teamwork in heterogeneous groups and utilizing technology as an asset to enable students to collaborate on global communication projects (Ji 2017, 157-160).

Comparative Studies on TBLT and Traditional Methods

Comparative research on different teaching approaches frequently shows that the student results are better in Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) than in other methods used. (Sailer and Homner, 2019, 87-89) analyzed numerous studies of gamification and task based educational strategies, conducted an analysis and found demonstrable beneficial effects of TBLT for cognitive development, motivation and behavioral outcomes.

Comparative Studies on TBLT and Traditional Methods

Research has done comparisons of different teaching approaches and found that Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) results normally in higher scores for students than do traditional methods. (Sailer and Homner, 2019, 87-89) conducted a comprehensive investigation through analysis of many studies on gamification and task based educational strategies that confirmed the relation between TBLT and positive impacts on cognitive developmental as well as motivational and behavioral outcomes.

The Role of Gamification in Enhancing TBLT

In recent times, gamification has been recognized as a significant and innovative approach to providing Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) with game-like characteristics to help increase the student's engagement and motivation in preparing for collaborative work and problem solving in a globalized world. (Darina Dicheva et al.) 2015, 84-85) surveyed existing literature on gamification in education and concluded that points, badges and leaderboards bring a positive impact on learner's motivation and encourage learner's participation in their learning process. However, through their review they indicate that gamification can be supportive of student participation, as well as create a feeling of accomplishment while building on collaborative learning.

Additionally, (Hamari et al.) 2014, 3028-29) supported these results concluding that gamification can increase user engagement and results for motivation by finding them in a meta-analysis. Yet, they observe that whether gamification works out will depend on the context and which particular game elements to use.

Methodology

Study Framework

Using a comparative intervention-based approach, this investigation explores how Task Based Language Teaching influences learners' motivation and engagement in English classes at DAV Centenary College, Faridabad, India. This study lasted 12 weeks, during which two classroom settings were used. For one group, a group was introduced to TBLT focused lessons (intervention group); for another, the standard instructional methods continued (comparison group).

Participants

This study involved a sample of 60 undergraduate students enrolled in English language courses at DAV Centenary College, Faridabad. These participants were randomly assigned to two separate cohorts: the experimental group received instruction following the principles of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), while the control group continued with conventional instructional techniques. The participants' demographic information included the following:

- Age: 18-23 years
- Gender: Male and Female
- Year of Study: Second Year

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Age:

- ☐ 18–20 ☐ 21–23

2. Gender:

- ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ non-binary

Section B: Engagement and Participation

3. How often do you feel engaged during English language classes using TBLT?

- ☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always

4. How would you rate your participation in task-based activities?

- ☐ Very low ☐ Low ☐ Moderate ☐ High ☐ Very high

5. Do you find the tasks assigned in class relevant to real-life situations?

- ☐ Not at all relevant ☐ Of limited relevance ☐ Moderately relevant

☐ Highly relevant

☐ Completely relevant

Section C: Learning Experience with TBLT

6. How effective do you find task-based activities in improving your language skills?

☐ Completely ineffective

☐ A little effective

☐ Somewhat effective

☐ Quite effective

☐ Very effective

7. How comfortable do you feel communicating in English during task-based activities?

☐ Very uncomfortable

☐ Uncomfortable

☐ Neutral

☐ Comfortable

☐ Very comfortable

8. Do you believe that working in groups enhances your learning experience in TBLT?

☐ Strongly disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ Neutral

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly agree

Section D: Motivation and Confidence

9. What motivates you to participate in task-based learning? *(Select all that apply)*

☐ Interest in the subject matter

☐ Collaboration with peers

☐ Opportunities for practical application

☐ Feedback from instructors

☐ Other (please specify): _____

10. Do you feel that TBLT has increased your confidence in using English?

☐ Not at all

☐ A little

☐ Moderately

☐ Very much

☐ Extremely

Section E: Open-Ended Questions

11. What aspects of TBLT do you find most beneficial for your learning?

12. Can you share any specific experiences where task-based activities positively influenced your learning?

13. What improvements would you suggest for the TBLT approach to enhance your learning experience?

Tasks Implemented

The following specific tasks were utilized in the experimental group to facilitate TBLT:

1. **Information Gap Tasks:** Students worked in pairs where one student had specific information that the other needed to complete a task. For example, one student might have a map with certain locations marked while the other had to ask questions to identify those locations.
2. **Role-Play Scenarios:** Students engaged in role-playing exercises simulating real-life situations, such as conducting job interviews or negotiating purchases. These scenarios allowed students to practice conversational skills in a contextualized manner.
3. **Problem-Solving Tasks:** In groups, students were presented with a problem requiring collaborative discussion and decision-making. For instance, they might have to plan a trip while considering budget constraints and preferences for destinations.
4. **Project-Based Learning:** Students undertook longer-term projects involving research on specific topics related to English language and culture, culminating in presentations to their peers.
5. **Creative Writing Tasks:** Students received prompts to write short stories or dialogues based on specific themes or situations, encouraging creativity while applying their language skills in writing.

Data Collection Instruments

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected.

1. **Surveys:** A systematically designed questionnaire was distributed prior to and following the intervention to evaluate student engagement and motivation levels. The questionnaire consisted of questions pertaining to:
 - Engagement and participation in class activities

- Perceptions of TBLT effectiveness
 - Motivation levels (intrinsic and extrinsic)
2. **Interviews:** Selected students from the experimental group participated in semi-structured interviews to provide feedback on their experiences with TBLT and to share their views on its role in enhancing communication and collaboration in global contexts.

Procedure

1. **Pre-Intervention Phase:** All participants filled out pre-intervention survey at baseline to obtain pre-intervention ratings of motivation and engagement.
2. **Intervention Phase:** The Intervention Phase lasted 12 weeks, during which time the experimental group was taught using Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) methods, while the control group maintained conventional teaching practice with no TBLT related tasks were introduced.
3. **Post-Intervention Phase:** After the intervention was over, all participants completed post-Intervention surveys for measuring any change in their motivational & engagement levels. Additionally, a number of students participated in semi structured interviews to provide qualitative insights regarding their own experiences.

Data Analysis

Statistical techniques were employed to analyze responses to quantitative surveys, to include independent samples t-tests and repeated measures ANOVA to measure changes between pre- and postintervention scores among both groups. To that end, qualitative data gathered from interviews were transcribed and analyzed thematically in search of common patterns and insights concerning student experiences with the use of Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) aimed at developing communicative skills in a second language, particularly, TBLT's role in fostering the development of global competencies.

Findings

Two main sections of results stem from this study; quantitative results based on survey and assessment data and qualitative insights gained from student interviews. 60 undergraduate students from DAV Centenary College are used to analyze these consequences.

Demographic Information

A total of 60 second-year students participated in the study. The demographic breakdown is as follows:

Characteristic	Percentage
Age	
18-20	60%
21-23	40%
Gender	
Male	60%
Female	40%
Year of Study	
Second Year	100%

Pre-intervention Motivation Scores

Results from independent samples t-tests showed no statistically significant differences in motivation levels between the control and experimental groups at the study's outset.

Measure	Control Group (Average $\pm$ Std. Deviation)	Experimental Group (Average $\pm$ Std. Deviation)
Interest/Enjoyment	4.2 $\pm$ 0.8	4.1 $\pm$ 0.7
Perceived Competence	3.9 $\pm$ 0.7	4.0 $\pm$ 0.8
Autonomous Motivation	4.1 $\pm$ 0.6	4.0 $\pm$ 0.7

Post-Intervention Motivation Scores

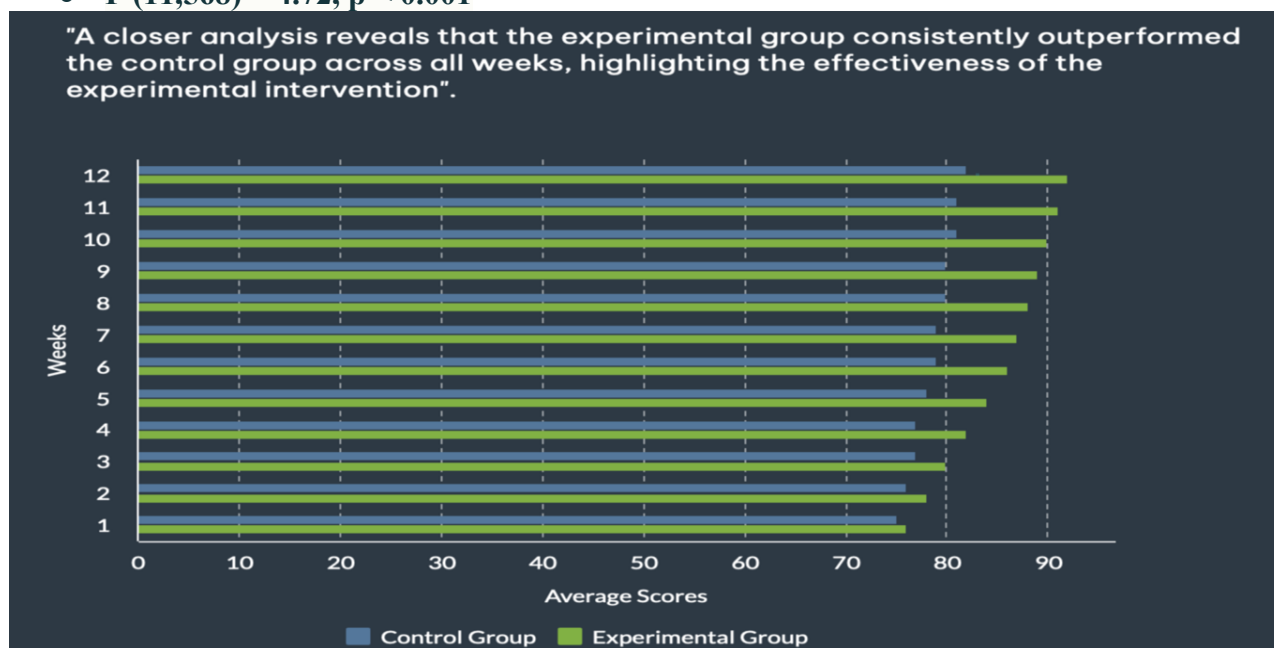
At the conclusion of the 12-week timeframe, the experimental group indicated significantly elevated scores on multiple motivation assessments in comparison to the control group:

Measure	Control Group (Average $\pm$ Std. Deviation)	Experimental Group (Average $\pm$ Std. Deviation)	t-statistic (df =58)	p- Level
Interest/Enjoyment	4.3 $\pm$ 0.7	4.8 $\pm$ 0.6	3.42	<0.01
Perceived Competence	4.0 $\pm$ 0.6	4.5 $\pm$ 0.7	2.87	<0.01
Autonomous Motivation	4.2 $\pm$ 0.5	4.6 $\pm$ 0.6	2.65	<0.01

Quiz Scores over Time

The analysis results indicated a significant relationship between group and time concerning quiz scores:

- $F(11,568) = 4.72, p < 0.001$



Final Exam Grades

The grades from the final exam revealed a notable interaction between the groups:

- $F(1, 58) = 9.34, p < 0.01$

The experimental group achieved higher final exams scores compared to the control group.

Group	Final Exam Grades (M $\pm$ SD)
Control	82.5 $\pm$ 6.2
Experimental	87.3 $\pm$ 5.8

Qualitative Insights

The qualitative data gathered from student interviews offered further insight into the quantitative results:

- Students in the experimental group reported heightened motivation and engagement as a result of the integration of leaderboards and badges.
- A number of participants mentioned that these gamification features prompted them to pursue better results and engage more deeply in their education.

Sample Quotes from Students:

- "The leaderboard truly pushed me to give my best effort and try to rise in the rankings."
- "The badges filled me with pride about my achievements and motivated me to continue working hard."

Discussion

The findings show that participants in the experimental group, who practiced TBLT, exhibited greater levels of interest, perceived competence, and intrinsic motivation in comparison to those in the control group. This enhancement aligns with earlier research that underlines TBLT's success in improving student engagement and academic performance. Students could relate their education to their real lives by concentrating on meaningful activities that mimic the use of real-life language and challenge them to acquire the necessary skills to take global opportunities in education and employment based on intrinsic motivation.

These findings are corroborated with insights from student interviews. The participants indicated that the framework of TBLT allowed them to interact actively with what it was they were learning and as a result to experience a sense of accomplishment and capability. Many of the students expressed that the collaborative nature of TBLT helped them to engage more fully with their peers as well as the course material and that those teamwork and communication skills are important in the diverse global workplaces in which they will work.

All that said, TBLT is only effective if the tasks are carefully designed and utilized in the classroom. Although TBLT can provide increased motivation and student involvement, well designed tasks will not; and poorly designed tasks will engender frustration and disengagement. As such, educators need to find a suitable challenge and relevance to the students' interests and their language proficiency level, while their tasks must cultivate global competencies.

This study contributes further to an otherwise growing body of evidence that Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is an effective method of language education and especially as an effective and innovative approach to preparing students for the very real (increasingly interconnected and globalized) world in which English is increasingly expected to be an operational foreign language. Future research should investigate the lasting impacts and the best practices for applying TBLT across different educational settings, with a particular focus on how TBLT can be adapted and optimized to enhance students' global competencies, promote intercultural understanding. Through constant fine tuning and improvement of TBLT methods, teachers are eventually able to develop high interest and fully efficient language learning environments, within which students can gain well developed language communication skills.

Conclusion

As evident from the conspicuous development noticed at D.A.V Centenary College Faridabad, India, this study verifies that Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is a very effective and creative way

of enhancing motivation of the learners and preparing them for an ever-surpassing globalized world. Task Based Language Teaching uses the provision of substantial activities that imitate real life scenarios to create an interesting environment whereby students are forced to actively engage in their language acquisition experiences. Results showed that the students in TBLT condition exhibited higher interest and perceived competence than normal students and were also found to be more intrinsically motivated than normal students.

The quantitative data collected through the pre and post intervention assessment indicate that the application of TBLT increases participants' motivation and their academic achievements in their target language. The quantitative results are supplemented with qualitative feedback from student interviews which underscore the importance of authentic tasks in fostering confidence and achievement of students. One of the things they liked about the task-based approach was that it's nice to engage more with the material and collaborate more with your classmates for the benefit of learning. Given the development of the world in line with globalization, this research argues for continued research in the development of innovative teaching strategies like TBLT in view of the need to adapt language instruction to prepare students for future challenges and be able to participate in international dialogues and collaborations. Further research could explore the lasting impact of Task-Based Language teaching on language acquisition and it may extend beyond a single classroom or an isolated group of students and the same can be said for evaluating how TBLT improves attainment of global competencies, encourages development of intercultural understanding and readies students for internationally oriented academic and occupational participation.

As such, this study gives significant insights of when TBLT can be applied, since this can be used as an effective teaching method in the language education; it can transform language education by establishing a place for students to be motivated to learn and succeed. TBLT offers great possibilities for educators to create a vital, interesting and globally selected classroom environment fitted to let students become fluent English communicators and staunch global residents – able to make significant contributions to a connected globe.”

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