

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING
HO CHI MINH CITY UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY AND EDUCATION



NGUYEN DINH NHU HA

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING BASED ON TASK-
BASED APPROACH AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL**

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DISSERTATION SUMMARY

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Supervisor 1: Professor Nguyen Loc
Supervisor 2: Doctor Tran Tuyen

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INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale for selecting the research topic

In the era of globalization and digital transformation, proficiency in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has become an essential requirement for developing a high-quality workforce. English functions not only as the international language of communication, science, and business, but also as a key instrument for accessing global knowledge and expanding opportunities for learning, employment, and international cooperation (Agustiana et al., 2024; Baker, 2024). In Vietnam, enhancing EFL competence among non-English-major students (STs) is considered a strategic task in the process of educational reform and global integration.

The Vietnamese government has demonstrated a strong commitment to improving foreign language education through major policies such as Decision No. 2080/QĐ-TTg (2017) and Conclusion No. 91-KL/TW (2024). These documents emphasize the importance of English proficiency in developing human capital and strengthening national competitiveness. However, current EFL teaching and learning in Vietnamese universities, particularly in non-English-major classes, remains problematic. Many STs learn English mainly to pass exams, showing limited intrinsic motivation and few chances for real communication. Courses are often grammar-oriented and theory-based, while Ts struggle to apply active teaching methods (Ms) and to design interactive, communicative tasks (Lap et al., 2025; Pham Minh Tri et al., 2022).

In response to these limitations, the Task-Based Approach (TBA) has emerged as an effective framework in modern language pedagogy. Unlike traditional methods focusing on linguistic forms, TBA emphasizes the development of communicative competence through authentic, goal-oriented tasks that engage Ls actively in meaningful language use (Hu, 2024; Riyawi & Hasibuan, 2025). Studies worldwide have confirmed that TBA enhances learning motivation, collaboration, and language fluency. Nevertheless, in Vietnam, the application of TBA remains fragmented and unsystematic, lacking an appropriate model tailored to non-English majors, and constrained by limited class time and assessment pressure (Nguyen Thi Bao Trang, 2024; Trinh et al., 2025).

To address these challenges, this dissertation entitled “**English Language Teaching Based on Task-Based Approach at the University Level**” aims to design, implement, and evaluate a TBA-oriented teaching model suited to the local higher education context. The study is expected to make theoretical contributions by refining the framework of TBA for EFL teaching in Vietnam and practical contributions by supporting Ts in adopting learner-centered and communicative pedagogy, thereby enhancing students’ real-world English competence..

2. Research purpose

The thesis develops and applies an instructional framework for English language teaching based on TBA. This framework consists of four phases: warm-up, task introduction, task implementation, and task assessment. The objective is to

contribute to the improvement of English learning outcomes for non-English major students at the university level.

3. Research object and research subject

Research object: Focus on the teaching and learning of English as a non-major subject at the university level

Research subject: Examine English language teaching for non-English major students at the university level based on TBA

4. Research tasks

Based on the stated research objectives, the research will carry out the following core Review domestic and international studies related to English language teaching (ELT) using the Task-Based Approach (TBA) in higher education contexts.

Examine the theoretical foundations of TBA-oriented English teaching within the framework of university education.

Conduct a survey and assessment of the current situation of TBA-based English teaching at universities in Ho Chi Minh City.

Develop a TBA-based instructional framework suitable for the characteristics of non-English-major English courses in Vietnamese universities.

Implement a pedagogical experiment at Nong Lam University, Ho Chi Minh City, to validate the effectiveness of the proposed instructional framework..

5. Scope of the research

5.1. Research content

The dissertation focuses on the investigation of the teaching of general English courses within the non-English major English programs at universities located in Ho Chi Minh City. The selected institutions include Nong Lam University - Ho Chi Minh City, Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology and Education, and Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City.

5.2. Research duration

The dissertation collected research data during the academic years from 2020–2021 to 2022–2023.

5.3. Research sites

Research sites for the current situation analysis: The study was conducted at universities located in Ho Chi Minh City, including Nong Lam University - Ho Chi Minh City, Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology and Education, and Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City.

Research site for experimental implementation: The experimental teaching was carried out at Nong Lam University - Ho Chi Minh City.

6. Research hypothesis

English language teaching that follows TBA has received increasing attention from academic administrators and English instructors at the university level. This approach has demonstrated several positive effects in relation to achieving instructional objectives, developing appropriate course content, and creating supportive teaching and learning conditions. Nevertheless, significant limitations remain concerning the organization of instructional formats, the application of teaching methods, and the implementation of assessment procedures aligned with TBA. If English language teaching for non-English major students is designed and implemented according to the four phases of TBA, including warm-up, task introduction, task implementation, and task assessment, then it is expected to address the aforementioned limitations and improve students' learning outcomes in practical English usage at the university level.

7. Research methods

7.1. Research methodology

The dissertation is based on the methodology of dialectical and historical materialism, viewing English teaching as an interactive and evolving system in which objectives, content, methods, organization, and assessment are interrelated. It is guided by modern educational principles such as the systemic–structural, activity-based, and learner-centered approaches, emphasizing the integration of theory and practice. Within this framework, Task-Based Approach (TBA) is treated as a holistic process where students are active participants and teachers act as facilitators, ensuring the study's scientific rigor, coherence, and practical relevance.

7.2. Data collection methods

Document analysis

Theoretical research was conducted to support the process of qualitative data collection by reviewing and analyzing a range of documents, including official dispatches, proposals, and policies issued by the Ministry of Education and Training. In addition, relevant academic sources such as books, journals, theses, and dissertations from both domestic and international contexts were consulted. These materials were carefully selected, categorized, systematized, and scientifically analyzed to serve the development of the literature review and theoretical foundation. On that basis, key theoretical aspects of English language teaching based on TBA were clarified and reinforced.

Questionnaire survey

The study employed a questionnaire-based survey to investigate teachers' perceptions of English language teaching based on TBA, and to gather opinions from both teachers and students regarding the current implementation of TBA in terms of content, instructional formats, teaching methods, assessment, and supporting conditions. The survey also examined the perceived necessity and feasibility of applying TBA in English language instruction at the university level. A convenience sampling method was used to collect data from 45 teachers and 450 students at three

universities in Ho Chi Minh City: Nong Lam University - Ho Chi Minh City, Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology and Education, and Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City.

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect in-depth opinions from teachers and students about the application of TBA in English language instruction at the university level. The interviews focused on practical implementation, necessity, and feasibility. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on their voluntary participation and their level of involvement in teaching or learning English using TBA. All interviews were conducted in person, recorded, and transcribed for subsequent content analysis.

Experimental method

An experimental method was employed to examine the reliability and effectiveness of the instructional framework for English language teaching based on TBA proposed in this dissertation. The experiment was conducted with two control classes and two experimental classes in general English courses at Nong Lam University - Ho Chi Minh City.

7.3. Data analysis method

Quantitative data collected from the survey and the experimental study were coded, cleaned, entered, and processed using SPSS version 20. Statistical analyses included tests of questionnaire reliability using Cronbach's Alpha, as well as calculations of means, variances, standard deviations, Spearman's rank correlation, and T-tests to compare results between groups. Qualitative data obtained from the interviews were selected, coded, categorized, thematized, and synthesized to support the interpretation of findings and to enrich and clarify the results of the quantitative analysis.

8. Theoretical and practical significance of the research

8.1. Theoretical significance

The dissertation enriches and develops the theoretical foundation of EFL teaching through the TBA in the context of Vietnamese higher education. It clarifies and systematizes key concepts such as approach, task, TBA, EFL teaching in universities, and task-based EFL instruction, thereby forming a coherent conceptual framework for research and application.

It also proposes a TBA-based instructional structure, enabling Ts to conduct classroom activities more effectively, and introduces a set of criteria and procedures for assessing STs' communicative competence in line with TBA principles. These contributions enhance the theoretical basis for assessment and evaluation in EFL teaching.

Furthermore, the dissertation provides scientific evidence and reference data for future research in educational science and foreign language pedagogy, particularly in the areas of task-based instruction and communicative competence development.

8.2. Practical significance

The dissertation analyzes and evaluates the current general English programs for non-English majors at universities in Ho Chi Minh City, thereby identifying content areas and conditions suitable for applying TBA in instruction. Based on this analysis, a TBA-based teaching plan was designed, consisting of four stages: warm-up, task introduction, task performance, and task evaluation, accompanied by a teaching procedure adapted to current instructional conditions.

Results from the pedagogical experiment demonstrate positive impacts and strong practical significance of TBA-oriented EFL instruction on STs' learning outcomes and communicative competence, confirming the feasibility and effectiveness of the proposed structure in the Vietnamese university context.

Additionally, the research outcomes can be applied in teacher training and professional development, as well as in revising and improving non-English-major curricula, thereby supporting higher education institutions in renewing teaching methods toward competence- and task-based orientations.

9. Dissertation structure

In addition to the introduction, conclusion and recommendations, references, and appendices, the dissertation is organized into five chapters as follows:

Introduction

Chapter 1: Literature Review on English Language Teaching Based on Task-Based Approach at the University Level

Chapter 2: Theoretical Foundations of English Language Teaching Based on Task-Based Approach at the University Level

Chapter 3: Current Situation of English Language Teaching Based on Task-Based Approach at Universities in Ho Chi Minh City

Chapter 4: Designing English Language Teaching Based on Task-Based Approach at the University Level

Chapter 5: Pedagogical Experiment on English Language Teaching Based on Task-Based Approach at the University Level

CHAPTER 1

LITERATURE REVIEW ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING BASED ON TASK-BASED APPROACH AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL

1.1. Approaches to English language teaching at the university level

Originating from practical demands in English language instruction and the goal of enhancing students' English proficiency, various teaching approaches have been developed that emphasize learner-centeredness and real-world applicability. Prominent approaches include the Audio-Lingual Approach, the Communicative Approach, the Natural Approach, the Lexical Approach, and TBA (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Each of these approaches has its own characteristics in terms of content organization and instructional methods. However, limitations remain in

fostering students' comprehensive communicative competence in authentic contexts. Among these, TBA is considered an effective approach because it organizes language learning activities around real-life tasks, creates natural interaction opportunities, increases learning motivation, and fosters pragmatic competence (Willis, 1996; Nunan, 2004). Recent studies have shown that TBA aligns well with modern educational trends, which emphasize learning through doing, problem-solving skills, and intercultural communication in the context of globalization (Ali, 2023; Liu & Guo, 2020).

1.2. Task-based approach in English language teaching at the university level

TBA emerged in the 1970s, grounded in the foundation of the Communicative Approach and sociolinguistic theories. In contrast to traditional methods that focus primarily on linguistic structures, TBA emphasizes the central role of students and encourages them to use the target language to complete tasks that are closely connected to real-life contexts (Ellis, 2003; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Nunan, 2004). The primary goal of TBA is to develop learners' ability to use the language naturally, flexibly, and effectively through interaction and experience both inside and outside the classroom. Compared to methods such as the Audio-Lingual Approach or the Natural Approach, TBA enables students to move beyond passive learning and rote memorization. Learning tasks are designed with varying levels of complexity, creating opportunities for students to enhance their communicative competence, collaboration skills, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities (Willis, 1996; Long, 2014; Skehan, 1998b). TBA also contributes to fostering students' motivation, self-directed learning, and positive attitudes toward English as a subject. At the same time, it supports instructors in shifting their roles from knowledge transmitters to facilitators and learning companions. These practical benefits have led to the increasingly widespread adoption of TBA in English language instruction at the tertiary level, particularly in the context of international integration and the growing demand for real-world communicative competence (Ali, 2023; Bhandari, 2020; Wen et al., 2021).

1.3. English language teaching for non-English major students at the university level

English for non-English majors refers to a subject that is designed for students who do not specialize in English language studies at the university level. According to Yafeng (2008), this concept was introduced by Hutchinson and Waters (1987), and it is categorized into two main types: general English (GE) and English for specific purposes (ESP). General English focuses on the development of fundamental language skills, while ESP serves the specific communicative needs related to students' future professions (Ajideh, 2009). The teaching of English for non-English majors plays an important role in higher education as it contributes to achieving the intended learning outcomes, supports students in accessing specialized knowledge, and enhances their ability to integrate into the global workforce (Khalil & Eke, 2020; Ghafar, 2022). International studies conducted in China, India, Kazakhstan, Thailand, and Germany have demonstrated that English for non-English majors significantly improves students' language proficiency, particularly their communicative competence and ability to read academic and professional materials. However, a

number of limitations remain, including the lack of practical relevance in curriculum design, insufficient opportunities for practice, inappropriate teaching methods, and limited assessment frameworks (Yafeng, 2008; Jamilah, 2015; Nilubol, 2021; Ratajczak, 2021). In the Vietnamese context, various studies have evaluated the current situation and proposed improvements for non-English major English programs. Findings indicate that students have a strong demand and positive attitudes toward English learning, but still face challenges such as large class sizes, limited instructional time, outdated teaching methods, and ineffective assessment practices (Huynh Tan Loi & Le Thi Kim Oanh, 2018; Tran Minh Thanh et al., 2020; Nguyen Duy Khang, 2022). Some studies have also highlighted that implementing the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages requires adjustments in both instructional time and curriculum content (Pham Huy Cuong, 2022). In general, English for non-English majors is an essential component of higher education. However, in order to improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning, curricula need to be designed based on students' practical needs and the demands of the labor market. Greater emphasis should also be placed on innovating teaching methodologies, diversifying learning tasks, and improving assessment practices.

1.4. Task-based approach language teaching at the university level

TBA has attracted scholarly attention since the 1970s, with numerous studies focusing on its effectiveness and applicability in tertiary education contexts. Carless (2011), in his study conducted in Hong Kong, found that teachers expressed positive attitudes toward the TBA. Other researchers, including Lopes (2004) and Muller (2005), observed that TBA supported students in improving their ability to use the target language in real-world situations, even among learners with lower proficiency levels. Studies by Aljarf (2007), Birjandi and Ahangari (2008), Ortega (2009), Amer (2019), and Bhandari (2020) further confirmed that TBA enhances students' communicative skills, vocabulary acquisition, and confidence in collaborative activities. These findings also highlighted the importance of a clearly defined instructional structure in the implementation of TBA. In the Vietnamese context, although the number of empirical studies remains limited, existing research by authors such as Le Van Canh (2008), Tran Thi Thanh Truc (2011), Le Van Tuyen (2014), Phuong Hoang Yen (2016), Dao Thi Thanh Hao (2017), Chi Do Na (2017), Tran Trung Nghia and Nguyen Buu Huan (2018), Cao Thi Hong Phuong (2018), Lam Thi Lan Huong et al. (2021), and Tran Tin Nghi (2023) has confirmed the positive contributions of TBA to enhancing students' English proficiency, particularly their communication skills and attitudes toward learning. Nonetheless, several challenges have been identified. These include limitations in facilities, restricted instructional hours, teachers' lack of expertise in task design, and pressures related to assessment practices. Both domestic and international research has consistently emphasized the need to concretize the instructional structure of TBA in order to ensure its feasibility and effectiveness. This theoretical gap serves as the foundation for the present dissertation, which focuses on researching, designing, and experimentally validating an instructional model for task-based English teaching that is tailored to the specific characteristics of general English courses for non-English major students at Vietnamese universities.

1.5. Research gap and focus of the dissertation

A review of both domestic and international studies reveals that EFL teaching through the TBA has been examined from various perspectives, including theoretical foundations, instructional effectiveness, and learner attitudes. International research has mainly focused on the role of tasks in developing communicative competence, whereas studies in Vietnam have been limited to introductory discussions, small-scale trials, or partial evaluations. However, existing research has not yet proposed a coherent and contextually appropriate instructional structure suitable for the realities of Vietnamese higher education, particularly in non-English-major courses.

The current research gap lies in the absence of a systematically designed and empirically validated TBA-based instructional framework that meets the demands of educational reform and promotes foreign language competence among non-English-major students. Therefore, this dissertation focuses on developing and implementing a TBA-oriented English teaching structure grounded in solid theoretical principles and practical feasibility, with the aim of enhancing the quality of EFL instruction in Vietnamese universities.

CONCLUSION OF CHAPTER 1

An overview of both international and Vietnamese research confirms that English language teaching based on TBA has become a prominent trend in language education since the 1970s. Numerous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of TBA in developing students' communicative competence through real-world tasks, allowing them to engage with the target language in a more meaningful and autonomous way. TBA aligns with learner-centered and competency-based orientations in modern curricula. However, in the context of non-English major instruction in Vietnam, challenges persist in curriculum design, teaching methods, and assessment practices. Students often remain passive, communicative tasks are limited, and the application of TBA lacks clear structure and scalability. To address this gap, the dissertation aims to construct and validate a structured model of TBA tailored to non-English major students. The study not only consolidates the theoretical foundations of TBA and non-English major English teaching, but also proposes a feasible and practically applicable model that contributes to improving instructional quality in the current context.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING BASED ON TASK-BASED APPROACH AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL

2.1. Key related concepts

2.1.1. Task-based approach in language teaching

2.1.1.1. Approach

An approach refers to a system of foundational assumptions about the nature of language and the processes of teaching and learning. It serves as a conceptual orientation that guides instructors in designing content, selecting methods, and organizing instructional activities to address specific learning tasks.

2.1.1.2. Task

A task is a specific classroom activity that requires students to use the target language to accomplish a clearly defined communicative goal that has practical relevance.

2.1.1.3. Task-based approach

TBA is an instructional approach in which the processes of language teaching and learning are organized around tasks that are meaningful, goal-oriented, and closely connected to students' real-life contexts.

2.1.2. English language teaching at the university level

English language teaching at the university level refers to the process of organizing instructional activities to help students develop their ability to use English for academic study, professional purposes, and real-world communication.

2.1.3. Task-based approach in English language teaching

TBA in English language teaching is an instructional process in which teachers align lesson objectives with task-based principles, select appropriate content, and guide students in applying practical knowledge to solve learning tasks. This process involves the flexible use of suitable teaching methods and formats that reflect actual classroom conditions.

2.2. Task in English language teaching based on task-based approach at the university level

2.2.1. Foundations for identifying task types in English language teaching based on task-based approach

According to Willis (1996), a task is a learning activity with a clearly defined purpose. It supports students in developing their ability to use the target language through communication, problem-solving, and enhanced motivation. Unlike controlled exercises, tasks allow learners to use language in a natural and flexible way that reflects real-life contexts. Richards and Rodgers (2001) describe a task as a means by which learners engage their existing linguistic competence to handle situations that are familiar and meaningful. Ellis (2003) emphasizes that, in order to select appropriate task types within TBA, teachers must consider students' proficiency levels, their communicative needs, intended learning outcomes, and levels of cognitive development. In particular, tasks should reflect a clear progression in complexity and align with both the lesson sequence and the learners' abilities. Effective tasks often have specific goals, practical situations, and demand that students draw on linguistic knowledge and sociocultural understanding to achieve tangible results. In addition, tasks should provide communicative gaps that allow students to express personal viewpoints in English. When appropriately designed, tasks can support the comprehensive and sustainable development of learners' English language proficiency throughout the learning process.

2.2.2. Types of tasks in English language teaching based on task-based approach

Several task types proposed by Willis (2007) have been selected as suitable for use in English language instruction based on TBA. These include listing tasks, ordering and classifying tasks, comparing tasks, problem-solving tasks, creative tasks, group-based split and combine tasks, decision-making tasks, and opinion exchange tasks. Each type offers distinct opportunities for students to use English in purposeful, meaningful ways that promote both linguistic development and communicative engagement.

2.2.3. Task structure in English language teaching based on task-based approach

According to Willis (2007), identifying a clear task structure is a crucial element in English language teaching based on TBA. This structure consists of three main phases: pre-task, task phase, and post-task. Each phase plays a guiding role in assisting teachers to organize classroom activities effectively while also helping students carry out tasks with purpose and direction. In the first phase, teachers introduce students to the task through model activities. During the task phase, teachers monitor student progress, provide linguistic support when necessary, and evaluate student participation. In the final phase, students are given opportunities to present their work, consolidate knowledge, and reflect on the learning process. A well-structured task sequence enhances classroom interaction, improves instructional effectiveness, and fosters sustainable development of students' English language competence.

2.3. Frameworks of task-based approach at the university level

In the context of English language instruction for non-English major students at the university level, selecting an appropriate instructional structure plays a vital role in enhancing students' communicative competence. Existing frameworks proposed by scholars such as Prabhu (1987), Willis (1996), Ellis (2003), and Nunan (2004) have outlined specific instructional frameworks. However, these models still present certain limitations when applied to general English classes for non-English major students, particularly in terms of feasibility, clarity regarding the roles of teachers and students, and alignment with course content. Building upon and adapting Willis's (1996) framework, this dissertation proposes an instructional structure that includes four distinct phases: warm-up, task introduction, task implementation, and task assessment. This framework is visually represented to clarify the instructional process, making it easier for teachers to implement and for students to understand their roles in each stage of the lesson. A key feature of the proposed model is its flexibility in organizing tasks that align with the thematic content of the lesson.

2.4. Organization of English language teaching based on task-based approach at the university level

2.4.1. Learning outcomes of English courses for non-English major students at the university level

The English language curriculum for non-English major students at the undergraduate level in Vietnam has been developed in accordance with official documents issued by the Ministry of Education and Training, including Circular No. 01/2014/TT-BGDĐT, Official Dispatch No. 808/KH-BGDĐT, Official Dispatch No.

7274/BGDĐT-GDDH, and Decision No. 729/QĐ-BGDĐT. According to these documents, the minimum expected English proficiency level for non-English major students is Level 3 of the Vietnamese Six-Level Foreign Language Proficiency Framework. At this level, students are expected to understand familiar content related to academic and everyday contexts, handle basic communicative situations, write simple texts, and briefly express thoughts, personal experiences, or plans in English. These learning outcomes provide a critical foundation for designing English language programs and evaluating the language proficiency of non-English major students in higher education.

2.4.2. Learning theories in task-based approach

As Richards and Rodgers (2001) point out, any instructional approach is grounded in a set of educational theories. TBA has been developed based on four main theoretical foundations, including behaviorism, cognitivism, constructivism, and humanism (Costa, 2016; Doghan, 2012; Han, 2014; Reimann, 2016). Behaviorist theory emphasizes the role of reinforcement and feedback from teachers in helping students form language habits through repeated task performance. Cognitive theory focuses on learners' mental processes during task completion and encourages the development of language-related thinking. Constructivist theory views students as central participants who use prior knowledge to build new understanding through task engagement. Meanwhile, humanistic theory values learners' freedom, individuality, and emotional well-being in the classroom. Through the integration of these theoretical foundations, TBA enhances the central role of students and creates a learning environment that is experiential, flexible, and responsive to the real-world conditions of English language instruction in contemporary university settings.

2.4.3. Components of English language teaching based on task-based approach

2.4.3.1. Learning objectives in task-based approach

Knowledge: Students are expected to acquire vocabulary and grammatical structures related to familiar topics such as family, hobbies, work, travel, and socio-cultural themes.

Skills: Students should demonstrate the ability to use English fluently, naturally, and coherently to express opinions and respond effectively to real-life situations.

Attitude: Students are expected to engage in learning with seriousness and responsibility, to take initiative in developing their language skills, to demonstrate creativity and autonomy, and to apply their English knowledge in practical contexts.

2.4.3.2. Instructional content in task-based approach

Elements such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, topics, and communicative pace must be systematically designed to correspond with everyday situations (Richards and Rodgers, 2014). Gan and Leung (2020) emphasize that the content should closely reflect actual life experiences, while Pan (2024) and Waluyo and Wangdi (2024) recommend that instructional content should be aligned with career-oriented goals. Designing content in accordance with TBA ensures practical

application and enhances students' ability to internalize and transfer language knowledge to both academic and social contexts.

2.4.3.3. Instructional formats in task-based approach

English language instruction based on TBA incorporates flexible classroom formats that provide students with opportunities to build communicative competence. Common instructional formats include: whole-class instruction, individual instruction, pair & group work, instruction with visual & video resources, online instruction and field trips.

2.4.3.4. Teaching methods in task-based approach

Effective methods in TBA-oriented English instruction are those that promote active student engagement and encourage collaboration in task completion. These methods should also align with students' future workplace communication needs (Murphy, 2003; Richards and Rodgers, 2014). Key methods include: questioning, pair & group activities, role-playing, problem-solving, storytelling, and situation-based instruction.

2.4.3.5. Assessment in task-based approach

Assessment in TBA is a continuous process aimed at monitoring students' progress and their ability to complete tasks (Bachman, 2002; Ellis, 2003). Unlike traditional testing, the assessment focuses on students' practical competencies, responsiveness, and application of English in realistic contexts. Ellis (2003) outlines three main components of assessment in TBA: first, defining the assessment task based on the instructional content; second, conducting the task within a time frame and under collaborative conditions; third, measuring performance through either direct observation or reference to the CEFR framework. Jackson (2022) suggests that assessment criteria should include idea development, vocabulary use, organizational clarity, grammatical accuracy, pronunciation, and fluency. Assessment activities may take various forms, such as project-based assignments, communicative tasks, or written essays. Evaluation must occur throughout the learning process and reflect students' actual language use, thereby supporting teachers in adjusting their methods and providing timely feedback.

2.4.3.6. Supporting conditions for task-based approach

Teacher qualifications: Ahmadian and Long (2021) identify several essential competencies for instructors involved in TBA. These include classroom management skills, the ability to design and select appropriate tasks, sensitivity to students' learning difficulties, and the capacity to provide effective feedback for learning improvement.

Learner autonomy: Aldosari and Alsager (2023) define five characteristics of autonomous learners. These include having a clear understanding of learning objectives, possessing various strategies and techniques to manage learning, being capable of organizing their study process, demonstrating information-processing skills, and showing strong intrinsic motivation.

Facilities: The implementation of TBA requires learning environments that are equipped with standard resources. These include projectors, computers with Internet access, audio systems, and adequately designed classroom spaces that facilitate effective interaction and task completion.

2.5. The importance of task-based approach in English language teaching

English plays a crucial role in expanding students' career opportunities and access to global knowledge. TBA supports this goal by promoting student-centered learning and encouraging real language use through practical tasks (Chen, 2025; Zhou and Shi, 2024). It improves communication skills, increases motivation, and strengthens students' ability to apply English in real-life contexts (Willis and Willis, 2007; Yu et al., 2024). This approach also fosters collaboration and critical thinking (Ilamanova, 2025). Assessment focuses on real performance, not just theory, making learning outcomes more authentic (Alasal, 2025).

CONCLUSION OF CHAPTER 2

Chapter 2 provided the theoretical basis for applying TBA to English teaching in Vietnamese universities. The chapter clarified key concepts, identified instructional components, and analyzed task structures relevant to non-English majors. It defined TBA with emphasis on teacher guidance and learner autonomy in addressing language tasks. The proposed model, adapted from Willis, reflects classroom realities and supports communicative competence. The chapter also reviewed essential instructional elements and grounded the approach in behaviorist, cognitive, constructivist, and humanistic theories. These foundations serve as a reference for the subsequent investigation and experimental design.

CHAPTER 3

CURRENT SITUATION OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING BASED ON TASK-BASED APPROACH AT UNIVERSITIES IN HO CHI MINH CITY

3.1. Overview of the survey

3.1.1. Survey purpose

The primary purpose of the survey is to investigate the current situation of English language teaching based on TBA at public universities in Ho Chi Minh City. The findings serve as a practical foundation for designing lessons aligned with this approach.

3.1.2. Survey content

The survey focuses on the following aspects:

- The perceptions of lecturers regarding English language teaching based on TBA at the university level.
- The evaluations of both lecturers and students regarding the current implementation of English language teaching based on TBA at the university level.

3.1.3. Survey scope

The survey examines the current situation of English language teaching based on TBA at three public universities in Ho Chi Minh City: Nong Lam University, Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology and Education, and Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City.

3.1.4. Survey participants

The survey involves 45 lecturers and 450 students from the three universities mentioned above: Nong Lam University, Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology and Education, and Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City.

3.2. Research methods and duration

The research employed three methods: questionnaire distribution, structured interview, and direct classroom observation. The data collection process took place during the summer semester of the academic year 2022–2023.

3.3. Survey results

3.3.1. Current perceptions of lecturers regarding English language teaching based on task-based approach at universities

The survey results indicate that the perceptions of lecturers regarding English language teaching based on TBA are notably diverse. The statements that received the highest level of agreement include: “Students have opportunities to use the target language to complete academic tasks” (Mean = 3.65), “Tasks are applied flexibly according to each lesson’s content” (Mean = 3.52), and “TBA content emphasizes the central role of students” (Mean = 3.44). In contrast, statements related to learning theories and assessment criteria received lower average scores (ranging from 2.62 to 2.84). The Spearman test results confirm that the differences in ranking were statistically significant (Sig. < 0.05). In-depth interviews with lecturers also revealed their recognition of the potential of TBA in developing students’ problem-solving skills and increasing opportunities to use the target language. However, some concerns were raised regarding implementation difficulties and the appropriateness of TBA for students’ proficiency levels. These findings highlight the need for further professional development to enhance lecturers’ understanding of the theoretical foundations and practical techniques required for TBA implementation.

3.3.2. Current implementation of English language teaching based on task-based approach at the university level

3.3.2.1. Content of English language teaching based on task-based approach at the university level

Survey findings from lecturers and students indicate that English language content remains largely grammar-oriented, with mean scores of 3.42 and 3.60 respectively. In contrast, aspects central to TBA, such as student-centeredness, vocabulary, pronunciation, and real-world relevance, received lower ratings between 2.12 and 2.59. The Spearman test confirmed significant differences across these content areas. Observations from 15 classes showed that most lecturers followed textbooks closely and emphasized grammar and reading tasks. Only 8 sessions included tasks connected to real-life situations. Interviews also highlighted a

perceived gap between instructional content and practical language use. These results suggest that English teaching content under TBA remains limited in authenticity. A stronger focus on communicative competence aligned with real-life contexts is necessary to enhance the effectiveness of instruction.

3.3.2.2. Formats of English language teaching based on task-based approach at the university level

Survey data from lecturers and students show that the current forms of English language teaching based on TBA mainly focus on whole-class instruction (Mean = 3.43 and 3.42), group-based learning (Mean = 3.44), and the use of visual or video materials (Mean = 3.45 and 3.46). Meanwhile, forms such as individual learning, field trips, and online instruction are rarely or never applied, with mean scores ranging from 1.72 to 2.52. The Spearman test confirmed that the ranking differences were statistically significant (Sig. < 0.05). Classroom observations from 15 lessons reflect similar patterns. Most lecturers adopted whole-class and group activities with multimedia support, and 12 sessions included vivid visual or video materials. However, the overuse of collective instruction has limited opportunities for students to engage actively, personalize learning, or explore real-life experiences. These findings suggest that current instructional forms under TBA remain limited in diversity and lack personalization. Expanding instructional formats is necessary to reinforce student-centered learning and practical engagement.

3.3.2.3. Teaching methods of English language teaching based on task-based approach at the university level

Survey results indicate that lecturers and students highly appreciated the use of questioning (Mean = 3.50 and 3.47) and group or pair activities (Mean = 3.52 and 3.50) in English language teaching based on TBA. Other methods such as problem solving, storytelling, role play, and case-based learning were rarely applied, with mean scores ranging from 2.36 to 2.58. The Spearman test confirmed that these differences were statistically significant (Sig. < 0.05). Classroom observations from 15 sessions revealed that lecturers mainly used rapid questioning and required immediate answers, which placed pressure on students and limited their time for reflection. Although group work was implemented, lecturers often allocated insufficient time, prompting students to request extensions to complete the assigned tasks. In summary, teaching methods under TBA currently rely heavily on questioning and group or pair work. While these methods are easy to implement, they do not fully exploit the potential of TBA to enhance students' communicative competence and their ability to use the target language in practical contexts.

3.3.2.4. Assessment forms of English language teaching based on task-based approach at the university level

Survey findings show that both lecturers and students reported that assessment primarily relies on paper-based tests (Mean = 3.65). In contrast, other forms such as formative assessment, project-based tasks, and communicative activities were implemented at a limited level, with mean scores ranging from 2.44 to 2.58. Classroom observations and interviews further revealed a strong emphasis on

theoretical testing. Lecturers have not fully adopted assessment methods aligned with the communicative orientation of TBA. Communicative skills were rarely assessed in a comprehensive manner, and feedback remained minimal or unclear. These findings highlight the need to reform assessment design to better reflect students' actual English language competence and to enhance the overall effectiveness of the learning process under TBA.

3.3.2.5. Supporting conditions of English language teaching based on task-based approach at the university level

Survey findings indicate that both lecturers and students provided positive evaluations of teaching staff and facilities supporting English language teaching based on TBA. High levels of agreement were observed on criteria such as lecturers' subject knowledge, ability to manage classroom activities, approachable attitudes, and the availability of teaching equipment. However, both groups noted that lecturers had not provided timely or specific feedback during the learning process. On the student side, although students demonstrated interest in the course and possessed a reasonably solid knowledge foundation, their autonomy in the classroom remained limited. This was evident through infrequent participation, minimal sharing of personal opinions, and a lack of initiative in using the target language. The classroom environment, library system, internet access, and functional rooms received favorable ratings and were viewed as effective components supporting instructional activities. These results suggest that optimizing the use of existing conditions must be accompanied by appropriate pedagogical methods and task organization in order to enhance interaction, feedback, and student autonomy in learning.

CONCLUSION OF CHAPTER 3

This chapter presents a concise overview of English language teaching based on TBA at three public universities. Findings show that lecturers have recognized the central role of students and the importance of target language use. However, key components such as task design, real-life communication, feedback, and assessment remain underdeveloped.

Instruction remains grammar-focused, with limited personalization and experiential learning. Group activities and questioning dominate, while methods like role-play and case-based instruction are rarely used. Assessment still relies on written tests, offering little insight into communicative competence.

Supportive conditions, including lecturers and facilities, generally meet implementation needs. Yet, students show limited autonomy and rarely initiate language use. These findings highlight the need for a clear design of English language teaching for non-English majors based on TBA.

CHAPTER 4

DESIGNING ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING BASED ON TASK-BASED APPROACH AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL

4.1. Characteristics of the English language course for non-English major at the university level

4.1.1. Course characteristics

The English language program for non-English majors includes 14 credits as outlined in the national curriculum framework. Each university may adjust the duration based on its own policies. The program consists of general English and English for specific purposes. At the three surveyed universities, general English is divided into two modules: English 1 and English 2. These courses aim to develop students' language skills, especially communicative competence, to meet learning outcomes and prepare them for future academic and professional environments.

4.1.2. Course learning outcomes

The general English course helps non-English major students reach at least B1 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Learning outcomes cover grammar, vocabulary, and four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Communicative competence in real-life contexts is also emphasized. The course follows a learner-centered approach, with content focused on familiar life and workplace situations to support students' effective use of English.

4.1.3. Course content

The general English course at the three universities shares consistent objectives, content, and instructional materials. The textbook *Life* is used in both English 1 and English 2, combining language knowledge with real-world situations. The content aligns with TBA through its practical, communicative, and student-relevant topics. These features support lecturers in designing tasks suited to students' academic and career needs, making the program suitable for applying English language teaching based on TBA.

4.2. The relationship between the implementation of the English language teaching structure based on task-based approach and the development of students' English language proficiency

The framework for English language teaching based on TBA consists of four stages: warm-up, task introduction, task implementation, and task assessment. These stages are organized according to a clear pedagogical orientation to emphasize the central role of students in using the target language. By following specific phases such as preparation, implementation, and reporting, students can develop key competencies including autonomy, communication, collaboration, and problem-solving. This framework contributes to the formation of a positive learning environment and supports students in using English flexibly and effectively in real-world contexts..

4.3. Planning English language teaching based on task-based approach

4.3.1. Principles of organizing English language teaching based on task-based approach

The organization of English language teaching based on TBA should meet core principles, including a focus on equipping students with both knowledge and skills in the target language, connecting theory with practice to develop communicative competence, encouraging student autonomy and creativity, ensuring task feasibility,

and relating tasks to authentic contexts. TBA enables students to acquire knowledge in a logical sequence and use language naturally and effectively in real-world situations.

4.3.2. Identifying general English content for task-based implementation

To meet research objectives, the general English course content was reviewed to identify lessons suitable for TBA. Each lesson includes clear goals for knowledge and skills, along with relevant task types. Tasks are designed to promote communication, collaboration, and problem-solving, allowing students to practice language in realistic contexts. This provides a strong foundation for implementing TBA effectively in non-English major university courses.

4.3.3. Sample design for English language teaching based on task-based approach

This section presents sample instructional designs applying the TBA structure to two lessons: Unit 3: Transports, Lesson 3A, and Unit 5: The Environment, Lesson 5A.

4.4. Assessment of English language teaching based on task-based approach

To ensure the feasibility and effectiveness of implementing TBA, this section introduces a set of assessment criteria and a task performance checklist. These tools comprehensively address essential language skills, with a particular focus on speaking in real-life contexts. A five-level rating scale and checklist enable lecturers to monitor, evaluate, and adjust teaching activities according to students' abilities. This serves as a foundational step toward enhancing the quality of English language teaching for non-English majors at universities.

CONCLUSION OF CHAPTER 4

The dissertation proposed a structured English language teaching framework based on TBA for non-English majors. The design includes four stages: warm-up, task introduction, task implementation, and task assessment, adapted to the Life A2–B1 textbook through two lessons: Unit 3 (Transports) and Unit 5 (The Environment).

A task performance evaluation system was also introduced, based on CEFR and Jackson (2022), covering content, vocabulary, organization, grammar, pronunciation, and fluency. This supports more accurate assessment of students' communicative abilities.

The findings confirm that TBA is feasible and aligns with higher education reforms, forming a foundation for the experimental application in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

PEDAGOGICAL EXPERIMENT ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING BASED ON TASK-BASED APPROACH AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL

5.1. Implementation of the experiment

5.1.1. Purpose of the experiment

The experiment aims to demonstrate the effectiveness and feasibility of English language teaching based on TBA, structured into four stages: warm-up, task introduction, task implementation, and task assessment.

5.1.2. Hypothesis of the experiment

If the TBA framework is applied to general English courses, the English learning outcomes of non-English majors will be significantly improved.

5.1.3. Participants and scope of the experiment

The experiment involved 120 students enrolled in general English courses at Nong Lam University - Ho Chi Minh City. Participants were randomly assigned to an experimental group and a control group, with equivalence in class size, age, and initial proficiency level. All instructors held at least a master's degree and had extensive teaching experience. The experiment took place under normal classroom conditions from September 7, 2023, to November 30, 2023.

5.1.4. Content of the experiment

During the experiment, the TBA framework was implemented across eight lessons (four from English 1 and four from English 2), corresponding to eight units in the detailed syllabus.

Experimental group: Students were taught using the TBA instructional structure (see Section 2.3.5), with lesson plans provided in Appendix 11. The tasks focused primarily on developing speaking skills in communicative contexts.

Control group: Students followed traditional methods, including explicit grammar and vocabulary instruction and textbook-based exercises, with minimal integration of communicative tasks.

5.1.5. Experimental procedure

The experiment was conducted with 120 students of English 1 and English 2 at Nong Lam University - Ho Chi Minh City. The researcher prepared lesson plans based in TBA, speaking tests (Appendices 6 - 8), and a five-level assessment rubric. Teachers were trained in TBA and scoring guidelines.

Teaching followed the original syllabus and schedule. The experimental group studied with TBA, while the control group followed traditional methods. Speaking skills were assessed three times. Two independent raters scored the performances using the rubric.

Collected data were processed using SPSS and Excel to examine the effectiveness and feasibility of TBA.

5.1.6. Assessment tools and methods

5.1.4.1. Assessment tools

Pre-test and post-test were used to assess English proficiency.

5.1.4.2. Assessment methods

Qualitative and quantitative methods were used.

5.2. Preparation of the experimental teaching plan

5.2.1. Lesson plan development

After identifying the contents of the general English course (English 1 and English 2), the dissertation developed eight experimental lesson plans (Appendix 11). These plans were designed to support teachers in delivering instruction based on the TBA.

5.2.2. Experts' evaluation of task-based approach in English language teaching

Feedback from educational experts confirmed the necessity and feasibility of applying TBA framework. Experts also offered additional perspectives on the applicability of the structure in actual teaching contexts.

5.3. Experimental results analysis

5.3.1. Quantitative evaluation before pedagogical intervention

A pre-test (Appendix 6) was administered to assess the English proficiency of students in both the experimental group and the control group. The mean scores were 5.08 for the experimental group and 5.12 for the control group. The score distributions were nearly identical, as illustrated in the cumulative frequency chart.

The T-test result (Sig. = 0.402 > 0.05) confirmed no statistically significant difference between the two groups. This finding ensures the equivalence in initial proficiency and the reliability of the experimental implementation.

5.3.2. Quantitative evaluation after pedagogical intervention

**** Results of the second post-intervention assessment***

After confirming that the experimental group (EG) and control group (CG) had equivalent English proficiency at the outset, EG received instruction based on TBA, while CG continued with traditional methods. Midterm assessment results indicated that EG's mean score increased from 5.08 to 5.72, whereas CG's score slightly rose from 5.12 to 5.23. The correlation coefficient between pre- and midterm scores in EG reached 0.72 (Sig. = 0.000), indicating a significant difference. In contrast, CG showed no statistical change (Sig. = 0.260).

The T-test comparison between the two groups revealed a significance value of $0.005 < 0.05$, confirming that the application of TBA had a statistically significant positive impact on EG's English proficiency. Figure 5.2 illustrates the more noticeable improvement trend in EG compared to CG.

**** Results of the third post-intervention assessment***

The third assessment further reinforced the distinction between EG and CG. EG achieved a mean score of 6.32, significantly higher than CG's 5.55. The T-test result (Sig. = 0.000 < 0.05) confirmed a statistically significant difference between the two groups after the intervention.

When comparing the second and third assessments, EG improved by 0.6 points, while CG increased by only 0.32 points. The paired correlation coefficients in both groups were high (EG = 0.856; CG = 0.802), with statistical significance (Sig. = 0.000), indicating a positive correlation between the two testing stages.

Figure 5.3 visually demonstrates the shift: EG's distribution curve moved clearly to the right, while CG's curve remained skewed to the left. These results suggest that TBA significantly enhanced the English proficiency of EG students compared to the traditional instruction applied in CG.

5.3.3. Qualitative evaluation after the experiment for the experimental and control group

Qualitative data collected from the teacher of the experimental group indicated several positive changes in student attitudes, confidence levels, and English language proficiency following the implementation of TBA. Students actively engaged in classroom tasks, demonstrated a willingness to collaborate, responded promptly during interactions, and frequently attempted to expand communicative topics. Some students voluntarily proposed creative presentation ideas or volunteered to speak in order to overcome their fear of public speaking.

Furthermore, students displayed greater responsibility through lesson preparation, independent material searching, and extended practice beyond class hours. The results of the speaking performance assessments also confirmed significant progress among students in the experimental group. These students exhibited flexible language use, coherent reasoning, practical relevance in responses, and improved fluency.

In contrast, students in the control group showed limited progress. Many struggled to complete communicative tasks, demonstrated weak response times, made minimal connections to real-life contexts, and frequently encountered errors in expressing their ideas. These findings suggest that the application of TBA not only enhanced students' communicative competence but also positively influenced their learning attitudes and promoted greater learner autonomy.

CONCLUSION OF CHAPTER 5

After twelve weeks of implementing TBA in English language instruction at Nong Lam University - Ho Chi Minh City, the following conclusions can be drawn:

The application of the instructional framework based on TBA demonstrated both feasibility and effectiveness in teaching English to non-English majors. The stages of the TBA framework were implemented in alignment with the curriculum content and contributed to increasing students' initiative, creativity, and interaction during the learning process.

The experimental results indicated significant improvement in the English communication skills and test scores of students in the experimental group compared to those in the control group. The comparison of average scores across three testing sessions, along with qualitative analysis of teacher feedback and student performance, confirmed the positive impact of TBA on students' language proficiency and learning attitudes.

Although the scope of the experiment was limited, the obtained results hold statistical significance and practical value. These findings reinforce that TBA

framework is an appropriate and promising direction for enhancing the quality of English language teaching at the university level.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Conclusion

The implementation of English language teaching based on TBA has become a prevailing trend in many countries, aiming to meet practical demands and enhance students' competitiveness in the labor market. The literature review confirms that TBA offers notable advantages over other approaches, particularly in improving learners' communicative competence and confidence in using the target language. However, to ensure effectiveness, a clearly structured instructional framework is required to support students in developing problem-solving abilities and language use through meaningful tasks.

This dissertation has systematized the theoretical foundation of TBA by clarifying relevant concepts, underlying learning theories, and instructional structure for English language teaching based on TBA. It has also identified key components necessary for successful implementation within the university context. Based on this framework, the study conducted a needs analysis at three universities in Ho Chi Minh City, revealing significant limitations in teachers' awareness, teaching methodology, assessment practices, and supporting conditions. These findings emphasize the need to reform English instruction by enhancing student-centered learning.

The dissertation proposed a structured model of English language teaching based on TBA, which aligns with the characteristics and intended learning outcomes of general English courses. It also demonstrated how instructional content could be integrated into the TBA framework. Results from the pedagogical experiment, combined with feedback from teachers, students, and experts, confirm the feasibility, effectiveness, and practical value of this instructional structure in improving English language proficiency among non-English majors at the university level.

2. Recommendations

Based on the research findings, the dissertation affirms that implementing an EFL teaching structure grounded in the TBA is a sound and effective direction consistent with the current reform of higher education in Vietnam. To maximize its impact and broaden its practical application, there is a need for strategic and systematic orientations in teaching organization, teacher professional development, learning material design, and further research on TBA within the Vietnamese educational context.

First, the expansion and institutional adoption of TBA across a wider range of universities, learner groups, and educational levels is essential to verify the stability, adaptability, and pedagogical effectiveness of the proposed model. Simultaneously, it is crucial to develop EFL curricula and learning materials aligned with TBA principles, ensuring consistency between learning outcomes, course content, and instructional organization. The integration of digital technologies into interactive materials, online platforms, and learning management systems will enhance the

flexibility, autonomy, and efficiency of both Ts and STs in the teaching–learning process.

Human factors remain central to successful implementation. The pedagogical competence of Ts plays a decisive role in realizing the potential of TBA. Therefore, higher education institutions should provide in-depth professional training for Ts on task design, classroom interaction, and learner-centered assessment. Regular workshops, academic seminars, and communities of practice should be maintained to promote professional exchange and innovation. Additionally, the assessment system should be reoriented toward evaluating communicative competence in authentic contexts, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches through tools such as rubrics, portfolios, and task-based performance assessments.

From a research perspective, further empirical investigations are needed to clarify the effectiveness of TBA for specific language skills and its influence on psychological and social factors such as motivation, confidence, and learning engagement. Longitudinal studies examining the sustained impact of TBA on graduates' language use in professional contexts would provide deeper insights into its long-term benefits.

Overall, these recommendations aim to develop the TBA-based EFL instructional structure into a systematic, scientifically grounded, and highly applicable pedagogical model. Implementing these directions will not only enhance the quality of language education and foster innovation in teaching methods, but also contribute to the formation of core and specialized competencies for university students in the era of international integration and digital transformation.

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