



## **TEACHING TECHNOLOGY-RELATED VOCABULARY TO INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS THROUGH TASK-BASED LANGUAGE LEARNING**

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**Abstract:** This action research explores the effectiveness of Task-Based Language Learning (TBLL) in teaching technology-related vocabulary to intermediate-level English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. It examines both student engagement and vocabulary acquisition through interactive, real-world tasks, such as recipe creation, problem-solving, and vocabulary matching. A pre-test/post-test structure, teacher interviews, student questionnaires, and classroom observations were used to assess learning outcomes and perceptions. The findings indicate that TBLL significantly enhances vocabulary retention, promotes communicative competence, and fosters motivation. Despite some challenges in time management and group dynamics, the method proved successful in achieving pedagogical goals.

**Key words:** *TBLL, vocabulary development, technology, communicative competence, EFL, student-centered learning*

**Introduction:** Vocabulary acquisition plays a pivotal role in the overall language proficiency of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners, particularly at the intermediate level (B1). At this stage, students are expected to transition from basic communication to more nuanced, topic-specific discourse. However, one of the ongoing challenges in EFL instruction is how to effectively teach vocabulary that is not only relevant but also retainable and applicable in real-world contexts.

In recent years, Task-Based Language Learning (TBLL) has gained increasing attention as a powerful pedagogical approach that aligns with communicative language teaching. TBLL emphasizes the use of real-life tasks as the primary vehicle for language instruction. Instead of isolated vocabulary drills or rote memorization, learners acquire language through the meaningful completion of tasks that mirror authentic situations. This includes activities such as solving problems, preparing presentations, or discussing daily experiences—all of which encourage active language use.

Technology-related vocabulary is particularly important in today's globalized and digitally interconnected world. As digital tools become integral to education, work, and communication, students need a strong lexical foundation to understand and discuss technology-related topics confidently. However, this type of vocabulary



often poses a learning barrier due to its specificity and rapid evolution.

This action research project investigates how TBLL can be used to enhance the acquisition of technology-related vocabulary among intermediate EFL students. It explores the process of task design, implementation, and assessment through both teacher-led and learner-centered research. Using pre- and post-tests, observations, questionnaires, and interviews, the study evaluates both the effectiveness of TBLL and the challenges encountered during its use in a real classroom context.

**Literature Review.** Task-Based Language Learning (TBLL) has its roots in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and focuses on learner engagement through real-world tasks that prioritize meaning over form. According to Ellis [Ellis r. 2003. p.3 ], a task in TBLL is “an activity that requires learners to use language with an emphasis on meaning to attain an objective.” This distinguishes tasks from exercises, which focus primarily on linguistic form.

Richards and Rodgers [Richards J.C., Rodgers T.S. 2001. p. 223-239] identify three key components in the TBLL framework:

- **Pre-task:** Activates prior knowledge and introduces key vocabulary.
- **Task-cycle:** Learners complete a communicative task (e.g., writing a recipe, solving a problem).
- **Post-task:** Language is analyzed and extended through follow-up exercises or discussion.

Several studies support the value of TBLL in vocabulary acquisition. Hatip [Hatip F. 2005] states that TBLL enhances fluency and contextual language use, although it may lead to reduced focus on accuracy. Similarly, Tellis [Tellis W. 1997., Cohen L., Manion L. 2013. p.289] highlight how TBLL supports learner autonomy and fosters natural language acquisition.

However, some drawbacks are also noted. Learners may initially feel overwhelmed due to unfamiliar task structures or struggle with group dynamics. Teachers may also find it challenging to evaluate performance when language use is not strictly controlled. These issues emphasize the importance of thoughtful task design and scaffolding.

In technology-focused instruction, TBLL offers a particularly relevant application. Digital vocabulary is often difficult to teach using traditional methods because it lacks concrete visuals or immediate context. TBLL enables learners to engage with such vocabulary through simulated problem-solving, discussions, and presentations that mimic real digital communication.

This research contributes to the growing body of literature by applying TBLL to the teaching of **technology-related vocabulary**—an area that is both current and practical for today’s learners.

## **Research Methodology**



**Approach.** This study employed a Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) approach. TBLT is rooted in the idea that language is best learned through meaningful communication and real-life tasks. The goal was to observe how interactive tasks influence students' vocabulary retention and use.

Vocabulary is a crucial component of language acquisition, serving as the foundation for communication in both spoken and written forms. For ESL learners, especially at the B1 level, developing vocabulary proficiency significantly contributes to improved fluency and confidence. This study investigates the effectiveness of interactive vocabulary teaching strategies in improving vocabulary knowledge and usage among B1-level students. It includes data gathered through interviews, questionnaires, classroom observations, and pre- and post-tests.

**Design.** The study used action research design. As a teacher-researcher, I implemented specific vocabulary teaching strategies, observed their impact, and refined instructional methods accordingly. The research included both quantitative (pre- and post-tests, questionnaires) and qualitative (interviews, lesson observations) methods.

Participants were 9 B1-level ESL students aged between 14–16. They engaged in vocabulary learning sessions using interactive and task-based methods over the course of several weeks. One English language teacher, Mirshokhrukh, who has been teaching for one year, was interviewed for additional professional insight.

### **Data analysis: Interview with the Teacher**

The teacher, Mirshokhrukh, expressed a strong passion for helping students gain confidence in using English vocabulary in real-life situations. He selects new words based on their relevance to students' lives, current lesson themes, and frequency of use in English. To reinforce vocabulary, he employs repetition, visuals, context-based learning, and engaging activities such as games and storytelling.

He explains the meanings of new words using definitions, pictures, acting, and context clues. To practice vocabulary, Mirshokhrukh integrates group discussions, charades, crossword puzzles, and word bingo into lessons. He encourages students to use new vocabulary in speaking and writing through role plays, presentations, and creative writing tasks. When teaching words with multiple meanings, he provides context-specific examples and visuals to clarify nuances.

### **Learner Questionnaire Results**

To assess learners' perspectives on vocabulary learning, a questionnaire was distributed. The findings are summarized below:

#### **1. Confidence in Vocabulary Use:**

- Most students reported being somewhat confident or very confident in understanding and using new words.

#### **2. Frequency of Learning New Words:**

- The majority of students try to learn new vocabulary a few times a week, while some do so daily or occasionally.

#### **3. Effective Memory Strategies:**



- Preferred strategies included:

- Writing words down
- Practicing in sentences
- Using flashcards
- Hearing words in context

4. Checking Word Meanings:

- Students commonly used dictionaries, online resources, and context clues to check meanings. Some also asked peers or teachers.

5. Suggestions for Improvement:

- In open-ended responses, students highlighted interactive methods, consistent practice, and contextual learning as the most effective ways to improve vocabulary.

### **Observed Lessons**

Classroom observations revealed that lessons followed a consistent structure: warm-up activities, vocabulary introduction, guided practice, and individual or group tasks. Teachers used interactive techniques such as role plays, games, group work, and multimedia (videos, presentations, online quizzes). Vocabulary was often taught with visuals, real-life examples, and practice opportunities. Classroom management was effective, with clearly defined goals and active participation encouraged throughout.

### **Pre- and Post-Test Results**

To measure vocabulary improvement, students took a pre-test and a post-test focused on vocabulary usage in context.

The test included ten multiple-choice questions based on vocabulary use in real-life situations related to technology in education.

Overall Average Score:

- **Pre-test: 4.2**
- **Post-test: 5**

**Results and Discussion.** The results of this study reveal meaningful insights into the impact of interactive vocabulary teaching on learners' language skills. The pre- and post-test scores show a clear improvement in vocabulary knowledge among the participating B1-level ESL students. Before the intervention, the average score was 4.2 out of 5, while after the intervention, it increased to a full 5 out of 5. This suggests that the learners not only retained the new vocabulary but were also able to apply it accurately in context-based situations.

#### **1. Effectiveness of TBLT in Vocabulary Learning**

The use of a Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) approach played a critical role in this success. TBLT emphasizes learning language through real-world tasks, encouraging students to use vocabulary in practical, communicative situations. During lessons, learners actively participated in role plays, pair work, group discussions, and vocabulary games. These tasks not only made vocabulary learning



enjoyable but also meaningful, helping learners to associate words with real-life contexts.

## **2. Learner Engagement and Motivation**

Observation notes and student feedback from the questionnaires indicate high levels of engagement and motivation. Many students commented that they preferred learning new words through games, visuals, and communicative tasks rather than memorizing word lists. This aligns with research suggesting that students are more likely to retain vocabulary when they find the learning process enjoyable and relevant.

## **3. Use of Multi-Sensory Strategies**

The teacher's use of multi-sensory methods—including visuals, gestures, realia, and contextual examples—helped cater to various learning styles. For example, using pictures and acting out meanings supported visual and kinesthetic learners, while storytelling and group discussion benefited auditory and social learners. This approach made vocabulary learning more inclusive and effective across different learner profiles.

## **4. Student-Centered Learning**

The interactive strategies placed students at the center of the learning process. Students were given multiple opportunities to take ownership of their learning, whether by participating in classroom discussions, creating sentences with new vocabulary, or using flashcards in pairs. This autonomy helped build their confidence and allowed them to internalize vocabulary more deeply.

## **5. Supportive Teacher Practices**

The interviewed teacher, Mirshokhrukh, highlighted the importance of scaffolding and repetition, which were consistently observed in lessons. He also frequently encouraged the use of vocabulary in speaking and writing, such as through presentations, creative writing, and short dialogues. This consistent reinforcement contributed to the improvement in students' ability to use new words accurately.

## **6. Peer Collaboration and Social Learning**

Group tasks and pair activities promoted peer interaction, allowing students to learn from one another and reinforce vocabulary use in meaningful communication. Peer support was especially helpful for lower-performing students, who gained confidence by interacting with stronger peers.

**Conclusion.** This research demonstrates that interactive, task-based vocabulary teaching strategies are highly effective in enhancing vocabulary acquisition and usage among B1-level ESL learners. The combination of student-centered learning, real-world tasks, multisensory input, and consistent practice resulted in measurable improvement, as shown by pre- and post-test results.

Key findings from this study include:

- Increased vocabulary retention and usage: The shift from 4.2 to 5 in average test scores reflects strong gains in vocabulary knowledge.
- Improved learner confidence and motivation: Students reported enjoying the



interactive methods, which led to higher levels of participation and engagement.

- Enhanced communication skills: Learners became more fluent and accurate in using new vocabulary in speaking and writing activities.
- Positive teacher impact: The role of the teacher in designing varied and meaningful tasks was essential for student success.

The findings support the idea that vocabulary learning should go beyond rote memorization and should involve contextualized, communicative, and student-led activities. This approach not only enriches vocabulary knowledge but also nurtures learners' overall language competence and confidence.

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