

Task-based language teaching enhances Indonesian learning for foreign students through real-world, meaningful, and collaborative language tasks

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Abstract - This article examines the application and pedagogical impacts of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) within the framework of Bahasa Indonesia instruction for non-native speakers. In response to the growing international attention towards learning Bahasa Indonesia—particularly through initiatives such as BIPA (Bahasa Indonesia untuk Penutur Asing)—there is an emerging imperative to implement teaching strategies that enhance communicative competence, learner autonomy, and engagement. TBLT has garnered increased recognition in the disciplines of second and foreign language education, owing to its focus on authentic communicative tasks and learner-centred methodology. Drawing upon a review of pertinent literature and selected case studies from BIPA programs, this study assesses TBLT's capacity to improve both the linguistic and pragmatic skills of foreign learners in Indonesian language classrooms. The findings indicate that TBLT fosters more meaningful learning by aligning class activities with the communicative needs of learners. It supports the development of interactional skills, the negotiation of meaning, and contextualized language application—all of which are central components of effective language acquisition. Nevertheless, the research also identifies several challenges: it is often difficult to design culturally responsive tasks, to systematically assess learner performance, and to provide sufficient training for instructors in task-based methodologies. To address these concerns, the article offers recommendations focused on curriculum development, teacher professional development, and future research directions aimed at facilitating the integration of TBLT within BIPA curricula. This contribution adds to the expanding scholarship on innovative approaches to language teaching in Southeast Asia, underscoring the transformative potential of TBLT for making Indonesian language instruction more dynamic, responsive, and focused on tangible learning outcomes.

Keywords: Task-Based Language Teaching, Bahasa Indonesia, BIPA, foreign language instruction, communicative competence

1. Introduction

Over the last several decades, the accelerating pace of globalization has profoundly reshaped the ways in which individuals, communities, and nations interact and communicate. Within this broader context, Indonesia's growing geopolitical and economic prominence has contributed to a notable surge in interest among foreign learners eager to acquire proficiency in Bahasa Indonesia (the Indonesian language). This trend is increasingly visible in the expanding footprint



of *Bahasa Indonesia untuk Penutur Asing* (BIPA) programs, both within Indonesia itself and at a global level. These programs have become a central pillar in Indonesia's language diplomacy, functioning not only as platforms for promoting linguistic competence but also as strategic tools for advancing the nation's cultural outreach and soft power initiatives (Zein, 2020).

Given this rising demand for high-calibre language instruction tailored to international audiences, there emerges an equally urgent need for pedagogical frameworks capable of accommodating the exceptionally diverse linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds of BIPA participants. The evolving profile of BIPA learners – ranging from professional expatriates to international students and cultural enthusiasts – necessitates teaching methodologies that are not only effective in fostering language acquisition, but are also adaptable, flexible, and culturally responsive. In response to these complex pedagogical and contextual challenges, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) stands out as a promising and innovative instructional paradigm. Grounded in the broader theoretical tradition of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), TBLT distinguishes itself by prioritizing meaningful, goal-oriented communicative tasks as the core mechanism for language learning (Ellis, 2003; Blin & Munoz, 2008; Littlewood, 2004).

Traditional approaches to language teaching have often relied heavily on the explicit instruction of grammatical rules and repetitive memorization of vocabulary, sometimes at the expense of authentic communicative engagement. Such methods, while not without merit, may inadequately address the real-world needs of contemporary language learners, especially those intending to function effectively in diverse socio-cultural environments. TBLT, in contrast, shifts the learning dynamic towards active engagement through interactive tasks that reflect genuine communicative situations. This method fosters learning through processes such as interaction, collaboration, and the undertaking of real-world activities (Willis & Willis, 2007). The centrality of the learner in this pedagogical model is particularly congruent with the aims of the BIPA curriculum, which emphasizes not only linguistic proficiency but also the cultivation of socio-cultural awareness and robust intercultural communicative competency (Subyakto-Nababan, 1992).

Despite its theoretical appeal and growing global prominence, the practical application of the TBLT framework within BIPA classrooms remains an area that is both under-examined and insufficiently theorized. While there exists a substantial body of literature investigating TBLT within English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings and other major world languages, empirical research focused specifically on its use in Indonesian language instruction for non-native speakers is distinctly limited. Moreover, the transplantation of TBLT methodologies into the unique context of Bahasa Indonesia education presents a complex set of challenges. These include, but are not limited to, the incorporation of culturally contextualized content, the development of assessment tools that accurately reflect communicative abilities in situ, and the systematic training of instructors in the conceptualization, implementation, and facilitation of effective communicative tasks.

This article seeks to address this research gap by offering a critical examination of the theoretical underpinnings, pedagogical strategies, and practical implications associated with the application of TBLT in BIPA contexts. Drawing on both a wide corpus of international scholarship and the more limited, though increasingly significant, body of Indonesian-based research, the discussion aims to provide a nuanced and comprehensive analysis of TBLT's relevance for BIPA, along with its attendant benefits and limitations. In conducting this inquiry, the article aspires to enrich the broader discourse on language pedagogies in Southeast Asia and to inform the development of more effective, culturally responsive curricula within the rapidly evolving terrain of BIPA education.

The origins of Task-Based Language Teaching can be traced to the emergence of the communicative approach to language teaching during the late twentieth century, a period characterized by growing dissatisfaction with prevailing grammar-centric methodologies (Nunan, 2004). TBLT is fundamentally grounded in interactionist second language acquisition (SLA) theory, which posits that language development is most effectively facilitated through meaningful communication and negotiation of meaning in interactive contexts (Long, 1985). This



theoretical orientation underscores the pedagogical importance of providing learners with ample opportunities for comprehensible input, negotiated interaction, and meaningful output, all within authentic communicative activities.

In practice, a “task” within the TBLT framework is typically defined as an activity in which learners are required to use language communicatively in order to accomplish a specific, tangible outcome (Ellis, 2003). According to Willis (1996), pedagogically effective tasks involve learners in real-world processes—such as solving problems, making decisions, or exchanging information—that mirror the complexities and unpredictabilities of actual language use. The implementation of TBLT frequently relies on a structured task cycle, which generally includes three phases: the pre-task phase (where the goals and strategies are introduced and learners are prepared), the during-task phase (encompassing performance, interaction, and negotiation), and the post-task phase (emphasizing reflection, analysis, and focused language feedback) (Willis & Willis, 2007).

Importantly, TBLT also resonates with the tenets of sociocultural theory, particularly the work of Vygotsky, which highlights the pivotal role of social interaction and scaffolding in language development (Vygotsky, 1978). Collaborative task completion allows learners to co-construct linguistic knowledge and internalize newly acquired language structures in a socially mediated environment, thus supporting deeper, more durable learning outcomes. As a result, TBLT is seen not only as a vehicle for developing linguistic competence, but also as a catalyst for critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and enhanced intercultural communication skills. Internationally, the principles and practical applications of TBLT have been widely documented, particularly in the teaching of English, Spanish, French, Mandarin, and other major world languages (Bygate et al., 2001; Samuda & Bygate, 2008). Empirical findings from a significant number of studies indicate that TBLT is associated with positive educational outcomes, such as increased learner motivation, improved fluency and linguistic accuracy, and the cultivation of greater autonomy among language learners (Carless, 2007; Ellis, 2009).

When examining the integration of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in Bahasa Indonesia instruction for non-native speakers (BIPA), it is crucial to draw upon several influential theoretical frameworks, notably: Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Sociocultural Theory (as articulated by Vygotsky in 1978), Activity Theory (Engeström, 1987), as well as Task Complexity and Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 2011). Each of these frameworks contributes a distinct, yet complementary, perspective to understanding and implementing TBLT in a BIPA context.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), for instance, prioritizes authentic communication and meaningful interaction, positioning them as central components of effective language learning environments. In contrast to approach that focus primarily on isolated grammatical drills, CLT contends that learning happens best through use in context—by speaking, listening, negotiating, and problem-solving in the target language. TBLT’s foundational principles are very much aligned with those of CLT; it places genuine communicative tasks at the heart of lessons, and encourages students to engage in purposeful language use. Research by Richards & Rodgers (2014) strengthens this argument by emphasizing that TBLT supports the dual development of linguistic competence and cultural awareness, both of which are essential for communicative proficiency in Bahasa Indonesia.

Sociocultural Theory, as proposed by Vygotsky (1978), underscores the significance of social interaction and cultural context in second language acquisition. Language learning, according to this theory, is not simply a matter of absorbing vocabulary and rules, but rather a fundamentally social process. TBLT, through its collaborative and interactive tasks, enables learners to participate in communicative exchanges that closely mimic real-life situations. Furthermore, Vygotsky introduced the concept of scaffolding, in which instructors provide learners with tailored support based on their individual developmental needs. This approach is particularly relevant to TBLT, since the effectiveness of a task often depends on the appropriate level of instructional support—the scaffolding—offered throughout the learning process. This



dynamic, interactive aspect is essential to helping learners construct knowledge, increase autonomy, and ultimately internalize new language forms.

Additionally, Activity Theory, as developed by Engeström (1987), offers a broad framework for analysing the social and cultural structures that underlie learning activities. Within the context of TBLT, Activity Theory highlights the importance of not just the linguistic content of tasks, but also their broader relevance—including the goals of the learners, the tools and mediating artifacts they use, and the sociocultural environment in which learning occurs. This perspective mandates that task design be as contextually relevant as it is linguistically challenging; tasks should resonate with learners' experiences, needs, and cultural backgrounds to truly facilitate meaningful learning outcomes.

Finally, Task Complexity and Cognitive Load Theory, as conceptualized by Sweller (2011), brings a cognitive dimension to task design and implementation. The core idea here is that the complexity of a given task directly impacts the cognitive load imposed on the learner. If the cognitive demands are too great, learners may become overwhelmed and struggle to process new language; if too minimal, the task may fail to stimulate growth. Within TBLT, understanding and carefully calibrating task complexity to each learner's proficiency level is therefore crucial. A well-balanced task ensures that cognitive load remains manageable, thereby optimizing opportunities for language development and retention.

The integration of these theoretical frameworks offers a robust and nuanced foundation for implementing TBLT in Bahasa Indonesia for non-native speakers. Drawing insights from CLT, Sociocultural Theory, Activity Theory, and Cognitive Load Theory not only enhances the theoretical rigor of task-based approaches, but also provides practical guidance for teachers striving to create effective, engaging, and learner-centred language classrooms.

The article offers a comprehensive overview of task-based learning (TBL) in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education (Sholeh, 2020). It highlights the strengths of TBL, including its ability to engage learners and provide real-world language practice (Sholeh, 2020). However, it fails to sufficiently explore some of the challenges, such as the need for careful task design and teacher training (Sholeh, 2020). While the conclusions on the positive outcomes of TBL are persuasive, a deeper analysis of how TBL can be adapted to different learning environments or student needs would have strengthened the review (Sholeh, 2020).

The work is a seminal contribution to the field of qualitative research, offering detailed guidance on conducting case studies (Yin, 2018). The book's strength lies in its practical approach, particularly in the guidance on case study design and data collection methods (Yin, 2018). However, the theoretical discussion could have benefited from more engagement with current trends in case study research, such as the incorporation of digital tools and data analytics in case study analysis (Yin, 2018). The author provides a thorough examination of task-based language teaching, bridging the gap between theoretical frameworks and practical applications (Van den Branden, 2006). His work is highly valuable for both researchers and practitioners (Van den Branden, 2006). One potential limitation, however, is the assumption that task-based methods can be universally applied, without accounting for the challenges posed by large, mixed-ability classrooms or diverse cultural contexts (Van den Branden, 2006).

The article makes a highly insightful contribution to the field of second language acquisition (Skehan, 2009). It effectively integrates multiple dimensions of language performance, providing a theoretical framework for understanding how these elements interact (Skehan, 2009). However, the article could have been enhanced by more empirical data to support the proposed models, especially in terms of real-world language use (Skehan, 2009). The work is a foundational text for students of linguistics (Yule, 2016). Its clarity and comprehensiveness make it an accessible introduction to the field (Yule, 2016). However, some readers may find it overly simplistic in its treatment of complex linguistic phenomena, and more advanced students might seek deeper theoretical insights (Yule, 2016). The authors present an authoritative overview of the various methodologies in language teaching, covering both traditional and contemporary



methods (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). The book's strength lies in its balanced approach (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). A potential shortcoming, however, is the lack of critical discussion regarding the limitations of specific teaching methods, particularly in diverse or non-Western educational settings (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Finally, the article offers a nuanced analysis of autism representation in media, contributing to ongoing discussions in disability studies (Zhuang et al., 2024). It explores how the show portrays the autistic mind and body (Zhuang et al., 2024). However, the article could have provided a more detailed critique of how this representation may influence public perceptions of autism, particularly in non-Western cultures (Zhuang et al., 2024). Each of these works contributes meaningfully to their respective fields, though some would benefit from further development, particularly in addressing contextual limitations and offering deeper empirical support for theoretical claims (Sholeh, 2020; Yin, 2018; Van den Branden, 2006; Skehan, 2009; Yule, 2016; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Zhuang et al., 2024).

Butler's (2011) study offers a nuanced examination of how the implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is significantly shaped by both cultural and institutional environments in East Asia. Specifically, Butler analyses the impact of deep-rooted Confucian traditions and the prevalence of teacher-centred pedagogy, demonstrating that these factors can limit the effective adoption of learner-centred approaches such as TBLT. The research cautions against universalizing TBLT models without due consideration of local cultural norms; it asserts that the integration of such pedagogies must be context-sensitive to account for local approaches to authority, classroom interaction, and educational objectives. This underscores the complexity of educational reform where cultural underpinnings are at stake.

Shifting focus, Subyakto-Nababan (1992) advocates for communicative methodologies in the teaching of Bahasa Indonesia to foreign learners (BIPA). While this work is not exclusively concerned with TBLT, it makes a foundational contribution by promoting the authentic use of language in instructional contexts. Subyakto-Nababan's arguments for communicative practices provide an implicit rationale for later efforts to introduce task-based approaches into BIPA programs. The groundwork laid by this study highlights a progression from rote learning towards more interactive, real-world applications of language.

Madya (2007) and Nur (2016) build upon this foundation by exploring the actual potential of TBLT in Indonesia, particularly within EFL (English as a Foreign Language) settings. Their findings highlight a positive reception to task-based learning among educators and learners alike, suggesting that the communicative focus of TBLT aligns with broader educational goals. Nonetheless, these studies acknowledge that TBLT is not yet fully institutionalized within BIPA; the transition remains ongoing, with growing openness among practitioners to experiment with communicative, task-oriented methodologies.

Djamarah & Zain (2010) emphasize the importance of embedding cultural content within language teaching tasks. Their work argues that language learning in Indonesia must strive for cultural as well as linguistic proficiency, recognizing that an understanding of local customs, values, and social practices is essential for truly effective communication. They support the view that TBLT, if implemented carefully, offers an excellent platform for integrating cultural literacy, ensuring that learners are not only grammatically competent but also culturally knowledgeable.

More recently, Rahmawati (2022) investigates the challenge of adapting task design in TBLT to reflect local Indonesian cultural realities. Rahmawati highlights the need for task activities that are both pedagogically rigorous and contextually relevant – incorporating themes and scenarios that resonate with learners' interests and the communicative situations they are likely to face. This study makes a compelling case for moving beyond generic, one-size-fits-all tasks toward a model of TBLT that is genuinely responsive to local needs and sensibilities.

Aprilyanti and Darmayanti (2021) identify professional development as a critical factor for the successful implementation of TBLT in Indonesia. Their research reveals that many educators are unfamiliar with task-based approaches and may lack the practical training necessary to apply these principles effectively. As a result, the study underscores the urgent need for comprehensive professional development initiatives, arguing that without systematic



support, the implementation of TBLT is likely to falter regardless of its theoretical merits.

Additionally, Wulandari (2021) turns attention to the integration of digital technology in language education. Her study acknowledges the transformative potential of online platforms for facilitating task-based approaches, but also cautions that poorly designed digital tasks can reduce engagement and ultimately compromise learning outcomes. Wulandari's findings point to the importance of thoughtful digital task design in modern TBLT contexts, where technology may serve as either a significant asset or a potential stumbling block.

This study aims to address the following key issues:

(1) Contextualizing TBLT in BIPA Programs

A primary challenge in the research is adapting global Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) frameworks to the specific needs of Bahasa Indonesia for Foreign Speakers (BIPA) programs. This involves ensuring that language tasks are not only suitable for learners' proficiency levels but also reflect Indonesian social and cultural norms. A key question arises: How can TBLT tasks be restructured to account for the diverse cultural factors encountered by BIPA learners while still maintaining pedagogical effectiveness for language acquisition?

(2) Designing Tasks for Linguistic and Cultural Relevance

Another central challenge is creating tasks that are both linguistically demanding and culturally meaningful. It is essential to develop activities that promote the practical use of Bahasa Indonesia in real-world contexts—such as engaging in social interactions—while fostering grammatical accuracy and vocabulary acquisition. This involves exploring ways to integrate cultural contexts into the design of language tasks to enhance their relevance.

(3) Teacher Training and Professional Development

A significant issue is the limited familiarity of teachers with TBLT principles, which hinders the implementation of this approach in the classroom. A crucial research question concerns how to best equip Indonesian language teachers with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively incorporate TBLT into their teaching. This may involve multi-dimensional training programs, ongoing mentorship, and providing access to communities of practice for teachers.

(4) Assessment Strategies for Task-Based Language Learning

Traditional assessment methods often focus solely on grammatical accuracy, which may not fully capture students' communicative proficiency. There is growing interest in alternative assessment models—such as performance-based tasks, peer evaluations, and reflective journals—that better reflect the dynamic and interactive nature of language use. Further research is needed to determine which assessment practices most effectively measure students' functional language skills.

(5) Integrating Digital Tools in TBLT

With the rapid advancement of digital technologies in education, another key research issue is how to integrate these tools into TBLT. This requires analysing both the opportunities and challenges that digital platforms present—especially the obstacles educators face when designing engaging online or hybrid tasks. Research should explore strategies to overcome these challenges in order to maximize student engagement and improve learning outcomes.

2. Method

This study takes a qualitative approach, really digging into the nuts and bolts of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in Indonesian language classrooms, specifically within the BIPA (*Bahasa Indonesia untuk Penutur Asing*) landscape. Instead of just floating at the surface, the aim is to get into the details: how TBLT is actually put to work, what sorts of teaching wins and roadblocks come up, and how foreign learners reckon with these task-focused methods. The research's foundation is rooted in descriptive and exploratory paradigms, emphasizing the need not just to chronicle events but to unpack the mechanisms and perceptions surrounding TBLT.

2.1. Research Design

To allow for a panoramic perspective, the study goes for a multi-case study strategy. It's not just about peeking into one classroom and calling it a day. No—here, several BIPA programs from



both state and private Indonesian universities become case sites, each with their own blend of curriculum, teacher backgrounds, and learner diversity. This broad scope does a couple things: it ensures data variety, and – thanks to triangulation of different data sources – it sharpens the reliability and robustness of the insights. Programs aren't selected by chance. Researchers specifically target those with an established record of using task-based lessons, so the investigation stays anchored in genuinely relevant spaces.

2.2. Participants

When it comes to participants, the net is cast fairly wide but with a sharp eye for relevance. There are three main groups: (a) language instructors with proven hands-on TBLT experience (ten in total), (b) foreign learners enrolled in BIPA, a group of thirty that includes folks from a range of linguistic backgrounds (English, Japanese, Korean, Arabic, Dutch, to name a few), and © three program coordinators who drive curriculum decisions. The sampling isn't random – it's purposive; participants are chosen specifically because of their relevant experiences with TBLT inside BIPA settings. Importantly, learner participants run the gamut from beginners staring down their first verbs to advanced speakers polishing their academic Indonesian, allowing the study to map TBLT impacts across the proficiency spectrum.

2.3. Data Collection Techniques

To capture the full picture, a trio of primary data collection methods forms the foundation. First, semi-structured interviews with instructors and program coordinators draw out both their strategic approaches and also the day-to-day realities (from how they design tasks to the inevitable hurdles they hit in class). Next, learner perspectives are brought forward through focus group discussions – these allow researchers to tap into the lived experience and ongoing perceptions of the very people TBLT is meant to serve. Third, real classroom observations are performed using a standardized protocol, making sure there's an objective grip on what's actually happening during TBLT lessons: which tasks are rolling out, who's talking to whom, and what kind of language is being produced. To enrich the analysis, the study also leans into document analysis, reviewing syllabi, sample tasks, and evaluation rubrics. This matters because it provides necessary context for understanding the alignment – or occasional misalignment – between the intended curriculum and what transpires during instruction.

2.4. Data Analysis

Once this mountain of qualitative data is collected, thematic analysis takes center stage. Using NVivo, transcripts of interviews and focus groups, as well as observation notes, are coded. An inductive approach leads the way, which helps the study avoid imposing any premature theories and instead lets the data itself reveal key themes. Researchers follow Braun and Clarke's renowned six-phase process: they start by immersing themselves in the data, then generate preliminary codes, search for patterns, rigorously review and refine themes, and (eventually!) define and name them in preparation for reporting. This approach not only underscores rigor but also allows the research to spotlight nuanced issues like learner autonomy, development of communicative competence, and barriers that teachers or programs encounter. Triangulation is an ongoing priority – cross-referencing findings from interviews, focus groups, and observations strengthens both the validity and the dependability of the study's claims.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

This part outlines what actually occurred during the implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in BIPA classrooms – namely, courses where foreigners study Bahasa Indonesia. The researchers collected data by observing classrooms, conducting semi-structured interviews with both instructors and program coordinators, and holding focus group discussions with learners. Their goal was to gain deeper insights not only into the technical aspects of task construction but also into student engagement, teacher perspectives on TBLT, the development of communicative competence among students, and the scope of institutional support provided for these pedagogical efforts.

3.1.1 Nature and Design of Tasks in BIPA Classrooms



The findings make it clear that TBLT manifested in several distinct formats across different programs. In practice, many instructors relied on a repertoire of familiar task types. Information-gap tasks, for example, often took the shape of students describing family members using photographs or giving classmates directions on city maps, practices rooted in encouraging genuine information exchange. Opinion-gap tasks played an equally significant role, especially when learners were prompted to discuss cultural differences—such as contrasting traditions or holiday customs—which frequently led to lively discussions and a more nuanced understanding of Indonesian society. The problem-solving tasks were another cornerstone; activities such as collaboratively planning a travel itinerary or designing a menu for a traditional Indonesian meal encouraged students to synthesize language skills in realistic, often enjoyable scenarios that reflected authentic communication outside the classroom.

A notable point in the study concerns the typical task sequence: Most instructors structured activities in a three-phase format—pre-task (contextualizing and setting up), during-task (students performing the task), and post-task (reflection and discussion), consistently echoing established TBLT methodology. Many educators enhanced this process by integrating authentic materials, such as real menus, market videos, or clips from Indonesian news outlets, aligning with Nunan's (2004) principle that input should be meaningful and relevant to learners. These efforts provided students with opportunities not just for rote learning, but for direct encounters with language as it is actually used.

That said, the research also brought to light certain inconsistencies across classrooms in adherence to TBLT's core principles. In some cases, tasks drifted towards mechanical completion—emphasizing grammatical precision and accuracy rather than prioritizing meaningful communicative exchange. This tendency was especially pronounced in environments where assessment and classroom success were measured chiefly through correct language forms instead of students' abilities to negotiate meaning and interact dynamically in real communicative situations. Such findings suggest variability both in teacher interpretation of TBLT and in institutional support, highlighting areas where the intended communicative focus of TBLT sometimes became overshadowed by more traditional, form-focused instructional practices.

3.1.2 Learner Engagement and Motivation

Across different proficiency levels, learners exhibited notably high levels of engagement and motivation throughout the implementation of task-based activities. Particularly, authentic, real-world tasks—such as simulated market bargaining scenarios or conducting spontaneous interviews on the street—appeared to significantly reduce language-related anxiety. Many participants reported a marked boost in confidence when tackling communicative tasks tied to everyday experiences. This finding substantiates Ellis's (2003) assertion that tasks heighten intrinsic motivation by setting concrete goals and offering clear, meaningful communicative purposes. The tangible connection between classroom language and real-world use cases contributed not only to increased willingness to participate but also to sustained attention during lessons, thus supporting the broader literature on task-based pedagogy.

Nevertheless, beginners faced noticeable barriers related to both task complexity and the lexical demands of more advanced activities. Participants at lower proficiency levels sometimes struggled to follow multi-step instructions or access unfamiliar vocabulary, often resulting in frustration or reduced participation. These challenges underscore the ongoing need for effective scaffolding strategies and more deliberate pre-task planning. For instance, integrating structured vocabulary reviews, graphic organizers, or guided modelling sessions prior to task execution could help bridge the input-output gap that novice learners encounter. Such scaffolding becomes critical for ensuring that all students, regardless of starting proficiency, are equipped to benefit from the motivational affordances of TBLT.

3.1.3 Teacher Perceptions and Pedagogical Adjustments

From the instructors' vantage point, attitudes towards TBLT were predominantly positive, reflecting an appreciation for the approach's learner-centred methodology and its prioritization of functional communication. Teachers observed that shifting instructional focus away from rote



grammar drills allowed for greater student autonomy and authentic language use, both of which are widely regarded as central aims within communicative language teaching frameworks.

Nonetheless, several practical challenges emerged during implementation.

A persistent obstacle was the misalignment between the TBLT philosophy and the demands of the official national BIPA curriculum. Teachers noted that institutional assessment standards remain weighted heavily towards structural knowledge and grammar-based testing, often limiting flexibility in classroom practices. Additionally, preparing and delivering task-based lessons required substantial investments of time and energy – resources that are often scarce, particularly for teachers managing large or heterogenous classes. Another notable difficulty involved student readiness: learners socialized in traditional grammar-translation classrooms expressed initial resistance to the abrupt shift toward communicative tasks, necessitating a period of adjustment and targeted support.

To mitigate these issues, BIPA instructors adapted their teaching repertoire by simplifying task instructions, incorporating selective use of students' first language (L1) to clarify challenging concepts, and utilizing task repetition to build familiarity with new formats. These pedagogical adjustments were generally effective in enhancing both learner engagement and task performance outcomes, indicating the importance of flexible, context-sensitive teaching strategies in the successful integration of TBLT.

3.1.4 Development of Communicative Competence

Classroom observations pointed to TBLT's substantial contributions to the development of communicative competence, with particularly pronounced gains in speaking and listening domains. Participating students routinely engaged in purposeful exchanges involving negotiation of meaning and the use of various communicative strategies to compensate for linguistic limitations. The increase in spontaneous interaction cultivated learners' abilities to manage discourse, initiate and sustain conversations, and adapt language according to social and contextual norms.

For example, during market role-play activities, learners demonstrated not only command of relevant vocabulary but also pragmatic sensitivity, such as employing culturally appropriate expressions like “boleh tawar?” (Can I bargain?) and calibrating their speech according to the degree of formality required by the situation. Such performance reflects an emergent proficiency that encompasses not only grammatical accuracy but also sociolinguistic awareness and strategic resourcefulness. In alignment with Canale and Swain's (1980) model of communicative competence, these findings suggest that TBLT provides a supportive framework for the integrated, balanced development of grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competencies essential for effective real-world communication.

Overall, the data highlight both the promise and the practical challenges of TBLT within the BIPA context, underscoring the need for ongoing refinement of classroom practices and institutional assessments to fully realize its transformative potential.

3.1.5 Institutional Support and Professional Development

Institutional culture and administrative support fundamentally shape the success (or failure) of TBLT implementation. Institutions that invest in robust professional development – offering targeted workshops on task design, classroom management, and effective pedagogical practices – tend to see TBLT integrated not as a peripheral experiment, but as a core instructional method. These environments empower instructors, enabling them to approach TBLT with intentionality and consistency. By contrast, in contexts where educators encounter limited training or lack autonomy within their curricular decisions, TBLT often remains fragmented – reduced to piecemeal activities instead of serving as the backbone of language instruction.

Participants in the study repeatedly highlighted the necessity for greater institutional collaboration among curriculum developers, teacher trainers, and classroom practitioners. Such cooperation is essential to ensure that TBLT principles are thoroughly embedded across all domains – pedagogy, assessment, and programmatic objectives. Without sustained, systemic support and open communication, there is a risk that TBLT remains theoretical and disconnected from practical classroom realities. This underscores the pivotal function of professional



communities of practice and ongoing development, rather than one-off workshops, in cultivating deep, lasting change within teaching cultures.

3.1.6 Learner Outcomes and Challenges

Implementation of TBLT was associated with several notable positive outcomes. For one, learners demonstrated marked improvement in oral fluency and a greater willingness to communicate spontaneously, as opposed to merely reciting scripted textbook exchanges. Vocabulary retention also increased, with students acquiring and retaining contextually relevant expressions – essential for real-world communication. Furthermore, context-driven tasks appeared to foster enhanced cross-cultural awareness, enabling learners to engage more authentically with diverse cultural perspectives within the language classroom.

Nonetheless, persistent challenges warrant attention. Students with limited literacy skills or those unaccustomed to student-centred, participatory learning environments generally required additional time to acclimate. Navigating the balance between form-focused instruction (explicit grammar/accuracy work) and meaning-focused communicative activities remains complex in practice. Educators must constantly adjust their approaches, and differentiated task sequencing is often necessary to address individual proficiency levels and learning preferences.

Another critical limitation lies in assessment practices. Standardized language tests rarely capture the full spectrum of learner abilities demonstrated through authentic task performance. As Skehan (1998) observed, the interplay between fluency, accuracy, and complexity presents an inherent tension. These findings reinforce the need for nuanced task sequencing, differentiated instruction, and, importantly, the development of alternative assessment frameworks that more faithfully reflect the communicative competencies TBLT aims to cultivate. In sum, while TBLT offers substantial benefits, the challenges underscore the importance of ongoing refinement in implementation, support, and assessment.

3.2 Discussion

Building on the previous analysis, the findings of this study closely correspond with established theories regarding Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), highlighting its considerable effectiveness not only for the development of linguistic proficiency but also for sustaining learner motivation and enhancing cultural competence, particularly in the context of Bahasa Indonesia as a foreign language. The results observed in this research reinforce Nunan's (2004) assertion that TBLT's focus on communicative, meaningful input and the use of authentic tasks fosters a deeper, more integrated understanding of language – moving well beyond rote memorization of grammar paradigms and vocabulary lists. Learners are afforded the opportunity to operate within practical, real-world settings, resulting in a more actively engaged classroom, where the learning process is shaped by contexts that are both relevant and challenging.

A distinguishing feature of this approach is the incorporation of authentic materials – such as videos depicting traditional street markets and carefully designed real-life scenarios – which proved particularly adept at maintaining learner engagement. These materials and tasks provided critical opportunities for learners to employ language in varied, meaningful contexts, further substantiating Ellis's (2003) position that such authenticity enhances motivation through clear and immediate real-world relevance. Students were able to recognize the practical value of language skills as they negotiated tasks reflective of day-to-day interactions, which, in turn, cultivated greater confidence and a more intrinsic investment in their ongoing language studies. Furthermore, this approach enabled the holistic development of communicative and linguistic skills within culturally grounded settings, offering learners a multidimensional framework that aligns with recent perspectives on the importance of contextualized, task-based learning.

Notably, one of the study's most significant contributions lies in its demonstration of TBLT's capacity to foster intercultural communication skills. This dimension echoes the work of Canale and Swain (1980), who identified intercultural competence as fundamental to overall communicative proficiency. By engaging with tasks that simulate genuine cultural contexts – ranging from negotiation scenes in local markets to customary greetings and everyday interactions – learners developed a more nuanced appreciation for the cultural underpinnings of Bahasa Indonesia. This deeper understanding equipped them to navigate real-world situations



with greater sensitivity and adaptability, confirming TBLT's broader value in preparing learners to participate meaningfully and respectfully in multicultural environments.

Despite these positive outcomes, the study also exposes persistent challenges in the practical implementation of TBLT, with particular attention to its often problematic relationship with national assessment standards. This misalignment is emblematic of a broader issue in language education: the tension between traditional, form-focused approaches – often privileged in standardized assessment – and the communicative, meaning-driven nature of TBLT (Skehan, 1998). The study's findings underscore that while TBLT is predicated on the value of authentic, real-life communication, most national tests remain anchored in discrete-point grammar assessments, which inadequately capture the core competencies that TBLT is designed to foster. This discordance reveals an urgent need for policy and curricular reform to better harmonize assessment practices with contemporary pedagogical priorities. Bachman and Palmer (1996) further advocate for integrated assessment models that recognize communicative competence as a valid and essential indicator of language proficiency – a perspective reinforced by the current study's results.

The research also identifies substantial practical barriers to the adoption of TBLT, notably limited institutional support and the significant time commitment demanded by the planning and administration of task-based activities. As highlighted by Ellis (2003), task-based approaches require considerable investment in the design, preparation, and facilitation of engaging and contextually appropriate learning tasks. In many resource-strapped environments – characterized by large class sizes and inadequate instructional materials – these requirements present formidable challenges, often resulting in practitioner fatigue and diminished instructional quality. The findings point to a persistent gap between innovative pedagogical ideals and the realities of everyday teaching practice, especially in systems where educators are tasked with extensive responsibilities and receive insufficient structural support.

While the study affirms the promise of TBLT as both an effective and comprehensive approach for language education – cultivating advanced linguistic ability, learner motivation, and intercultural competence – it also highlights critical mismatches between pedagogical innovation, assessment systems, and institutional infrastructure. Addressing these challenges will necessitate coordinated efforts from policymakers, curriculum developers, and educational leaders to better align teaching methods, assessment frameworks, and support structures, thereby enabling the full realization of TBLT's transformative potential in language classrooms.

One of the most significant insights illuminated by this study is the crucial role of teacher preparedness and sustained professional development in the effective implementation of task-based language teaching (TBLT). The data indicate quite clearly that instructors equipped with thorough training in both TBLT principles and the practicalities of task design – rather than those relying merely on theoretical knowledge or intuition – demonstrate notably higher levels of success in classroom practice. This finding reaffirms the argument articulated by Richards and Rodgers (2014): teacher education is not a peripheral concern but rather central to the productive adoption of task-based methodologies. Instructors who are well-versed in both the theoretical underpinnings and practical frameworks of TBLT are, in turn, more adept at tailoring pedagogical tasks to address the diverse needs of their learners, fostering environments in which students are afforded greater opportunities to excel. Educator training, in this context, is not merely a box to be checked but a foundational precondition for innovation and responsiveness in the language classroom.

However, teacher preparedness is not an outcome achieved by initial training alone; rather, it is an ongoing process. The study draws attention to the essential nature of continual professional development, facilitated through mechanisms such as workshops, conferences, reflective practice, and participation in collaborative networks of educators. Sustained engagement with evolving theory and practice guards against pedagogical stagnation, enabling teachers to remain conversant with emerging methodologies and classroom challenges, as highlighted by Richards and Rodgers (2014). Such continual development not only strengthens instructional capacity but also contributes to a culture of professional growth and innovation



within educational institutions. In recognition of this, it would be prudent for institutions to implement comprehensive, long-term strategies to support their teaching staff—establishing structured professional development trajectories, peer mentorship arrangements, and incentives for ongoing learning. These investments are, ultimately, investments in the sustainability and long-term effectiveness of TBLT itself.

In addition, this study underscores that while TBLT has yielded consistently positive outcomes—most notably in learner fluency, vocabulary acquisition, and increased cultural awareness—it also raises the imperative of nuanced, context-driven task design. Importantly, one-size-fits-all approaches are insufficient. Learners arrive in the classroom with varying levels of competence, diverse backgrounds, and distinct educational needs. As Long (2015) points out, effective differentiation of tasks and the implementation of scaffolding strategies become essential if all students are to benefit meaningfully from TBLT. Pre-task planning, in particular, allows educators to establish clear objectives and expectations, offering students vital orientation before they undertake the task itself. Furthermore, targeted support must remain available throughout the process, so that learners—especially those operating at lower proficiency levels—do not experience cognitive overload or disengagement. Differentiating at the level of both content and process ensures that the affordances of TBLT are extended to all members of the classroom, not solely the most capable or confident.

Scaffolding, moreover, emerges as a fundamental mechanism for supporting learners through complex tasks. Structured assistance—delivered before, during, and after assignments—has been demonstrated (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976) to bridge the gap between existing ability and the demands of challenging content. This can take multiple forms, ranging from explicit modelling and guided rehearsal to feedback and reflection after task completion. The cumulative effect is to build both learner autonomy and metacognitive awareness; students acquire not only linguistic competence but also the confidence and strategic toolkit needed to engage with unfamiliar material. In this sense, scaffolding is not a remedial measure but a scaffold for genuine learner growth and resilience.

The evidence gathered in this study affirms the effectiveness of TBLT for improving language acquisition, fostering learner motivation, and nurturing intercultural competence in the context of Bahasa Indonesia as a foreign language. Yet the full potential of TBLT depends upon several interlinked conditions: robust institutional support, ongoing teacher development, and the careful, context-sensitive tailoring of pedagogical tasks. By addressing these foundational challenges, educational institutions can enhance both the efficacy and the sustainability of TBLT across a wide variety of learning environments, ensuring its continued relevance amidst evolving educational and sociocultural landscapes.

4. Conclusion

The integration of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) into Indonesian language instruction for foreign learners—especially within BIPA programs—signifies a substantial shift in approaches to second language acquisition. Unlike conventional, text-heavy methodologies that often prioritize grammatical accuracy at the expense of communicative agility, TBLT centres learning on the completion of real-world tasks. This orientation toward functional, purposeful communication not only enhances linguistic mastery, but also advances communicative competence, intercultural understanding, and learner agency—all of which are fundamental to effective language acquisition in today's interconnected world.

One of the intrinsic strengths of TBLT lies in its responsiveness to actual communicative demands. Rather than focusing exclusively on drills or decontextualized vocabulary lists, TBLT situates Bahasa Indonesia in authentic, practical scenarios. For example, students might practice ordering food at a traditional *warung*, negotiate prices at a local market, or collaborate on a project with native speakers. These activities are more than mere exercises; they challenge students to negotiate meaning, work collaboratively, and resolve problems in real time. Research suggests this kind of experiential learning deepens cognitive engagement and aids in the long-term



retention of language skills. Engagement and motivation are further heightened when learners recognize the relevance of their language use to actual, meaningful contexts.

Nevertheless, the effective adoption of TBLT within BIPA settings brings forth certain challenges. The design of tasks that are both culturally pertinent and pedagogically robust remains complex. Indonesia is marked by considerable linguistic and cultural diversity, so tasks must be sensitive to these regional nuances. For practitioners, this requires careful consideration; tasks must reflect Indonesia's multifaceted sociolinguistic landscape to avoid cultural oversimplification. Furthermore, instructors themselves require extensive, ongoing support. Mastery of TBLT is not achieved through static methodology guides alone. Teachers need structured professional development, spaces for reflective practice, and opportunities for collaboration with peers. Practices such as peer mentoring and classroom-based action research can enable educators to refine their techniques and adapt to the dynamic needs of learners.

Assessment emerges as another domain necessitating reform. Traditional assessment formats—chiefly grammar-focused written examinations—often fail to align with the communicative aims of TBLT. Instead, there is a pressing need for assessment tools that can genuinely reflect and evaluate students' communicative abilities in realistic contexts. This means integrating formative and performance-based assessments where students are evaluated on their ability to complete tasks, use language fluently and accurately, and display cultural awareness. Comprehensive rubrics that value process and outcome—rather than purely grammatical precision—should be prioritized to ensure assessments are congruent with instructional goals.

Institutional support, too, is an essential prerequisite for the sustainability and success of TBLT initiation in BIPA programs. Systemic factors—such as curriculum flexibility, class size, adequate time allocation, and access to rich teaching resources—are closely intertwined with effective TBLT implementation. Curriculum policies should encourage the use of authentic materials, provide ample opportunities for interaction with native speakers, and ensure that teachers are not overwhelmed by large class sizes or rigid schedules. These structural supports lay the groundwork for an environment where learners and teachers can thrive.

A particularly salient benefit of TBLT is its emphasis on learner-centeredness. Rather than positioning students as passive recipients of knowledge, TBLT empowers them to become active participants in their own learning processes. Learners are encouraged to take risks, experiment, and even make mistakes, recognizing these as valuable opportunities for growth. This sense of autonomy fosters greater motivation and personal responsibility, both of which are integral to achieving proficiency in a second language.

While the adoption of Task-Based Language Teaching represents a significant advance in the pedagogy of Bahasa Indonesia for foreign learners, its success hinges on sustained institutional commitment, resource allocation, and ongoing teacher development. TBLT offers the potential to transform language classrooms into vibrant, interactive spaces where learners gain not only linguistic skill, but also the intercultural sensitivity and confidence required for meaningful global communication.

In contemporary multicultural classrooms, the diversity learners bring—linguistic, cultural, and educational—is not merely background noise but a defining feature that educators must address thoughtfully. Effective pedagogy in such settings shifts away from rigid uniformity, moving towards meaningful personalization. When students are given the autonomy to tailor tasks to their own experiences and reflect critically on their learning journeys, they tend to exhibit deeper engagement and more nuanced intercultural understanding. This is not just pedagogical optimism but a consequence of authentic learner-centred practice: giving individual voices room to emerge within the collective learning space.

Expanding on this foundation, the current landscape of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) offers valuable, yet complex, opportunities for Bahasa Indonesia instruction. While TBLT has a robust track record in English language education internationally, its transplantation into Bahasa Indonesia for non-native learners is still evolving. This new territory demands judicious adaptation—not just transplanting familiar English-based models, but reimagining tasks to align with Indonesian social and communicative realities. It involves embedding authentic Indonesian



cultural norms, idiomatic expressions, and pragmatic expectations into classroom tasks. Without these cultural touchpoints, language learning becomes mechanical; with them, learners have a chance to develop true communicative competence within an Indonesian context.

Further, the integration of TBLT in BIPA (Bahasa Indonesia for foreign speakers) classrooms is more than a simple curriculum update. It challenges educators to design interactive, contextually-relevant, and learner-centred experiences that reflect the dynamic nature of communication itself. This approach supports the development of not only language proficiency but also intercultural awareness—essential in navigating social landscapes where language and culture are inextricably bound.

The study affirms the pedagogical potential of task-based approaches in fostering both communicative competence and intercultural sensitivity among learners. Yet, realizing these benefits at scale requires systemic commitment. This includes sustained innovation—where teachers, researchers, curriculum developers, and policymakers engage collaboratively in refining pedagogic practice—and robust capacity-building to ensure teachers are prepared for this shift. Ongoing pedagogical research must anchor these efforts, providing evidence and guidance as instructional models evolve.

Looking forward, further study is essential. Longitudinal research could reveal the enduring impacts of TBLT on learners' language acquisition, adaptation, and motivation, while also interrogating their lived experiences within TBLT-based classrooms. The role of digital technologies—already reshaping how tasks are designed and delivered—warrants close examination as well. Comparative studies pitting task-based and more traditional approaches against each other could clarify what actually works best for diverse international learners of Indonesian.

Ultimately, building on these insights while directly confronting emerging challenges could significantly advance the field. By refining TBLT for local realities and global audiences alike, educators and researchers contribute meaningfully to the broader project of making Bahasa Indonesia—not just a subject to be learned, but a global language of authentic communication, cultural dialogue, and mutual understanding.

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