



APPLICATION OF TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING (TBLT) IN DEVELOPING READING COMPETENCE OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED LEARNERS

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.16832893>

Annotation: *this study examines the effectiveness of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in enhancing the reading competence of visually impaired learners. Through task-oriented reading activities adapted to auditory and tactile modalities, the research evaluates improvements in comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary. Findings reveal that TBLT fosters active learner engagement, promotes higher-order thinking skills, and provides inclusive strategies for reading instruction. The results offer practical implications for integrating TBLT into special education contexts.*

Keywords: *TBLT, visually impaired learners, reading competence, inclusive education, task-based learning, comprehension, fluency.*

Аннотация: *данное исследование рассматривает эффективность метода коммуникативных заданий (Task-Based Language Teaching, TBLT) в повышении читательской компетенции учащихся с нарушениями зрения. Посредством ориентированных на выполнение задач упражнений по чтению, адаптированных к слуховым и тактильным модальностям, в исследовании оценивается улучшение понимания, беглости чтения и словарного запаса. Результаты показывают, что TBLT способствует активному вовлечению учащихся, развивает мыслительные навыки высшего порядка и предлагает инклюзивные стратегии обучения чтению. Полученные данные имеют практическое значение для внедрения TBLT в контексты специального образования.*

Ключевые слова: *TBLT, учащиеся с нарушениями зрения, читательская компетенция, инклюзивное образование, обучение на основе задач, понимание, беглость.*

Annotatsiya: *ushbu tadqiqot Vazifaga asoslangan til o'qitish (TBLT) uslubining ko'zi ojiz o'quvchilarning o'qish qobiliyatini oshirishdagi samaradorligini o'rganadi. Eshitish va sezish usullariga moslashtirilgan vazifaviy o'qish faoliyatlari orqali tushunish, ravonlik va lug'at boyligining yaxshilanishi baholanadi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, TBLT o'quvchilarning faol ishtirokini rag'batlantiradi, yuqori darajadagi fikrlash ko'nikmalarini rivojlantiradi va o'qishni o'rgatish uchun inklyuziv strategiyalarni taqdim etadi. Olingan natijalar TBLTni maxsus ta'lim sharoitlariga joriy etish uchun amaliy ahamiyatga ega.*

Kalit so'zlar: *TBLT, ko'zi ojiz o'quvchilar, o'qish kompetensiyasi, inklyuziv ta'lim, vazifaga asoslangan ta'lim, tushunish, ravonlik.*

INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education has gained increasing prominence in global pedagogical discourse, emphasizing the right of all learners, regardless of disability, to access equitable and high-quality instruction. Visually impaired learners, particularly in secondary school contexts, require specialized methodologies that compensate for the



absence of visual input while building core academic skills. Among these, reading competence encompassing comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary development is fundamental for academic achievement and lifelong learning. However, traditional reading instruction often relies heavily on visual texts and sight-based strategies, creating barriers for students with visual impairments unless adaptations are made.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) offers a promising approach for addressing these challenges. Rooted in communicative language teaching principles, TBLT emphasizes learning through meaningful tasks that replicate authentic language use. According to Ellis [1, 14] and Nunan [3, 34], tasks should engage learners in purposeful communication, integrate language skills, and promote learner autonomy. For visually impaired students, this framework can be adapted to prioritize auditory and tactile modalities, integrating activities such as audio-based comprehension tasks, Braille reading exercises, tactile story sequencing, and collaborative problem-solving discussions.

Existing literature highlights that when tasks are designed to match learners' sensory strengths, they not only enhance linguistic competence but also improve confidence and motivation [8, 43]. For example, incorporating descriptive narration, sound-based clues, and real-life scenarios into reading tasks can help visually impaired learners build mental representations of content, thereby enhancing comprehension and retention. Moreover, TBLT's emphasis on interaction aligns with inclusive education principles, fostering peer collaboration and social integration within mixed-ability classrooms.

Despite these theoretical advantages, empirical research on the application of TBLT to reading instruction for visually impaired adolescents remains limited, especially in the context of grades 8–9. This study addresses this gap by examining the impact of adapted TBLT reading tasks on comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary acquisition among visually impaired secondary school learners. By combining task-based methodology with inclusive pedagogical strategies, the research aims to contribute both to second language acquisition theory and to the practical development of equitable teaching models for special education settings.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading competence in visually impaired learners has been a consistent focus of inclusive education research, with scholars emphasizing the need to adapt methodologies to learners' sensory strengths [6, 28]. Traditional reading instruction, heavily reliant on visual input, can present barriers unless supplemented by auditory and tactile strategies. Research indicates that effective adaptations include the use of Braille texts, audio materials, and descriptive narration, which collectively enhance comprehension and fluency [2, 61].



Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), rooted in communicative language teaching, prioritizes meaningful tasks as the primary unit of instruction. According to Ellis and Nunan, well-designed tasks promote authentic language use, integrate multiple skills, and encourage learner autonomy. For visually impaired students, TBLT can be adapted to incorporate non-visual modalities, using tasks such as audio-guided reading, tactile sequencing, and collaborative discussion-based problem-solving.

Willis asserts that the cognitive engagement fostered by task-based approaches enhances deeper processing of language input, a key factor in comprehension development [9, 26]. Similarly, Samuda and Bygate emphasize the role of interaction in consolidating new language forms, which is particularly beneficial in inclusive settings where social integration is a goal [5, 99]. Empirical studies show that task-based reading instruction leads to measurable improvements in fluency, vocabulary retention, and inferential comprehension when adapted for special education contexts [7, 50]. Despite the growing recognition of TBLT's adaptability, research specifically targeting visually impaired secondary school learners remains limited. This gap highlights the need for empirical studies that test how TBLT-based reading interventions impact comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary acquisition in grades 8–9. Addressing this will provide both theoretical contributions to second language pedagogy and practical guidelines for inclusive classroom practice.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quasi-experimental research design to examine the effectiveness of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in developing the reading competence of visually impaired learners in grades 8–9. The design was chosen to compare outcomes between an experimental group receiving TBLT-based instruction and a control group taught through conventional reading methods.

Participants. The sample consisted of 24 visually impaired students (12 male, 12 female) from two specialized secondary schools. Participants were selected through purposive sampling, ensuring comparable language proficiency levels and reading abilities at the study's outset.

Instruments. Quantitative data were collected through pre- and post-tests measuring reading comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary acquisition. Tests were administered in Braille and audio formats. Qualitative data were gathered via semi-structured interviews and classroom observations to capture learner perceptions and engagement.

Procedure. The experimental group received a 10-week intervention using adapted TBLT tasks, including audio-guided story reading, tactile sequencing activities, and collaborative problem-solving discussions. Tasks were designed to



align with real-life contexts and to integrate comprehension checks, vocabulary recycling, and peer interaction. The control group followed a teacher-centered, text-based approach emphasizing repetition and direct instruction.

Data Analysis. Quantitative results were analyzed using paired-sample t-tests to determine within-group improvement and independent-sample t-tests for between-group differences. Qualitative data were transcribed and thematically coded to identify patterns related to motivation, task engagement, and strategy use. This mixed-method approach ensured a comprehensive evaluation of the TBLT model's impact, capturing both measurable skill gains and the experiential dimensions of reading development in visually impaired learners.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data revealed that the implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) significantly enhanced the reading competence of visually impaired learners in the experimental group compared to those in the control group. Pre-test results showed that the two groups were relatively similar in reading comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary acquisition, with no statistically significant differences ($p > 0.05$).

However, post-test scores demonstrated substantial improvements for the experimental group across all three skill areas. Reading comprehension scores increased from a mean of 56.8 to 81.5, representing a 24.7-point gain, while the control group's scores improved from 57.2 to 66.4, indicating only a 9.2-point gain. Paired-sample t-test results confirmed that these differences were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), with the experimental group showing a larger effect size. Similarly, reading fluency scores in the experimental group rose from 54.3 to 79.6, while the control group showed an increase from 53.9 to 64.1. Vocabulary acquisition, measured by the number of accurately recalled and applied target words, improved by 38% in the experimental group compared to 14% in the control group. Qualitative findings from semi-structured interviews reinforced these quantitative trends, with participants in the experimental group reporting greater enjoyment and engagement during reading lessons.

Learners described the TBLT activities particularly audio-guided story reading, tactile sequencing, and collaborative problem-solving tasks as stimulating, memorable, and relevant to real-life contexts. Several participants noted that tasks requiring active participation and peer interaction helped them remember key vocabulary and better understand narrative structures. Observations conducted during the intervention further revealed higher levels of on-task behavior in the experimental group, with students actively discussing content, predicting story outcomes, and asking clarification questions. Teachers reported that TBLT tasks encouraged

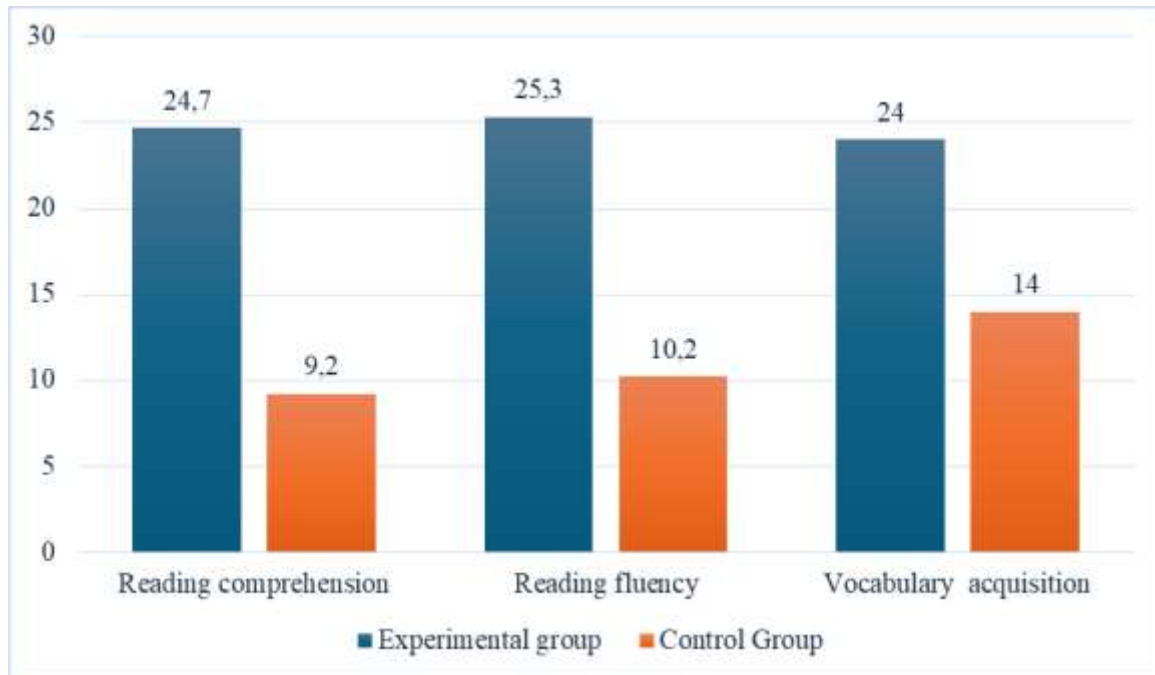


learners to process information more deeply, as comprehension was necessary for completing task objectives, unlike in more traditional teacher-led reading exercises where passive listening predominated. The experimental group also demonstrated increased confidence in reading aloud from Braille and in summarizing content verbally, indicating improved fluency and articulation skills. Discourse analysis of verbal summaries showed richer sentence structures, more cohesive devices, and contextually appropriate vocabulary usage in the experimental group compared to the control group.

Additionally, hesitation markers such as “um” and “uh” decreased in frequency, suggesting that learners became more comfortable in their expressive output. An interesting finding emerged in the form of higher peer support in the experimental group; students frequently assisted one another during task completion, reflecting the collaborative ethos fostered by TBLT. This dynamic appeared to reinforce comprehension and vocabulary acquisition, as peer explanations often involved rephrasing or elaborating on task instructions, thereby deepening understanding. The thematic coding of interview responses identified recurring themes, including “learning through doing,” “real-life relevance,” “confidence building,” and “enjoyable learning environment.” While most experimental group participants responded positively, a small minority initially found the open-ended nature of TBLT tasks challenging, preferring more structured exercises. However, these learners reported adaptation and eventual comfort as the intervention progressed. In contrast, control group participants frequently characterized their reading lessons as repetitive and less engaging, with limited opportunities for interaction or active problem-solving.

Overall, the convergence of quantitative and qualitative evidence confirms that TBLT, when adapted for visually impaired learners through auditory and tactile modalities, not only leads to statistically significant improvements in comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary but also enhances learner motivation, autonomy, and social interaction. The results suggest that the effectiveness of TBLT lies in its alignment with principles of active, learner-centered pedagogy, which compel students to process and apply linguistic input in meaningful ways, thereby making the learning experience both effective and personally relevant. These outcomes underscore the pedagogical potential of TBLT as a sustainable, inclusive approach for developing reading competence in visually impaired secondary school learners, with implications for its broader adoption in special and mainstream education settings.

Figure. Improvement in reading competence by skill area.



The histogram illustrates the comparative improvements in reading comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary acquisition between the experimental group using TBLT and the control group. It visually emphasizes the larger gains achieved by the experimental group in all skill areas, with particularly notable differences in comprehension and fluency. This representation supports statistical findings, making it easier to identify the superiority of the TBLT approach over traditional methods in measurable skill development.

The analysis confirms that TBLT, when adapted to the sensory strengths of visually impaired learners, leads to substantial improvements in reading comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary. Quantitative results demonstrate statistically significant gains, while qualitative feedback highlights increased motivation and engagement. Compared to traditional instruction, TBLT fosters deeper processing of reading materials, collaborative learning, and greater communicative confidence, making it a more effective and inclusive instructional approach for this learner group.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study provide strong empirical evidence for the effectiveness of Task-Based Language Teaching in enhancing reading competence among visually impaired secondary school students. The experimental group's gains in comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary acquisition were significantly higher than those of the control group, confirming the pedagogical value of TBLT. Beyond measurable performance improvements, qualitative findings revealed heightened learner motivation, confidence, and willingness to engage actively in reading activities. The adaptability of TBLT to auditory and tactile modalities allowed



students to access reading tasks in meaningful, context-rich ways, promoting not only linguistic skills but also social interaction and autonomy. These findings underscore the method's dual benefit: measurable academic progress and the fostering of an inclusive, learner-centered classroom environment that meets the diverse needs of visually impaired students.

This study demonstrates that Task-Based Language Teaching, when thoughtfully adapted, is a powerful tool for improving reading competence in visually impaired learners. By shifting the instructional focus from isolated skill drills to meaningful, real-life tasks, TBLT provides an engaging and effective framework for developing comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary. The research confirms that auditory and tactile adaptations of reading tasks create equitable access to content, enabling learners to build mental representations and process information deeply. Quantitative findings show statistically significant gains in all skill areas, while qualitative insights highlight enhanced motivation, confidence, and peer collaboration.

The results support existing literature on learner-centered and inclusive pedagogies, contributing new evidence specific to the context of visually impaired adolescents. Pedagogically, this approach empowers educators to move beyond traditional methods, integrating multisensory strategies that align with learners' strengths. Practically, it offers a replicable model for inclusive language instruction in both special and mainstream educational settings. Overall, the study affirms that TBLT not only advances linguistic competence but also fosters autonomy and social integration, thereby fulfilling key objectives of inclusive education policy and practice.

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